Suicide Walk coming to FIU this weekend

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Mikaila Berkman lost her best friend to suicide six years ago.

Since then, Berkman, a student majoring in hospitality and a building manager at the University at the University’s Graham Center in the Modesto A. Maidique and, has made it her goal to spread awareness and make suicide an open discussion.

“Her [her friend] was 21 days away from her twenty-first birthday,” she said. “It was probably one of the hardest things I’ve ever been through. Two years after it happened, I did a suicide awareness walk in San Francisco that really helped me.

When Berkman moved to Florida, she tried finding similar campus walks at different universities.

She had no such luck.

Last year, she reached out to the University’s External Relations office to try to get one incorporated at the University.

“External Relations told me that it’s this whole big production and they would have to shut down the school, so I just said, ‘Never mind,’” Berkman said. “Then this year the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention reached out to me and we figured out a way to produce a walk inside the school – that way it wouldn’t be this huge thing.”

AFSP, a leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to preventing suicide, is sponsoring this year’s walk.

Adriana Trespalacios, assistant director of operations for GC and chair for the event, believes that this walk will open up discussion about mental illness.

“I went through an experience with my father and I learned that it is something that people just don’t like to talk about,” she said. “It’s something that, unfortunately, is happening a lot in all universities. It’s a big issue among college students.”

According to the American Association of Suicidology, suicide is the second leading cause of death among young attending colleges and universities in the United States.

The study states that 33 percent of undergraduate and graduate students have considered attempting suicide at least once and over 30 percent of students have reported having suicidal ideations.

People have said to me things like, “I’ve been 20 years and now is when I can actually say the word out loud,” said Trespalacios. “People have been taught not to talk about it and I think this walk will stop that. This is an opportunity to meet people who have been through very similar experiences, people who have felt the same pain and who have had to cope with the same thing.

To ensure that happens, Trespalacios and her team will be giving out colored beads to attendees.

“Everyone who’s wearing a red bead means that they’ve lost a parent, someone who’s wearing a blue bead means they’ve had an experience with a sibling and so on,” she said. “You’ll get to share your stories and help each other because you see that person has been through what.”

The event will serve as a fundraiser for AFSP – with a goal of raising at least $5,000.

So far, they’ve raised $4,590.

“Now, it’s just about raising awareness,” said Berkman. “If there’s even one student that’s teetering on the thoughts [of suicide] and they come out and talk and that life is saved, then it’s absolutely worth it. It’s OK to talk about this. And it’s important that people can have easily-accessible places to go to do this.”

Berkman has been in both sides of issue and has contemplated suicide.

“I’ve been there. I can personally say I’ve been there,” she said. “But I’ve also been on the other side and it’s devastating to your family and to your friends and, trust me, you will be missed… Talk. Reach out. It gets better.”

Lisa Varela, a sophomore engineering major, is looking forward to the event.

“Suicide affects everyone and we should all care enough to support this walk,” she said. “I’m really glad that FIU was able to do this because I’m sick of everyone shying away from the topic of mental illness. I’m looking forward to some change in the University and I think that this event is the perfect way to start it.”

The planning for the walk began in February. Currently, there are over 290 people registered for the event.

Registration is still open and will close before the walk at 10 a.m. To register, go to afsp.donordrive.com/event/311u.

The walk will be held on Saturday, March 21 in the GC Lawn at 10 a.m.

“Don’t ever assume that the other person’s issue is not a big deal. Even if it’s not important to you, don’t brush it off,” said Trespalacios. “Always be someone’s angel. You never know how much a smile can mean for that other person and it can really save a life… Suicide is extremely preventable and, with the right help and sources, it should not be happening.

President and CEO of Miami Dade County Fair & Exposition, Inc. on FIU’s expansion

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Founded in June 1965, the University began with just one building: the abandoned Tamiami Airport’s traffic control tower. Fifty years later, the University has grown to acquire various campuses, regional centers, international campuses and a student body of nearly 54,000.

And at present, the University has no plans to halt its continuous expansion anytime soon.

According to Robert Hohenstein, president and chief executive officer of The Miami Dade County Fair & Exposition, Inc., roughly five years ago the University began discussions of expanding onto its adjacent land, where the Fair currently resides.

The Miami Dade County Fair is a private non-profit organization whose mission statement is “to enrich its community by promoting education and South Florida agriculture while showcasing youth achievement,” according to its website.

“The Fair has been on the Tamiami land for 43 years and, according to bizjournals.com, it’s the largest fair in Florida in terms of attendance. According to Hohenstein, although The Fair is a yearly event in spring that lasts 21 days, the Miami Dade County Fair & Exposition, Inc. is a year-round business.

“This is not just a Youth Fair over here,” Hohenstein told Student Media. “We do about 70 exposition events here – trade shows, festivals, christmas parties, corporate addresses and police use the land for training.”

Last fiscal year, which ended June 2014, it hosted over 915,000 guests through their exposition business.

On November 4, 2014, the community had a vote that allowed the University’s expansion onto the occupied adjacent land.

The community spoke, and 65 percent of voters voted in favor of the expansion.

“I’m so excited that the community supported us,” said Alexs Catayagu, Student Government Association president at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. “[First] we need to put together the money to relocate [The Fair]… the second opportunity is that we need to negotiate another site for the fair to move to.”

“The Fair is in agreement with the County that is valid until 2085 and Hohenstein states that the November decision is not a mandate for The Fair to move or for the University to start expanding.

According to the cancellation clause on the lease, the lease may be terminated or cancelled for the public interest. The County must give the tenant, in this case The Fair, three years’ written notice and must first provide a secure and equal, or better, alternate site in Miami-Dade County.

The lease also states that, in the event that The Fair moves, the County must pay to the tenant all moving expenses.

“Our lease is with the County, if the County wants to break the lease before 2085, they know the ramifications,” Hohenstein said. “Financially, they are not going to break the lease until the University finds a site that we like and are agreeable to. The money to pay for it and none of those [other] things are close to happening.”

According to the Miami-Dade County Fair & Expo Relocation Study, there have been three places that the University, The Fair and the County have taken into consideration for the relocation.

These places include the Graham Site, located in the Hialeah/Miami Lakes area; the Homestead Site; and the Sun Life Site, located around the land of the Sun Life Stadium.

According to Hohenstein, none of the three proposed sites measured up to The Fair’s current site.

Hohenstein said that the Homestead Site is outside the development boundary and the mayor doesn’t want The Fair to leave a central part of the County. He also said that the Sun Life Site is too small to accommodate the largest fair in Florida and that the Graham Site had much potential, but was too expensive for the University to pay.

“We’ll just continue to have conversations and talk, we all know what our responsibilities are,” he said. “We are not going to abrogate our rights under the terms and conditions on the lease.”

According to expand.fiu.edu, the University plans to use the fairgrounds for the construction of an incubator entrepreneurship and data center, additional housing, expansion of STEM programs and green space.

When contacted for further contacts on the expansion, the University’s Office of Media Relations submitted an email with frequently asked questions on the issue.

Students line up to get free healthy food at the lettuce Go Green event on Tuesday, March 17. The event taught students how to live a sustainable lifestyle.

LETUCE GO GREEN

Evelyn Mune/THE BEECN

Let us know your opinion in the comments below.
Palestinians denounce Netanyahu, vow to keep statehood push

Palestinians signaled on Wednesday that if a right-wing new government takes command in Israel, they will enlist the help of the international community in pursuing their statehood bid and pressing war-crimes action against Israel.

Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator in earlier peace talks with Israel, said it appeared Netanyahu would remain in place as prime minister. On the eve of the election, the Israeli leader declared that there would be no Palestinian statehood while he remained in office.

“It has become clear that Netanyahu, who just said that he is against a Palestinian state and that he plans to increase (Jewish) settlements if elected, will form the next government,” Erekat told the Voice of Palestine radio. “It is very clear that there is no partner in Israel for the peace process.”

Netanyahu wins decisively; Herzog concedes

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s conservative Likud party won a decisive victory in Israel’s elections, preliminary results to be announced Wednesday, putting him on track to forming a rightist governing coalition and an unprecedented fourth term in office.

With 99 percent of the votes counted, Likud had 30 parliamentary seats, compared with 24 for the center-left Zionist Union led by Isaac Herzog.

After testosterone rush of hunting, men’s ‘love hormone’ surges upon return home

From hunting grounds to athletic fields to trading floors, men moving together in packs, and sometimes alone, are typically engaged in what anthropologists term “male status competition.” And their levels of testosterone -- the hallmark hormone of masculinity -- tend to rise accordingly.

But a new study explores the hunting, familial side of men who engage in such primal activities, often to support, feed or bring honor to their families. It finds that side, too, is expressed hormonally, when a man arrives home to his family bearing dinner (or perhaps a paycheck or a trophy).

Indeed, the higher a man’s testosterone has risen in the course of his engagement in traditionally male activity, the more the “love hormone” oxytocin tends to surge upon his arrival home, researchers have found.

The goal is to develop these opportunities in 50 cities, with Miami being one of the first 10 that will launch the program in partnership with the young Men’s Christian Association.

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell has ambitious goals for the initiative, among them are to have 10 million kids playing and learning in the outdoors, one million volunteers across the United States public lands and 100,000 jobs for young people as scientists, park rangers and more across America’s backyard each year.

The event began with opening remarks from Pedro Ramos, superintendent of the Everglades National Park.

Ramos introduced Tomas Regalado, mayor of Miami, who expressed his support to Jewell and the Youth Initiative and his excitement to have Miami participate in an “initiative for the United States’ future” as the first city to publicly announce it.

Following Ramos’ remarks, Jewell performed the official announcement of the program and expressed her desire to be not only in the warm Miami weather, but also in “a city that is surrounded by such natural beauty.”

According to Jewell, from a young age, she has always maintained herself engaged with the outdoors and has visited many of the United States national parks and public spaces, from hiking in the Wichita Mountains during her job in petroleum engineering in Oklahoma, paddling in the Buffalo River in Arkansas, to the exposure of public lands in Seattle as chief executive officer of Recreational Equipment, Inc. and finally as Secretary of the Interior.

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Sally Jewell
United States Department of the Interior

The common thread that runs through all [my jobs] I would say is the love for the outdoors. It has driven where I lived and how I’ve volunteered my job and it has been all of those volunteer experiences that have led me to this job.

According to Jewell, children have become disconnected with nature.

Today, they spend an average of 44 hours a week in front of a screen compared to 30 minutes of playtime in the outdoors. “When adults are telling you what to do all the time, you’re not learning how to be creative…seeing things that you might want to find on your own,” Jewell said, “Most of us grew up with some kind of place—it could be a vacant lot, a little creek—that helped shape our childhood.”

Jewell feels that many children today are missing out on these types of places and that something must be done.

“We need to get more children engaged with nature and the great outdoors because it feeds their soul,” she said.

With an amount of $5 million in funding with American Express, the initiative is already seeking to begin implementing plans with YMCA to have a growing number of children learning and playing outside.

There will be a full-time employee in the YMCA of South Florida who will be coordinating the resources to get kids connected with the public lands.

The Department of the Interior aims to have children feel welcomed in Miami’s public lands, from the Everglades to Biscayne Bay to local parks and natural areas.

[Children] are going to understand what’s happening with the Everglades and why they need to restored. Your children will be chartering a course for [Miami and its public lands] for the future,” Jewell stated. “It is our job to create an environment for these children to truly love and respect the outdoors.”
NERD CULTURE...

Nerd culture is fake
Nerd is the word, and that’s okay

MICHELLE MARCHANTE
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It’s fascinating to see how something that used to be considered nerdish suddenly becomes cool once it hits the mainstream. Look at the term nerd, for instance. When used, it could mean you are really smart, but it’s still used as a degrading and cruel word to bully someone.

However, this word has suddenly become a “cool” phrase.

Celebrities walking around wearing shirts with comments such as, “I Love Nerds” and stating in interviews that they consider themselves nerds is probably the reason for the word’s newfound popularity, leading to stores that target young adults selling shirts with pictures of Hello Kitty wearing glasses with “nerd” sprawled across it or other accessories used as nerd self-identifiers.

If the word nerd suddenly stops meaning well, nerd, people will just invent another word to replace it.

It’s like some secret campaign to stop bullying that hit the mainstream, without people realizing it, under the pretense of a new trend: Nerd Culture.

Instead of avoiding the term, as was done in the past, people claim to be nerds just because they saw the latest sci-fi film or say that they’re nerdy because they read a book.

A campaign against bullying is a great thing, but changing the meaning of a word that is constantly used to bully, in my opinion, will not stop the act of bullying. Maybe this campaign is meant to aid the self-confidence of those who have suffered from or are currently being bullied. The thought behind this unofficial campaign could be that, if you give negative word a new, positive meaning, it will stop being negative – but it doesn’t work like that. If the word nerd suddenly takes on a new connotation, people will just invent another word to replace it. Changing the meaning of words isn’t going to stop bullying. It’s just going to make the bullies have to think and come up with a new cruel word to use.

In fact, this campaign to make “nerd” a positive word might be doing more harm than good. I can imagine that anyone who has been called someone who had been called that in the past. While it gave someone grief, it’s a source of torment for someone else. In my book, that still sounds like bullying if you’re deliberately saying it in front of someone you know has suffered from the name-calling.

Friendly name-calling is fine, when both parties are okay with it and knew what literature meant literally, but if one of the two takes it the wrong way, it becomes bullying.

It seems silly to think that bullying will transcend high school and into university but it doesn’t even translate into the workforce.

Just because someone graduates from high school doesn’t mean they suddenly change their ways. Yes, people change, but it doesn’t happen overnight. Change takes time.

It doesn’t matter if we’re out of high school, it doesn’t matter if you’re now a part of the workforce, if you’re finally graduating into the “real world,” you have to remember that words can still hurt.

Saying you’re an idiot and being one is two completely different things. Bullying will never go away, it doesn’t mean otherwise, but it can be lessened.

People like to think they don’t measure what they see on TV or in movies, but the truth is, sometimes we do – even if we don’t realize it. Instead of trying to change the meaning of words like nerd, maybe the campaign should focus on showing more people standing up to bullies in movies and shows. Some of you may be needed, but I think this idea could work.

Doesn’t hurt to try, right?

SAM SMITH
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I am a nerd.

Because you are reading this, you are probably a nerd. It’s beginning to seem like everyone is a nerd now, and that has the potential to create a wonderful world.

The connotations of words change constantly to match the vernacular, so it isn’t too-surprising that “nerd” means something different today than it did ten years ago – and it doesn’t need to be a bad thing.

Whether it is well-meaning or not, it is more important for the other person’s feelings to be respected than it is for you to feel free to call them whatever you want.

For example, describing someone as “cool” used to be somewhat negative. It described a person as standoffish before evolving into a synonym for mysterious, calm or slick. After that, it took on today’s use as a compliment for someone hip and enjoyable to be around.

The reclaiming of a term to empower an oppressed group is a very common, effective practice. Words like “bitch” and “slut” have been used to insult women for decades, however, many women have begun using them as terms of endearment. Even this, however, is a disproportionate comparison.

When “nerd” was used in the past to bully smart or counter-culture people, it was a result of distaste toward those who they were seen as different, not as a way to discriminate against a person for variances in their genetic makeup they have no control over.

That said, it is important to note the fact that some people will never be comfortable with certain terms. Understand and follow people’s desires, should they ask you not to call them something. Whether it is well-meaning on your part or not, it is more important for the other person’s feelings to be respected than it is for you to feel free to call them whatever you want. This applies to all aspects of social interaction – not just the word “nerd.”

When something nerdy hits the mainstream, nerds should rejoice. Be happy for the people who created something that became successful because they poured their hearts and souls into a project.

Keeping something to an esoteric few simply because it’s a part of “Nerd Culture” is elitist and against the very values that comprise the movement.

Nerds are supposed to be welcoming to one another, not trying to test whether or not a person is a “true fan.” They are a group created as a result of a level of societal exclusion.

Instead of scaring off potential friends by saying a person doesn’t meet a certain level of nerdiness, as nerds once did not meet a certain level of popularity, why not let someone call themselves a nerd if they like aspects of the culture? It only creates more people to have something in common with.

Being called a nerd in a new light should not be viewed as a dismissal of those who were bullied in the past, but as an acceptance of oneself.

The mainstream use of “nerd” isn’t a clandestine anti-bullying campaign, but an example of the natural evolution of society into a more accepting whole.

To unapologetically and passionately enjoy something, as nerds do, is a beautiful thing, and I think that people are coming to realize that by reimagining the meaning of the word.

FRANK AND IRENE:
The News (is scary)

SEND US YOUR LETTERS
Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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Study abroad is a big chance for self-discovery

Drinking beer in between classes at Fresh Foods—one can only dream.

That’s why I left Miami and decided to fly across the Atlantic to the city of Barcelona and study abroad here for a year, where I am fortunate enough to regularly drink beer in between classes.

But this way of life has had its implications, nonetheless. I am occasionally accidentally groped in the mornings on the subway, I have accidentally groped in the front door with a smile for no apparent reason.

It’s been about seeing life in a different light and walking out the door with a smile for no apparent reason.

Alcohol wasn’t really my only motive in leaving; after nearly twenty years of Miami, I had been dying to get out of the peninsula and I knew this much-needed break was going to greatly impact my work experience in Barcelona.

Despite these miniscule financial losses, I have gained not just a great deal of weight but a great deal of life experience by getting as far as way from home possible.

I’ve been pickpocketed twice and the bakery next to my building is responsible for the twelve pounds I’ve put on over the course of six months. It can’t be all fun and games when you’re a Miamian studying abroad in Barcelona.

It’s been about accepting the opposing perspectives.

The new change is expected to bring about confusion and right for 836.

However, the Escola Massana and Barcelona has allowed me to embrace myself by embracing me.

A group of Spaniards from the school have inducted me into their group and, to date, we’ve travelled to Rome together, played a “truth-or-dare” that involved a great deal of strip-teasing, sent pictures of each other’s feet to each other, made art together and have shared a beer during our lunch break at the coffee shop across the street from school.

We accept each other and our unusual mannerisms; Adelaida’s objection to hair removal, Mamo’s battle with addiction to marijuana and negativity, Raül’s benevolent innocence and monkey-like tendencies to climb trees, Judit’s apparent asexuality and me for a hair that’s neither brown, or green, or blue, or purple or blonde.

Going abroad, for me, has been far more than being of legal drinking age, living in a cool European city and “carpe diem.”

It’s been about becoming comfortable in my own skin, detaching from the labels of my nationality and gender, about exchanging anecdotes with the old woman next to me on the subway, about hearing the sounds of the streets below me and the rhythm of my neighbors life through these thin apartment walls, about understanding cultural differences and about accepting the opposing perspective.

It’s been about seeing life in a different light and walking out the front door with a smile for no apparent reason.

About sharing this story with you and encouraging you to take the next flight out of Miami, so you too can enjoy that beer as you walk to class.

Izvel Basualdo attends two different schools in Barcelona, the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona and the Escola Massana, a school exclusively for art and design. Basualdo is double majoring in journalism and fine arts, with a minor in art history. She writes weekly columns for The Beacon about her experiences and encounters abroad.

Traffic jam to be expected for Sunday, March 22 near MMC

On Sunday, March 22, the traffic pattern for state roads 826 and 836—the Palmetto and Dolphin expressways, respectively—will shift. Westbound State Road 836 will close late Saturday and will reopen at 6 a.m. on Sunday in order to affect the least amount of traffic.

The changes concern a switch in the lanes; instead of using the left two lanes of the Dolphin Expressway to exit into 826 North or South, traffic will use the right lanes. For traffic that continues west on 836, it will use the left three lanes instead of the three right lanes the expressway is currently using.

This $560 million project—which is funded in part by federal stimulus money—began in 2009 and is expected to finish by March 2016. There have been several previous shifts in the lanes for state roads 826 and 836. In early 2014, the Palmetto and Dolphin expressways were set into the lanes that are currently in place: left for 826 and right for 836.

The new change is expected to bring about confusion for people that tend to traffic these expressways. The 2014 shift increased congestion at the 826-836 intersection, causing many people to arrive late to work, school and other activities. Drivers should expect the same result this year starting Sunday.

However, Oscar Gonzalez, spokesperson for this project, stated that it usually takes drivers only about a week to adjust.

The shift of the lanes will take place after the exit ramp for Northwest 72nd Avenue.

Florida International University President Mark B. Rosenberg accepted Miami Symphony Orchestra’s second annual “Golden Baton” recognition award during Spring break at the Knight Concert Hall at the Adrienne Arsht Center. See the symphony perform at the FIU Werthman Performing Arts Center, at 6 p.m., April 11.

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Big K.R.I.T.’s “Pay Attention Tour” Hits LMNT

Mississippi artist, Big K.R.I.T. has recently felt the need to prove his worth since his latest release “Cadillactica” dropped November of 2014. Besides being labeled as one of the victims of Kendrick Lamar’s unclogging “Control” verse, K.R.I.T even stated on “Mt. Olympus,” that the odds aren’t in his favor in regards to being considered the best lyricist in hip-hop because of his southern background.

With that being said, K.R.I.T.’s “Pay Attention Tour”? (named after his second album) hit LMNT in Wynwood this past Saturday (March 13, 2014) and much like its title, proved he’s not the one to sleep on, but rather to “Pay Attention” to. The concert hit a bit of a rough start as Texas group Crit Life, who besides having a similar name as the headliner, actually had the crowd on the opposite side of the spectrum.

During their opening performance, the group was met with locals heckling throughout the crowd, which then led to an affiliate of the band throwing water at the hecklers. Usually performers throw water into the crowd as their energy picks up but in this case, it was more of a taunt, which led to the individual playing concert vigilante—going into the crowd himself looking for the perpetrator, inciting a brawl at the front of the stage. Security handled the scuffle swiftly, but the vibe of the crowd was pretty distraught. To little surprise, DJ Dibiase took to the stage to set up, instantly shifting the overall tone of the venue. Krizzle ran up on the stage, exuding pure adrenaline and performed his high tempo mixtape cut “King Without A Crown”. After the song, K.R.I.T. revealed to the crowd that he has not performed in Dade County since 2012. With that being said, he promised to give his fans a memorable performance and he would not let them down.

With much disdain, I felt as if K.R.I.T. was going to only perform songs off his latest release, “Cadillactica,” but to my surprise, he performed tracks off both studio albums as well as several of his mixtapes. This led me to the realization that 28-year-old K.R.I.T has a stronger, more extensive discography than most of his peers.

While performing “Only One” off the mixtape “King Remembered In Time,” K.R.I.T. surprised the crowd by bringing out frequent collaborator Smoke DZA. Soon after while performing the title track of the tour, K.R.I.T. brought out Rico Love to serenade the crowd during “Pay Attention.”

Late in his set, K.R.I.T. ran off stage and out to an alley outside the venue briefly. He returned to the stage to announce to the crowd that LMNT management had received noise complaints and that his set was to be cut short. In order to soothe the crowd, K.R.I.T. performed an ode to his deceased grandmother with “The Vent,” a soulful cut off the “Return of 4Eva” mixtape, before ultimately finishing the show with the powerful track “Mt. Olympus,” where he solidifies his place as a top-tier artist in hip-hop.
**JACOB SPIWAK** Staff Writer jacob.spiwak@fiusm.com

The favorite season for the FIU swimming and diving team became even more incredible over Spring break, as swimmers Chase Harris and Jess Chadwick saved a drowning girl’s life in North Palm Beach.

Chadwick being “deadly afraid of open water” after getting stung by a jellyfish prior to the 2013-14 season, she swam to the woman and was able to rescue her.

“She was drowning,” Chadwick said, “but I just told her to hold onto my foot and I just swam as fast as I could to shore and pulled her out.”

Unfortunately, despite the amazing display of instinct and heroism by Harris and Chadwick, some tragedy struck as well. Twenty-one-year-old Dario Williams, the rescued woman’s cousin, was the other person stuck in the rip current.

Harris was fighting off the currents attempting to reach Williams, but she was unable to reach him in time.

“Like, I was 5 feet from the man,” Harris said. “A wave hit and he was under and never popped back up. I swam and swam and swam.”

A fisherman spotted Williams’ body in the water a day later, after a previous search had been unsuccessful.

The death of Williams is terribly unfortunate, but the fact that Harris and Chadwick heroically swam into the water and saved a life can’t be overemphasized or forgotten.

If it wasn’t for the two Division I swimmers and their bravery, two lives would have been lost that day.

Although the heroic efforts of Harris and Chadwick and the extremely unfortunate loss of Dario Williams are the real important stories here, it is worth noting that two of their teammates are going to be competing in the NCAA Tournament this weekend.

**FIU swimmers save life of a drowning woman**

**PETER HOLLAND** Contributing Writer sports@fiusm.com

It’s not easy to give up playing your favorite sport, especially when you played it at a young age. Baseball may come to mind when you think about the sport you played in your livelihoods. And that’s how the FIU Club Baseball started. It is currently led by Gustavo Garcia, a sophomore meteorology major, who is the current president and plays in-field.

“We all love the sport, we’ve been playing it since it was a big part of our lives, so it’s not easy to let it go, so we decided to keep it going because we want to get together, have fun and do something that we all been doing in our entire lives,” said Garcia, who played baseball since he was four years old.

Even though FIU does have a collegiate baseball team at a Division-I level, trying out to get a roster spot was slim to none.

“We all tried to walk-on, but they got great players over there. The roster spots would be filled up before we get a chance to try out,” Garcia said. “We’ve all dreamed that we could play at the collegiate level, but this is the best thing we can do right now, we just added three more pitchers to the roster” he said.

Guys like David Weiss, the club’s outfielder and star slugger got the opportunity to try out for the FIU Baseball team, but didn’t make the cut.

Even though it’s only a club, competition remains the same. Its still on a Division I level as a club sport. The team is part of the National Club Baseball Association (NCBA) and are playing in the South Atlantic-South Conference, where they play against teams like UCF, UM, FSU, and Florida Tech.

“We all love the sport, we’ve been playing it since it was a big part of our lives, so it’s not easy to let it go, so we decided to keep it going.”

**Future true freshman is a stone cold kicker**

**PETER HOLLAND** Contributing Writer sports@fiusm.com

As the FIU football team is having their spring practice with their returning players and early enrollees, some up and coming true freshmen have to wait until the fall camp to practice with the team.

There is one true freshman who won’t be participating in the spring, but will make an immediate impact this coming season. His name is Stone Wilson, the kicker from Kokomos, Florida. That’s right, I said kicker.

Stone Wilson at 5’11” 170 pounds was a standout/kicker punter at the IMG Academy, a football powerhouse and private school located in Bradenton, Florida, where it is home to elite talented athletes and future NFL prospects. The school produces NFL players like Cam Newton from the Carolina Panthers and Super Bowl winning QB Russell Wilson from the Seattle Seahawks; Just to name a few. Wilson finished his high school career without missing one field goal attempt. According to FIU Sports.com, he was 22-22 in field goal attempts, a net punting average of 40 yards, three came inside the 20 yard line and one inside the ten.

He also had 51 kickoffs that result into touchbacks and a 74 percent touchback rate.

He helped lead his team to a 10-1 record and finished the season ranked number 16 in the nation. Wilson was also second team All-Area selection and Kobebie Fab50 rated him as the number 5 ranked punter and 31 ranked kicker in the country.

According to Kohl’s Kicking, they listed this specialist as the number 14 ranked punter and number 66 ranked kicker in the country. There were high praises by Head Coach Ron Turner and Special Teams Coach Billy Miller.

“I believe with his versatility and strong leg, he will have the opportunity to compete in multiple positions on special teams this coming fall. He will have to compete with returning and incumbent starter Austin Taylor, who will be a junior this fall and finished last season 15-21 in field goal attempts.

I expect Wilson to contribute and help improve FIU special teams, whether on kickoff, field goal attempts, extra points or punting; He can do it all at a high level. First game is at UCF and special teams will be critical, but I expect good ole Stone to get the job done.

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SOFTBALL

Softball extends winning streak, sweep River Hawks

The FIU softball team (20-11, 3-3 C-USA) swept the UMass Lowell River Hawks in a doubleheader on Tuesday, improving their win streak to three.

In the first game of two, sophomore Rachael Dwyer (2-0) threw her second complete game this season striking out a career-high four batters. She only allowed three hits and one run in the six innings out in the circle.

The Panthers offense dominated in the third inning with seven runs including senior Krystal Garcia’s home run and junior Alejma Lopez’s two RBI double.

Sophomore Stephanie Teixeira, junior Dominique Grossman, freshman Ashley Belans and Lopez all recorded two hits to combine for the nine runs scored.

Sophomore Sammi Green made her first collegiate start at second base and started a 4-6-3 inning-ending double play to get the Panthers out of the top of the first.

FIU made some great defensive plays in the second inning as Dwyer caught a sharp line drive up the middle and Grossman caught a fly ball steps before running into the right field wall.

Panthers softball players congratulate infield/catcher Krystal Garcia after she hits a homerun. The Panthers scored 9 runs in the first game of the day on Tuesday, March 17.

The Panthers offense continued in the second game, scoring 3 runs in the first inning after Garcia hit her second home run of the day, a two-run shot over the center field wall.

Junior Corrine Jenkins (12-5) started the second game and got her second shutout this season which moved her into a tied position for fourth all-time in FIU history. She pitched all seven innings tallying a season-high nine strikeouts.

The first run scored in the second game was one to be remembered.

With one away, Belans hit a double down the left field line and advanced to third on Sanchez’s sacrifice hit.

Then the River Hawks intentionally walked Teixeira to put the runners in the corners. Teixeira then distracted UMass Lowell in a rundown while Belans snuck across the plate to score.

The Panthers took the game 3-0. Conference USA action will return on Saturday, March 21, at 4 pm in the Felsberg Field at FIU as the Panthers softball team takes on North Texas.

Rule changes possible but very unlikely for NFL

With NFL administrative meetings coming up next week, it is time again for possible rule changes. These meetings, which have executives and coaches from each of the 32 NFL franchises come together, are where rules such as the “Tuck Rule” were born.

A week out at the 25 possible rule changes, with some of them proposed by different teams, have their high points, their low points and their insane points.

A few of the lower points for me—meaning the ones that I do not believe will be passed, include rules proposed by the Detroit Lions and the New England Patriots, as well as a change to a bylaw.

The Lions’ proposed rule change would make every penalty need to be reviewed by the booth officials. This makes sense for them to propose seeing as they were the No. 4 most penalized team in the league for 2014 and maybe a review would have given some of those back. However, that would increase the game time by a lot and will more than likely not be passed by the voters.

The Patriots were again active, as they are yearly, in prospective rule changes. One of their proposed changes is one that has been on the table for years and never passed, but it is a long shot to make it this year as well. It also effects the media. It would be that cameras are placed by certain points on the sidelines and on the goal posts in stead of being brought in by each media network. I don’t see why this would need to be changed as of now but who knows, maybe someone will vote yes this time.

The bylaw that has a proposed change is the strangest one to me. It suggest that instead of having the point in the middle of the summer where teams must cut down from 90 to 75 players that it simply goes all summer to when each team must simply cut down to 53 by the end of the summer before the regular season begins.

This to me is a joke.

That will not give any of the cut players a good chance on making it on to another team’s roster.

There are two of the rules that I really see as high points, or what I believe will be passed.

These changes come from the Chicago Bears and the Patriots.

The Bears’ suggestion should be passed. It states that each team should be granted at least one possession a piece in overtime.

This would change it from where the first team to get the ball scores, the automatically win to where both teams would have the right to try. That only makes sense for a fair game to be played.

The proposed rule by the Patriots that I believe will pass is one that states that the ban on challenges during the final two minutes of the halves and over time be removed, so that they may occur.

I do not see why this ban would be in place and completely agree that the ban should not be in place.

Now to the insane point.

This one is from the Indianapolis Colts, where former FIU star wide receiver T.Y. Hilton now plays.

This rule change would make a 9-point series be possible.

No, you didn’t read that wrong. Nine points in one series.

They propose that if a team scores a touchdown and successfully goes for two points, that they be given the option to kick a field goal from 50 yards out for another single point.

That is insane to me. However, I can see some merit to this. It is not a usual thing for a team to miss a field goal from where it is set up currently and a 2-point conversion is definitely more exciting. This would add a bit of flare to the point-after-touchdown time.

If this passes, I will be a fan of it. If it doesn’t, I would still love to see this be a possibility in the annual Pro Bowl to see how it would go, and maybe put it back on the table in 2016.

In the end though, I am going to doubt that even a quarter of the prospective rule changes will occur. So many things of these changes are brought up every year but stay the same.

However, from a fan’s perspective, some of these proposed changes might make the games even more enjoyable.
University to commemorate new Royal Caribbean facility

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The University will formally open the new Royal Caribbean facility, located at the Biscayne Bay Campus, in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, March 20. FIU commemorates the recent partnership with Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. and the completion of the Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Entertainment Production Studio.

The University signed a deal with the Miami-based cruise line to build their entertainment studio on campus grounds in December 2013, and the building opened for business last January. “The deal aligns with the University’s strategic commitment to the arts and to build win-win public-private partnerships, according to President Mark B. Rosenberg.”

Royal Caribbean considers South Florida home, and what better way to give back to the community than to be able to enrich the education of FIU students.

Richard Fain  
Chairman & CEO  
Royal Caribbean

Collaborative, a program offering hospitality and architecture University students exclusive access to these facilities via research and internship opportunities. At least 20 students of the Chapman School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and College of Architecture and the Arts receive paid part-time internships this summer at the new facility.

Felix said the partnership is a good opportunity for hospitality and CARTA students because it will help them gain experience. They will also have access to RCL’s proprietary data for their research.

“Hospitality internships will include hands-on experience in operations and management,” said President Mark B. Rosenberg in an email about the ceremony. According to Rosenberg, arts internships will include music, theater and visual arts — from stage management, lighting and design to auditions, promotion, rehearsals and final production.

“Hospitality internships will include hands-on experience in operations and management,” said President Mark B. Rosenberg in an email about the ceremony. According to Rosenberg, arts internships will include music, theater and visual arts — from stage management, lighting and design to auditions, promotion, rehearsals and final production. “I think it’s going to be everyone’s first time for the most part,” said Jazmin Felix, Student Government Association president at BBC, on entering the building.

The three-story, state-of-the art entertainment studio has a 300-seat theater, 20,000-square-foot costume facility and 10 other rehearsal studios. Part of the deal includes ROYAL@FIU World Stage and a 20,000-square-foot costume facility.

There will also be a SJMC Awards Ceremony where recipients will be awarded with different recognitions and scholarships.

Jessica Figueras, a senior public relations major and FIU Public Relations Society of America Membership Director, has been nominated for an Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award. In 2013 she transferred from Broward Community College and has been heavily involved as a public relations intern for the BBC Office of the Vice President.

“I basically learned as much as I could in terms of leadership experiences, professional and networking skills,” said Figueras. To finish, the Society of Professional Journalists will host an all-day conference with panel discussions and break-out sessions Friday.

Saturday, there will be a technology conference at BarCamp Miami in Wynnwood’s Miami Ad School where people show up and pitch innovative ideas. It is entirely sponsored by the SMIC in collaboration with Hacks/Hackers, the Knight Foundation and the Fourth Estate.

“Companies are looking for individuals who cannot only stay at the cutting edge, but can also understand where things are going,” Tucker said.

“You need to have that mentality of being able to look beyond the horizons and innovate yourself and become a leader in these changes.”