Low vaccination rate leaves South Florida at risk

AMIN COLOMINAS
Staff Writer
amin.colominas@fiusm.com

Measles, once declared eradicated in the United States in 2000, has since been found in more than 30 states in the past year alone.

An increasingly alarming issue facing Miami-Dade county is the lowered rates of vaccinations for children, which may pave the way for highly contagious diseases, such as measles, to emerge once again in our society.

This phenomena has become one more worrying for experts, citing parents refusing to vaccinate their children as a possible cause.

There are currently three acceptable exemptions in the state of Florida upon which parents can refuse to vaccinate their children.

Students can be granted a medical exemption if they are currently in the process of being vaccinated but have not completed all the required shots.

Lastly, parents can opt for a religious exemption to vaccination, given to students transferring schools.

Measles, once declared eradicated in the United States in 2000, has since been found in more than 30 states in the past year alone.

Nestled between Jacksonville and Tallahassee, Columbia County carries the lowest rate of families claiming a religious exemption to vaccinations at more than six percent.

In 2013, Miami-Dade County maintained only a 92 percent rate of vaccination, falling just short of the Florida Department of Health’s desired 95 percent. Shockingly, this still places Miami-Dade county among the bottom ten for vaccinations—Okaloosa County at the very bottom with a mere 87 percent.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools spokesperson Daisy Gonzalez-Diego issued a statement regarding the vaccination rate.

“The district is at a solid vaccination rate, but we will continue to stress to parents and the healthcare community the importance of vaccinations so that all our students are properly immunized prior to beginning their school year.”

It seems, Florida, and specifically Miami-Dade county, are at heightened risk.

Roughly 2,500 children entered the County’s school system last year unvaccinated.

South Florida remains particularly susceptible to a possible disease outbreak, given its large and constant transit of both immigrants and tourists coming from other countries that have low rates of vaccination.

Students shared their thoughts.

Gabriel Delgado, freshman biology major, understands the concerns some parents may have.

“Even though I personally completely agree with getting vaccinated, I can at least understand why some parents might not immunize their kids,” he said. “It’s their choice to do the best for their children, and in their eyes it just isn’t worth it. Some may think the vaccines don’t do anything, and others might think its just some pharmaceutical company trying to make a profit just because they’ve never heard of measles.”

Delgado also referenced the fear some parents harbor regarding the potential risk of their children developing autism if they happen to get vaccinated.

“In our society, many parents refuse to vaccinate their children, and in their eyes it just isn’t worth it. Some may think the vaccines don’t do anything, and others might think its just some pharmaceutical company trying to make a profit just because they’ve never heard of measles.”

Aileen Marty, director of the FIU Health Travel Medicine Program and Vaccine Clinic and professor of infectious diseases at the University’s Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, has taken a public stand against these types of mentalities.

“The benefits far outweigh the risks,” Marty said. “I know people have individual rights, but unfortunately there’s an awful lot of bad information about these vaccines out there, and people are not thinking about the fact that one out of every five kids is going to have a complication from the measles.”

Denis Rousseau, Mar Main, Silvia Ayuso and Karen Cabalero, all journalists who have covered news in Cuba, discuss their experiences at the “Covering Cuba from Within: Journalists’ Perspectives” panel discussion on Friday, March 27.

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Al-Qaida affiliate seizes major city in northern Syria

In a major setback for Syrian President Bashar Assad, al-Qaida’s affiliate in Syria and forces from four other Islamist groups captured the city of Idlib in its third day, the United Nations said on Saturday.

Videos posted on the Internet showed fighters carrying the Nusra Front’s black flag destroying statues and portraits of Assad in Idlib’s main squares and its government buildings, including the Bath party headquarters and the headquarters of military intelligence.

Anti-government activists said the Islamists killed at least 50 government soldiers in the fighting, but that most of the government’s troops had fled the al-Mastuma camp about 10 miles south of Idlib and to the nearby city of Ariha, both of which remain in government hands. The Islamists also seized at least six tanks from government forces.

The UN staff, about 140 people, left in three planes bound for Aden, the Yemeni capital, sources said. Just after midnight, Jamal Benomar, the Moroccan who is the U.N.’s special envoy to Yemen, made one last effort to broker a settlement, contacting the parties to Yemen’s fighting and inviting them to join him on his flight out. All agreed except the Iranian-backed Houthis rebels, whose capture of Sanaa and march toward Aden had alarmed the Saudis.

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

UN pulls out of Yemen, ending hope for brokered peace

With Saudi Arabia’s bombing campaign in its third day, the United Nations on Saturday withdrew its remaining personnel from Yemen’s capital, dashing whatever hope remained that the fighting would stop and U.N.-sponsored peace talks would resume.

The UN staff, about 140 people, left in three planes bound for Aden, the city of Abyan in the south of Yemen. There were also sea evacuations of foreign personnel from the ports of Aden and Hodeidah and from Aden, U.N. sources said.

Panel to explore complex Venezuela-Cuba alliance

This is especially true in the instance of the Cuban-Venezuelan alliance that has developed significantly over the last ten years. Miami alone has the largest demographic of Cubans outside of Cuba in the world. In addition, the largest concentration of Venezuelans in the United States is in South Florida, particularly in the suburbs of Doral and Weston, with over 100,000 people residing in the state.

This discussion is intended to explore the complexities of the relationship between the two countries that also heavily influence the geopolitical sphere in our state today.

The University’s Cuban Research Institute will be hosting a panel discussion on the political and economic relationship between Cuba and Venezuela.

A Special Relationship: The Political & Economic Links between Cuba and Venezuela, in the Cuban Research Institute is partnering with the Latin American and Caribbean Center to make an in-depth analysis on the various components that make up the complicated Cuban-Venezuelan alliance.

Both University departments often work together to coordinate events, considering that their targets of research oftentimes overlap. When discussing the paradigms between related countries, one of the topics deals with how Cuba has deployed thousands of doctors in order to provide medical assistance to the Venezuelan government and its people. A keynote of the discussion is that both countries have cemented their relationship and how it is an interdependent and mutually beneficial affiliation for both governments. Students were asked to offer their thoughts on the discussion.

Some expressed enthusiasm and excitement for the event.

“It’s great, in my opinion, that the University is hosting the panel,” said Kristal Perez-Rocha, a senior international relations major. “The topic fits the environment of FIU, since there’s such a huge Cuban influence, and nowadays you can’t really talk about Cuba without talking about Venezuela.”

Others shared a similar sentiment.

“Well, I would go if I could,” said Andres Roçabado, a freshman psychology major. “I like these sorts of talks, and the affiliation. The legal infrastructures of both Venezuela and Cuba have been closely entwined since the political and economic affiliations between Chavez and Fidel Castro. These relations have extended unto their successors, Nicolas Maduro and Raul Castro.

In addition, Carlos Antonio, a Venezuelan political scientist, will discuss the domestic reception of the Venezuelan people to the Cuban aid. His discussion will encompass a personable piece that will explore how Venezuelans perceive the Cuban alliance within the country.

Although the event will be free and open to the public, it requires legal issues will also be discussed. Manuel A. Gomez, a professor of law, will lead a panel on the legal and political implications of the environment of FIU, since there’s such a huge Cuban influence, and nowadays you can’t really talk about Cuba without talking about Venezuela.”

“Panel to explore complex Venezuela-Cuba alliance

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Freedom of speech is not freedom from consequence

JOSHUA CORVINGTON
Staff Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

Free Speech has often been manipulated to hide bigotry under the guise of protecting oneself against censorship, especially in political arguments, debates on websites and even among common people.

The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States lays out the basic freedoms granted to people living here that Congress cannot infringe upon: press, religion, assembly, petition of grievances and speech. This includes both written words and symbolic gestures.

Free Speech, however, hasn’t always been a guaranteed right for anyone to say anything that crosses their minds. It’s quite a surprise, then, that the “anti-censorship” defense continues to occur within political and social debate over the Internet and in real life.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, when the 14th Amendment to the Constitution was added due process to the states, the Supreme Court started applying most of the original Bill of Rights to state governments - most notably since the 1920s.

There have been plenty of court cases since regarding the issue of speech. They stretch as far back as 1943 with West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette, which ruled that students were not to be forced to salute the flag or recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Rights covered under the First Amendment according to uscourts.gov, include students wearing black armbands to protest a war at school, advertising commercial products and professional services, engaging in symbolic speech (e.g. burning the flag in protest), contributing to political campaigns and using certain offensive words and phrases to convey political messages among a host of others.

The list of expressions or types of speech that aren’t protected also varies. According to the First Amendment Center, the main categories of unprotected speech are inciting imminent or lawless action, defamation - which is illegal only if factually false - obscenity, child pornography, fighting words and threats.

Hate speech is a bit of a gray area, it is protected from federal government action, as long as it doesn’t spark hate crimes and threats aren’t involved. Employers can, however, fire employees who disrupt the environment, students can be disciplined for vulgarity and hate speech generally isn’t tolerated on websites, places of work and government institutions. The First Amendment may protect the right to speech, but does not shield anyone from criticism or punishment.

The core of the “free speech” defense is that people should be able to say what they wish, however they wish, heedless of people around them.

This defense, often heard on the Internet or in political venues, is apparently designed to protect against an Orwellian society where everything is controlled and manipulated by the government via the “political correctness thought police.”

This defense completely neglects the fact that people are not entitled to be agreed with, heard, replied to or taken seriously; people have to watch what they say and how they say it in the "real world" because there are consequences.

The Internet is still relatively new, but most websites have ethics policies that lay out what cannot be said or done using their service. Harassment, any form of discrimination or death threats are banned according to many Terms of Service agreements that most people skim over.

Three political parties are vying for seats in this year’s Student Government Association. In 1978, Maida Crane resigned from the FIU Student Government Association due to her involvement in her personal life.

One of the major forces FYYOU holds its candidates running for the different seats compared to any of the other parties. The party is looking to hold is Alexis Calatayud’s, as she is running again to hold her current seat as SGA president along with current Vice President Tiffany Roman-Biffa.

Calatayud’s campaign platform includes supporting FIU expansion, enhancing off-campus study space, expanding financial aid, improving career readiness and entrepreneurship opportunities and implementing a university-wide strategic plan with a student focus.

What sets Calatayud apart from her opponents, Stefan Bahad and Kristen Nyman, the presidential and vice presidential candidates of the FIUnite party, is her experience in efforts to expand Bright Futures scholarships to summer courses, which Calatayud says is a “vital concern at the state level.”

With their focus on the mechanisms to bump FIU higher on the state’s funding list, it’s easy to question how well she will spend time focusing on matters within campus instead of FIU on the larger scale. Whether or not FYYOU will hold majority of seats might also determine how well decisions will be passed within SGA to help propel FIU to the next level.

The Union of Florida International University, also known as FIUnite, poses the second largest number of candidates running for different seats. FIUnite was founded in 2012 by example and transparency, by hosting office hours for any student to come and speak about issues, regardless if it’s a big concern or a small one.

Chief Deputy of Elections Committee Kenji Martinez, a sophomore studying biology, is working to make sure this year’s elections run smoothly.

“Other advisor has been testing the voting on an iPad to make sure everything goes smoothly during elections,” Martinez said.

In order to avoid voters fraud this election, Martinez said there will only be certain spots available to vote – the GC computer lab, the library breezeway and a voting poll at the engineering campuses.

Whether or not the different locations will suffice in preventing voting fraud is uncertain, and can still interrupt the integrity of the entire voting system.
Women Who Lead conference promotes anti-rape culture at FIU

Shannon Miller was introduced as the keynote speaker during FIU’s ninth annual Women Who Lead conference. The seven-time Olympic medalist is well-known for her success in winning 49 National competitions and 59 International medals. Due to her accomplishments such as starting her business in marketing and entrepreneurship, advocating women’s health and battling against a rare form of ovarian cancer and winning she has endured in the fight of women in leadership.

During her appearance she shared the importance of motivation in leadership. She talked about subjects such as handling adversity in a positive manner.

“It’s about the attitude and mindset in winning every day,” Miller said.

“The Gold Medal Mindset,” as she calls it composed of four simple tasks: have goals, stay motivated, be positive and remain consistent.

Her career as a gymnast accentuated an example of overcoming obstacles people face when putting up with a fight.

The schedule of events opened with two concurrent sessions. The panels revolved on the 21st century self-image of women as well as discussing raising sexual awareness towards women in need.

Because of the high statistics of students who are at risk for sexual assault, the Victim Empowerment Program has been enabled to provide help for women in the At Risk Center located on campus.

The goal for these programs is about seeking volunteering opportunities to advance help towards women dealing with post-traumatic disorders or depression due to rape, sexual harassment and assault.

Since many universities have not gathered programs like these available, the Women’s Center has held these resources amongst students dealing with these serious issues.

It had not been known to many that 1 out of 350 women in college experience actual sexual violence.

Now, with the aid of the school’s facilities, FIU embraces the responsibility of keeping cases confidential or not depending on the decision of the victim.

The main goal is about enabling help in which the victims can confide in order to keep the university environment free of sexual conduct and harassment.

Aside from the program proving that women have a role in avoiding sexual violence it also tells us that men are taught not to rape and to respect women as well as men who are also rape victims. The ethical principle behind this is that it is more than a matter of obeying the law but condoning it as the right thing to do.

Some pressing tips the conference left to students are: If you see something, say something; never ask victim assaulting “why” type of questions; when put in a vulnerable situation of sexual harassment flee, do not resist, and scream; and lastly, do not simply report to the records, but also maintain the wholeness of the victim.
‘A Darker Shade of Magic:’ a page turner

MARIA GIL

‘A Darker Shade of Magic’ by V.E. Schwab stole my heart.

The story follows a guy named Kell who is a rare traveler-magician with the ability to jump between parallel Londons in different universes connected by one magical city.

Schwab creates four different Londons: Gray London, Red London, White London, and Black London; each one very different from the others.

Gray London is our London, a London without magic.

Red London is Kell’s London, a London flowing with magic.

White London is a London that is dying and losing its magic.

Black London is a London that was destroyed many centuries ago.

Kell is a red traveler and he carries messages back and forth from the different London royals.

On the side, Kell is smuggling tems back and forth between different Londons for people who are curious and want to see a glimpse of another London that they will never be able to travel to.

During one of these travels, Kell finds himself in a bit of trouble when he finds out an item he is smuggling is dangerous.

He runs into Lila Bard who is a thief and a cross-dressing pirate. After she robs him and then saves him, they then join forces on an epic adventure the parallel universes.

It is a complicated story because of its multiple story lines that are occurring all at once. There is Kell and Lila’s adventure, the mystery of Black London, as well as the villain’s plot to bring chaos to all three realms of London.

Schwab does a fantastic job when it comes to writing. As you pick up different details about each London throughout the story you’re able to visualize what they might look like.

My favorite London is Red London. where life and magic are revered and where Kell was raised alongside Rhys Maresh, the flirtatious heir to the flourishing magical empire.

Schwab is able to roll the plot in such a striking way that all the plot twists blew my mind.

Schwab was able to let the reader fall into the story and truly feel like you’re the one in this journey with Kell and Lila as she builds a brand new world that we used to be familiar with.

Through a third person narration and keen eye to detail in her descriptions, Schwab makes it seem that you are part of the team. You are using blood magic and holding on to Kell’s jacket as you pass through the portal to a different London. You are crossdressing alongside Lila in order to rescue Kell.

The pacing of the story at the beginning may seem a bit slow, but it’s worth it to keep on reading. You have to allow Schwab take the time be able to build up this world and suck you in.

It’s about the 50-page mark when you will be hooked and you will not be able to detach your eyes from the words that are imprinted on the white pages.

The plot was dark and mysterious, a lot darker than I expected it to be.

There is action, violence, blood, gore and murders in a world that is suppose to be happy and magical. You will feel utter fear run through your veins in certain moments of the story as you pray for the safety of the characters while they fight to survive.

Schwab was able to roll the plot in such a striking way that all the plot twists blow my mind.

My heart was beating so fast it felt like it was exploding through my chest because of the intensity of the story. For example, when my favorite character got severely injured I had to stop and calm down.

With 4.3 stars on Goodreads, A Darker Shade of Magic is a book you must run to the library and find immediately so you can follow the thrilling journey with Kell and Lila.

“Turn the Page is a sporadic column where our Life Writers turn the page on a new top selling book and critique it.”

life@fiusm.com
Panthers’ take series over Marshall

ALEJANDRO AGUIRRE
Asst. Sports Director
alejandro.aguirre@fiusm.com

No team likes to be in the bottom of the standings. That’s where FIU was headed if it didn’t win this series against Marshall.

Instead, they were able to gather timely hits and good pitching to end up exactly in the middle of the pack of the Conference USA standings.

FIU was able to take two out of three games over the Thundering Herd who are now in second to last place after losing the series.

On the three game series senior outfielder Brian Portelli had a bases-clearing double which broke open the game.

The Panthers lead 3-1 in the top of the sixth inning before Portelli blasted a three-run double into the left-center field gap to extend FIU’s lead to 6-1.

After this hit, the Panthers never looked back to take game one easily 7-4. Portelli lead the offense that game providing four RBIs.

His 22 RBI on the season are second on the team to Edwin Rios, who has 23 RBI.

Game two ended on a sour note for the Panthers as they didn’t expect that type of ending to a game that could have been won easily. Marshall was able to have a come from behind victory in their last at bats in the bottom of the ninth inning.

After getting the first two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning, FIU closer Danny Dopico walked a Marshall hitter and the next batter followed with a double before Dundon’s game-winning hit.

This was a rare thing to see for Panther fans because Dopico has been a consistent and solid closer all season but unfortunately they weren’t able to hold the lead and lost 5-4.

In the series finale, FIU pitching dominated the game and was able to silence Marshall’s bats. Sophomore Chris Mourelle led the charge as he only gave up four hits in eight and one thirds innings pitched.

Mourelle was pitching a shutout into the ninth inning before the Thundering Herd mustered up their only run off the right-hander.

Mourelle got his fifth win of the season by allowing only six hits, one run, two walks and striking out five batters.

Jack Schaaf started the offense for the Panthers in the top of the fifth inning.

Rey Perez led off the ninth inning with a walk and was brought in to score when Schaaf flied a double into the left field corner.

Edwin Rios added an insurance run to extend the lead in the ninth with his eighth home run of the season.

Danny Dopico was able to redeem himself from his game two performance when he gave up the lead. He relieved Mourelle with one out in the bottom of the ninth. Dopico had runners on first and second base.

Pinch-hitter Ryne Dean was the first batter to face Dopico and eventually struck out. Dean got Andrew Dunden to ground out to record his fifth save of the season.

With the win FIU took the three-game set from Marshall and improved to 13-15 overall and 5-4 in Conference USA to be in sixth place. They hope to keep climbing the standings as they return home for the month of April.

The Panthers next take on Bethune-Cookman at home on Tuesday, March 31.

Softball team takes series over Owls

ALANNAH ALFONSO
Staff Writer
alanannah.alfonso@fiusm.com

The FIU softball team (22-16, 5-7 C-USA) split a pair of games on Saturday against in-state rival Florida Atlantic University and took the series on Sunday afternoon.

Junior Corinne Jenkins (13-7) had her 75th career start on Saturday in the first game against the Florida Atlantic Owls. She went the first four and a third innings striking out one and only allowing four hits.

Senior Shelby Graves came in to relieve Jenkins in an bases loaded situation and shut out the Owls in the final two and three thirds innings allowing no runs and getting her first save of the season.

Sophomore Stephanie Teseira (2-2,3) and Gabby Spallone (2-6,4) led the offense as the middle of the lineup for FIU produced all the runs.

Senior Krystal Garcia drove in two RBIs off a double to left as the Panthers took a 4-0 lead in the third inning.

The Panthers ended up winning the game 4-2 before falling 5-1 in the second game against the Owls.

Freshman Rachel Dwyer (2-1) started the game and threw only inning and one third before sophomore Brianna Bartuccio came in for four and two thirds innings to keep the Owls at bay.

Costly errors in the first led Florida Atlantic to put up three runs against the Panthers. They stretched their lead to 5-0 in the second. FIU was hitless until Ashley Belans and Ashley Leon each roped singles to left center.

The FIU softball team then took the series on Sunday with a 3-0 win over the in-state rivals.

Jenkins registered her third shutout this season and allowed just five hits over seven innings.

Spallone got the first hit of the game and cleared the plate when Garcia hit a base-clearing double to left center.

The FIU softball team won 3-0 and took the series. The Panthers will return home and host UB in a crucial conference matchup starting Thursday, April 2 at 6 p.m.

JOIN OUR STAFF!

The BEACON is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, don’t be shy.

Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124 or apply at fiusm.com.
Pitching, the key to dominating the game

Flora Kalu
P i t c h i n g wins games. No matter what level you are playing pitching will always dominate the game. The FIU Panthers know this and at this collegiate level have assembled a rotation and bullpen worth keeping an eye out for. Last season the Panthers finished fifth in the nation with a 2.29 ERA and destroyed a C-USA record for ERA of 2.05 more than the previous record.

25 games into the season pitching has been one of our strongest suits. Cody Crouse is the Friday night starter for the Panthers with 71 ERA and strikeouts in 34 innings pitched so far this season. He has good command on the mound and has developed a promising slider that has fooled a good amount of hitters.

On the Sunday slot with a 3.93 ERA and 19 strikeouts in 36 and two-thirds innings pitched. Mooreull’s accuracy last led him to be C-USA Freshman of the Year. He continued to show command in the strike zone. Freshman pitcher Andres Nunez has dominated on the mound earning the Saturday spot in the rotation. A tremendous feat by a freshman at a Division One school and team leading 32 strikeouts, Nunez had shown promise on the mound and will hopefully continue to dominate on the rubber.

These weekend starts all took place in the strike zone. The team’s confidence in their pitchers. They know when to throw off speed and have trust in it if the batter is looking for a fastball. They all throw good fastballs in on the hands if the batters begin struggling there and the pitching staff does good in knowing their hitters and attacking their weaknesses. They are confident in their strengths and that’s what’s going to win ball games.

Sand volleyball successful in Palmetto Invite

STEFANO RIVERA
Contributing Writer

The sand volleyball team continued to show how dominant they are this past weekend at the Palmetto Invitational in Columbia, South Carolina. The Panthers played two top-sixteen teams this weekend at the Palmetto Invitational in Columbia, South Carolina. The Panthers played two top-sixteen teams this weekend.

Licka ousted the Gamecocks with a 21-16, 1 pair for the last game. Samoday and Messing and Corrine Quiggle 21-19, the afternoon as senior Tina Toghiyani 21-19 at the No. 2 position.

Monforte and Summer Nash defeated Sophie Asprey and Taylor Raciich defeated senior Darija Sataric and sophomore Savannah Davis at the No. 4 position. However, the Panthers would bounce back to even the score at 1-1 as Kristine Monforte and Summer Nash defeated Lara Dijkstra and Becca Streblov 21-19, 21-19 at the No. 2 position.

The Panthers took their first lead of the afternoon as senior Tina Toghiyani and sophomore Arev Cuff defeated Katie Courtney and Quiggle 21-19, 21-16. The Waves would later tie it at 2-2 then to play a match-deciding game.

The Panthers No. 1 pair, Maryna Samoday and Anika Licka, defeated Pepperdine’s No. 1 pair, Kelley Larsen and Kellie Woolever, as the team ended up winning 3-2. With this win, the Panthers improved to (3-0) against AVCA Top 10 teams and 12-1 for the season.

The team looked to use its victory over Pepperdine as momentum for the match against South Carolina. Once again, the Panthers won closely contested sets as they prevailed 3-2. The team jumped off to a good start as Martyna Gluchowicz and Anna Budinska defeated Jade Hayes and Macie Tendrich at the No. 4 position. The Gamecocks would continue to find their rhythm at their No. 2 position bested the Panthers.

After splitting the next two matchups, the Panthers were placed in a familiar second-seeded Cavs. The heat sits at the.

As of March 30, the Miami Heat sits at the seventh seed in a weak Eastern conference. They’re stuck between trying to catch the sixth seeded Milwaukee Bucks and fending off a slew of teams behind them. It’s a position that Heat fans and players are not accustomed to being in. For the last four seasons, it was almost a foregone conclusion that Miami would end up as a top two seed and coast to the NBA finals. One of the most remarkable things about that four-year run is how healthy the team stayed.

Now, in this post-LeBron world, the Heat is limping into the playoffs. The injury bug hit the Heat early on when newly signed power forward Josh McRoberts started the season on the bench with an ankle injury. After appearing in only 17 games, McRoberts went down with a torn meniscus and was ruled out for the rest of the year.

The most obvious blow to the Heat was the loss of star power-forward Chris Bosh. In February, Bosh was diagnosed with blood clots in his lungs and was informed he would miss the remainder of the season. Though not as serious, some of the Heat’s role players are starting to go down as well. Chris Andersen missed three straight games of as Sunday thanks to a calf injury. Luol Deng has also been facing some leg issues and missed the second half of Sunday’s win with a bruised knee.

These setbacks, coupled with Dwyane Wade missing 19 games due to rest and general knee soreness, have made Miami’s front line very thin.

Head coach Erik Spoelstra has done a phenomenal job of plugging in pieces to fill these gaps. He’s used a combination of mid-season signings with Michael Beasley and Henry Walker, as well as D-League call-ups for Hassan Whiteside and Tyler Johnson.

Recently, though, some of Coach Spo’s plugs have caught the injury bug. Hassan Whiteside missed two games with ten stitches in his hand and Michael Beasley left Sunday’s game with a right elbow contusion.

Luckily, Miami has gotten a lift from co-captains Dwyane Wade and Udonis Haslem. Wade has averaged 26 points over his last 12 games, including a 40-point performance Sunday night against Detroit. The Heat has won eight of those 12 games.

Though only averaging 4 points per game in 2014-15, Haslem has turned it on as late. He has a double-double in two of his last three games after not having one for almost two years. His contribution is especially meaningful considering the recent injuries to Whiteside and Anderson.

The most likely scenario for Miami is a seventh seed and a first-round playoff showdown with the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Heat will have to get healthy if they want to put up a fight against the second-seeded Cavs.
University honors Chaplin School Alumni

MARIA C. SERRANO
Staff Writer
maria.serrano@fiusm.com

From volunteering at the world-renowned Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival to working in a 140-seat restaurant management laboratory, students at the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management have come out winning.

Two of the most outstanding alumni from the Chaplin School were recognized at the FIU’s Alumni Association’s 14th Annual Torch Awards Saturday, March 28.

Humberto “Burt” Cabatias, Founder and Chairman of Benchmark Hospitality International and Ed Mugnani, President of the Western Division of Eurest-Compass Group said they are indebted for the opportunities the University presented them.

“Everybody, no matter how small a percentage of their status today, they have to attribute some percentage to the time they spent at FIU,” said Cabatias in an interview with FIU Student Media.

According to the FIU Alumni website, Torchbearers are honored for their positive impact on the University, the community and their careers. It is the highest honor bestowed by FIU to a graduate.

“Everybody, no matter how small a percentage of their status today, they have to attribute some percentage to the time they spent at FIU,” said Cabatias in an interview with FIU Student Media.

For more than 20 years, Ed Mugnani, the second honoree of the night, has been involved in the foodservice industry. He is also a member of the Society for Hospitality & Foodservice Management, and is active in numerous charities.

Despite his many years in the industry, Mugnani had first started in the political science career field. Later on did he realize that his true passion was in hospitality and management.

“Ultimately, you need to do what is important to you and what is going to bring you the most fulfillment in your life. That will bring you the largest benefit throughout your career, in your life,” said Mugnani in an interview with Student Media.

Both alumni continue to be involved in University activities. Mugnani has been a guest speaker at several events and Cabatias has served as Chairman of the Industry Advisory Board for the Chaplin School.

“I think recognition for me will be great if it is able to reflect to other students what FIU has meant to them and how they should be a strong support of the alumni,” Cabatias said.