Middle school students introduced to STEM with EV3 Robotics program

**CAMILA SAENZ Contributing Writer news@fiusm.com**

The University created a new after school program this year in collaboration with school middle schoolers to the STEM fields.

The EV3 Robotics program hopes to expand the minds of young students and to encourage anyone who is interested in pursuing a degree in a STEM field.

Students participating learn the basics of robotics, as well as more advanced components. The students who complete the EV3 program have the opportunity to apply for partial scholarships to the University.

“The idea began that every student could be involved in STEM through robotics to learn the sciences,” said Adly Norelus, assistant director of the Office of Pre-Collegiate, Grants and McNair programs.

Not only will the students be learning the basics of robotics, as well as more advanced components, but they will also be able to compete in both local and national competitions. Miami Edison Park K-8 Center and North Miami Middle School are currently the two schools involved in the program.

Students at Edison Park K-8 Center are part of the EV3 Robotics program, intended to raise interest in STEM among middle schoolers. Only Edison Park K-8 Center and North Miami Middle School are currently involved in the program.

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The program is also predicted to expand to other middle schools in the area, providing more opportunities to the students of Miami-Dade County.

According to Norelus, many students show interest at such a young age for the sciences because there are not many opportunities provided that allow them to gain hands-on experience.

“These middle school students will feed into these high schools and continue to participate in the program, even during the summer,” said Simms.

Norelus. “The ultimate goal is for these youngsters to continue their education after high school at FIU.”

The EV3 Robotics program also provides opportunities for current students at the University.

“We have currently three students involved in the program - as tutors, mentors, and teaching assistants,” said Norelus.

As the program expands at the University, it could mean an eventual expansion in the STEM fields, resulting in a larger program with more opportunities for its students, according to Simms.

“FIU plays a strong role in the program,” said Norelus. “We meet with (students) throughout the program, we provide college prep workshops that help [them] learn time management, as well as career exploration.”

During the summer, the middle school students will be on campus to tour the University facilities and explore the college culture. According to Norelus, the only requirement to be in this program is to be interested in learning more.

The students who complete the EV3 program have the opportunity to apply for partial scholarships to the University whenever their time to potentially attend the University comes. "Once again, FIU proves that it is worlds ahead," said Simms.

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**MERCEDES CEVALLOS Contributing Writer news@fiusm.com**

Even though the federal government has announced changes regarding regulations on traveling to Cuba, the University will not be changing its travel policy toward the country.

These federal travel changes allow academic travel to Cuba without requiring a special license from the Department of Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control. In other words, the new regulations allow all students enrolled in degree programs at accredited United States academic institutions to access programs to study abroad in the island nation.

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Cuba travel policy notice from University

President Barack Obama told Congress on Tuesday that he is removing Cuba from a list of state sponsors of terrorism, the latest action in his drive to normalize relations with the island nation. Obama’s decision, he said, would do its best to save something in its power to bring them home,” Buhari said.

How long can Pakistan stay out of Yemen fight in face of Saudi pressure?

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, under heavy pressure from Saudi Arabia and its allies, has reversed Parliament’s vote last week to remain neutral in the Saudi-led campaign in Yemen, on Monday once again pledged to deploy Pakistan’s military if Houthis rebels in Yemen threatened Saudi Arabian territory. But Sharif, who owns his political career and perhaps his life to Saudi intervention in Pakistan affairs, didn’t suggest that he intended to concord forces now – in spite of angry denunciations from the Pakistan government that has ruled Saudi Arabia for 15 years, and would list to citizens’ anguish and take action.

“This new approach must also begin with honesty. We do not know if the Chibok girls can be rescued. Their whereabouts remain unknown. As much as I wish to, I cannot promise that we can find them. But I say to every parent, family member and friend of the children that my government will do everything in its power to bring them home,” Buhari said.

The United Nations’ top human rights official on Tuesday joined the growing chorus of senior U.N. officials calling on Saudi Arabia to take greater care not to target civilians or civilian buildings in its bombing campaign against rebels in Yemen. Prince Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein, the U.N.’s high commissioner for human rights, warned that some of the actions may amount to war crimes – a caution other officials have made in recent days. But Prince Zeid’s comments may carry special weight because he is a member of Jordan’s royal family. Jordan is a member of the Saudi-led coalition carrying out the bombing campaign with U.S. support.

“Every hour we are receiving and documenting deeply disturbing and disturbing reports of the toll that this conflict is taking on civilian lives and infrastructure,” Prince Zeid said.

Worry grows at UN over civilian casualties in Yemen

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As Nigeria marked a year since the abduction of 276 schoolgirls from the northeastern town of Chibok by terrorist group Boko Haram, President-elect Muhammadu Buhari said he could not promise that his government would be able to find and rescue those still in captivity. But he said if they were alive, his government would do its best to save them.

Buhari said his government would take its own approach, different from that of the previous government.

Obama drops Cuba from terror list, reads for showdown with Congress

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FRANK AND IRENE: Tram Troubles

JESSICA SOLER
Staff Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

In the world of music there is no such thing as good or bad. There are only differences of opinion. As long as there are fans listening and relating to it, anything else matters.

There are two sides to music. On one side, music is a unifier. At a party, any combination of people will come together to chant along to Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believin’” or Britney Spears’ “Oops!…I Did It Again.”

Iconic songs like these take the listener back in time to when they first heard it. As diverse as these iconic songs are, they are all one thing in common: they were popular.

At some point in time, those iconic songs were the prevalent sounds a mass majority of people listened to. This leads to the other side, where music causes separation. A lot of people are often criticized or even bullied for their choice in music if it is not widely known or liked. Punk music is seen as kiddie rock, metal is satanic and pop is the drones of mindless moneymaking. No matter what genre someone listens to, there will always be a critic saying that it is “not good music.”

But really, what is “good music”? If the lyrics resonate and the sound makes people move, why not listen to it?

The only rule in music is that there are no rules. Music, like any art, is about self-expression. Not everyone is going to like the same music, but this creates endless sound possibilities, with different fans and interpretations. Musical diversity should not be a bad thing. If two people disagree about a certain band, artist or genre, neither of them is necessarily right or wrong. Their respective musical preferences are their own and they should be proud of them.

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If someone is a music enthusiast, they are the last one who should be sound-shaming others. Claiming to have the “true” sound or the “best” sound is limiting. If there was only one kind of music, there would be no innovation. Rock ‘n’ roll was a product of blues, country, gospel and pop were created from rock ‘n’ roll elements. Music builds on music.

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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.
In today’s pop culture, you’d have a hard time finding anyone not pulled in by either Netflix or the Disney/Marvel superhero dynasty that has commanded movie theaters, television, comic books, and, now, the Internet.

“Daredevil” is another step taken with Marvel to cement the fact that it doesn’t matter how strange the concept, what the medium, or how bad the stigma towards a particular series might be (I’m sure I’m not the only one who remembers the 2003 Daredevil film starring Ben Affleck). If you put the Marvel name on something, two things are guaranteed: People will flock to it and it will be fantastic.

“Daredevil” tells the story of Matt Murdock, played by Charlie Cox, a lawyer who was blinded in his youth while saving an old man from a truck. Over time, he learned to hone his other senses to the point where he can hear a heartbeat across a room or smell the cologne of someone two stories up from him. Using this, he fights crime in the courtroom during the day and, at night, dons a mask and deals out his own form of justice on the streets.

As exceptional as Cox’s performance is, the other is a man with every reason to be afraid of. And when someone makes him angry, he will grab their head and bash it in until they’re nothing more than a bloody mess. As much as “Daredevil” is the origin of the hero, it is as much the origin story of the Kingpin, one of Marvel’s most intimidating and dangerous villains. D’Onofrio plays Fisk with a childlike personality. He’s awkward, seems to force words out when speaking. He’s a romantic, he’s something of an artist, he’s lonely and conflicted.

D’Onofrio’s interpretation of Fisk as something more than just pure evil. By the end of the series, you know exactly why people are afraid to even mention his name at the beginning. The Kingpin is one of those few villains who is opening committing crimes and evil acts, yet no one lifts a finger against him. “Daredevil” shows you exactly why. The supporting cast manages to really bring a level of quality and emotion to the show that you might not expect from a superhero series.

For every criminal he takes down, two more seem to pop up, worse than before. Throughout the series, he walks the line of what he considers evil.

Murdock stays as the man in the black mask and Fisk is seen wearing black or gray suits. For those costume aficionados out there, I can give a bit of good news: by the end of the series, you will see Murdock in red and Fisk in white. The series poses one of the most interesting conflicts seen in a crime series. Two characters and their hatred and admiration. You root for people who are pure evil, against those fighting for good, at times even wishing the heroes would give up for their own safety. And if you’re a fan of the comics, you’ll be in for a subtle reference or two and should understand that just because a character is alive or important in the comics doesn’t mean they’ll survive on screen.

But whether you’re a fan of comics, superheroes, or just enjoy a good crime show, “Daredevil” will be among your favorites of 2015.

“On the Tube” is a column that reviews and critiques different on-going series on television.
The film concerns the aforementioned titular street gang being framed for a murder, resulting in them needing to get back to their home turf before someone else gets to them first.

The film is supposed to take place at some point in the near future, but the film never makes this too clear in any way. Besides, if I had to guess without knowing the film’s release date, I’d probably say late 70s – some styles and aesthetics are just impossible to disguise.

However, you’d be wrong if you think this makes the film a disservice; on the contrary, putting the film in this time period allows it to enjoy the film’s sometimes campy nature, as well as put a historical spin on things.

When I first saw this film, I originally assumed it was an exaggerated reflection of the times, with what New York City basically being overrun with colorful street gangs around every corner.

One can see “The Warriors” as a modern day “Anabasis” retelling taking advantage of a famous but rotten city where even surreal things as seen in this film don’t seem all that off in real life.

On a purely visual and atmospheric level, “The Warriors” works masterfully. You can already see this film as mindless entertainment, so it helps that the film’s look is unique and appropriate. Colors are natural, but stand out when certain gang members are around; The Warriors themselves dress in red and tend to themselves dress in red and tend to

The episode begins the emotional rollercoaster of high school life. The Beacon – Friday, April 17, 2015

LIFE! The Beacon – Friday, April 17, 2015

When Tyrion arrives from his little boat trip in Pentos, along with Varys, and they plan to move the Meereenese from the wall, Cersei gets her chance to be a little lass and a lass for the dominant of a major death in each episode, I’m sure the coming weeks are going to be an emotional rollercoaster for fans of the show.

On “The Tube” is a column that reviews and critiques different on- line series on television.

Future of education includes video game in classrooms

BRIAN CRECENTE

 Polygon

A lot of modern students spend as much time playing video games as they do attending school, according to research by the University of Indiana.

Some may view that as a shocking affirmation that video games are eroding the education of an entire generation, but the U.S. Department of Education sees it as an opportunity, a chance to reinvent education in a way that makes it more relevant to today’s student.

“If you look at the life of a student ... a lot of students play on average about 10,000 hours of video games,” said Richard Martin, the U.S. Department of Education’s Games for Learning lead. “You can imagine a lot of the time which of the two activities they feel more engaged in or more relevant.

“If you can take that experience of getting outside of school and make it feel just as relevant and just as compelling when they’re in school learning stuff and doing stuff and doing something that’s interesting and educational, that’s that bridging we want to sort of provide.”

Later this month, the U.S. Department of Education holds its first Games for Learning Summit in New York City, a gathering of educational experts, students, teachers, game publishers and developers. Summit organizers hope to use the event to help break down the barriers that exist between the interests of game developers and needs of educational game developers. The outcome, organizers hope, will be new ways to make and distribute engaging and educational video games to classrooms.

“The outcome is ready to use technology in innovative ways,” said Richard Culatta, the director of educational technology at the US Department of Education. “But I think we are largely dependent on the people who are building these tools and the companies that provide apps that meet educational needs.

“Part of the message we are trying to send here is, if you’re building and designing games for learning, you have to connect and work with teachers and with school leaders to make sure you are building games that are meeting the needs.”

Among the sessions are two from massive game-maker Ubisoft. The publisher will have developers at the summit to talk about its rhythm-meets-education guitar game “Rocksmith” and its benefits of dance game “Just Dance.” Perhaps most surprisingly, the publisher will also be talking about its incredibly popular action, assassination game “Assassin’s Creed” and a game it published about the first World War.

“This is an example of how games can show the first ‘Assassin’s Creed’ which took place during the `Great Crusade,’ to the latest, ‘Assassin’s Creed Unity,’ the development teams have gone to great lengths to be historically accurate at multiple levels,” said Michael Burnham, associate director of public relations at Ubisoft. “Over the years we’ve heard of universities across the U.S. using the games to teach students, compare the in-game history with the history they learned in class or simple to show students what periods of history looking like visually.

Beadle points to the level of high definition detail in “Assassin’s Creed Unity’s” representation of the Renaissance architecture and work with key cultural and linguistic experts to include an accurate representation of the Kanien’keh’a:ka (Mohawk) Nation in “Assassin’s Creed 3,” as examples.

“Each game has a database where players are able to further explore and learn about key historical moments they have played through or about a building they have passed or climbed,” he said.

“The Warriors” was disliked by most critics when first released, but has since grown in stature, to the point of having its own video game developed by Rockstar Games.

For a film that works as a modern day retelling of a classic Greek tale, it’s relatively simple on the surface.

While one can watch the film and see nothing but action and thrills, one can also see social commentary, anxiety, bravery, and loyalty. ’Throughout memorable characters, music and atmosphere and you have yourself a film deserving of cult status.

“I think the summation is the latest sign that the Department of Education recognizes the power of games for learning. And, Culatta says, the department is committed to fostering a broader adoption of high quality games for education.

In fact, he says it’s an inevitability that games will become an important part of education in the future.

The summit is a direct response to President Barack Obama’s ConnectedED initiative, a push to provide, among other things, Internet connectivity to schools across the country. That connectivity made the idea of using games to transform learning more practical.

“Along with that comes this challenge of what do we do with that connectivity?” said Culatta. “How do we use it to move more than just electronic text books, which is not the goal. Not only that, but a few actual songs show up, too, to great effect (Joe Walsh’s “In the City”, which was written for this film, plays during the end credits).

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**SPORTS**

**FOOTBALL**

**Springing into football with spring game**

**Contributing Writer**

**PETER HOLLAND**

The FIU football team will be strapping up Friday, April 17 at 7 p.m at Ocean Bank Field.

As we are counting down the days until the Friday, April 17 the official spring game, here is what to expect for key starters back on both offense and defense.

** QBs**

It’s pretty clear that Alex McGough will be the starting quarterback for this coming season, and we all expect this true sophomore to take first team reps Friday night. However, the backup position is up for grabs, and it will come down to either Redshirt Freshman Bud Martin or early enrollee Christian Alexander.

Martin, so far, has been really competitive throughout the whole spring, and he definitely knows how to throw a spiral compared to other QBs.

There’s Juwan Caesar and his 6-foot-5 219 pound frame, who’s finally going to seek action after sitting out for the entire season because of NCAA transfer rules.

There’s also senior starter Clinton Taylor who has also been having a productive spring as he has been the most consistent player in the receiving corp.

**Defense**

Everybody knows that the Panthers biggest strength is their defense, that finished in the top 35 in the country. Majority of players are back, including our star cornerback Richard Leonard, who decided to withdraw from the NFL and stay for his senior season.

Expect this defense to fly around and make turnovers and make big hits Friday night. Defense wins football games.

Overall, I expect the panthers to be more explosive than last year and make the game fast pace. With majority of the players coming back, plus adding some young players in the mix, I won’t be surprised if the Panthers become a huge threat in the conference.

This will be a great opportunity for all students, alumni and parents to come out and get a good taste for what’s to come this season.

The annual spring game starts this Friday at 7 p.m.

I expect a huge crowd during this Friday Night Lights at Ocean Bank Field.

**BASEBALL**

**Panthers look to turn season around versus WKU**

**ALEJANDRO AGUIRRE**

Asst. Sports Director

Coming into the season projected to finish second and currently at eighth place in the Conference USA standings is not what the baseball team expected to be at this point in the season. They have been struggling as of late which has been costly to the team.

As of now, they still have a chance to do a complete 180 and finish this season on a high note. There are 18 games left in the season with the bulk of the games against conference opponents.

That’s what the team has to focus on now because that C-USA record is what matters the most.

This Friday, April 17 the Panthers take on Western Kentucky University for a three game weekend series. Every game from here on out is crucial.

This series can determine the direction of the team as WKU is a conference opponent and is one spot out of FIU in the standings.

Both teams have the same record at 7-8 but what determines if that WKU is ahead of the Panthers is their overall record. WKU has a 17-16 record while FIU is below .500 with a losing record of 16-20.

After losing back to back C-USA series against Florida Atlantic University and University of Texas San Antonio, the Panthers need every available player on the roster for the rest of the season because it is going to take the entirety of the team to finish as a top seed.

Senior outfielder Brian Portelli swings and makes contact at the game against the University of Southern Florida on Tuesday, April 7.

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Some players that need to lead the charge are seniors Brian Portelli, Julius Gaines and junior Edwin Rios. Offensively, all three swung the bat well last season against FAU.

Portelli improved his team-leading batting average to .338 and Rios hit his team-leading 11th home run. Gaines had a great season with the glove too as he anchored the defensive infield alignment. These three players need to carry this successful play into the series versus the Hilltoppers.

While sweeping the Hilltoppers might be too much to ask for, taking two out of three is a must for FIU. Doing so, they climb the standings and can go ahead of WKU and even University of Alabama at Birmingham. This would put them in the top half of the standings with 15 games left to play which is enough time to finish at an even higher seed.

Let’s hope for the best for the Panthers as they have to scratch and claw to make it to the top.
The Heat's 2014-15 season was not a waste

If there's one thing I can say confidently about the 2015 Miami Heat season, it's that almost none of my predictions came true.

In the beginning of the season I believed that the Heat were a top five seed in the East. Although they were LeBRon-less after the offseason, I thought that they would have enough experience behind All Stars Chris Bosh and Dwayne Wade to be competitive.

For a short time, I was right: the Heat jumped out to a 5-2 record and even led the Eastern Conference for a bit. Then I was really wrong.

Three issues held the Heat back in the first half of the season: they had no true center, no true point guard and no depth. Although Pat Riley would fill the first two holes with point guard Goran Dragic and center Hassan Whiteside, the Heat's lack of quality bench players and a host of other problems caught up to them.

I don't think anyone can pinpoint exactly when the Heat went up in flames. Injuries to key players were tacked on for every few weeks. The defense slowly corroded as the season dragged on. Somewhere along the way, the Heat lost their "clutch" gene and started blowing double digit leads early. This season was so out of left field that even Riley couldn't right the ship. Just when he acquired Dragic from the Suns, Bosh was admitted into the hospital. Just when it seemed that the Heat pulled off the steal of the century in signing Hassan Whiteside, the center flared his maturity issues.

Now, the marathon that is the NBA regular season is finally over and with it the Miami Heat's chance at defending their Eastern Conference title.

The Heat were officially eliminated from playoff contention on Tuesday night when the Pacers defeated the Wizards, but a long list of losses in which the Miami Heat dropped the ball deserve the blame first.

If you're a Miami Heat fan, you can view this season as either a train wreck or a gift from above.

The basketball gods plagued the Heat with injuries; Bosh, Wade, Josh McRoberts, Shabazz Napier and Luol Deng all missed significant playing time. As a direct result of those injuries, however, players like Whiteside and Henry Walker received playing time and were able to come into the fold. Without the bad this season, the pieces that the franchise needs for the future may have never been discovered.

I say "So what if the Miami Heat have to watch the playoffs from the outside this year?" They've made the postseason in all but two years in the Dwyane Wade era. Maybe the Heat deserve to rest for a while, which might not be too difficult to do knowing that they can expect a starting five of Dragic, Wade, Deng, Bosh and Whiteside next season. The future is bright.

The most important thing to remember about 2014-2015 is that it was not a waste of time just because they missed the playoffs. The Heat spent the year developing chemistry and adding pieces that will pay off in a big way one day.

In the meantime, it's all up to the Marlins now to make sure that South Florida doesn't go on a full calendar season without playoffs.

Now that's a future that terrifies me.

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Jazmin Felix didn’t even want to be in student government. Coming to the University as a nursing student, Felix had her sights focused on studying and no campus life involvement.

Yet, after being Student Government President in middle school and Vice President in high school, being in SGA-FIU was inevitable.

“I walked passed the SGA office and it was like, ‘Jazmin, Jazmin, apply…and I was like, ‘no, no, no’, and I kept walking and I turned right back around and I picked up an application,” Felix said.

Her passion for helping others and putting students first triumphed.

She began as a Lower Division Senator, then a Nursing & Health Sciences Senator and Speaker of the Senate.

At just eighteen years old, no one expected a freshman to thrive in the SGA at such a fast pace.

“She believed in what student government stands for and to this day, she believes that and it makes it easier for her to follow up with her convictions. It is rare finding students that dedicated that early,” said Rafael Zapata, interim director at the BBC Office of Campus Life.

“It didn’t surprise me that she would potentially be president,” Zapata said. Felix soon became the BBC Student Government Council President her junior year in spring 2014. As part of her platform for SGC-BBC President, she used the acronym BBC, Bringing Big Changes and that’s what she did.

“I feel like a lot of the challenges that we’ve had, we’ve conquered them. I was very aggressive with my goals and I knew what I wanted to do – I had such an amazing team,” Felix said.

During her tenure, the council funded the renovation of the Wolfe University Center.

The $4.2 million construction process included changes in the BBC Panther Square and the Panther Plaza and its addition of a panther statue.

They also added phone charging stations, lockers for student storage and a computer lab in the second floor of the WUC.

“I think the greatest achievement over the past five years is the funding and purchase of a panther statue,” said Alexis Calatayud, SGC-MMC president.

“During her tenure, Jazmin has taken a role in advocating for the Baptist Bay Campus in budget deliberations, University committees and state advocacy. These tools, when utilized well, are invaluable to the betterment of student experience,” Calatayud said.

In terms of having a stronger collaboration between MMC and BBC, Calatayud, who was re-elected president for the 2015-2016 school year, said topics that directly and equally impact both campuses will be discussed.

However, she said it is important to understand that sometimes their unique goals and needs must be met individually.

Camille Williams, vice president of the SGC-BBC, said she appreciated the way Felix adapted to working differently with each individual she worked with.

“She’s really a great person at bringing out the best in people,” said Camille Williams, vice president of the SGC-BBC.

“We all managed to work very well with the other campus councils and we got the job done and that was a great accomplishment because we all worked together despite our differences,” she said.

Williams referred to the Inter-Council Coalition, a new partnership started by Felix, to address student needs between SGA and the rest of the BBC’s major student organizations.

Williams said that Felix’s humor brought life to the council.

“She can make anybody laugh. She could talk to a brick wall and it would talk back. That’s the character she brought to every meeting that we had and it was always very easy, but also very focused,” said Williams.

Felix is the youngest out of six brothers and sisters and a family from Turks and Caicos Islands in the British West Indies.

“I’m the baby, but you know, it’s funny because people would think I’m suppose to be the brat, right? I’m the last one, but my mom has always instilled in me good work ethic so I’ve never been like a bad brat… I’ve been a good brat,” said Felix.

Larissa Adames, SGA coordinator at the BBC Campus Life, said she always involved everyone in the council when decisions were made.

“She always thought of others so that kind of made her stand out. Once she puts her mind to something, she goes ahead and does it,” said Adames.

Elena Sibony, SGC-BBC Chief of Staff, said Felix changed her heart. Sibony thought that when she entered SGA, there was going to be no room for friends because it’s a serious job.

“But, she got me this small cute box of chocolates (on Valentine’s Day) and she goes, ‘Will you be my Valentine?’ and it was just so cute. She really made SGA like a family to me and it altered my heart,” Sibony said.

“She has so much on her plate, she never loses her cool, she’s always relaxed, she’s always having a great time. It’s inspiring for me because that’s what I strive to be like. I absolutely love her,” Sibony said.