SGA candidates debate before the results

ADRIAN SUAREZ AVILA
News Director
asuarez@fiu.edu

Before the elections results were revealed yesterday, the presidential and vice presidential candidates for the Student Government Association at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus met for a debate.

When prompted to discuss how they improved the University during their time at the school, the vice presidential candidates, Kristen Nyman, a junior political science and international relations major, and Yolanda Roman-Biffa, the current SGA-MMC vice president, had different responses.

Roman-Biffa, in her role as the vice president, worked alongside SGA-MMC President Alexis Calatayud in various capacities to coordinate events and different initiatives, among them making SGA’s presence felt in the Engineering Center.

She also spoke of her efforts conducting research with FIU in Washington, a program that allows students to get mentored by alumni living in the capital. Roman-Biffa and Calatayud plan on creating a program that directly matches University alumni living in Washington, D.C. with current University students in order to provide them with the chance to secure internship opportunities for themselves.

At the moment, Roman-Biffa and Calatayud are working with Carlos A. Becerra, director of federal relations in the University’s Office of Governmental Relations, for a funding plan for the proposed program. They are also reaching out to other departments for help.

For Nyman, her experience helping the University has been different. Nyman spoke of her experience with the Model United Nations team at the University, her role as a Rho Gamma for the Panhellenic Council and founding president of the International Affairs Society.

Through the listed involvements, Nyman said that she was able to serve the University community as a leader and a mentor.

The discussion then moved to a topic on the public good and the University’s role in influencing it.

In terms of how she may help the University with strengthening its influence on the public good, Nyman focused her discussion on alumni relations.

She cited an instance in which a friend of her who graduated from the University received a letter in the mail within a week asking her to make a donation to her alma mater.

Nyman believes that there are better ways of reaching out to alumni, and part of her and Stefan Bahad’s platform is connecting current students and alumni through the form of internships and other leadership development opportunities that may influence the public good.

For Roman-Biffa, on the other hand, her focus is set on different sights.

She and Calatayud are working to designate the University as an Ashoka campus, a designation that distinguishes colleges and universities considered to be hubs of solution-making.

Although both women already consider the University as a solution maker that tackles a variety of issues, they want to improve the University during their time as a leader and a mentor.

The candidates debated over whether they would like to see the SGA-MMC office moving to the MMC during the 2015-2016 academic year.

Nyman’s sights are with her street team and the possibility of actively reaching out to students in areas they frequent.

“We never see anyone from student government around school. Whoever wins next should fix this.”

Roman-Biffa plans on reaching out to the student body by holding breakfasts, similar to the ones that were held earlier in the year in the Betty Chapman Plaza at the MMC. At these events, she plans on engaging students and asking them to communicate their concerns about the University.

Part of her plan also includes attending send-off sessions for Panther Camp and informing the freshmen there of the opportunities to engage with SGA.

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SEE SGA, PAGE 2
Human rights groups join Mexico-UN dispute over accusations of torture

A controversy over the use of torture in Mexico and whether the government has retreated on human rights and rule of law issues intensified Tuesday, with human rights groups voicing “profound disgust” denouncing the government of Tuesday, with human rights groups over his government’s pledge to receiving international funding or have strong connections through the U.N. envoy.

Iran nuclear talks head into extra day as US, partners agree progress being made

After more than a decade of on-off, off-again debate about Iran’s nuclear future and six intense days of negotiations in this tony lakeside resort, officials from the world’s most powerful nations on Tuesday set aside a self-imposed midnight deadline and agreed to talk some more.

State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf made the announcement eight hours before the deadline was due. Harf noted, in an email to reporters, “We’ve made progress toward the finish line, then we should keep going.”

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For her, although the breakthrough meetings that Roman-Biffa proposed sound like a good idea, she believes that there are more effective ways of communicating with students about offering solutions to their problems. She also plans on turning social media as a communication tool.

Through campaigning, she and Bahad found that students in the School of Music want a lounge, and that some Muslim students on campus want their own prayer room. These discoveries were all due to actively asking students what they want done.

“In order to truly cater to our FIU students, we need to be in constant communication with them, and offer them whatever practical aid we can,” Nyman said.

Then the presidential candidates had a chance to speak.

For Roman-Biffa, the biggest concern for students is access to financial aid, which is one of the main platform items for her and Calatayud’s campaign.

Having started discussions with the state legislature to offer access to Bright Futures scholarships during the summer, Roman-Biffa noted that students at the University are nontraditional, many juggling work and classes.

In such, they believe that there needs to be a more effective system of need-based financial aid that better serves the University’s unique demographic.

Nyman’s answer raised some eyebrows in the audience.

“One thing I want to highlight about our student body is that it’s so diverse and such, that to answer [the] question would almost be an injustice to the kind of student body that [the University has],” she said.

Nyman went on to explain her response.

For her there isn’t just one thing that the student body needs, considering that it’s seeking to, the University’s goal, along with that of the other universities in the state university system, is to graduate students within six years.

In order to accomplish this goal, Calatayud had started work on revamping the freshman experience course, which will last one year and feature a new format.

The new program aims to immerse students into the University community and actively engage them from the moment they enroll.

Calatayud’s goal is to have a 70 percent graduation rate of students by 2020, considering that the current figure is 54 percent.

For Bahad, his focus was on increasing student success at the University.

Noting that a lot of success stems from involvement, he wanted to start tackling the issue of student success with a new website: involvement.fiu.edu, which would serve as a one-stop shop for student involvement.

He cited that one of the biggest reasons that students don’t get their degree after graduation is the lack of access to networks, unwillingness to work on things through University and community collaborations.

Candidates give their thoughts prior to the revelation of election results

For both the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years Luis Bolanos was in charge of fiusm.com. Lauren Shade, who most recently served as recruitment director for all of FIU Student Media, will fill in that position.

WRGP, which was led for a majority of the 2014-2015 academic year by Sheyla Marimon will be run by Amanda Nyman and her running mate intend to provide students the chance to actively let the representatives know what they see wrong with the school or what can be improved.

When prompted to answer what they believed the main priority was for students at the University, Roman-Biffa and Nyman once more took different approaches to their responses.

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Cinderella increases female empowerment

MICHELLE MARCHANTE
Staff Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

Looking at movies today, the most basic classification you can use to define films is probably the difference between a chick-flick and a guy movie.

A guy movie normally refers to an action film with a character, normally played by some macho-man like Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson going around kicking butt, using an assortment of theatrical weapons and jumping off buildings. A chick-flick is usually some sweet, romantic drama where the audience is waiting for the two main characters to finally get together.

Things aren’t so simple anymore. If I were to ask you whether “The Hunger Games” or “Divergent” were action movies or chick-flicks, what would you respond? They’re action movies with a nice touch of romance to spice things up.

Men may assume these movies are chick-flicks because the protagonists just so happen to be women. I wouldn’t call them sexist, but they are used to the idea of society has constructed that an action movie requires a male protagonist and a chick-flick requires a female protagonist.

However, strong women have played leads in film for a long time. Just look at the 1979 movie “Alien” starring Sigourney Weaver, or Angelina Jolie’s portrayal of Lara Croft in the 2001 movie “Tomb Raider.”

Hollywood, though, simply has never seen so many female-led box-office hits go to the theaters in succession.

If this is the case, some may wonder why a movie like “Cinderella” would be released during this time of female empowerment.

Honestly, why not? Cinderella is tough in her own way, by being able to survive living with her wicked step-family and never letting them break her spirit.

The new Cinderella mantra, “have courage and be kind,” is a great one to live by. I know many viewers would have all preferred it if Cinderella socked the daylight out of her evil step-mother at the end of the movie, but staying true to what she believed in - by forgiving her - was empowering in itself.

A strong, female lead doesn’t always have to get down and dirty to be respected. Things are changing.

It forces people to look to the details of how things work and how their actions will create a reaction in hopes it will be to their benefit. Memory skills develop as the game storyline progresses and players need to recall what gear they have and how to use it in the best way.

What I find amazing is how video games can be a stress reliever. There’s nothing better than button-mashing the stress away after a long day.

There has even been scientific research on how video games can even help those who have mental health problems such as ADHD or Alzheimers disease.

I’m not saying that video games perfect. Like everything, they should be taken in moderation.

Video games can easily turn into an addiction, given how much they stimulate the brain.

Further, in the digital world, you are not yourself. You can be whoever you want to be, in a way that is often seen as an escape from reality.

A game well known for this is World of Warcraft, where people often begin neglecting their responsibilities, relationships and hygiene while questing for pixelated armor and goods.

It’s not worth straining one’s real life for something that is made of pixels with no value aside from in-game currency.

Video games are like exercise for the brain - while it’s beneficial, users need to take a break from hours of playing to enjoy real life.

As much as they can stimulate the mind and develop sharp skills, playing in moderation is always important to keep in mind.

Gaming can be beneficial in moderation

JESSICA HIERRO
Contributing Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

I remember when I was just a kid, my dad would play Mario Bros. with me on the Nintendo Entertainment System instead of reading a book before bedtime. It was the best.

The love of video games is so embedded in me now that I realize how much they play a part in people’s growth and development; in ways both good and bad.

One of my favorite game series is The Legend of Zelda, and I find it amazing how some series is The Legend of Zelda, and I find it amazing how some...
Leyanis Diaz wins Miss Black and Gold for 2015

KRYSYL PUGH
Contributing Writer
lifefiusm.com

Leyanis Diaz was crowned Miss Black and Gold 2015 on Sunday night, March 29 in the Graham Center Ballrooms at the Miami University Gardens. After two and half months of rehearsals, late nights and photo shoots, the time had arrived. There were six contestants selected to compete in the Miss Black and Gold 2015. Andrew Jones, vice president of the Tau Delta chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity directed the pageant this year.

“I wanted to take this opportunity and try something new and see how I can use leadership skills in a new thing,” said Jones. There were well over 30 applicants but only six women were selected to participate. These women were selected as a result of their GPAs, school and community involvement and embodiment of true womanhood, not just physical attributes.

“That’s why we chose the girls we chose, we are very particular,” said Jones.

First runner up, Tatyana Brown during the evening wear segment with her escort, a member of Tau Delta chapter Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

“My favorite part of the pageant was meeting new people, it was a bunch of girls getting together every night practicing dancing, laughing and interacting with other personalities,” said Jazzmine Foston, contestant number one.

Since 2004, the Tau Delta chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha has allowed this pageant to be a platform to highlight and foster the structure between success and etiquette within young women. This highlights women’s poise, confidence, communication skills, intelligence and beauty. Throughout the pageant, academic success is stressed as a result of the fraternity providing winners with scholarship for post secondary education.

Andrew Jones and Camille Gayle, former Miss Black and Gold 2014, hosted the entire pageant. There was a judge panel of four Luther Pierre 2010, University graduate and the first jewel to the Tau Delta chapter, Keba Williams 2011 Miss Black and Gold and singer/songwriter entrepreneur, Allen Pierre-Louis registered nurse at Jackson Memorial Hospital North, Brianna Meneses Sullivan current pre-med junior at University of Miami and former 2013 Miss Black and Gold.

There was much support in the crowd from many other fraternities and sororities. As well as the various queens on campus such as Miss FIU Tanya Whitaker, Miss Caribbean Student Association Keyna Fleary and Miss Woman of Excellence Channell Porter.

They wore their crowns and showed great support. The pageant began with an opening prayer. To follow, the six contestants barefoot dressed in white and gold goddess gowns graced the stage and performed choreographed dances, designed by the swimsuit competition. The contestants presented a wide variety of talents—spoken word, piano playing, singing and many different genres of dance styles.

After the talent and formal wear segments, the Former Miss Black and Gold 2014, Camille Gayle, graced the stage one final time with her crown. "I can thank the Tau Delta chapter enough for giving me this opportunity. So much has happened in my life and one thing that remained constant was their support and love for me," Gayle said.

The hosts were ready to crown the new Miss Black and Gold 2015. All of the contestants were presented with appreciation plaques. Second runner up was contestant number three, Briana Rojo and first runner up was contestant number five.

Tatyana Brown also won Miss congeniality and best talent. Miss popular was contestant number four, Leyanis Diaz, who was also crowned Miss Black and Gold 2015.

“I didn’t expect to win, I wanted to win of course, but after the show I felt like I was going to be third or second place,” Diaz said.

Diaz is a senior broadcast journalism major who plans to get a master’s in Spanish-language journalism from the University at receipt of her undergraduate degree this year.

Diaz is a proud member of Mu Sorority and has been since fall 2012. "Aside from school, I don’t really do anything because I’m always doing something school related. However, I do enjoy movies and hanging out with friends," Diaz said.

Diaz won the crowd with a confident opening message introducing herself. Next for swimsuit competition, she wore an elegant all black piece bikini with a black shawl for her entrance onto the stage.

Merely a split second after hitting the stage, Diaz drops the shawl and struts the stage with a candid smile the entire time. For a talent, Diaz put her best foot forward in a modern hip-hop/Caribbean dance routine.

During the dance routine, Diaz had a wardrobe malfunction, and the DJ played the wrong song for her performance. However, she fixed it right away and continued her performance gracefully.

"I just laughed about it and was actually more upset about the song being wrong," said Diaz. Diaz shared her thoughts on the whole event.

“I enjoyed working with the other ladies and this overall was a great experience...very special I will hold on to it,” Diaz said.

Jazz in the Gardens: A decade of jazz

CAITLIN HOGAN
Contributing Writer
life@fiusm.com

The total was 21,000 people. All of those people came out to the Sun Life Stadium in Miami Gardens for the “Jazz in the Gardens” 10th annual music festival on March 21 and 22. The Women’s Impact Conference and Luncheon kicked off the weekend on Friday, March 20, at the Miramar Cultural Center with the conference titled “THERE’S NO ‘S’ ON MY CHEST BUT A HERO LIVES WITHIN.”

The conference featured keynote speaker reality show personality Omarosa Manigault and R&B vocalist Howard Hewett. This was followed by the 2nd Annual Friday Night Pre-Party, hosted by comedian and radio personality Rickey Smiley, featuring The D.M.C. Band, a comedy show, live entertainment and dancing.

Rickey Smiley and D.L. Hughley Saturday and Sunday as well. The impressive line-up included local artists Karina Iglesias of “The Voice” and John Erinoh, followed by Sheyla E., Men of Soul, Toni Braxton and R. Kelly. Sunday’s acts were local artist Valerie Tyson, the Jazz in the Gardens All Star Band, Brian Culbertson, Run-D.M.C., Erykah Badu and Maxwell.

Mayor Oliver Gilbert of the City of Miami Gardens stated, “This signature event was birthed from humble beginnings with just 1,800 people in attendance for our first year. I am proud to have watched this festival grow in number and esteem and reach this landmark of 10 years.”

Along with the lineup, there were more than 40 exotic food vendors present, a Vendor Marketplace, an outdoor gallery exhibiting professional local artist’s paintings and merchandise being sold for fans to support their favorite jazz and R&B artists. Welcome to all ages and for anyone who can appreciate jazz, neo soul, R&B, and hip-hop, University students are encouraged to attend JITG next year.

This is the 10th annual music festival in the Gardens with the theme “In the Gardens” 10th annual music festival Stadium in Miami Gardens for the “Jazz in the Gardens” 10th annual music festival on Sunday, March 29 in the Graham Center Ballrooms at the Miami University Gardens.
Mr. Wonderful’ rock on LP

The Beacon – Friday, April 3, 2015

Vincent Rives

RIVES REVIEWS

Action Bronson is one of the biggest acts in rock in 2015. Standing at 5’8”, his one leg makes him the smallest man in pop culture.

Bronson’s story is like reading the plot of a Marvel superhero movie. Before rap, Bronson was a gourmet chef, but after a kitchen knife sliced his leg in 2011, Bronson used his downtime to focus more on his rapping. Four years later, Bronson is releasing his major label debut album “Mr. Wonderful” under Atlantic Records/Vice Media.

The Albanian MC out of Queens, New York has a distinct sound style about him. He might be the closest thing to modern day Wu Tang, besides vocally sounding like Ghostface Killah, Bronson is best known for his over-the-top metaphors, which include him performing ridiculous stunts like triple backflips, or dropkicks. Very similar to Wu Tang, Bronson’s transitions immediately to him connecting thoroughly, but when it’s off, it’s way off. One of the best tracks is “Mr. Wonderful” where the intro track is a recording from a hip-hop 80’s radio show, and again, he decides against it.

Bronson channels his inner 80’s rock star. Yet, on those channels his inner 80’s rock star. Yet, on those tracks he feels like another Action Bronson mixtape, but with major label budgeting. The majority of production features Clanton’s frequent collaborators: The Alchemist, Party Supplies, Statik Selektah, with additional work from Mark Ronson and OVO Noah “40” Shebib from Drake’s camp.

The music videos for “Easy Rider”, “Acting Crazy”, and “Baby Blue” are the most creative and downright funniest videos since the days of Ludacris. Bronson is often seen in another attempt to win sympathy and after venting to his sports ball on the seven train, or on the three train.

He starts thinking that he isn’t being respected or appreciated, and after venting to his sports ball friends at the bar, he realizes he needs to do something amazing to make them all notice him. Entering a random cow, which Phil thought would be great to butcher, but everyone else is naturally against it.

In fact, Todd used to spend time on his uncle’s ranch, so he knows how to take care of a cow! As one can imagine, Phil is less than pleased.

Will Forte is great at facial expressions, and these episodes really demonstrate that as we see him fake a smile, hide pain, or pretend to be in pain or surprise. Every emotion Phil has feels genuine or genuinely phony, and the rest of the cast is just as excellent at either being funny, serious or sweet. Of the many moments I loved in these episodes, a very nice one comes at the end of “Mooovin’ In”.

After finding the cow Phil lets loose in another attempt to win sympathy after bringing it back, Todd decides to let Phil take all the credit for finding it.

Todd explains that Phil means so much to him and that letting him take credit for finding the cow seems righteous. Phil comes off as truly touched, and right as he says he doesn’t want to take the credit, the scene transitions immediately to him announcing to everyone that he found the cow.

One thing these episodes further demonstrate is that Phil has become very unlikable.

While I might not mind and enjoy seeing him fail as well as see him succeed, I fear many people’s complaints will be something along the lines of “how can we root for such an unlikable character?”

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While I might not mind and enjoy seeing him fail as well as see him succeed, I fear many people’s complaints will be something along the lines of “how can we root for such an unlikable character?”

Indeed, this is a problem if you’re rooting for Phil. I, for one, am merely observing Phil and his companions as they do their best to survive the post-apocalypse.

As for the future of this series, however, the direction it has been taking thus far may prove a problem for many viewers.

Vincent Rives vincent.rives@fiusm.com

‘Mr Wonderful’ rock on LP

Lately, people either give concern or flak in regards to “The Last Man on Earth” not being good anymore. According to some of these folk, the show has gone downhill ever since the beginning with the introduction of other characters and the run around of the same plot, like Phil not getting over Melissa. Also, according to these people, the show is no longer funny.

That last one I don’t understand, since for me the show has remained just as hilarious as ever, if not more so.

Episode 7, “She Drives Me Crazy” continues with Phil not getting over Melissa and everyone learning that she and Todd are having sex – all the time.

This bothers Phil so much that in a hilarious scene involving a town meeting, he tries to vote to make the sex sessions less frequent, but he ends up being voted to clean up his toilet pool.

Soon, he devises a plan to strand Todd in the middle of nowhere during a long car trip, but after driving off, then reversing, then driving off, then reversing again and again, he decides against it. It shows that Phil isn’t all that bad and even Todd thinks he’s a nice guy. Then again, Todd thinks everyone’s nice.

“I could be nicer,” said Phil, as he realizes that he could use some improvement, leading us to the next scene of him seriously redoing himself to clean out his pool.

Then comes episode 8, “Mooovin’ In” and for the first time in several episodes, the dynamic changes.

Phil stops being so concerned about Melissa and Todd and more concerned about his standing in the community.

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Rafael Abreu rafael.abreu@fiusm.com
BASEBALL

Panthers look to take Conference USA series against UTSA after B-CU loss

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

After dropping their first meeting on March 24, FIU looked to bounce back and even up the season series against Bethune-Cookman. The first game between them, the Wildcats won a close one 3-2. In this past game, it was a back-and-forth match that went down to the end. B-CU was the team that came out victorious for the second time this season with a score of 7-4. This was a tough loss for the Panthers to take as B-CU is in a bit of a slump with an 11-21 record.

FIU was always able to bounce back after the Wildcats put runs on the board. The Panthers scored four runs on six hits and was led by sophomore JC Escarra, who went 2-for-4 with a solo home run. Freshman Jack Schauf followed up Escarra’s performance going 1-for-1 on the night with two RBI, while drawing to a walk.

Pitching seemed to struggle in this game. Sophomore Williams Durruthy earned his first loss of the season after giving up two runs on three hits and striking out two in only two and two-thirds innings of action. Starter David Lee earned the “no decision” and was able to hold the Wildcats to two runs. One in which was unearned. Lee kept B-CU’s offense in check as they only tallied two hits in five innings pitched.

It seemed like every time the Wildcats scored, FIU was able to respond. They took a one-run lead three times in the game. When B-CU scored in the second, fourth and sixth, FIU responded with runs in the third, fifth and seventh innings to tie the game up. Late in the game, heading into the top of the eighth with the score knotted up at 3-3, B-CU scored two runs to take a 5-3 lead. Escarra’s solo shot pulled the Panthers within one in the bottom of the eighth. However, the Wildcats countered with two more runs in the top of the ninth for a 7-4 advantage thanks to B-CU’s from Austin Garcia, who drove in five runs in the whole game while going 2-for-4.

After this rough loss the Panthers need to regroup and focus winning those conference games which means a lot. They will return to Conference USA action as they will be hosting the UTSA Roadrunners in a three-game series this weekend.

Jo Mai Soledad Lorenzo/The Beacon

Panthers look to take Conference USA series against UTSA after B-CU loss.

SOFTBALL

Blazers of UAB next on the schedule for FIU

ALANNAH ALFONSO
Staff Writer
alannah.alfonso@fiusm.com

FIU softball will host a three-game conference matchup against the UAB Blazers this Thursday, April 2 and Friday, April 3 at Felsburg Field at the FIU softball stadium. Coming off a series victory against another C-USA rival, FAU, the Panthers look to come out victorious against the Blazers that come to Miami for the first time this season.

The Panthers have had dominant pitching and hitting especially by senior Krystal Garcia who cleared the bases with doubles in both of the victories played this past weekend against the Florida Atlantic Owls.

Sophomore Gabby Spallone is now leading C-USA in doubles (12) with sophomore Stephanie Texeira (10) and Ashley Belans (9) are tied for second.

FIU has a good conference matchup against UAB and have Caitlin Antfield to look out for offensively. The junior is leading in almost every category including batting average (.495), on base percentage (.533), and hits (54). Junior Sara Beth Williamson is also one to look out for as she is leading her team with 7 home runs this season tied with FIU sophomore Stephanie Texeira.

Texeira will definitely put the pressure on as she leads in a few of the same categories. With 38 RBIs so far this season, UAB should definitely be careful when pitching to Texeira. Both programs have a solid offense which will be a fun matchup to watch alongside both pitching staffs that have aces like UAB’s freshman Megan Smith and sophomore Cara Goodwin against FIU’s junior Corrine Jenkins and senior Shelby Graves. Jenkins registered her 11th career shutout victory over Florida Atlantic last weekend placing her as fourth leading in all-time Panther softball history.

It will be a great conference matchup to watch Thursday at 6 p.m. at Felsburg Field at the FIU softball stadium and a double header on Friday at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Freshman infielder Ashley Belans runs to fourth base in the game against the University of Massachusetts Lowell on March 17. The Panthers play the University of Alabama at Birmingham on Friday, April 3 at 5 p.m. and 7 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.
The sand volleyball team has shown how strong they are this year. In the beginning of the season, the Panthers were ranked No. 9 and looked for a strong start for the program’s third year. The team has done exactly that the first month of the season.

On Monday, March 30, the team moved up to No. 3 in the nation in the DiG Magazine Collegiate Poll. They have accomplished this with a record of 13-1, which includes two-ranked competitions, a 3-0 record against AVCA Top 10 opponents, and a 4-1 record against DiG Magazine Top 20 teams. This is the best start to a volleyball season in its short, three year existence.

The Panthers have swept three consecutive tournaments they have participated in: the UNF Sand Invitational in Saint Augustine Beach, Florida, the Tiger Sand Tournament in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and the Palmetto Invitational, South Carolina. At one point, the team went five straight matches winning, showing how dominant it can be.

The last tournament the Panthers competed in was the Palmetto Invitational against Pepperdine University and University of South Carolina, the host. Pepperdine was ranked No. 2 in the DiG Magazine rankings before the Panthers won 3-2. The team posted the same outcome against South Carolina, which was ranked No. 17 into the next match. The Panthers used these two victories as momentum in order to jump into the No. 3 spot. In the DiG Magazine rankings, the Panthers trail University of Southern California and University of Hawaii. The Trojans are undefeated with a record of 12-0, and the Warriors jump into the spot with a 10-1 record.

Despite trailing those teams, the Panthers lead the way for Florida State University. The team has played both FSU and Stetson in the Spring Break Tournament in DeLand, Florida. The team defeated the Seminoles 3-2, which were ranked No. 2 at the time, but Stetson handed the Panthers their only loss of the season with a tightly contested, 2-3 victory at home.

The play of senior Maryna Samody and freshman Anja Licka has been the boost the Panthers needed coming into the season.

At one point, the team went five straight matches winning 5-0, showing how dominant it can be.

They run the No. 1 spot for the team and are 13-1 in dual matches, including eleven straight wins. These players have an opposing playing style that is working for them. Samody, standing at 6-foot-2, provides power needed for kills, while Licka, standing at 5-foot-9, provides speed and quickness for defense.

The team will host its first tournament of the season as it welcomes four teams to the Doctors Hospital FIU Surf and Turf Tournament on Friday, April 3 and Saturday April 4 in Miami Beach. On Friday, the Panthers will face off against Webber International University and Stanford University, which is currently ranked No. 15 in DiG Magazine. On Saturday, the team will compete against Carson-Newman University and Florida Atlantic University.

The Panthers will look to use their No. 3 ranking as fuel going into another tough weekend in order to maintain one of the best records in the nation.

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**Dolphins have ‘new-look’ receivers**

The Miami Dolphins made a big splash by signing defensive lineman Ndamukong Suh this offseason, but the receiving corps might’ve been the most changed group on the team this offseason. Out are Hartline, Gibson, Clay and Wallace, and in are a bunch of young guys that we don’t know much about.

Yeah, Dolphins fans should be concerned.

Mike Wallace’s departure just plain shocked me. Understand the frustration that Dolphins fans had for him; Tannehill never was able to hit him in stride consistently and there were times when Wallace wouldn’t fight for the ball. That being said, I still think that ditching Wallace was a mistake.

First of all, a guy with the kind of speed that Mike Wallace possesses doesn’t just appear on your team via a lucky draft pick. These kinds of players are highly sought after, even in the NFL, if their hands aren’t that good.

What’s valuable is what the Wallace’s playing style that is working for them. The threat of Wallace up top was a key to the Dolphins’ offensive gameplan. But unfortunately, fans won’t be able to enjoy that style for a long time because of a rather disappointing acquisition.

The trade made this late in the offseason when the Dolphins could’ve done something with the few million dollars that they are now stuck with this year! Was this a well-thought plan and almost leads me to believe that something was indeed going behind the scenes.

Now Jarvis Landry, Kenny Stills and the newly acquired Jordan Cameron will have to do the heavy lifting for the league’s youngest receiving corps. Still produced adequately for the New Orleans Saints, but it has yet to be seen if he will live up to the billing of starting receiver.

Overall, the only thing that I’m certain about is that I have no idea how the lines of these pass-catchers will fill out by season’s end.

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**Surgery becoming epidemic in MLB**

Over the past several years, there has been an epidemic of sorts plaguing professional baseball. As each season goes on, it appears that many, many of pitchers requiring season-ending Tommy John surgery continues to rapidly increase.

Tommy John surgery is the procedure in which the ulnar collateral ligament - UCL - in the elbow is reconstructed, allowing the player to throw a baseball again after months of rehab.

Before the surgery existed, pitchers with a tear in their UCL would never be able to pitch again. It’s a great advancement in modern medicine that has allowed the preservation of many pitcher’s careers, but it’s still considered a drastic procedure no player ever wants to receive.

Clearly it’s a crashing news for a pitcher to hear that his arm is going to be shut down indefinitely, but many pitchers are able to come back from the surgery better than they were before.

However, many players have never been able to fully recover from Tommy John surgery. The surgery itself heals the UCL, but the muscles and ligaments surrounding it must and never return to the level of efficiency they were at before the surgery.

There are many different theories as to why the number of players requiring Tommy John has continued to increase in recent years. Some point to the fact that pitchers nowadays are throwing almost all year long starting a very young age. The stress on the arm catches up to them. Others claim certain pitches or deliveries that torque the arm are to blame for the increase in UCL tears.

The statistics on the issue vary completely, and make it very difficult to peg down this down to sound conclusions. All you can conclude for certain is that Tommy John surgery is something affecting many young pitchers and just about every organization in the MLB.

The Matlins are one of the teams that have been hurt the most by UCL injuries, most notably the loss of ace Jose Fernandez last season that will spill over into the 2015 season. They also recently saw relief pitcher Aaron Crow injure his UCL in Spring Training, and pending a second medical opinion he will require Tommy John surgery.

You expect pitchers like Fernandez to come back strong after months of rehabilitation. He’s one of the most talented young stars in the MLB, and the surgery should allow him to return at a high level. A similar case is Matt Harvey, the young ace of the Mets who is set to return from Tommy John this season.

For players like Crow, however, who are unproven and attempting to make a roster and solidify a job in the MLB, Tommy John hits them even harder. Crow will be unable to do any baseball activities for months, and as unfortunate as it is, this surgery could potentially end his MLB career.

While it’s near impossible to fully understand why the “epidemic” has been spreading throughout the MLB, the growing need for Tommy John surgery is the unfortunate reality that has ended — or slowed down — the career of many young pitchers.
Good Wine and Good Company

BY KRISTAL C. PUGH
Contributing Writer
kcp@fiusm.com

Students no longer have to wait until Friday night happy hour to have a nice glass of wine.

Friends of Wine is a social club based on the Biscayne campus that has been around since 1989. However, the club originally was apart of the school of hospitality, the club just recently branched off onto its own.

Friends of Wine meets every Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. on Biscayne Bay campus in the hospitality building in the Carnival Center.

Students are able to try anywhere between three to five wines paired with appetizers.

The events for the rest of this semester are free. However, in the future if there is a fee, it’ll be $5.

There are variety of events each semester with guest speakers and regional wines from all over.

On Tuesday April 7, the Friends of Wine will have the honor of Javier Fonseca speaking to them about El Carajon International Tapas -Restaurant -Wine-Shop-Bakery.

Fonseca will provide further details about the restaurant and of course the wine selection and other great information.

The event to follow will be April 14 with guest speaker Eric Lake where the club will learn about dry wine. The flyer suggests the question “Is this wine dry?”

Professor Patrick Chip Cassidy, a wine professor here at the University, created Friends of Wine.

He started the club for a wine sales job he held and two of his students attended.

This encouraged him to make something similar available to students.

Allowing students to taste wine and become educated on the different kinds, tastes and learn to have a greater appreciation.

The club indulges in different tastes from around the world and learn the history of them.

Learning where they came from, how they came to be.

All questions about wine are answered within this club.

Kodie Koch, a graduate student of hospitality and president of the Friends of Wine club encourages all students to come.

It’s a very relaxed educational environment.

“I fell in love with wine before I came to FIU,” Koch said.

“I went to a restaurant and the sommelier had me try several kinds of wine,” Koch said.

Koch said that a red wine called Bordeaux was her favorite. “After tasting wine I became so curious and kind of made wine tasting and educating myself about it, my hobby.”

Wine has often been described as poetry in a bottle, and the best wine is wine served with friends. Take a friend and go check out the club you might enjoy yourself more than you expect!

“We are a small club and have about six main members and if anyone wants to join just come check us out on a Tuesday of your choice,” Koch said.

If students have a free Tuesday evening, and want to learn about wine while tasting it, consider the Friends of Wine club.

However students must be 21 or older to drink.

WHAT: Friends of Wine Club
WHEN: Every Tuesday 5:30 p.m.
WHERE: Biscayne Bay Campus, Chaplin School of Hospitality

Alumnus wins recognition for food blog

BY SUDIYEN NAVARRETE
Contributing Writer
sudiyen.navarrete@fiusm.com

With a zeal for food and pugs, Geoffrey Anderson, a FIU Student Media and FIU journalism alumnus, has been awarded the 2015 Johnshop & Wales University Zest Award for best food blog by reader’s choice.

Alumus wins recognition for food blog

Along with his girlfriend, Dianne Rubin, he features different restaurants across Miami interviewing chefs and owners to understand their pursuit for top-notch food service. According to the JWU website, the Zest Awards honor leaders in culinary arts to celebrate South Florida’s culinary heritage.

Graduating from the University, Anderson began to visit different restaurants and it occurred to him that blogging about food was what he wanted.

After a trip to Chicago two years ago, Anderson and Rubin came up with the idea of incorporating their favorite dog with their food blog to deliver a unique idea to their followers.

Everybody has a food blog, [but we asked], “How are we going to be different?” Anderson said.

“You’re not allowed to take a pug to go bigger and create their website miamifoodpug.com. Both said they needed to “go big, or go home.”

According to Rubin, they were declared winners after a month of waiting for votes to be counted. She said they couldn’t keep calm when they were announced winners.

“We have visited restaurants in Brickell, Doral, Miami Beach, the City of Sweetwater and Wynwood, for example.”

They started with restaurants and bars in Coral Gables and made their first service and events.

Their favorite restaurant is Sweet Dogs on Calle Ocho. It offers unique foods, especially in hot dogs. According to the blog, customers have the choice of creating their own hot dog to fit their particular tastes.

Anderson said the restaurant’s owner, Victor Ruiz, gives exceptional customer service.

“He is the nicest and most humble man ever,” said Anderson. “[Sweet Dogs] was ranked number 12 in the top 100 restaurants in the country [according to yelp.com],” Anderson said.

They’ve been able to maintain friendships and connections thanks to the blog. “They know who we are,” Rubin said.

They also have partnered with Compassionate Pug Rescue to support its campaign “Find Me a Home Friday.” They were able to get photo shots of adoptable pugs and incorporate them into their food photos.

The couple is planning to move together this fall with the adoption of a pug leading their interest for food and pugs to success.