University launches United Way campaign, goal of $200,000

LESLIE OVALLE
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The University’s partnership with Miami’s largest nonprofit organization, United Way, is launching a campaign this year, which adds up with a goal of $200,000 dollars. The non-profit organization focuses on improving education, financial stability and health in the community. According to the organization’s website, they believe that these three areas are the building blocks for a good life.

“FIU is about being a service to the community,” said Alexio Calatayud, president of the Student Government Association. “We are our community, so [United Way] is a service to us.”

This year’s campaign video focuses on Miami-Dade’s poverty statistics, stating that out of half of the Miami-Dade community, 29 percent are “one emergency away” from falling into poverty and 21 percent are already living in poverty.

“We basically fund programs in the communities to help those people who need that little boost,” said Norie Del Valle, vice president overseeing the organization’s fundraising efforts.

United Way has been a part of the Miami community for nine decades, claiming that their story is the story of Miami—as stated on their website. United Way has been involved in the community in different events, including the 1926 “Great Miami Hurricane,” the 1940 war efforts, the Cuban migration and Hurricane Andrew.

The University’s fundraising calls are reached with the help of students, faculty and staff, said Del Valle.

Faculty and staff have the option of donating through payroll deduction, but the options for pledging also include credit card e-check, cash and check.

“We do a number of events,” said Sandra Gonzalez-Levy, External Relations senior vice president and co-chair of the FIU United Way campaign. “We would like students to actually participate in [United Way]. It’s planning a number of events to get students to participate.”

These events will be going throughout the year, from Sept. 17 and through Dec. 11, the date of the United Way Auction and conclusion of the year’s campaign.

Some events include the passing of a donation bucket at the Homecoming Game on Saturday, Oct. 24, where a bucket will be passed around the audience and everyone pitches in as much as they’d like, said Del Valle.

All the money goes to United Way.

According to Calatayud the campaign will include a dunk tank, with student leaders and administrators and a Halloween-themed event.

The Homecoming Council will also be participating in this year’s campaign. All donations made for viewer’s choice during “Unleash The Crown” pageant will be passed around at the Homecoming Game on Saturday, Oct. 24, where a bucket will be passed around the audience and everyone pitches in as much as they’d like, said Del Valle.

All the money goes to United Way.

According to Calatayud the campaign will include an event where students can vote for something that they think should be a thing of the past. It is an event that is sure to gain a lot of attention.

“Even scientists think that exposure to lead in children was a thing of the past. It isn’t,” said Guilarte. “Although this phenomenon has had dangerous levels of toxic lead in the past, we are working towards a solution.”

Guilarte provided his expertise to the New York Daily News, in April 2015, tests showed a 2-year-old had dangerous levels of lead in his blood.

“Even scientists think that exposure to lead in children was a thing of the past. It isn’t,” said Guilarte. “Although this phenomenon has had dangerous levels of toxic lead in the past, we are working towards a solution.”

Guilarte also focused on engaging faculty and expanding research opportunities. Another of his mandates is to improve student success as the college seeks to enroll 200 doctoral students by 2020.

Guilarte is also a scientist in the fields of mechanism-based neurotoxicology and neuroscience. His approaches to neuroscience research has used behavioral, cellular and molecular testing and the application of brain imaging technology.

Guilarte has also done research on the effects of environmental chemicals on the central nervous system and on diseases that break down neurons. He has worldwide recognition for his revelations of the effects of low-level lead exposure on the central nervous system during development and for the therapies he developed to reverse
FAMU settles hazing lawsuit with drum major’s family
Florida A&M University on Friday settled a wrongful death lawsuit with the family of Robert Champion over the fatal haz ing of the drum major for $1.1 million and an apology, according to documents obtained by the Orlando Sentinel. An insurance company will pay $800,000 to the drum major’s estate and the university will pay $300,000 through the Florida Department of Financial Services, the maximum allowed without a claims bill that would have required the Legislature’s approval.

Seven years later, Obama still mump on Keystone
When TransCanada applied to build the Keystone XL pipeline, John McCain had just picked a little-known Alaska governor as his running mate in a desperate attempt to stop the presidential campaign juggernaut of a freshman senator named Barack Obama. Saturday marks seven years since the day TransCanada applied for its permit to build the pipeline from the Canadian oil sands, through the United States’ midsection and refineries in Texas. As Obama prepares to leave office in a year, there is still no sign of a decision from him on the pipeline.

Munich, beer festival near, glad to be at center of refugee crisis
The central rail station here these days is a maze of eager but confused new lives in this medieval city. Holding what’s left of their worldly belongings, families with overstuffed luggage are waking, squat on benches, or pace, trying to figure out how to navigate thesenew new lives in this medieval city.

Taiwan-China tensions on the rise as elections draw near
The Presidential Building in Taipei isn’t easily mistaken for other buildings—it’s an ornate Baroque-style structure that dates back to 1919 and is capped by a 200-foot-tall tower. Modesto Maidique Campus:

TRIBUTE NEWS SERVICE

THE BEACON

I-SHIP IT

University to hold event promoting safe sex
GUETHSHINA ALTENA
Contributing Writer
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Jonathan Lopera said college is a great place to mingle, and that makes it more important for students to check for sexually transmitted diseases.

“With so much interaction, it’s necessary for us to take the necessary precautions to stay healthy,” said Lopera, a freshman finance major.

Student Health Services’ Healthy Living Program will host its third annual two-day free STD testing to promote safe sex. Students can test for Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia and human immunodeficiency virus.

According to Stephanie Caceres, University Health Services health educator and event coordinator, participants can call to find out their results within two weeks to a month. On a normal day, testing on campus can cost from $6.50 to $40.

MySQL Madrileño Campus, GC 210, Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
(305) 348-2709
news@fiusm.com

The event has seen an increase in almost double the number of participants in the last two years, according to Caceres. 172 people attended in September 2013 and 313 people in February 2015.

“The numbers are expected to grow as more people become aware of the benefits of STD testing,” said Caceres. “The event provides education on safe sex practices, besides testing.”

“STD is very important, especially for people in relationships,” said Sherley Joseph, a freshman nursing major.

“It’s a great way for people to protect their bodies and their partner’s as well. This event will make sure that students who attend more about safe sex practices,” said Joseph.

For those who rather not know their status or are too afraid of what their results would be, Caceres said it’s better to be informed and prevent the spread of a disease. She said that if a disease is detected early, some STDs can be completely eliminated.

Bacterial STDs such as Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia can often be cured with antibiotics. Even though diseases like HIV cannot, it can be alleviated with treatments.

Lopera said he appreciates the University providing free STD testing for students, which not only benefits them, but also the community as a whole.

Personally, I believe remaining healthy should be a priority for everyone. It’s our job to protect not only ourselves but others of these diseases,” said Lopera.

The event will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Sept. 22 at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus in parking lot 8, which is located in front of the Student Health Center.

United Way kicks off at the University
WAY, PAGE 1

because all funds collected will go straight to United Way and the community.

Previously, the auctions have included roundtrip airline tickets, restaurant gift certificates, electronics, jewelry and gift baskets, among other things.


There is an entrance fee of five dollars for all attending concerts which will include drinks and complimentary hors d’oeuvres.

The auction will be held on Friday, Dec. 11 at the GC Ballrooms from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

“FLU is unique because of the student participation,” said Del Valle. “As the university has grown we’ve been working hard to get the students more engaged.”
Technology is taking over our world

ARIEL WEINSTEIN
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Every day, people walk through life not paying attention to the majority of what is going on around them.

Everyone is focused on his or her smartphones, texting and looking at Instagram posts, browsing through Facebook and getting in some online shopping. When they have free time during the day, it’s all about procrastinating their to-do lists with Netflix and Hulu.

Hours upon hours are spent with their attention glued to some technological device but is this a healthy way to live though?

Every hour spent on technology takes on toll on your body which will eventually start sleep, it turns into hours, which is also spent with your phone to go to bed before finally agreeing to others over a text than to meet up in face-to-face.

Society as a whole has become more and more comfortable in talking to others over a text than in his or her message. Words and comments can have such a different meaning when you can physically hear the comment being made. This enables you to have a more productive and higher quality conversation when you can hear them out face-to-face.

Every ounce of attention you take is all fun and games, and there probably hasn’t been a class any student has taken since elementary school that has been all fun and games. So how do students deal with boredom in class? They resort to technology. Every ounce of attention they may have had towards the professor and the material being taught now goes straight to their phones and laptops.

This is a serious issue because instead of keeping up with the material and understanding the concepts while being taught, they must learn it on their own time, which is also spent being distracted by their technology.

The technological world is by far one of the most beneficial and impressive worlds humans have created. However, we need to be careful that we’re not making the technological world our whole world.

Working in groups is easier

HEATHER WILKINS
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opinion@fiusm.com

Whenever you hear the teacher or professor say the words ‘group’ and ‘work’ together or even ‘team’ and ‘work’ together, you know your day just got worse.

Even though most businesses have teams or groups and some law enforcement organizations have groups of two or more to help with investigations, there are just days where you don’t want to work in a group but you have to show up with a smile on your face anyway.

Group members usually receive more complaints than the actual group itself. Some members assume the group needs a leader and voluntarily become the group leader without asking anyone else if they want to be the person in charge. Other times, you have one group member who just does all the work because no one else wants to organize and manage the group’s information. In most cases, you have that one group member who is completely ignored and isn’t involved with the group’s decision making until the approaching deadline.

Why do people assume working in groups makes everything easier than working alone? Some businesses assume that by working in a group, the paperwork is done faster. In other businesses, the paper work is completed and delivered on time by the individual.

Not all businesses and corporations follow the same general guidelines about group work; they just do it so there is no mess and no fuss about the job and getting everything done in a timely fashion.

Groups are even used in educational facilities. Teachers who enforce group work often believe that it helps students with their managing abilities and enhances their skills in both communication and problem solving.

But there are exceptions to this rule and usually those who do not wish to participate in groups often become the lone wolf.

The lone wolf will be singled out by other members because of the lack of effort on the individual’s behalf. Being a lone wolf isn’t a problem if you’re in a career position that doesn’t involve group work but for those career paths that require a team of people it can be pretty challenging to get along with anyone.

Whether you are a lone wolf or an arid group person, working with someone else won’t kill you because friends are yet to be made and relationships are yet to be discovered. You can be for or against group work, but eventually you will have to deal with having professional working partnerships in the long run.
finding solutions to problems affecting underserved only raises FIU’s reputation but also showcases the FIU graduate students at major conferences not presenting their research at national and international degree students. He encourages FIU students to also graduated three doctoral and two master’s "from students to colleagues." 

Krishnaswamy Jayachandran, Ph.D. Earth and the Environment College of Arts & Sciences Professor

Krishnaswamy Jayachandran is a noted plant microbiologist. In addition to actively contributing to his field of study, he has mentored 200 undergraduate and graduate students toward their research projects and promotes STEM experiential and experimental learning. In addition, he fosters collaboration among graduate students and undergraduate students through a mentoring program. His efforts speak to his belief that today’s students are tomorrow’s decision-makers and natural stewards.

Steven F. Oberbauer, Ph.D. Biological Sciences College of Arts & Sciences Professor

Steven Oberbauer is the graduate program director of biological sciences. As a researcher, scientist and scholar, he adapts his mentoring style to meet the needs of his students, displaying a genuine interest for the scholarly pursuits of FIU students. By encouraging students to take ownership of their projects and providing them with the necessary support, he continues with his mission to transition advisees "from students to colleagues."

Jiuhua George Chen, Ph.D. Mechanical and Materials Engineering College of Engineering & Computing Professor

Jiuhua Chen is an active contributor of new research. In the past five years, he has also graduated three doctoral and two master's degree students. He encourages FIU students to present their research at national and international conferences so that these emerging scholars can gain confidence. He believes that the presence of FIU graduate students at major conferences not only raises FIU’s reputation but also showcases the university’s strength.

Excellence in Advising and Mentorship

Marisol Florén-Romer, Ph.D. Law Library College of Law Assistant Director, Librarian

Marisol Floren-Romer is adept at conducting research and locating legal scholarship (no matter how elusive the text or material) as the College of Law’s international reference librarian. While her specialty is investigating information pertaining to foreign and international law, she also provides assistance to faculty and students researching U.S. state and federal laws. In 2011, she began digitizing special foreign law collections and providing this content to Digital Library of the Caribbean.

Kenneth J. Feeley, Ph.D. Biological Sciences College of Arts & Sciences Associate Professor

A respected U.S. tropical biologist, Kenneth Feeley has 71 peer-reviewed publications. His research is at the leading edge of studies concerning the role of climate change and deforestation on the persistence and distribution of Amazonian forest species. In 2014, he was awarded the National Science Foundation’s prestigious Career Grant. An active member of FIU’s Biology department, he has headed a successful lab of graduate students.

Eric Bishop-von Wettberg, Ph.D. Biological Sciences College of Arts & Sciences Assistant Professor

Eric Bishop-von Wettberg is a noted plant evolutionary biologist and ecologist. He develops new varieties of crops that have the stress tolerance of wild plants and the cultural characteristics favored by small farmers in the developing world. His interdisciplinary approach to ecological studies has inspired significant collaborations among FIU scholars. His understanding of the issues in modern plant breeding and conservation have earned him acclaim in the scientific and agricultural communities.

Excellence in Librarianship

Jeffrey H. Greenfield, Ph.D., PE Civil and Environmental Engineering College of Engineering & Computing Lecturer

For Jeffrey Greenfield, the most successful accomplishment has been his field efforts to implement systems combining engineers build systems combining real-world situations. Greenfield says every Greenfield’s students say his lessons are transferrable to real-world situations. He makes an effort to find the appropriate means to deliver his message, whether it be through humor and lively interactions. He shares his extensive knowledge of the field with 700-800 students per semester, and, remarkably, takes the time to support students with intellectual disabilities.

Joanne Sanders-Reio gives students a chance to learn thanks to her endeavors. For Athauda, minimizing the gap between students' perceived as negative to being valued as essential to their education. He creates a supportive learning atmosphere where errors are transformed from being stigmatized to being valued as essential to their education. He creates a supportive learning atmosphere where errors are transformed from being stigmatized to being viewed as essential to their learning.

Excellence in Research and Creative Activities

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Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, Senior Lecturer

Dr. Gagani Athauda designs lessons to ensure her students' individual needs are met. Her students say her lessons are transferrable to real-world situations. She meets her students' individual needs even in large classes of 120. Her students say her lessons are transferrable to real-world situations. In addition to her research, Pelaez has been developing her ability to teach. Her effective teaching methods empower students with intellectual disabilities.

Excellence in Teaching

Vivek M. Uribe-Urnan, Ph.D. History College of Arts & Sciences/ Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs Associate Professor

Vivek Uribe-Urnan holds joint appointments in history and law. His most distinguished accomplishment has been his field efforts to implement the $20.5 million Justice Reform and Modernization Program to overhaul Colombia’s justice system. Led by Uribe-Urnan’s Luis Salas, the program has resulted in the construction of several houses of justice in Colombia to strengthen the resolution of local disputes. Uribe-Urnan serves on the FIU Faculty Senate and he is also chair of the History department.

Excellence in Service

Eric Camayd-Freixas, Ph.D. Modern Languages College of Arts & Sciences/Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs Professor

Camayd-Freixas is a specialist in socio-linguistic and epistemological approaches to Latin American/Latino literature and cultural studies. He is also a leading specialist in translation and interpretation. His training in the analysis of texts and speeches coupled with years of experience as a forensic linguist for federal state courts have afforded him an in-depth knowledge of evidentiary procedures, establishing him as a national voice on immigration policy.

Orlando Jacinto Garcia, Ph.D. Music College of Arts & Sciences/ The Arts Professor

Orlando Jacinto Garcia is a professor of music composition and composer in residence with FIU’s College of Architecture + The Arts. One of the most important composers of his generation, he has earned three Latin Grammy nominations. Garcia embraces new technology and innovation in his field. In 2009, he collaborated with FIU colleagues Josek Kolasinski, John Stuart and Campbell McGrath to present the inter-disciplinary video opera Transcending Time at the Biennale in Zagreb, Croatia.

Luther Brewster Jr., Ph.D. Humanities, Health and Society Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Assistant Professor

In addition to being a dedicated Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine professor, Luther Brewster is actively involved in finding solutions to problems affecting underserved communities across South Florida. His three-tier community engagement structure has received tremendous support and is credited with bringing together a range of organizations such as governmental entities, community leaders, non-profits and foundations to respond to the health disparities of client populations.

Excellence in Engagement

Ivanessa Arostegui, MS Clinical & Counseling Psychology College of Education Lecturer

Ivanessa Arostegui uses active learning methods to foster open minds, explore possibilities and break down their preconceptions. She says her students are energized and invested as drivers of their own learning.

Excellence in Community Service

Jeffrey H. Greenfield, Ph.D., PE Civil and Environmental Engineering College of Engineering & Computing Lecturer

For Jeffrey Greenfield, the most successful accomplishment has been his field efforts to implement systems combining engineers build systems combining real-world situations. Greenfield says every Greenfield’s students say his lessons are transferrable to real-world situations. He makes an effort to find the appropriate means to deliver his message, whether it be through humor and lively interactions. He shares his extensive knowledge of the field with 700-800 students per semester, and, remarkably, takes the time to support students with intellectual disabilities.

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Excellence in Teaching

Vivek M. Uribe-Urnan, Ph.D. History College of Arts & Sciences/ Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs Associate Professor

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Excellence in Service
Excellence in Teaching

**Uma Swamy, Ph.D.**
Chemistry and Biochemistry
College of Arts & Sciences
Senior Lecturer
For Uma Swamy, being a great teacher means being a lifelong scholar – constantly learning and innovating. To make chemistry engaging, Swamy designs courses with simple explanations and examples for difficult concepts; she links concepts to phenomena or applications from everyday life. David Chatfield, chair and associate professor of chemistry, says the department is leading the way in the university-wide effort to promote active learning thanks to her endeavors.

**Gagani Athauda, M.D.**
Cellular Biology and Pharmacology
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine
Assistant Professor
Dr. Gagani Athauda designs lessons to meet her students’ individual needs even though some classes can be as big as 120 students. She also supports her students outside of the classroom, serving as a mentor to many of them. For Athauda, minimizing the gap between students and faculty creates a comfortable environment that is conducive to active learning and student engagement. Her students say her courses are of the highest quality.

**Hector Huerta, OTD, MS, OTR/L**
Occupational Therapy
Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences
Assistant Professor
Hector Huerta creates learning environments where students are energized and invested as drivers of their own education. He creates a supportive learning atmosphere where errors are transformed from being perceived as negative to being valued as essential opportunities for professional development. His students describe him as knowledgeable, creative and generous and consider him one of those professors who will leave an indelible mark on their lives.

**Ebru Özer, Ph.D.**
Landscape Architecture, College of Architecture + The Arts
Associate Professor
Ebru Özer’s students have won many competitive design awards and prestigious scholarships, bringing national recognition to the landscape architecture program at FIU. She keeps her students up to date on cutting-edge research, teaching ecological sustainability in landscape as well as addressing some of the most important issues facing society – climate change and economic disparity. Many of Özer’s students have gone on to successful careers in top design firms.

**Joanne Sanders-Reio, Ph.D.**
Leadership and Professional Studies
College of Education
Senior Instructor
Joanne Sanders-Reio gives students practical tools for the real world and the knowledge to understand when it is appropriate to use them. Her effective teaching methods empower students to achieve their academic and professional goals. As a former writer and editor, she focuses on communication skills, recognizing how a lack of writing skills can jeopardize careers.

**Jill Weiss, MS**
Computing and Information Sciences
College of Engineering & Computing
Senior Instructor
Jill Weiss is an in-demand instructor. Weiss makes her courses engaging by connecting with her students through humor and lively interactions. She shares her extensive knowledge of the field with 700-800 students per semester, and, remarkably, takes the time to support and mentor many of them. Weiss is also a strong advocate of Panther Life, a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities.

Excellence in Adjunct Teaching

**Ivanessa Arostegui, MS**
Religious Studies
College of Arts & Sciences/Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs
Lecturer
Ivanessa Arostegui encourages students to open their minds, explore possibilities and break down walls. Arostegui uses active learning methods to foster critical thinking in the courses she designs. She also creates learning environments built on mutual respect; her students are motivated to ask challenging questions about complex topics. Because she believes learning is a two-way street, she asks her students to discuss their own personal and lived religious experiences.

**Jeffrey H. Greenfield, Ph.D., PE**
Civil and Environmental Engineering
College of Engineering & Computing
Lecturer
For Jeffrey Greenfield, the most successful engineers build systems combining technological acumen with innovative thinking. Mirroring that dynamic, he strives to bring a technological and creative approach to all his courses. Greenfield’s students say his lessons are transferable to real-world situations. Greenfield says every classroom presents a unique community of learners who will build on the concepts learned in his classroom to make society more vital.

**Marcos Alan Kerbel, MBA, CPA/CFP/CPAML**
Finance
College of Business
Lecturer
Marcos Kerbel has been engaging students in the study of finance for 35 years. As the chair of the Education and Training Committee of the Florida International Bankers Association, he stays informed of proposed banking legislation and regulation. He challenges his students to present and debate related topics from a variety of perspectives, including cross-cultural and global viewpoints, inspiring them to participate in dynamic discussions about important finance and business issues.

**President’s Council Worlds Ahead Faculty Award Finalists** (in alpha order)

**Luther G. Brewer Jr., Ph.D.**
Humanities, Health and Society
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine
Assistant Professor
Luther Brewer takes the less-beaten path to find solutions to society’s most pressing issues. Brewer is an innovative problem solver who is on a mission to provide vital health care to the community. As the community director for the Green Family Foundation Neighborhood HELP(TM) – the College of Medicine’s flagship service-learning program, Brewer helps better prepare students to serve diverse populations in underserved areas of Miami-Dade County.

**Stavros V. Georgakopoulos, Ph.D.**
Electrical and Computer Engineering
College of Engineering & Computing
Associate Professor
Stavros V. Georgakopoulos is a visionary conducting groundbreaking research. Georgakopoulos has developed wireless powering technologies that are expected to enable next-generation applications for biomonitoring, pacemakers, drug delivery, artificial organs and bionics. His work on origami antennas is projected to have a significant impact on space communication systems. He also leads a grant-funded program that engages female and minority elementary school students in STEM fields.

**Aileen M. Marty, M.D., FCAP**
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine
Professor
Dr. Aileen Marty inspires FIU medical students to explore unconventional problem solving. Last year, Marty proposed a 21st-century solution to the issue of quarantining travelers and health care workers arriving from Ebola-affected countries, suggesting the use of fitness bracelets with GPS that record vital signs. She also responded quickly to the need for laws governing burials in cases of contagious diseases by collaborating with FIU Law Professor Elisia Rodriguez-Dod.
Panthers split first day of FIU Invite

STEFANO RIVERA
Contributing Writer
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The women’s volleyball team played its first home game since Aug. 29, as they hosted the FIU Invite. The event began on Thursday, Sept. 17, which saw the Panthers play two games. The first, was a 1 p.m. match against Bethune-Cookman University, the second was a 7 p.m. match against Mercer University.

The team came into this double-header fresh off a sweep in the Stetson Invitational, beating Stetson University and Florida.

A strong bond forms leaders on rugby team

ERIKA SEMPRUN
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sports@fiusm.com

With the fall season quickly approaching, Rugby team captain and President Mateo Velazquez leads his team at practice in the scorching Miami heat in order to prepare for the tough season ahead.

Velazquez, who’s pursuing an electrical engineering degree at Florida International University, is extremely excited to play alongside his teammates in hopes of continuing the success the team experienced this past summer when the Panthers played with men’s club in 7s.

Velazquez has been following his father’s footsteps since he began playing rugby for Southwest Miami High School. His father, Carlos Velazquez, also played rugby in their homeland of Uruguay. The rugby team captain admits to looking up to his father for guidance on and off the field.

“I try to follow his footsteps as much as possible because he has a huge passion for the sport,” Velazquez said.

In order to create a stronger bond among teammates, Coach Ron Suarez decided to create leadership roles in order to help the team communicate on and off the field. Teammates were asked to vote for the team captain, back’s captain and forward’s captain.

“Tackling this leadership role as team captain has given me a better sense of confidence to take up more challenges,” said Velazquez.

“We make sure the team is able to communicate and has no problems on the field or off the field, in school and even life. We’re able to help with whatever it is, the student or player needs,” said Jose Laphitzondo, back’s captain.

Laphitzondo, who’s currently completing his last semester and earning a degree in finance and international business, not only plays Rugby for FIU, but has also showed much talent on the field as a punter for the football team. However, backs’ captain confesses that his love for rugby began long before he picked up a ball for the Panthers.

Laphitzondo and his family, who immigrated to the U.S. five years ago, created a bond through rugby in their native country of Argentina. Fortunately, Laphitzondo confesses that he’s found a new family and home at FIU.

“We share camaraderie, this team is like a brotherhood,” he said. The back’s captain not only holds this level of respect for his team but also for the game.

“Rugby transmits values of friendship and respect for every player, even the opposing team. This sport is one of a kind,” said Laphitzondo.

Accompanied by team captain Velazquez, forward’s captain Barrington McNutt and the rest of his teammates, the backs’ captain hopes the team continues the success they shared this summer in 7s as they go into the fall and spring seasons.

“Hopefully we can bring the success we had this summer in 7s to 15s. That’s our plan,” he said.

Despite the fact that the Panthers suffered a tough loss at regional finals against Charlotte and missed out on a spot at Nationals, the team is proud of the victories they have achieved. “Although we lost the finals, we were happy. Our skills helped us make it far and hopefully we’ll continue to go far this season,” said Jose Laphitzondo.

With Ron Suarez coaching the Panthers, there’s no doubt that this team will be able to continue the success they experienced this past summer. This group of leaders share a bond that will lead them straight to victory.

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Strong bond forms leaders on rugby team

RUGBY CLUB

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“We share camaraderie, this team is like a brotherhood,” he said. The back’s captain not only holds this level of respect for his team but also for the game.

“Rugby transmits values of friendship and respect for every player, even the opposing team. This sport is one of a kind,” said Laphitzondo.

Accompanied by team captain Velazquez, forward’s captain Barrington McNutt and the rest of his teammates, the backs’ captain hopes the team continues the success they shared this summer in 7s as they go into the fall and spring seasons.

“Hopefully we can bring the success we had this summer in 7s to 15s. That’s our plan,” he said.

Despite the fact that the Panthers suffered a tough loss at regional finals against Charlotte and missed out on a spot at Nationals, the team is proud of the victories they have achieved. “Although we lost the finals, we were happy. Our skills helped us make it far and hopefully we’ll continue to go far this season,” said Jose Laphitzondo.

With Ron Suarez coaching the Panthers, there’s no doubt that this team will be able to continue the success they experienced this past summer. This group of leaders share a bond that will lead them straight to victory.

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Photos courtesy of rugby in florida - USA
Everglades, Frost exhibit both works of art

There is an unprecedented beauty about the Everglades that makes it one of the most magnificent natural ecosystems in the world. There is a freshness to it. An atmosphere that shouldn’t be tampered with by the hands of man. Within it, you will find splendors hidden about the area that harbor a brilliance that hasn’t been regarded by the eyes of many.

However, the Everglades is only a glimpse, a remnant of a pure land that stands firm amongst the litter and pollution that plagues the very ground we walk on.

Jim Couper, founding director of the Art Museum at Florida International University, has recognized the decline of the once pure natural ecosystem. “My work is a humble acknowledgement of the wonder that has been taken from us,” Couper said.

He has honed his artistic abilities to properly convey the beauty of the Everglades through the eyes of a witness who has stood before its elegance, and has witnessed its slow deterioration. It is for this reason that his paintings do not feature people, but rather a first person depiction of the spectacles that are visible within the national park.

Therefore, it is amongst the freshwater, amid the untouched wilderness of the Everglades that Couper is able to craft his astonishing works of art. They act as a sanctuary from a world that lacks the care necessary to preserve an ecosystem that is often taken for granted.

When perusing the exhibition, one is not simply viewing a painting etched onto a canvass. Instead, one is looking through a window that offered a remarkable view of unblemished nature. Couper’s painting “Night Sky” displayed a unique view of the heavens that can only be witnessed in an atmosphere where lights are absent. It was by far the largest and most detailed portrait in all of the exhibition.

Although Couper’s paintings are truly breathtaking, they are not merely an idea placed in a museum to be witnessed and glorified. These paintings portray a natural beauty that is in need of preservation and protection.

The Everglades is in need of our assistance, for we are the only ones who can purify its soiled waters, littered grounds, and the endangered wildlife that depend on its wide expanse. This is what Couper encourages us to dwell on as we examine his incredible exhibition.
Students determined to work up a sweat met their match when the creator of popular exercise videos visited the WUC Ballrooms. “Insanity” creator Shaun Thompson led students, staff and even community members into shape on Sept. 16 as part of 2015 Rec Expo.

The 2015 Rec Expo took place this past Wednesday, Sept. 16 opening up with a vendor fair where students could buy anything to satisfy their exercising needs but the main event was the workout session with Shaun T.

The fitness guru came out clapping and jumping from a door behind the crowd. The mob quickly turned and cheers filled the ballroom.

“People, this is not about looking good in the mirror or to others,” said Thompson. “It’s about coming out better than when you came in.”

Then it was workout time, starting with a simple warm up that gradually augmented in intensity. Half an hour passed and the first signs of dismay started to appear amongst those that were giving their all to keep up with Thompson. But Thompson noticed the whining strength of the class and jumped from the stage to join the crowd hoping to renew their energy.

“Come on people! There is always a reserve! Build up your energy to be the best that you can be,” said Thompson.

The minutes turned into hours and the crowd refused to give up, jumping higher and higher, punching faster and faster. Thompson walked around the crowd correcting and mentoring those that needed it and giving words of encouragement to the ones that were falling behind.

“He does all of his work out without any equipment, and in my PE class we don’t have the resources to get any equipment either so I draw most of my workouts from him,” said Caron Schiffman, a 60-year-old physical education teacher at Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School.

Schiffman brought her Insanity videos to the workout expecting Thompson to sign them. She even brought with her a video of a mass workout session in where almost 150 high school students could be seen working out to Thompson’s rhythm in a big screen in the school gymnasium.

“He is so down to earth. Not like other celebrities that think that they’re better than others,” said Michelle Perez, an Insanity instructor who works for a company called Core Fitness that works with Thompson. She was more than excited to see Shaun T in person again.

“Believe in yourselves, and if you do that you will succeed in whatever you set your mind into,” said Thompson, ending the 2015 Rec Expo.

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