SA tackles financial aid in Tallahassee

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Student government leaders from every public university in Florida will meet later this month in Tallahassee to review state policies that many say limit the access of post-secondary education.

Alongside student debt, loan repayment and the increasing cost of tuition, Student Government President Alexis Calatayud said University representatives plan to make financial aid a key issue at Polithon, a traveling forum that helps young adults become policy changers.

“Florida needs more educated workforce where only 45 percent have degrees,” Calatayud said. “We just need to help the people in the system who were using the lockers had a buildup of dust and spoiled food for years. “Soda bottles were half full and we found a 1993 Beacon and spoiled food for years. “Soda bottles were half full and we found a 1993 Beacon and spoiled food for years. “Soda bottles were half full and we found a 1993 Beacon and spoiled food for years. “Soda bottles were half full and we found a 1993 Beacon

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The United States and Russia agreed Friday to consider potential areas of military cooperation in civil war-wracked Syria as a powerful al-Qaeda-allied rebel group vowed to “defeat” the expanding Russian military force that is being deployed in Northwestern Syria. The agreement to hold military-to-military talks in parallel with diplomatic consultations was reached in a telephone conversation between Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and his Russian counterpart, Sergey Shoigu, the first time they’ve spoken since Carter took his post seven months ago, a Pentagon statement said.

**Feds appeal family detention ruling**

Federal officials will fight for their right to continue to lock up mothers and children in family detention centers. The Justice Department filed an appeal with the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday after a federal judge ruled that the practice is unconstitutional.

**Cash running out for refugee aid as European crisis grows, UN says**

The outpouring of sympathy and expressions of concern for the plight of hundreds of thousands who’ve fled the Syrian civil war to reach Europe has not translated into financial support for international organizations that their calls for contributions to provide food, shelter and clothing for those displaced by the conflict, including 4 million who’ve fled to Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, remain largely unanswered.

**Obamacare administration must release thousands of detained children with their mothers, who say they’re fleeing violence in their home countries.**

The Department of Homeland Security did not file an emergency stay of the judge’s ruling, however.

States. “For some months now, we have witnessed an event which fills us with hope: the process of normalizing relations between two peoples following years of estrangement. It is a process,” Francis said of the two neighbors who’ve been estranged for years of mutual suspicion and animosity.

“This is a great moment to set to take us to the United States and Russia as an ongoing process and parallel with diplomatic consultations,” Francis said.

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**Pope reminds Castro that improvement in ties with US is a process**

Pope Francis hailed the resumption of diplomatic ties between the United States and Cuba as an ongoing process and announced global war in his first address to Cuba on Saturday. Pope Francis arrived in Cuba at the start of an historic nine-day trip that is also set to take him to the United States and Russia as an ongoing process and parallel with diplomatic consultations, Francis said of the two neighbors who’ve been estranged for years of mutual suspicion and animosity.

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**Lauren Lander: The woman who uses fitness apps for cardio and strength training routines.**

Lauren Lander said she hired a personal trainer to be more fit. After she quit her job, she was forced to switch to a virtual one.

She is one of many women who use fitness apps for cardio and strength training routines. The majority of the apps feature female trainers, according to the Washington Post.

Apps include Spinitr Athletic, Nike Training Club, Fouticity and Workout Trainer. People range from nutrition to muscle targeting and some take them of a personal trainer.

Lander uses Apps & Core Sworfit, an app by Nesiteise that lets users sync workout lengths, calories burned and workout types directly to Apple’s Health app. It also guides users through video exercises demonstrated by professional personal trainers.

“I like it because it gives me an ab routine for as many minutes as I want,” said Lander, a senior health service and administration major. “It shows me exactly how to perform each exercise, and at the end it tells me how many calories I burned.”

Sworfit is free and accessible and while it isn’t as thorough as a face-to-face trainer, she said it’s a good substitute to keep her active. Despite the app’s accessibility, Bogdan Carbaran, a School of Computing and Information Sciences professor said there are privacy and security issues. Carbaran said the School worked together to hack a popular fitness app, Fithfit. The app requires users to log calories, weight, food plan and to record your sleep.

They were able to access private information to the users and manipulate the app.

“I believe privacy and security are important concerns. Apps can collect significant personal sensitive information from the user, then use it in ways the user might not approve of,” said Carbaran.

Apps could also be malicious and harm the device and user.”

Among top 20 free apps, 75 percent of free iOS apps and 80 percent of free Android apps have been hacked, according to a 2014 report by Arxan, a software developer. Arxan also reported that 97 percent of the top 100 paid Android apps and 97 percent of the top 80 paid iOS apps have also been hacked.

Lina Jannine said fitness programs offered at the Wellness and Recreation Center values the use of fitness apps if used appropriately and effectively. She said a big issue is the persistence of people using the apps and only applying what they learn, and not so much relying on them.

“If it makes a sedentary person work out, then great,” said Jannine, WRC assistant director of fitness programs at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus.

“Even manually entering what you’re eating is making you more aware,” she said.

Jannine said she doesn’t think it’ll be good for other people. She thinks it’ll be good for other people. She works out because she is already familiar with most of the information they provide.

She said people could benefit most from nutrition apps or specific muscle-targeting apps. Some people want to get rid of a particular body fat and they do not know targeting workout routines, which could be good for people.

“Some people just don’t know.” In these cases, apps can be helpful, she said.

Carbs apps for students gain or lose weight, while others try to incorporate healthier foods to get rid of junk food from their diet.

Ratasha Iribarren, WRC student assistant at the main campus, is a personal trainer. She said she recommends the app MyFitnessPal to her clients. In calorie counter and diet planner format, she hopes they will be more aware of their regular diet.

“With that social component, I can see what my clients are eating and I can make suggestions,” said Iribarren, an FBI alumna.

She said she also uses the app to show her clients what she eats and to track her calories.

Vanessa Ensente said she uses MyFitnessPal and said that it is tedious to manually put in her food intake.

Ensente, a senior nutrition major, said she uses the app to gain weight and it showed her that her problem was that she ate too little for her goal.
Deciding a major should be based on more than just money

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With so many students under pressure to enter fields promising financial prosperity, immediate returns on their investments in education and bragging rights for their parents, the humanities have suffered a popularity shift. This is understandably so as the cost of higher education is on the rise—surging 538% since 1985. Many majors outweigh others in terms of immediate financial return. Parents are usually thrilled to hear their child say they intend on majoring in any STEM field - STEM meaning Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics; but the student who proclaims a desire to pursue an education in the humanities is often met with a very different reaction. The economic anxieties of undergraduates are narrowing the concept of education into something that will provide them with quick financial return on their degrees, booting the humanities off the list of majors that will provide immediate applicable skills in favor of STEM fields. It is important to note that the rewards of the humanities are not always instant and straightforward, causing the department to suffer, but are very pertinent to an ocean of pursuits.

The obscured value of the humanities has made way for a bad reputation and criticism, even from President Barack Obama who in Jan. 2014 said that: “…folks can make a lot more, potentially, with skilled manufacturing or the trades than they might with an art history degree. Now, nothing wrong with an art history degree – I love art history. So I don’t want to get a bunch of emails from everybody…”

Every time people learn of my decision to major in English, I am met with two different responses, both of which are equally flattering. Some will say: “So, what are you going to do for money? Teach?” to which I would politely shrug and mutter a “maybe” through the internal screaming.

Others will place their hand on my shoulder, concerned for my well being, and tell me how they “want me to be able to support myself.” This is the part where I thank them, if they’re being sincere, and explain that everyone, no matter who they are, faces the issue of job security. There are very few secure jobs for anyone, and I would be more okay with being jobless and having majored in something I genuinely care about, something that made me happy for the four years I was able to indulge in it, than jobless and holding a degree that I worked towards in hopes of being more employable.

The assumption that humanities majors will have it hard in a doomed economy seems to be the standard idea among many, but things aren’t actually all that bad for us.

In a 2010-11 survey conducted by the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, it was revealed that the prospects of unemployment for recent humanities graduates was 9 percent, right with the prospects for those graduating from science and math fields at 9.1 percent.

Some will still argue that the humanities are a dying pursuit in these changing times, and that this could be supported by the massive drop of students between the years 1970 and 1985, when computers were becoming more accessible. The enrollment in the humanities fell off a cliff from holding 17.2 percent of all bachelor’s degrees, to as little as 7 percent by 1985.

By 2011, the number of bachelor’s degrees had stabilized to 6.9 percent. This drop in enrollment is not the byproduct of a mass revelation that the humanities will become useless, though. The decline could be attributed to a number of things, including the increased use of computers, and women’s desires to veer away from traditional roles in favor of more “feminine” in favor of more male dominated fields.

Yes, times have changed, but the humanities are still very valuable to our society.

The humanities seek to comprehend and explain the cultural, social and emotional realms of the human experience. In a way, it is like biology—the study of life—is not about developing factual knowledge, but about developing graceful dialogue in our conversation with the world. There are endless employment opportunities for clear communicators, thinkers and writers.

Literature, for the longest time, has provided us with an understanding of humanity. This understanding is still relevant, it will be relevant for as long as we are human. So what greater education than understanding ourselves?

Leon Wieseltier, American writer, critic, philosopher and literary editor of The New Republic, addressed this in 2013, asking: “Has there ever been a moment in American life where the humanities were cherished less, and has there ever been a moment in American life when humanities were needed more?”

The search for practical degrees has changed the realm of higher education in a massive way. We are now seeking degrees that will land us money-making jobs, and push us out of the college generated debt from obtaining them.

Economic survival is not the sole product of what major you claim. Your major will only provide the groundwork and habitat to the personal effort you put forth. Those who will thrive are the self-motivated individuals who possess the ability to think dynamically, and the skill to clearly articulate their thoughts, regardless of their intended career path. After all, your major will not get you a job, you and your efforts get you a job.

As FIU students we are all familiar with the FIU Alert System. If there’s a disturbance on campus, students can expect a notification from the system via text, phone call or email. Some students can even attest to being notified via social media. However, students and staff alike are starting to be concerned by what seems like a lack of consistency in the FIU Alert system.

On Monday, Sept. 14 our writers at The Beacon broke the story that there was a man with a foot fetish sniffing women’s feet in the Green Library. The next day, the culprit was arrested by Miami-Dade authorities.

Students never received a notification, and only knew about the incident through The Beacon and local news. The incident was shrugged off as a laughable occurrence but the situation is actually quite serious.

The arrested culprit was identified as Eddy Juan, a registered sex-offender and the foot-sniffing incident had actually occurred about two weeks before the story broke. There was a registered sex-offender on campus in the Green Library and for two weeks no one received any type of notification.

On Wednesday, Sept. 2 a frightening situation occurred at the Wolfe University Center on the Biscayne Bay Campus. A student had a dispute in the building’s game room and angrily left after promising to come back later with a firearm. As a precaution, everyone was evacuated from the room. The student came back and demanded to be let in. The student was later apprehended at his home by authorities. As of right now, no one is sure as to whether or not a firearm was involved.

What we do know for sure is that the vast majority of students did not receive an FIU Alert about the incident. Some speculate that an alert was never sent out so as to avoid a campus-wide panic. Other’s believe that many students are not subscribed to the FIU Alert service and simply missed the notification. The alert system can be a bit of an annoyance so it shouldn’t be a surprise that many students have unsubscribed to the service.

Whatever the case may be, we at The Beacon want all FIU students to say safe and observant. If you see any suspicious behavior, please alert the proper authorities as soon as possible.

Most importantly, make sure you are subscribed to the FIU Alert service and know that you can receive calls, texts or emails about happenings around campus.

Though we know receiving an unwanted alert during class is frustrating, your safety should always be your top priority. Stay safe, stay informed, and stay vigilant.
Del Rey’s ‘Honeymoon’ is a ‘rebirth album’

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Since her 2011 breakthrough with "Vultures" and her debut album, "Born to Die," Lana Del Rey has carved a name for herself through her powerful vocals, individuality and clear vision for the art she wants to convey through her music. C r o o n i n g over a jazzy mar-

Do you know that guy who used to weigh 250 pounds a few months ago? Do you know Perez-Espinosa walking around the other day at 170 pounds? That same guy who says he goes to the gym like once a week for spinning classes?

"Doctors hate him, find out how he broke the laws of nature and made up his own!" Yeah, that guy. Chances are, you know him, as his name is on the cover of the August issue of SDA Health. "Honeymoon," can be thought of as a hybrid of last year’s "Ultraviolence" and her debut album, "Born to Die."

"Honeymoon" probably will be a rebirth album, in which Del Rey sheds her skin to reveal the most genuine and true form of herself. "We both know that it's not fashionable to love me" is the first line she sings on the album, presenting us for what is the most honest we have seen Del Rey do.

In "Honeymoon," Del Rey continues to make a conscious effort to bring new elements into her retro soundscapes. Del Rey once again puts her artistry to practice with another one of her takes on Nina Simone, with a more upbeat, slight 60's tinged version of "Don’t Let Me Be Misunderstood for True Happiness." The cover art included in the album is a cartoon style in which you can strip each one layer by layer musically, lyrically and thematically. The title track serves as a dark and daunting platform for the album, building the anticipation for what the rest of Honeymoon has in store.

Del Rey has experimented with a sample of the T.S. Eliot poem "Burnt Norton," treating the literary work as a monologue and a melodrama. She makes Del Rey manages to maintain the air of mystery and elusiveness she is known to intrigue audiences with. In "Religion," Del Rey expresses how much damage a relationship can do if not for love itself, but being a hip hop track on "Blackest Day" within the whole purpose is to try to innovate some things for future Mars missions. This year on our team we have a great breakthrough with mechanical engineering, computer engineering and electrical engineering, we’re really branching out this year. The essence behind Bernal’s motivation to excel in school and extra-curriculars that benefit her burgeoning career comes from her desire to be a part of something great in the future of space exploration. "I think it’s the idea of being a part of something that is so vast," Bernal said. "The reason why I want to do aerospace engineering, the reason I want to do propulsion specifically, is because space is so incredible. It’s a field that we don’t know much about. To think you can play a part in making that discovery, that someday there might be a colony on Mars and you can say ‘Oh, that engine was mine, I made that,’ is an incredible inspiration.”

You always need to have a goal because that’s what keeps you going. I don’t think I could be so motivated all the time if I didn’t know that I have my personal goal to have something in space by age 25."
specialTEA worth the splurge

As I walk in, I feel like I've been transported to an urban-style restaurant that I would see in Wynwood—but definitely not around West Miami-Dade.

With their green walls, green sofas, brown leather seating booths and reclaimed wood tables, I couldn't believe this place existed right across from the campus.

This restaurant prides themselves on being environmentally conscious by using organic products and eco-friendly materials, which is always a plus.

With their extensive tea blend perched up against the wall, it was nearly impossible to pick just one to try.

Aside from tea, specialTEA also serves Organic Fair Trade coffee, frappes, smoothies, a variety of homemade pastries, gourmet-style salads, paninis and wraps.

Did I mention they also have vegan and vegetarian options? After about 10 minutes of deciding what I'd like, I ordered an "Arnaldo Palmer." Their Miami version of the classic consists of half of their "daily steep" and half of their mint lemonade. Since the steep for that day was called Sangria Spice, I was extremely excited to see how this would taste.

I wanted to cover all of my bases, so I also got a tapenade toast, a chocolate chip cookie with Oreo crumbs, a small key lime pie, a lychee boha milk tea and a giant homemade peanut butter cup.

I was with a friend, so I felt secure enough to order all of this food without feeling judged by eavesdropping onlookers.

With the time it took for the food and drinks to come out, this is definitely a place to not be in a rush, which is nice, considering how most of us are always running around trying to get things done. With fun board games and free Wi-Fi provided by the restaurant, the waiting time flies by.

When the drinks came and I had a sip of my Arnaldo Palmer, I fell in love.

The sweet mint lemonade perfectly complemented the fruity Sangria Spice tea. It was full of flavor, perfectly sweetened and refreshing.

The lychee boha milk tea was tasty as well. Even though I found the bobas pearls a bit smaller than I'm used to, it was still on par in regards to flavor.

As the tapenade toast arrived to the table, the aroma of a fresh pressed baguette filled the air. The bread was full of gooey mozzarella cheese with a hearty smear of salty and savory tapenade spread, it was definitely a treat.

Needless to say, I felt pretty fancy eating this meal, especially considering I was across the street from the fairgrounds.

The chocolate chip cookie with Oreo crumbs was so yummy. It had the perfect ratio of chocolate chips to cookie and the Oreo were a nice touch. The key lime pie was rich and creamy and tasted really authentic.

The giant homemade peanut butter cup was so rich, I couldn't finish it all. The peanut butter was soft and creamy, and the chocolate exterior was smooth and it melted in my mouth. I have zero complaints about any of the pastries here.

The specialTEA experience is unlike anything I've ever had around school. Every item was so unique, it only made my time there more enjoyable.

Even though their food is a little on the pricier side, it is definitely worth the occasional splurge. With a relaxing environment, sweet treats, savory meals and delicious tea, specialTEA is definitely a go-to spot for study groups and just about anyone who likes great food.
Panthers dominate Eagles, win opener

Megan Taiz/The Beacon

Senior cornerback Richard Leonard prepares for a play in the Sept. 19 home opener against North Carolina Central University. The Panthers scored 39 points, and defensively held the Eagles to 38 yards rushing and 209 yards total during the game. Panthers take on Louisiana Tech on Saturday, Sept. 26 at 2:30 PM.

Injured in action, player sustains concussion

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As the Panthers routed North Carolina Central Saturday night with a 39-14 victory making them 2-1, a scary moment happened late in the third quarter.

Junior safety Wilkerson Myrtil took a huge collision with a North Carolina Central player on a bubble screen play. Myrtil was on the ground without any sudden movements for the first five minutes before regaining his limbs.

The stadium was in silence for 15 minutes when the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue ambulance showed up. At first, it was unclear who got injured or what happened during the play prior to that injury. Trainers and staff gathered around the injured safety leaving everyone wondering and worried if he will be okay.

After taking off his pads and helmet, the ambulance strapped in Myrtil as he was carried off on a stretcher and taken to the nearest hospital. After the game, Head Coach Ron Turner confirmed during the press conference that Wilkerson Myrtil sustained a concussion, but fortunately, it’s nothing too serious and he will pull through.

“He’s going to be fine,” Turner said. “He was knocked out, but he was moving and everything. I asked how bad it was and they said it’s not that bad. He will go through a concussion protocol and see where he is heading. But he will be fine.”

Senior defensive end and team captain Michael Wakefield let his teammates know that Myrtil will be fine after the game. He also shared his concerns during the press conference. “Anytime when one of our brothers go down, we really feel it,” Wakefield said. “We work with each other everyday so it really hurts when you are concerned about what’s wrong with him.”

The status of how long Myrtil will be out is still uncertain. With their first home opening win and a 2-1 record, the Panthers will be back on the road this coming Saturday for their Conference-USA opening against Louisiana Tech. The game will start at 2:30 p.m.
Panthers win C-USA home opener

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The women’s volleyball team finished the first day of C-USA play with a perfect 2-0 record, splitting its first two matchups, beating Bethune-Cookman 3-1 and losing to the University of Central Florida 0-3. Looking to finish the event and gain another victory, the Panthers were set to face off against Seattle University at 7 p.m.

The Panthers got off to a slow start, losing the first set 12-25. The team committed six errors, finishing with a hitting percentage of -.661 and managed to only get five kills. However, the host team would get off to a hot start in the second set and bounce back and grab the set 25-17, forcing the Redhawks to a .000 hitting percentage, totalling six kills and six errors.

After being asked if Head Coach, Rita Buck-Crockett, said anything to her players before the second set she said, “I just told them that they are good and they just need to not to be afraid to lose and they need to play to win.” She also said, “If you make an error, you make an error. But make it going for it, and I think that made the difference.”

However, the Redhawks got the better of the Panthers in the final two sets, defeating them 25-13 in the third and 25-16 in the fourth to win 3-1. Seattle finished the match with 49 kills, a .291 hitting percentage and 10 aces. Of those 10 aces, Junior, Jelena Vujcin, had six.

Buck-Crockett said, “Number seven’s serve is what really hurt our team. We couldn’t return her out. She got us. She’s a very good server.”

For the Panthers, Senior, Lucia Castro, raised up nine kills and 10 digs. Junior, Katie Hogan, also had nine kills. Senior, Adriana McLamb, although finishing with a .000 hitting percentage, freshmen, Katie Friesen, totalled 37 assists and nine digs. Senior, McLamb, finished four digs shy from her career best with 23.

When asked how important starting 2-0 in C-USA play was, she said, “This is a huge win because FAU is a very good team.” She also said, “We’ve proven that we are a very good team.”

The Panthers will be on the road the next two games and continue their slate of C-USA games. First, they will head to Houston to take on Rice University on Friday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. After that match, they will make way to Bowling Green, Ky., to face off against Western Kentucky University on Sept. 27 at 1 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

Women’s soccer team well worth the wait

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Only the devout were found in the stands after the rain delay that pushed the game back a little more than an hour. But the FIU Women’s Soccer team proved to be worth the wait, dominating the pitch for the full 90 minutes against the UC Irvine Anteaters en route to their first win of the season.

The offense was on full display and the defense solidified their strengths once again as the Panthers got their third shutout of the year winning with a score of 2-0.

The FIU offense came out firing and finally found the back of the net in the 26th minute when Madlen Weinhardt shot a laser right under a diving Anteater goalkeeper. Junior, Alyssa Robinson, put the offense on her back, taking the ball down the pitch and giving the team some insurance right before the half with her shot sailing past the UC Irvine keeper at the 42nd minute.

Senior, Adriana McLamb, also added to the attack with shots on goal for each of them, but both just coming up short of a score.

This FIU Women’s Soccer team’s defense kept the ball off their half of the pitch for the majority of the game, but Sophomore, Nevena Stojakovic held that force field around her goal when she was called upon getting her seventh shutout.

The Panthers were led by the defense of Senior, Gloria Levorin, finished with 11 kills and a match-high .661 hitting percentage. Freshman, Katie Friesen, totalled 37 assists and nine digs. Senior, McLamb, finished four digs shy from her career best with 23.

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Home play busts wide open with win

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The FIU defense was lights out, allowing only seven points to NC Central (the other 7 points the Eagles scored were on Taylor’s interception return) and interrupting three passes. This is nothing new, as we’ve seen what Matt House’s defense is capable of before; but if FIU can consistently force turnovers and give the offense good field position, I think FIU can be a legitimate team.

For an improving football program that has yet to earn a victory, the Panthers were certainly giving their fans in the seats. There have been rumors before; but if FIU can consistently force turnovers and give the offense good field position, I think FIU can be a legitimate team.

The fans were outstanding,” Turner said, “I think that helped. It was great to get a win for the fans. Next time we come home (on October 10th) hopefully we’ll get as much of a turnout. Like I said before, we’ve got a good football team and I’d love for the people of South Florida to come out and see us - I think they’ll like what they see.”

While FIU certainly could’ve played better, overall it was a fantastic home opener for an improving football program that desperately needed one. The team played very well in just about every aspect of the game, the incredible new blue and gold uniforms were a hit and most importantly, as I mentioned before, they actually got some fans in the seats. There have been rumors of FIU needing to average at least 15,000 fans per home game if they want to avoid demolition to the FCS. Also having their most attended home opener in years will certainly help their cause.

FIU opens Conference USA play next week, as they travel to face Louisiana Tech University on Saturday, Sept. 26.
Future Entrepreneurs club makes waves at BBC

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Having a background in hospitality and an entrepreneurial spirit inspired Jonathan Mendez to start a club at FIU for others interested in finance, business and technology, with knowledge straight from the experts.

Mendez, a senior in hospitality management, started the Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals club in spring 2015 with the rest of the club’s executive board and became the president of the club.

“I was eager to start a club at FIU and relate it to hospitality, for students with an entrepreneurial mindset,” Mendez said.

HFTP is an organization focused on the training of financial and technological personnel in hotels, clubs and business related to hospitality, according to HFTP’s official website.

“We want to be future entrepreneurs, and why should we limit ourselves and our club to finance and technology when there are more routes to explore to achieve success?” said Mendez.

Taking classes and working off campus has presented obstacles in terms of managing the club. However, Yassine Belkady, senior in hospitality management and director of finance of the club, said, “Everybody has to pitch in and implement new ideas and it has been working so far.”

The members work together, but have roles to play, such as the vice president, Jordan Hamilton, senior in hospitality management. He put together a presentation explaining step by step how to invest in the stock market.

Hamilton said the club has given him and his friends chances to meet CEOs like Robert Schwartz, senior vice president for Morgan Stanley’s Wealth Management division, who came to BBC to speak about his career at a conference the HFTP/Future Entrepreneurs club put together in early September.

“I took an accounting class and after receiving an email about this conference, I decided to come and check it out,” said Lucette Ambroise, senior in hospitality management. “Mr. Schwartz because I felt like I could relate to some of his experiences.”

“What we strive to do with this club is to show students that they can fly with their own wings by getting contacts, building a network and developing different capacities in finance and business,” Belkady said.

According to Dale Gomez, director of information technology at the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management and one of the club’s advisors, technology is another important aspect and component of this club.

“They really wanted to find a student that fits the technical aspect of the club and Maudson took leadership role in this position and became their director of marketing,”

Students attend a conference with Robert Schwartz at the Wine Spectator Restaurant Management lab in the Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management building on FIU’s Biscayne Bay Campus on Thursday, Sept. 3.

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Sponges akin to redwoods of the sea crowding out corals on Florida reefs

JENNY STALETOVICH
TNS Staff

In the absence of coral on Florida’s ailing reefs, a titan of the sea is taking over: giant barrel sponges.

Big as a bathtub, the sponges increased by 600 percent more reef. In some areas, the number of baby sponges increased by 600 percent.

“If they’re all that there is, the reefs will flatten out and decay,” said study co-author Joseph Pawlik, a marine biologist at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. “As long as they’re holding the space and they can live hundreds of years, they won’t give that space up to the coral.”

While researchers only documented the rise in the Florida Keys, Pawlik said he has seen the spread all over the Caribbean, from Belize to Tobago.

“We think the exact same thing is happening everywhere in the Caribbean,” he said.

While bad news, Pawlik said there is an upside. The sponges suck in huge amounts of water, filtering out carbon and sending it back into the sediment. In an increasingly carbon-rich atmosphere, that’s a good thing.

“They provide a place for baby fish and shrimp and baby lobsters, all the things important for fishermen,” he said.

But they also take up space where young coral, if water conditions are good, could grow.

In the 1990s, Pawlik said researchers at the Aquarius underwater research station south of Islamorada began noticing the sponges turning white.

Some completely fell apart. So in 2000, Pawlik started monitoring the sponges, mapping out 12 16-acre plots.

Over time, the sponges had begun crowding out seaweed, which had spread after bleaching wiped out about 90 percent of the reef tract. So that was a good thing. But between 2006 and 2012, the number of sponges began to rise, likely because of the absence of hurricanes, which can easily topple the big sponges even at 30 feet deep where they live.

If acidity in oceans continue to rise under climate change predictions, coral with their vulnerable limestone skeleton, will likely die. The sponges, with a glass skeleton, so far appear unaffected by increasing acidity, he said.

“It’s better than what we had, which is seaweed. But coral is better than sponge,” Pawlik said. “It’s still a matter of things being out of whack.”