

The Patriot

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Francis Marion University's award-winning student newspaper

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FMU hosts its third annual FM A'Glow Participants drive through campus to see sights

Finn Millians
Copy Editor

Starting at dusk, FMU held its third annual FM A'Glow on Oct. 24 throughout campus. A bit different this year due to COVID-19 regulations, the event was held as a drive through rather than a walk through.

Different student organizations from campus as well as individual groups were allowed to register to set up a site to display their pumpkins. All of the sites had hay bales, where students decorated them with up to eight free pumpkins and all the groups had until 5 p.m. on Saturday to create their sites and be ready for the drive through. Registered groups all competed for different awards based on costumes, pumpkins and their physical sites, such as scariest site, most creative pumpkin and best costume.

Hayli Keith, a senior health care administration and vice president of the ZTA sorority, helped set up pumpkins for both groups' sites. She is no stranger to FM A'Glow, as her sorority participates every year and she is in many student groups, and despite the differences, she still enjoyed it immensely.

"As a senior, I remember the past couple years of FM A'Glow, but actually enjoyed the drive through ver-



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

Sightseers drive through FM A'Glow to see the spooky decorations created by students and organizations.

sion more," Keith said. "My friend group and I enjoyed it so much that we actually drove through it twice."

According to Keith, it was more animated this year and the festivities were more interactive.

"Everyone had such cute and creative displays, and people seemed way more into it than in prior years," Keith said.

Another group that participated was the Patriot women's softball team. In a

site organized by the team, athletes spent the latter half of the week acquiring, carving and painting pumpkins to display. They set up their site and stayed throughout the night, social distancing and interacting with the participants.

Addie May, a junior nursing student and women's softball player, participated in the event and contributed "Finding Nemo" themed pumpkins to her site. She said she loved the event and

getting to hang out with her team in a fun Halloween setting.

"It was a good time for us to enjoy the season and festivities together—but safely because of COVID-19, of course—and still reach out to the community," May said.

As it was a drive-through event, students were able to hop in their cars and slowly wind through campus to witness the sites, people and pumpkins.

Aleah Smalls, a junior psychology major, said she drove through the event intending to enjoy some spooky season fun.

"I enjoyed it overall," Smalls said. "I always look forward to this time of year to see what FMU has in store during Halloween."

Smalls said because of the experience as a whole, especially the visuals and the safety precautions taken, she is already excited for next year's FM A'Glow.

"It was fun and safe, and I enjoyed myself every moment and can't wait to see what happens next year," Smalls said.

Even with the pandemic and the regulations that come with it, FM A'Glow was able to maintain its usual flair and promote fun and friendly competition this Halloween.

"I think FMU did a great job with this event, especially since events have been limited due to COVID-19 regulations," Keith said.

Some of the men's soccer team also attended. A native of Spain, Javier Bello, a junior business administration major and a forward in the FMU men's soccer team, had a good time and liked the experience of a Halloween event.

"With how they talked to us and treated us, it was a good, positive movement," Bello said. "It was my first time doing stuff like that because in my own country it is not common. We really enjoyed it."

With FM A'Glow kicking off the Halloween festivities here at FMU, Student Life and other organizations also hosted other holiday-themed events before the end of October.

Students explore cultures YGB performs for Harrison

Finn Millians
Copy Editor

The Campus Activities Board (CAB), Student Government Association (SGA) and the Student Life Office coordinated a Cultural Food Fest from 12-3 p.m. on Nov. 5 in the Smith University Center (UC) where the cultures of different places around the world and some of their signature dishes were presented to the students of FMU.

To kick off the event, J. Mark Blackwell, the director of international programs at FMU, opened the event with a short, informative presentation on the study abroad opportunities offered to students. Pamphlets were handed out outlining the various aspects of studying abroad and contact information to help lead students to their own study abroad experiences if they were interested.

Tymoshio Robinson, student body president, was a crucial part of creating the event. As the head of SGA, he worked closely with the CAB chair and the assistant vice president of Student Life to formulate the menu and the

presentation.

"The Cultural Food Fest is an opportunity to educate ourselves and our palates on different cultures around the world and the popular foods and cuisines thereof," Robinson said. "It is also an opportunity to expose ourselves as students to cultures other than our own. As student body president, I was heavily involved in almost all facets of planning and executing the event."

After the presentation, the feast commenced. Dishes from seven different countries were featured in

the event: banana licuado from Mexico; West African shrimp; vegetable pad Thai from Thailand; macaroons from France; lemon and garlic potatoes from Puerto Rico; pastisio from Germany; and chicken paella from Spain.

The combination of cultural education and foreign dishes drew in quite the crowd. The event started at noon, so many students were trickling in from classes to experience the foreign delicacies.

"As time went by, students started showing up to try different foods and

SEE CULTURE PAGE 3



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

Students and faculty tried out different foods from around the world prepared by Aramark in the Smith University Center.

Kei'yona Jordan
Copy Editor

The FMU Youth Gospel Choir (YGB) opened up for Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Jaime Harrison at his last campaign event of the race at 6 p.m. on Oct. 26.

The concert took place at the Charlie W. Johnson Stadium at Benedict College.

YGB performed three songs before Harrison came on stage.

They sang three gospel songs: "When the saints," "Total Praise" and "God Said It."

Tylic Galloway, YGB soprano singer and senior psychology major, said this was the second event for the Harrison campaign that they performed for.

"Being the age that I am now and having the understanding that I have now, I realize how monumental it was to be up on that stage singing the gospel during a time like this," Galloway said.

Galloway also said the choir was very excited to be given the opportunity to perform at another one of his events.

"We really enjoyed

performing at a political event and being able to encourage people to vote and get involved through music," Galloway said.

Galloway said she hoped the choir's involvement in things going on in society would help unify the FMU student body.

"I hope that our singing brings all the students together because we see the student body as one," Galloway said. "Not black and white or democrat or republican, but as one."

Galloway said that being a part of an event that gave them the opportunity to use music to ignite change was another surreal experience.

"It's bigger than me; it's

bigger than Jaime Harrison and it's bigger than Lindsey Graham," Galloway said. "Because we were literally using our voices to make a movement in the state and in the country."

After YGB performed there were a couple more performances by local singers and then Harrison came out and addressed the audience.

He was happy to be able to hold the event on Benedict's campus.

"It is so great to be on the campus of Benedict college," Harrison said. "A historic college here in Columbia, South Carolina."

Harrison told the

SEE YGB PAGE 2



PHOTO BY KEI'YONA JORDON

Common performs after Jaime Harrison leaves the stage at the Charlie W. Johnson Stadium at Benedict College.

COACH SPOTLIGHT | Jeri Porter

Finn Millians
Copy Editor

With five previous seasons under her belt at FMU, Jeri Porter, head coach of the women's basketball program at FMU, has embraced her role as a mentor, established roots in Florence and is continuously working toward a national title. However, with her well-established career and ambition for her program, it is surprising that she never planned to become a coach.

Initially, Porter's dream was a career in professional counseling; basketball was truly a means to an end. Directly after her senior season at Liberty University, she took a graduate assistant coaching position in the women's basketball program to help finish out her psychology graduate program. Instead of only helping complete the program, this assistant role revealed her true passion as a mentor for young women.

"I fell in love with the job because I fell in love with the role that I had in the lives of those young women," Porter said. "I think the role gave me the purpose. The role preceded the vocation."

Once she found her niche, she wholeheartedly embraced it. She is now in her 28th season of coaching and is still enjoying it immensely. Her favorite part about her job is the impact she has in the lives of young women.

"I have seen my role in all the years I have done this as being a mentor, being



PHOTO BY ABIGAIL LESLEY

Porter is an avid supporter of and contributor to the FMU women's basketball program.

a leader, just somebody who has the responsibility of helping to mold young women and advise," Porter said. "If I can be a good coach and a good mentor to help the young women that I have been privileged to work with to get them ready for going out into the real world; I think I have always felt that was my role as a coach."

With her program specifically, she focuses on building and creating a family dynamic and maintaining relationships within the program itself and the community.

"In terms of the program, it has kind of put us in the place of almost being family-oriented here," Porter said. "And as much as I hope that people can see it in the people we have here, I hope they see it even more in those young women that have played here for me in the last five or six years that

come back and support us." However, family does not simply stay within the bounds of her team. This core family reaches out into the Florence community to help develop relationships that contribute to an enormous extended family outside the program.

"Most of the things we do in regard to community service is related to kids," Porter said. "One of the things I am really big on is kind of paying it forward. If there are kids right now in our community at the moment that can see something in us that can inspire them to be that in a few years as they finish up high school, then we want to start establishing those relationships."

And she had been determined to establish these relationships. The women's basketball program has worked with many local kids programs in the Florence

community. They have worked with the Florence Boys and Girls Club, the YMCA and several other youth organizations. This work and these values all lead back to one thing Porter always imparts to her own players: the principle of giving back.

"There is a scripture that is so relevant to athletics: 'To who much is given, much is required,'" Porter said. "And so if you are that person that has been given that talent and who has been afforded an opportunity to go to school and get an education—I think that it's something you have to be willing to pass on and be present and available to mentor that next kid who might need it."

She works to shape her own players and program into a grateful and generous one. With their natural talents and hard work, they were able to reach a place

that most can only dream of, and she wants them to acknowledge that fact and help others to do the same.

"We try to step back from seeing it as a right and try to see it more as a privilege," Porter said.

As the matriarch of this family, Porter's goal is to keep all her players and the program on the same page. She understands that the life of a student athlete is a difficult one—she was one herself, after all—so she does her best to keep them motivated and inspired.

"I think in our very purest form as coaches, we are all motivational speakers," Porter said. "I always ask myself: 'How can I take this thing that we do every day that demands their time and their attention—how can I inspire them to want to do a little bit better, be a little bit better?'"

Porter works every day to stay impactful on her players and the program. She expects much from them, and she has personal goals, as well. She is consistently building, block-by-block, toward a national championship.

"Everyone who I have recruited and brought into the program since I walked through the doors in 2016, I have told unashamedly: 'I want to win a national championship,'" Porter said.

With these goals in place, the family environment and a humble yet hungry mindset, the women's basketball program is most certainly moving in a positive, successful direction.

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YGB

audience that South Carolina was undergoing a transition.

"The winds of change are blowing," Harrison said. "And they are blowing through South Carolina."

Harrison urged his supporters to vote for him and not Graham because he

didn't understand hard times.

"We need someone who understands the hardships people are going through and help them overcome them," Harrison said.

Harrison went on to tell the audience about why he loved South Carolina and how

he planned to make it a place for everyone to succeed.

Alongside Harrison and his campaign workers was Charleston native and host of The Breakfast Club Charlamagne tha God and rapper and actor Common.

The concert was the

third event of the day for the Harrison campaign trail.

Common and Harrison stopped at a local barbershop to urge people to vote and to convey the importance of voting.

After visiting the barbershop, Common

went to Allen University, a historically Black college and university, where he was able to talk to the students about voting and his campaign.

Students and faculty analyze racial tension

Finn Millians
Copy Editor

FMU and the African-American Faculty and Staff Coalition (AAFSC) held a joint event at noon on Oct. 9 at the Performing Arts Center (PAC) in downtown Florence to discuss the prevalence and differences of microaggressions and macroaggressions. This was the first in a series of four panels to be held at the PAC titled "Cultural Conversations."

Kayla Duncan, the assistant director of the Counseling and Testing Center at FMU, an active member of the AAFSC and the chair of the new cultural committee within the AAFSC, is the creator of the cultural conversation.

"After being home with everything, and after the death of George Floyd, I was involved with some of the marches here in Florence because I just felt really passionately," Duncan said.

"I just felt like I really needed to be involved in something."

Duncan, after gathering her thoughts and planning, started communicating with people within the school and the community to try and put her plans in motion.

"I reached out to the president, Linda Sullen, of the AAFSC," Duncan said. "I said, 'Hey, I feel passionately that Francis Marion should be involved in some of the race-relation talks here in Florence because I feel like we have a reputation of being at the forefront of some of that stuff and I don't see any other universities taking a strong role in that yet.'"

After her talk with Sullen, Duncan and Sullen both went to FMU President Fred Carter to present their ideas. There were plans to work within the school and within the community through training, panels and outreach programs. As a whole, they just wanted to bring these crucial conversations into the community.

"I wanted to expand the conversation from a global one to a community one because that is really how change happens," Duncan said. "This is an important way to have a conversation everyone is already having, but give people necessary, informative, positive information about how to integrate things into their daily lives they don't have words for."

With help from Carter, the AAFSC, various professors and the staff of the PAC, planning for the cultural conversations was put into motion.

"We all worked together to make it seamless," Duncan said. "We also allowed it to be virtual; it was so important to us to honor people's concerns with social distancing and the pandemic. It gave the option for people who needed to watch it online to replay it afterward."

This first event was hosted by the recently retired chair of psychology at FMU,

Will Wattles. As the recipient of the AAFSC Diversity Award in 2016 and the creator of a racial diversity course at FMU that allowed civil discourse between students of different races and educated them on racial issues, Wattles was asked to be the first keynote speaker.

"I guess somebody said, 'Maybe we can get Will Wattles to do the first one,'" Wattles said. "I don't actually know though, because I was up in Maine."

Wattles took over the panel and compiled research on microaggressions and macroaggressions into a presentation.

"The main topic was microaggressions," Wattles said. "As I was finding those examples, it helped me to realize just how omnipresent it really is."

In his presentation, Wattles gave countless examples of microaggressions and macroaggressions in various contexts in life to show how pervasive the issue

truly is. He even admitted his own lack of understanding of the issue.

"We just can't know that," Wattles said. "White people just don't understand what it's like to go through it."

And that is the goal of the cultural conversations—to open the mind and educate people to help them better understand race relations and the issues that manifest in society.

The PAC held the second cultural conversation at noon on Nov. 6 titled "Changes in African-American race relations in Florence overtime and how to create an inclusive environment for people of color." And the PAC will host the next two conversations in the spring of 2021. The dates and times for the next "Cultural Conversations" have already been announced on FMU's website.

NOTICE TO FMU OFFICES AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:

The Patriot is interested in what you are doing on campus. To increase the likelihood that your events are covered, please submit news releases and schedules to us. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Students gather for “CarnEvil”

Julia Fulmer
Staff Writer

Students eagerly gathered at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 29 outside of the Smith University Center (UC) ready to enter FMU’s 11th annual “CarnEvil” event.

The event was a joint-effort Halloween celebration hosted by the Campus Activities Board (CAB), Student Government Association (SGA) and the FMU Diplomats.

CarnEvil mainly took place in the UC commons with a variety of carnival games scattered around the room. Students who successfully completed the games were given tickets to use at the prize booth for candy, trinkets or an entry into the raffle for different prizes. In addition to the “Spooky Cinema” showing classic horror films in the gym, food trucks parked on the UC lawn to supply students with food, such as funnel cakes, barbeque and ice cream.

To accommodate COVID-19 precautions, the event was split into two sections, one from 6:30-8:00 p.m. and the other from 8:30-10:30 p.m., allowing time for sanitation between the time slots. The event welcomed around 300 students in one of the largest activities hosted on campus this semester.

According to Alex

McGill-Brown, student life specialist, CarnEvil was originally scheduled to take place on the UC lawn. However, due to possibility of rain, they decided to move the event indoors. Since the new venue would be an enclosed space, the event organizers decided it would be safer to limit the number of people at the event. This led to the introduction of a ticket system, where students could sign up online for free tickets to use for entry. Despite the sudden scheduling changes, students flocked to the event.

“We had a fantastic turnout,” said McGill-Brown. “The tickets sold out in minutes, and I had to post new tickets twice.”

One of the most popular attractions of the night was the scare trail. Aided by student volunteers from Kappa Delta (KD) and Pi Kappa Alpha (PIKE), students were led through the eerie halls of the UC’s second floor with a few surprising encounters along the way.

McGill-Brown said she was impressed with the overwhelmingly positive response to the scare trail, as it was the first year it has been featured in a CarnEvil. She said similar activities in the past led them to the idea for the trail.

“We did haunted escape rooms last year and people seemed to really enjoy it,” said McGill-Brown. “With

COVID precautions, we didn’t want to confine people to one enclosed space and have them touching clues and such, so we did the trail. I’m honestly so impressed with our students. They put in so much work and really made it fun. The PIKES and KDs also made a huge difference by volunteering as actors. They brought a great energy to it.”

Tristan Shird, a junior elementary education major and member of the SGA Senate and Diplomats, said he decided to volunteer at the CarnEvil to get to know some of the new students this semester and encourage more people to come to events.

“I think that we should have more activities during this pandemic because there are a lot of freshmen or transfer students that are coming by, so they’re not really making friends by just staying in their dorm room or staying in their apartment,” Shird said. “So it’s best to have these events so they can interact with other people and also make new friends and get to know everybody.”

Dalisay Aldrete, a junior elementary education major, said she decided to work as a volunteer for the Diplomats, stationed at the ping pong ball toss carnival game.

“I think the important thing is to make sure people are being cautious of how close they are to others,

having their masks on and just taking precautions as far as their personal lives go and applying that whenever they have events like this,” Aldrete said. “I know it’s really hard to keep social distancing and trying to keep everyone safe, but it’s also very important to have that kind of community within the university.”

Sophomore nursing major Tiara Chavis said she enjoys the Halloween atmosphere during this time of year.

“I love Halloween,” said Chavis. “I love the theme of it, the colors, the fears and everything. I really enjoyed the event so far just playing the games. I’m most excited about the haunted trail. I would recommend it to other students and other people in the community.”

McGill-Brown said she wanted to thank everyone who helped make the CarnEvil possible this year.

“I am so proud of our students for how they organized this event,” McGill-Brown said. “I also want to point out that without the help of people like Dean Blackburn, Derek Young or our facilities and grounds crew, we would not have been able to make this event happen. They are incredible people to work with and really help to make these events great.”



GRAPHIC BY JOSHUA GRAHAM

Food Fest

Ultimately it was an extremely successful event,” Robinson said.

Robinson said he enjoyed the event; after countless time spent planning the event, he was finally able to taste all the dishes.

“It was an amazing experience,” Robinson said. “The food was pretty good. I tried things I’d never tried before and got to learn about different countries and cultures. The best dishes were easily the pastitsio and the

macaroons.”

Madeline Winning, a sophomore psychology major and middle blocker on the women’s volleyball team, attended the event to taste some great food and learn more about the culture and

food from different locations around the world.

“It was very cool to taste different foods from different countries while learning about the history and what was in each,” Winning said.

With the turnout and the

feedback given from the students on campus, the Cultural Food Fest was a popular event. Students had a great opportunity to safely try out different foods while following COVID-19 guidelines. Considering the success of

the event, the international program attracted some interest; you know what they say, “The way to a student’s heart is through their stomach.”

Continued from page 1

HOSA informs students about health care opportunities

Kei’Yona Jordan
Copy Editor

FMU’s chapter of Health Occupational Students of America (HOSA) hosted a Healthcare Administration Alumni Panel virtually from 3:30-5 p.m. on Nov. 4.

The panel was originally supposed to be an in-person event, but due to the COVID-19 restrictions they felt having the event on Zoom would allow the maximum number of students to attend.

HOSA invited four FMU alumni who are currently working in healthcare administration to speak to students who are looking for jobs.

Rita Abuaita, a health care administration employee at McLeod Hospital; Tevin Leary, a new patient welcome center manager; and Kyle Matthews, site ad-

ministrators for orthopedics at McLeod, as well as several other healthcare administration alumni, all joined the event as panelists.

Each of the panelists was asked to introduce themselves, state their job title and talk a little bit about how they got there.

Leary told the students he had been working at Hope Health for about three years and that he had been in his current position since the beginning of 2020.

Leary said the HOSA meetings gave students the opportunity to learn about the opportunities that are available to them and how to find employment.

“It was something that definitely wasn’t there before I left,” Leary said. “There was nothing at all because the program had just started in the spring of 2017.”

During the panel, Leary told students about how important it was to get some type of experience in their respective fields.

“Try and find where you can do these things and get experience, whether it’s volunteering, job shadowing,” Leary said. “That way you will know if you will like it. Because if you don’t like it, then you won’t succeed.”

Leary said this was the third time he had been invited back as an alumni to talk with students.

The other panelist, Abuaita, talked about her job as a billing account representative. “I didn’t have a job straight out of college,” Abuaita said. “That made me a little anxious because I wanted to get my life started.”

Abuaita urged students to not be scared if they are

close to graduating and feel like they don’t have things lined up.

“It’s okay if you don’t get the first job you apply for,” Abuaita said. “Just keep applying and working hard.”

There were several other panelists who were able to speak to students throughout the meeting.

HOSA advisor Sarah Kershner said the panel was incorporated into their monthly HOSA meeting. Kershner said inviting the alumni back to speak with the students is extremely beneficial, especially for seniors.

“If it weren’t for the alumni coming back and sharing, it would be hard for the current students to know what to work on and how to go about finding jobs,” Kershner said.

Kershner said she wants

students in healthcare administration to know there are a variety of places they can work.

“Many times, our healthcare administration students think they can only work in a hospital when there are a lot of other options out there for them,” Kershner said.

While the majority of HOSA members are seniors,

the meetings are open to all students.

Kershner said she would like to start reaching out more to freshman students as well so they can begin building their resume and professional portfolios.

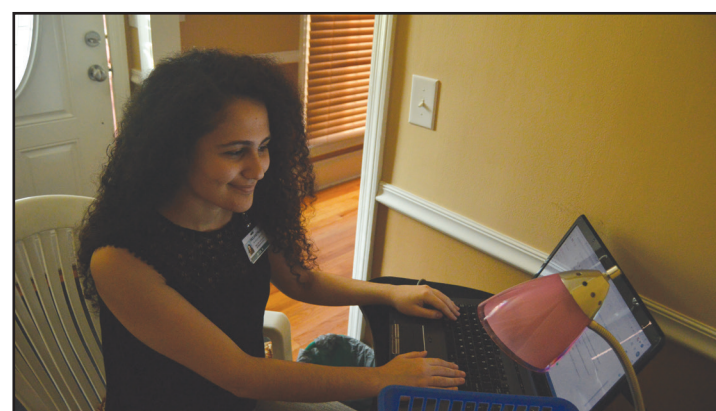


PHOTO BY KEI’YONA JORDON
Rita Abuaita is a recent health care administration graduate and now works for McLeod Hospital.

FMU explores history of race relations within Florence

Kei’Yona Jordan
Copy Editor

The African-American Faculty and Staff Coalition (AAFSC) partnered with the FMU psychology department to host the second “Cultural Conversation” at noon on Nov. 6 in the FMU Performing Arts Center (PAC).

The speakers were Antonio Cooper, assistant professor of psychology; Erica James, assistant professor of psychology; and Joe Heyward, former vice president of Student Affairs.

The second cultural conversation discussed changes in African-American race

relations in Florence and how to create an inclusive environment for people of color.

Kayla Duncan, assistant director of the Office of Counseling and Testing, welcomed the audience. Duncan thanked FMU President Fred Carter and the psychology department for making the event possible.

Heyward, the first speaker of the night, spoke about the evolution of racial issues in Florence. Heyward told the audience about the hardships of segregation and integration when he was a little boy.

“I’m a part of the Jim Crow South,” Heyward said.

Heyward went on to talk about the slow growth that African-Americans in Florence saw in race relations. He said several pastors decided to start a group that focused on race relations in Florence.

“They formed a committee because they wanted to see what could be done to improve the race relations in the city,” Heyward said.

At the onset of integration in Florence, Heyward said his little sister was chosen as one of the few Black students to integrate into all-White school in Florence.

“In 1966, there was an experiment made as far as the public schools were

concerned,” Heyward said. “There was a small group of students that were sent to Pointer Junior High School as a test case for integration.”

After speaking about integration, Heyward told the audience that Francis Marion College, at the time, was one of the best things to happen for Florence because of the opportunities it gave minorities.

Cooper and James spoke at the event via Zoom. James and Cooper praised the speech that Heyward gave, and Cooper said he agreed with Heyward when he talked about how simple communication could go a long way to start change.

“It’s the start of a conversation,” Cooper said. “Sometimes, you have to get uncomfortable to become more comfortable.”

James said that improving race relations starts with acknowledging that there is actually a race problem.

“We can’t ignore it and pretend it isn’t there because it doesn’t affect us in the same way it affects other people,” James said.

James said another important step for improving race relations is looking inside of ourselves.

“We have to recognize what is going on and work toward changing it every day,” James said.

James said those were the two key steps that would help solve race issues in today’s society.

At the end of the speeches, members of the audience were given the chance to ask questions or make comments.

Leroy Peterson, the department chair of chemistry, said there was not enough progress being made with race relations because the conversations had started before their time and change was still slow.

“I just don’t see the changes that should be forthcoming after all of these decades,” Peterson said.

FMU mobilizes votes

Kei'yona Jordan
Copy Editor

Students organizations, fraternities, sororities, faculty and staff all teamed up to get students registered to vote.

The initiative to get students registered began at the beginning of the fall semester.

Tymoshio Robinson, SGA president and senior political science major, began the effort in the start of the semester to get as many students voting as they could.

In an email to the student body the day before Election Day, Robinson reminded students that voting was their right as well as their responsibility.

"The right to vote is a right that should be valued, cherished and exercised each time we are given the opportunity," Robinson said.

Robinson said this election in particular was like no other since it would be one of the most monumental elections in history. He said they wanted to keep up the tradition of having the most students vote in the nation.

"Students at Francis Marion University, statistically, vote in larger numbers than students that attend any other institution of higher learning in the state of South Carolina and across the nation," Robinson said.

Robinson added a resolution to the SGA Constitution requiring all the senators to be registered to vote and to vote.

To keep the statistics high, Robinson partnered with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. (AKA) to adopt

a class within the student body.

As an organization known for hosting an array of events and being heavily involved with organizing events for the student body, Naetosha Young, AKA president said she knew they could help get people to vote.

The AKA's hosted a voting competition among the three organizations. Each organization had to adopt classes of students and get as many of them to vote as possible.

"Since all of our events have to be online, we figured that making it a competition would really get people involved," Young said.

On behalf of SGA, Robinson adopted the freshman class and began campaigning to get them to vote.

The AKA's also hosted a town hall event that allowed students to talk with and question local candidates running for various offices in Florence area.

Larryon George, SGA Treasurer, senior accounting major and a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., said the Alphas have many initiatives, but getting people to vote was a major goal.

"A voteless people is a

hopeless people," George said. "With this initiative we educate people on voting, their rights on voting, how to register to vote and we register them to vote."

George said the Alphas host a voter registration drive through every year at FMU.

George also said he was happy with how many students came out and showed an interest in voting.

"We were very pleased with the outcome and proud of our students for not only registering but actually going and using their voices by casting their ballot," George said.

SGA offered numerous opportunities for students to get registered at various events.

The student chapter of the NAACP on campus was also heavily involved with urging people to vote.

NAACP participated in local voting drives, volunteered at voter registration events and worked on Election Day to assist people with the voting process.

FMU's involvement in promoting voter registration and assisting students in the process created relationships among the different on-campus and local organizations in the area.



FMU students show their "I Voted" stickers. PHOTO BY KEI'YONA JORDON

FOOD TRUCK THURSDAY @UC LAWN



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GRAPHIC BY MAKAYLA O'NEAL

Students prepare for virtual NMUN next semester

Ansley Lesley
Staff Writer

Last week, FMU put together its team for the National Model United Nations (NMUN). This is the 11th year in a row that FMU has participated in the NMUN.

This year's team consists of six students. All of the participants come from various majors as the team is not limited to only political science majors. Jennifer Titanski-Hooper, assistant professor of geography and the Model UN lead instructor and co-coordinator, and Dillon Tatum, assistant professor of political science and

Model UN co-coordinator, will instruct the students and serve as the team's leadership.

"It's a great opportunity for our students to interact with other students and cultures from around the world, as well as get a first hand look at what international cooperation in the UN looks like," Titanski-Hooper said.

The NMUN is a conference where students have the chance to personally experience the inner workings of the UN. Universities from all over the world send teams to participate. Each team is assigned a country to represent at the conference. During

the conference, the team will function as representatives of their country. Last year, the FMU team represented Bosnia and Herzegovina. FMU's country for this year has yet to be assigned.

Leading up to the Model UN, each team does extensive research on their country to learn about its history, culture, political structure and geography. They also study the UN itself as an organization. Students will work collaboratively and individually to prepare themselves for NMUN. Students are taught how to discuss issues using proper debate protocol and practice giving

presentations on the UN and their country. The students will also write several position papers, discussing their nation's stance on issues, such as human rights and climate change, that are being debated at the UN.

"Writing the position paper is one of the most important parts of the course," Titanski-Hooper said. "It prepares students to participate in debates at the conference surrounding these key issues."

During the conference, students function as if they were the actually representing a country in the UN. They will write resolutions

detailing how a nation can combat a particular issue, debate complex issues on the UN floor and deliver speeches, as well as working to form alliances with other countries.

"The Model UN experience is also a great way for students to learn some presentation and technical writing skills as speech makers and creators of position papers and resolutions," Titanski-Hooper said. "The experience is also a great way for students to hone their professional and leadership skills."

To simulate the UN as much as possible, the conference typically occurs at the

UN in New York City. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the NMUN has moved to a hybrid platform. Some teams will meet at the UN in person, while others, such as FMU, will attend virtually.

"There will still be a lot of opportunities for students to interact and network and make the most of the conference experience," Titanski-Hooper said.

The NMUN will begin on March 28, 2021 and end on April 1, 2021. Before the conference begins, students will prepare their position papers and practice representing their country.

JUDGE BARRETT: A FAIR JUDGEMENT?

Joshua Hardee
Co-Editor

For the third time during his presidency, President Trump has managed to appoint a justice to the U.S. Supreme Court. And, thankfully, the approval process didn't bring with it another media fiasco as we saw with Justice Brett Kavanaugh's appointment. Yet there was a regretfully partisan divide among the senators in the confirmation hearings over concerns about specific cases, Barrett's faith, her judicial philosophy and even her general demeanor.

With as much airing out as is done in these hearings, I think it would be beneficial to do a bit of retrospection on Barrett's confirmation – how she responded and the questions that were brought up. What's more, I wouldn't like to either praise or condemn her here; rather, I would like to make some observations.

I agree, Barrett did come off as sort of rigid and unyielding. But when your job demands complete impartiality and reason-based decision making, then it stands to reason that the individual occupying the position would be dispassionate. Like their black robes symbolize, judges are not supposed to display personality in their work. The principle behind this is to represent judges as united in vetting cases in terms of how laws have been applied and whether they are constitutional. They are not policy-makers, and any person who either states or implies that they are a judicial activist isn't truly committed to the job or to the will of the people – their will as expressed in the laws their representatives pass into law on behalf of their constituents. Legislators create the law,

and judges interpret the law for its constitutionality and its fairness.

I think people need to ask themselves if what they're demanding of judges is fair or even proper. If, for example, you want a judge to rule in a case in favor of the party who's seeking something for which neither precedent nor federal statute supports their claim, then trying to persuade the judge to rule in their favor on a strictly moral basis wouldn't be consistent with the judge's task. Instead, lobby your representatives in Congress to pass legislation that would allow a judge to lawfully rule in that person's favor in those kinds of cases.

I despise double standards, and I noticed it in a couple instances during the hearings.

First, most senators were

quick to point out that Barrett would be filling the seat vacated by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Many of the Democratic senators digressed on Ginsburg's legacy, and some of them very clearly intimated that Barrett would be a poor replacement. Barrett would often decline to comment on certain issues and cases because they could be involved in cases that could come before the court, which is in compliance with ethics guidelines. Ginsburg herself gave a well-known elaboration on why judges should decline: "It would be wrong for me to say or preview in this legislative chamber how I would cast my vote on questions the Supreme Court may be called upon to decide. Were I to rehearse here what I would say and how I would reason on such questions, I would act inju-

iciously. A judge sworn to decide impartially can offer no forecasts, no hints, for that would show not only disregard for the specifics of the particular case, it would display disdain for the entire judicial process." If a judge commits to a certain policy position, then they admit that they may be swayed by something more than just the merits of the cases over which they may preside.

Second, I'd like to add a word to the recusal question that was put to Barrett more than once. Doesn't it seem like a contradiction in terms to suggest that Barrett should recuse herself from a case in which there's, for instance, a question about religion, especially Catholicism, but that she wouldn't have to recuse herself from a case involving a question about abortion if she were an open

supporter of Roe v. Wade and of reproductive freedom? Hypothetically, you couldn't deny her impartiality in the former instance and forgive it in the latter simply because you believe Roe v. Wade to be immutable. That's hypocritical. As Barrett pointed out, Roe v. Wade isn't considered super precedent, which means that it doesn't belong to a class of cases, such as Brown v. Board of Education, that aren't ever anticipated to come before the court. Whether you believe Roe v. Wade should not be overturned has no bearing on the specific issues of a particular case that could come before the Supreme Court; and therefore, it has no bearing on a judge's decision-making process.