

The Patriot

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Francis Marion University's award-winning student newspaper

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SGA expresses strength of Patriot spirit Reviews successful changes on campus

Kei'yona Jordan

Copy Editor

The FMU Student Government Association (SGA) hosted their first State of the Student Body Address on March 16 in the Chapman Auditorium.

Leaders in the Florence community and on the FMU campus came out to show their support.

The newly elected, first female African-American mayor of Florence, Teresa Ervin, made a guest appearance at the event.

This school year, SGA worked to establish their governing presence throughout the school with different initiatives and campaigns. During the leadership event, SGA President Tymoshio Robinson, SGA Attorney General Ariana Prete and other speakers highlighted the different changes SGA has undergone to solidify their role in the student community.

"We govern, we advocate and we represent," Prete said during her speech about what SGA is.

FMU President Fred Carter introduced Robinson and said his hard work and leadership were responsible



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

During the FMU State of the Student Body Address, SGA President Tymoshio Robinson discusses minimum wage increase for student workers.

for a lot of the changes happening throughout the university.

"His leadership, always vibrant, unwavering and visionary has played an essential role in realizing many of the successes the university has achieved during this past year," Carter said.

Robinson said SGA's first piece of legislation was a resolution to establish

SGA as the elected and sole sovereign body of the entire FMU student population.

SGA welcomed their first president's cabinet and renewed their relationship with the Campus Activities Board (CAB), appointing them as an agency of SGA.

The SGA also passed an omnibus of resolutions geared toward advocating for the students.

The resolutions in

the omnibus called for feminine hygiene products in women's restrooms, professors to place mental health statements at the end of every syllabus, making all unofficial transcripts free of charge, the expansion of campus dining services and incorporating mental health days into the spring 2020-2021 calendar.

Robinson said SGA accomplished the biggest

goal of the year by passing a resolution that recommended the overall campus minimum wage be raised to \$8 an hour. The minimum wage change went into effect on Jan. 28, 2021.

During his speech, Robinson said a true patriot is a student who is resolute, tenacious and someone who is a fighter.

"What better words can be used to describe the

unmatched force that is the student population of FMU," Robinson said.

Robinson spoke of the many actions and projects SGA accomplished on campus during the pandemic and civil unrest throughout the country. He highlighted the executive board's mission to condemn systemic racism, excessive use of force by police and supporting Black Lives Matter in support of George Floyd, which he said he believed set the precedence for the upcoming year.

"It was a signal of hope and understanding to the FMU community from the first all-Black Student Government Association executive cabinet," Robinson said.

The Robinson administration hosted events that were geared toward every aspect of what FMU students needed and focused on different policies and legislation that would support the FMU student experience on campus.

Robinson said these events and actions were taken to enhance student's experiences in the present and future.

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SGA hosts Education Symposium Tasty Treats from Trucks

Kei'yona Jordan

Copy Editor

The Student Government Association (SGA) invited SC State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman to speak at their first ever K-12 education symposium at 6:30 p.m. on April 6 at the FMU Performing Arts Center (PAC).

After being introduced by SGA Vice-President Delonte Hough, Spearman informed the audience of South Carolina's educational journey through the pandemic.

"My, how things have changed and my, how much we've learned," Spearman said. "We have gone through together as people, and together as a public education system."

Spearman said the public education system make decisions in the best interest of its students, staff and families. She also admitted that she would have done things differently based off of the knowledge she has now.

"Some of those, I might do a little differently now as we've learned," Spearman said. "But everything at the moment was made with the best information and best commitment that we've had."

She told the student leaders they will also make decisions based off the knowledge and commitments

in the moment, but these are subject to change.

Spearman discussed some of the disparities the state's education system faced. Some of the schools were more equipped to transition to e-learning because they already had the technology devices and training, while other schools were not as prepared because they didn't have enough resources to make the transition.

"Some school districts were handing out devices to students who were already prepared because they had a couple days of e-learning," Spearman said. "There were others who weren't quite there. They had some devices, but they had to get them ready and get them out to the kids."

Spearman said the teachers were also worried because they didn't know how they would be able to teach in an online class setting. In response to their concerns, the state education system created training modules for teachers.

Spearman said one of the largest obstacles they faced during the pandemic was the struggle with broadband.

"There were those thousands of students who had no access to technology at home," Spearman said. "Many of those students were right here in the Pee Dee."

The children who didn't have access to technology

were sent home with supplies, such as copy and paper, until they could get more money to order additional devices. Spearman said they spent 20 million dollars getting hotspots for students and almost 100,000 hot spots are currently being used in households today.

During her speech, Spearman said there were two bills to improve access to broadband being drafted. There was a state bill being drafted in South Carolina's general assembly and a broadband expansion bill is being drafted and taken before the SC Senate.

Spearman said another one of their struggles was finding a safe way to begin reopening schools. She said they had a hard time figuring out the best way to do things because they were getting conflicting information from schools on the other side of the world.

"We were walking in the blind," Spearman said. "Most of our information was coming from international sources."

Spearman created a task force to start coming up with ideas and protocols for reopening schools. The task force came up with several protocols, such as making sure to wash your hands, keep your mask on, having an area cleaned once it was vacated and vaccinating people quickly.

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Cierra Graham

Staff Writer

FMU Student Life held Food Truck Thursday on April 1 on the University Center (UC) lawn.

The food trucks invited to campus were Yaad Kitchen, Piggyback and Sunshine's Sweet Creations. While the food trucks varied in regard to menu and prices, the demand for delicious food was immense. With music provided by DJ Snipes, students enjoyed great food, great music and an opportunity to gather safely in an open space.

Yaad Kitchen served authentic Jamaican cuisine such as jerk chicken, oxtails and curry chicken. The side options were rice and peas, rasta pasta, cabbage and rolls. The menu prices were fairly low, and the student demand was high attracting a long line of students.

Yaad Kitchen can often be found at a new site in Florence called Eats on the Creek. Eats on the Creek is a food truck service in which various trucks participate and offer great food options to the Florence community. Yaad Kitchen can be found on Instagram @yaadkitchen.

Piggyback's food truck served barbeque and catfish. The menu consisted of burgers, wraps, loaded fries, and catfish tacos. The prices ranged close to \$11 and accepted cash only. Like Yaad Kitchen, students



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

A student buys some sweets from the Sunshine's Sweet Creations food truck.

enjoyed this truck as well. In addition to having a food truck business, Piggyback BBQ & Catfish also has a restaurant in Lake City, SC. Piggyback's also offers services at the Eat on the Creek site. Piggyback's can be found on Instagram @piggybacks_bbq_catfish. Sunshine's Sweet Creations offered sweets such as funnel cakes, lemonades and cheesecake. Often, as students left trucks like Yaad Kitchen or Piggyback BBQ & Catfish, they went to Sunshine's Sweet Creations to complete their meals. The menu prices

varied based on the food options. Funnel cakes are a frequent fan favorite, and speaking to most students proved just that. Sunshine's Sweet Creations can be found on Instagram @sunshine_sweet_creations.

Food Truck Thursday was a great way for students to enjoy new food options and convene in a safe, open-spaced environment. The prices are reasonable, flavors are excellent, and the portions are worth the price.

News

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Address

During his first days as SGA president, Robinson formed different task forces to take on issues among the student population. One of those task forces was geared toward continuing the policies that the previous SGA president, Kendria Mason, started with food insecurity.

"The task force on food insecurity worked diligently to restructure the SGA food pantry and was extremely successful in getting the initiative rerunning for the 2020-2021 academic year," Robinson said.

Robinson's administration also created a voters' registration task force, which he said provided FMU students with as many opportunities as possible to allow them to participate in the 2020 presidential election.

"In all, we hosted and co-sponsored five different opportunities for voter registration last semester," Robinson said.

Having partnered with other organizations on campus, Robinson thanked all the organizations involved for helping to promote voting

throughout the campus.

SGA hosted financial literacy events, improving mental health events, SGA awareness week and welcome week events for incoming new students.

They also hosted many diversity and inclusion events such as "Your Lives Matter: Students Speak Out." Robinson said this event gave students a safe platform to share their difficult experiences.

Robinson gave the audience a sneak peek at some of the events planned for the next semester, such

as the education symposium and a first-generation college student event.

Robinson ended his speech by thanking the SGA senate and other organizations on campus that excelled in helping all the initiatives take place.

"On behalf of all FMU patriots, your hardwork and dedication to our student body means a lot, and we appreciate your event planning and initiative planning you have been able to host this academic year," Robinson said.

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Symposium

Some of the school districts went back fully to in-person learning, some had hybrid options and others remained virtual.

"If you follow those mitigating strategies, schools can operate very safely," Spearman said.

After Spearman spoke,

Hough shifted the event to a panel discussion about dealing with modern issues in education, such as having to maximize resources in poorer

areas.

SGA said they hope to host more events like this in the future to get most students at FMU involved in

the SC education system.

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Amine Dream Team wins 4th annual President's Bowl

Julia Fulmer

Copy Editor

After much anticipation and a seven-event lead-up, the final round of the FMU President's Bowl named its new 2021 victor, Amine Dream Team.

Hosted at 7 p.m. on March 22, the Smith University Commons (UC) housed the fourth annual President's Bowl, furnished with a large blue backdrop and tables adorned with banners and buzzers.

Following six prior events in the President's Bowl series, the final round pitted the KAs, representing Kappa Alpha Order, and the Amine Dream Team, representing the FMU Chemistry department and the American Chemical Society (ACS), against each other in a final round to determine the recipient of the \$2,500 prize.

Team spirits were high, with the KAs donning their new pastel-colored rush shirts and Amine Dream Team garbed in protective goggles and lab coats. Chemistry professor Jennifer Kelley went the extra mile in team spirit, taking on the role of the team mascot. Dressed in a life-sized mole costume, Kelley emoted throughout the bowl when tensions were high.

Though the event lasted a mere 15 minutes, the teams made quick work of the questions, with Amine Dream Team picking up a 20-point lead of 55-35 by halftime. While it seemed the night was decided by a large



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

KAs awarded \$1,500 for second-place finish in fourth annual President's Bowl.



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

Amine Dream Team wins first-place prize of \$2,500 in the fourth annual President's Bowl.

margin, the KAs returned to the second half re-energized, closed the gap with Amine Dream Team, obtaining a five-point lead just before the last question. However, Amine Dream Team claimed the final buzzer for a deciding score of 95-85.

Rhiannon Van Demark, team captain of Amine

Dream Team, president of the FMU chapter of ACS and junior chemistry major, said she enjoyed getting to bring together all her friends from the department to work together as a group.

"I like the atmosphere [the President's Bowl] brings to campus, and it's just a really fun environment,"

Van Demark said. "Everyone is out, not so much to win, but just to have fun."

Andrew Powell, a biology major and member of Amine Dream Team, said he enjoyed the change in pace the President's Bowl offered, breaking up an otherwise hectic semester schedule.

"I used to do [trivia], in

high school, and even though it was a really long time ago for me, I still just thought it would be fun to do again," Powell said. "I honestly just did it for a story to tell and something fun to do. Also, what other chance am I ever going to have to show off this random collection of nonsense trivia?"

Sam Cathcart, a member of the KAs team and a freshman mechanical engineering and physics double major, said his favorite part of the bowl was testing his knowledge on the variety of questions.

"I did a trivia bowl when I was in middle school and I just loved it," Cathcart said. "It's random knowledge and you're like, 'Oh, I know that. That's pretty cool. I didn't know I knew that.'"

Cathcart said the President's Bowl provided a great experience for his first year at FMU and encouraged students from all disciplines to register next year.

"It's something anyone can do because the questions are random," Cathcart said. "It is kind of nerve-wracking being up there in front of people and afraid that you're going to get questions wrong, but everyone on both teams gets questions wrong. No one is going to know every single answer, and it's just something to do for fun. Yes, there is prize money, but honestly, just do it for the heck of it. If you have a chance, sign up. It's really fun."

FMU plans to host the President's Bowl every year during March.

The Patriot is published five times per semester by and for the students of Francis Marion University. Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official opinions or policies of FMU. We encourage letters to the editor but do not guarantee publication. *The Patriot* reserves the right to edit or reject any material submitted.

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.

Lesley Willard

Copy Editor

FMU hosted a virtual career fair in place of an in-person career fair March 24.

"The main goal is to help connect students with employers and find jobs or internships that they can use for educational opportunities or for career opportunities," said Jennifer Kunka, associate provost for advising. "We are happy to have the opportunity to do a virtual career fair through Handshake."

Career fairs at FMU were moved to online platforms last fall due to concerns about COVID-19, and they have continued to be held that way ever since. While the interaction that in-person career fairs allow has been greatly missed by both students and prospective

employers, the virtual experience is currently the best and safest alternative.

With virtual career fairs, students lose the chance to walk among tables and decide when to make their move, but they gain the structure of scheduled interviews. However, in both cases, it is recommended that students dress professionally and research the employers ahead of time.

"There's the benefit that you have the opportunity to meet with employers who would normally not travel to attend our career fair," Kunka said. "It's cost effective for them."

Will Carswell, director of career development, said a number of employers have voiced their appreciation for virtual career fairs because of the travel or expenditure restrictions within their organization.

For this career fair, FMU welcomed 35 employers to meet and connect with FMU students and to share job and internship opportunities at their companies.

"The Career Development Office has an extensive list of employers who have long been associated with the university and are interested in our students," Carswell said. "Additionally, the school of health sciences and the school of education have strong community partnerships that we relied on. We are grateful 35 employers have agreed to join us, even during the COVID-19 pandemic and in a challenging economy."

Since COVID-19, employers have held back a little bit on hiring, but as things slowly settle, they seem to be coming back around. Hopefully, there will be a heavy

period for hiring students.

Although every student who attends the career fair does not leave with a job or internship opportunity, both Kunka and Carswell encourage students to attend.

"Walking into a career fair and coming out with a job is often the exception, not the rule," Carswell said. "Every career fair offers numerous chances to build a network of mentors, to strengthen your professional skills, to learn more about various industries and to present yourself as a person, not a piece of paper."

Over 80 percent of all jobs come through networking. Even if attending a career fair doesn't result in a job offer, students still gain experience with interviewing and networking and have the chance to make a lasting impression on a potential future employer.

Participating in more than one career fair can be beneficial because students can perfect their interviewing skills and lessen the anxiety associated with the process.

Eventually, the goal is to return to in-person career fairs when it is safe to do so, but for now, FMU will continue hosting virtual career fairs. If you missed this career fair, the Career Development Office is always available to assist students in their professional endeavors, offering resume reviews, career counseling, help with job or internship searches and more.

"Nothing is more rewarding than helping students prepare for the next phase of their life and career," said Carswell.

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Woodard wins with words

Cierra Graham
Staff Writer

The Campus Activities Board (CAB) held FMU’s Got Talent Finale at 5 p.m., March 24, in the Chapman Auditorium.

The talent for the night included performances from Cody Walker, Elise Campbell, Asia Senhouse, Alex Vereen, Kristen Woodard, Aleah Smalls and Jahylin Baxter. The event was hosted by Jayla Frieson and MJ Armstrong, and the judges for the event were Jeffrey Lampkin and Jordan Jefferson. There was also a special performance by the 2020 winner, Myla Wilson.

The Royalettes, a dance team on campus, opened for the event. To begin, Aleah Smalls, often compared to the artist HER, sang a song. Her performance was great, and she received positive feedback from the judges. Next was contestant Alex Vareen, who wowed the crowd with a gospel song called “Last Mile” by Jarell Smalls & Company. Vareen was engaging with the audience and became a crowd favorite. Following Vereen was Kristen Woodard, who performed a written

poem called “Unwanted Acquaintance,” which talked about a battle with anxiety. Woodard’s performance was very moving, as many can relate to the discussion of anxiety. The students, as well as the judges, enjoyed her performance.

Moving forward in the night, contestant Cody Walker sang “Before You Go” by Lewis Capaldi. He showed his skills on the guitar by providing his own accompaniment. Other singers of the night were contestants Elise Campbell and Asia Senhouse along with the final contestant, Jahylin Baxter. Baxter was known as the “comeback kid,” since the audience from the original opening night of the talent show voted to bring him back. Careful to take advantage of his second chance, Baxter did his best to amaze the audience. He performed a song called “Listen,” accompanied on stage with posters reminding the crowd that their life matters, one of which included a suicide hotline number. Baxter’s performance received a standing ovation.

During deliberation, MJ Armstrong, a contestant

from the 2020 talent show, gave a closing performance. Alexandria Vareen won 3rd place, with Jahylin Baxter coming in 2nd place and Kristen Woodard won 1st place by just two votes.

Vareen shared she was surprised she placed.

“I feel really good; I had a good time being able to meet new people and the experience overall,” Vareen said. “It was never about winning for me, I just wanted to use my gift.”

“It was really fun meeting new people, and I’m really grateful,” Kristen Woodard, a senior public relations major, said. “I thank my family, friends and God, and I hope this is the start to many new things.”

Woodard said her poem was great for the occasion given the global pandemic.

“I wanted to highlight COVID-19 since a lot of people are experiencing anxiety during this time,” Woodard said.

Students at the event enjoyed the performances and great laughs provided by the hosts of the event.



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG
From left to right, Jahylin Baxter, Cody Walker, and FMU’s Got Talent winner, Kristen Woodward.



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG
Asia Senhouse sings at FMU’s Got Talent Finale.



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG
“Comeback kid” Jahylin Baxter performs “Listen.”

Sims receives grant

Kei’yona Jordan
Copy Editor

Hunter Sims, assistant professor of physics, recently became a recipient of the National Science Foundation (NSF) grant.

NSF awarded Sims \$101,854 for research from money that has been set aside specifically for research. The grant also includes enough money to allow a student of Sim’s choosing to research alongside him.

This grant will provide coverage for the next two years to purchase different software and technology needed to complete the research.

Sims said he will be conducting his research with a colleague from Oak Ridge National Lab that he worked with prior to coming to FMU.

Sims will be taking some students or a student from FMU physics department to the lab later next year due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

“We probably won’t get to go there this summer, which is unfortunate,” Sims said. “But hopefully we will get there next summer at least.”

Sims applied through NSF under the Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) program, which is geared toward facilitating competitive research.

Sims said he went

through the fourth track of EPCoR’s Research Infrastructure Initiative (RII), which allocates money directly for a professor to complete research. However, Sims said that professors asking for money in their grants for a student is expected, yet sometimes still gets declined.

EPSCoR is a program that works to give money to states that don’t receive much funding from the NSF.

“There are like 28 states that get less than a percent of the NSF budget,” Sims said. “A lot of them go to places like California, New York, Massachusetts and some of those places.”

Sims said the EPSCoR program doesn’t just seek out smaller schools. He said his application was competing with larger schools such as Clemson and USC.

“I will say that it probably appeals more to smaller schools, but at the same time it was not just for schools like Francis Marion,” Sims said.

Sims’ area of study is computational physics and material science. He said his study of expertise focuses on solving equations that could be used to find out the different properties of a material.

“What I study is more like the electronic and magnetic properties of materials,” Sims said. “So, basically, whether something

is going to be a conductor or insulator and whether it is magnetic or not.”

Sims said his research will focus specifically on a superconducting material, which is something that will allow electricity to pass through without any resistance when it is below a certain temperature.

Through his research, he hopes to find a way to bring superconductors to the point of working at room temperature in everyday conditions. This would make it cheaper to generate electricity.

The physics department is looking for students who are at least in their junior and senior years of college. Sims said he has already had students who are interested in doing research with him.

Sims said there is a research course that is offered in the physics department and one of the students taking that course with him would be joining him this summer to begin research.

The grant will fund Sims’ research for the next two years by allowing him to purchase crucial software.



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SGA senate changes election criteria

Kei’yona Jordan
Copy Editor

Candidates running for student body vice president or president will not be allowed to hold any off-campus internship or externship requirements.

Tymoshio Robinson, president of the Student Government Association, proposed an amendment to the constitution’s election laws.

The SGA senate approved Bill 112, the purpose of which is to change SGA’s executive board candidacy requirements and election laws.

Robinson’s amendment

added an additional part to section 2.5 of the constitution, creating section 2.6.

Section 2.6 states “In the event that a candidate for Student Government Association President and/or Vice President is required to complete an academic internship and/or education department field placement or student teaching requirement, he/she shall not be allowed to serve in these positions during the same academic year of the aforementioned requirement.”

Robinson said he believed that running for president or vice president comes with a

lot of requirements and that people shouldn’t have to choose between their degree and school.

“I still believe there should be a level of how much you can be involved,” Robinson said. “And that’s not a negative thing to say. If you can’t do it, you just can’t do it.”

The current vice president of SGA is a student teacher among other roles on campus and splits his time between teaching and SGA.

“We know vice president Hough is doing student teaching,” Robinson said “And I think he is doing a great job still juggling both SGA and student teaching.”

Robinson said that being an athlete, doing student teaching and internships are like full time jobs.

During the question-and-answer session, sophomore political science major and SGA senator Alfonso Legette asked how Robinson could exclude someone else’s management of time.

“If that person is able to manage both of those and their time accordingly, then why does that disqualify them from that position?” Legette asked.

Robinson told Legette that internships and other off campus requirements were not matters of time management.

“Eventually, you are going to have to choose where most of your time is going to go and if it is your degree requirement,” said Robinson.

“Being the SGA president or vice president isn’t required for not one degree on this campus, but if you are an education major, going into that class is a requirement and almost always other things are going to get neglected.”

Robinson said section 2.6 only applies to off-campus academic internships.

Robinson said he wanted to make sure that people running and future elected candidates understood that the president and vice

president positions require a lot of work and time.

“I’m not saying it’s a bad thing I am just saying these positions just need a certain level of commitment,” Robinson said.

Despite the speeches in opposition, the student senate passed Bill 112, which will go into effect immediately with the upcoming elections.

The Patriot Position

The Patriot Staff

In these early days of President Joe Biden’s term, he must confront a number of crises facing the nation: the global COVID-19 pandemic, the consequent economic destabilization and increasingly tumultuous issues of racial injustice, to name a few. But the financial consequences resulting from the pandemic have illuminated a particular burden that millions of Americans have been struggling with for decades – the student debt crisis.

The Federal Reserve’s economic database shows that students collectively owe more than \$1.7 trillion in loans. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, of the 68 percent of people who pursued postsecondary education and borrowed, each person, on average, owes \$31,800. Those who pursued a bachelor’s degree at a public institution owe an average of \$28,600; for a

private non-profit, \$33,900; and for a private for-profit, \$43,900.

In light of this, Biden and others in Congress have felt pressure to address a complicated problem that demands immediate action to assist struggling Americans amid the pandemic while also implementing reforms to the current system to prevent another debt crisis.

Biden has supported cancelling \$10,000 in student debt for all borrowers. Sens. Chuck Schumer and Elizabeth Warren jointly provided a plan that would cancel up to \$50,000 in debt. Of course, at the other end of the argument, there are senators, such as Bernie Sanders, who call for the cancellation of all student debt. Each of these resolutions brings out contrasting motivations for the government’s subsidizing most, if not all, student debt or leaving the brunt of the burden to the individuals

who decide to pursue higher levels of education.

Literally, with the stroke of a pen, Biden could wipe out everyone’s student debt. Reasonably, such an easy solution can hardly be the most efficient and the most sustainable. Biden’s ability to issue an executive action comes from a passage in the Higher Education Act of 1965 that grants the education secretary the power to “compromise, waive or release” federal student loan debts. This possibility also begs the question of whether forgiving debt should leave out those who had already paid off their loans. Retroactively compensating people who had consolidated their loans is another prohibitive monetary factor in the debate.

Arguably, since the U.S. government is the largest facilitator of consumer debt, its mechanisms to enable people to attend postsecondary education

shouldn’t be opportunistic. The federal government is essentially pulling the strings of the economic and educational futures of millions of Americans, yet without any clear directive.

At The Patriot, we want to see a well-defined directive driving our country’s approach to helping Americans best facilitate the means they have. For many people, the opportunity to pursue a better future for themselves and their families means taking out oftentimes substantial loans, gambling on achieving a return on their investment in their education.

Rather than marshal for a full subsidy of college education at this point in time, we would like to see our government address this issue in several smaller capacities.

First, the current economic climate has and will undeniably exacerbate the strain on those who were

already likely to default on their loans, possibly forcing them to file for bankruptcy. A relatively small amount of loan forgiveness – say, \$10,000 – would be of great relief to low-income individuals. Yes, it would also help high-income earners, but to a much lesser extent.

For those who take out smaller loans and who correspondingly pursue lower levels of education, it is often harder to find employment that allows them to meet their monthly payments and cope with other expenses. Forgiving some debt would assist those who are most likely to default on their loans by erasing most of their balance. As a result, we can help keep people working at this critical time.

Second, the federal government could work to equalize access to a baseline of higher education across all 50 states and all

demographics, working with already existing programs in each state that are likely to have well-established networks among students and their communities.

Lastly, if we acknowledge that we want qualified people to fill different positions in the workplace, then we have to ask ourselves if want to empower almost anyone to pursue any vocation, and to be able to do so with dignity and fiscal responsibility. This could be achieved, and help stem future borrowing, by institutionalizing aspects of Biden’s revision of the “free college” plan espoused by the likes of Sanders: providing two years of community college for free and eliminating the cost of tuition for students whose families make less than, say, \$100,000.

CAB holds Zumba night to sweat out stress

Julia Fulmer

Copy Editor

Popular music and laughter rang throughout the halls of the Smith University Center (UC) during the most recent UC After Dark event, hosted at 5 p.m. on March 31.

Sponsored by the Campus Activities Board (CAB), the event featured Marlon Thames, a Zumba instructor for Lake City Fitness Center, who led students in simple, repetitious dance moves, gradually increasing the difficulty throughout the songs as people began to feel more comfortable. In addition to the event, students

were offered fresh popcorn and lemonade, a resource that quickly became popular during the strenuous workout.

Caira Wilson, executive chair of CAB and senior secondary English education major, said CAB hosted a Zumba event two years ago when the organization was just starting.

“We were just talking about it, and we decided to bring it back because it was such a hit when we had it,” Wilson said. “So, we were like, ‘Okay, let’s get some people out of their rooms and enjoy some Zumba because a lot of people haven’t really been able to get out.’”

Wilson said she fell in love with CAB during her sophomore year and enjoys the sense of community the events bring to the student body.

“I think a lot of people are getting out of their shells, which is great,” said Wilson. “It gives people the avenue to have fun and be with their friends. Francis Marion is known to be a commuter campus, but we have a lot of students that actually live here on campus, and I want students to be able to have those opportunities to leave their rooms, have fun with their friends and actually enjoy what Francis Marion

has to offer.”

Brittany Clark, CAB member and junior marketing major, said they decided to ask Thames to instruct the event because they were already familiar with her work.

“Another member of CAB is a family friend of hers,” Clark said. “She recommended and contacted her, and I also got in contact with her, and we just went from there.”

Carlyse Major and Tamara Jackson, two junior nursing majors, said they discovered the event after working out at the UC gym. Though they had not planned

on participating in Zumba before, they ended up staying until the end.

Major said she enjoyed everything about the event, especially the dance to “Just Fine” by Mary J. Blige. Though she tried Zumba years ago, Major said she had fun taking the exercise aspect more seriously.

“I was younger, so I was just playing around, you know,” Major said. “I wasn’t really paying attention to the instructor. But doing Zumba just now, it was a nice workout, and I’m kind of tired now. Some of the dance moves were harder than others, but that’s okay.

Everybody had a good time.”

Jackson said she enjoyed the event because it encouraged students to come together and be active.

“It gives students the chance to let their hair down and not focus on the stressful final exams coming up,” Jackson said. “You know, it’s the end of the semester, and everybody’s stressed, so this is a good stress-relieving event while also keeping everybody healthy.”

The Royalettes enchant the audience

Finn Millians

Copy Editor

On Thursday, April 1, the Royalettes Dance Team performed their showcase, The Enchanting, at 6:30 p.m. to highlight their versatility as a team and pass on the torch from the graduating president to the newly designated leaders.

Calaysia Fullwood, Royalette vice president and sophomore nursing major, emphasized the hard work put in by the team and the goals of the showcase.

“We had a lot of practice,” Fullwood said. “We started with tryouts, then we had to request spaces, then we had to choose a music list and then pick between solos and different groups. It was a lot of preparation.”

The Royalettes wanted to highlight all their skills and talents as dancers and also incorporate several dance styles into their performance.

“It was mostly to show that we were very versatile,” Fullwood said. “When most people think of dance, they think of hip-hop or ballet, but we did majorette, we did hip-hop, we did lyrical; also, we had cheer and step.”

All the individual and group performances within the showcase incorporated



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

The Royalettes dance team shows off their versatility through several different dance styles in their showcase: The Enchanting.

these styles and helped convey their skills as dancers. Each member had different roles designated by the president and other leaders for the team.

Trischen Byrd, Royalette president and senior history major, was mostly in charge of the creation of the showcase and the delegation of roles within the performance.

“It was a hard process,” Byrd said. “I started planning for this show way before we had tryouts. I initially met with Calaysia and my captain, Kiara. I started talking to them about the show and any ideas they had. The main part of the show came from after we had tryouts when I got to know all of the girls on the team.”

Byrd had to use the months of practice and preparation to create a lineup of performances that would help utilize each dancer.

“None of this would have happened if it were not for the president; she really put everything together,” Fullwood said.

The event was hosted by Malcom Armstrong,

sophomore engineering major, a friend to the Royalettes and a member of the Campus Activities Board (CAB).

“They asked me, ‘Do you want to host the showcase?’ and I was like, ‘Sure,’” Armstrong said. “I came up with stuff on the fly. When you freestyle things, it is a journey. You never know

how it will go. I feel like that is the most fun adventure in the world.”

Armstrong was able to incorporate many interactive competitions and a rap performance into the showcase between dance numbers. Despite COVID-19 hindering many activities in 2020 and 2021, the showcase was able to persevere through proactivity in planning and adhering to guidelines.

“The turnout was successful even though we had restrictions and parameters around what we did,” Armstrong said. “I feel like the event was a success.”

The Royalettes closed their showcase with some final words from Byrd and new designations for leadership of the dance group.

“I am graduating in the fall, but I passed on the torch so they can know things for when I am actually gone,” Byrd said. “I am going to be teaching them, making sure they have the same resources I was able to give them while I was here.”

The Royalettes will host another tryout in the fall of 2021. Follow their Instagram page, @theroyalettes2020, and the Student Life Office for details on upcoming performances.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT | Caroline Floyd

CRIME REPORT

For the period 3-3-21 through 3-22-21, the following incidents were reported to and/or investigated by Campus Police:

3/3/21
Vandalism of Property

An officer was dispatched to the residential apartments after a student reported numerous scratches on the driver’s side of her vehicle. The scratches were discovered shortly after the student noticed a Snorlax Pokémon card on her windshield. The student mentioned she had much conflict with a prior roommate, leading her to move out.

3/11/21
Fire Response

An officer was dispatched to residential apartments in response to reports of a stove fire. The fire began as two students were cooking hamburgers, observing a small flame after they lifted the pan from the stovetop. They put out the fire by discharging the fire extinguisher and notified the Housing Office shortly after.

3/14/21
Simple Possession of Marijuana

Two officers responded to the residential apartments after reports detailed the smell of marijuana in the area. The officers spoke with a student about the smell, who admitted he smoked the substance earlier. The student later confessed to hiding more marijuana throughout his apartment, which the officers promptly confiscated.

3/22/21
Telephone Fraud

An officer was dispatched to the residential apartments after a student said he received a suspected scam phone call. The student said he initially received a call from a number in his hometown, leading him to answer. Upon answering, the caller asked the student for the last four digits of his social security number, subsequently asking for his address and date of birth. The student refused to answer any further questions and hung up.

FOUND PROPERTY: FMUPD currently has numerous items that were left unattended or were found on campus. If you are missing an item of property and can provide identifying information for your missing property,

Lesley Willard
Copy Editor

After being in a car accident that led doctors to believe she would never walk again, Caroline Floyd, a junior psychology major, defied the odds in every way possible.

“This event has shaped me into the woman I am today,” Floyd said. “It has shown me that I can get through anything life throws at me.”

Born and raised in Darlington, SC, Floyd is the oldest of five siblings. When she was 11 years old, she was a victim of a drunk driving accident. The car she was a passenger in was hit head on, and Floyd was left with three broken vertebrae in her back, a broken foot and a broken cheek bone. Doctors performed a 14-hour reconstructive surgery on her spine, but they were not expecting a positive outcome.

“I was told many times that this would be the surgery that would paralyze me,” Floyd said. “Doctors were in awe when I woke up and could still feel my legs.”

After the accident, Floyd was expected to require two years of physical therapy to regain all of her strength, but this was not something she wanted to accept. She said she was very bull-headed through the process and managed to complete her physical therapy program in about six months.



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG

Caroline Floyd has overcome multiple obstacles after complications from a childhood car accident.

“This was easily one of the hardest things I have ever been through,” Floyd said. “But with the support of my family, my relationship with God and the internal fire that I had within me, I got through something that I never even believed would happen to me.”

Floyd is currently enrolled at FMU as a psychology student with plans to graduate in the spring of 2022. After graduating, she hopes to obtain her masters and eventually become a licensed counselor. In addition to being a student, she works as a full-time nanny and a part-time nursing assistant at Advanced Cardiology.

“I chose Francis Marion because I wanted to be close to my family,” Floyd said. “I feel that all of my siblings are at very pivotal ages, and it is important for me to be around if they need me.”

Initially, Floyd thought she wanted to major in pre-med, but when she started those classes, she didn’t feel as though she was in the right place.

“I have always had a gift in communication,” Floyd said. “I love talking to people and trying to understand why people do what they do and think the way they do. After

PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT | Jennifer Lyles

Cierra Graham
Staff Writer

Having experienced first-hand the life of an FMU Patriot, Jennifer Lyles offers a personable experience to her students.

A native of Florence, SC, Jennifer Lyles is a sixth-year biology professor at FMU. She attended FMU as an undergraduate student, obtaining a bachelor’s in biology. After graduating, Lyles went on to attend the University of Florida College of Medicine, where she obtained a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences with a concentration in genetics.

“Having family members that worked [at FMU] in various capacities, it was really just a natural fit,” Lyles said. “I was already really familiar with FMU.”

Lyles said the biology department was extremely supportive of her endeavors as a student. Because of this, it was encouraging to have opportunities present where she may not have found on her own, as well as building relationships with professors.

“When I started getting interested in research, they helped me find available research opportunities,” Lyles said.

Halfway through undergrad, as her interest in the field continued, she decided acquiring more experience would be a big part of her post-graduation plans. Lyles participated in several research projects in graduate school, as well as during her professional career at FMU.

Lyles is currently working on two research projects. One project focuses on viral vectors, where harmless viruses are used for gene therapy to treat genetic disorders, while the other focuses on probiotic



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jennifer Lyles, an FMU alumna, continues her research in biology while also teaching at her alma mater.

microorganisms, bacteria and yeast that are beneficial to health.

“Biomedical science is science that has a medical application, often known as bench-to-bedside,” Lyles said. “It’s translational research – research that has some kind of clinical or medical application.”

While in graduate school, Lyles thought her future career could be working for a biotech company. However, her plans changed as she spent more time observing and experiencing additional aspects of the research process on a larger scale. She noted, at a larger university, such as the

University of Florida, there is an immense amount of pressure on the researcher to acquire sizeable amounts of grant funding, produce results quickly and publish frequently. Witnessing other researchers struggle with these extreme expectations, she decided researching full-time wasn’t the best option for her.

During her graduate experience, she sought teaching opportunities outside of her graduate program. She eventually landed an opportunity as a teaching assistant and taught a microbiology lab for pre-health undergraduate students at the University of

Florida.

“I really loved it,” Lyles said. “I enjoyed it, and I felt it was much more my pace. I knew it would be something I would enjoy doing long-term, and that I would look forward to going to work every day.”

Nearing graduation from the University of Florida, a position opened at FMU for a microbiology professor, and Lyles found herself in Florence again.

In addition to her responsibilities at FMU, Lyles serves on an Institutional Biosafety Committee for Advarra, Inc. As a committee member, she reviews protocols for

clinical trials and performs risk assessments. Reviews have included the recently FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines, among other emerging vaccines and treatments.

Lyles spends her time outside of FMU with her husband and their two young daughters. They especially love camping and spending time at the beach in the summers.

“Francis Marion means a lot to me,” Lyles said. “I’ve had some of my best memories here on this campus, both as a student and as a faculty member. FMU has been such a huge part of my life.”

VOICES of the PATRIOT

ARE WE WHAT WE USED TO BE?

James McCarley
Co-Editor

Since I'm graduating (if all goes well) in May, I've been thinking a lot about my experiences at FMU. This school has been a large part of my life and my family's for so many years. My parents went to FMU (back when it was Francis Marion College) in the 70s and 80s, three of my siblings went to FMU and have already graduated, and my younger brother started attending FMU last year.

Looking back at old yearbooks, when they still made yearbooks, it's amazing what used to happen on campus. Despite being primarily a commuter school, FMU had an amazing community that came together for all sorts of things. From dances to Christmas parties, there was so much happening on campus that it must have been impossible to attend everything.

My parents had an amazing experience on campus, whether it was playing spades every day in the UC or participating in intramural sports, which used to be a much bigger deal. The campus was mostly a commuter school, but students still found time in their busy schedules to come together as a community.

So, why talk about what life used to be like at FMU? Because I think its important that the campus, as well as its students, come together as a community more often. Having been here since 2015, I've seen a lot of changes at FMU, and I think the campus needs to go back to its roots and create a new identity that brings everyone together.

From my own personal experiences, there are so many opportunities to

improve oneself academically, whether it's going to New York for the National Model United Nations (which got cancelled due to COVID-19, but it was still a cool experience writing a position paper) or going to San Antonio for a conference during New Year's. But I've missed having a non-academic community that I can be a part of and grow with.

This is not to say that FMU has been a bad experience. Far from it, I've gotten to grow in ways I couldn't have imagined when I first arrived. I'm thankful to have gone to a school where I can get to create meaningful relationships with my peers.

Everyone who I knew when I came to FMU as a dual-enrollment student in 2015 has already graduated. There's a lot to be said for starting early, but I miss graduating with everyone I used to know. That isn't to say I won't be happy to walk across the stage with my friends, but it won't be the same.

I hope that I leave FMU in a better state than when I first came here, a bright-eyed, rather naïve, 17-year old homeschooler who had no idea what I was doing.

With my time as an undergraduate coming to a close, I'll leave you with this: do well in school, find a group of people who push you, and you'll always be enough. Be the change you want to see, whether it's at FMU or in your own life. There's so much that I wish I had done or learned, but that's all in the past. There's always tomorrow, and who knows, maybe in the end you'll learn a thing or two. Peace.

MORE THAN MIND-NUMBING

Finn Millions
Copy Editor

In the relatively recent past, the stigma against mental health disorders has prevented widespread conversations about its prevalence in daily life of the ordinary person. However, with an influx of national tragedies, suicides, substance addictions and more, society decided that it was finally relevant and thus began a national battle for good mental health.

While it is incredible that mental health is less stigmatized and help is more easily accessible to those who need it, I fear that a line was crossed somewhere. In advocating nationally and globally for mental health, it became a commodity. The idea was morphed and manipulated into a lucrative business and turned into revenue streams.

Like a pendulum, we swung from one extreme to another. Before, mental health was taboo. There were no conversations and it was not an "issue." Later, mental health was a forced conversation, and it was more common to fall into a category (i.e., anxious, depressed, hyperactive, etc.) than not. Fleeting emotions and situations are immediately diagnosed and treated; negativity is now viewed as "unhealthy."

There are now thousands of apps and services in which people can pay money for mental health assistance and support. Forms and surveys that evaluate mental health statuses are filled out in most public institutions, but the questions are vague and misleading. Medication is widespread and easily acquired, especially SSRIs, which aid in correcting the chemical balances responsible for anxiety and depression.

I am personally opposed to the idea of promoting neurotransmitters to fix minor problems. The harsh reality of mental health disorders—namely depression and

anxiety—is that they fall on a spectrum. The impact of neurotransmitters will inevitably affect other parts of the brain and behavior, which might end up being worse than the original issue.

Please do not misunderstand me—the last thing I want to do is discredit mental health disorders. However, I believe this hyper fixation on mental health as a whole is desensitizing us to the issue and creating confusion as to what qualifies as a disorder, what qualifies as symptoms and what qualifies as common emotional reactions to specific situations or life in general.

A happy medium is necessary. There are fields in which professionals are trained and certified to deal with mental health disorders—psychologists and psychiatrists. I believe we need to scale back the overwhelming number of resources just a bit and allow more input from psychologists and psychiatrists on how to treat mental health.

I also think there should be more emphasis put on self-care, and there should be education on healthy coping mechanisms. Medication, unless used for a disorder or illness that involves a lack of lucidity or control, should be used as a tool not a crutch.

As a society, I am proud of how far we have come in the fight for good mental health. I just do not want to see us succumb to the illusion of quick results, the idea that medication is always necessary or the agenda of large companies that simply want more revenue. Growth has been exponential; now we are in a place where we can tweak the present system and allow for a more effective, long-term solution for the pervasive mental health disorders in our communities.

EMBRACE THE WINDS OF CHANGE

Lesley Willard
Copy Editor

For many people, change is an immensely scary thing. It forces them to decide between staying in the stagnant and sometimes uncomfortable present or moving toward what they hope will be a better future.

From a leadership perspective, change is made up of four P's: pinpoint the pain, picture your purpose, prepare your people and prune the plant. Following these four steps encourages long-term change and helps prevent fallback.

When you pinpoint the pain, you are basically looking for a challenge. Searching for the area in your business or organization that needs the most help and deciding that you will designate that area for growth and improvement. There is always a weak link, and working toward making it stronger will be extremely beneficial in the long run.

Picturing your purpose means looking toward the future and deciding what the plan for your company is. Knowing what you want to happen and how you plan to get there is essential to success. Without a plan of action, there is no way to keep track of the goals you have set for yourself or your progress on reaching them.

The third step of change is to prepare your people. When you are leading a team, you must keep each and every one of them informed and updated on what is coming next. Encouraging change and looking at it in a positive light creates attitudes that accept and embrace change instead of rejecting it.

When a large team of people is involved, having even one person who refuses to weigh the benefits of change can affect the entire staff. Starting with the leaders of your organization, begin looking at change as a good thing. Eventually, that attitude will trickle

down to everyone else.

Finally, you must prune the plant. When referring to an actual plant, pruning is mandatory for it to thrive. This process includes removing excess buds or branches, removing sick branches and removing dead branches.

Now, think of this concept from a business standpoint. Think of the team members whose roles are not necessary or helpful; they are considered the excess buds or branches. Think of the employee that doesn't have a positive attitude when they come to work; they are a sick branch. Think of the one employee who refuses to give making changes a chance; they are considered a dead branch.

Although, as a leader, it may be difficult to remove these people, it is necessary for the long-term success and health of your business.

It's understandable that change is scary for many people, but what is unacceptable is not working to overcome that fear. There has never been a company to not benefit from change at one point or another, and knowing and accepting it is a great source of comfort for those who may struggle with the thought of it.

Employers look for people who are open to go wherever the leaders of the business takes them. If you are a leader, being friends with change is a great superpower, but even if you are only an employee, accepting change is still a very valuable trait.

Although you may be perfectly comfortable right where you are, life is constantly changing. It is better to embrace it than to run away from it.

IDEALISM HAS A LOT OF POWER

Joshua Hardee
Co-Editor

Following her journey as an Irish immigrant to becoming the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations during the Obama administration, Samantha Power's memoir "The Education of an Idealist" astonished me with its messages of empathy, conviction, honesty and, of course, idealism.

To be honest, I had never heard of Power until I stumbled across her memoir while looking for another biography to read. Since it always feels as though our governments and our politicians flounder to address even the most straightforward problems, I've never been that inclined to read into politics or the lives of politicians. But I was pleasantly surprised after reading her memoir. There are four main aspects of her story I teased out that not only make it a good read but also offer a well-rounded framework for developing our political and personal perspectives around a range of topics.

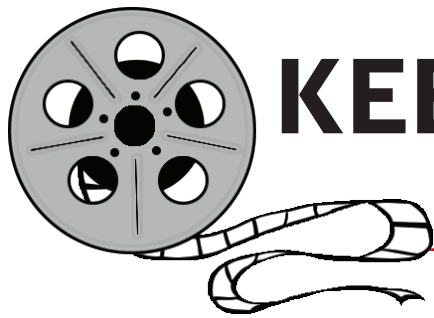
First, the honesty that underpins the entire narrative is as refreshing as it is insightful, into her worldview and into the broader global community. Initially, Power tells of the personal struggles she underwent as her parents' marriage imploded: her father sank deeper into his alcoholism and her mother, with her new partner, took both her and her brother to the U.S. to start a new life. She admits that her interest in international relations and foreign relations was sparked rather accidentally by seeing footage of the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing that had been beamed into the news station where she'd been working during college as a sports reporter. Witnessing this horrific incident seemed to awaken the sense of empathy that would compel her throughout her career.

Wanting to help, Power worked at the Carnegie Endowment for

International Peace, but she felt limited in that capacity. So, she decided to travel to the former Yugoslavia and become a war correspondent. As much as she and other journalists reported on the conflicts there, people in positions to act couldn't or wouldn't move fast enough to positively change policies. She had the idea to attend law school to learn about the legality around creating, changing and instituting public and foreign policy. This led her to become a professor at Harvard Kennedy School, during which time she wrote "A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide." This book attracted the attention of then-Senator Barack Obama, who invited her to work with him and eventually his presidential campaign.

Advising Obama on issues related to the treatment of human rights abroad, she realized the various ways in which, on a small scale, one can help champion human rights, and on a larger scale, one country can stand up for smaller countries to help prevent all kinds of disasters and atrocities. In one instance, Power realized a solution born out of conviction, empathy and idealism. As UN ambassador, she recognized the need for the international community to pull together to confront the Ebola crisis as it was threatening to become a pandemic. By relieving the suffering of the people where Ebola had broken out, the U.S. and other countries could prevent a global health crisis and help regions that couldn't handle such a problem on their own.

Despite some of the heavy material, I felt after reading Power's memoir that we're not as powerless to change the world for the better as we may think we are.



KEEPIN’ IT REEL

“Devil in a Blue Dress”

Carl Franklin’s “Devil in a Blue Dress” is one of those movies you let sit in your box of antique films and watch every few years. It packs everything into one film: action, mystery, reality, comedy and love. From the beginning until the very end, the movie keeps us watching, something difficult to do with films made over a quarter of a century ago.

The movie starts by painting the picture of a very neat Black man, who owns a well-kept house in an all-Black neighborhood. The setting also seems to start off in a majority Black town. Denzel Washington plays the character of Easy Rawlins, a seemingly normal, upstanding man. Though he has just been let go from his job, the movie doesn’t paint him as merely an impoverished Black person. Instead, the movie gives Easy dignity. Black men owning property is not something America wanted to portray very often in the history of African-American men in film.

Although the film makes a statement about the race and societal issues African-Americans were facing during that time, the movie did not focus the entire plot and details around them.

Throughout the movie, Easy demands respect from everyone he comes in contact with, but he doesn’t do it because he is Black; he does it because he is simply a man. Even when Dewitt Albright, a crooked mobster, spouts off racial slurs, Easy pays no attention to it. I think the beginning of the movie set the tone that the film is about race, but is not consumed by it.

My favorite character in the entire movie was Mouse. He was the exciting burst of violence the story needed, and he really embodied his role. While the movie works to paint him as a psychopathic killer, I only see him as a loyal friend. Being that he is Easy’s friend from back home and from the war they served in together, I felt like the film made a subliminal comment on war veterans when they finally come home.

One of my favorite scenes with Mouse is at the end of the movie when he is hugging Easy. He tells him how he split his half of the money from Daphne, the girl they are trying to save, because he knew Easy was too good of a person to take it from her. This signaled real friendship, and it ruled out the idea that they were only

friends because of the money they could acquire together.

I would have to say my least favorite character in the movie was Corretta James. I will add that she played her role very well, but I just hated her role. I don’t understand why she kept pressing Easy to sleep with her while his friend, her husband, was in the next room. You would think it would be Joppy, because he betrayed one of his good friends, but I had a feeling from the beginning he was no good.

After Easy sleeps with Corretta, I start to question whether Easy is actually a good guy, because it shows he is willing to do whatever for money. Then, I realize Easy is, indeed, a good guy, and he is trying to fight off seemingly inevitable tragic downfalls. However, there is one question the movie leaves me hanging with: why does Easy save Daphne? Is it because she offered him such a huge lump sum of money, or does he do it because he is a hero?

The love aspect of the film was a peculiar one because, for the majority of the movie, I was scared for anyone to uncover Daphne and her secret because everyone who seems to say they love her is out to either hide or kill her. The movie paints the picture that she is not loved anywhere.

However, Todd’s love for Daphne begins to unfold when Easy begins to realize more and more of what is going on. Until then, viewers only see Daphne as a runaway cheater.

I would argue the real love story is not between Daphne and Todd, but rather, is most prevalent in the relationship with her younger brother, Frank.

The danger she puts herself in to protect him is life threatening, but she does that instead of cutting him off and acting as though he doesn’t exist.

Movies like this, which sprinkle problematic issues throughout, catch people’s attention more than movies that come right out and talk about injustices against race. They convey those hidden or unspoken issues to bigger audiences. I wish we could have more films like this one in 2021.

Kei’yona Jordon
Copy Editor

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

Passed Proposals

The Department of Mathmatics

- Modify teacher licensure option
- Modify number of hours for teacher licensure

The Department of Biology

- Add BIOL 491
- Modify four year plan for biology secondary education option

The Department of Chemistry

- Delete CHEM 101
- Add CHEM 111 and 111L

Graduate Council of the School of Education

- Delete ART 501, 600
- Delete BIOL 501, 515, 602, 615
- Add EDUC 759

The Department of Speech-Language Pathology

- Modify SLP 542, 591, 543, 537, 507 course descriptions

The Department of Nursing

- Deletion of schedule for courses

The Department of Psychology

- Add PSY 505, 506

COACH SPOTLIGHT | Mark Gaynor

Finn Millians
Copy Editor

Despite coaching at FMU for nearly two decades, Mark Gaynor, the head golf coach for the golf team, is coaching his 18th year at FMU happily, relishing his time in Florence coaching and playing the sport he loves.

“I just like the game,” Gaynor said. “People who have not played do not really understand the competitiveness of it, and it’s really, as you get better, a competitiveness with yourself; you basically are playing yourself.”

Gaynor thrives from this self-competition and uses it within his coaching. He focuses on each player individually, working with their unique strengths and weaknesses to help them reach their greatest potential. To improve is to compete with and beat yourself.

“That’s the fun of it—trying to figure out each guy, what they are good at, what are they bad at,” Gaynor said. “The thing that I like about coaching the most is coaching the individual to make them the best player they can be.”

His experiences in coaching have taught him that each player is different, and to make a successful team involves individual improvements.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In his eighteenth year as the head golf coach at FMU, Mark Gaynor works to further his impressive legacy.

“The longer I coach, the more I find there is no right way of coaching golf, there are just more ways of being a better golf coach,” Gaynor said. “That is the beauty of the game; you can do it by yourself, you can do it with a team or you can do it with friends. We are an individual

sport that plays as a team.”

He does prefer one method of coaching, though: playing.

“I come from more of a playing side of golf,” Gaynor said. “You learn more from playing. You have to play golf to know what you need to practice, you do not practice

to go play golf.”

His philosophy has certainly been successful thus far. In his long career at FMU, he aided the transition from Division II to Division I, earned several coaching awards and coached many All-Americans. His legacy is a strong one and is only

continuing to grow.

Gaynor has led his program to establish roots within the Florence community. The Patriots use local golf courses to practice and play, which allows them to interact with the community and create relationships.

“Where we practice is where people are,” Gaynor said. “The people at the golf courses know who you are, and the guys are used to occasionally other people playing with us.”

Gaynor is also an avid golf player in his free time, still passionate for the game he has played for decades. His appearances at the golf courses and his coaching position have allowed him to make connections within the Florence community personally as well.

“The longer I have been here, the more I like it,” Gaynor said.

Besides playing and coaching golf, Gaynor likes to take around a month off in July every year to travel. He has been all over the world—Asia, South America, Europe, Scandinavia, to name a few. He is very excited to resume his travels now that the pandemic is coming to an end.

“I do about a month of traveling in the summer for the last 17 or 18 years,” Gaynor said. “I have yet to find a country where I do not like the food.”

You can find the Patriots on the golf courses around Florence, or at their last invitational, which Wofford College will hold on April 12.

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

Faith Allen

Finn Millions
Copy Editor

Heading into her last season as a Lady Patriot, Faith Allen, rising senior and forward for the women's soccer team at FMU, is relieved to have surmounted the obstacles of COVID-19, and is ready to leave it all out on the field.

"It's been different because of COVID-19 and because we've been searching to find a coach since sophomore year," Allen said. "It has been a really interesting experience, but I think it worked itself out."

The previous women's soccer coach, Lindsey Morgan, left at the end of the season in the fall of 2019. Throughout the spring of 2020, the Lady Patriots were looking for a new coach, but then the pandemic hit. Chelsea Parker, the newly hired coach of the women's soccer team, was unable to work with the majority of her new team until the spring of 2021.

"It's been stressful, I'm not even going to lie," Allen said. "Not only because of COVID-19 did we start late, but we also started late because we could not find a coach. There is a lot to do with pushing yourself to want to do something because you do not have a teammate. I had to be more independent with my stuff."

Though it was stressful, Allen understands the fight was worth it, and the season overall was successful. As a junior on the field, Allen was able to step more assuredly into her role as a leader.

"I feel like I've done better than I have in the past



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rising senior forward Faith Allen ends challenging COVID-19 season on a high note and looks forward to the fall.

few years, which has a lot to do with self-confidence," Allen said. "I am a forward. We have to maintain speed to beat the last defenders back there. I feel like I am pretty fast, and I know where to be at up top and how to find space on the field to get the ball."

She has been honing her skills as a forward for quite a long time now. She initially began playing soccer at an early age and has continued to play with passion ever since.

"I started playing soccer when I was in second grade," Allen said. "All the

other sports I played—I ran track, played soccer and did cheer—they were chosen for me, and I decided for myself to play soccer. It was my decision, so I valued it. And it was like, if I chose to play this sport, then I have to be good at it, you know?"

However, despite playing

for years, she never imagined she would continue the sport at the collegiate level.

"In high school, I had no thought to play college soccer; I just never thought I was good enough, you know?" Allen said. "So, I just never thought about it until my senior year when

I received offers from colleges. With soccer, I feel like I lack skill, but because I was fast, it made up for it."

She fell in love with FMU and the Florence community and decided to continue her soccer career here.

"Florence is a bigger version of where I am from," Allen said. "It is big, but it is small—everybody knows everybody. It felt like I was still home."

Soccer is not her only passion, however, as Allen also does acting and modeling in Charleston, SC. One of Allen's lifelong dreams is to become an actress.

"It has always been my passion [to act]. It is what I have always wanted to do," Allen said. "My friend recommended this place in Charleston where you had to go through a try-out process to be a part of it. If you do well, they offer to fly you out to New York. I did well, so they flew me out to New York, and that is how I kind of got into all of this stuff."

She has performed in two movies and one TV show, "The Righteous Gemstones," and only plans to further her acting career moving forward. Allen has also made a name for herself on TikTok, amassing around 30,000 followers and even being paid as a content creator.

Tune in to the Lady Patriots soccer team in the fall to catch Allen in action again for her senior season.

Patriots storm past Lochs

Melanie Dozier
Staff Writer

After a long game that had a very slow start, the FMU men's soccer team was victorious on March 22 over Clayton State University (CSU) with an astonishing final score of 4-0 at 6 p.m.

This game resulted in the soccer team's overall score being 4-3-2, with four wins, three ties and two losses.

In minute three, Nestor Nunez (#14) made an amazing pass to Oier Bernaola (#4) which resulted in an offside. This is when an attacking player is closer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second to last opponent.

Around the 6th minute, CSU had their first shot, which ended up going wide. In the next minute, FMU had their first very clear shot that ended up being blocked by the CSU goalkeeper.

Both teams had very nice attacks within the first 11 minutes of the game; however, Magnus Hoejland had an injury that everyone

was afraid might've been a broken ankle, but ended up just being sprained. Hoejland ended up being subbed, and remained out for the rest of the game.

In minute 13, Sam Pollard made a fantastic run; however, this also ended up being an offside. The Patriots made their first substitution in minute 22 from Nunez to Isak Strand.

Jafet Santiago (#6) had a nice one-on-one with the visiting keeper a few minutes later.

The Patriots had their first corner kick, which ended up being blocked, once again; however, they did not lose hope.

After halftime, both teams were playing well when Alvaro Zamora (#11) made a great pass to Javier Bello (#9) who then made a fantastic score at minute 25.

The Patriots then got their game faces on, and Bello passed the ball to Nunez, who scored the Patriots' second goal at minute 18.

Three minutes later, a third goal was scored by

Santiago. After this, around the 12th minute, Nunez got subbed out for Oliver Peters (#8).

The fourth goal came in around minute 8, when Bello made his second score of the game with an assist from Zamora.

After the game, Maximiliano Rocco, the FMU goalkeeper, said he loves his team and playing with so many people from all over the world.

"I have learned a lot from different cultures," Rocco said. "And I think each one of my teammates improves and grows by knowing and learning from each other."

Alvaro Zamora (#11) said playing with teammates from all over the world and observing how soccer is played in different regions is an enriching experience.

"What motivates me the most to keep playing is the competition and match days," Zamora said. "Training and thinking about winning the next game always helps you to be motivated in each training session."

UPCOMING GAMES

Cheer on your FMU Patriots at the following games!

**Saturday, April 17th -
Men's Baseball vs. Columbus State
@ 1 p.m.**

**Sunday, April 18th -
Men's Baseball vs. Columbus State
@ 1 p.m.**

**Friday, April 23rd -
Women's Softball vs. North Georgia
@ 4 p.m.**

**Sunday, April 25th -
Women's Softball vs. Young Harris
@ 1 p.m.**

