

# The Patriot

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Francis Marion University's award-winning student newspaper

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 2

## Two contestants receive golden buzzers Judges make FMU's Got Talent history

Chanelle Hanberry  
Staff Writer

The first round of the annual FMU's Got Talent showcase was held from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 30, in the Chapman Auditorium.

"I loved how they had the music we could jam out to during the breaks, so we didn't get bored, and the MCs were amazing," Meisha Coles, junior mathematics major, said.

The hosts, Mel'Anita Boyd and Arquantis Williams, kept the audience engaged between acts, providing comedic relief for the night. The event also featured two Student Life judges: Andy Matthews, Student Life Specialist for Student Development, and Britany Durrah, Student Life Specialist.

The night totaled nine acts, with The Royalettes dance team performing during the intermission and a performance from Campus Community Liaison, Malcolm "MJ" Armstrong, at the end of the show. The acts included singing and spoken poetry along with some guitar works from junior engineering technology major and contestant Cody Walker.

For the first time at the FMU's Got Talent showcase, two golden buzzer winners



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA

A contestant performs for the Student Life Judges, aiming to move on to the next round.

were selected. Golden buzzer winners are rare cases where a judge chooses an act to automatically advance to the next round.

"We were shocked when they said they selected two golden buzzer winners," Campus Activities Board (CAB) member and, Adrien McClintock, said. "We were expecting only one."

The golden buzzer winners were Jaylin Baxter, sophomore psychology major, who sang "I'd Rather Go Blind," by Etta James, and Cheyanne Stevenson, who sang "She Used to be Mine," by Sara Bareilles.

"This was my favorite one so far, and it was because our new CAB team is really getting out there, get-



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA

The Royalettes dance team shows the crown their new routine between acts.

ting the crowd entertained and really giving us a great show," Coles said.

During the intermission and after The Royalettes performed, CAB member, Reese Bacote, walked through the crowd, allowing people to sing some song selections. Some students sang, some danced, and some recorded themselves in action.

Some of the FMU's Got Talent contestants sang emotional pieces that reminded them of their past. One of these performers was Trinity Stevenson, sophomore pre-nursing major, who sang "Arcade," by Duncan Lawrence because it reminded her of an event last year and how traumatizing it was. Now, she looks back on it

and laughs.

The talent show was composed of students whose vocal ranges could go from high pitch, to alto, and even to a bass pitch. Matthews told one of the performers his vocal range was "sick."

Students engaged with the contestants' performances, offering standing ovations, cheering, singing along and clapping to the beat of songs.

"I am excited about the next showcase," Coles said. "The music hit to the core, and they sang with so much passion and emotion, plus they looked absolutely amazing."

Contestant Samaya Pinckney, junior pre-nursing major, performed an original poem called "Emotionally Unavailable." Her piece told everyone that she finally learned how to become selfish with the best parts of herself.

This year, the link to vote will be available in the FMU CAB Instagram bio @fmu\_cab. They allow viewers to vote for their top three favorite contestants. Their first-choice contestant will receive five points, their second choice will receive three points and their third choice will receive one.

## SGA offers free food pantry to students between meals

Julia Fulmer  
Co-Editor

Starting this semester, the free food pantry for students, founded by the Student Government Association (SGA), resides in the Allard A. Allston Housing Office.

Formed for the use of both commuting and residential students, the initiative offers canned goods, paper products and other toiletries for students to use, free of charge. The service is open primarily during the working hours of the housing office—8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.—though it is accessible as long as staff is present in the office. The pantry also accepts donations for canned goods, toiletries, household goods, cleaning supplies and other non-perishable items.

Created in 2019, the effort was previously located in the SGA office at the Smith University Center (UC); however, due to the limitations of an SGA student being present in the office to allow access, it was open less often for students. SGA president and junior political science major Alfonso Legette said they saw



PHOTO BY JULIA FULMER

Food pantry: "Multiple cans lined up on the shelf for students to browse through and take what they need."

this need, and the student-run organization moved the supplies near the residence halls for quick and easy convenience. Legette said he believes the pantry is underutilized lately due to the advent of COVID-19 and lack of proper marketing; however,

he hopes the accessibility of the new pantry location will draw in more students.

"If you are low on income or can't get to the store, please use the FMU food pantry," Legette said. "We could all use a hot meal."

Christopher Kennedy,

Vice President of Student Life and professor of history, said students hoping to use the pantry should go to the housing office in person and speak with Danielle Hutson, manager of the Housing Office. Though students are welcome to utilize the pantry

when needed, they must be considerate of the resources to allow enough for others.

"I would rather have students use it than have it go bad," Kennedy said. "And if you need to come by weekly, that's fine, but I'd rather them come by weekly than to walk

out of there with a whole bag full of almost everything."

Located in the same room as the food pantry is the clothing closet, another SGA initiative from former leadership. The closet provides free-to-borrow business wear such as dresses, suits and shirts for students to use in a pinch.

"It is really for students to borrow to go to a job interview if they do not have a formal sport coat or tie or anything to help them out," Kennedy said. "Hopefully, they will return it, and we can get it laundered. We have gotten some pretty good donations from faculty members."

Kennedy said he appreciates the continued donations to the clothing closet and food pantry by church partners and faculty and encourages more individuals or on-campus organizations to make donations.

"It is more of a campus community effort," Kennedy said. "SGA got it started, but I would love to have other people helping us as well. Who cares about taking credit? You know, we find a need, and we need to serve it."



## The Patriot

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*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.

## The Patriot

Francis Marion University's  
student newspaper

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# CAB hosts community bingo night at UC

Andrew Brain  
Staff Writer

The Campus Activities Board (CAB) hosted a bingo night event that took place at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 22 in the Smith University Center (UC).

Throughout the school year, CAB tries to incorporate as many community events as they can. After previously hosting a mega mingle event, a movie night and a way-back Wednesday party, the next event on the calendar was bingo night.

"We wanted to do something that would bring a lot of people out," said Antonio Pearson, a junior finance major and executive chair of CAB. "In general, a lot of people like bingo, and it gives people enough chances to win prizes that we have out."

Along with events like bingo, CAB has more in store for students here at FMU. According to Pearson, CAB acknowledges that students get bored stuck in a room all year, so they are trying to incorporate more events for the students to enjoy.

"We're trying to host more events throughout the week, so people can have more than just a day to get out," Pearson said.

CAB hosts UC After Dark every other Wednesday and has many more events planned for the rest of October. Lined up is FMU Aglow, Carn-Evil and pumpkin carving.

Despite some trepidation toward bingo, some students found they were pleasantly surprised with the experience.



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA

Students sit around a table awaiting the next call from the bingo host.

# Students gather weekly to take a breath

Finn Millions  
Co-Editor

Every Monday in Founder's Hall, room 255B, professor of business and director of the internship program, Mary Dittman, runs a meditation class open to FMU faculty, staff and students, titled "Just Breathe" from 1:30-2 p.m.

"When I was in college, I really struggled with anxiety," Dittman said. "For me, meditation really helps calm my anxiety. It also helps me when I'm feeling exhausted or overwhelmed; it helps me focus."

Around 2016, before the genesis of "Just Breathe," a former professor of the English department at FMU ran the class while Dittman was a student. After the

professor left, Dittman continued her meditation practice and traveled to California to study at The Chopra Center.

"I knew I wanted to start the meditation group back up," Dittman said. "I didn't really invent it, but I resurrected it."

The idea for the "Just Breathe" group and "meditation Mondays" were hers; however, she changed the format following what she learned at the Chopra Center. While it is a different group of people, the concept is the same. One difference between the new sessions and prior ones stems from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We started doing it by Zoom last year because of the pandemic, and we usually have three or so who regularly

join by Zoom," Dittman said.

Though the popularity of the video conferencing application is relatively recent, it allows for more geographical flexibility. Dittman has a regular attendee who used to attend FMU that currently resides in Virginia.

The meditation class starts with everyone sitting quietly and closing their eyes, allowing attendees to create a quiet space before proceeding. Dittman asks them four main questions for the meditation: who am I; what do I want; what is my dharma or purpose; what am I grateful for?

After voicing the questions, Dittman gives the group ten minutes of complete silence for meditation. During this part, Dittman has the

attendees repeat a mantra for concentration purposes.

"A mantra can be very helpful for having an anchor," Dittman said. "It's like a touchstone."

Dittman uses a Sanskrit mantra, "so hum," which translates into "I am." According to what she learned at the Chopra Center, it is normal for people to close their eyes, grow quiet and allow themselves to feel anxious. She uses a Sanskrit mantra because if she used English words, the natural word association performed by the human brain would perpetuate the wandering mind.

At the end of the silent 10 minutes, Dittman guides the participants through setting intentions. Intention setting is the easiest once the brain

is relaxed and tired. Dittman compared this phenomenon to hypnotist shows held at night since it is easier to manipulate the brain when it is more tired.

Dittman said she believes everyone can benefit from meditation.

"I think that sometimes people just suffer in silence because everyone else seems to be fine," Dittman said. "I wish I could get everyone to try meditation because I know how much it has helped me."

Students interested in signing up for "Just Breathe," can participate in Founder's Hall room 255B on Mondays at 1:30 p.m. or email Dittman at mdittman@fmarion.edu for the Zoom link.

# Professors pass out pastries at Pan!Demia

Melanie Dozier  
Staff Writer

FMU's Modern Languages department hosted a "Pan!Demia Pastries With Modern Languages" event, where professors shared free desserts with over 40 students earlier this week at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 28, in the Founders Hall breezeway.

"The purpose of the event was to promote the Modern Languages program and the many benefits of learning a foreign language," said Wendy Caldwell, professor of Spanish.

The Modern Languages program offers majors in both Spanish and French. With over 100 students in the program, the professors expect the program to continue growing, especially

with the increasing rate of other languages in the United States.

As students approached the tables, professors spoke with them about the benefits of fostering a professional background in foreign languages.

"We talked to many students about how to pair their minors or majors with a foreign language, and some of them were surprised to hear how complementary they were," said Kyrie Miranda, assistant professor of Spanish and French.

Miranda said learning modern languages is valuable because they teach you how to communicate with people beyond simple translation.

She also said there are cultural elements to languages that do not often translate

through words. However, such nuances give profound meaning to the lifestyle and lived experiences of a people.

"Students often do not realize that Spanish or French can complement many other majors and serve as a fantastic second major," Caldwell said.

United States officials from the U.S. Census Bureau in 2019 say only about 15 to 25 percent of Americans can hold a conversation in two or more languages, compared to the approximate 50 percent of Europeans. In addition to this, experts say roughly half of the human race can speak in more than one language.

Spanish and French are just a couple of the widely-spoken languages in the U.S. aside from English. In the southern parts of the United States, Spanish is spoken

more because the southern borders are closer to Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. However, in the northern areas of the country, French is more commonly spoken, as it is primarily spoken in Canada.

Miranda said her favorite part about the event was getting to meet students and see new faces since the pandemic limited the people she interacts with outside the classroom. She said it was nice to hear about their experiences at FMU thus far and hoped to spark an interest in them for learning Modern Languages.

The professors emphasized the financial benefits of adding a second language to one's repertoire, which could be easily paired

with another language.

"Pan!Demia Pastries stand helped several students expressing interest in majoring or minoring in Spanish after our conversations with them," Miranda said.

"Without the languages we speak today, there would be no understanding of one another, no community, no vibrant storytelling or song traditions. Our human culture is not sustainable without a language of some kind, be it spoken, written or signed.

Students interested in pursuing a major or minor in modern languages may contact Rebecca Flaggagan, chair of the Modern Languages department, at rflannagan@fmarion.edu for more information and further guidance.

# PIKE kicks their way to the top

Camryn Cassetori  
Staff Writer

The last two undefeated teams in the intramural kickball league faced off at 5 p.m. Tuesday at the old baseball fields behind the Smith University Center (UC).

Derrick Young, head of intramural sports on campus, put together the kickball league and organized the tournament after months of deliberation with his supervisor Chris Kennedy, Vice President of Student Life, about which intramural activities to hold for the upcoming year.

"Once the schedule is approved, I start on making flyers, getting information to Housing and all across campus," Young said. "I also send emails to former managers [to ask] if they would like to play again. This year, I also invited all the Fraternities and Sororities to participate."

PIKE, a group composed of members of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity on campus, made it to the kickball championship last year. They used their momentum to emerge victorious over Fried Chicken Wednesday's [ADD CONTRIBUTION], with a score of 12-1. The game

ended prematurely since once PIKE led by over 10 points in the sixth inning.

"It definitely helped that we had some guys with backgrounds in soccer and backgrounds in baseball, and when you put the two together, it essentially makes the sport of kickball, which explains why we're such a dominate force," Cullen Dore, a sophomore mass communications major, said. "The main goal as with other intramural sports we played in is to win the championship and get as many points for PIKE as we can."

While the game tied at 0-0 for the first inning, the

tide quickly turned in PIKE's favor by the top of the second.

The fraternity came out strong with a quick 2-0 lead in the top of the second inning, eventually increasing the gap to 7-0, then 10-0. In the bottom of the 4th inning, Fried Chicken Wednesdays got their lone point from sophomore psychology major and team captain Jacob Prete.

"Despite the outcome, I learned to work more on coordination and teaching the team the rules of kickball," Prete said. "I am very confident in my team's performance, and I know that we're ready to practice a little more and win the next games

we play."

Fried Chicken Wednesdays are the only team to score a point on PIKE throughout the entire kickball league thus far. If the two teams continue on their current path without losing any more games, they will likely meet again soon during the playoffs.

PIKE is now the only remaining team to be undefeated in the kickball league, securing the top position for the playoffs, but Fried Chicken Wednesdays is right on their heels, with their only loss coming from PIKE.



# First Friday Fun: A look into the event



An aerial view of First Friday at FMU showcasing the tents, food trucks and rides.



FMU welcomes students to First Friday.



Christopher Barton sits in the dunk tank.



Felonious Funk performs live music for the students at First Friday.



Students spin quickly in the swings, flashing colored lights in the darkness.



The Little Latin Kitchen food truck serves a guest at the window.

PHOTOS BY CULLEN DORE

## Johnson talks budgeting plans

**Chanelle Hanberry**  
Staff Writer

April Johnson, associate advising director for the Center for Academic Success and Advisement (CASA), hosted the “How to Manage Your College Budget” webinar at 3:30 p.m. on Sept. 29 through Zoom.

In the Webinar, Johnson spoke about the four pillars of personal financial success: purpose, planning, budgeting and action.

“Living on a budget helps you to be able to do the things you want to do,” Johnson said.

When defining the first pillar, Johnson said a student’s purpose should explain the “what” and “when” for their budget plan. She said, when starting, students must ask themselves why they are budgeting and lay out their goals, making sure their target goal is achievable and realistic. Johnson said target goals might change depending on situations that arise. Because of this, it is crucial to set a realistic budget to avoid a premature failure due to excess idealism.

When discussing the second pillar, Johnson said it’s helpful to create a plan that adds details to the overall purpose of the budget. In this way, Johnson said students must elaborate

on their goals and drill into the details of answering the “what,” “when,” and “how” questions, such as “what do you need to reach your goal?” and “how are you going to make it happen?”

The third pillar, budgeting, is when the planning stage takes motion. When handling this pillar, Johnson said it is helpful to consider sources of income and expenses. Though it can be relatively challenging to stick to a budget, Johnson said students must anchor themselves to their goals by keeping their minds on their purpose for making the budget. She believes this thought process will ultimately help students achieve their target financial goals.

“For a budget to work for you, you have to work your budget,” Johnson said.

Johnson also discussed the 50-30-20 rule, which states 50% of income must go to a person’s needs, with 30% to wants and 20% to savings. In consideration of this rule, an individual must determine all sources of income by finding their “net pay,” a term used when describing how much money an individual receives after taxes are deducted.

Once all the money “in” is calculated, it is time to determine how much money

will be going “out.” In this step, Johnson said expenses should be considered to determine the monetary pool left over. Though rent and bills are most commonly associated with expenses, other consistent payments, such as groceries and gas, should also be considered.

After subtracting total expenses from total income, Johnson began discussing the action pillar, in which individuals track, maintain and improve their budget. She told students the action stage can take many forms: making wise choices, recognizing needs and wants and updating the budget monthly.

“This takes time, and it will be hard, but the end goal is worth it,” Johnson said.

Budgeting successfully can take time and effort to get right, but the ultimate goal is personal financial success. For upcoming CASA webinars, students can visit the FMU calendar page or keep an eye out for mass emails containing the Zoom links from Jennifer Kunka, associate provost for advising and professor of English.

## CASA hosts resume workshop

**Kynleigh Hobbs**  
Staff Writer

FMU’s Center for Academic Success and Advisement (CASA) held a “Write your Resume” webinar at 2:15 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 30, via Zoom.

“It is tedious, yes, but it is what employers want,” Aylin Kruse, a psychology major graduate student said when describing the resume writing process.

Will Carswell, director of the Career Center, worked alongside Kruse and undergraduate English major Luke Watkins to guide students in eliminating potentially fatal errors within their resumes while providing advice on presenting themselves to future employers as effectively as possible. The webinar included resume writing tips such as formatting, language, appropriate length and pieces of information most valued by potential employers.

Watkins said it is crucial to highlight the positive impact of including specifics when describing previous work-related experiences to stand out among other applicants.

“The most important part to me is using the right language and details,” Watkins said. “You really

want to expand and go into detail.”

Kruse said remaining consistent with language and formatting is key to writing a professional and impactful resume, noting such lack of continuity is one of the most common errors she sees in resume samples. Despite this, it makes all the difference between employment and unemployment.

“For me, it is being consistent,” Kruse said. “It will look so much better if you just put everything in the right font.”

Speakers encouraged the students to participate in the Zoom call by utilizing reactions such as a “thumbs up” emoji to answer questions. A key point the hosts brought up was taking the initiative to form the core foundation of a resume that can be used far into the future with minimal updates.

CASA plans to host a series of webinars throughout the fall semester and intends to increase student attendance when possible. Future webinars will cover how to include sources in research writing, how to perform at a job interview and how to prepare for FMU’s upcoming career fair on Nov. 10.

“We’re just trying to break down the wall and encourage students to come to ask for help,” Carswell

said.

Carswell aims to motivate students to utilize the free resources provided for them, such as CASA, the career center and the writing and tutoring centers on campus.

“We would certainly encourage students to take advantage of all the free resources in CASA, and the career center is just a part of that,” Carswell said. “The staff exists just to offer help and provide options for students. That’s why we are here.”

The Tutoring Center offers specializations in math, chemistry, biology and finance, to name a few areas. The Writing Center focuses its efforts on guiding students throughout all stages of the writing process, whether it be conceptualizing, drafting or revising. Along with CASA and the Career Center, the FMU Tutoring Center is located in Founders Hall, Room 220, while the writing center resides in Founders Hall, Room 114-C.

Zoom links for the webinars can be found in mass emails to the student body. Students can find additional information about future webinar dates at the FMU calendar, listed at <https://www.fmarion.edu/calendar/>.





# UPCOMING CAMPUS EVENTS

## Events

- Oct. 11:

Just Breathe Meditation

FH 250B

1:30 p.m.- 2p.m.
- Oct.18:

National Chemistry Week Celebration

10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Oct. 22:

Songs for a New World by  
Jason Robert Brown

Hyman Fine Arts Center

7:30 p.m.- 9:30 p.m.
- Oct.26 :

FMU Concert Band

201 S Dargan Street

7:30 p.m.
- Oct.30 :

FM’AGlow- Drive Through Edition

5:30 p.m.- 9:30 p.m.



# Talk of the Town

## Events

## Distance from FMU

- Oct. 9:

Downtown Oktoberfest

Downtown Florence

6 p.m.- 9 p.m.

6.5 miles
- Oct.23:

Music Festival

City Center Farmer Market

4 p.m.-9 p.m.

6.9 miles
- Oct.23:

Alabama Renaissance Faire

Wilson Park

6 p.m.

6.7 miles
- Oct 29:

Florece After Five

Downtown Florence

5 p.m.- 8:30 p.m

6.5 miles





# VOICES of the PATRIOT

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Jerald McNair  
Chicago Tribune

What happened to “It takes a village to raise a child”?

It’s an African proverb that used to be quoted routinely. When we hear the phrase now, it doesn’t elicit the same emotion.

There used to be a time when neighbors freely talked with one another, where trust, mutual respect and a sense of community existed. Kids knew that if they misbehaved on the block, or around the neighborhood, other adults could not only weigh in but also freely correct them. It was a shared understanding that we were one community, striving for a better future. We knew that if our children were reared correctly, the future would be bright.

Unfortunately, that feeling of community and shared understanding seem to be eluding us in so many communities. Neighbors are not only apprehensive about correcting children, but they are also afraid. They are not certain if the child’s parents will support them or how the child will respond. The statement, “Don’t talk to my child,” is heard way too often. This message is clearly understood to mean, “Don’t correct, admonish or scold someone else’s child.” What this more than suggests is, if you see a child misbehave, you aren’t empowered to correct them. When you hear the child is using profanity, or see them throwing a rock at a neighbor’s window, stealing candy out of a store, fighting in the community or simply exhibiting behavior we all know is inappropriate, you are hesitant to get involved.

As a result, after years of children getting away with these behaviors, except for the times they are corrected by their parents, some of them feel empowered to commit more serious acts in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, we are witnessing something we never thought possible: living in fear of the younger generation.

According to Chicago Police Department reports, the average age of carjackers is 15 to 20. In fact, there was almost a 300% increase among children through age 17 from 2019 to 2020. And over 10% of homicides in 2020 were committed by the same age group. We see mobs becoming bolder, and more common, as teens commit violent acts in groups, stifling and frustrating law enforcement. Downtown Chicago is a central focus of some of them. Over the last couple of years, we have seen scores of teens walking in the middle of the streets downtown, jumping over cars, disrupting traffic, even assaulting others, all without a fear in the world.

How did it come to this? This question

seems to baffle us all. The reality is that there was not a watershed moment that gave rise to these kinds of acts. It’s hard to point to a particular moment in contemporary times that we could suggest is the reason why teenagers feel unashamed to commit such violent and reprehensible acts.

Over the course of time, we simply have allowed it because we didn’t permit the village to do its part. The village that we so often referenced decades ago was allowed to intervene, and to help steer a child in the right direction. We empowered one another. The children — that was us — understood and behaved accordingly.

Teenagers have often pushed the envelope, so to speak. They naturally exhibit behaviors and attitudes that we all want to admonish at times.

What is relatively new, and very concerning, is the abject violence and lack of empathy far too many youths are exhibiting. Reactive attachment disorder suggests that children who don’t develop healthy relationships with adults, or caregivers, early on in their lives, may develop callous and violent behavior later on.

Perhaps that is what has taken place. So many of our youth have not developed those nurturing relationships with adults. This is all the more reason why it’s essential for parents to allow the village to once again assist in raising their child. We can change the behavior of our youth if we change ours. They are a reflection of the mistakes that we, as a society, have made.

We never should have taken the power away from the village, the neighbors, the teachers and all the other adults with whom children come in contact. The good thing is sometimes what was done can be undone. It’s not too late to support and truly live by the phrase, “It takes a village to raise a child.” The change lies with the adults. When children see us working together, respecting and nurturing each other, truly working in their best interest, they do well.

Unfortunately, the road to recovery will be difficult. We have far too many teens and young adults who grew up saying, “No one can correct me but my parents.” Let’s try to change that mindset, particularly in those who are younger. The village is suffering. Kids are being shot in record numbers, often by individuals who are not much older than them. More than 300 children have been shot in Chicago this year. It feels like a war zone in certain parts of the city. We must empower the community to help raise our children.

## LIFE IN BOXES

Finn Millians  
Co-Editor

Throughout a person’s life, experiences and socialization shape their identity to encompass “who” they are. People are, by nature, impressionable and conformists; they have to be to survive in society. In the course of my own life, my identity was shaped by my nature, but it also consists of where and how I grew up, who I grew up with and all of my unique experiences along the way. While I would love to consider myself entirely independent and “different” from the status quo, I am self-aware enough to understand that I--like everyone else--fit neatly into a box somewhere.

Unfortunately, I have learned in life that these boxes are not always so cut and dry, and many times, the boxes are rotting.

To survive as humans, socialization to any degree is necessary. We must conform and choose the box in which we reside. This grouping may be natural, but it can also be toxic, especially in the age of such widespread communication.

From cancel-culture to forced societal standards based on trends, people are micromanaged within their demographic and feel pressured to keep walking along a predetermined line. Non-conformity and deviation from those predetermined standards meet with hatred and judgment. Though we preach about the individual and unique attributes, we set a standard for complete assimilation and adherence to these “special” standards.

We live in a toxic culture. It perpetuates itself through social media and the powerful minority that controls the platform. The constant gaslighting and rapid judgments within this “accepting” world create a narrative that we are moving forward toward peace and equity. In reality, we are proving Orwell right and falling into the trap of groupthink and blindly following the loud and powerful like naive sheep.

If society has not deemed an issue important enough, there will not be resources available to victims for help. If it is not widely publicized by the news and social media, then it was not important enough

to matter; it never really happened. If the powerful minority that runs the social and political world does not think something is acceptable, then that aspect is immediately blacklisted, and those associated are targeted and punished.

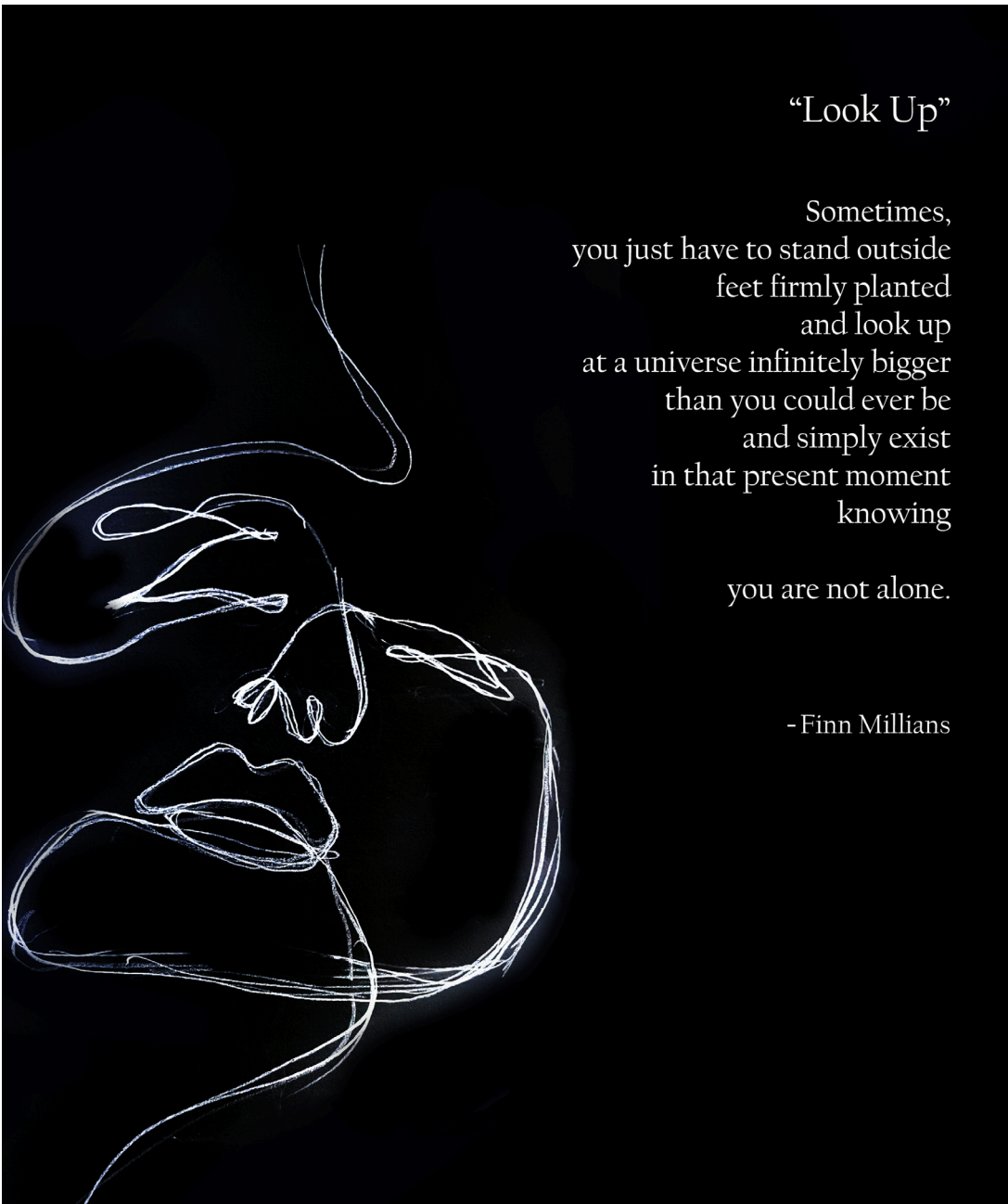
In some ways, through this extreme shift in the social dynamic, we have made progress with crucial issues. For example, the new standards for what is acceptable regarding race and gender are helpful and significant, but these new standards do not encompass all that needs to change. By ignoring other glaring issues to focus on specific things, we may focus more resources on pertinent issues, but it creates this precedent that the one or two focuses of society are the only focus period.

Right now, birth control and women’s rights are being infringed upon by governments. This issue is getting more publicized, but it does not fit within the framework of what is “important” to this new, manufactured society. It might, in the future, become a focus; yet, the idea that it can only be a universal focus if social media and the loud and powerful leaders deem it so is concerning.

I want all of us, within our various boxes, to be able to see all that goes on around us, despite the tall four walls of our boxes. We may need to stay in boxes for human nature’s sake, but we should be able to dismantle the rotting boxes and move to new ones when necessary. We may be made up of a universe of experiences and influenced by it all, but that means that we need to manipulate this controlled identity into something meaningful. We need to make sure that if we will be impacted by everything in life, the impact makes a positive difference rather than perpetuating a toxic culture.

not much help; at times my homework grades have been jeopardized. I think that we should revert back to traditional teaching methods concerning languages and mathematics in order to make sure all students are learning in the best way possible.

## Creative Corner



“Look Up”

Sometimes,  
you just have to stand outside  
feet firmly planted  
and look up  
at a universe infinitely bigger  
than you could ever be  
and simply exist  
in that present moment  
knowing

you are not alone.

- Finn Millians



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# ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT | Elizabeth Elliott

**Lesley Willard**  
Assistant Editor

After changing her major twice and testing out several potential areas of interest, FMU alumna Elizabeth “Liz” Elliott found her career calling as an elementary school teacher.

“Being able to be there for my students and have an impact on their lives is so rewarding,” Elliott said. “For some of my kids, the highlight of their day is coming to school and being loved on by their classmates because many of them do not get that at home. I love being able to witness those interactions and see how they positively influence the child.”

Elliott began her time at FMU as a nursing major, but she quickly realized she was too sensitive to continue in that field. She then decided to try out business instead, focusing on human resources. During her time as a student, Elliot worked in the service industry. There, she gained experience with HR roles and decided it would not be a good fit either.

“I was at a point in my schooling where I was not sure exactly what steps I wanted to take next,” Elliott said. “But then I got a job working with children at the YMCA one summer, and I fell in love; I changed my major to early childhood education as soon as I could.”



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Elizabeth Elliot, FMU alumna, fought through multiple setbacks to ultimately discover her dream of being an elementary school teacher.

After graduating in the spring of 2021, Elliot received offers for teaching positions in a couple of school districts surrounding the Florence area but felt drawn to Florence School District Three (FSD3) in Lake City. She said her top two choices were a 3K-5K Montessori position or a second-grade position, both in FSD3. Ultimately,

she accepted the second-grade teaching position at Lake City Early Childhood Center because one of her fellow graduates would also be working there, and she knew the principal well.

Going into her first year of teaching, Elliot said she was most nervous about doing everything alone, without the help of a cooperating teacher to tell her what to

teach. Surprisingly, it was even more challenging than she expected.

“Teaching alone and having so many children counting on you to help them learn can be intimidating,” Elliott said. “Luckily, my coworkers have been more than willing to help me out and give me advice, and my mom is a kindergarten teacher, so she has been a

big support.”

While she was a student at FMU, Elliott was a Teaching Child of Poverty (TCOP) Scholar and a member of the Kappa Delta Pi Honors Society. When she graduated, Elliot wanted to continue feeling connected to the school she would be working for, so she joined an events committee at Lake City Early Childhood Center

that plans celebrations throughout the year.

“I’m only in my first year, but I love my job,” Elliott said. “I feel like I am exactly where I was meant to be, and I am looking forward to everything the future brings.”

Throughout her entire journey, Elliot said she is the most thankful for the amazing support she received from her family, friends and FMU professors. A significant memory that stands out to her is the kindness she received during her junior year when she experienced a stroke due to severe migraines. Although Elliot was forced to miss two weeks of school, she said, with the help of her peers and professors, she was able to catch up, and did not have to sit out a semester.

“With changing my major twice, I had already added on an extra year to my time at FMU,” Elliott said. “Having a stroke was a major setback, but I was determined not to let it control me; my professors helped so much with that.”

Elliot said she would not change a thing about her time at FMU. Although it took her a year longer than she hoped to graduate, it gave her the chance to explore her career options, and she was able to graduate with a major, two minors, and absolute certainty in her passion for teaching.

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# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT | Elyanna Bauer

**Lesley Willard**  
Assistant Editor

Elyanna Bauer, freshman supply chain management major, is ready to embark on a new adventure into her college career after being homeschooled her entire life.

“I was terrified for my first class,” Bauer said. “Never being in a classroom setting made me feel more unprepared than most students, but it ended up being easier than I would have thought.”

Bauer’s mother was a high school teacher before having children, and when the time came for them to begin their education, she chose to homeschool them because of the location of their home to the nearest school. However, when she got to high school, Bauer transitioned to virtual schooling and completed her education through the South Carolina Connections Academy so her mother could return to work as a math professor at Florence-Darlington Technical College.

As Bauer began looking for colleges, she narrowed her search to her top three schools: FMU, College of Charleston and USC. Ultimately, she chose FMU because it would allow her to live at home and continue working at the Chick-fil-A Irby, and her father is a biology professor.



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA

Elyanna Bauer, freshman supply chain management major, works on self-confidence in her college career after years of home-schooling.

“I have a lot of mentors at Chick-fil-A, and they encouraged me to choose a major based on something that I would be good at and would provide for me financially in the future,” Bauer said. “Plus, I plan to own a business one day, and since my major is supply chain management, there’s a possibility for that opportunity to come through

Chick-fil-A.”

Upon enrolling at FMU, the honors program invited Bauer to join, so she decided to give it a shot. She said it was well worth it, and the honors classes she is enrolled in challenge her much more than the standard courses that she is taking alongside them.

“I want to learn as much as I possibly can,” Bauer

said. “I understand that every day will include new opportunities to learn. Plus, the more that I know, the more I can help other people to learn too.”

So far, Bauer says she loves FMU and finds it easier to learn in a small group of people rather than a class of 200, so the class sizes at FMU have been beneficial to her. She also says she

enjoys going to the library on campus to study and do homework, either by herself or with friends.

Since she was homeschooled most of her life and never had to focus on building relationships, Bauer struggles with self-confidence. However, she has been working to build that trait by playing piano, working as a Team Leader at

Chick-fil-A and volunteering with the children at her church through a program called Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed (AWANA).

“One of the turning points in my struggle with confidence was when I participated in a piano competition when I was 13,” Bauer said. “That was basically the beginning of my journey to becoming the most confident and determined form of myself that I can be.”

While Bauer still does not feel like she is where she is settled in her self-confidence, the young student continues to strengthen this trait within herself, and she is hopeful that FMU will give her more opportunities to grow socially.

Throughout the next few years of her career at FMU, Bauer is excited to continue to meet new people and learn everything she can about supply chain management to prepare herself for the future.

“FMU is everything I expected it to be,” Bauer said. “I did not expect to meet so many new people, but that is definitely something that makes me happy; I did expect it to be hard, which it is, but I know that if I put in the work, it will all be worth it.”



# ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT | Alvaro Zamora

Melanie Dozier  
Staff Writer

For Alvaro Zamora, a junior marketing major and forward for the Patriots’ men’s soccer team, his sport is both a passion and an avenue through which he can earn a degree to achieve his goals within the business world.

“The beauty of soccer is that if you fail once, nothing happens; try again until you achieve the goal,” Zamora said. “What keeps me motivated on the field is the opportunity to do better on the next play.”

Zamora was born in Madrid, Spain. He grew up fostering a love for soccer because it runs in his family—his dad was an avid soccer player. Zamora has been playing soccer for as long as he can remember. He said he started playing when he was around three years old, and he said it has been his passion ever since.

Zamora’s journey to FMU started at that young age, and his current status on the team is a continuation of his childhood dream. He now looks to leave a legacy behind after his career at FMU, and he is off to a



Alvaro Zamora, junior marketing major, works to find success on the field and within the classroom.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

great start with eight goals and nine assists before the end of his third year.

Zamora said that he will always remember what it was like to make his first

goal in the Francis Marion jersey: indescribable.

“It was a golden goal in the second overtime of a difficult match. Something that I had never experienced

before because in my country the rules are different,” Zamora said. “Being able to finish a game and a great victory with a goal of your own is an indescribable

feeling.”

Zamora believes kicking a ball towards the goal is one thing, but scoring a goal during a match is something you have to experience for

yourself.

This dedication and passion needs to stem from intrinsic motivation, something that Zamora has in spades. Such a feat can be challenging for someone from a different country, let alone a completely different continent. Zamora said he is an exchange student, which meant he had to learn ways to navigate American college life and steer away from being lazy or slacking.

Majoring in marketing, Zamora attends FMU in hopes of building his reputation and profile as a soccer player, as well as getting a degree he can use in the real business world.

Zamora said it is tough sometimes to balance a full-time sport with full-time classes and maintain his performance in both.

“Many times, it is difficult to combine soccer with classes,” Zamora said. “you miss a lesson one day because of a trip, or you have an exam the day after losing a game. It is in those moments when it gets difficult for you, but it is worth it,”

## KICKING TOWARDS THE WIN FMU SOCCER PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA  
Kimo Lemke, sophomore forward, prepares to take a shot.



PHOTO BY MORGAN ZASTAWNIK  
Jordan White, freshman defender, looks for an opening to throw in the ball.



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA  
Dayle McEwen, fifth year defender, prepares to launch the ball up the field.



PHOTO BY MORGAN ZASTAWNIK  
JG Garon, freshman midfielder, looks to find the forwards with a pass.



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA  
Jaume Bonet, freshman defender, looks for the pass to one of his teammates.



# Patriots fall to nationally ranked Argonauts

Finn Millions  
Co-Editor

In their first home weekend of the season, the Lady Patriots faced defeat after three hard-fought sets against the nationally ranked University of West Florida Argonauts at 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 17, in the Smith University Center (UC) gym.

The Argonauts are ranked 19th in NCAA Division II women's volleyball. The team from Pensacola, Florida came to Florence ready to battle.

The Argonauts defeated the Patriots 25-15, 25-21 and 25-14. The second set was a close one with multiple lead changes and ties. The Argonauts claimed the final five points, granting them a win for the set.

The Patriots spent the week before the tournament preparing for West Florida.

"We had very intense practices where we worked on being loose and confident in pressure situations," said senior middle blocker, Iyanla Thigpen. "We worked on blocking a lot in practice, so it felt great to see and feel everything transfer over."

Thigpen was a key

player for defense during the weekend, especially in their match against the Argonauts. Tallying two blocks for the Patriots, Thigpen successfully shut down some key offensive plays. Other offensive leaders were junior pin Gracie Davis, with 16 kills, and graduate student opposite Kayla Arthur, with 12 kills and two blocks.

Another crucial player during the match was a graduate student setter, Naina Ivanova, who tallied 27 assists. Ivanova was particularly excited to play the Argonauts because she is familiar with the pressure of playing nationally-ranked teams.

"Playing at a Division I level for four years, I am very familiar with the system that they play, and I enjoy playing teams like West Florida," Ivanova said.

Though the Patriots lost, there was a distinct feeling of optimism from the players looking into the rest of the season.

"We are very optimistic," Thigpen said. "We saw how much we grew together and how well we are progressing in the gym. We are such a talented team, and we have

not even reached our highest level of playing yet."

Ivanova believes they could have brought a better game to play the Argonauts, but she also can see the team's potential to have a promising season.

"We are learning every day and getting better and better," Ivanova said. "I think this season will be a great one for us."

The lady Patriots also enjoyed their first home weekend of the season. After many weekends away, the UC gym welcomed spectators from friends, family and other sports enthusiasts.

"It was fun," Thigpen said. "It felt great having the support from our families, friends and other sports teams. It made the games way more exciting and fun."

The Patriots will continue their season away at Erskine College and Emmanuel College, but their next home game will be at 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 8, against the Converse University Valkyries in the UC gym.



PHOTO BY AINARA EIZAGUIRRE IRASTORZA

The Patriots look to block the attack from the Argonauts.

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POETRY  
PATRIOTS  
GOLDEN

BUDGETING  
VOLLEYBALL  
KICKBALL

TALENT  
CASA  
BREATHE

SOCCER  
BINGO  
FRIDAY

## UPCOMING GAMES

Cheer on your FMU Patriots at the following games!

**Saturday, October 9th**  
**W Soccer v. Lees-McRae College (2 p.m.)**  
**M Soccer v. Lees-McRae College (4:30 p.m.)**

**Wednesday, October 13th-**  
**FMU Volleyball v. UNC Pembroke (7 p.m.)**  
**W Soccer v. UNC Pembroke (4 p.m.)**

**Saturday, October 16th-**  
**W Soccer v. Belmont Abbey (5 p.m.)**  
**M Soccer v. Belmont Abbey (7 p.m.)**

**Saturday, October 23rd-**  
**FMU Volleyball v. Barton (2 p.m.)**

**Wednesday, February 27th-**  
**W Soccer v. Barton (5 p.m.)**  
**M Soccer v. Barton (7:30 p.m.)**