Five Honors College Graduates Awarded Prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship

Four Miami Dade College graduates were awarded the Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship. Four are pictured here. From left to right: Ana Cristina Camba, Daphnie Velasquez Garcia, Stefani Davila and Alexa Bencomo.

By Juan S. Gomez

Five Miami Dade College graduates—Ana Cristina Camba, Stefani Davila, Paola Troconis Infante, Daphnie Velasquez Garcia and Alexa Bencomo—were awarded the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.

The recipients will receive up to $55,000 annually to cover living expenses, tuition, books and other fees.

She graduated in May with a 4.0 GPA and an associate’s degree in computer engineering from Eduardo J. Padrón Campus. She served as the vice president of Sigma Zeta Honors Society, layout editor at Urbana (the campus’ literary arts magazine) and a member of Phi Theta Kappa.

Ana Cristina Camba

After witnessing deaf customers struggle to order food at the Domino’s Pizza restaurant she works at, Ana Cristina Camba was encouraged to try to develop assistive technology.

“There’s not a direct bridge for people with hearing impairments in our world,” the 19-year-old said. “I want to establish a software that can bridge that disability with a hearing world.”

Camba, who wants to become a computer engineer, also performed mathematics and programming research as an intern at the School of Science at MDC. In 2021, she co-founded the Interactive Bilingual Reading Program in Nicaragua in partnership with FNE International to help children learn English.

Stefani Davila

During 4th and 5th grade, Stefani Davila sold candy with her friends to raise funds for the Jovenes Contra el Cáncer (youth against cancer) foundation in Ecuador.

“The foundation is my second home,” Davila said. “I have constantly learned new things, met interesting people, and had the opportunity to travel to different locations around Ecuador.”

Movie Marvel

Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness hit theaters on May 6. The film features Dr. Strange, Wanda Maximoff and America Chavez.

Contact Us: mdc.thereporter@gmail.com

The internet has to be considered a public utility to ensure the government protects it from the harms of monopolization.

Elections

MDC Trustee Vies For Seat On Miami-Dade County School Board

Roberto J. Alonso, who has more than 20 years of experience in education, has been a Miami Dade College Trustee member since July of 2020.

By Ammy Sanchez

Miami Dade College Board of Trustee member Roberto J. Alonso is running for a seat on the Miami-Dade County School Board for District 4.

The seat covers Miami Lakes, Hialeah and Hialeah Gardens. It became available after former County Commissioner Joel A. H. Libavsky, who has served on the board since 1986, said in April that she would not seek reelection.

Alonso’s competition is Kevin Menendez Macki, who has served as the school principal at Hobre Hebrew School in Hialeah for six years. He has more than 15 years of experience in education.

“We have a great community,” said Alonso, who is originally from Miami Lakes. “I see everybody more engaged than ever in the topic of education right now. So it’s really an exciting time and I think a turning point in education, where families, parents and students are really seeing [its] importance.”

Alonso, who has more than 20 years of experience in education, said his platform is centered around conservative values. That includes his support for parental rights in the school curriculum, opposing the imposition of Critical Race Theory in K-12, advocating for fair and accountable salaries for teachers and supporting funding and programs for students with special needs.

“I’m excited to hear and to see him put his thoughts, his dreams and his ideas to fruition,” said his sister Jessica Alonso Mendoza, who has been teaching since 1997 and is a first-grade teacher at Bob Graham Education Center.

Connecting with the community has been a huge part of Alonso’s campaign. He visits 100 homes in District 4 every day during the week. On Saturdays, he is joined by his family.

“One of the things that separates [Ro- be]t from everyone else is his ability to understand what people are feeling,” said Anthony Valenzuela, a 2021 MDC alumni who is helping Alonso with his campaign.

“He’s not a career politician who just wants...
Humanitarian Aid Being Collected For Ukraine

Miami Dade College, in collaboration with Florida for Ukraine and Jackson West Medical Center, is collecting humanitarian aid for the Ukrainian victims of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian War. 

Items being collected include large suitcases and medical supplies such as pain and fever-dye-free medicine (like Motrin and Tylenol), painkillers, bandages, sedatives, analgesics, tissues, and personal items.

The donations are ongoing and open to the general public. Supplies can be dropped off at any MDC student life department.

—Veronica Romano

North Campus Selects Brandy Parker As New Director Of Advisement And Career Services

Brandy Parker was selected as the new director of advisement and career services at North Campus. She began her role on April 25.

Parker, 41, will assist students in creating academic plans while discussing their goals, as well as helping students transition from high school to college.

“I am so happy that Miami Dade College chose me to be a part of this fundamental step in a student’s journey,” Parker said.

Parker worked at the City College of Chicago for 16 years in student services, admissions, continuing education of distance learning, and adjunct teaching.

She received her bachelor’s degree in textile apparel merchandising from Northern Illinois University in 2003. Eight years later, Parker obtained a master’s degree in business administration from a focus on human resources from Robert Morris University.

—Nicole Molina

The 2022-23 Univision MAGIC Scholarship Is Accepting Applications

Applications for the 2022-23 Univision MAGIC Scholarship are being accepted until May 30. Eligible students must be enrolled in the Miami Animation & Gaming International Complex and be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. They must demonstrate financial need, have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and have a letter of recommendation from MAGIC faculty.

The letter must be scanned and emailed to dmedina4@mdc.edu.

Students can apply for the scholarship at https://miamidade.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_Tx4TDFNF65x4Z. Winners will be announced in the summer.

For more information, contact Mauricio Ferrazza at (305) 237-7825 or mferrazza@miami.edu.

—Laureanne Apollon

Head Baseball Coach Morales Selected As Southern Conference Coach Of The Year

Miami Dade College Head Baseball Coach, Adrian Mo- rales, was selected as the Southern Conference Coach of the Year. The Sharks finished the season with a 29-15-1 mark including a 16-5 record in Southern Conference play.

They were the runner-up at the State Tournament in Lakeland, Florida, which took place from May 12-15. Morales became the second head coach during the 2019-20 season. He has an 92-44-1 mark in three sea- sons at his alma mater. Mo- rales played at MDC during the 2008 and 2009 seasons, earning First Team All-Southern Conference and First Team All-State honors.

He led those teams win back-to-back Southern Conference Championships.

—Juan S. Gomez

Rising Black Scholars Can Qualify For A Free Passport

Miami Dade College was selected to participate in the Institute of International Education American Passport Project.

The program, which will take place through December, will cover the cost for 25 Rising Black Scholars to receive a passport. Miami Dade College, the only higher-education institution in Florida selected to partici- pate in the project, will assist students with the application process.

To qualify, students must be at least 18 years old, United States citi- zens, first-year students with Pell Grant eligibility and be requesting a passport for the first time. For more information, go to https://bit.ly/3Nuq3GF.

"Being selected to participate in the IE American Passport Project solidifies MDC’s commitment to bringing the access gap to international education for its most underrepresented students,” said Michaela Toma- nova, the vice provost of Academic Affairs who oversees the Office of International Education at MDC.

—Nicole Molina

Padrón Campus Professor Selected As 2022 Outstanding Community College Professional

Diego Tibaquirá, a computer science professor at Eduardo J. Padrón Campus, was selected as the Region III 2022 Outstanding Community College Professional by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators on April 19.

"[I’m] thankful to Miami Dade College and Padrón Campus for providing the opportunity and support to do what I do on a daily basis to help change lives,” Tibaquirá said. “I want to empower people.”

Tibaquirá has taught computer science with an emphasis on cyberse- curity at Padrón Campus for 18 years. Additionally, he serves as a lead faculty for the Horne College and advisor of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society.

In 2017 and 2021, he was named an Endowed Teaching Chair. Tibaqui- rá was also selected as a Fulbright Specialist at MDC for a tenure of four years in 2021 and was nominated to the 2021 Ethical Hacker Hall of Fame.

More MDC, he worked as a data analyst at PepsiCo for two years and as an information security specialist at Naval Sea Systems Command for a year and a half. Tibaquirá has served in the United States Marine Corps for four years.

He has an associate’s degree in computer systems and network- ing and telecommunications from Craven Community College, a bachelor’s degree in computer science from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, a master’s degree in computer science from the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State Uni- versity and a doctorate degree in instructional technology and distance education from Nova Southeastern University.

—Laureanne Apollon

Bianco Selected Southern Conference Player Of The Year

Lady Sharks third baseman Raissa Bian- co was selected as the Southern Conference Player of the Year. The sophomore had a stellar season, leading the team with 46 RBI, a .428 batting average and 21 doubles. She also had a .577 slugging percentage, 10 stolen bases and two home runs.

Bianco’s strong of- fensive output was a major reason the Lady Sharks qualified for the State Tournament for the second season in a row. The Lady Sharks were 28-28 this season including a 15-12 record in Southern Conference play.

Miami Dade College starts State Tournament play on May 6 at 1 p.m. versus Pensacola State College in Longwood, Florida. The game will be live-streamed on Florida College System Athletics Association Digital Network.

—Juan S. Gomez
A Good Run: A runner jubilantly crosses the finish line at the 2022 Mercedes-Benz Corporate Run, which took place April 28 at Bayfront Park.

Strumming Along: Singer and guitarist Will Thomas from the band Tall Boys performs at The Barnacle Historic State Park on May 1.

Applauding: Linda Alvarado Stermer, Director of the Vocal Jazz/Pop Ensemble, introduces the group during the "Songs of Home and Healing" event on April 19 at Kendall Campus’ McCarthy Auditorium.

All Together Now: Vocal Fusion singers harmonizing Can’t Help Falling in Love With You on April 13 at Miami Dade College Kendall Campus’ Finn’s Bistro.
Tune Into Instagram Live For This Year’s MDC Journalism Series

This year’s series will feature journalists who have worked at The New York Times, Rolling Stone, the Miami Herald, Politico, CNN and WLRN. Three of them have Miami Dade College ties.

By Ammy Sanchez

*ammy.sanchez001@mymdc.net*

The Miami Dade College Journalism Speaker Series is back.

This year’s episodes will broadcast on Instagram Live—atmdctherporter—and highlight five journalists whose work has been featured in The New York Times, Rolling Stone, the Miami Herald, Politico, CNN and WLRN. Three of them have ties to Miami Dade College.

“We are delighted to have such a decorated lineup of journalists sharing their knowledge with our students,” said Manolo Barco, who serves as the media adviser to The Reporter.

Gregg Birnbaum, a former editor at the Miami Herald, Politico, CNN and NBC News, kicked-off this year’s series on May 13.

This year’s guest will be Sherrill Cabra, a WLRN PM newscaster and digital producer. She will appear on May 27 at noon. Cabra got her start in journalism as a 2019 spring and summer intern at WLRN. After her internship, she continued to report, anchor and produce for the station as a freelancer.

A year later, she covered the 2020 election for WLRN. In 2021, she interned at the Breakthrough News Reporting category, appeared on May 20.

The program’s next guest will be Sherill Lyn Cabrera, a WLRN PM newscaster and digital producer. She will appear on May 27 at noon. Cabrera got her start in journalism as a 2019 spring and summer intern at WLRN. After her internship, she continued to report, anchor and produce for the station as a freelancer.

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**ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT**

**SEDT Alumna Wins Five National Academy Of Television Arts & Sciences Awards**

- Domenicca Botero’s short film, Silver Waters, was honored five times at the Suncoast Student Production Awards on May 7. The film highlights a woman and her struggle with losing a loved one.

*By Andrea Charur
andrea.charur001@mymdc.net*

When Domenicca Botero’s 88-year-old grandfather—Mauricio Alberto Cevallos Balda—passed away in March of 2020, she struggled to accept his loss. “During the time that he passed away up until the funeral, I was convinced that it was a mistake,” Botero said.

Fueled by those raw emotions, Botero—who earned a bachelor’s degree in film production from the School of Entertainment & Design Technology in 2021—wrote Silver Waters, a 13-minute film about an elderly woman named Marisol who is in denial about her husband’s death.

The film resonated with audiences. On May 6, Silver Waters won a $2,000 prize for capturing first place in the Palm Beaches Student Showcase of Films in the College Feature/Short Awards category, the largest student film competition in Florida.

The following day, the film won five production awards—Best Long Form Film, Best Photography, Best Editing, Best Audio and Best Writing—at the Suncoast Student Production Awards sponsored by the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, the same organization that hands out Emmys.

“It’s emotional, it’s a good story and she did it in a very interesting way,” said Barry Gordon, the SEDT chairperson. Botero wrote Silver Waters in the summer of 2020 with her friend, Daniel Bellot, for their film workshop course at North Campus. In the spring of 2021, she assembled a crew of film students, alumni and industry professionals.

SEDT Pride: Domenicca Botero won five awards at the Suncoast Student Production Awards for her film Silver Waters. The film tells the story of an elderly woman struggling to deal with her husband’s death.

**MDC Trustee Wants To Be A Changemaker On Miami-Dade County School Board**

- To run for his own benefit...he really wants to make a difference.”

*By Andrea Charur
andrea.charur001@mymdc.net*

Alonso has also been active on his Instagram account—@robertoalonsos—where he posts information and videos about his campaign. He has received nearly $50,000 in contributions from individuals and businesses in the community, according to his campaign treasurer’s report.

Alonso is the founder and vice president of business development at Always At Your Side Adult Day Care, a realtor at Costa Real Estate, and co-founder of Miami Lakes Cars for a Cure, a car show in Miami Lakes that creates awareness and raises funds for cancer research.

He also co-founded HeroK12—a software company that automates the daily tasks of administrators in schools—and was the organization’s director of business development until 2019. Additionally, Alonso served as the chair of the public safety committee for the town of Miami Lakes from 2013 to 2016.

The 42-year-old earned an associate’s degree in computer and information sciences and support services from MDC in 2000.

**Hialeah Love: Roberto J. Alonso is running for a seat on the Miami-Dade County School Board District 4. Primary elections take place on Aug. 23.**

**Hialeah Love:** Roberto J. Alonso is running for a seat on the Miami-Dade County School Board District 4. Primary elections take place on Aug. 23.
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Three Miami Dade College Students Posthumously Honored During Graduation

Daniela Marchan Hidalgo, John Christopher E. Pangilinan and Mahmood Habbaba were remembered during the College's commencement ceremonies on April 23 at loanDepot Park.

By Juan S. Gomez
juan.gomez070@mymdc.net

Daniela Marchan Hidalgo's family somberly walked to the stage at loanDepot Park on April 23 to receive their daughter's posthumous associate's degree in culinary arts management.

"After we received her diploma and walked down the stage we broke down in tears," said Juan Carlos Cevallos, Hidalgo's father. "We felt proud of our daughter and surrounded by love, but at the same time we could not believe she was not there to enjoy that moment."

Hidalgo was one of three students posthumously honored during Miami Dade College's commencement ceremonies on April 23. Here are their stories.

Daniela Marchan Hidalgo

Daniela Marchan Hidalgo was a 23-year-old culinary arts student at the Miami Culinary Institute. She passed away on November 12 from an aneurysm due to an aortic rupture.

A butterfly garden was created in memory of April 12 at the MCI garden, 500 N.E. 2nd Ave., behind building 7. It features various flowers including lavenders and a star fruit tree because "she was a star like a star fruit," Cevallos said.

Inspired by her mom and grandmother's family restaurant in Ecuador that focused on seafood dishes but also prepared pastries, Hidalgo knew she wanted to be a pastry chef since she was a kid.

Following her lifelong dream, she enrolled at MDC in 2019. While studying, she made pastries at Dragonfly Izakaya & Fish Market, a contemporary Japanese pub.

Hidalgo also created an Instagram account to display the pastries she made—@danielashakery. "She always told us about her wonderful chef teachers and classmates. She was truly happy there," Cevallos said. "It was such a special part of her life and passion that we decided to place her MCI name tag along with her urn."

Besides cooking, her other hobbies were calligraphy, photography, and creating bracelets out of beads. She also loved to play with and care for her Australian Shepherd dog named Blue.

Hidalgo dedicated her life to spreading kindness by baking pastries for those who she loved. Despite suffering from Loes-Dietz Syndrome, a genetic disorder that affects the body's connective tissue, family and friends described her as a sweet and vibrant soul whose smile and zest brightened up everyone's day.

"She was very sensitive. She would cry when knowing of any tragedy, but she [would] also cry of joy when told that any relative was expecting a child," Cevallos said.

"She taught us to really live, to enjoy life at its fullest." —Mahmood Habbaba

Mahmood Habbaba

Mahmood Habbaba was a mechanical engineering student at Kendall Campus. He passed away after a motorcycle accident on March 29.

Although Habbaba's family did not attend the graduation, they watched the live-stream of the posthumous commemoration and heard the eulogy Kendall Campus president Anthony Cruz delivered.

"Mahmood was known for his warmth inclusivity, kindness and straightforward honesty that touched the hearts of everyone he met," Cruz said. "On behalf of the family, we ask you to hold your loved ones close and remind them you love them."

Habbaba began to pursue an associate's degree in mechanical engineering in 2018 to quench his understanding of how things like cars and appliances worked. After taking a short break from his studies to work in his family's business, Mahmood promised his parents he would return this year to graduate.

"He fulfilled his promise," said Aisha Shanan, Habbaba's aunt. "The 22-year-old devoted Muslim attended Masjid Al-Ihsaan, a mosque in West Perrine. He was a volunteer during iftar ceremonies—one of the religious observances of Ramadan—and participated in youth group meetings.

Habbaba also worked with Project Downtown to feed homeless people in Downtown Miami. "He represented his religion based on his character," Shanan said. "He always wanted to be that person who was remembered as someone who wanted to change the world."

In his spare time, Habbaba loved to fish, camp, play basketball, volleyball and football. His favorite place to fish was Bahia Honda State Park in the Florida Keys and one of his favorite camping sites was the Larry and Penny Thompson Memorial Park in Southwest Miami-Dade.

Following Habbaba's passing, a fundraising page was set up. It collected $60,000 before closing on May 3. The money will be used to build water wells and a mosque in Mali, a country in West Africa.

John Christopher E. Pangilinan

John Christopher E. Pangilinan, 23, was a health services administration student at Homestead Campus.

During graduation, Pangilinan's mom, Phoebe Enriquez, was visibly emotional as she raised her son's posthumous associate's degree with her family and MDC President Madeline Pumariles by her side. She then bowed to the crowd, who responded with a thunderous applause.

The family could not be reached for this story.
Graduates Reach The Finish Line At LoanDepot Park

By Juan S. Gomez
juan.gomez@mymdc.net

After more than thirty years of waiting, Desiree Blandon has graduated from college.

When Blandon arrived in Miami from Nicaragua in 1987, she put her education on the back burner. For three decades, she worked for Swissport (a ground handling company) to support her two daughters. But when the pandemic hit in 2020, Blandon was laid off. Unemployed, she pivoted to achieve her lifelong dream of attaining an education.

"It was a great experience," said Moreno, who was awarded the Homestead Campus. "I feel like I'm always running," said Moreno, who was awarded the Homestead Campus BOT Scholarship, a $5,000 prize.

"I feel like I always break one [barrier] so I can break another," said Isabella Cunningham, the SGA president at Wolfson Campus. "We need to make it to the finish line—graduation day.

"We have demonstrated that we are resilient and have the extraordinary capacity to positively impact our communities, our nation and the world," Cunningham said. "We are all changemakers."

Staff writers Ammy Sanchez and Emily Paz contributed to this story.

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2022 MDC Graduation

Graduation Day: Commencement speaker Jason Taylor (pictured at center) stands with President Madeline Pumariega (in red) and Provost Malou C. Harrison (far right) on April 23 shortly before going onto the graduation stage.

All Smiles: Students pose for the camera as they wait during the graduation ceremony at loanDepot Park on April 23.

With Honors: Honors College students look intently toward the stage at loanDepot Park on April 23.

Because I’m Happy: Ammy Sanchez, editor-in-chief of The Reporter, joyfully walks across the stage at graduation on April 23 at loanDepot Park. Sanchez was the recipient of the Board of Trustees Scholarship for North Campus.

Parting Words: Wolfson Campus Student Government Association President, Isabella Cunningham, speaks to graduates on April 23 at loanDepot Park.

No Cap: For many students, graduation was a great opportunity to showcase their creativity on their caps.
Despite Wrist Injury, Shin Powered Sharks Offense This Season

Sharks right fielder Wooyeoul Shin had a team-leading 10 home runs and a .551 slugging percentage this season despite missing 20 games due to an injury to his right wrist.

By Juan S. Gomez
juan.gomez070@mymdc.net

When a reporter recently asked Wooyeoul Shin about his offensive statistics, the Sharks right fielder quickly retorted: “I don’t really care about my stats.”

But there is no denying that the South Korean-born outfielder who transitioned from the infield this season had a banner year.

The 20-year-old led the Miami Dade College baseball team with 10 home runs and a .551 slugging percentage. He also has a .316 batting average and 36 RBI despite missing 20 games this season after suffering a ligament displacement in his right wrist in the season opener versus the State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota on Jan. 28.

“Woo is gritty,” said Sharks pitcher Tyler Monzon. “He is what [junior college baseball] is all about. He works hard. He plays hard. He wants to win. You can see it. You can see that he loves playing baseball. He loves to win. It’s the only thing he wants to do. There is nothing else on his mind other than baseball.”

His toughness was on full display this season. Despite injuring himself in the outfield on Jan. 28, Shin stayed in the game and hit a walk-off game-winning home run in the Sharks 2-1 win versus the Manatees. He also homered the following day versus Gulf Coast State College.

However, the pain in his wrist became too much to bear. He missed the next 18 games. Despite being told by doctors that the injury would force him to miss 12-16 weeks, he returned three weeks later. The Sharks were a lackluster 9-8-1 when he was out of the lineup.

When he returned to action on Feb. 24 versus SCF, he homered again.

Passion For Baseball Begins

Shin became enthralled with baseball in 2008 during the Olympics in Beijing. That year, South Koreans watched their team win the gold medal versus Cuba.

“A lot of kids started to play baseball after [those] Olympics,” Shin said.

But his parents didn’t allow him to start playing until he was 10 years old. They wanted him to concentrate on his studies. However, by high school, Shin was intent on being a professional baseball player. At Paichai High School in Seoul, South Korea he was an infielder until his senior year when his coach asked him to switch to center field after another player was injured. That year, Shin had a robust .420 batting average and four home runs.

Coming To MDC

After the season, an international scout told MDC about Shin. He tried out for the team in November of 2019 but his arrival was delayed until January of 2020 because of COVID.

After a few players had GPA issues, Shin made the team. In his first year, he boasted a .284 batting average, 34 RBI, 25 runs and four home runs in 34 games and was instrumental in the Sharks winning a state championship.

“He’s a perfectionist,” said Sharks Head Coach Adrian Morales. “He can have a bad round of batting practice and he’s going to get into the [batting] cage until 8 or 9 o’clock at night and try to correct himself. He’s a competitor and he wants to win. When you put winning first, good things happen and he does that.”

That unselfish attitude is applauded by his teammates. They say that even when he is lifted for a pinch hitter, he is always the first to shake the hand of the guy who is replacing him.

“He’s about winning,” Morales said. “He’s about the name on the front, not the name on the back [of the jersey].”
BASEBALL

Sharks Fall One Win Short Of National Tournament

The Miami Dade College baseball team was eliminated from postseason play on May 15 after losing, 4-3, to the College of Central Florida in the state tournament championship game.

By Juan S. Gomez
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Three of the teams that played in the state tournament finished in the top-20 rankings in the national polls. The College of Central Florida currently has a No. 2 ranking, Chipola College is ranked 12th and MDC finished at No. 20.

"I'm just very proud of everybody," said Sharks' right fielder Wooyeoul Shin. "The players, coaches, trainers, whoever is part of the team. I'm not gonna forget about this team."

Miami Dade College faced an uphill battle at the tournament after they lost their first game, 9-1, on May 12 versus Indian River State College. The loss put them on the brink of elimination the following day and forced them to face Chipola College, which was the No. 2 ranked team in the nation at the time.

The Sharks responded by defeating CC, 7-2. Catcher Loidel Rodriguez-Peralta and Shin led MDC’s offense with three hits each. Right-hander Andy Rodriguez collected the win, striking out nine in six innings.

On May 14, the Sharks’ offense was in full display as they scored 25 runs in two wins to qualify for the championship game. In the first game, MDC avenged their loss earlier in the week by defeating Indian River State College, 10-4. In the second game, the Sharks beat the College of Central Florida, 15-9, on the strength of home runs by second baseman Joseph Zamora, Shin and center fielder Jose Hernandez, who had five RBI in the game.

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"I’m just very proud of these kids," said Sharks head coach Adrian Morales. "The players, coaches, trainers, whoever is part of the team. I’m not gonna forget about this team."

Despite the loss in the championship game, the Sharks had a strong season. They were 39-19-1 and 16-5 in Southern Conference play. Head coach Adrian Morales was named the conference Coach of the Year and Rodriguez had a breakout season striking out 121 batters in 95.2 innings while posting a 2.45 earned run average and a 10-3 record.

Shin and Hernandez led the team with nine home runs each, Rodriguez-Peralta had a team-leading 45 RBI and Zamora led all hitters with a .369 batting average.

"It was a grind. It was mentally tiring and physically tiring but we never gave up" said Sharks first baseman Matthew Ktausch. "We showed heart."
**Marvel**

**Doctor Strange In The Multiverse Of Madness: A Misstep In Marvel’s Trajectory**

- Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness was released on May 6 and features a new Marvel character, America Chavez, as she is followed by Wanda Maximoff through different universes.

- By Christian Rodriguez

- The release of Iron Man in 2008 launched the Marvel Cinematic Universe into decades of success. Fourteen years later, we entered a new era of Marvel with the release of Doctor Strange in the Multiverse Of Madness, which hit the theaters on March 25.

- We are no longer in the Marvel Cinematic Universe but rather the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

- The film centers around Dr. Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch), Wanda Maximoff (Elizabeth Olsen) and America Chavez (Xochitl Gomez).

- America, a girl with universe-hopping superpowers, seeks Strange’s protection as she is followed by Wanda who wants to use Chavez’s powers to travel to a universe in which she can be with her kids that she sacrificed in the mini-series WandaVision.

- Though the last Marvel film release, Spider-Man: No Way Home, dipped its toes in the concept of the Multiverse through the interaction of characters from previous Spider-Man franchises, it still very much took place in our world where Peter Parker was the main attraction.

- In Doctor Strange in the Multiverse Of Madness, it is stated that Strange nor Wanda that take center stage but rather the multiverse itself.

- Therein lies the strengths and failings of this installment. On a positive note, the introduction of the multiverse does manage to bring excitement and novelty to the MCU even after more than 10 years of releases.

- This is particularly true when our familiar superheroes visit a reality named Earth-838.

- There are many met with Captain Carter (Hayley Atwell), a female version of Captain America, and Dr. Reed Richards (John Krasinski), a popular member of the Fantastic Four, who are part of a group of superheroes previously not introduced to the MCU.

- We also have an appearance of the fan-favorite Dr. X played by Elizabeth Olsen in the third season of the Loki TV series. We also have an appearance of the fan-favorite Dr. X played by Patrick Stewart from the X-Men movies.

- While it is an interesting part of the movie, it is very brief and underdeveloped.

- A similar issue is present with other elements of the movie such as the introduction of the new universe-hopping character America Chavez.

- While she plays an integral role in the plot, we barely have any emotional attachment to her by the end of the film.

- The underdevelopment might be because this film only serves as a setup for future movies further exploring these characters. However, the quality of the current production should never be sacrificed for future films.

- Instead of exploring these new worlds or characters, too much time is spent going through excessively CG’d interdimensional limbo as a quest for a magical book that will help them defeat all evil.

- Not only is this a lazy plot point but it also gets dropped as the film aims to go for a magical pep talk instead.

- Throughout the film, America Chavez cannot control her powers which only manifest in moments of extreme fear. In the end, she is the only one left to defeat Wanda. Achieving control of her powers could have been a deeply personal and emotional moment but instead it boils down to Dr. Strange telling her “You can do it!” and solving all their problems.

- The film feels like it is stuck between being an ambitious science-fiction installment and a character study of the three main characters and ends up doing both in a mediocre manner.

- However, the most disappointing moments are the ones that squandered potential. The film feels like it is stuck between being an ambitious science-fiction installment and a character study of the three main characters and ends up doing both in a mediocre manner.

- The film feels like it is stuck between being an ambitious science-fiction installment and a character study of the three main characters and ends up doing both in a mediocre manner.

- **A Marvel:** Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness was released on May 6. The movie features Dr. Strange, Wanda Maximoff and America Chavez.

- **The Reporter**

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**YouTube**

**The Downfall Of Mainstream Youtube**

- After its heyday in the 2010s, the streaming platform has slowly gone downhill. Now YouTube is adjusting in hopes of regaining its footing with content creators.

- By Veronica Romano

- When content creators like Zoeella and Jenna Marbles took the internet by storm, the 2010s felt like a golden period for the video streaming platform YouTube.

- YouTube provided everyone a platform, allowing creators to make content that was unlike anything else on the internet. It was created to allow anyone to publish whatever they wanted.

- Unboxing, shopping hauls and morning routine videos are all made possible by the platform.

- YouTube has been one of Gen Z’s favorite pastimes since the early 2010s, but many of the top creators have already shut down their channels.

- The video streaming platform was founded on February 14, 2005, and some of its most popular memes-inspiring videos, such as “Charlie Bit My Finger” and “Friday,” were uploaded in the early years.

- Rebecca Black, the creator of the song “Friday,” was one of the most Googled names in 2011 and she returned to music in 2021 with a remix of the song.

- Even today’s most popular artists, such as Shawn Mendes, Alesia Cara and Justin Bieber, got their start on YouTube.

- Although YouTube used to support popular creators, it appears that the platform has abandoned them.

- In 2011, YouTube’s initial, creator-centric motto “Broadcast yourself” was removed from the website and the site began to shift in a different, less creator-centric direction.

- Many popular YouTubers like Joey Graceffa, Tyler Oakley and Alfie Deyes left the platform for various reasons.

- They said the company’s general lack of communication left them feeling furious, forgotten and confused.

- When creators put in a lot of effort to make videos that don’t do well, the experience can be detrimental to their mental health.

- The platform did not allow for breaks and instead expected consistency in upload schedules.

- Furthermore, the content creators were not designed to engage with thousands of people every day, instead they were heavily affected by the huge volume of feedback they received.

- In 2017, we saw Viners that had preexisting fanbases join YouTube soon after the app was shut down. Their content was problematic.

- Logan Paul filmed some terrible footage in Japan’s Aokigahara forest. He showed the body of a man shot in the head.

- It was reported that he had committed suicide. YouTuber FouseyTube produced a reaction video with an anti-Semitic remark, as well as an influx of terrorist recruitment films.

- It wasn’t until 2020 that YouTube was held accountable for their inappropriate behavior. Shane Dawson and Jeffree Star are two examples.

- Another factor contributing to the decline in YouTube interest is TikTok.

- Although TikTok was founded in 2016, it grew rapidly during the COVID-19 outbreak. The app, which has been downloaded 2.6 billion times and has 1 billion users worldwide as of September 2021, contains content that ranges in length from a few seconds to three minutes.

- TikTok caters to Generation Z’s short attention span and penchant for short-form material.

- Ultimately, YouTube isn’t dead, it’s simply evolving.

- Content watchers like material that either does not take hours to consume or truly makes them chuckle.

- We’ll hunt for original and innovative content regardless of where it’s found.
Casual Instagram has taken over feeds on the app. The aesthetic includes users taking photos of everyday moments or habits in their life.

By Carolina Soto

Like so many other things in my adolescent years, I started my Instagram account in 2014 entirely because of the British boy band, One Direction. I would take a few selfies and immediately select the one I liked best before posting it to Instagram. If I was doing homework, I’d take a picture of it and make sure the caption expressed how stressful it was. If I had gone out with my family, I’d rearrange a collage full of photos and add a white border to it.

I wasn’t aware of the anxiety that comes with posting on social media at the time, nor of the “casual Instagram” look that has recently taken over the app.

No one cared about pretty pictures.

But if there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s that Instagram has changed the way we portray ourselves to the public throughout the years.

According to Business of Apps, there are about 1.4 billion Instagram users in the world.

Instagram Business Statistics states the app has about 200 million business profiles and 500,000 active influencers, many of whom are noted for having well-curated, visually beautiful feeds in their profile.

Throughout the years, many users have worked extensively to preserve a certain “feel” on Instagram by using intentional editing and beauty filters.

Instagram evolved from a simple photo-sharing software to a popularity contest based on approval.

The possibility of profiting from Instagram sponsorships reinforced the desire to exclusively broadcast the picture-perfect aspects of one’s life.

There’s nothing wrong with presenting your best self or using filters to enhance things, but instead of propagating insane beauty standards, be transparent about it.

However, there has been a shift in how Instagram is used by influencers.

Many users are choosing mismatched photo dumps, amusing “sh*tposts,” and unplanned shots of daily stuff instead of having carefully curated, unified feeds.

But now it appears that “casual Instagram” has arrived, with its sloppy and mismatched vibe.

Instead of solely uploading glam images and immaculate selfies, you can share photos of everyday moments in your life, such as a selfie of you in your sweatpants or your not-so-photogenic meal.

The casual look is meant to be a more laid-back approach to social media—possibly a reaction to the well-manicured feeds that have overtaken the app.

We are even seeing this type of feed on celebrities’ pages. Timothée Chalamet recently posted his Cup Noodles meal, and Charli D’Amelio posts her messy kitchen and unedited photos with her dog.

At the end of the day, it’s up to you whether you want to go for a casual or a more curated look. You may even commit to a certain overall aesthetic while throwing a casual post or photo dump on your page every now and then.

Whether your feed is considered casual or not, Instagram can still be a pleasurable, enjoyable experience. It’s all about how you approach the app, not necessarily how your photo looks.

We are our harshest critics and the thoughts we over-analyze about ourselves are probably not even on the minds of others.
Humility Is The Key To Self-Love

Embracing humility enables us to develop the self-compassion necessary to develop a healthy and loving relationship with ourselves.

By Juan S. Gomez
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For a prolonged period of my life, there was nothing I loathed more than making a mistake. It could have been a mistake in anything. Whether it was school, my personal life or even a video game, I always boiled in frustration.

My time in middle school was deeply troublesome. Due to the volatile effects of puberty, a dysfunctional household, poor friendship choices and my own immaturity, I was someone who I would consider “toxic” today. In seventh grade, my toxicity peaked. For three months, I teased one of my friends due to the pungent odor of his lunchbox. The teasing eventually turned bullying as me and my friends made it a habit to belittle him.

It wasn’t until the cried one time that I stopped to think about what I was doing. I felt a great deal of shame when I realized that my actions were bringing sadness to someone else. I immediately stopped teasing him and apologized. My friend forgave me for my mistake.

Despite his forgiveness, I found it hard to move on from the incident. I felt like I should have received a punishment to “balance” things out. Additionally, I grew increasingly frustrated at the fact that I had bullied someone.

At one point I realized that my perfectionism was affecting how I perceived myself. Instead of forgiving myself for making a mistake, I fixated on it and used it as ammunition to see myself as unworthy and incapable of change.

Eventually, I figured out that my perfectionism stemmed from a sense of pride rooted in insecurity and a lack of self-love. The only reason I wanted to be perfect was to see value in myself.

But now I understand that humility does not mean you underestimate or undervalue your worth or potential. Rather, it means acknowledging that you are human and that we always have something to improve upon. Embracing this gives you the patience and encouragement to develop into a better person.

Instead of staning your view of yourself based on a mistake, you will instead see failures as lessons. You will also develop a broader sense of compassion not only for yourself but for others as well.

Six years after the incident with my friend, I can now acknowledge my mistake and what factors caused it. Acknowledging my shortcomings and forgiving myself is what enabled me to ensure I now spread positivity instead of negativity.

The moment we embrace self-compassion through humility is the moment we take accountability, forgive ourselves and continue progressing to become better people.

Take A Stand Against Processed Oils And Fats

Natural oils and fats, such as virgin olive oil, butter and lard, serve as a traditional and healthier alternative to the processed oils and fats offered by the food industry.

By Sim Sitzer
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Refined seed oils and vegetable oils such as canola oil are in everything. That’s a problem because they are extremely unhealthy.

We need to return to the animal fats and virgin oils our ancestors have cherished and enjoyed for thousands of years.

Almost every processed food product in the supermarket has one or more of the following oils listed in their ingredients: canola, soybean, vegetable, palm, sunflower and safflower oils coupled with margarine or vegetable shortening.

The toxic extraction and refining processes that these oils go through make them very unhealthy.

You may be surprised to learn that canola oil is actually made from crossbred and genetically modified rapeseeds. The name canola stands for “Canadian Oil Low Acid” referring to its low-erucic acid.

Regular consumption of refined oils can lead to health problems such as cancer, heart disease, obesity, Alzheimer’s, inflammation, atherosclerosis, diabetes, gastrointestinal diseases, reproductive issues and immune dysfunction.

This all started with Procter & Gamble in the early 1900s. Having tons of canola seeds from cotton production, they discovered a way to industrially expel oil from the canola seeds, refine it and then hydrogenize it by forcing hydrogen gas into the oil to thicken it to create a substance reminiscent of butter or lard.

They called their product Crisco. Crisco launched a massive marketing campaign in the U.S. to get people to replace traditional fats with their products. Decades later, the rate of health problems increased since everyone was eating the hydrogenated industrial waste product.

Unfortunately, doctors and health agencies such as the FDA and the World Health Organization only recognized hydrogenated fats such as margarine and shortening as unhealthy but still insist that refined oils such as canola are healthy.

The fats that are optimal for human health are traditional animal fats such as butter (particularly raw butter), tallow and lard. Tallow and lard are rendered simply by simmering raw animal fat such as beef suet at low heat and then straining it. When the process is complete, you have healthy, versatile and tasty fats.

Animal fats are a staple in almost every traditional cultural cuisine. The saturated fat and cholesterol contained in them are healthy and essential nutrients, contrary to the mainstream nutritional opinion and corporate-funded studies.

Extra virgin olive oil and virgin coconut oil are healthy natural oil options, although extra virgin olive oil isn’t good for high heat cooking. What’s important in any oil is that it’s oil, unrefined, preferably organic and cold-pressed, not expeller-pressed.

These recommendations are in accordance with the Weston A. Price Foundation. They are a non-profit organization that advocates for traditional foodways by promoting foods such as pastured-raised or hunted meat, raw dairy products, time-honored fats and sourdough bread.

Start replacing ancestral fats by choosing butter. And making sure that your food is not cooked in cheaply processed oils that are harmful to you.
Miami Needs Better Public Transportation

By Carolina Soto
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The only reliable way to get around Miami is with a car. With more people moving in, our streets are jam-packed with automobiles while the city neglects public transportation to help pedestrians. If we continue to construct more road infrastructure, we will be trapped in our automobile dependency indefinitely.

Instead of expanding road infrastructure endlessly to meet an insatiable demand for cars, South Florida should strive to improve its public transportation system. Buses run every 30 minutes to an hour on average. For some people, the waiting time for public transportation to arrive is equivalent to the time it takes them to get to a destination using a car. Taking the bus every day for work, school, appointments and errands is unrealistic and unreliable for people who don’t have a car. My niece has to rely on the bus every week for her commute. No matter how early she gets to the bus stop, she always ends up running late. There was one occurrence where the bus she was waiting for never showed up.

Due to the unreliability of Miami’s public transportation, she is forced to use Uber a few days a week. It is unsustainable because she spends what she earns on Uber alone, which often costs around $150 a week. Some people get stressed and irritated when faced with traffic and angry drivers. As an alternative, they take the bus, the Metromover or Metrorail. Unfortunately, those options are limited and only useful to a very specific area of Miami. The rest of the city is left on its own or faces the same unreliable options my niece does.

The increased traffic has made road rage prominent in Miami. People honk at you, flick you off, or scream at you out of frustration while driving. The more angry drivers and cars we have on the road, the more chances we will see an increase in car accidents and rise in insurance prices.

Something has to be done about Miami’s public transportation to accommodate its growing population. If not, our dependence on cars will exacerbate the already crippling issues connected with traffic and road rage.

The Reporter

By Christian Rodriguez
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Installing cable systems in cities is a big undertaking that was originally less expensive. Older telecommunications companies wired up cities and thus ensured a lasting monopoly through the service provider. It is very difficult to enter the market as a competitor in an industry with such expensive and complicated entry barriers of infrastructure.

In 2017, the monthly cost of broadband in the United States was a whopping $66.17. A figure significantly higher than nations such as France at $38.30, Germany at $35.71 and South Korea at $29.90. These astronomical prices could be reduced through government regulation which is what happened in France. There, the dominating internet service providers were compelled to lease out part of their cable systems to incumbent carriers to create a fair chance of entering the market. Such regulation on internet providers would be possible if they were deemed public utilities. Often, drawbacks to unregulated service providers include the fight for net neutrality and the exclusion of certain communities.

Net neutrality is the idea that internet service providers shouldn’t block or impose limits on a user’s access to content. The equalizing and democratic aspect of the origins of the internet enabled it to become a vehicle for social movements. However, since 2017, the Federal Communications Commission has rolled back most Net Neutrality protection laws. That allows internet service providers to provide faster internet speeds if you are on specific sites like Facebook as opposed to a smaller social media competitor that may lack the funds to pay for equal broadband.

The throttling of internet speeds serves to further perpetuate the market control of huge companies like Facebook while stifling competition. Under public control, this behavior wouldn’t be allowed. The current system exacerbates the lack of internet access in rural and less affluent communities since the infrastructure isn’t updated for communities with lower potential subscriber numbers because unregulated service providers don’t see the capital investment required as worthwhile.

These practices only serve to perpetuate and expand the existing social divides. Internet service is not a luxury, it is necessary for schoolwork, jobs and access to general information and education. Internet access must become a public utility to ensure it is accessible and affordable to all.

Letters to the Editor

The Reporter welcomes letters to the editor. All submissions should be 200 words or less and must be typed. Writers must include their full name, contact number, campus student number and e-mail address. Faculty and staff should include the title, department and extension. All letters are subject to editing for purposes of brevity and clarity. Letters can be sent via e-mail to mdc.thereporter@gmail.com, with the subject “letter to the editor.”

Advertising

By Aracelia Diaz
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Public Transportation

Miami's burgeoning population and its overdependence on automobiles in a call to action for the city to improve its public transportation infrastructure.

By Juan S. Gomez, Forum Editor // (305) 237-2776 // juan.gomez770@mymdc.net

Miami’s public transportation system is equivalent to natural monopolies. Each service acquiring the status of a public utility in the United States is considered a public utility. The only way water and electricity are in common? They are all necessary and road rage prevalent in Miami. People honk at you, flick you off, or scream at you out of frustration while driving. The more anger drivers and cars we have on the road, the more chances we will see an increase in car accidents and rise in insurance prices.

Something has to be done about Miami’s public transportation to accommodate its growing population. If not, our dependence on cars will exacerbate the already crippling issues connected with traffic and road rage.
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