

FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

THE ROAR

HOLIDAY EDITION
December 2023

A Season of
Hope and Promise



ROAR THE

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FMU IS READY FOR 2024 AND BEYOND!



Dear FMU Family,

As we gather around the holiday season, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible spirit of collaboration that defines our university. I extend my heartfelt thanks to our esteemed faculty, dedicated staff, and exceptional students for their unwavering commitment to excellence.

This year, we've achieved remarkable milestones through invaluable partnerships, generous grants, and meaningful gifts. Your collective efforts have elevated FMU to new heights, reinforcing our reputation as a beacon of knowledge and innovation.

In the spirit of giving, these collaborative ventures have not only enriched our academic community but also opened doors to endless possibilities. Your resilience and dedication have played a pivotal role in securing FMU's reaccreditation by SACS-COC, a testament to our shared commitment to academic integrity and quality.

As we reflect on the past and celebrate our achievements, let us also look forward to an exciting future. The reaccreditation marks a new chapter for FMU, one that holds promise and potential. Together, we will continue to shape the minds of tomorrow and inspire positive change.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season filled with warmth, gratitude, and the anticipation of a bright future for FMU.

With heartfelt appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dr. Jaffus Hardrick". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Dr. Jaffus Hardrick



Lilly Endowment Inc.

A private foundation since 1937

Lilly Endowment Awards FMU \$1 Million to Help Local Churches Flourish

Florida Memorial University has received a \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment to help establish a Resource Center for Development that will be completely dedicated to helping local churches to thrive.

In November, Lilly Endowment approved 105 grants to organizations across the United States through a competitive round of its Thriving Congregations Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to help congregations flourish by strengthening ministries that lead congregants to a deeper relationship with God, each other, and to the vitality of their communities and the world.

FMU, the only Historically Black College and University selected in Florida, will use the grant over a five-year period beginning in 2025 to help 100 South Florida churches to address challenges they've faced for many years, but became more acute during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Twenty local churches of various denominations will be selected each year over the five years for in-depth research and development. The faculty and staff of Florida Memorial University are extremely

excited to connect with various South Florida communities and work with local pastors.

The grant will enable FMU to provide the selected churches with support in a number of areas, including the use of digital technologies to effectively bolster their ministries, support to address the increasing mental health and wellness needs of congregants, and assistance in ministries that address racial inequities and injustices to promote healing and reconciliation.

“We’re deeply grateful to Lilly Endowment for its continued generosity in helping to make the world a better place by supporting educational institutions such as Florida Memorial University,” said Dr. Jaffus Hardrick, FMU President. “South Florida is one of the largest and most diverse major metropolitan areas in the nation. Having well equipped partners at the helm with extensive experience in theological education, I am confident, the Thriving Congregations Initiative will be a blessing for the 100 area congregations and beyond.”

Lilly Endowment launched Thriving Congregations in 2019 with an invitational round of grants to 23 organizations. An additional round of 92 grants was made in 2020. In January 2023, the Endowment

invited eligible organizations to submit proposals in this competitive round. Since 2019, the Endowment has provided grants to 220 organizations through the initiative.



ABOUT LILLY ENDOWMENT

Lilly Endowment Inc. is a private foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. A principal aim of the Endowment's religion grantmaking is to deepen and enrich the lives of Christians in the United States, primarily by seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment also seeks to improve public understanding of diverse religious traditions by supporting fair and accurate portrayals of the role religion plays in the United States and across the globe.

TRAINING IN CONSTRUCTION TRADES

United Way Miami is proud to announce a significant expansion to UpSkill Miami, a transformative fund designed to create targeted workforce development initiatives and catalyze economic mobility within the community. The new partnership establishes a commitment with Florida International University (FIU), Florida Memorial University (FMU) and Florida Power & Light (FPL) to assist more than 250 individuals with construction and energy training.

United Way is the driving force behind UpSkill Miami and is leading the charge by forging powerful partnerships with some of the largest employers in our region. The expansion in construction trades with FIU and FMU will train participants enrolled in the 16-week construction and electrical training programs, equipping them with the essential skills necessary to secure entry-level construction jobs and prepare them for promising career paths. FIU also offers a six-month electrical pre-apprenticeship certificate program.

The UpSkill Miami expansion into the energy industry with FPL offers a six-month pre-apprenticeship program for individuals interested in a career as a skilled lineworker. This program comprises

six months of formal training, which includes two weeks of on-the-job training.

“In our community, we are taking a crucial step to meet the increasing demand for skilled professionals in construction trades and energy,” said Symeria Hudson, president and CEO of United Way Miami. “Our collaboration with FIU, FMU and FPL directly addresses the pressing issue of connecting available jobs with unskilled workers, ultimately providing residents with the opportunity to secure employment and support their families.”

According to the 2023 ALICE Report, the number of Miami-Dade County households unable to afford the basics has grown to nearly half a million. The report also establishes the Household Survival Budget at \$76,284, the estimated minimum cost for a family of four to live and work in Miami-Dade County. However, the current median household income in the county is \$59,044, highlighting the disparity between living expenses and actual earnings.

“We are proud to partner with United Way Miami on our new pre-apprenticeship program, which allows aspiring lineworkers to jumpstart their careers through valuable on-the-job training and experience,” said Christina Lopez, FPL executive director

of employee and customer programs. “At FPL, we’re working every day to make a difference in the communities we serve – and we are excited to do just that in Miami-Dade County by providing unique career development opportunities to individuals across the area.”

In Florida, there are more than 140,000 construction jobs with average salaries of \$52,000. UpSkill Miami is expected to have a wide-ranging impact that will set many local families on an upward trajectory that will last for future generations.

“FIU’s Construction Trade Program is a direct response to the construction industry’s needs, as expressed to us by our alumni, faculty, local agencies and

partners,” said Jose Faria, endowed chair of FIU’s Moss Department of Construction Management. “Partnering with United Way Miami will help us further cultivate a knowledgeable construction workforce for our community while addressing local economic challenges through workforce development.”

“Here at Florida Memorial University, we are committed to providing programs in high-demand fields,” said Dr. Jaffus Hardrick, president of FMU. “Through the Construction Trades Program, the first of its kind at a Historically Black College and University in Florida, we are helping to set program participants up for a lifetime of success. FMU established this alternative



CLASSES BEGIN JANUARY 16 - MAY 3, 2024

- ✓ **FREE TUITION**
- ✓ **LEARN A NEW SKILL**
- ✓ **EARN MORE MONEY**

FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY
**Certificate Program
in Construction
Trades**

**General Eligibility and
Participation Requirements:**

- High School/GED Graduates
- Live or Work in Miami-Dade County
- Earn Less than \$35K Annually
- Returning Citizens
- Immigrants
- Career change within the trades field
- Ages 17+
- Underrepresented population
- Veterans



Construction Trade Program

Sixteen-week program including the Core Curriculum and introduction to electrical. Successful completers earn an OSHA-10 certification, NCCER Blue Card and completion certificate. Eligible candidates may apply by completing the application at www.fmuniv.edu/upskill or contact the Office of Continuing Education and Professional Studies at 305 626-3600.

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program in 2021 to provide individuals who do not have the means but who have the desire to obtain the needed skills for a career in the construction trades. FMU is here to put them on that pathway, tuition-free, thanks to our committed partners who are key to building futures and equipping individuals to thrive.”

The phase I launch of UpSkill Miami proved successful through its partnerships with Baptist Health, Jackson Health System, Miami Dade College, The CDL School and

United HomeCare. Together, the partners provided comprehensive healthcare and transportation job training, showcasing UpSkill Miami’s effectiveness as a bridge between education and workforce development. By adding construction and energy training, the fund creates a pathway for more than 750 people to access high-demand jobs over the next 12 months.

“This collaboration is a valuable asset, exemplifying United Way’s commitment to investing in and supporting the community through workforce training and fostering

future success,” remarked Marshall Ames, chairman of the Lennar Foundation. “It’s truly inspiring to witness programs like UpSkill Miami addressing the needs of our industry. The construction sector consistently requires well-trained, skilled

professionals to meet the county’s infrastructure demands.”

Seed funding for UpSkill Miami comes from a historic investment from MacKenzie Scott’s foundation. Those eligible for the UpSkill Miami program must live or work in

Miami-Dade County, earn below \$35,000, or be unemployed. UpSkill Miami’s target population is people of color, female heads of household, veterans and youth ages 18-24 or those aging out of foster care.

United Way Miami is committed to conducting thorough research and devising strategic plans to meet the evolving needs of the Miami-Dade community and shaping the future of this innovative workforce fund.

To learn more about UpSkill Miami, please visit unitedwaymiami.org/UpSkillMiami.

“We are helping to set program participants up for a lifetime of success.”

–Dr. Jaffus Hardrick

ABOUT UNITED WAY MIAMI

United Way Miami is a driving force in the community, successfully responding to emerging needs and transforming people’s lives. Since 1924, we have worked together with our network of donors, volunteers and partners to generate and amplify resources and advocate for policies that improve the quality of life for all. We leverage our unique role as convener, strategic funder, service provider, awareness builder and influencer so that everyone in Miami-Dade has access to quality education and the opportunity to lead healthy and financially secure lives -- the building blocks of a thriving community.



FMU Receives \$550K from the State of Florida for STEM Programs

Florida Memorial University is getting the deserved funding needed to raise the academic bar on excellence when it comes to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Thanks to the Florida Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee's Democratic Ranking Member, Christopher Benjamin, FMU received a check for \$550,000.

Rep. Benjamin who earned his BA degree from FMU in 1998, was proud to return to Lion Country after going through the long process with the Appropriations Subcommittee to ensure FMU was recognized.

"We know the challenges our universities are facing in achieving their educational pursuits and we want to help," said Rep. Benjamin. "FMU still stands out on top for me and as the only HBCU in South Florida, FMU is still needed in 2023 and needs support."

The funds will be used for two key projects here at FMU.

1. STEM Expansion Project Fostering Excellence in Cancer Studies, Data Science, and Cybersecurity
2. Florida Memorial University Math and Writing Center

"Everything we do is to ensure our students have a competitive advantage to compete in the global market," said FMU President Dr. Jaffus Hardrick. "FMU is the only institution to receive this funding and I want to thank Rep. Benjamin for his continued support of Florida Memorial University."

Interim Provost Dr. Samuel Darko, along with STEM faculty members Dr. Rose Stiffin, Dr. Ayivi Huisso, Dr. Marilyn Sherman, Dr. Jayanta Das, Dr. Amalya Mihnea, and Dr. Latoya Appleton also attended the check presentation.



Thank You Dr. Mae Bryant



**FLORIDA
MEMORIAL
UNIVERSITY**



Thank you so much Dr. Mae Bryant for your incredibly generous contribution of \$25,000 in support of the Bishop Victor T. Curry Scholarship Fund! Your support means the world to us and plays a crucial role in empowering students from diverse backgrounds and fostering academic excellence. Together, we're making a real difference!

Thank You!



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service
Dade County (FL) Chapter

Dr. Jaffus Hardrick hosted an appreciation reception for the Dade County Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, in the Smith Conference Center on Oct. 22., for their \$25,000 donation to the chapter's endowment fund at Florida Memorial University.

The Dade County Chapter of The Links, Incorporated hosted its fifth edition of their signature fundraiser FlipSide Miami at the Lou Rawls Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of FMU on Sept. 30.

The event's proceeds support the charitable and educational programs of enhancing the lives of individuals and families in the local community, including the endowment that was established in 1999, to benefit students from the African Diaspora who are pursuing a college degree at FMU.



Trustee Spotlight

JOHN OWENS, ESQ.



Mr. Owens was born and raised in Waynesboro, Va., the third and youngest child of the late John Owens, a Howard University graduate, and Vivian Owens, a Tuskegee University graduate.

After graduating from Waynesboro High School in Virginia, where he excelled in academics (class Salutatorian) and sports (basketball, football, and track), Mr. Owens attended Princeton University.

At Princeton, Mr. Owens was a letter winner on the university's Division I-AA football team and graduated cum laude.

Following college, Mr. Owens worked in the business consulting field in New York City before attending the College of William and Mary where he obtained joint degrees from its Law School (JD) and Business School (MBA).

Mr. Owens moved to Miami, Fla., in 2007 and is currently a shareholder at global law firm Greenberg Traurig, where he has been nationally recognized for his work in venture capital and business law.

Mr. Owens currently resides in Miramar, Fla., with his wife Camielle, who is also an accomplished corporate attorney at public company Opko Health, Inc., and their three children, John IV, Zuri, and Dallas.

Mr. Owens is proudly a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and is also a member of 100 Black Men of South Florida.

In addition to his service on the Board of Trustees at Florida Memorial University, Mr. Owens sits on the Board of the Miami-Dade Innovation Authority, and on the Investor Funding Committee at the Levan/NSU Broward Center of Innovation.

Mr. Owens is proud supporter of his high school where he has an annual scholarship that bears his name.



REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

Congratulations Lions!

It is with profound gratitude that I inform you that Florida Memorial University has received reaffirmation of our accreditation for another 10 years from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC). This decision further affirms that our university's strategic focus is on the right trajectory of growth and alignment with best practices. Equally important, this achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of every member of our university community.

I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our board of trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students who played a pivotal role in this significant accomplishment. Your commitment to excellence and tireless efforts have been instrumental in securing our university's accreditation status for the next 10 years until 2033.

While this milestone is undoubtedly worth celebrating, it also serves as a reminder of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. Reaffirmation of accreditation is not just a recognition of our past achievements but a commitment to our future. We must remain diligent to embracing the highest standards of academic quality, student success, financial solvency, operational excellence, and relationship development.

As we move forward, let us all remember that it is through our collective efforts that we have achieved this remarkable success, and it is through our continued dedication that we will secure an even brighter future for the university.

Thank you once again for your hard work, passion, and unwavering commitment to our beloved institution.

Go Lions!

Dr. Jaffus Hardrick
President

THE ROYAL CORONATION



The Royal Coronation of Her Majesty Efinity Crawford and His Majesty Miles-Jordan Smartt took place on Friday, Oct. 13, in the Lou Rawls Center for the Performing Arts. Florida Memorial University's Coronation 2023 ceremony was a lovely occasion for the entire Royal Court.

Following the pageantry, the Royal Court and guests also enjoyed an elegant evening at the "Mystical Night in an Enchanted Forest Royal Ball" held in the Smith Conference Center. To view photos from the event, please [click here](#).





GOD, I LISTENED TOO

Real estate mogul, philanthropist, and author Dr. La-Doris McClaney visited FMU in November to share words of financial wisdom with students. Dr. McClaney, 85, spoke about how her life began humbly in Troy, Ala., and how she went on to amass a real estate empire worth tens of millions, ultimately living in a lavish mansion on Holmby Hills Drive, the wealthiest neighborhood in Beverly Hills, California.

With hard work, education, and pure grit, she has a life story that is compelling and offers hope to anyone who believes in a higher power. In her memoir *God, I Listened Too*, she recounts her life and shares how the power of prayer, determination, and pure grit can transform a simple seed into an abundant harvest.

During her FMU visit, Dr. McClaney spoke about the importance of giving back and supporting HBCUs. The Fine Arts building at Bethune Cookman University is home to the Dr. LaDoris McClaney School of Performing Arts and Communication. She also signed copies of her book, a gift to the students, faculty, and staff who attended the on-campus seminar. Dr. McClaney also donated professional women's attire, shoes, and accessories to the university's career center.

To view photos from her visit, please [click here](#).





MAKING THEIR VOICES HEARD

The FMU Ambassador Chorale, under the exceptional leadership of Dr. Argarita Johnson-Palavicini, has been chosen by the Miami Dolphins to sing the National Anthem at their home game against the New York Jets at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, at 1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023.

This will be the first time the Ambassador Chorale will perform The Star-Spangled Banner at an NFL game in the regular season. On Tuesday, Dec. 5, Dr. J. spoke about this special privilege in an in-studio taped interview on NBC6 VOICES with Jawan Strader and the significance of the upcoming performance for the students and the university.

Six Ambassador Chorale members, Makeeda Warrington, Zecharia Green, Hannah Prieto, Damaris King, J'ahmor Marrishow, and Nathaniel Noel also sang the a cappella version of The Lord Bless You and Keep You by: Peter C. Lutkin for the show.

After the taping, Mr. Strader provided a tour of the studio and graciously posed for group and individual photos with Dr. J. and the students. The segment is scheduled to air at 9 a.m. Saturday, Dec.16 on NBC6.



HEAR THEM ROAR!



The ROAR Marching Band has risen to the top of the rankings as the number one band in Division II among historically Black colleges and universities in the nation. The rankings are published by ESPN's The Undeclared, a sports and pop culture website.

The top two ranked bands from Division I and Division II conferences have earned the right to compete for the national championship and the title of ESPN's HBCU Band of The Year. The competition against Virginia State will take place in the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, Ga., on Friday, Dec. 15.

There is much anticipation about the ESPN inaugural competition as many are eagerly awaiting the awarding of the two HBCU national championship trophies.

The Division I trophy has been named after the long-time Florida A&M Director of Bands Dr. William P. Foster, and the Division II trophy has been named after Nathaniel Clark Smith who was a famous composer solicited by President Teddy Roosevelt to lead the band at Tuskegee Institute in 1905.

This is more than a competition for FMU's acclaimed ROAR Marching Band, it's a celebration of excellence and is an opportunity to showcase the musical talent, precision, dance, and drum major skills of our FMU Lions.





H O M E C O M

AWAK

OF THE



Homecoming 2023: The Awakening of the Lion

Homecoming 2023: Awakening of the Lion was jammed with a little bit of everything for everybody.

It truly takes a team to execute one of Florida Memorial University's most anticipated annual events!

Enjoy this recap video of some of this year's most memorable moments.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



When it comes to tech, students at Florida Memorial University are blazing their own dynamic trail.

FMU was one of 25 HBCUs to take part in the BLACK ENTERPRISE 8th Annual BE Smart Hackathon, hosted by American Airlines in Fort Worth, Texas, on Nov. 5.

Florida Memorial & Friends, a combined team of three FMU students, a Spelman College student, and a Norfolk State University student, won second place.

As second-place winners, each team member was awarded 75,000 AA Advantage miles for their app, AASharp.

FMU seniors, Jabulani Mzee and Rigaud Luly, and freshman Amauri Straford were evaluated on their app's viability, practicality for end-users, and the efficiency of the technological infrastructure.

The BE Smart Hackathon is a platform for participants to engage in friendly competition and is an opportunity for them to showcase their technical skills and gain practical knowledge in utilizing emergent APIs.

During the 24-hour hack, American Airlines provided technical staff to mentor each team and guide them in preparing and delivering their presentations to the judging panel of American Airlines executives.

This year's event brought together its largest gathering to date: 180 students to form 34 teams from 25 of the nation's HBCUs.

First place went to Jackson State University's team TICODE, and rounding out the top three was third-place winner, team Sky Bison from Howard University.

Congratulations to our Lions and all the HBCU participants!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

AN EVOLUTIONARY LEADER

LaTonya Williams is the Director of Supplier Diversity at Vanderlande, a market-leading, global partner for future-proof logistic process automation in the warehousing, airports and parcel sectors. Vanderlande has 9,000 employees in 29 countries.

William is a Certified Scrum Master (CSM), a Project Management Professional (PMP), and a Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB). She is also a registered Neutral (Mediator) with the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution, which is the administrative office of the Georgia Supreme Court Commission on Dispute Resolution.

Williams has a Master's in Public Administration with a concentration in government contracts, she earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Management from Florida Memorial University.

She was recently featured on the INCLUDING YOU PODCAST Hosted by Amy C. Waninger who works with organizations that want to build inclusive cultures and diverse leadership pipelines for a sustainable competitive advantage.

[Click here to watch the podcast.](#)





FACULTY AND STAFF SPOTLIGHT

MS. APRIL PETTYJOHN

Thompson Hospitality Services is proud to announce that Ms. April Pettyjohn has been selected to serve as Food Service Director at Florida Memorial University! Ms. Pettyjohn earned her Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management with a concentration in Business Management at Delaware State University, followed by a master's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resources at the University of Phoenix.

She has also served in several roles in the field of hospitality: Food and Beverage Manager, ARAMARK, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.; Food and Beverage Manager, Jacksonville Zoo, Parks and Entertainment, Jacksonville, Fla.; and Food Service Director, Trinity Food Services, Yulee, Fla.

With Thompson Hospitality Services, Ms. Pettyjohn has served as Catering Director at Lincoln University, Oxford, Pa., and Oakwood University in Huntsville, Ala. On behalf of Thompson Hospitality, Ms. Pettyjohn looks forward to serving faculty, staff, students, and the external community as she embarks upon this exciting venture. Her contact information will remain the same until otherwise notified.





DR. DÉBORAH GÓMEZ

Dr. Déborah Gómez and her team were awarded a grant of \$180,000 from the U.S. Department of Education to develop the second phase of a Spanish-language curriculum that centers on and celebrates Blackness in Latin America.

The primary goal is to provide an inclusive learning environment for our students, who are often underrepresented in this field. In this innovative project, students are immersed in the diverse cultures of Latin America's Black communities. The approach honors the history of these communities and creates an inspiring educational space, promoting understanding and appreciation.

The launch of the open-access webpage with the first Spanish I curriculum was met with enthusiasm with 500 teachers nationwide joining a webinar. Last summer, Dr. Gómez and her team were honored with the Distinguished Practitioner Award by the International Association for Task-Based Language Teaching. She's received numerous requests from language professors and teachers for a Spanish II curriculum, which will be developed with this grant. Furthermore, Bethune-Cookman University is set to implement the curriculum starting in Fall 2024.

FMU's students also will benefit from the student-centered curriculum designed to meet their language needs while ensuring it is freely accessible to every student. By leading this innovative approach, FMU positions itself as an institution at the forefront of curriculum development, particularly in creating inclusive and culturally rich educational resources. This pioneering approach has the potential of attracting the attention of academia, future students, and other institutions, thereby enhancing FMU's reputation.

Dr. Gómez is confident that by creating and disseminating the Spanish II curriculum, we'll continue to serve the language teaching community, especially students aiming for proficiency in Spanish. This grant also will enable FMU to extend resources to both teachers and students.

FMU'S ANNUAL BREAST CANCER WALK



Our Lions Entertainment Board, Health Services, and Human Resources collaborated to host FMU's Annual Breast Cancer Walk.

The October event began with a health fair seminar in the Smith Conference Center.

Team members with Florida Blue and Memorial Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine Center shared very important information about breast cancer screenings.

Although screenings cannot prevent cancer, mammograms can help find breast cancer early when it is easier to treat.

Following the seminar, dozens of students, staff, and faculty put on their "faith, hope, cure" specialty t-shirts and walked around campus in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Some walked in memory of a loved one and others for those who are currently battling this disease.

A variety food and treat trucks were also provided for the participants.

FMU, AMAZON, AND MIAMI DOLPHINS UNITE EVENT

In November, dozens attended the HBCU Networking Event presented by Amazon in the Smith Conference Center.

The student-centered event began with ice-breaking networking questions, which the students really enjoyed.

Dr. Hardrick spoke about the importance of developing relationships and that success is built on strong partnerships to prepare FMU's students for the global marketplace.

Students had the opportunity to network with Amazon, Miami Dolphins, and Miami Dolphins Football UNITES™ representatives.

They also mingled with members of 5,000 Role Models, local business owners, and alumni who attended the event.

The highlight of the evening came from the panel of three Amazon recruiters.

The panel shared valuable gems of information with students who engaged with thought provoking questions about landing work after graduation.

WPLG's Emmy Award Winner Anchor Calvin Hughes served as moderator.

The evening ended with several students walking away with raffled autographed Miami Dolphins memorabilia, compliments of Miami Dolphins Football UNITES™.

To view photos of the event, please [click here](#).



FMU ON BET

BET is always ready to shine the light on HBCUs, which are much more than institutions.

Florida Memorial University is one of a selected group of schools BET has decided to spotlight for having unique curriculums.

Please enjoy the latest BET HBweCU segment and learning about some of these programs by [clicking the link here](#).



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DAY



The FMU Arts and Humanities Department hosted an International Education Day on Wednesday, Nov. 15. The event featured cultural learning stations, a food court, and a discussion panel.

The learning stations and food court were positioned outside of the Marketplace Dining Hall. Foods representing various nations were on the lunch menu. There was also a panel discussion that focused on international education, faculty research, and student employment in the Smith Conference Center.

FMU ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

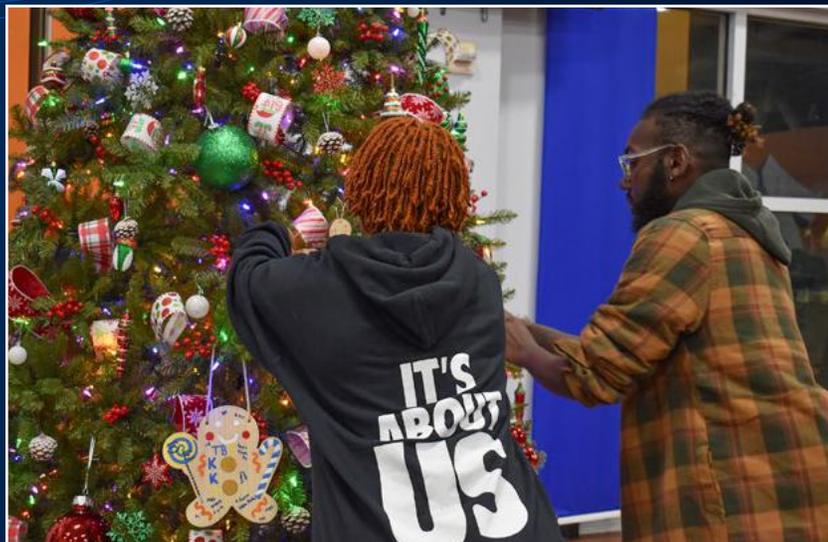
FMU held its annual tree lighting celebration in the Marketplace Dining Hall on Friday, Dec. 1.

Students, faculty, and staff joined in on the holiday festivities by making and placing decorative ornaments on the university's Christmas tree.

The event also included impromptu stepping from the campus Greeks, a meal, and music for an evening of festive entertainment.

Mocktails were served, in addition to a hot chocolate station, but the countdown to the holiday lights on campus was the treat of the evening.

Please feel free to download photos from the event here: [Jingle Mingle: FMU Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony](#)





FMU LIONS FOOTBALL POST BEST RECORD IN MODERN ERA

The Lions football team finished the season 6-4 overall, which is their best record since the program resurfaced in 2020. Led by second year Head Coach Bobby Rome, FMU boasted the number one offense (statistically) in the NAIA for the majority of the year. ESPN also named FMU the most improved team in the NAIA this season.



Congrats to Coach Jones!

Florida Memorial University's Michael Jones is the Sun Conference Assistant Coach of the Year! The Sun Conference announced its postseason major award winners for the 2023 football season in November.

Jones serves as the Offensive Coordinator and the Quarterback Coach for the Lions and helped lead them to a 6-4 overall and 5-2 conference record. Jones also helped to develop the offense that finished first in the conference in rushing offense and third in passing.

FMU averaged 480 yards of offense per game and Jones was a key contributor to the success of the Lions' seven All-Conference honorees.



Men's Basketball

For the first time since the NAIA men's basketball Division I and Division II merged, the FMU men's team made the top 25 in the latest NAIA Men's Basketball Coaches Poll, under Head Coach Delano Thomas. Landing on the 25th spot, the poll was voted upon by a panel of Head Coaches representing each of the conferences and Continental Athletic Conference on Nov. 29, 2023.

Women's Basketball

The FMU Lions started off the 2023-24 season with a 5-3 record.

Led by interim Head Coach Rodd Woods, the Lions look to return to championship status after taking the 2023 SUN Regular Season and Tournament championship.



© Leakpaparazzi



Men's Soccer

It was also a season of firsts for FMU's women's soccer. With a 1-0 victory, the women's soccer team defeated Webber International for the first time in program history in October.

The highly competitive match proved to be historic as Head Coach Marc Lue Young earned his first career SUN conference victory while the team won its first conference match since 2016.

Women's Soccer

It was a good season for FMU men's soccer who finished the season with nine wins with first-year Head Coach Alex Nichols.

This is the most wins for the program since 2015, where the men's soccer team earned 10 wins.





67th

ANNUAL

DONATION DAY

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2023 | 10:00 A.M.

**“Envisioning the Future Exceptionally
Through Christ Centered Evangelism”**

Jeremiah 29:11 and Acts 1:8

Progressive M & E Baptist State Convention of Florida, Inc.

Mrs. Dorothy P. Davis, Senior Women’s Auxiliary President
Rev. Dr. Bartholomew Banks Sr., Convention President



Florida General Baptist Convention, Inc.

Dr. Audrey Austin White, Women’s Auxiliary President
Rev. Dr. Carl Johnson, Convention President

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW PHOTOS OF THE EVENT!](#)





FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

BISHOP VICTOR T. CURRY

MLK

PRAYER DINNER

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2024 | 7:00 P.M.

FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

SMITH CONFERENCE CENTER

15800 NW 42ND AVENUE, MIAMI GARDENS, FL 33054

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP DINNER
CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN
LUTHER KING, JR., BISHOP VICTOR T. CURRY, AND
OTHER HEROES THAT STAND FOR JUSTICE AND FIGHT
FOR A BETTER SOCIETY FOR ALL OF HUMANITY!

SPACE IS LIMITED.

PLEASE PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS AT [FMU.EDU/MLK](https://www.fmu.edu/mlk).

All ticket sales and donations will support with Bishop Victor T. Curry Scholarship Fund.





VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**47th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade
Monday, January 15, 2024**

Honoring "The Dream" Through Acts of Service



**Volunteers Needed! Scan the QR Code to sign up.
Deadline is Friday, December 15, 2023**

For more information email Sharhonda.ford@fmuniv.edu

SAVE THE DATE



Commencement

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2024

PLEASE VISIT [FMU.EDU/COMMENCEMENT](https://www.fmu.edu/commencement) FOR UPDATES





I MY FMU

M O M E N T U M F U N D C A M P A I G N

CALLING ALL ALUMNI AND STUDENTS!

Show your love and support for
Florida Memorial University by making a \$500 commitment
over 5 years to the I Love My FMU Campaign!

WAYS TO DONATE:



Online: Click here or visit fmu.edu/momentumfund



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Mail: Send checks or money orders to
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Miami Gardens, FL 33054



Email: gerald.johnson@fmuniv.edu

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Plus, you can always find episodes of *The Lions' Den*,
our show highlighting campus happenings, on our
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THANK
You
So Much!



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