

BARRY & ST. THOMAS ALLIANCE UPDATE

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Barry will no longer be allying themselves with St. Thomas University, said University President Sister Linda Bevilacqua in an email sent out to students on Nov. 6.

She wrote that in the last few months, Barry and St. Thomas had been exploring a strategic alliance at the request of the religious sponsors of both universities. Finally, "the process has concluded and a strategic alliance was not deemed to be in the best interest of either university."

In a Nov. 3 story, *The Miami Herald* reported that both universities spent most of 2017 brainstorming ways they could collaborate. But now, six months later, the taskforce is no more.

The article mentioned that the religious sponsors for the two schools announced their decisions in a letter on Oct. 26 – about one week before Sister Linda told the students.

Msgr. Franklyn Casale, the president of St. Thomas told the *Herald* that the "process of merging would have involved re-accrediting the schools under a charter, which would have affected both athletics and fundraising."

Furthermore, since news spread earlier this



Photograph by Victoria Newell

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

year about Barry's \$9 million budget gap, the *Herald* reported that the university has closed the gap by "eliminat[ing] at least 25 staff jobs, closing the school's Davie campus, and beginning a hiring freeze."

Sister Linda told the student body that the college now has a balanced budget for fiscal year 2018 (July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018).

Senior criminology major Rinayah Davis did not know that the merger was called off until Sister Linda sent out the email to the student body. She initially said that the merger would not have affected her because she's graduating soon, but believes the university would have benefitted from the alliance.

"It would have been interesting to take classes that they don't have here at St. Thomas," said Davis. "You know, sometimes you come

here and sometimes you go to St. Thomas... you would have had different groups of people. Instead of everybody knowing each other in one school, you would have both schools sharing experiences."

Freshman undecided major Carl Swim Telemaque would not have had a problem with a merger but his only concern would have been class size.

In Sister Linda's letter, she also announced that we have "exceeded our fall goal for new full-time undergraduate students" by 128. The university received over 10,000 applications for new undergraduate students and, this fall, 870 new students began their Barry journey.

Barry now has over 7,300 degree-seeking students currently enrolled.