

Fall 2000

# Florida International University Magazine Fall 2000

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## Which of the following milestones did FIU recently attain?

- a. Established a College of Law
- b. Achieved the highest ranking in the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classification system
- c. Won approval to establish a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society
- d. Launched an intercollegiate football program
- e. All of the above

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S P O N S O R E D B Y :





# FIU *magazine*

FALL 2000

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Volume VII, Number 1



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

It's been the season of uncertainty. December 1st: The ballots in Florida are still being recounted/counted (or vice versa depending upon your persuasion), and the U.S. Supreme Court has been drawn into the fray. The presidential election has come down to the political foibles of the Sunshine State.

In the midst of this political uncertainty, it's been a season of resolute direction and bona fide victories for FIU. Just consider these four milestones. After more than a 10-year battle, the University established a College of Law. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching awarded FIU the highest ranking in its classification system, Doctoral/Research University-Extensive. The University was admitted to Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most distinguished of all collegiate honorary societies. The Board of Regents approved the establishment of a football program; the FIU team will take the field in 2002.

As the University continues to develop its academic excellence (and garner increasing recognition of its achievements), technology and the Internet are transforming the way the University teaches and conducts business. You'll find articles on different dimensions of technology, as well as these significant milestones, in this issue of FIU Magazine.

Years down the road, 2000 may be best remembered by the FIU family as the year the University entered the major leagues. And the year somebody (?) was elected president.

Todd Ellenberg  
*Editor*

# Record \$5 million foundation gift boosts campaign

The Campaign for FIU received a landmark gift that has propelled its total to more than \$194 million.

The Wallace H. Coulter Foundation awarded a \$5 million grant – the largest from a private foundation in FIU's history – to the College of Engineering in support of its Biomedical Engineering Institute. State matching funds bring the value of the grant to \$10 million.

"The positive impact that the Coulter Foundation's grant will have on South Florida cannot be overstated," President Modesto A. Maidique said. "The endowment created with this grant will provide the infrastructure to establish a major biomedical engineering program in South Florida and meet the demands of an industry of immense and growing importance."

The ongoing Campaign for FIU is poised to reach its \$200 million goal within the next few months. By November 1, more than \$22.6 million had been raised during the 2000 calendar year. This total includes major gifts to a variety of areas.

The University Library Special Collections Section received a very special gift-in-kind. Sheldon Abend, a prominent publisher and producer of plays, musicals, and motion pictures, donated nearly 1,400 rare original theater manuscripts valued at more than \$2.3 million. The collection, with works dating back to 1789, includes masterpieces by such luminaries of the American theater as Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams and British playwrights George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde.


Contributing to FIU's increasingly strong curriculum in the environmental sciences, RMC South Florida, Inc. made a contribution of \$600,000 to the Southeast Environmental Research Center. The funds will help establish a course of study in land mitigation. The first of its kind in the world, the program will train graduate students in the science of recovering mined properties and restoring them to an environmentally sound condition. State matching funds bring the value of the gift to more than \$1 million.

The Philadelphia-based Pew Charitable Trusts awarded the University a \$600,000 grant to fund a study to examine the role of

religion in the civic and cultural life of new immigrants in Miami.

The Art Museum at FIU continues to attract great support. Howard and Gloria Scharlin, longtime friends of The Art Museum, recently joined a growing list of contributors to the museum's building fund. Their \$50,000 gift – which will be combined with state matching funds for a total value of \$100,000 – brings the planned multi-million-dollar facility closer to its realization. Jesse Siegel, through the foundation that bears his and brother George's name, has likewise made a generous \$50,000 gift to the project. State matching funds bring the value of the gift to \$100,000.

Several private foundations and companies have awarded grants that directly benefit students in pursuit of education. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation contributed \$100,000 to the College of Engineering in support of a program to increase academic achievement and career potential for disadvantaged Hispanic-American students. The Loews Corporation made a gift of \$60,000 in support of minority scholarships for the School of Hospitality Management; state matching funds bring the value of the gift to more than \$100,000. The Gannett Foundation made a \$50,000 gift in support of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication's minority recruiting efforts. The Gertrude E. Skelly Charitable Foundation again contributed \$50,000 in support of a nursing scholarship fund established by and named for the foundation. Interval International Inc. donated \$50,000 to establish the Interval International Scholarship Endowment within the School of Hospitality Management. Another \$50,000 gift to the School of Hospitality Management – from the Chicago-based Getz Foundation – will support its Southern Wine & Spirits Beverage Management Center.

Several new \$50,000 contributions have been made in support of FIU's football program, which will begin competition in fall 2002. The newest Football Founders, as the football donors are called, include Pharmed Group, the Flyer Publishing Company, the Huizenga Family Foundation, Inc., and FIU faculty member Ted Baker. 

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## *A landmark year for Florida's 'fastest growing research university'*

# FIU achieves top Carnegie ranking and sponsored research up 30 percent

**T**wo announcements this past summer – a new ranking in a national higher education classification system and an extraordinary increase in annual sponsored research and contracts – confirm FIU's rapidly growing distinction as a research university.

In ratings released in September, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching awarded Florida International University the highest, most comprehensive ranking possible in its prestigious classification system, making FIU one of only five Florida schools to hold that status.

FIU made the biggest leap of any of Florida's research universities, rising from a "Doctoral II" rating in Carnegie's old classification system to "Doctoral/Research University-Extensive" in the new categories unveiled along with the newly released classifications. "Extensive" replaces Carnegie's previous rating of "Research I."

Only five universities nationwide, including FIU, made the move from Doctoral II to Extensive.

"We set a goal a decade ago of achieving Carnegie's Research I distinction, and are pleased that we met the Foundation's criteria so quickly," said FIU President Modesto A. Maidique. "The investments we made in our doctoral programs and research facilities and the standards to which we held ourselves have paid off."

"We've known for some time that we're not only Florida's fastest growing research university, but one of its very best. But it feels wonderful to get this kind of external validation," Maidique added.

The continued commitment of the faculty to sponsored research yielded record results last year.

FIU faculty secured nearly \$58.1 million in scientific contracts and grants in 1999-2000, an increase of more than 30 percent over last year and the third consecutive annual increase in excess of 20 percent.

"Our research budget growth is a strong indicator of how well our researchers match up against their counterparts nationwide," said Maidique. "In areas ranging from engineering to biology, our faculty and our students are making this exactly the kind of dynamic, public urban research university that we set our sights on becoming long ago."

Nearly \$34 million of the new total comes from federal grants – the most competitive funding source and a key measure of the maturity of any university research program. That figure represents a 34 percent increase over the \$25.3 million in federal grants secured in 1998-99.

"I think it's fair to say that we are the fastest growing institution, public or private, in the state of Florida," said Maidique. FIU's numbers are particularly impressive because FIU does not have a medical school. Such colleges tend to dominate research programs at universities that offer medical degrees, in Florida and nationwide.

It's not just the dollar amount that's significant, said Thomas Breslin, vice president for Research and Graduate Studies.

"It's important to note that more than 80 percent of the proposals submitted by faculty were accepted," said Breslin. "That's extraordinary on a national level. Most universities are pleased with 60 percent."


"Federal funding is a measure of the national stature of the University, and ours is growing rapidly," he continued. "FIU ranks among the top 60 universities in the U.S. in terms of dollars funded by the National Science Foundation. That shows a great confidence in the federal government toward FIU and the work being done here."

The new Carnegie rankings emphasize the number and type of degrees an institution awards instead of focusing on research funding or admissions selectivity.

To achieve the Extensive classification, a university has to award 50 or more doctoral

degrees per year in at least 15 disciplines. To get a "Doctoral/Research University-Intensive" rating, a university had to award at least 10 doctoral degrees annually in three or more areas, or at least 20 doctoral degrees overall. Florida schools ranked Intensive include the University of Central Florida and Florida Atlantic University.

The Foundation will change the system again in 2005 – Carnegie's centennial year – adding criteria that recognize different dimensions of institutions.

"The momentum surrounding FIU is almost palpable," said Maidique. "I can't think of a more exciting place to be in higher education than right here, right now." 

### TOP 20 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS AND AWARD TOTALS FOR 1999-2000

M.A. Ebadian	\$12,605,706
Ronald Jones	\$4,138,700
Stephen Leatherman	\$3,407,136
Luis Salas	\$2,595,000
Debra Danker	\$2,300,997
Charles Bigger	\$2,124,767
Jay Turner	\$1,946,495
Gustavo Roig	\$1,861,264
Naphtali D. Rishe	\$1,279,571
Daniel Childers	\$1,098,396
Cathy Leff	\$836,100
Malek Adjouadi	\$828,736
Eric Wagner	\$813,762
Ricardo Alvarez	\$716,060
Michael McClain	\$686,872
Robert Vos	\$659,976
Alex Stepick	\$640,000
Maria Bilbao	\$601,362
Steven Oberbauer	\$600,507
Carmen Mendez	\$599,978

SPC

LD

1771

F73

A1

F5

*When preparation meets opportunity:*

## FIU College of Law poised to

brought together an entire community, nay, a state, often divided along racial and cultural lines, in its quest to make affordable legal education available in South Florida, is perhaps the most amazing thing of all.

“One thing I learned through my participation in this process is that you can never take anything for granted,” said Carlos B. Castillo ('88, Political Science), an associate with White and Case LLP law firm. Castillo became involved four years ago as one of the driving forces behind alumni efforts to help secure a law school.

“People have differing opinions as to why we were successful this time, but I think the difference is that the stature of FIU as a university has risen considerably,” observed Ronald Berkman, dean of FIU’s College of Health and Urban Affairs. “The University has demonstrated that it can be a doctoral and research institution. This time, the effort had a tremendous amount of support from virtually every sector of the community.”

Its strength of conviction about the need for a public law school has brought the University to this point, and now its strength of conviction about the *focus* of the new school — one of public service and transnational law — will see them through to the first day of classes in fall 2002.

That and a lot of hard work.

One of the first things the University did after Governor Jeb Bush signed the bill formally establishing the FIU College of Law was recruit a consultant to assist in the development process. Frank Read, sitting president, dean and professor of law at South Texas College of Law in Houston, was hired last September as a “readiness consultant.” It was an inspired choice, for Read is intimately familiar with Florida, as well as what it takes to build a quality program. In a distinguished career filled with exceptional credentials, Read has served as dean of five different law schools



*President Maidique and Governor Bush at bill signing.*

over the span of 27 years (“It’s a curse,” he joked), including the University of Florida from 1981 to 1988. In addition, he served as deputy consultant on legal education with the American Bar Association (ABA), a position that makes him particularly valuable as a readiness consultant.

“The ABA’s Section on Legal Education & Admission to the Bar, which is the legal education accrediting arm of the ABA, requires that new law schools retain a readiness consultant,” explained Read.

The most pressing task, according to Read, is the hiring of a dean for the new law school. The interview process is well underway, conducted by a search committee that is chaired by Berkman and includes such legal luminaries as State Attorney Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, further evidence of the University’s commitment to build bridges with local public service lawyers. Read hopes the committee will be prepared to make an offer to a candidate around the first of the year, which would be “ahead of the game,” according to Read.

That’s not the only thing ahead of schedule.

“The initial planning done by FIU has been superlative,” said Read. “This advance work

**T**he ink on the signed legislation dried months ago. The blood, sweat and tears associated with the 10-year battle establishing the Florida International University (FIU) College of Law — wiped away, replaced by a renewed sense of purpose. After all, there’s precious little time for slaps on the back and fond reminiscences when there’s still so much work to be done.

It was a battle to be sure, this fight for the law school, and one for the ages. That an upstart, urban public university would have the temerity to ask for its own law school when it’s a mere child in “university years” is incredible enough. That it would come back time and again, refusing to accept no for an answer, is even more remarkable. But that it



*Alumnus Carlos B. Castillo was among the graduates leading the effort to establish the College of Law.*

# impact the community

has put them a step ahead of where most schools are at this point in the process. FIU has developed a terrific sense of momentum.”

This momentum includes having done an “exceptional job” of heeding FIU’s and South Florida’s diverse population, according to Read, and identifying a unique focus for the FIU College of Law that complements the community’s composition. It is anticipated that the student body will reflect the diversity of South Florida – and FIU – thus increasing the number of Hispanic and African-American lawyers practicing in the state.

“South Florida is a microcosm, not only of the state and nation, but also the world. I think that microcosm is important because you can no longer separate domestic issues from those that are international,” said John Stack, professor of Political Science and director of FIU’s Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies, and a member of the committee to establish the law school. “These issues intermingle, and that’s where the term transnational evolves – it’s a mixture.

“It’s our intent to create a law school that provides students with a wonderful foundation in the study of law, but also one that prepares them for the next 30, 40 or even 50 years of practice, and that is increasingly a transnational approach,” said Stack.

Bennett Brummer, public defender for the 11th Judicial Circuit of Florida, agrees. Having been involved with several governments and judicial agencies in Latin America, Brummer has participated in several FIU-related symposia and has seen firsthand the need to train law school graduates knowledgeable in transnational law.

“Although Miami’s development as a hub for hemispheric commercial, technological, social and political activity has reached critical mass, its enormous potential as a center for transnational legal institutions is in its earliest

stages,” said Brummer. “The lack of sufficient world-class transnational legal institutions hinders related development and makes us less competitive. The FIU law school will increase the momentum of that development.”

Understanding that future law school graduates need to be knowledgeable about international legal issues, the College of Law plans to offer international courses and will integrate the relevant aspects of international law into domestic law courses, particularly the required first- and second-year courses.

The transnational focus of FIU’s College of Law is somewhat unusual. Few law schools currently have such a curricular concentration, with New York University and the National Law Center at the University of Arizona being two notable exceptions.

The FIU College of Law will be unusual in several respects, including the fact that it will offer both full- and part-time programs. The inclusion of a part-time program is significant because it will afford access to a legal education to those individuals whose personal situations require them to work full-time, thereby excluding them from a full-time law program. No other public law school in Florida current-

ly offers a part-time program.

The next major initiative after the hiring of a dean is the hiring of a law librarian. Once again, Reed said FIU is way ahead, having already acquired a considerable amount of law volumes under the direction of Roger Jacobs, Notre Dame’s Kresge Law Library director.

Once a dean is in place, the process of hiring faculty will commence.

“The University already has several members of the FIU community who have law degrees,” said Read. “One of the challenges in assembling the faculty will be to identify how best to utilize the talents of those individuals.”


An important step in all of this, Read pointed out, is for FIU leaders to reach out to the local legal community.

“I would expect the University would connect with leaders of the bench and bar and share with them their vision for the FIU College of Law, as well as solicit their help and advice,” said Read. “Things like that make eminent good sense – to include in the evolutionary process the best thinking of the local bench and bar.”

To that end, a community advisory board chaired by Chesterfield Smith, founder of Holland and Knight LLP and former president of the American Bar Association, has been formed to advance the best interests of the FIU law school in the absence of law alumni.

“When a new school is established, there are obviously no alumni to help out initially,” said Smith. “We’ve formed a committee of what we think are talented and motivated lawyers who we hope will work hard to advise and help the College of Law until it has a solid base of alumni to whom it may turn.”

If previous results are any indication, the effort will succeed with flying colors.

“As an outsider,” said Read, “I can say that FIU has been a university that has done its homework in a real and substantive way.” 



*Chesterfield Smith, Community Advisory Board chair, Holland & Knight LLP; Cecilia Altonaga, 11th Circuit Court Judge ('83, Political Science); and Provost Mark Rosenberg.*





Bruce Nissen

## No boom for workers

"Workers in our state often labor under standards and conditions well below national or regional norms. In most comparisons, Florida is falling behind. ... Given the rapid expansion and the growing wealth of the decade, this is an unparalleled poor showing for hourly workers,"

said Bruce Nissen, program director at FIU's Center for Labor Research, on the Center's annual Labor Day study, which showed that the national economic boom isn't paying off for many hourly-wage workers in Florida.

—*St. Petersburg Times*,  
August 30, 2000

## FIU LANDS PHI BETA KAPPA CHAPTER



The Phi Beta Kappa Society, the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society in the nation, voted October 21 to establish a new chapter at Florida International University.

Established in 1776, Phi Beta Kappa has established chapters at 265 colleges and universities in the intervening years. The highly selective organization's Congress meets every three years to consider new members. This year's meeting yielded eight new members, FIU among them. FIU becomes the youngest member of the honorary society.

"Receiving a Phi Beta Kappa chapter at FIU validates the hard work of many dedicated academic leaders and faculty at this university — chief among them, Arts and Sciences Dean Art Herriott — and further enhances the value of an FIU degree," said FIU President Modesto A. Maidique.

"The honor of having a Phi Beta Kappa chapter at FIU tells our current and future students that they have chosen to study at one of the United States' most respected institutions of higher learning," said FIU Provost Mark Rosenberg, who attended Phi Beta Kappa's 39th Triennial Council in Philadelphia with Herriott and Sociology/Anthropology Professor Abraham Lavender. All three are Phi Beta Kappa members.

Universities that received chapters along with FIU were Auburn University in Alabama; Austin College in Sherman, Texas; Illinois Wesleyan; the University of Mississippi; St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia; and Truman State University in Missouri. All were established by 1860, with the exception of FIU, which opened its doors in 1972.

In addition to FIU, four other Florida institutions have Phi Beta Kappa chapters: Florida State University (1935), the University of Florida (1938), Stetson University (1982) and the University of Miami (1983).

For more information on Phi Beta Kappa, visit its web site at [www.pbk.org](http://www.pbk.org).



Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson, President Maidique and M. Ali Ebadian at the check presentation ceremony.

## HCET RECEIVES RECORD \$35 MILLION GRANT FROM DOE

In a historic landmark for the University, FIU's Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technology (HCET) received a \$35 million, five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Energy — the largest single grant in the University's history.

At an October 20 ceremony at the University, U.S. Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson announced the grant to support the center's research, development and demonstration of innovative environmental cleanup technologies.

Under the grant, the university will act as a test bed for environmental technology while serving as a primary science center for minority students. As a testing center, HCET is DOE's largest university site for nuclear decontamination research.

"FIU's HCET serves a dual purpose and helps the U.S. Energy Department meet some of its central goals," said Richardson. "It helps us remain on the cutting-edge of science, and it contributes to our efforts to prepare our future work force — including women and minorities — for jobs that will guide us in cleaning up our environment and developing the technology that will shape our world during the 21st century."

FIU created HCET in 1995 in partnership with DOE. That same year, the center received its first grant of \$22 million from the department. HCET has completed more than 80 research and development projects in the past five years, and has opened field offices at sites in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Fernald, Ohio.

"We appreciate the opportunity to benefit the nation through our research efforts," said Ebadian. "However, the real benefit is the opportunity to provide DOE and industry with future scientists and engineers from our broad spectrum of students."

Among its other projects, HCET is conducting "brownfields" research — the environmental restoration of abandoned commercial or industrial facilities — including work at Opa-Locka and Overtown sites.

## MARINE BIOLOGY DIRECTOR AND BISCAYNE BAY CAMPUS ENERGIZED BY PARTNERSHIP

Chris Brown, director of FIU's new Marine Biology program and associate chairman of the Biological Sciences Department, arrived in town last May. Excited about creating something from nothing, he's hit the ground running and hasn't stopped since.

"I'm invigorated by the enthusiasm I see on the Biscayne Bay Campus (BBC) for this program," said Brown. "Professionally, it's very exciting."

Brown was a tenured professor who spent 11 years at the University of Hawaii (UH) prior to coming to FIU. At UH, he helped design a new marine laboratory—an experience that is serving him in good stead as he now oversees conceptual planning of a marine science building, including a marine laboratory, at BBC.

Receiving his bachelor's degree (1978) from Union College and doctorate in Physiology (1984) from the University of Delaware, Brown did his post-doctoral science work at the University of California, Berkeley from 1984-89. In 1989, Brown went to UH. He spent part of 1995 in Sweden as a Fulbright Scholar.

For now, the program will include Brown and three other faculty members. In addition to finalizing job descriptions and salaries and interviewing candidates, Brown is also working on developing and revising the curriculum. "We hope to receive approval from the Board of Regents in January 2001 to offer a degree in Marine Biology," said Brown. "If that occurs, we will begin taking majors in the fall of 2001." Brown envisions master's and doctorate programs "not too far down the line."

"The visibility of the program is one of my immediate concerns," said Brown. "I want the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, among others, to know we're here."

Brown is also working with the Marine Animal Rescue Society (MARS), a nonprofit volunteer group affiliated with the University, which rescues and rehabilitates stranded dolphins, whales and manatees. Its base of operations is at BBC.

Brown hopes to collaborate with other programs on campus as well.

"I'll be working with other existing interests on this campus, such as journalism, art and hospitality management, to see how best we can complement one another's programs," said Brown. "I'd like our presence on campus to broaden the experience for everybody. I think the sciences and arts really should be connected."



A rendering of the Phi Gamma Delta house.

## CONSTRUCTION OF GREEK HOUSING NOW UNDERWAY

FIU has taken another step toward providing students and alumni with the trappings of a traditional college: Greek housing.

Five national Greek organizations have worked with their local chapters to develop plans for fraternity houses at University Park. FIU has set aside land just south of the campus's 107th street entrance, and dedication of the site was held earlier this year. Phi Gamma Delta has already begun the construction process, conducting excavation work for their house's foundation.

"Having houses will increase dramatically the level of involvement by the alumni," said Richard Latorre '87, a founding member of Tau Kappa Epsilon. "It will create greater visibility for recruiting and get alumni back to campus and involved in the fraternities, community and FIU."

Other fraternities with plans on the drawing board include Sigma Alpha Mu, Pi Kappa Alpha, and Tau Kappa Epsilon. Sigma Phi Epsilon is also expected to build a house. The first should open to residents in the summer of 2001.

Greek representatives, students and alumni began talking about the possibility of Greek housing with FIU's administration nearly eight years ago. Only recently, however, did any of the organizations have the financial means to do it.

"It's a big investment," said John Bonanno, assistant vice president for Student Affairs, who helped get the Greek system started at FIU in 1986. "(Greek houses) should liven up the campus. It's something we've had in mind for a long time."

Bonanno explained that the alumni fraternity brothers—not the students who will eventually live in the houses—will foot 100 percent of the construction bill. Most fraternities will take out a building loan and then raise funds among



Chris Brown



Eduardo Gamarra

## On the campaign trail

"It was the first time in my 25 years in this country that I've seen a presidential candidate devote an entire speech" to Latin America, said Eduardo Gamarra, director of FIU's Latin American and Caribbean Center, on Gov. George Bush's August 25 visit to FIU. Gamarra said Bush proposed "no real, significant innovation in the three pillars of American policy that have been in effect since the Reagan era" – free trade, fighting drug imports and supporting democracy, including opposition to Castro.

–*The Tampa Tribune*, August 26, 2000

their members. "The alumni are monitoring the whole process," Bonanno said. "That's a plus."

Alumnus Francisco Oses '94, chapter counselor for Sigma Phi Epsilon, is among those helping the effort. He believes the benefits are well worth the time and money. "Being able to congregate in one area, students and alumni, . . . will give us all a reason to get together, a focal point," he said of the impending "fraternity park." "We can share cross-generational opinions and ideas."

Each of the homes will accommodate between 30 and 40 residents and a house director. Although the University has made available only five lots at this time, other land will be found as additional fraternities and sororities decide to pursue that option, according to Bonanno.

FIU currently has 13 fraternities and 10 sororities representing nearly 750 members. Most organizations hold meetings in University buildings and participate in a variety of Greek-oriented events as well as other campus and community-service activities.

## MELLO NAMED NEW ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Rick Mello was named the University's new director of intercollegiate athletics and campus recreation last June.

"After an extensive national search, I am delighted that Rick has accepted the challenge to lead FIU athletics further up the ladder of success and provide leadership as

we launch intercollegiate football," said FIU President Modesto A. Maidique.

Mello spent the last five years as director of athletics at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock (UALR). The California native served as the athletic director of the Sun Belt Conference Executive Committee from 1996-98 and aided in the development of the locally syndicated Sun Belt Conference basketball television package. He also enhanced the UALR Sports Hall of Fame and established the UALR Trojan Foundation and its athletic booster club.

In that time, Trojan athletics won 11 conference titles and finished as high as second for the Sun Belt Conference's Commissioner's Cup (1996).

"I am honored and excited to be the new athletic director at Florida International University. It is obvious that with the success the program has had and the addition of football, the University sees athletics as an integral part of a campus that has grown significantly in recent years," said Mello.

Mello is no stranger to the South Florida area. He served three years at the University of Miami (1992-95), where he was responsible for all outside revenue generation as the associate athletic director for external operations (development, ticket operations, marketing and promotions and special events).

Before Miami, Mello spent eight years at the University of California, Berkeley, as associate director for media relations from 1984-87; football recruiting coordinator from 1987-90; and assistant athletic director for marketing and promotions from 1990-92.

Additionally, Mello was media relations director at the University of the Pacific from 1983-84; assistant executive director of the Cal-State Fullerton Titan Foundation from 1982-83; and director of marketing and media relations for women's athletics at UCLA from 1981-82.

Mello replaces Orville M. "Butch" Henry, who resigned to become general manager of Crimson Tide Sports Marketing in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Mello will be the tenth athletic director in the 28-year history of the FIU program.

## COMPUTER SCIENCE PROFESSOR'S BOOK IN TOP 30 OF 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Mark Allen Weiss, an FIU Computer Science professor, is the author of a book that was voted among the top 30 computer books of the 20th century.

"I was pleased and kind of shocked, actually," said Weiss of the selection of *Data Structures and Algorithm Analysis*, which was first published in September 1991. Weiss' book was ranked number 13.

Pearson PTR, Slashdot.org, Netscape's DevEdge Online and Doctor Dobb's Journal asked readers to name three books that have made the biggest impact in computer technologies to date. According to information provided on the Addison Wesley Longman (AWL) web site listing the winners, "The winning selections are books that stand dog-eared next to computers, ready to tackle the next challenge. Books that have stood the test of time, and whose value extends into the next century."



Rick Mello

AWL is an educational publishing company offering textbooks, multimedia and learning programs in key academic disciplines.

Weiss' book, simply put, is geared toward individuals writing programs for large amounts of data. His original book is currently in its second edition and has versions in several different programming languages, including C++ and Java.

"It seems a lot of books out there focus heavily on one element – theory or practice – but not both," said Weiss. "The comments I've heard are that people like the balance I was able to strike in my book."

Weiss has been at FIU since 1987, and is the author of several other books in addition to his *Data Structures and Algorithm Analysis* series. His books have been used at more than 500 universities worldwide.

Weiss received his doctorate in computer science from Princeton University. The recipient of several awards including the FIU Excellence in Teaching Award and FIU Excellence in Research Award, Weiss is chairperson of the College Board's Advanced Placement Computer Science Development Committee. The committee designs the curriculum and writes the AP exam that is currently taken by 20,000 high school students annually.

## COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES MERGES WITH COLLEGE OF URBAN AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In a move mirroring the trend toward interdisciplinary practice and research, the College of Health Sciences and College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) have merged to form the College of Health and Urban Affairs.

"There is a very strong academic and professional connection between the two colleges," said Ronald M. Berkman, dean of the newly created college, who served as dean of CUPA since 1997. "Given the increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary practice and research, it is logical to forge these relationships at the university level."

The trend toward interdisciplinary practice and research is likely to grow according to the recent report of the Pew Commission on Health Professions, the most comprehensive study of the future of health care undertaken in the last decade. A solid program of federally sponsored research currently underway in those programs formally under the College of Urban and Public Affairs enhances the rationale for the merger, according to Berkman.

The new College of Health and Urban Affairs houses four schools: the School of Social Work, School of Nursing, School of Policy and Management, and the School of Health. In addition, under the auspices of the School of Policy of Management there are several programs including Health Services Administration, Public Administration, and Criminal Justice. Under the auspices of the School of Health there are programs in Public Health, Dietetics and Nutrition, Health Information Management, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Language Pathology.

"The vast majority of the sponsored research in the former College of Urban and Public Affairs is in the area of substance abuse and HIV prevention, with a particular focus on minority populations," said Berkman. The merger will provide an "expanded platform" upon which to

build this research and incorporate young researchers from the former College of Health Sciences.

Guiding the merger was the primary goal of enhancing the preparation of FIU students. "While the merger will greatly benefit the faculty and research enterprise, the most important benefits will go to the students who are training for careers in these professions," said Berkman.



William G. McMinn

## ARCHITECTURE DEAN McMINN RESIGNS TO RETURN TO TEACHING

William G. McMinn, Florida International University's dean of Architecture since 1996, has resigned to return to the classroom.

"I have truly enjoyed my work as the head of FIU's School of Architecture," said McMinn, who will remain at the head of the school until a new dean is hired. "But it is time that I go back and spend my time teaching the architects of tomorrow."

Much of McMinn's architecture career has revolved around the classroom. He served as professor of architecture and head of the departments of architecture at Louisiana State University and at Auburn University in Alabama. He also taught at Clemson University and at Texas Technological University. He served as the first dean of architecture at Mississippi State University and then served as the dean of the College of Architecture Art and Planning at Cornell University before coming to FIU.



Lisandro Perez

## Youthful activism

"The Elian case mobilized some groups that had not been very active, above all young people," said FIU sociologist Lisandro Perez, director of the Cuban Research Institute, on the final departure of Elian Gonzalez to Cuba

—*Agence France Presse*,  
June 28, 2000

Brought on to lead FIU's School of Design, McMinn launched an aggressive growth strategy that increased student enrollment in the school by 32 percent and brought the school through the accreditation process in record time.

"Dean McMinn has performed at the highest level during his five years as dean, and has brought grace, distinction and sophistication to our administration. He has brought his faculty together through the articulation of a common purpose while linking the new school to the fast world of high technology practice in our broader community," said FIU President Modesto A. Maidique. "I thank him for his commitment and many contributions to our community."

A national search for a new dean is being led by Fernando Gonzalez-Reigosa, dean of the FIU Honors College.

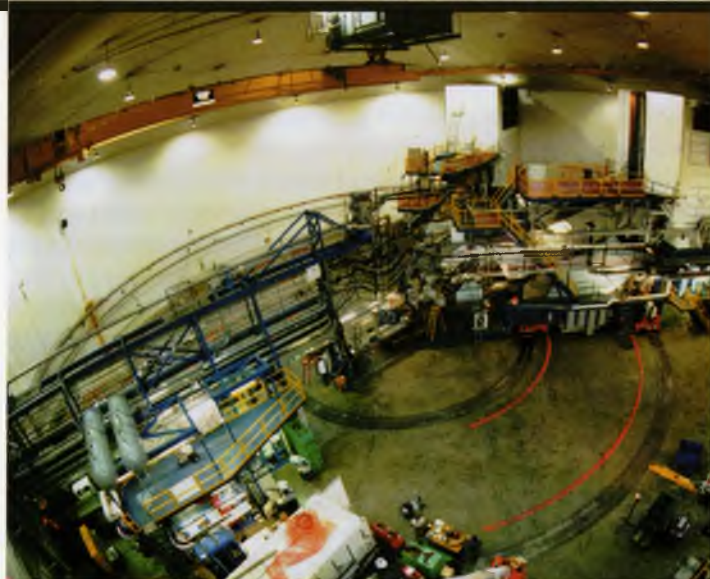
### **Revealing the power of the force EXPERIMENTAL NUCLEAR PHYSICS GROUP CONDUCTS RESEARCH AT DOE 'ATOM SMASHER'**

A group of faculty and students at the University are conducting research on the constituent particles of the atomic nucleus, probing an area of scientific knowledge that was in its infancy just a few years ago. In the process, they are searching for fundamental answers to the nature of matter and the forces that bind the atomic nucleus — and all other matter — together.

The Experimental Intermediate Energy Nuclear Physics Group at FIU, part of the Physics Department, now includes six faculty: Werner Boeglin, Franz Klein, Laird Kramer, Pete Markowitz, Brian Raue, and Joerg Reinhold. Eight undergraduate students and four doctoral students are engaged in the group's research.

"We're a bit of a quiet department when we're here," Markowitz said. "We always like to take our students to the Jefferson Lab. It makes the work more exciting for them."

The group conducts its research at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (formerly known as the Continuous Electron Beam Accelerator Facility —CEBAF) in Newport



Two high resolution spectrometers in experimental Hall A of the DOE's Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility track and measure particles for further study.

News, Virginia, one of only a handful of such facilities in the world. The \$600 million electron accelerator — also known as an "atom smasher" — acts as a giant microscope, enabling a glimpse inside the nucleus and its constituents, the nucleons (protons and neutrons) that are built up from quarks. Groups from 30 different countries conduct experiments at the Jefferson Lab.

The FIU group was founded in 1995, the year the accelerator opened, when DOE forged a partnership with FIU and financed a portion of the salaries of several new physics professors at the University.

In its research, the group has focused on "looking at what particles such as protons and neutrons look like," explained Markowitz, and specifically the quarks that are their building blocks. "We're trying to understand how these quarks work together in groups. We want to find out if there is a simple set of rules to describe how they act."

There are six known "flavors" of quarks: "up," "down," "top," "bottom," "strange" and "charm." The group's work focuses on quarks in simple systems having only a few constituents. Ordinary protons are made up of "up" and "down" quarks. By switching a "strange" quark for "down" quark, hyperons — exotic, unstable particles heavier than nucleons (protons and neutrons) can be studied. Other experiments produce "strange" quark and "anti-matter" quark pairs.

At the Jefferson Lab, the group carries out experiments that aim to replicate abstract modeling conducted at FIU. The oval-shaped accelerator, which is seven-eighths of a mile long, uses radio waves to push and pull electrons at nearly the speed of light. When they collide with target materials such as carbon, hydrogen or gold, particles — such as hyperons and quarks — are knocked out of the atoms. Since they are highly unstable and disappear in billionths of a second, highly sophisticated detectors track and measure these particles. The data from the experiments is studied upon return to the University.

The success of the research has prompted the group to pursue a new possible initiative: the establishment of a Center for Detector Development and Simulation in partnership with the Jefferson Lab. The proposed center would develop detectors, at a cost of \$500,000 to \$1 million per unit, for the experiments conducted at the lab. The University is now

seeking federal funding to support the creation of the new unit and its research.

"The (Nuclear Physics) group has certainly been responsible for the rapid growth of the department and enabled it to gain a national reputation," said Stephan Mintz, chairperson of the Physics Department. "FIU has been the leading experimentalist on a number of new projects (at the Jefferson Lab). This is the role that senior institutions normally play."

## HOME SWEET HOME: UNIVERSITY PARK TOWERS OPENS TO STUDENTS

To provide FIU students with more on-campus housing and to augment the University's ability to recruit students, the University Park Towers complex opened its doors in July. FIU President Modesto A. Maidique, Student Affairs Vice President Patricia Telles-Irvin and director of University Housing James Wassenaar presided over the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The \$22 million structure, designed by Harper Partners, Inc. and built by Turner Construction, has 508 beds. "We have tried to appeal to the needs of today's students as well as future students with the design of this building," said Wassenaar. "This type of high quality residence hall will help FIU's recruiting efforts."

Constructed in less than 12 months, the building has an apartment-style configuration. The typical accommodation in the new building is a private room within a four-bedroom apartment suite.

"University Park Towers is a significant step forward in meeting the growing need for on-campus housing," said Wassenaar. "We have adopted a goal to increase our housing by 500 beds every two years."

The University Park Campus can now house more than 1,500 students while the Biscayne Bay Campus can house 300 after the recent \$2.6 million renovation of the Bay Vista Housing complex.

The third phase of the University Park housing expansion is currently in design development and is slated for completion in June 2002. As part of this project, Wassenaar is pursuing construction of a dining hall.



## FIU RESEARCHERS ESTABLISH LINK BETWEEN SEA LEVEL RISE AND BEACH EROSION

After decades of controversy among researchers, three FIU scientists have established a concrete link between rising sea level and beach erosion.

"Our results answer one of the most fundamental and vexing questions in coastal science, with important implications for global warming," said Stephen P. Leatherman, director of the FIU International Hurricane Center. "After years of research, we have provided the first proof that pervasive beach erosion along the U.S. East Coast is caused by sea level rise."



Leatherman and fellow researchers Keqi Zhang and Bruce C. Douglas analyzed the historical and current state of the eastern seaboard beaches, going back as far as 150 years. The project was supported by \$1.36 million in grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Almost 90 percent of U.S. sandy beaches are experiencing erosion. The researchers' results come after five years of studying the historical changes in sea level and the amount of sand washed back into the ocean. Storms, human influence and coastal engineering projects were all taken into account.

"This is a scientific breakthrough that will rewrite the textbooks," said Leatherman. "This has been our 'Holy Grail,' and there is now a solid explanation of the cause of long term, pervasive beach erosion."

The research, which began years ago when Leatherman worked at the University of Maryland, focused on the historical records of the eastern seaboard from New York to South Carolina from as early as 1850. The study will continue for three more years and will include Florida's coastline as well.

"South Beach and Miami Beach areas are still in pretty good shape," said Leatherman. "But as time goes on, sea level rise will erode a foot or two a year, which adds up over time."

*University Towers in foreground adjoining Panther Hall.*



Joel Trexler

## Eel Invasion

"The minute I saw it, I knew it was not from here," said Joel Trexler, associate professor of Biological Sciences, about the Asian swamp eels that threaten the ecologically sensitive Everglades.

The nonindigenous eels, which eat practically all aquatic life, could disrupt food webs and breeding sites in the Everglades.

"This is not a lot of arm waving. This is a real threat."

—*The Wall Street Journal*,  
September 27, 2000



Tito Omaghomi, President, SGA Biscayne Bay Campus, former FIU President Gregory Wolfe (at podium), Provost Mark Rosenberg, Vice President for Student Affairs Patricia Telles-Irvin, and President Maidique.

## BISCAYNE BAY CAMPUS CELEBRATES CHANGE

FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus is celebrating change.

In August, officials at the campus welcomed faculty, staff and students with a renaming ceremony, which was dedicated to celebrating the new direction of the campus. The campus plans to utilize its bayfront location to develop its new Marine Biology program while expanding already established programs.

"This celebration will mark a new era for the campus," said Vice Provost Raul Moncarz. "Our goal is to expand on new ideas while remaining close to FIU's long standing tradition."

The semester kickoff was also marked by the dedication of the newly renovated Mary Anne Wolfe Auditorium at the campus. Wolfe, the wife of FIU's third president Gregory Wolfe, helped develop cultural programs at the University and is active in the community.

## FROM VIRGINIA TECH TO FIU: DONNIE MARSH NAMED AS HEAD MEN'S BASKETBALL COACH

Last spring, the University announced the appointment of Donnie Marsh as its new head men's basketball coach.

"Donnie Marsh is a man of experience and integrity who is capable of taking our men's basketball program to the next level," said Paul Gallagher, senior vice president for Business and Finance. "He firmly believes that the young men in our program are students first and athletes second, which is consistent with the mission of FIU."

Marsh, 44, comes to FIU from Virginia Tech, where he spent the last three seasons,

including last year as the men's basketball associate head coach.

"While we are sorry to see Donnie go, Florida International has made a great choice," said Virginia Tech Head Coach Ricky Stokes. "Coach Marsh has tremendous knowledge of the game and relates well to student-athletes. We know that he will have a successful career at Florida International."


Prior to his stint at Virginia Tech, Marsh worked as an assistant coach under Pat Kennedy at Florida State.

After earning All-America playing honors as a collegian at Franklin & Marshall (PA) College, Marsh was selected by the Atlanta Hawks in the third round of the 1979 NBA Draft. He then went to work as associate director of admissions, assistant basketball coach and head baseball coach at his alma mater. For one year, he was also president of Players in Action, Inc., a firm representing professional athletes.

His basketball head coaching experience came at Division III Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania, where he also served as associate director of admissions. From 1989 through 1993, he was the head basketball coach at Trenton State (NJ) College, where he posted an overall record of 64-41. Marsh's overall record as a head coach is 76-54.

After Trenton State (now known as College of New Jersey), Marsh worked two years in the Atlantic City (NJ) Public School District. He was the district's athletic director, then held the position of director of cocurricular and extracurricular programs.

Marsh is the fourth head coach in the 19-year history of the Golden Panther men's basketball program. He replaces Marcos "Shakey" Rodriguez, who resigned last March after five seasons at FIU.

"I'm excited about this opportunity. This is a time of tremendous growth for the University, and I'm thrilled to be a part of that growth," said Marsh. "I'm aware of the charge and challenges that lie ahead of me, but I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get started." 



Donnie Marsh

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## FIU Miami Film Festival welcomes best in international cinema

**T**he FIU Miami Film Festival welcomes the world during its 10-day run of new foreign and domestic movies. Just around the corner, the 2001 festival will be held Friday, February 23, to Sunday, March 4,

in the historic 1,700-seat Gusman Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Miami.

FIU acquired the prestigious festival in late 1999. Celebrating its 18th year, the annual event has a reputation for bringing to town



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# Business as usual and business unusual

One thing becomes immediately and abundantly clear upon speaking to Joyce Elam, dean of the FIU College of Business Administration (CBA), as well as the college's faculty and alumni: today's CBA is *not* your father's College of Business.

With an ambitious agenda designed to transform CBA into one of the top business programs in the country, Elam and others are concentrating much of their efforts on developing courses and degree programs focusing on technology and e-business.

"What we're really trying to do is integrate e-business concepts throughout the curriculum so that every course will have a little bit of e-business," said Elam.

"E-business is a term which is rather fashionable right now, and we decided we didn't want to be 'also-rans,'" added Kuldeep Kumar, the college's Ryder Eminent Scholar of Information Systems. Kumar is the college's chief "catalyst," as he refers to his role, for the (E)-Business Crossroads Initiative.

"We had to stop and think about what e-business really meant. In the new economy, how is business going to change?" asked Kumar. "The slogan that we've adopted is 'business as usual and business unusual,' borrowing a term from CNN.

"We're making a transition and looking at it from a cross-disciplinary perspective. In the past, that's not the way things were done. Our curriculum was partitioned into Department of Marketing, Department of Strategy or Department of Management Information Systems and so on," he continued. "With e-business, we're trying to create a cross-disciplinary initiative.

"I use the word cross-disciplinary knowing that it's not just the College of Business which should be involved; it should be broader than



Joyce Elam, dean of the College of Business Administration

that. In some respects with e-business, business and society are coming together," said Kumar. "The Internet is in people's homes. You need to talk about people and their behavior on the Net and how business meshes with it. So overall, you have to start looking at it in terms of business and society together.

"Fortunately, we have faculty members on our team who look at e-business beyond the disciplinary boundaries and look at it as business and society coming together," said Kumar.

To that end, Kumar has facilitated the formation of a group of 11 FIU faculty members from various departments as part of the (E)-Business Crossroads Initiative.

"We have a professor who deals with business and society issues; we have finance professors; we have marketing, accounting and

"What we're really trying to do is integrate e-business concepts throughout the curriculum so that every course will have a little bit of e-business," said Elam.

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information technology professors," said Kumar. "Their job over this year has been to create an individual and collective vision of what this e-business is. They meet regularly. To facilitate the creation of this vision, each faculty member works with one or two businesses, helping those businesses design their e-business strategy, or observing how their e-business strategy is being implemented."

Companies the group is working with include (e) General Motors and IBM. Additionally, Kumar said a member of the group is working with a bank in Boca Raton to create an online banking strategy, and another member is working with America's largest freight forwarding firm to create a new dot-com company in logistics and transportation. They're also working with a local company founded by FIU graduates, Interactive Marketing Solutions. Building on the expertise being gained by its professors through the (E)-Business Crossroads Initiative, the college will begin offering short courses, seminars and certificates for business professionals and executives.

Another major e-business-related initiative was the establishment of a Master of Science in Management Information Systems (MS-MIS), which accepted its first students last January.

"The MS-MIS is a premier program for us," said Dinesh Batra, associate professor of Decision Sciences and Information Systems. The MS in MIS requires three courses in electronic commerce, two in database, one in programming, one in knowledge management, one in project management, one in system analysis and design, one in understanding business processes and one in information technology strategy.

"A curriculum that combines both technical and functional/managerial material is a unique aspect of our program," said Batra. "We realize that you can't just throw technology at a problem. You have to understand the business implications."

"This program has been designed for the e-business developer," added Elam. "The curriculum prepares students who want to be the architects and builders of e-business systems."

In developing the MS-MIS program, Batra and his colleagues have sought the advice and feedback of the local business community, as well as students.

Eddy Martinez ('90 B.S. Industrial and Sys-

tem Engineering, '99 Executive MBA) is one of the local business leaders offering real-world advice about the program's development. A manager in technology management practice at AnswerThink, a leading Internet consulting firm whose clients include Time Warner, Isuzu and Unisys, Martinez participates on an informal advisory board that meets periodically to review the MS-MIS program.

"We review the curriculum to make sure the courses are applicable to today's business environment," said Martinez. "Basically, it's a way to make sure the graduates are getting the education and training they need."

Several other companies are involved in CBA initiatives through the Business Partners Program. "The Business Partners Program is a college program where the business community supports the college financially in carrying out activities that offer mutual benefits to the college and the business partner," said Elam. The college offers special events for its business partners, including a dinner in their honor, and helps identify potential interns and employees. Arthur Andersen, Burdines, Hewlitt Packard and SunTrust have been particularly active in the program.

It's this type of forward thinking that has driven the college since Elam became dean in 1998. With major investments in its information technology infrastructure and courses, the CBA's Ryder Business Building is now wireless. And in a nod to the future, all master's business students must have laptop computers.

For the first time, the college's annual "Business Plan Competition" is focusing exclusively on business plans for an original seed, start-up or early-stage venture in the information technology, telecommunications or Internet-based business arenas. Winners of the competition will be announced in early March at the CBA "Net-Biz Challenge" awards ceremony.

Along with MS-MIS and a Global e-MBA program that was launched in November (an MBA program offered primarily via the Internet), the CBA will also begin offering a master's in e-business next spring.

"We've started another initiative that we're really excited about called MBA Plus," said Elam. "This program was designed for the alumni of our MBA programs. We've identified a set of courses that our alumni can take, thus allowing them an opportunity to update their

knowledge." One particularly popular course this past fall was "Introduction to e-Business."

The college has always had a strong undergraduate program. The plan is to keep the undergraduate enrollment around 4,000 students while focusing on building the graduate programs. Today, the college has close to 100 full-time and 600 part-time graduate students. In the next five years, Elam's goal is to increase the number of full-time graduate students to 300 and the number of part-time students to 700.

When asked about her five-year vision for the CBA, Elam doesn't hesitate.

"My vision is that we will be one of the top five business schools in international business that emphasizes information technology," said Elam. "We're not going to be known as a technology school, we're going to be known as an international business school that is very forward-looking in its use of information technology within the curriculum."

"Those two dovetail so well together. A top five international business school must be able to offer its programs abroad. We're already doing that through online learning," she continued. "We can offer an MBA or an MIB anywhere in the world. The majority of each course in the program is offered via the Internet. The professor spends one week in-country with the students."

Additionally, the college recently started up an e-business within the college. "We are trying to move the conduct of business within the business school to the web," said Elam. "One of the projects I'd like to work on during the next academic year is the 'on-line advisor system.' Students would be directed to a special web site to receive answers to their questions and to receive advice. Department chairs would be able to approve such things as programs of study and adds and drops through digital signatures. I would like us to re-engineer the advising process using the concepts and technology of e-business."

"We're trying to use ourselves as a living laboratory for what an e-business really is," said Elam.

Don't expect the pace to slow anytime soon.

"In the world in which we live, things need to be done in three months, not three years," said Elam. ■  
FIU



THE MIAMI HERALD / JARED LAZARUS

Kuldeep Kumar

## A catalyst for virtual change: 'We're making waves'

**K**uldeep Kumar, the College of Business Administration's Ryder Eminent Scholar of Information Systems, arrived at FIU in January 2000, energized at the prospect of examining with fellow academicians the nuances and complexities of e-business, something many "traditional" business schools have yet to address.

As the individual responsible for the college's innovative (E)-Business Crossroads Initiative, Kumar has played a vital role in the development of the college's interdisciplinary e-business programs.

"To say I'm 'overseeing' or 'supervising' the e-business initiative is misleading," said Kumar. "I would say I'm more of a catalyst. I'm bringing people together — getting them excited about their ideas, getting them to do things, coordinating them."

Just as Kumar is an agent of change within the college, his career has been filled with changes that have taken him to points throughout the world. He has held positions at institutions including Georgia State University, University of Waterloo and McMaster University in Canada, and has lectured at sda Bocconi in Milan, Italy, ESADE in Barcelona, Spain, and

Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Prior to moving to academia, his business career included several positions in information systems management in banking, utilities, government and university administration.

Kumar left Georgia State University, where he served as associate professor of Computer Information Systems, for Erasmus University in the Netherlands in 1996 to become chair-professor of Information Management at The Rotterdam School of Management. "I was doing well at Georgia State, but I hit my mid-forties and went through this mid-life thing saying, 'What am I doing?'" said Kumar. "I was a tenured professor, published, doing well and so on — but I said, 'I've got to do something different,' so I escaped to Europe.

"My escape was fun for four years, but I wanted to come back home," Kumar continued. "I realized my home hadn't changed, but I had changed. I needed to come back to a university where I could play with new ideas, and I've found Joyce (Elam) to be a dean who is willing to be very different from a traditional dean. And when she introduced me to (Provost and Executive Vice President) Mark Rosenberg, I found that he was very willing to support innovative


ideas in the business of business education.

"It made sense for me to be here," said Kumar.

In addition to his leadership of the e-business initiative, Kumar supervises several doctoral candidates in North America and Europe. Their findings have complemented his work with the Crossroads Initiative.

"We recognize that if we are going to leapfrog over the established mid-range universities, we need to look at the world differently," said Kumar. "The second- and third-tier universities are still mired in old theories. It's the top-level universities — the Harvards, MITs, Stanfords — which are willing to go beyond the status quo. This is where we have an advantage. We're a young faculty, we've got ideas we can bring in and we aren't stuck in an old paradigm.

"We have the potential here of creating something where we can draw people who are innovative thinkers. I think we're beginning to convey a message to those outside the FIU community that we are willing to embrace new ideas," said Kumar. "We're making waves."

When it's suggested that's why he came to FIU, Kumar smiles and says, "It's been fun so far." 

# HIGH IMI



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES O'BRIEN © 2000.

James O'Brien with a computer simulation of the "Stanford Bunny" model fracturing as it is struck by a heavy, fast-moving "weight." The Stanford Bunny (developed at the California university) was one of the first models to be scanned and made publicly available. According to O'Brien, researchers often use the model to demonstrate new animation techniques.

**"FIU professors did a good job designing a curriculum that left me well prepared for the next step."**

**W**hen most of us view high-tech movies featuring extraordinary forces of nature (think killer waves in *The Perfect Storm*) or other Hollywood wizardry (think spectacular explosions in *True Lies*), we are mesmerized by the larger-than-life special effects that keep our eyes riveted to the screen. For FIU alumnus James O'Brien ('92, B.S. Computer Science), it's a little different. Such images cause him to think about the wonders of computational geometry, image processing, surface modeling, physical simulation and scientific computing.

O'Brien, who earned his M.S. ('97) and Ph.D. ('00) in Computer Science from Georgia Institute of Technology, joined the University of California (UC) at Berkeley faculty as an assistant professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science last September. It was a prestigious appointment for O'Brien, who currently has two patents pending; UC Berkeley's Computer Science program ranks in the top five in the country.

O'Brien teaches a course in computer animation at the introductory graduate/advanced undergraduate level. But his position entails far more than teaching. His duties include research roughly 50 percent of the time, teaching roughly 50 percent of the time and administrative tasks (grant proposals, etc.) roughly 50 percent of the time. "And, yes," he said laughing. "I'm aware that that adds up to more than 100 percent."

While his talents were sought by more than a dozen universities, O'Brien was attracted to UC Berkeley because of his research interests. "There's a very strong connection between my research and what's happening in the movie industry," said O'Brien. "In the last few years, there's been an explosion in graphics and animation."

The techniques and processes O'Brien is working to perfect have potential applications

beyond the entertainment industry. He hopes the techniques can one day be used to help train those in high-risk professions such as fire fighting.

"At some point in his/her training, a firefighter has to go into a burning building," said O'Brien. "Wouldn't it be great if we could offer up a synthetic environment that simulated the conditions of a burning building but offered none of the danger?"

As far as the entertainment industry goes, he hopes his research and that of others will progress to the point that "explosion technology" in computer graphics will become a viable option for filmmakers. "As it stands today, we can't create a realistic explosion with computer graphics. Filmmakers have two choices – they can blow up an existing object or they can build a model and blow that up. Either option is expensive and even the model explosion really needs to be executed properly the first time," said O'Brien. "If you build an explosion with computer graphics, you can blow up the object as many times as you want until you get it right."

But visuals are only part of a believable blast. According to O'Brien, the element of sound is a critical component to any explosion.

"Some day we hope to extend the techniques to include sound simulation – what one would hear from these events. I'm not involved yet in this type of work, but in many ways, it's a straightforward extension of work I have already done," said O'Brien. "It also presents some new and interesting problems that I have not dealt with before."

O'Brien's work in ground surface simulation technique (think of bike tracks left on a surface area) and fracture modeling (breaking objects) has resulted in two pending patents. "There's a large question of what it means to have a software patent," said O'Brien. "I'll be interested to see how the issue evolves, but I don't think it will affect the research I'm doing."

# PACT

This research has been well received by his peers. O'Brien has already published five papers in the most respected refereed international journals in his field and nine papers in refereed international conference proceedings, including the prestigious annual ACM SIGGRAPH, where he has published five articles over the years. His awards include the ACM SIGGRAPH '99 Impact Paper Award for "Graphical Modeling and Animation of Brittle Fracture," the Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award from Georgia Tech, a prestigious Intel Fellowship and several "best paper" awards. While at FIU, he was a member of the ACM Student Programming Team that placed second in the southeast regionals.

"James is quite a unique individual," said Victor B. Zordan, a Ph.D. candidate at Georgia Tech. Zordan has worked closely with O'Brien for many years and considers him an "important work associate" and trusted friend. "He has a tremendous ability to comprehend abstract concepts and realize these ideas concretely through his well-honed programming skills.

"While his talents are the best of the best, he's also a go-getter and extremely hard worker," said Zordan.

O'Brien's earliest memories of computers are inextricably tied to FIU.

"He started around the fourth grade by playing a game called 'Adventure' on FIU's Univac computer using my vt100 terminal," said O'Brien's father, FIU Associate Professor of Hospitality Management William O'Brien. William joined the University's computer support staff and was an instructor in the School of Computer Science in the early 1980s. In the mid-'80s, he went to the School of Hospitality Management where he still teaches a course in Hospitality Computer Applications.

"The only other thing that really competed

with computers when I was younger was physics," said O'Brien.


A graduate of Columbus High School in Miami, O'Brien attended FIU on scholarship as part of the Faculty Scholars Program, the precursor to the Honors College. O'Brien gives high marks to his FIU education. "I must say I felt well prepared for what I encountered at Georgia Tech," said O'Brien. "The FIU professors did a good job designing a curriculum that left me well prepared for the next step."

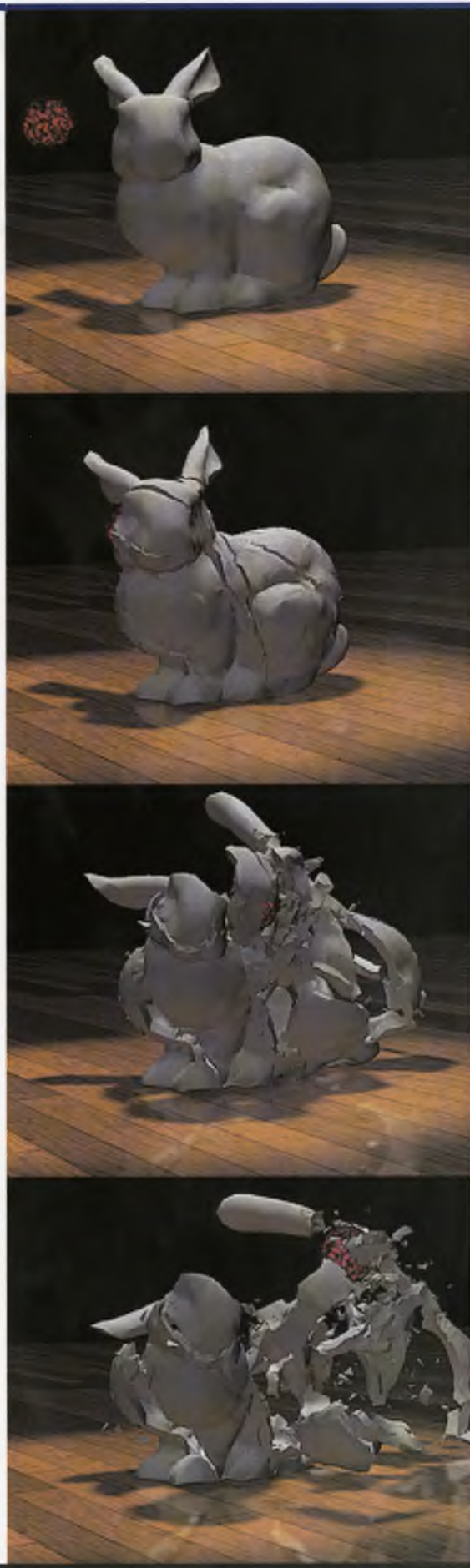
"We're delighted because he's teaching in a computer science program that's in the top five in the country, and it all started with an FIU education," said Jainendra Navlakha, director of the School of Computer Science. "As far as we know, he's the first alumnus of our school to attain such a prestigious appointment."

Navlakha wasn't surprised to hear of O'Brien's accomplishments, which are considerate for someone who has just received a doctorate.

"He was always a very good scholar," said Navlakha. "We remember him as a nice, humble, hard working guy."

When he's not creating explosions and smashing objects, the soft-spoken O'Brien enjoys hiking and other outdoor activities with his wife Heather, a schoolteacher at Berkeley High School. "My wife grew up in Wyoming, and I grew up in Miami, so we both have an appreciation of the outdoors."

When asked where he would like to be 10 years from now, O'Brien said he would aim to head an active research lab. He'd also like to be a consultant with movie studios or high-end computer graphics studios. Regardless of what the future holds, O'Brien's intellectual curiosity is sure to remain constant. "It's a question of finding an interesting problem and figuring out how best to address it," he concluded. 



# Harnessing cutting-edge technology to solve real-world problems



CATE Director Malek Adjouadi

"I wanted to make robots touch and see – and find out how to use those techniques and transfer them to human beings."

As a child growing up in Algeria, Malek Adjouadi always dreamed of becoming a doctor. When he had the opportunity to attend college in the United States, he jumped at the chance – but the scholarship that made it possible mandated that he study engineering instead of medicine.

Adjouadi never entered the field of his dreams. Nevertheless, some 30 years after coming to this country, he's still pursuing his dream of helping people. Instead of using medicine's instruments and methods, however, he and an interdisciplinary faculty team are innovatively harnessing the technologies of engineering and computer science to develop solutions for those in need.

Today, as director of Florida International University's Center for Advanced Technology and Education (CATE), Adjouadi is spearheading cutting-edge research which is developing algorithms and techniques for applications including medical diagnostics, robotic automation, and human-computer interfaces to assist those with visual or motor function disabilities.

CATE was established in 1993 with an initial three-year grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF); subsequent funding through 2004 has been awarded by NSF and the Office of Naval Research. The objectives of the center are to create a state-of-the-art computing environment that engages both educational and research avenues; address several critical technology areas, with an emphasis on real-time imaging; enhance the

curriculum; and attract and retain students, particularly minority graduate students.

The research conducted at CATE focuses on two central themes:

- the integration of software development and hardware design to solve real-world problems; and
- the creation of a strong link between teaching and research, with such a link benefiting undergraduate and graduate studies.

Based on these central themes, CATE conducts research in:

- image processing and computer vision;
- EEG-based brain research and human-computer interfaces
- robotics for motion planning and automated guidance;
- real-time and multidimensional signal processing; and
- biomedical applications in confocal microscopy and flow cytometry for hematology studies and data analysis.

Early in his academic career, Adjouadi embarked on a research course that would lead to the themes explored at the center. After receiving his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Oklahoma State University, Adjouadi conducted his master's and doctoral studies at the University of Florida. For his thesis, he studied how to endow robots with a sense of "touch" and his dissertation was on "Computer Vision Techniques to Help the Blind."

# edge technology problems

"My research interests came from my early desire to become a medical doctor," Adjouadi explained. "I always wanted to develop engineering techniques that would complement the medical field. I wanted to make robots touch and see – and find out how to use those techniques and transfer them to human beings."

To help realize its objectives, CATE has forged research partnerships with several biomedical corporations and hospitals, including Beckman-Coulter, Inc., Baptist Hospital, Fraunhofer Institute and Intelligent Hearing Systems. Three particularly active collaborations are ongoing with three Miami partners: Bascom Palmer Eye Institute of the University of Miami School of Medicine, The Neuroscience Center at Miami Children's Hospital and the Spinal

Cord Injury Service of the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Miami.

At Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, Armando Barreto, associate professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Julie Jacko, an NSF consultant from Georgia Tech University (and former FIU faculty member), work with Robert Rosa on the design and development of human-computer interfaces for individuals with visual impairments.

At the world-renowned eye institute they have conducted research with partially sighted individuals (as well as control group subjects with normal vision) in which an eye gaze tracker system tracks the orientation and position of the pupil, and electroencephalograms (EEG) measure activity in the visual cortex, the portion of the brain in which visual images are

"seen." The research proposes that for every position on the visual continuum there is a corresponding computer interface design that will accommodate users with visual impairments. The research is studying possible links between the physiological characteristics of partially sighted people and different computer interface designs. A potential outcome of the research could be the development of interfaces which would enable individuals to redress or overcome their visual impairment. Another aspect of the research involves the use of sounds that change when the cursor on the computer screen is moved toward icons on the screen — or to have these same sounds provide assisted guidance in indoor or outdoor environments.

Barreto and Adjouadi are also conducting research on interfaces for individuals with severe motor disabilities. In one project, an eye gaze tracking system is utilized to move a cursor on a computer screen. In a second project, three electrodes on the forehead and temples detect contractions of the jaw and forehead muscles to move a cursor. For instance, clenching the jaw on one side would move the cursor in that direction – and clenching both sides of the jaw simultaneously would be detected and translated into the "clicking" of a computer mouse button. This technology could be linked to motorized systems that would enable mobility.

The research CATE is conducting with The Neuroscience Center at Miami Children's Hospital focuses on bridging two complementary



Professor Armando Barreto (left) and doctoral student Navarun Gupta working with an eye tracking system used in human-computer interfaces.



*Drs. Ilker Yaylali and Prasanna Jayakar of the Miami Children's Hospital Neuroscience Center are collaborating with CATE scientists.*

technologies – one using electrodes clinically implanted in the brain and the other using external electrodes – used to help understand brain activities. These tools are being employed to study epilepsy and the brain responses that occur during an epileptic seizure. Samples of tissue from the portion of the brain that causes seizures will be studied on CATE's confocal microscope, a highly sophisticated instrument capable of creating three-dimensional displays of microscopic specimens.

The collaboration has considerable theoretical and practical implications given the relevance and complexity of brain signals that must be understood to develop pragmatic applications. In addition to advancing the goal of designing viable human-computer interfaces, the work has the potential to lead to new methods and theories of information processing.

"Miami Children's Hospital and FIU are working together to develop programs to advance the growth of neuroscience at both institutions," said Prasanna Jayakar, director of the The Neuroscience Center at Miami Children's Hospital. "We are working on advances in the fields of cognitive neuroscience, epilepsy, neuro-imaging technologies and furthering the understanding of the molecular basis of abnormalities of brain tumors and epilepsy."

The areas of learning strategies and cogni-

tive science, which are central to the development of human-computer interfaces and artificial intelligence, are the specialties of Ana Pasztor, professor of computer science. Her work is closely related to and complements the work done in the CATE lab: While people in the CATE lab study aspects of experience from a third-person perspective through various machines and measurements, she studies subjective experience from the first-person perspective of the experiencing person. Her work has a wide range of applications: from artificial intelligence – where intelligent agents with subjective experiences (such as emotions) are being studied and built – to education reform, where building new knowledge on students' existing experiences is being advocated and researched.

"I'm interested in people – how they learn, how they function," Pasztor explained. "A lot of the work in the CATE lab deals with cognitive science and the possibility of intelligent machines."

In addition to its research agenda, CATE pursues the goal of recruiting and supporting the education of undergraduate and graduate students, with an emphasis on women and minority group members who are underrepresented in the sciences and engineering. To

date, the center has graduated two doctoral students, 17 master's students and 18 bachelor's students. Currently in the pipeline toward graduation are nine doctoral students, seven master's students and 14 undergraduate students.

"The visit to the CATE lab is the highlight of all the tours I lead for prospective students," said Nola Garcia, pre-college programs coordinator and recruiter for the College of Engineering. "In addition to the lab's technology, the students there are phenomenal. He (Adjouadi) picks the best and brightest students; they show their enthusiasm and it gets prospective students excited."

Looking toward the future, Adjouadi shared several ambitious long-term goals CATE will pursue. He hopes the research team will realize its ambitious vision of creating working computer models and interfaces to help guide blind individuals or allow access and mobility for people with multiple disabilities. In addition, he believes they can develop techniques that will result in more precise diagnoses and treatments of neurological disorders.

"There are a myriad of incredible technologies," he said. "I feel we can make this contribution, but it's tremendously complex." **FIU**



*Ana Pasztor works with children from Claude Pepper Elementary School on their subjective experience studying math.*



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## *The National Policy and Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging*

# Innovative research provides food for thought

**F**ood. It fuels all that we do. It makes life possible. For most individuals it's such a routine part of everyday life that it's simply taken for granted.

For many Americans, however, hunger and malnutrition remain a reality of day-to-day life. And the problem is most severe among those individuals least able to cope with it: the elderly.

According to Nancy Wellman, Florida International University (FIU) professor of Dietetics and Nutrition, three out of every five Americans age 65 and older – 60 percent – are “at high to moderate nutritional risk.” This alarming figure is based on the result of 30 national studies covering 66,000 adults; individuals at risk met three to five “warning signs” on a 10-point checklist developed by the Nutrition Screening Initiative, a program promoting routine assessments to achieve better nutrition among the elderly.

The problem and the paucity of research dedicated to solutions prompted the establishment of the National Policy and Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging at FIU. The center was founded by Wellman, who serves as its director, and Dian Weddle, associate professor of Dietetics and Nutrition and its co-director.

Created in 1995 under funding from the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), the center promotes healthy aging by working to reduce malnutrition among older adults, especially minorities with health disparities. The goal is to improve quality of life, promote independence and decrease early nursing home admissions and hospitalizations through better nutrition. The center helps modernize Elderly Nutrition Programs (ENPs), which are



*Dian Weddle, Nancy Wellman and Victoria Castellanos*

the cornerstone of the Older Americans Act, and also provides educational and research opportunities for FIU students.

The center – the only one of its kind in the nation – works with the Aging Network, which includes more than 4,000 local nutrition projects serving congregate and home-delivered meals (popularly known as Meals on Wheels); 57 state and territory agencies on aging; 227 tribal organizations; and 650 area agencies on aging. With the rapidly increasing numbers of frail older adults, the center promotes risk-based nutrition screening to identify and serve the most needy and provides technical training, policy analysis and outcomes research. The center and its applied, community-based research has fostered vital links between faculty/researchers, professional care providers and patients.

The center has three current areas of focus:

- to help Meals on Wheels programs;
- improve the quality of nutritional care in nursing homes; and
- help cooperative extension programs to assist older adults in rural communities.

“With more attention to good nutrition you have a better quality of life with greater independence,” said Wellman, former president of the American Dietetics Association and current president of the Nutrition Screening Initiative. “We’re a practical center looking for ways to help Americans age well, actively, gracefully.”

Wellman’s leadership in professional organizations and the applied research and service activities of the department were key factors leading to the center’s formation. In 1994, Weddle worked with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs on nutrition screening pilot

projects, utilizing the Nutrition Screening Initiative checklist at sites serving different ethnic populations: Hispanic in Little Havana, African American in Liberty City, and Jewish in Miami Beach. "The project demonstrated that older adults are at risk for malnutrition and some have diet-related disorders," Weddle said.

The next research project focused on how good nutrition could be integrated into an overall continuum of care. The study was conducted at sites in Miami, Broward County and Osceola County – to consider the differences in populations and services in urban, suburban and rural areas – and a model was developed to incorporate nutrition as an integral element in care assessment.

"It proved to be a successful model," Weddle commented. "There are things you can fix if you target appropriately. What was needed was a focus on nutrition beyond the meals. We need to hook clients up to services to enable them to successfully meet nutritional needs."

The interdisciplinary, community-based approach of the projects was a key factor that attracted the AoA funding to formally establish the center. "We were able to develop local solutions that were realistic and practical," Weddle said.

Jean Lloyd, the AoA nutrition officer in Washington who works collaboratively with the center, said the center plays a unique national role designing interdisciplinary, community-based nutrition programs for the elderly. She noted that the center's work can help impact state and federal policies to provide quality nutritional services.

"A lot of social service people don't understand the role nutrition plays to keep people healthy and independent – and some nutritionists don't understand the role of social services," she explained. "The center bridges the social service and nutrition service networks. It is helping to create a positive future for older adults that connects nutrition, health and independence."

### **Meals on Wheels: a nutritional lifeline**

One of the center's current AoA-funded initiatives is *Nutrition 2030*, a dynamic partnership with the Meals on Wheels Association of America that aims to help ENPs expand and



*Debbie Kleinberg and Stacey Reppas of the North Miami Foundation for Senior Citizens' Services.*

better serve needy older adults. Current funding allows ENPs to deliver nutrition services to only about 7 percent of the high-risk older population overall, including up to about 25 percent of low-income and minority older adults.

A project within the center has been the Morning Meals on Wheels (MMOW) Breakfast Program, an innovative public/private partnership between the center, the AoA and General Mills Foodservice Inc. to better meet the needs of the at-risk homebound older adults.

MMOW provides breakfast in addition to the traditional lunchtime meal so participants receive two-thirds of their recommended dietary intakes. The center conducted a nationwide study to evaluate the effectiveness of adding the second meal. In this six-month study, the center worked with 1,500 frail homebound older adults served by the 20 organizations selected from the 100 local projects that applied to participate. Adding breakfast proved to be a cost-effective way of reducing malnutrition risk, increasing nutrient intake, and improving health and appetite. Caregiver duties were reduced, and it helped enable clients to meet the cost of medicine, heat and rent.

"Breakfast is a wonderful opportunity to double the nutrition provided to clients," said Debbie Kleinberg, executive director of The North Miami Foundation For Senior Citizens' Services, Inc., one of the organizations chosen to participate in the research project. "It seemed like an efficient mechanism to increase nutrition for clients at risk."

Thirty of the 200 elderly clients who receive Meals on Wheels lunch deliveries were selected

to receive the additional meal. The breakfasts typically include cereal, milk, bread, fruit and a hard-boiled egg or yogurt. The at-risk clients receiving the breakfasts are homebound and rely on Meals on Wheels as their nutritional lifeline. Kleinberg said they have heard of instances where clients would only eat a portion of their lunch and save the rest to stretch it for another meal. They would like to offer breakfast to even more clients, but tight public funding limits any expansion. While the AoA funds the lunch meals, support from the North Dade Medical Foundation makes the breakfast meals possible.

Stacey Reppas, an FIU master's student in Dietetics and Nutrition and nutrition program administrator with the North Miami Foundation, has been planning the menu cycle for the breakfasts. In addition, she has been collecting data and providing client interventions that she is using for her thesis, "Nutrition and Oral Health in Older Adults." Among the interventions are providing nutrition tip sheets and a "chopster" food processor, which chops up food and makes it easier to eat.

"FIU is offering a unique opportunity," Kleinberg said. "We haven't experienced anything like it from other universities."

### **Reaching out in rural America**

Under a \$220,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Fund for Rural America, the center has been developing model programs that demonstrate effective case studies between older adult organizations and cooperative extension services that focus on the nutritional needs of rural populations. The project is being conducted in part with cooperative extension services at Kansas State University, Montana State University and the University of Florida. In Kansas, efforts have focused on designing a nutrition program to complement Meals on Wheels, while at the University of Florida a nutrition education program has been developed.

"Traditionally, these programs have not worked with older adults. They now recognize the great need in rural communities and they want to do something about it," said Weddle.

The Montana State University Cooperative Extension Service has been working closely with Montana Aging Services on the project, which will have an educational focus. They are in the process of collecting and analyzing

data throughout the state to assess needs; then interventions will be developed and instituted.

"It's all based on education – we'll see what will hit home to help clients make behavioral changes," said Marnie Cranston, state nutritionist with Montana Aging Services. "The interventions are very practical: How can we make changes in their diet that they will like? The cooperative extensions will provide the community resource connections. ... Our goal is to keep folks in their communities as long as possible."

### Helping the most frail

When Victoria Castellanos, assistant professor of Dietetics and Nutrition, had a post-doctoral fellowship at Penn State, she conducted research on obesity. When she subsequently came to FIU in 1996, she was determined to apply what she knew about why people overeat – but use it to help people eat *more*. The venue for her work would be nursing homes.

"People are literally starving to death in nursing homes," Castellanos said. "Many middle-aged people can afford to lose five to 10 pounds – but not someone who is 75 years old. They often can't gain it back."

Castellanos applied for funding from the Health Care Financing Administration through the AoA to conduct research on ways to reduce dehydration and malnutrition in nursing homes. She secured a \$75,000 one-year grant and a demonstration project was launched at The Palace at Kendall Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, a 180-resident

facility. She soon discovered that the structure and financing of nursing homes were a fundamental part of the problem.

"The biggest problems don't concern appetite," Castellanos explained. "It's mostly a staffing problem in long-term care. Most nursing homes need more hands to feed people who can't feed themselves. Most facilities don't even pay a dietitian to be there full time. To solve this problem it's going to require more hands to feed people. Health care professionals will bend over backwards to give residents medicine. It is just as important that they buy into the fact that people need to eat to stay healthy."

The first step in the project was to have the nursing home's dietitian on site an additional 16 hours a week (up from the previous four hours per week). The dietitian was charged "to do whatever needed to be done" to improve nutrition in the facility. A variety of approaches were adopted. They trained the certified nursing assistants to better recognize signs of malnutrition and dehydration; more staff members were trained to provide feeding assistance; computer technology was used to enhance the dining program; and they introduced a new snack program. Throughout the project they tried to involve the nursing home residents' families. A set of outcome measures was developed to determine the effectiveness of the various actions; these included patient records, food intake studies and family satisfaction surveys.

"We looked at what was going to have the




Armando Triana and Sharon Clewis

greatest impact," Castellanos explained. "We found that education and assessment tools are only useful if the physical environment in the nursing home accommodates a behavior change in the health professionals being educated, if the data that is used in the nutritional assessment is accurate and up-to-date, and if staffing levels and supervision are adequate."

Several FIU master's students have worked on the program, including Armando Triana, who has been collecting outcome data, some of which he may use for his thesis on increasing appetite and food intake by reducing dehydration.

"This has been an excellent experience for everyone involved," said Jeff Nusbaum, administrator of The Palace. "I think one of the most important things in a facility is nutrition and hydration. It impacts our residents' general overall health. The program definitely impacted our overall operation here. There is a better understanding of residents' nutritional needs and an appreciation of those needs."

Sharon Clewis, the dietitian and FIU alumna (B.S. Dietetics and Nutrition, 1982) at The Palace and consultant on the FIU project, believes that it's important for the nursing home industry and academia to work together on solutions.

"This research can validate better programs, systems and measures," commented Clewis. "Other facilities can utilize these tools and really effect an improvement in nutrition and hydration for nursing home patients. The problems we have addressed here are universal at nursing homes." 



The dining room at The Palace, site of a center demonstration project.

# The science of education: for FIU



Research vessel/ice breaker Nathaniel B. Palmer  
(NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION/S. KLIPPER)

It is fitting that on the last day of his Antarctic adventure aboard the research vessel/ice breaker Nathaniel B. Palmer, chemistry instructor Shawn Beightol ('93, MS in Science Education) chose to excerpt Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem *Ulysses* in his daily web journal. For in the grand spirit of adventurers before him, one senses Beightol is a man whose mind will never "rust unburnish'd."

• • •

It's a typical summer morning at Dr. Michael Krop High School in north Miami-Dade County. On this Tuesday, the 20 students in Beightol's physical/earth science class display varying degrees of interest. As Beightol writes on the blackboard each student's coordinates for the soil samples they are about to take, the surrounding scene is a microcosm of the vagaries of high school. Most students are attentive and pepper him with questions, but one young man peruses his CD collection, intent on selecting just the right tune for the short walk ahead. Two young women primp and apply lip gloss while nearby, under the watchful eye of Beightol, two students drop a sampling of limestone into hydrochloric acid to see the resultant fizzing and release of carbon dioxide.

Through it all, Beightol remains unflappable, striking a balance of discipline, patience and wit sought after – often elusively – by educators. The rapport is genuine, for teaching these children to expand their horizons has been, for Beightol, a soothing salve on a difficult childhood and young adulthood burned into his psyche.

• • •

"I come from an underprivileged family," said Beightol, who was born in New York but has spent most of his life in Florida. "We grew up on welfare and food stamps. I know what a difference each person makes in the childhood of someone like me."

Originally planning a life in youth ministries and missionary work, Beightol graduated from Miami Christian College in 1988 with a double major in Missions and Biblical Studies and a minor in Koine Greek. Beightol cites a lack of fulfillment in "drawing a paycheck from the church" and a failed marriage as the end of his formal ministry.

Two years after graduating from Miami Christian College, and five years into his tenure as a youth director/assistant pastor, Beightol enrolled at FIU. He completed course credits in Chemistry (he's six hours shy of a bachelor's) and his M.S. in Science Education in 1993.

Upon graduation, Beightol taught science for five years at William H. Turner Tech Arts High School, where he was also director of the Middle School Advanced Agriscience program. Beightol came into his own at Turner Tech, winning several awards and grants, including the National SECME, Inc.'s Teacher of the Year award in 1998. SECME is the largest pre-college science, engineering and mathematics enrichment program in the U.S. That same year, he was one of 10 teachers

*"...I am a part of all that I have met;*

*Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'*

*Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades*

*For ever and for ever when I move.*

*How dull it is to pause, to make an end,*

*To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!"*

–*Ulysses* by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

# alumnus, it's the ultimate voyage

in the nation to be awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) Antarctic Research Program Award. The NSF award led to his search for submarine hydrothermal vents in the Bransfield Strait.

"Antarctica taught me the grandness of our world a little more, it taught me that what is apparent is not always forever," reflected Beightol. "Professionally, it taught me a lot about teamwork and rekindled my passion to prepare and challenge my students for worlds beyond their imaginations.

"The most important thing I can give my students is a love for knowledge and appreciation for the capacity we have as humans for the intellectual and aesthetic," said Beightol. "I want to challenge them to live on that plane – to seek the enjoyment of life as more than mere animals."

Beightol does his part in small, yet meaningful, ways. Each day he puts a new non-science word or phrase and its meaning on the classroom blackboard. He also works poetry and literature into his lessons.

Leaving Turner Tech in 1998, Beightol became and remains an FIU adjunct professor, and taught chemistry for one year as a science instructor in the Partnership in Academic Communities (PAC) Program in FIU's College of Education. While involved in this program, Beightol taught for half a day at Southridge Senior High School and half a day at FIU. In 1999, Beightol returned to the high school setting full-time.

"At Krop we serve a really neat community with very diverse ethnic, social and cultural classes," said Beightol. "We've got students from upper-income and upper-middle class homes, students who live in a nearby trailer park, and students who come from working class homes. I think the healthy balance has pulled the curve up."

Beightol receives high marks from his students.

"If school was like this more often, people wouldn't be sleeping in class," said Sophomore Marcel Ledoux. "Mr. B's really cool."

"Mr. B's different. He gives us responsibilities," said Junior Fraendy Clervaud, who as a dual-enrollment student attends Krop and takes courses at FIU. "The way he teaches is good preparation for college."

• • •

*In today's lesson, students are testing for carbonates in the soil. It's serious stuff, this survey: Each student is responsible for analyzing the soil according to specific coordinates, the sum of which will "tell a story," as Beightol puts it, of this heretofore ignored plot of land adjoining the school's parking lot. By graphing the results and inputting the data into computer software, Beightol's students will generate a complex 3-D color graph of the surveyed land.*

*Before they leave the classroom, Beightol reminds the students that if the soil becomes contaminated, they must discard it and retrieve more. "You have to govern yourself," instructs Beightol. "You have to have some integrity."*

*In addition to learning earth science, Beightol explains that one of the purposes of this summer school science class is to bolster the students' math skills.*

*"They're actually learning math skills through this science class," says Beightol. "We've already done line graphs and pie charts. Now we're doing complex three-dimensional graphs of the soil samples. I had each student do 21 samples. By the time they're done, they know darn well how to do percentages.*


*"Too often there's this huge gap between learning something in the classroom and applying it to a career," continues Beightol. "With these projects, I'm trying to close that gap."*

• • •

This past fall, the science club, under Beightol's direction, began working on a microgravity simulator (clinostat) to study the effects of microgravity in plants. After gathering enough data under these conditions, Beightol hopes to secure a grant or persuade NASA to bring a high school flight program to Florida, similar to a successful program already in Texas.

"A KC 130 jet, or 'Vomit Comet' as it's called, flies parabolic trajectories, which provide 30-40 seconds of near-zero gravity conditions," explained Beightol. "My goal is to have the students take their own research projects aboard.

"We hope to quantify the effect of gravity on biological fluid transport and raise questions about the long-term effect of microgravity on plants, especially those that involve successive generations aboard spacecraft," said Beightol. "We also hope to draw connections to various analytical devices that depend upon capillary fluid flow and suggest some of the effects of microgravity upon these as well.

"I love science. I eat it, drink it, sleep it," said Beightol. "I like the challenge of understanding why and how the universe works." 



Shawn Beightol with his students.

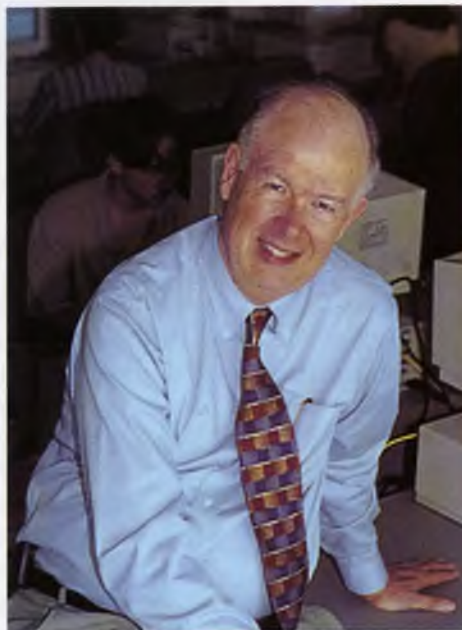
# Conquering the 'digital divide'

As Florida International University has evolved into a top public urban research university, it's been impossible to miss the University's physical and curricular growth, such as the recent additions of a law school and football program and the opening of new residence halls. But initiatives in technological advancements, while not as high profile, have been a vital part of this growth, positively affecting teaching, learning, research and communications, thereby setting the stage for further development.

As the chief architect of FIU's Information Resource Management (IRM) initiatives, Arthur Gloster, vice provost and chief information officer, has overseen the expenditure of millions of dollars on a wide range of projects and initiatives since arriving at FIU.

"We look at all of these projects as being an investment for the University," said Gloster. "The e-commerce age is upon us, and we have to be literate in the use of e-commerce in dealing with our student body, alumni and friends of the university."

One of these projects is the iNET Initiative, a three-year program designed to enhance uses of technology in web-assisted instruction and communications with students. The challenge is to get students to more fully integrate the computer into their course work and communications with the University beyond basic word processing functions. As part of this initiative, 49 faculty members attended an iNET/iFIG Summer Institute, which offered specialized instruction in developing curricu-



Arthur Gloster

lum that employs web-based technologies.

"We know that approximately 80 percent of our incoming freshmen have access to a home computer, but we can't forget the 20 percent that do not," said Gloster. "It's the 'haves' versus the 'have nots,' and we're looking at ways to address this and conquer the 'digital divide.' Our intent is to encourage every student to communicate with the University via the Internet."

Progress is being made. According to Gloster, more than 50 percent of the students now register for classes via the web. And the

University hasn't mailed report cards (except on request) since the first of '97; all grades are accessible via web or voice response.

"We're attempting to change the behavior by pushing the technology," said Gloster. "We're also looking for permission from the state to allow payment of tuition by credit cards."

In another move that would directly impact students, the University is exploring the possibility of employing the use of e-textbooks.

"With e-textbooks, a faculty member could choose multiple textbooks and multiple chapters and a student would not have to buy each full text," said Gloster. "Students would have access to a server to download the portions they would need, and they would pay a charge for that access. Students would still be able to highlight the text, underline it, make notes on each page and store them to be shared with other classmates."

"We're looking at how we can improve access to information for students and faculty in the pedagogical tasks," said Gloster. "There's a world of information out there, and more and more of that information is being made available electronically."

The library, which operates under the direction of Gloster, is also upgrading its use of technology. The Biscayne Bay Campus library recently purchased two Rocket eBook Pro readers and one SoftBook. Both

are hand-held electronic devices, known as e-book readers, which contain a selection of titles, according to Jenny Saxton, resource development librarian at the Biscayne Bay Campus. Saxton was involved in researching the current technology and making recommendations for the library.

"These titles are downloaded directly from the companies that sell the devices, from online booksellers such as BarnesandNoble.com, or from public domain web sites such as Project Gutenberg," said Saxton. Library patrons check out the devices as they would a regular book. In addition, the FIU Libraries now have access to a service called netLibrary, which circulates e-books via the Internet. Once students set up their own netLibrary accounts, they can read the e-books using a computer in the library, at home or on a laptop.

Another area in which the University is forging ahead is its recent partnership with Global Crossing to establish Americas-Path (AmPATH), a high-speed network that will connect research and education networks in Latin America to the United States and rest of the world.

"This will allow Latin American researchers to access information previously unattainable to them," said Gloster, who engineered the agreement between the University and Global Crossing.

"Global Crossing has given us the use for three years of 10 high-speed circuits to 10 Latin American countries. The value of that is somewhere in the area of \$30 million over three years," said Gloster.

Two other Internet communications companies, Lucent Technologies, Inc. and Cisco Systems, Inc., provide the high-speed switches and routers, some at no cost, for the AmPATH project. The backbone networking

equipment will be housed in downtown Miami's Technology Center of the Americas, a 700,000-square-foot facility under development at N.E. 9th Street and North Miami Avenue.

"There's a membership fee for each university and research facility that wishes to be part of AmPATH, and then there's a connection fee of \$150,000 for each country," said Gloster. "We're covering our operational costs out of those fees."

A related venture is the Gemini Project, due to be tested in the first quarter of 2001, according to Gloster. The new research link to Latin America will allow researchers to access images from the Gemini South telescope in La Serena, Chile, and the Gemini North telescope in Hawaii.

"We're also working with the National Science Foundation (NSF) to see how we can tie in transmissions from the world's largest radio telescope in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, and the largest electron microscope, which is located in Japan," said Gloster.

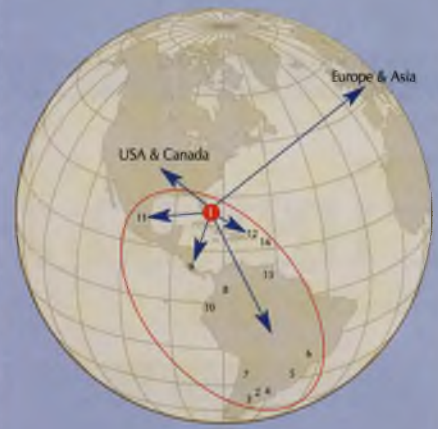
These initiatives will strengthen future research efforts because faculty will have greater opportunities to conduct high-level research without great expenditure of time, money and effort.

Closer to home, one of IRM's most demanding projects has been the shoring up of the university's infrastructure. That effort has cost "probably \$7 to \$8 million," according to Gloster.

"We've become one of the top schools, as far as infrastructure is concerned, in the country today," said Gloster. "There are few universities that are very far ahead of us. In fact, we've become the model under an NSF grant for minority-serving institutions."

With the exception of seven buildings, Gloster said the Biscayne Bay Campus and University Park, as well as the Wolfsonian-FIU on Miami Beach, are completely networked. "We're way out in front as far as that's concerned," said Gloster.

Another project currently underway designed to position FIU "way out in front" is Internet Protocol (IP) telephony. According to Gloster, "That's the next major jump. Voice will run on the same



### AmPATH Participating Universities/ Project Participants

This network represents approximately 200 research and educational institutions.

University (Group)	Country
1 Florida International University .....	USA
2 Universidad de Buenos Aires.....	Argentina
3 Universidad Belgrano .....	Argentina
4 RETINA .....	Argentina
5 RNP.....	Brazil
6 FAPESP.....	Brazil
7 REUNA .....	Chile
8 EMTLSA .....	Colombia
9 University of Costa Rica .....	Costa Rica
10 Universidad Tecnologica Equinoccial.....	Ecuador
11 CUDI.....	Mexico
12 University of Puerto Rico.....	Puerto Rico
13 REACCIUN.....	Venezuela
14 University of Virgin Islands.....	Virgin Islands

network as data and also the same network as video." FIU is the largest institution thus far to work with Cisco Systems, Inc., on the new technology.

In a project set to begin in January 2001, IRM is planning to replace the 1970s-era software used to run the university's administrative departments.

"We're looking at modern software that will affect how we deal with our publics, including our alumni, students and employees," said Gloster. "For example, we're looking at ways to facilitate human resources becoming more self-service, where you could change your fringe benefits online from your desktop.

"We've made good progress with our old system, but I refer to it as 'putting lipstick on a hog,'" said Gloster. "We've done a good job, but that doesn't alter the fact that the system is antiquated."

IRM's ambitious programs should keep the University well equipped to meet the challenges of this new century.

"It's all coming together," said Gloster. 



# First in her class . . . Alumna

by Victoria Stuart



Gwendolyn Boyd

**F**IU alumna Gwendolyn Boyd was born the last of nine children to a family in a poverty-stricken neighborhood on the west side of Jacksonville, but she has spent the rest of her life being first.

“Many people told me that a young black woman from the ghetto didn’t have much chance at success, but I never listened to them; I never placed limits on myself,” said Boyd.

A graduate of the Miami Police Academy, Boyd was the first black female officer to train recruits at the academy, the first to spearhead major undercover operations, and the first to ride a three-wheel motorcycle on duty. She continued on the fast track to become the Miami Police Department’s first black female sergeant, lieutenant, and then captain.

She served in the department for more than 25 years, becoming the first black female police major in the state of Florida, the first female assistant chief in the Miami Police Department’s 100-year history, and the first to retire and be selected to serve as a police chief in another city.

Three years ago, Boyd became the first black female police chief for the city of Prichard, Alabama, and last year she was chosen as the first black police chief for the City of Miramar, Florida.

She was also the first and only female police chief in Florida (and perhaps the nation) to hold a doctorate degree.

Today, Boyd is the first FIU alumna to serve on the executive board of a Florida state university. She was named vice president of Administration for FIU in April and directs the departments of Public Safety, Human Resources, Purchasing, Environmental Health and Safety, Comptroller, and Inspector General.

“It was indeed a surprise and a great honor to be invited to consider this position by President Maidique,” said Boyd, who holds a master’s degree in public administration and a doctorate in adult education and human resource development from FIU.

“I am truly excited about the opportunity to make a significant contribution to my school,

and I am impressed by the phenomenal growth and development that have occurred since I graduated in 1996,” she added. “I am grateful that FIU provided me with the requisite knowledge and skills to reach the pinnacle of my law enforcement career, and, now I am returning to my alma mater for a new challenge.”

A petite, soft-spoken woman with a gentle demeanor and a smile that lights up the room, Boyd’s appearance and humble attitude belie her hard-won success. The only clue to her former profession is a ramrod straight spine and posture so sharp it could cut steel.

“When I first joined the force, people had a stereotype image of policewomen: big, burly, loud and tough. Well, I was tough alright,” she laughed, “After all, I grew up in the ghetto. But I surely didn’t fit the image in any other way.”

Surprisingly, Boyd said that few people ever challenged her. Just two months after she graduated from the Police Academy, she was involved in an incident where she subdued a six-foot, 250-pound muscular male who had attacked her male partner.

“In a strange way, I was lucky that happened so early in my career, because I earned the professional respect of all the other male officers, and I didn’t have to experience the kind of prejudice many other female officers endure,” explained Boyd, whose “street smarts” and physical fitness were nearly unequaled by any other officer, male or female.

There was only one other time her professionalism was ever challenged, when, as a Police Academy Instructor, two husky male students bet that they could outrun her. She just smiled and started running – and running and running.

“We ran more than five miles, then up and down all the stadium steps at Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC). Then we ran around the track again. The two men became so worn out that they had to drop out, regurgitating from exhaustion. By the time they stumbled back to the academy, I had already run all the way back, showered and changed into my

*“Many people told me that a young black woman from the ghetto didn’t have much*



# named FIU vice president

police uniform. I met them at the door with an assignment to write a 1,000 word essay about not being a quitter.”

That kind of energy and “never-give-up” attitude are the hallmarks of Boyd’s life – both professional and personal.

Despite growing up in poverty; despite the death of her father before she was born and the death of her mother before she was five years old; despite the deaths of both her adoptive parents just three years later, Boyd never let her circumstances limit her aspirations.

“I lived with my great-grandmother from the time I was 8 to age 17, and she instilled in me a profound faith and trust in God. She encouraged us to pray about problems, prosperity and perseverance, and she always emphasized the value of an education,” Boyd remembered. “She was the solid rock in our lives. My older sisters and brothers were also my role models; they all achieved success in their own lives as nurses, teachers, construction workers and managers.”

Initially wanting to follow in her sisters’ footsteps and become a nurse, Boyd struggled through chemistry and biology classes until she saw a billboard that changed her life.

“I liked the idea of helping people, but nursing didn’t seem to be my niche,” she said. “Then one day, while attending MDCC, I saw a billboard advertising the new Public Service Aide program with the Miami Police Department. After my first class in criminology I was hooked. I knew I had found my bailiwick!”

“As a Public Service Aide, my job was to write up police reports and respond to non-law enforcement incidents, thereby enabling police officers to focus more of their time on ‘crime fighting,’” she remembered. “However, after hearing about police foot chases, car chases and in-progress calls dispatched over the radio, my adrenaline would shift into overdrive. So one day, when I heard a burglary-in-progress call, I responded! My supervisor later reprimanded me and told me that I better enroll in the next police academy class,

before I got into real trouble.”

From that moment forward, Boyd’s career skyrocketed. In the late ’70s and early ’80s, she won national recognition for her success as an undercover narcotics officer. Known as “Hot Stuff,” she masqueraded as a prostitute/addict to catch drug dealers and crooked business owners, and contributed to so many record-breaking arrests that she made headlines all over the country. Her story was also featured in national magazines such as *Jet* and *Ebony*.

“I was very interested in upward mobility, but everyone told me I was crazy, that the police department wasn’t ready for black female sergeants,” she explained. “But I studied hard and scored high on all the exams, and remained focused on my goals in spite of opposition and naysayers.”

At the same time, Boyd was also moving up the academic ladder, earning her master’s degree in Public Administration in 1982, while working full-time and raising two daughters.

“I have always believed in higher education, and I knew I didn’t want to stop at a bachelor’s degree, but I wasn’t seriously thinking about a doctorate until Dr. Douglas Smith convinced me to go for it. I had been considering psychology and the study of human behavior, but he suggested a class in adult education and human resource development. After my first class on adult learning theories with Dr. Jo Gallagher – the second female professor I’ve ever had – I was hooked again!”

Boyd finished her dissertation in record time – less than a year. Her research examined the effectiveness of psychological testing for police officers.

Boyd has been labeled “an American success story” by her peers, but what truly sets her apart is that, in addition to focusing on her own career, she has dedicated her efforts to improving her community and creating better interracial understanding.


“I grew up in an area where all the cops were white and all the black kids would run as soon as they saw them, convinced they’d be arrested

for something, anything,” she said. “But when I graduated from the academy and rode with other officers and talked with them, all my misperceptions disappeared because I got to know them as individuals rather than just ‘uniforms,’ and I realized we were all – black, white, Hispanic – part of the same team.”

That team-building spirit has helped Boyd achieve an extraordinary degree of success, and her record is nearly legendary. When she arrived as the new chief of Prichard, Alabama, she found an understaffed, underfunded department with cramped and outdated facilities. The police officers at the time were earning less than \$7 an hour, and had to supply their own guns, ammunition and uniforms. In addition, the city was struggling with high crime and murder rates – more than 60 percent of which were related to domestic abuse.

After her first year on the job, the violent crime rate dropped by 39 percent and the homicide rate by more than 50 percent. She hired additional officers, arranged for salary increases and new uniforms, supplied appropriate weapons to her officers, wrote several federal grants to acquire new equipment, and initiated sting operations to reduce the rate of drug-related crimes, among many other projects.

Throughout her career, Boyd has been a leader in integrating education into her police work, from initiating community workshops to providing professional officer training. Even during her first months as chief of police for the city of Miramar, she arranged for FIU faculty to teach on-site courses for officers who needed to complete their bachelor’s degree.

“I guess my career has come full circle now,” she said. “Back when I was working on my master’s degree, I took a class with Professor Anne Marie Rizzo, who asked us to write out a set of goals for our lives and a time frame in which to achieve them. I wrote that my ultimate goals were to become a police chief and maybe get a doctorate, and here I have fulfilled all my own predictions. It still amazes me ...but I am not finished yet!” 

*chance at success, but I never listened to them; I never placed limits on myself.”*

*The 'sleeping giant' wakes up:*

# Golden Panthers take to the gridiron in 2002



It's a funny thing about hard work – sooner or later it always seems to pay off. Case in point: the year 2000 at FIU.

First came the creation of the FIU College of Law. Next was the University receiving the highest ranking in the prestigious Carnegie classification system. Now, it's football.

Having received approval earlier this year from the Florida Board of Regents (BOR) for the establishment of a football program, FIU announced in September the hiring of former Miami Dolphins quarterback Don Strock as the first-ever head football coach of the Golden Panthers. Strock had previously served for one year as FIU's football operations director.

"We were off and running before the ink was dry," said Strock, referring to the BOR's decision to approve the new program. "I left the BOR meeting and an hour later was on the road to Poinciana High School in Kissimmee to look at a quarterback and a tackle. All of the other coaches saw it on the web, and they took off, too. We had a plan that we wanted to follow."

Strock and his coaching staff have been given the opportunity – and responsibility – of building a program from the ground up, and Strock knows the only way to build a successful program is to put in the requisite "sweat equity" before the first kick-off.

For the past two football seasons, Strock and his staff have been watching up to 18 games each weekend. Boards filled with hundreds of names of potential recruits crowd their offices in a trailer adjoining the FIU Community Stadium, where games will be played. A toll-free number was secured to facilitate communications between Florida coaches and Strock and his staff. Seventeen hundred questionnaires

were sent to high school athletes, and information from nearly 500 replies was entered into a database that is updated as needed. Informal campus tours have been given to interested coaches, parents and student athletes.

"Florida is a hotbed of football talent," said Strock, who doesn't plan to go outside the state to recruit. "Last year there were 300 Florida student athletes who received football scholarships to attend colleges; only 80 of those stayed in Florida. The state is not over-saturated with schools, it's over-saturated with players."

Strock is encouraged by the response he's received thus far.

"We show the campus to recruits from area high schools, and they invariably say they didn't realize we had so much to offer," said Strock. "We feel that 50 percent of the battle has been won if we can get them here."

"One of the biggest things we have going for us is that our stadium is on campus," said Strock. "When your stadium is on campus, football games become an *event*. Students living on campus get involved, the fraternities and sororities get involved. It fosters school spirit, and there's a lot to be said for that 'college atmosphere.'"

"There's 86,000 FIU alumni, and more than 65,000 live in South Florida," continued Strock. "A lot of them probably haven't even been back to the campus since they graduated."

With surveys indicating 85 percent of the student body and more than 85 percent of the alumni favor the establishment of a football program, school administrators are confident the crowds will follow.

"When I look at the successes the University has achieved in such a short time, I see athletics as a catalyst – and specifically football – to bringing all of that together five to six times a

year on fall Saturday afternoons," said Athletic Director Rick Mello, who has extensive experience in major initiatives such as this. "The reason why Don is so valuable to this institution is that he realizes that football fits within the academic mission of this institution."

"What we need to do is make football an event to engage – and bring back – our students and our alumni," continued Mello. "If we do that successfully then we'll have a successful football program. And I have every confidence that we can do that."

Mello said the University has already sold hundreds of season tickets without benefit of a formal marketing campaign, and the program recently launched a two-year season-ticket campaign expected to add significantly to that number. And the list of Football Founders, those individuals contributing \$50,000 over a five-year period, continues to grow.

Paul Gallagher, senior vice president of Business and Finance and one of the driving forces behind the program's approval, is looking at ways to accommodate the legions of fans expected to flood the stadium for the first-ever Golden Panthers football game on September 14, 2002.

"One of the options we're considering for the initial expansion to 16,000 is using temporary bleachers," said Gallagher. "Six or seven years into the program, we hope to build a 30,000-seat, \$30 million permanent stadium."

With the enormous investment in time, energy and money that such an undertaking requires, Strock realizes what's at stake.

"There's no question that all eyes are going to be on me," acknowledged Strock. When asked if there are any programs or individuals he particularly admires, Strock thinks a moment before replying.

"There's several ways to look at that,"

answered Strock. "I have great admiration for Frank Beamer at Virginia Tech, whose program was floundering just a few years ago. He built it back up through academics, support of the university and professors, to the point that they played last year for a national championship. No one thought that would ever happen.

"Obviously, I spent 15 years here with Coach Shula, so there's certainly some things I picked up from him," said Strock. "I played a year with Marty Schottenheimer in Cleveland, and I coached three years with the Baltimore Ravens and Ted Marchibroda. I learned things from each of those experiences."


One of the things he's learned over the years: "Football talent is only part of the mix. We know if a student is a good player by watching film of him and by seeing him play in person, but that's only one piece of the puzzle.

"Watch a player's behavior on the sideline," said Strock. "Watch how he intermingles with his teammates. Is he a team guy or is he more concerned with waving to his girlfriend? You can find out a lot about an athlete by observing him on the sidelines."

In addition to analyzing what he sees on the field, Strock maintains a good relationship with Florida's high school coaches.

"There are some student athletes who are good players – some of them have even called to express interest in our program – and we're not considering them because, after speaking with their coaches, we've decided they aren't the type of individuals we're looking for in our program," said Strock. "We always ask about a player's attitude and character. I can tell you from experience that, when you get that number of people together, you want to make sure, to the best of your ability, that a player's character and attitude is where it's supposed to be. A couple of bad apples can make the whole tree rot."

When the FIU team takes the field in fall 2002, Strock knows they will carry with them the hopes of an entire South Florida community hungry for Golden Panther football.

"For many people, FIU has been a sleeping giant for a long time. Before May 17th, FIU was the largest public school in the United States of America without a football team," said Strock. "Now somebody else has that distinction." 

*The FIU football coaching staff (counterclockwise from bottom left): James Colzie, Bruce Hardy, Don Strock, Joe Barantovich and Curt Wiles.*



# FIU alumna achieves runaway success at 2000 summer Olympic games



Tayna Lawrence

**T**ayna Lawrence ('99, Liberal Studies) became the first-ever FIU alumnus to win a medal in the Olympic games with her performances in the women's 100-meter dash and the women's 4x100-meter relay this fall in Sydney, Australia. Running for Jamaica, her native country, Lawrence won an individual bronze and a team silver.

"I didn't go into the Olympics with specific expectations of winning a certain color medal or even a medal at all," said Lawrence. "My goal was to give the best performance possible. If I did that, I knew I would be happy regardless of how I placed.

"The only time I started thinking about medals was when I made the two finals, but even then I never thought about particular color medals," said Lawrence.

Lawrence is to be forgiven if thoughts of a medal were not foremost in her mind. Last year, she didn't know if she would ever be able to compete again. Sidelined by a debilitating stress fracture in her back, Lawrence wore a body cast for four months, leaving her ample time to think about her future.

"The injury, in a way, was a blessing in disguise. I was in so much pain I couldn't do anything. There were times I felt like giving up, but I never did," said Lawrence. "Being away from the track for so long made me realize how much I missed it, and I said to myself, 'When I come back from this, I'm going to work harder than ever.'"

She did.

Lawrence, who moved to Fort Worth, Texas, in November of '99 to train with her then-new coach Lloyd Edwards, finished third in the 100-meter dash at Jamaica's Olympic trials in July. But that finish left Lawrence unwittingly embroiled in a controversy over Jamaica's team roster.

Track and field giant and six-time Olympic medalist Merlene Ottey began lobbying for a spot on the Jamaican team for a chance to compete in her sixth Olympics, specifically in the 100-meter dash, after finishing behind Lawrence at the finals. The 40-year-old Ottey, who had seen her suspension for a positive drug test overturned earlier this year, argued that she had not had sufficient time to prepare for the trials and should be given special consideration.

"Before I went to Europe to run on the track circuit, I heard rumors that I'd be the one pushed out," Lawrence said in a September *Miami Herald* interview. "It made me angry at first, then I decided to use it in a positive way. I figured the best thing was to ignore everything and prove to them I deserved the spot."


Prove it she did, recording a series of solid finishes. Lawrence moved up to 12th in the Grand Prix standings, ahead of fellow Jamaicans Ottey (15), Beverly McDonald (19) and Peta-Gaye Dowdie (20).

Ottey eventually took the spot of Dowdie, and Lawrence's spot on the team was secure.

"I wasn't surprised by her success, really, because when she went to Europe prior to the Olympics, she was beating some of the best runners in the world," said FIU's Mike Becker, coach/coordinator of Athletics/Cross Country/Track, and Lawrence's coach while she was at FIU.

Next up: the March 2001 World Indoor Championships in Spain.

If this past summer is any indication, we'll be reading about Lawrence's track successes for a long time to come.

"Since I've started competing again," Lawrence reflected, "everything has come together." 

Dear Alumnus,

*As your alumni association heads into the new millennium and develops a new communications strategy to meet your needs, we hope you find this association update a welcome complement to the quality content in FIU Magazine.*

*In these pages we hope to give you an update on association news and happenings, provide you with information on upcoming events, respond to questions of interest and keep you in the loop with developments as they occur. As with the alumni newsletter, this will help keep you connected to FIU today.*

*As we conclude the year with this new section, be sure to make plans for the new year – join us for Alumni Homecoming 2001 on February 9-11. With activities planned for the entire family, this is surely the time to reconnect with memories of your college days and rediscover the FIU of today.*

*We hope you enjoy this new feature; let us know what you think. Best wishes for a wonderful new year!*

*Carlos A. Becerra  
Interim Director for Alumni Relations*



Carlos Becerra

## FEBRUARY

### HOMECOMING 2001

#### 7 FIU Baseball vs UM

**University Park, Baseball Stadium - 7 PM**

Come kick off Homecoming festivities and enjoy the inaugural game at the newly completed FIU baseball stadium. The Golden Panthers face their cross-town rivals the University of Miami Hurricanes in one of the most exciting games of the year. For tickets, call 305-FIU-GAME.

#### 8 Alumni Kick-off Reception - TBA

Kick back and enjoy a fun happy hour event and meet other alumni at this annual networking reception. There will be a drawing to win exciting door prizes.

#### 9 Homecoming Golf Open

**Shula's Golf Club, Miami Lakes - 7 AM**

Tee off with tourney host Florida Marlins' Mike Lowell, and enjoy a morning of golf, networking, and competition! Four person scramble. \$150 pp; \$600 foursome. For registration and sponsorship information, call 305-FIU-ALUM.

#### 10 Homecoming Day

**Golden Panther Arena, University Park**

The University Park campus opens its doors to all alumni and friends to celebrate Homecoming 2001.

##### 4 PM - Homecoming Parade

Come early to save a seat for this exciting caravan of student floats and marching bands.

##### 5 PM - Touchdown Club BBQ

Enjoy a pre-game meal and get a taste of FIU Football at the Alumni Association Tailgate BBQ. \$6 in advance, \$8 day of event.

##### 7:30 PM - FIU vs. New Orleans

The Golden Panther Arena will be packed to the rafters as the men's basketball team faces their opponent in the peak of the Homecoming festivities.

#### 11 Florida Extravaganza

**Biscayne Bay Campus, Kovens Center - 4 PM**

Now in its fifth year, this wine and food festival will tantalize your taste buds and benefit the School of Hospitality Management. Call 305-FIU-WINE for tickets.

## MARCH

#### 1 Alumni Night at the FIU Miami Film Festival

**Gusman Center for the Performing Arts, Downtown Miami - 6 PM**

Join other association members in a night of film and fun. Reception to be held prior to the screening and post-party at the Bailey's Festival Club. Call 305-FIU-ALUM.

To RSVP or for more information on all Alumni Association activities, call **305-FIU-ALUM**.

# ALUMNI RELATIONS



Carmen Argamasilla '87



Manny Garcia '90



Eric Pfeffer '77



Iván J. Parrón '94



Gabriel A. Rincón-Mora '92

## TORCH AWARDS HONOR ALUMNI AND FACULTY EXCELLENCE



The FIU Alumni Association recognized distinguished alumni and faculty at the Torch Awards 2000 dinner and ceremony on November 29 at FIU-University Park.

"The Torch Awards are named after the Torch of Knowledge, which serves as a centerpiece of University Park," said Carlos Becerra, interim director of the FIU Office of Alumni Relations. "We are pleased to bestow these awards on members of the FIU family who have made selfless contributions to the University and the community."

The Outstanding Achievement Awards were awarded to **Carmen Argamasilla '87**, **Manny García '90** and **Eric Pfeffer '77**.

Garcia is an investigative reporter for *The Miami Herald*, and his work helped lead a *Herald* team to a 1999 Pulitzer Prize on voter fraud in Miami elections. Argamasilla, vice president of corporate communications at HBO Latin America Group, is a role model for Hispanic-American women who seek to succeed in today's multicultural business environment. Pfeffer, chairman and CEO of Cendant Corporation's Hotel Division, is recognized as one of the world's leading hotel

executives.

The Charles E. Perry Visionary Award, named after FIU's founding president, were presented to **Iván J. Parrón '94**, **Gabriel A. Rincón-Mora '92** and **Rachelle H. Weiss '93**.

Parrón, president/CEO and founder of Ritmoteca.com, revolutionized the online music industry with a legal alternative to Napster focused on Latin music. Working hand-in-hand with record labels, Ritmoteca.com has amassed exclusive rights to more than 250,000 songs by some of the most popular Latin artists, including Marc Anthony, Celia Cruz and the late Tito Puente. Rincón-Mora is senior integrated circuit designer for Texas Instruments and an adjunct professor at Georgia Institute of Technology. At the age of 28, he holds several patents and has authored a widely used textbook. Weiss is founder and president of Physicians Diagnostic Systems. She has made critical health care services available to Florida's rural and low-income residents, while building her business to more than \$3 million in annual revenues within three years of its inception.

The Community Leadership Awards were presented to **Jayne Harris Abess '77**, **Marleine Bastien '86**, and **Allen Susser '78**.

Abess' commitment to the well being of her community has been evidenced by hands-on work, particularly for organizations that seek to improve the health, education and welfare of families in South Florida. She is director of Community Relations for City National Bank, chair of Goodwill Industries of South Florida and past president of the Junior League of Miami. Bastien is a political activist and social worker and the founder and president of *Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miyami* (Haitian Women of Miami). Described as a "voice for the voiceless," she has fought to empower Haitian women. Susser is chef and owner of Chef Allen's Restaurant and has distinguished himself for his extraordinary efforts on behalf of such causes as homelessness, hunger relief and prenatal care.

The FIU Service Awards were presented to **Carlos B. Castillo '88**, **Gerald Grant Jr., MBA '78**, and **Mary Lou Pfeiffer '86**.



Gerald C. Grant '78



Mary Lou Pfeiffer '86



William J. Keppler



Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver



Butler W. Waugh



Rachelle H. Weiss '93



Jayne Harris Abess '77



Marleine M. Bastien '86



Allen B. Susser '78



Carlos B. Castillo '88

Castillo, an attorney with White & Case, LLP, worked tirelessly to promote the establishment of the FIU College of Law, which was approved earlier this year by state officials. Grant, a regional vice president of AXA Advisors, is a past president of the FIU Alumni Association and a current member of its board of directors. He initiated FIU's inaugural entry into Miami-Dade County's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade. Pfeiffer is a member of the College of Arts & Sciences Dean's Board of Advisors, where she has shown her commitment to improving the academic unit from which she earned her bachelor's degree. In 1999, she made a groundbreaking gift to the university – the largest received to date from an FIU graduate – that has allowed the college's Department of Religious Studies to establish an endowment in support of a new program in Native American religions.

Outstanding Faculty Awards were given to **William Keppler**, Public Health, **Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver**, Journalism & Mass Communication, and **Butler Waugh**, English.

Keppler, a professor in the Department of Public Health, exhibits great interest in and concern for all his students, and for the last seven years has led students in feeding the homeless in downtown Miami. Kopenhaver, a professor and associate dean in the School of Journalism & Mass Communication, has won numerous professional and service awards and recently served as the national president for the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Waugh, a professor in the Department of English, was tapped by FIU founding president Charles E. Perry to help build the university. FIU's first employee, Waugh served for five years as the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences before returning to the classroom and now looks forward to assisting FIU in the organization of its new Phi Beta Kappa chapter.

## CAN THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HELP ME LOCATE FELLOW GRADUATES?


Yes. The Office of Alumni Relations, which provides staffing support for the FIU Alumni Association, will gladly assist you in the search for former classmates.

If you are looking for a single, specific individual, you can make an inquiry simply by sending an e-mail message with your name and contact information to [alumni@fiu.edu](mailto:alumni@fiu.edu) or by calling 1-800-FIU-ALUM (305-348-2568). Keeping in mind that nearly 90,000 students have graduated from FIU and that many share the same or similar names, please furnish as much information as possible about the person you seek. At a minimum, supply the individual's full first and last names and, if known, the middle name or middle initial that he or she used *at the time of graduation*. Additionally, the year in which the person graduated from FIU and the college or school from which he or she received a degree would be helpful.

Alumni Relations has a strict policy of not providing personal information about FIU alumni to anyone. Rather, the office will forward *your* name and contact information to the individual you wish to find. It is then up to him or her to get in touch with you.

If you are looking for several or more fellow graduates, you should consider purchasing the FIU Alumni Directory, which was last published in 1997. The directory contains biographical and contact information organized in a variety of ways (alphabetically, by college/school, by geographic location, etc.) to maximize its usefulness. It is available in either hardcover or CD-ROM for \$25 to members of the Alumni Association and for \$35 to non-members. Call 1-800-FIU-ALUM (or 305-FIU-ALUM) to purchase a copy.

If you would like to inform other alumni about your personal and professional achievements in hopes of hearing from those with whom you attended FIU, pass along your good news to Alumni Relations by e-mail ([alumni@fiu.edu](mailto:alumni@fiu.edu)), by phone (305-348-3334), by fax (305-348-3636) or by mail at University Park, PC 234, Miami, FL 33199. This information will be published in the Class Notes section of the *Alumni News*, the Alumni Association's newsletter. Photographs are welcome. (Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for easy return.)

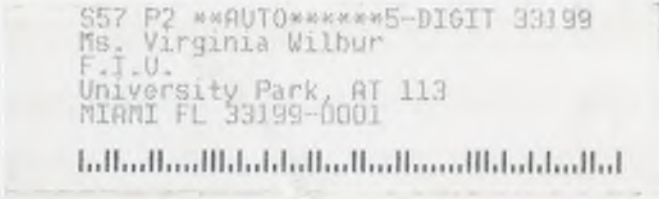
Finally, for anyone who graduated in 1975 or 1976, Alumni Relations has devised a special way to help you track down former schoolmates. At the combined '75/'76 class reunion reception planned for the week of Alumni Homecoming 2001 in early February, a "friend finder" system will be in place to make the task a snap. To learn more about the event, call 1-800-FIU-ALUM (or 305-FIU-ALUM). 



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*Celebrating Excellence, Creating Opportunity: A History of Florida International University* chronicles FIU's development from an abandoned airport to one of America's most dynamic young public universities. It tells the story of the University's earliest beginnings through its formal establishment, opening in 1972, and the rapid growth and development of its first 25 years. It also relates the lives and visions of the people who made the University a reality and built it into what it is today. *Celebrating Excellence, Creating Opportunity* captures the spirit of Florida International University as it enters its second quarter-century.

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