Florida Atlantic University (FAU) reading faculty and administrators in the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC) collaborated during the Reading and Writing Workshop at the Bridge Hotel in Boca Raton, Florida, on Dec. 8, 2012.

For several years, SDPBC has taught reading and writing at many of their schools using a workshop model developed by the Teacher’s College Reading and Writing Project (TCEWP) at Columbia University. Use of this method of instruction has had a positive impact on student achievement, according to Dr. Barbara Ridener, Chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning.

The Reading and Writing Workshop was made possible by a grant funded by the Mary and Robert Pew Public Education Fund. The purpose of the grant was to support select FAU faculty to attend TCRWP workshops at Columbia University, as well as support training such as this workshop.

The Florida workshop provided all FAU reading instructors the opportunity to learn what was gleaned at the TCRWP workshops at Columbia University. “With Palm Beach County Schools being such an important employer of FAU graduates, we wanted to make sure that our students are trained with the best and most current strategies employed by the district,” Dr. Ridener explained.

Dr. Valerie J. Bristor, Dean of the College of Education, and Dr. Ridener are Principal Investigators of the grant. In attendance at the workshop were: Dr. Bristor; Dr. Ridener; Anita Abraham, Adjunct Instructor; Dr. Jennifer Bird, Core Teaching Instructor; Dr. Catherine Bishop-Temple, Adjunct Instructor; Leslie Calhoun, Core Teaching Instructor; Sharon Crawley, Professor; Kelly Kayle,
Adjunct Instructor; Melissa Lucrezia, Adjunct Instructor; Dr. Philomena Marinaccio, Associate Professor; Marcia Richards, Adjunct Instructor; Kimberly (Stansell) Towe, Adjunct Instructor, and Dr. Janet Towell, Professor, from FAU.

Also in attendance were Louise Grant, Executive Director of the Mary and Robert Pew Public Education Fund, as well as MaryAnn Colbert, Manager, Reading/Writing Workshop, K-12 Curriculum; Keith Oswald, Assistant Superintendent, Safety, Culture and Learning Environment; Nikki Jones, K-5 Writing Program Planner, K-12 Curriculum; Deborah Battles, Director, Department of Federal and State Programs; Natasha Araos, Curriculum Instructional Specialist, K-12 Curriculum; Lisa Fitzpatrick, Curriculum Instructional Specialist, K-12 Curriculum, and Robin White, Instructional Reading Specialist, K-12 Curriculum, from SDPBC.

During the Reading and Writing Workshop held in Boca Raton, Florida, on Dec. 8, 2012, participants (from left) Kelly Kayle, Adjunct Instructor, Melissa Lucrezia, Adjunct Instructor, and Dr. Jennifer Bird, Core Teaching Instructor, listen to presenters (center photo) Dr. Philomena Marinaccio, Associate Professor, and (right photo) Leslie Calhoun, Core Teaching Instructor. All of them are from Florida Atlantic University.