

# FIAT program earns \$20,000 grant

The Florida Institute for the Advancement of Teaching (FIAT), a program of Florida Atlantic University, has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the PNC-Harbor Foundation, which receives its principle funding from the PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. PNC's contribution will go towards expanding the FIAT program in Florida's Treasure Coast region.

Providing practical, research-based and scalable solutions for Florida's educational system, FIAT was established in 2002 within FAU's College of Education and is funded by gifts from corporate and family foundations as well as grants from private donors and targeted school districts. In an effort to address the state's critical teacher shortage, FIAT was created to recruit, prepare and retain quality teachers in Florida schools.

## FAU Update

Comprised of three innovative and over-arching programs, Good FIT, SMaRT and AIT, FIAT is making a significant difference in the quality of education at public and charter schools within the southeast region of the state. The identified high-need schools are typically located in rural or urban areas. By supplying hands-on training to FAU and other state college students who seek careers in teaching, each FIAT program is structured to offer institute participants increasing levels of classroom responsibility. Since FIAT's inception, more than 1,200 students from FAU, as well as from Broward College, Palm Beach State College and Indian River State College, have served as instructional interns, substitute teachers and student-teachers. By molding future teachers

with valuable classroom experience, the FIAT program has improved the lives of close to 80,300 K-12 students in Palm Beach County alone.

"PNC has a long history of strengthening and enriching the lives of neighbors in the community," said Craig Grant, regional president of PNC for Florida. "Our support of FAU's FIAT program will help assist training teachers who understand the needs of area schools and youngsters, and help prepare our local youth for future success."

Slated to begin in the spring, the FIAT program will leverage this donation to place 10 local undergraduate students from FAU's Treasure Coast campus and Indian River State College in two Treasure Coast schools. Another 10 students will be placed in the same two schools in the fall of that same year.

The schools are Lake-

wood Elementary and Marine Ocean Academy, joining Palm Point Research School at Tradition (an FAU-St. Lucie County School District Charter School).

"The FIAT program in the Treasure Coast will help schools more effectively implement their local school improvement plans," said Glenn Thomas, assistant dean, PK-12 schools and educational programs, FAU College of Education. "When considering the economic development of a region, a key component is the quality of that area's available educational resources. The FIAT program will have a unique impact on the area's students and teachers in training, and ultimately support the area's future growth."

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Compiled by FAU