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FAU Announces Researchers and Creative Scholars of the Year

BOCA RATON, FL (April 14, 2009) – Florida Atlantic University’s Division of Research announced the 2009 “Researchers and Creative Scholars of the Year” at the recent Honors Convocation. Each year, FAU’s University Research Committee (URC) selects faculty to be recognized by the university for outstanding research, scholarly and creative contributions. Awards are presented at the academic ranks of professor, associate professor and assistant professor in two categories: sponsored and project-oriented research; and creative and scholarly activities research. This year, the URC selected six nominees to receive these awards.

"Our faculty members are pursuing research and scholarship that benefit the citizens of Florida and beyond, and their cutting-edge research and quest for knowledge are enriching classroom teaching as well as broadening the base of their disciplines," said Dr. Michael Moriarty, interim vice president for research at FAU. "Their many achievements are helping us gain national and international recognition as a research university."

Professor, Sponsored/Project-Oriented Category – Dr. Amy Wright, Research Professor and Director, Center for Marine Biomedical and Biotechnology Research, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute

Dr. Amy Wright’s research focuses on the discovery of novel marine natural products that have utility in the treatment of human diseases or as tools for better understanding the disease process. Over the course of her career, her research group has identified over 100 different marine natural products with biological activity. One compound she identified early in her career has been approved in Europe for the treatment of soft tissue sarcoma, and another compound from the laboratory was evaluated in human clinical trials for utility against a range of solid tumors. An additional compound recently discovered in her laboratory has been shown to block adenosine triphosphate (ATP) production in cancer cells and is currently the subject of a significant research effort at a pharmaceutical company. Wright’s research has been primarily funded through external research grants awarded through state and national agencies. She has served as either a principal investigator or co-principal investigator on 12 projects in the past five years with grants

exceeding \$8.5 million since 2004. Wright has worked with students at all levels and is active at the state and national levels in organizing meetings, workshops and serving on review panels, national research planning activities and as an expert in the field of marine natural products research. She has been selected as the vice chair for the 2010 and chair of the 2012 Gordon Research Conference on Marine Natural Products.

Professor, Creative and Scholarly Category – Dr. Oliver S. Buckton, English Department, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters

During the past five years, Dr. Oliver Buckton's research has encompassed three main projects, the first of which is the completion of a book titled *Cruising with Robert Louis Stevenson: Travel, Narrative, and the Colonial Body*, which was published in 2007 by the Ohio University Press. The book has been favorably reviewed in leading journals such as *Victorian Studies* and *Journal of British Studies*. The second part of his research agenda has focused on the life and work of Oscar Wilde, in particular, the representation of his life and works in popular culture. Buckton's research on this topic has born fruit in his substantial chapter, "Oscar Goes to Hollywood: Wilde, Sexuality, and the Gaze of Contemporary Cinema," which recently appeared as part of the collection *Oscar Wilde and Modern Culture: The Making of a Legend*, published in 2009 by the Ohio University Press. The third part of Buckton's research at FAU is a more recent project on the constructions of masculinity identity in the Victorian period and the early 20th century. This new book project, which includes chapters on Stevenson as well as Joseph Conrad and Rudyard Kipling, is slated for completion by December 2010, and has already yielded several conference papers including one that is to be published in the leading scholarly journal *Studies in the Literary Imagination*.

Associate Professor, Sponsored/Project-Oriented Category – Dr. Dale E. Gawlik, Biological Science Department, Charles E. Schmidt College of Science

Since 2004, Dr. Dale Gawlik has received more than \$3.5 million in awards for research projects funded by six different extramural sources. In 2006, he was presented with an FAU Research Incentive Award, and in 2008, he received a service recognition award from the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, a federal team overseeing the Everglades restoration. Gawlik's broad research interests are in avian ecology, wetland ecosystems and restoration ecology. Since 2003, he and his students have published their research results in 20 papers. Gawlik's graduate students have cumulatively received more than 26 awards, scholarships and fellowships totaling over \$32,000. He has served on 16 graduate thesis committees, seven graduate non-thesis committees and has supervised 14 undergraduate directed independent studies. In addition to his research, teaching and scholarly activities, Gawlik has held various elected positions on the executive board of the state chapter of the Wildlife Society including his current

position as vice president. He also serves on a broad range of professional committees, and reviews and edits papers for various scientific journals.

Associate Professor, Creative and Scholarly Category – Dr. Noemi Marin, School of Communication and Multimedia Studies, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters

Dr. Noemi Marin, director of peace studies, is the author of *After the Fall: Rhetoric in the Aftermath of Dissent in Post-communist Times* (2007). She is the editor of the *Journal of Literacy and Technology* (www.literacyandtechnology.org). A native of Romania, Marin is a Fulbright Instructor on Intercultural Communication in Southeastern Europe. Recent publications include critical essays in books such as *Negotiating Democracy; Advances in the History of Rhetoric; Realms of Exile; Intercultural Communication and Creative Practice*, along with articles in academic journals such as *East European Politics and Societies, Forum Artis Rhetoricae, Migration, and Global Media Journal*. Marin's scholarship examines the relationship that discourse and culture create, focusing mostly on rhetorical studies in Eastern Europe, on the role of intercultural communication within democratic discourse, and on the challenging interactions of technology advances and their impact on the international public sphere. Currently, Marin is working on a book on presidential rhetoric in societies in transition and on an edited volume dedicated to the 20-year anniversary of the fall of communism. In addition to research and instruction, Marin directs graduate students both at MA and PhD levels. At present, Marin is working to develop the peace studies concentration track in the FAU PhD in comparative studies.

Assistant Professor, Sponsored/Project-Oriented Category – Dr. Ceylan Isgor, Basic Science Department, Charles E. Schmidt College of Biomedical Science

Dr. Ceylan Isgor joined the college in 2004 as a tenure-track assistant professor immediately following her postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan. Shortly after coming to FAU, she developed a research program studying individual differences in stress responsiveness in a rodent model of human sensation-seeking called the "novelty seeking phenotype." Using this unique model, Isgor aims to capture normally occurring individual differences in emotional reactivity including psychostimulant addiction. She has collected behavioral and molecular data to show that the novelty-seeking phenotype can indeed predict nicotine craving and can identify neurobiological differences between individuals who have high versus low vulnerability to develop addiction. Isgor is the recipient of a New Investigator grant from the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) as the principal investigator to study potential drug targets to neutralize the neurobiological differences that are antecedents to nicotine relapse in the vulnerable phenotype. She has expanded her research into a team science project to include two of her colleagues, Dr. Keith Brew and Dr. Vijaya Iragavarapu in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Biomedical Science to

investigate if the novelty-seeking phenotype can predict distinct responses to nicotine in the immune system. Last year, they received \$820,000 from the FDOH for this project. In addition, last month, Isgor was awarded an R15 grant in the amount of \$213,750 from the National Institutes of Health to investigate individual differences in relapse to nicotine. Isgor currently has three graduate students in her laboratory who are paid through these grants. Together with a colleague, she has also developed a graduate course in molecular neuropsychopharmacology which she has taught for two years. Last year, Isgor received a college-level “Excellence of Graduate Teaching” award for the success of her graduate course.

Assistant Professor, Creative and Scholarly Category – Dr. Jacqueline H. Fewkes, Anthropology Department, Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College

Dr. Jacqueline Fewkes’ main research emphasis over the past five years has been focused on the development of her first major new book, *Trade and Contemporary Society along the Silk Road: An Ethno-history of Ladakh*, recently released by Routledge Press. Fewkes has spent more than 10 years researching trade routes and their influence on modern cultures. Her new book is an ethno-historical study of the trade system in Ladakh, a region of northern India that was once a busy center of trade on the Silk Route between central and southern Asia. Previously a crucial part of a global trade network, Ladakh later became increasingly isolated as national business boundaries were defined and enforced during the 20th century. Fewkes’ study provides a cultural history of an important area in Asia, exploring the lives of traders and illustrating how social issues in modern communities are inseparable from events of the past. Her social research combines anthropological, historical and archaeological methods of investigation, using data from primary documents, surviving material culture, ethnographic interviews and participation-observation fieldwork. Over the past two years, Fewkes’ has also been developing a new research project on the little known existence of women’s mosques in the Maldives. She has been awarded both internal and external grant support for this project. Among the many awards she has received are a highly competitive Social Science Research Council grant for participation in an international conference on inter-Asian connections and a Library of Congress award for research in Asian studies.

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Florida Atlantic University opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University serves more than 26,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses strategically located along 150 miles of Florida's southeastern coastline. Building on its rich tradition as a teaching university, with a world-class faculty, FAU hosts ten colleges: College of Architecture, Urban & Public Affairs, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Biomedical Science, the Barry Kaye College of Business, the College of Education, the College of Engineering & Computer Science, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Graduate College, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science.