Max Planck Society to Establish an Institute at FAU Jupiter

In November 2007, the Max Planck Society gave its approval for the establishment of the Society’s first overseas institute in the United States. The Max Planck Florida Institute will be located near Scripps Florida’s permanent facilities on the Jupiter campus of Florida Atlantic University.

In September, Palm Beach County’s Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved $87 million in funding for the next ten years. On December 18, Gov. Charlie Crist put his stamp of approval on the state’s half of the $190 million incentive package.

“The Florida’s leadership in life-science research continues to grow,” Crist told reporters.

With the establishment of its “Florida Innovation Incentive Fund” the State of Florida has launched a wide-ranging program designed to attract biotech companies and research institutions to Florida and develop the state into one of the world’s leading centers of biotechnology. It was Florida’s commitment that three years ago persuaded the Scripps Institute, which has an international reputation in the field of biomedicine, to locate on the Jupiter campus of FAU. It was the prospect of cooperating closely with Scripps that stimulated the Max Planck Society’s interest in Palm Beach County. FAU is one of the fastest-growing research universities in the United States and will play an important part in training junior scientists. The University is also providing the land to build the new institute.

Once the contract negotiations with Florida are completed, the institute is expected to start work before the end of 2008. In its first stage of development the institute is expected to have three departments staffed by approximately 150 researchers from around the world. The Max Planck Florida Institute will also offer a visiting scientist program and provide lab space for internationally renowned researchers to carry out their work.

“The Max Planck Florida institute will give us a foothold in the world’s most important country for science,” emphasized Max Planck Society President Peter Gruss.

The Munich-based Max Planck Society maintains 80 research institutes and other facilities devoted to basic research in life, natural and social sciences, and the humanities. It was founded in 1948 and named for Max Planck, the father of quantum physics. The Jupiter campus will develop bio-imaging technology that will allow researchers to study the structure, dynamics and function of molecules and tissues.

Robert M. Edsel Speaks to FAU Jupiter’s Lifelong Learning Society

In January, Florida Atlantic University’s Lifelong Learning Society presented a lecture by Robert M. Edsel, author of Rescuing Da Vinci and executive producer of the documentary film, The Rape of Europa.

Edsel’s lecture, “Is Art Worth a Life? Hitler, War and the Monuments Men,” focused on a special multinational group of more than 350 men and women who served in frontline military units during World War II to ensure the preservation, protection and restitution of the world’s great artistic and cultural treasures. This band of unsung heroes, referred to as the “Monuments Men,” worked tirelessly to track down, identify and catalogue millions of priceless works of art and irreplaceable cultural artifacts that had been stolen by Hitler and the Nazis, including masterpieces by da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rembrandt and Vermeer.

Edsel, a successful business entrepreneur in the oil and gas industry turned modern-day “Indiana Jones,” sold his company and moved to Europe with his family in 1996. While in Florence, he developed a passion for art and architecture, and a curiosity as to how monuments and great works of art survived the devastation of World War II. Edsel has dedicated the past six years to painstaking and far-reaching research to unravel the secrets of the Monuments Men. He is working to make the world aware of their unprecedented contributions, both during and after WWII, and to ensure that these unsung heroes receive appropriate recognition from both the United States government and the public.

In addition to his book, Rescuing Da Vinci, Edsel has worked with members of Congress to pass a resolution honoring the “Monuments Men” and is the co-producer of the documentary film, The Rape of Europa, which was recently released in local theaters.

For more information on the Lifelong Learning Society, call 561-799-8867 or 561-799-6547.

FACULTY FOCUS: Rachel Corr

Dr. Rachel Corr near a volcano in Ecuador.

"This is an unexplored area in which very few researchers have worked," Dr. Corr stated. "I hope to contribute to our understanding of the role of indigenous elites during the colonial period, since these native lords mediated between Spanish colonial authorities and indigenous tribute-paying subjects."

Another important aspect of her research focuses on the emergence of modern ethnic groups through colonial processes of migration and intermarriage, in labor and tribute demands forced people to leave their homelands for other regions. This line of research shows how modern ethnic identities were shaped in part by the changing structure of colonial society.

Dr. Corr’s travels were made possible through a Faculty Development Award and a donation from the Honors College Advisory Board’s past chairman Richard Gordon.

Dr. Corr said, “I want to express my thanks for the generous support of my research trip to Ecuador. During this trip I was able to update information for my book manuscript (based on previous research) and start a new research project. I am grateful for the support of the donor.”
I am constantly amazed by the vitality of the intellectual and artistic life on the Jupiter campus. Part of this comes from the diversity of our student population. The opportunities for interaction and exchange among our youngest residential students in the Wilkes Honors College, our 10-something commuter students and the mature students in our Lifelong Learning Society add a dimension to this campus that one doesn’t see elsewhere.

Part of this comes from the diversity of academic programs offered on this campus — business, criminal justice, education, environmental studies, journalism, life sciences and the humanities among others. Faculty members from widely divergent disciplines rub shoulders regularly on this tiny campus resulting in serendipitous collaborations. An excellent example is an essay written by one of our English professors on his experience attending a sea turtle watch camp resulting in the writing of an essay. Faculty members from widely divergent disciplines rub shoulders regularly on this tiny campus.

Our cultural offerings also reflect the wide variety of programs we host:

- The quality and diversity of the MacART show in the SR atrium is emblematic of the arts and humanities on this campus. Students, faculty and visitors marvel at the works of art of our own campus faculty.
- In addition to their outstanding art exhibitions, the MacArthur Campus Library has begun a series of “LIVE at the Library” musical offerings.
- This spring the entire campus shared an exciting treat as the result of a gift from LLS students Donald and Judy Smith, who funded a visiting scholar. Dr. Sheldon Hackney, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities and a distinguished historian of the American South, spent three days on campus in February visiting classes, meeting informally with students and faculty and delivering two public presentations on America of the 19th/20th centuries.
- The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters shared the talents of its students and faculty in the School of the Arts. We enjoyed a splendid “Musical Showcase” in March.
- Rounding out our cultural offerings were wonderful public lectures sponsored by the Center for Environmental Solutions, the Scripps Howard Institute on the Environment and the Honors College Speakers Forum.

It’s no wonder our tagline is, “FAU at Jupiter is out of this world!”

Dr. Sheldon Hackney, 1st Donald and Judith Smith Visiting Scholar, Lectures to Lifelong Learning Society and MacArthur Campus Students

On March 13 Dr. Sheldon Hackney, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, presented a lecture, “1968: Turning Point or Detour?,” to the Lifelong Learning Society at Jupiter. Through the generosity of two Lifelong Learning Society members, the Donald and Judith Smith Visiting Scholar program was established. This year, a committee comprised of faculty from the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters and the Wilkes Honors College selected Hackney to be the first speaker for the program.

In addition to his presentation to LLS, Hackney also presented a lecture on “American Exceptionalism” to Dr. Doug McGeechin’s European history class, meeting informally with students and faculty and delivering two public presentations on America of the 19th/20th centuries.

MacART 2008 Featured at FAU Jupiter

MacART, which runs through May 2, features artwork created by students, faculty, staff and Lifelong Learners at FAU Jupiter. This is the third year for the campus exhibit, and more than thirty individual artworks from 27 different artists are shown. Media includes photography, collage, pen & ink, acrylic and oil painting.

London Study Abroad Opportunity for Graduate Students

The College of Education Department of Curriculum, Culture & Educational Inquiry is offering a graduate course in Summer B that includes a two-week component living and studying in London, England, July 6-22. The course, EDUC 6635 Global Perspective of Curricular Trends Across Nations, is under the leadership of Dr. Roberta Weber and is open to all majors from any college. Total estimated cost for the trip is $2,495 (including airfare) in addition to tuition. For detailed information, please contact Dr. Weber at rweber@fau.edu

FAU Jupiter Hosts Health & Wellness Fair

For more information, please contact the campus Counseling Center.

More than two dozen nonprofit organizations and businesses presented displays and educational materials promoting a healthy lifestyle. Services included blood pressure and blood sugar checks, HIV screening and consultation with a nutritionist. Participants received tobacco prevention information, and learned how to camp and backpack. The Bloodmobile was available for blood donations.

“We were pleased to provide information on healthy lifestyle behaviors to our students and the community,” said Dr. Phil Cromer, director of the Jupiter campus Counseling Center.
FAU Jupiter hosted Campus Camp Wellstone in January prior to the national debates held on the Boca Raton campus.

“Campus Camp Wellstone provides a proactive way for members of our student community to have their voices heard at this important time,” said Heather Bishara, assistant director of student life and recreation.

The training program, geared toward seasoned activists and those new to progressive activism, focused on concrete skills such as campaign planning, coalition building and message development through training sessions conducted by Camp Wellstone professionals. Participants learned how to successfully recruit and retain volunteers, as well as develop new leadership.


Camp Wellstone is part of Wellstone Action, a national center for training and leadership development for the progressive movement. Founded in January 2003, Wellstone Action’s mission is to honor the legacy of former U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone and his wife, Sheila, by continuing their work through training, educating, mobilizing and organizing a vast network of progressive individuals and organizations. The Wellstones died in a plane crash in 2002.

Campus Camp Wellstone was co-sponsored by the Feminist Student Union, Enviro-Club, Council of Student Organizations, College Democrats, Student Life & Recreation and the FAU Leadership Committee.

Camp Wellstone participants with program moderator Brian Lenzoki and Heather Bishara, director of student life and recreation.

Beacon Cove Students Learn about the Environment Through New Publix Greenwise Market Tours

By Alana Edwards, Education & Training Coordinator – FAU Center for Environmental Studies

In September 2007 the long-awaited Publix GreenWise Market opened in Palm Beach Gardens. Publix GreenWise Market sells health natural and organic products as well as conventional items, making this market perfect for one-stop shopping.

“Green” does not just refer to some of the products that they sell, but also to the way in which they run their store, and even how it was built. Skylights, automatic lighting, earth-friendly refrigerators, dual-flush toilets, recycling and composting are just some of the ways that this store is demonstrating how businesses can be sustainable.

In order to get this message to the public, Publix GreenWise Market plans to offer field trips for upper elementary school students. Early last year, Publix GreenWise Market partnered with Florida Atlantic University’s Center for Environmental Studies to develop pre-visit classroom lessons for elementary students. These lessons focus on pollution prevention, recycling, energy and water conservation and composting.

In November, Ms. Smith’s and Ms. Wittbold’s 3rd grade classes from Beacon Cove Elementary School piloted the lessons. “The lessons were terrific,” said Ms. Wittbold. “They were hands-on and correlated with what we learned in science about our earth’s natural resources.”

One of the students’ and teachers’ favorite lessons was called “Every Last Penny.” This lesson focuses on the difference between renewable and nonrenewable resources, with emphasis on resource availability and depletion. The activity simulates the ever-increasing difficulty of finding nonrenewable energy resources.

When the lessons had been completed and the students’ environmental awareness had been peaked, they were given a tour of the new store to see how the store is using the sustainable practices they had learned about in the classroom.

“The students had so much fun on the tour of Publix GreenWise Market! It was great for them to see how a major local business is working to protect the earth and our natural resources,” said Ms. Wittbold.

Publix GreenWise Market will continue to offer these tours for elementary students in the spring. If you would like to learn more information about these classroom lessons and tours, contact a GreenWise event planner at 561-514-5175.

FAU Jupiter Participates in “Go Red for Women” Campaign

On February 1, members of the faculty and staff at the MacArthur campus were told to bring attention to heart health for women. Participants contributed $5 or more to the American Heart Association and received “red dress” pins and stickers to remind others to “Learn and Live.” Tribute cards listing the names of those honored or remembered by the donations were posted in The Burrow, the campus student union.

“Heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States. We want to bring attention to this important issue, so that we can help women safeguard their heart health,” said Dr. Kristen Martaugh, campus vice president.

Mrs. Wittbold’s class from Beacon Cove Elementary with the Publix GreenWise giftbags they received after their tour and pizza lunch.

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Dr. Jon Moore Receives TIAA-CREF Faculty Service Award

At the 2008 Employee Service Awards ceremony on March 25, Dr. Jon Moore, associate professor of biology in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, received the TIAA-CREF Faculty Service Award.

President Frank T. Brogan congratulated Dr. Moore on his contributions to environmental education, the preservation of our environment and the protection of wildlife, particularly endangered species. For the past two years, Dr. Moore has been deeply involved in the rescue and relocation of gopher tortoises from land that is about to be developed.

“This is literally a life-saving enterprise, because historically developers in Florida have been permitted to bury the animals alive during the construction process,” said Brogan. “Thanks to the determined efforts of Dr. Moore and his allies, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission recently ordered a moratorium on this grisly practice and approved a far-reaching management plan to ensure the survival of this threatened species.”

The TIAA-CREF Faculty Service Awards were introduced three years ago to recognize outstanding achievement on the part of FAU’s faculty members, for their work at the University, in our local communities, and all over Florida, the U.S. and the entire world. The program carries a cash award of $1,200.

Congratulations, Dr. Moore!

Dr. Jon Moore with President Brogan.

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Where do you take FAU?

Florida Atlantic University

MacAWARDS – April 14, 5:30 p.m., AD Auditorium
Alumni & Friends Breakfast – April 15, 8:30 a.m., The Burrow
Arbor Day Celebration – April 25, 10 a.m., Huchkorn Arboretum
Wilkes Honors College Medallion Ceremony – May 2, 9 a.m., LLS Auditorium
Scrpps Howard Institute on the Environment – May 12-17
FAU Board of Trustees Meeting – May 28, 10 a.m. EC 101/102
Honors Summer Institute July 6 – 26

For information on other FAU events, go to www.fau.edu