Photo Caption: L-R: FAU Students Betty Jones, R.N., B.S.N., Olga Medina, R.N., B.S.N. and Tracy Britcher, R.N. with HANDS Medical Director James Roberts, M.D.

**FAU Family Practitioner Students Gain Clinical Experience at HANDS of St. Lucie County**

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL (April 19, 2011) - Three Florida Atlantic University students enrolled in the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing’s family nurse practitioner (FNP) program at the Treasure Coast campus are currently obtaining clinical experience at the HANDS Clinic in Fort Pierce. A 501(c)(3) charity opened by the St. Lucie County Health Access Network, Inc. in October 2010, HANDS is a family medical and dental clinic that provides access to healthcare for the indigent, uninsured and working poor in St. Lucie County. FAU students Olga Medina, R.N., B.S.N., Betty Jones, R.N., B.S.N. and Tracy Britcher, R.N. are all working alongside HANDS Medical Director James Roberts, M.D., to assist with patient care.

“We see some people in their 40s who have never seen a doctor, and they really need the care,” said Medina, who has worked in the nursing profession for three years. “I once saw an 18-year-old diabetic with a blood sugar of 400. He could not afford insulin or an adequate number of test strips — it was so great to be able to help him.”

Clinical experiences are an essential component of FAU’s graduate education in advance practice nursing, as 660 hours of clinical experience are required for graduation. FAU works
with local healthcare providers across the Treasure Coast region to cultivate a broad variety of clinical experiences for the FNP students.

“I like teaching, and I am happy to have them here,” said Roberts. “The students provide assistance to the program while learning at the same time.”

FAU is a partner in the St. Lucie County Health Access Network, a consortium of area healthcare providers, educational institutions, medical societies and charitable organizations. The College of Nursing recently completed an agreement with HANDS to continue providing clinical experiences for FNP students.

“The Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing at FAU is grounded in the philosophy of caring,” said Josie Weiss, Ph.D., P.N.P.-B.C., F.N.P.-B.C., F.A.A.N.P., associate professor and Treasure Coast FNP program coordinator. “HANDS allows our students to work with underserved patients who have limited resources and are in need of the quality care they can receive at HANDS.”

“HANDS is a very nice environment for learning,” said Jones, who has worked in the nursing profession for six years. “The patients are from many backgrounds, and we get great experience working with a variety of chronic illnesses.”

For more information on FAU’s College of Nursing, visit www.fau.edu/nursing.