

**FAU**  
**CENTER FOR AUTISM AND  
RELATED DISABILITIES**  
Florida Atlantic University

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## Director's Update

Dear CARD Families,

I want to thank you for your kindness in welcoming me as the new Director of the Florida Atlantic University CARD Center. I am proud to be a part of such a well-respected, proactive and dedicated group of professionals providing support to the autism community. As a former school district Director of Exceptional Student Education, I was a direct recipient of the many excellent trainings and consultations provided to my teaching and support staff by FAU CARD.

I have joined the FAU CARD team at a very critical time of budget cuts which has led to a forced reduction of services and prioritization of supports. FAU CARD is working diligently to stay true to its mission of providing quality services and supports to you and your family. In this endeavor, we are working on providing more efficient and effective services through continued partnership and collaboration with school districts, charter schools, private schools, as well as with community, government agencies and faith-based organizations. We are also expanding our training opportunities and have begun to conduct live online trainings.

In addition, we are working diligently with our Constituency Board, consisting of committed community partners and loyal parents, who are assisting us with our increased fundraising efforts. Our 5K race in October, aligned with FAU Homecoming Week, was a huge success! This event bypassed fundraising efforts from the prior year with our 5K Race holding the distinction of the largest race in Boca Raton in 20 years. We

want to thank all of our volunteers, vendors and participants for all your overwhelming support.

Currently, we are working with our dedicated Wings of Hope Committee with the planning of our annual charity cocktail party fundraiser. This event is anticipated to be another wonderful source of revenue to augment our decreased state funding. We are so very grateful for the generosity of several important donors as well as the dedication of our hardworking Constituency Board and our committed partners for their perseverance in seeking additional sources of revenue.

FAU CARD has not waived in its commitment to provide a full array of programs and supports to our families. Please take a moment to review our spring training offerings, the state CARD Conference scheduled for January 13-15, CPR Certification Training for parents and caretakers in February 2012, and our Wings of Hope fundraiser set for March 10, 2012. In addition, don't forget to mark your calendar for our annual Family Conference to be held on Saturday, April 21, 2012.

We are overwhelmed by your support and kindness and remain steadfast in the provision of a variety of quality, free services to individuals with autism and their families.

Sincerely,

Maryellen Quinn-Lunny, Ed.S.  
Director



**Save the Date!**



**Our 3rd Annual Cocktail Reception Benefitting  
FAU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities**

**Saturday, March 10, 2012**

**7:00 p.m.**

**At FAU Football Stadium's Premier Club**

  
**CENTER FOR AUTISM AND  
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## Executive Director's Update

Dear CARD Families,

The holidays are a great time of year to be with family to have fun and share experiences. But it can also be a time in which some risks to children with ASD are increased. Parents face many challenges with their children- those with or without ASD- but safety is right at the top of the list.

Travel can be a challenge. Be sure your child is buckled up or secured in the appropriate child safety seat. We know that many children on the autism spectrum fuss or even tantrum in efforts to avoid being buckled up. Parents have to be persistent to make sure their child travels safely. Bringing items likely to be of interest to your child such as books, toys and electronic devices can help make the trip more pleasant for them and reduce stress all around. If you are simply not able to get your child to cooperate with buckling up or being secured in their child safety seat, make contact with our CARD staff so we can provide assistance and guidance.

Home fires are more common during the winter. This is a good time to check your fire alarms and replace batteries. Schools conduct routine fire drills and this has shown to be essential in assuring that children in the U.S. stay safe in the occurrence of real school fires. Home fire drills make sense. Children with autism and other disabilities often hide in their room under beds or in closets when an actual fire occurs. We all know the value of practice in helping a child with ASD understand how to act in a future situations. It is a great idea to help them practice

what to do in the event of a fire alarm. The holidays offer a great time to have a practice fire drill at your home.

Finally, wandering is a serious worry at any time of the year but with more activity during the holidays, children may be more likely to wander. Wandering is especially dangerous in our FAU CARD region with so many surrounding pools, lakes, ponds, canals and other tempting targets for children with ASD who like water. I am currently involved in conducting research here at FAU and have found that about 80% of children with ASD wander. Update your home security arrangements to keep up with the physical growth of your child. The extra latch on the front door that might have kept a 4-year-old in the house may now not keep your 8-year-old safe. Monitoring is critical. While in the company of others, it can be easy for parents to assume someone else is keeping an eye on their child while in actuality no one may be watching them. Knowing your child's patterns is also important. If things get too busy in the home, the child may become anxious and wander in search of a less busy environment. Taking the child for a walk is a safe alternative.

Have a wonderful time over the holiday season and help keep the focus on safety for all children by providing extra attention to the special safety concerns of children with autism.

Sincerely,

Jack Scott, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



**Announcing special appearance by Dr. Temple Grandin Saturday evening at Conference Banquet\***

**WILL YOU BE THERE? THEY WILL!!**

**AUTISM 2012**

**HAVE YOU MADE YOUR RESERVATION FOR THE CARD CONFERENCE?**

Dr. Tim Knoster

Dr. Amy Wetherby

Dr. June Groden

Dr. Bill Heward

Diane Adreon

Dr. Mae Barker

Loring Spoiter

Dr. Michael Alessandri

Karl Dunn Buron

Dr. Lorraine Jones

Michelle Garcia Winner

Dr. Laura Riffel

Dr. Bill Jensen

Dr. Gregory Valcante

Dr. Michael McManmon

Dr. Galen Chun

Dr. Nicholas Maccarrone

Nada El-Khoury

Kim Coppola

Dr. Nancy Aguinaga

Sponsored by CARD, The Florida Outreach Project and PEPsA, this conference provides comprehensive, evidence-based information to assist families, educators and other professionals in developing effective programming for all individuals with autism spectrum disorders and related disabilities.

When: January 13-15, 2012

Where: Florida Mall Hotel, Orlando

For more information about the conference and registration, please visit [www.ucf-card.org](http://www.ucf-card.org).

We look forward to seeing you there!



## MEDICAL UPDATE

### Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Next Frontiers in Civil Rights

Judith Aronson-Ramos, M.D.

For parents and families who have a loved one with an autism spectrum disorder priorities change all the time. During the early years, the focus is on early intervention. This means obtaining effective therapies, seeking appropriate education, developing communicative language, and promoting appropriate social skills. Families work diligently trying to ensure their children receive the best therapies and are constantly looking for interventions with the most promise and best track records in helping their children with autism.

As children mature, their needs change and educational and school environments often become more complex and difficult to navigate. Social pressures affecting individuals on the spectrum increase with age causing various levels of stress and tension. Inappropriate behaviors and habits can be harder to manage in older individuals when they violate social norms (i.e. personal space, hygiene, etc). Parents find that there are fewer resources shrinking as children move into their teen years and young adult hood. These issues are often considered part of “transitioning to adulthood” and have become a hot topic amongst autism advocates and organizations such as CARD dedicated to improving the welfare of individuals with autism.

What I would like to offer today is a small glimpse at the future. Sometimes parents are so consumed in the moment when children are younger they don't consider the long term perspective. We do invest in prepaid college tuition programs, we fund savings accounts for future needs, we take out insurance policies to protect our families these are all strategies that are important. But what about our kids in the spectrum? Are we adequately addressing the needs they will face as adults? We all know at this point Autism is a spectrum in the broadest sense of the word. With skills ranging from intellectual genius to intellectually deficient, hyper verbal to non-verbal, savant to severely delayed there are times

it is difficult to identify what we need to advocate for with Autism Spectrum Disorders due to the diversity of individuals in the spectrum. However, there are some common themes which apply to all individual with ASD and these include:

- The basic human right to self determination
- Equal opportunity
- Freedom from discrimination based on disability

I do see a future where a civil rights platform for individuals on the spectrum may be on the horizon. As the numbers of children with ASD grow up, society will feel the pressure of the special interests of individuals with ASD mount. Many organizations including CARD, Autism Speaks, the Autism Society of America and others have lobbied on state and national levels for the rights of children with autism for years. Now, we may see a future where individuals with ASD, such as Ari Ne'eman, who advocate for themselves, with the most able members on the spectrum speaking for those lacking in communication skills.

I welcome the day when our political system and society as a whole recognizes that individuals with ASD have unique abilities and contributions to make to the world. I eagerly await the day our first political leaders step forward and share that he or she is on the spectrum and rocks the world with their announcement. We know they are out there; we may even have hunches in the current political system about who is or is not on the spectrum. We may be able to surmise with considerable accuracy who these individuals are and whether or not they are willing to admit to or disclose a diagnosis. I know in my life time I will see the admission, “I am on the Spectrum” announced from the office podium of a member of the House, the Senate, who knows...the oval office one day? This may in fact be the next frontier in Autism advocacy.

***For more information about Ari Ne'eman's self advocacy network, please visit:***

***[www.autisticadvocacy.org](http://www.autisticadvocacy.org)***

## Special Events / Trainings

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### **Understanding Neurodevelopmental Aspects of Autism Spectrum Disorders: Biological Basis and Clinical Implications**

Recently presented findings at the Society for Neuroscience in November 2011 showed a 2/3 increase in the number of brain cells in prefrontal cortex of post-mortem brain tissue in ASD compared to neurotypicals. This construct supports an evolving clinical focus on ASD's relative strengths mediated by earlier maturing components of neural circuitry and provides further evidence supporting ASD as a disorder of accelerated/overexpansive brain development.

This talk assumes no prior knowledge of neuroscience.

*Join us for this special training presented by Dr. Christopher Kye, Pediatric and Adolescent Psychiatrist, to be held on our Boca Raton campus on January 27, 2012 from 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM. This training will also be available live online. To register, please call **561-297-2055** or email [CARD@FAU.EDU](mailto:CARD@FAU.EDU).*

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### **CPR Training**

CARD is offering parents a CPR/AED course, to be provided by the American Heart Association, in several locations within our region. Those who can demonstrate that they have mastered the skills upon completion of the course will become CPR/AED certified.

The training will take approximately 4 hours and will be conducted by a professional who is an expert in children with special needs. The training will emphasize application to these children/persons. A minimal fee of \$20.00 will be charged. FAU CARD will offset the balance of the cost.

Date:

Time:

February 11, 2012- Boca Regional Hospital

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

February 11, 2012- FAU Treasure Coast campus, Port St. Lucie

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

February 18, 2012- FAU campus, Jupiter

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

*To register, please call **561-297-2055** or email [CARD@FAU.EDU](mailto:CARD@FAU.EDU). Space is limited and registrations will be accepted on a first come-first serve basis.*

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### **Family Connections Conference**

The 2012 Family Connections Conference, sponsored by FAU CARD, will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2012 at FAU campus, Jupiter in the Lifelong Learning Center. Panel includes a father and siblings of individuals with ASD, as well as an adult with ASD. Mark your calendars for this free event! More information will be forthcoming.

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# Boca Raton - Groups & Trainings / Parent Networking

All events will be held in Room 411 in the College of Education.

**Connect to all trainings live online by emailing**

**[card@fau.edu](mailto:card@fau.edu) for details.**

## Adult Group

Adults with an autism spectrum disorder ages 18 and older are welcome. The group meets to discuss issues, problem solve and form friendships.

### Date

### Time

1/23	7 - 9 PM
2/20	7 - 9 PM
3/19	7 - 9 PM
4/16	7 - 9 PM

## Addressing Bullying and Related Issues

Parents and professionals will be educated on various forms of bullying and learn how to look for signs of possible bullying. Strategies and resources in teaching your child how to handle situations involving bullying and teasing will also be shared.

1/20	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
3/9	

## Navigating the Educational System: A Roadmap to Collaboration

This training will assist parents in working collaboratively with school staff when planning their child's educational program. Participants will receive a road map of what to expect when working with their child's school.

2/3	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
3/2	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

## Developing & Maintaining Relationships

This presentation shares ideas with individuals with ASD, parents and professionals in order to promote the acquisition of life and social skills. Areas to be addressed include self-regulation, non-verbal communication and relationships.

2/17	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
4/13	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

## How to Understand Your Child's IEP

Parents will learn the components of an Individualized Education Plan. Assistance will be given in goal and objective writing and what accommodations and modifications are available to your child will be discussed.

2/24	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
4/6	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

### REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS.

ALL GROUPS AND TRAININGS ARE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION DUE TO LACK OF REGISTRATION.

PLEASE CALL **561-297-2055** OR E-MAIL [CARD@FAU.EDU](mailto:card@fau.edu) TO REGISTER FOR EACH EVENT.

FAU CARD does not endorse specific programs or points of view presented in this newsletter.

## Treasure Coast - Groups & Trainings / Parent Networking

All groups and training locations will be held on our campus in Port St. Lucie. Rooms will be announced upon registration.

***Connect to all trainings live online by emailing [card@fau.edu](mailto:card@fau.edu) for details.***

**Date**

**Time**

### **Adult Group**

Adults with an autism spectrum disorder ages 18 and older are welcome. The group meets to discuss issues, problem solve and form friendships.

1/18

7 - 8:30 PM

2/22

7 - 8:30 PM

3/21

7 - 8:30 PM

4/18

7 - 8:30 PM

### **Early Intervention Techniques for Young Children**

Parents and professionals will learn about blending of evidence-based early intervention approaches to respond to a child's individual needs.

2/3

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

### **Navigating the Educational System: A Roadmap to Collaboration**

This training will assist parents in working collaboratively with school staff when planning their child's educational program. Participants will receive a road map of what to expect when working with their child's school.

2/17

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

### **Visual Supports**

Participants will learn about visual strategies to support individuals with autism spectrum disorders at home, school, and in the community.

2/24

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM



**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS.**

ALL GROUPS AND TRAININGS ARE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION DUE TO LACK OF REGISTRATION. PLEASE CALL 772-873-3367, 772-873-3422, OR E-MAIL [CARD@FAU.EDU](mailto:card@fau.edu) TO REGISTER FOR EACH EVENT.

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## Treasure Coast - Groups & Trainings / Parent Networking

All groups and training locations will be held on our campus in Port St. Lucie. Rooms will be announced upon registration.

***Connect to all trainings live online by emailing [card@fau.edu](mailto:card@fau.edu) for details.***

**Date**
**Time**

### ***Behavior Basics***

Participants will learn basic behavior management strategies that can be used in the home and the community to promote positive behaviors.

3/9

11:30 - 1:30 PM

### ***IEP Basics for Parents***

Parents will learn the basic components of the Individualized Education Plan for their students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

3/23

11:30 - 1:30 PM

### ***Functional Skills to Promote Independence***

Participants will learn procedures to teach routine activities of daily living to promote independence and increase self-help skills.

4/13

11:30 - 1:30 PM

### ***Preparing for Community Participation***

Participants will learn to identify necessary tools and strategies to use when taking their child/student into the community in order to make the experience meaningful and enjoyable.

4/27

11:30 - 1:30 PM



**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS.**

ALL GROUPS AND TRAININGS ARE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION DUE TO LACK OF REGISTRATION.  
PLEASE CALL 772-873-3367, 772-873-3422, OR E-MAIL [CARD@FAU.EDU](mailto:card@fau.edu) TO REGISTER FOR EACH EVENT.



## **The FAU Communication Disorders Clinic (CDC) offers teen social skills group that involves parents as social coaches**

In collaboration with the FAU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD), the FAU CDC will begin offering a social skills treatment group where teens diagnosed with high functioning autism or Asperger's will learn how to make and keep friends.

Registered teens, ages 12 through 19 and enrolled in middle or high school, will participate in a social skills evidence-based treatment program called PEERS (Program for the Education & Enhancement of Relationship Skills). Developed by UCLA Semel Institute, this 14-week program is unique in its inclusion of a parent group (which is a requirement of the program) so that parents can provide support and coaching to their teen. Some of the topics that will be addressed over the course of treatment include: Conversational skills, Finding common interests, Reciprocal conversation, Non-verbal communication, Electronic communication, Safety, Choosing friends, Extracurricular activities, Appropriate use of humor, Potential friends and rejection, Get-togethers, Good sportsmanship, Peer rejection, Teasing & bullying, Changing a bad reputation, and Peer conflict.

The group will meet every Tuesday from 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM in the College of Education at the FAU Boca Raton campus. The charge will be \$30 per session for a total of \$420 for the 14-week program. The first treatment group will begin on January 17, 2012.

To apply or inquire, contact the CDC at 561-297-2258 or [margyros@fau.edu](mailto:margyros@fau.edu)

## COMMUNITY NEWS



### Cognitive Training Center

The LearningRx Brain Training Center in Boca Raton uses the gold-standard of cognitive skills testing —helping you know the root cause of learning struggles.

Owner/Director, Liz Knowles, Ed.D., has been an educator all her life and is the author of nine teacher resource books. Liz has a staff of certified cognitive trainers offering training in seven cognitive skills (attention, logic & reasoning, processing speed, working and long term memory, auditory and visual processing).

For more information, please visit: <http://www.learningrx.com/boca-raton/default.htm>, email: [bocaraton.fl@learningrx.net](mailto:bocaraton.fl@learningrx.net) or call: (561) 361-4010.

### Sense-Abilities, L.L.C. Special Needs Camp

Sense-Abilities is a camp that caters to children, ages 6-15, who have mental disabilities and/or are on the autism spectrum. It is run by local professionals who work with this special population daily throughout the local schools.

This camp is supported by the Village of North Palm Beach and operates out of their Parks and Recreation facility on South Anchorage Dr. on Saturday mornings from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Cost is \$25.00 per week and fees include house activities, snacks, and community field trips. Partial scholarship opportunities are available.

For more information, please call 561-625-6740 or email [gove5922@aol.com](mailto:gove5922@aol.com) or [christine.black@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:christine.black@palmbeachschools.org).



### TOPSoccer is Coming to Port St. Lucie

TOPS (The Outreach Program for Soccer) was formed 12 years ago through our governing body FYSA (Florida Youth Soccer Association). The program was established to give players with disabilities the chance to get an introduction into the sport of soccer. The program is set up where players can interact with others and receive guidance and support from a Buddy. The Buddy is a trained volunteer that will work with the player one-on-one each week to instill confidence and a feeling of belonging to a team. The games are designed so everyone can be successful and the players will be placed in a fun and safe environment. The program is FREE so we are always looking for support from local businesses through sponsorships and or donations.

The TOPS Soccer registration page is now open. This program is FREE to any family that has a child with special needs and or disabilities. This program is available to players ages 5-19 and all abilities. The program begins Jan. 7th and runs each Saturday from 2pm - 4pm through Feb. 18th. We are accepting applications from anyone that would like to be a volunteer and Buddy and we are offering volunteer hours for all H.S. Buddies. If you are interested please contact Karen Dunn – [karen.dunn13@gmail.com](mailto:karen.dunn13@gmail.com) or Steve Gitlin – [nolifelines@aol.com](mailto:nolifelines@aol.com) for details.

Click the link below to register:

[www.gotsport.com/asp/application/reg/Default.asp?ProgramID=11359](http://www.gotsport.com/asp/application/reg/Default.asp?ProgramID=11359)



**A conference for parents, principals and headmasters, psychologists, guidance counselors, special education teachers, educational consultants and students.**

This one-day conference brings some of the country's top experts who specialize in helping students with ADHD, autism spectrum disorders and other learning differences find the right college "fit" and smoothly make the transition to higher education.

**New this year:** a track exclusively for high school students. They will have the opportunity to tour campus with a current Lynn student, go to a student panel discussion and the luncheon and attend a 3 p.m. breakout session of their choice.

When: Friday, Jan. 27, 2011, 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Where: Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center at Lynn University

For more information, contact Angela Juliano at 561-237-9000 or email [tickets@lynn.edu](mailto:tickets@lynn.edu)

For more information on the conference, visit [www.lynn.edu/about-lynn/news-and-events/events/transitions-2012/view](http://www.lynn.edu/about-lynn/news-and-events/events/transitions-2012/view)



## ASK EPPY

### Financial Planning for Your Future and the Future of Your Parents

Fran Eppy

We try not to think about what lies ahead, but the fact is **one in two people will need in home assistance or nursing home care.** That's a pretty staggering figure if you ask me! Yet most of us, including myself, have no idea what that might cost. So I did some research just to give you a rough idea. (I'm not trying to depress you, I promise!) I just want you to pause for a moment and think about doing a little planning.

So, here's what I found...

#### Results for the Cost of Care in Boca Raton, FL

Based on the most recent John Hancock Cost of Care survey, the table below shows the 2011 average cost of care in Boca Raton, FL. These costs DO NOT consider inflation increases and nursing home costs are based on semi-private rooms. Unfortunately, Medicare will only cover a small fraction of the costs.

Boca Raton, FL	Average Costs	Annual Costs
Home Health Care [Hourly Avg.]	\$17.00	\$26,520.00
Assisted Living [Monthly Avg.]	\$3,603.00	\$43,236.00
Nursing Home [Daily Avg.]	\$238.00	\$86,870.00

So in reflection, if one of my parents needed this and had a small nest egg, some social security funds and Medicare, the nest egg would be gone very quickly and the rest of the burden would be on me! I suppose my other parent would have to come live with me. The financial burden is devastating! In addition, I would never want to financially devastate my children. They have their own lives to live and dreams to plan for.

Putting a plan in place for yourself will take this burden off your children and if your parents are still healthy, you might be able to provide a plan of protection for them and yourself! There are even some interesting options such as buying a life insurance policy on your parents that carries a long term care rider should they need it, and if they never do, you can be the beneficiary. You will get your investment back and then some! Lots of options exist, but you have to act while you (or they) are healthy in order to get the best deal!

Please contact us for more information.

#### Eppy Financial Group, Inc. 1000 Corporate Drive 7th Floor Fort Lauderdale, FL 33334

Eppy Financial is a unique team of financial planners dedicated to helping families with special needs. Questions can be submitted to [feppy@finsvcs.com](mailto:feppy@finsvcs.com) or by calling 954.689.9482. We will answer all questions submitted either in the quarterly newsletter or with a personal response from one of our team members.

**CONTACT US**

***Statewide CARD Toll Free Number: 1-800-9-AUTISM  
(288476)***

***FAU CARD Toll Free Number: 1-888-632-6395***

***Website: [autism.fau.edu](http://autism.fau.edu)***

***e-mail: [card@fau.edu](mailto:card@fau.edu)***

**Boca Raton Campus**

777 Glades Road  
Boca Raton, FL 33431

Main Line: 561-297-2023

Fax: 561-297-2507

**Treasure Coast Campus**

500 NW California Blvd.  
Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

Main Line: 561-297-2023

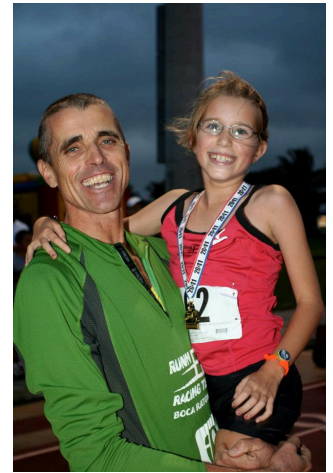
Fax: 772-873-3369

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**FAU**  
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Florida Atlantic University



***Thank you!***

We would like to express our most sincere gratitude to all of the families and professionals who recently participated in our second annual 5K Run/Walk.

Thank you for all your support in making this such a successful event!



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***If you or your organization would like to contribute to FAU CARD,  
donations can be made out to:***

**FAU Foundation CARD**

**and mailed to our office at:**

**FAU CARD  
Department of ESE  
777 Glades Road  
Boca Raton, FL 33431**