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FAU Harbor Branch to Host Distinguished Guest Lecturer

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (November 12, 2013) – FAU’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, along with the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science’s Department of Geosciences, will host Jennifer Biddle, Ph.D., for a special lecture titled “Microbial Life in the Subsurface: Letting the Sequences Tell the Story,” on Wednesday, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. in the Johnson Education Center, 5600 U.S. 1 North, in Fort Pierce. The event is free and open to the public.

HBOI and the College of Science were one of 30 institutions selected to host the ocean leadership distinguished lecturer, an honor for which approximately 90 institutions applied. In addition to the lecture, Biddle will give a seminar for faculty, staff and students at FAU’s Boca Raton campus. She also will meet with scientists, research staff, undergraduate, graduate and high school students at HBOI and Boca Raton.

“This is an exciting opportunity to interact with a scientist who is at the forefront of investigating life in the deepest regions of the earth’s crust,” said Peter McCarthy, Ph.D. of HBOI’s marine biomedical and biotechnology program. “Microorganisms thrive within the deep subsurface and may well provide insights into the origins of life on this and other planets.”

Biddle is an assistant professor at the University of Delaware School of Marine Science and Policy in Lewes, Del. She earned a bachelor’s degree in biotechnology from Rutgers University and a Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology from the Pennsylvania State University.

The Distinguished Lecturer Series (ussp-iodp.org/outreach/distinguished-lecture-series/) brings the scientific explorations and discoveries of the International Ocean Discovery Program (www.iodp.org/) and its predecessor programs to students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and to the geoscience community in general. Since 1991, more than 750 presentations have been made through the Distinguished Lecturer Series program to audiences at U.S. colleges, universities and organizations.

For more information, call 772-242-2400 or visit www.fau.edu/hboi/community/events.php.

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About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute:

Founded in 1971, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University is a research community of marine scientists, engineers, educators and other professionals focused on Ocean Science for a Better World. The institute drives innovation in ocean engineering, at-sea operations, drug discovery and biotechnology from the oceans, coastal ecology and conservation, marine mammal research and conservation, aquaculture, ocean observing systems and marine education. For more information, visit www.hboi.fau.edu.

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of three signature themes – marine and coastal issues, biotechnology and contemporary societal challenges – which provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.