

# HARBOR BRANCH OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE

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## FOUNDATION

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## **HBOIF ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR 3 HARBOR BRANCH LOBOs PURCHASE**

**FORT PIERCE, FL** – The Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation (HBOIF) board of directors recently announced its decision to award a \$559,295 grant to FAU Harbor Branch to fund the purchase and operation of three (3) LOBO (Land/Ocean Biogeochemical Observatory) units to be deployed in the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) in St. Lucie and Indian River counties.

A LOBO is a sophisticated and proven water monitoring system which provides high quality, long term reliable data. These new sites will complement additional LOBOs that were recently deployed by St. Johns River Water Management District in the central and north IRL.

The likely locations of the HBOIF-funded LOBOs will be in Indian River County – Vero Beach, downstream of the North, Main and South Relive Canals, and near Sebastian River and Sebastian Inlet; and in St. Lucie County – near Taylor Creek and Fort Pierce Inlet to dovetail existing and planned IRL water quality monitoring efforts.

The IRL is a unique, highly diverse, shallow-water estuary of national significance stretching along 40% of Florida's east coast, with an estimated economic impact of more than \$3.5 billion per year. FAU Harbor Branch initiated the Indian River Lagoon Observatory (IRLO) in 2011 to be a leader in fulfilling the need for a strong estuarine observing and prediction network in the IRL, to determine the risks and opportunities association with environmental change. Urbanization, excessive freshwater releases, degradation of water quality, contaminant loading, loss of habitat (e.g., seagrasses, mangroves), decline of fisheries, and emerging diseases in marine mammals are increasingly important issues in the IRL, as they are throughout the world's estuaries and coastal waters.

The HBOIF Board also announced additional three-year funding at an annual level of \$874,950 designed for internal capacity building for Harbor Branch.

HBOIF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization under the Internal Revenue Service, and a Direct-Support Organization (DSO) of Florida Atlantic University benefitting Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute. The DSO designation allows HBOIF to affiliate with the Florida Atlantic University Foundation, Inc., through which all private support dollars are administered. This arrangement allows HBOIF to benefit from the business operations of a larger foundation.

HBOIF is also the named recipient of the revenue generated from the four Harbor Branch specialty license plates owned by more than 140,000 Florida residents. The Harbor Branch specialty plates - Protect Wild Dolphins, Protect Florida Whales, Save Our Seas, and Aquaculture - are among Florida's most popular, providing nearly \$3 million for Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute research annually.

For more information, contact the HBOIF office at (772) 466-9876, ext. 224 or [kkissman@hboifoundation.org](mailto:kkissman@hboifoundation.org).

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**About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation**

*The mission of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation, Inc., is to support Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, a research institute of Florida Atlantic University. Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation (HBOIF) supports marine science and engineering research and education by funding HBOIF-FAU efforts to advance understanding of oceans and coastal areas through exploration and scientific inquiry. HBOIF is a 501(c) 3 organization and a Direct-Support Organization (DSO) of Florida Atlantic University benefitting Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute. [www.hboifoundation.org](http://www.hboifoundation.org)*

**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](http://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](http://www.fau.edu).*