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FAU Harbor Branch to Partner with Mercyhurst University and the Old Vero Ice Age Sites Committee on Archaeological Dig in Vero Beach

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (September 17, 2014) – FAU’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI) will soon play a role in researching a piece of the Ice Age on the Treasure Coast. The Old Vero Man site has been called one of the most important finds in the history of North American Archaeology, and has been carefully overseen since 2010 by the Old Vero Ice Age Sites Committee (OVIASC). Last year, the OVIASC hand-picked the experts at Mercyhurst University’s Archaeological Institute to begin exploring this historic site, and now, they’ve chosen the scientists who study ancient DNA at HBOI to process some of the recovered bones.



On Wednesday, Sept. 17 at 11 a.m., a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between OVIASC, HBOI and Mercyhurst University, paving the way for Mercyhurst to send bones that are found at the Old Vero Man site to HBOI’s ancient DNA lab for faculty and staff to process. The signing event and press conference took place at HBOI, and included key members of OVIASC, Mercyhurst’s Archaeological Institute and HBOI. Press tours of the HBOI ancient DNA lab were also made available.

For more information, contact Carin Smith at 772-242-2230 or carinsmith@fau.edu.

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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.fau.edu/hboi.

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.

About Mercyhurst University:

Mercyhurst University, founded in 1926 by the Sisters of Mercy, is a fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution in Erie, Pa. The university offers more than 50 undergraduate majors with nearly 70 concentrations and pre-professional tracks, as well as nine graduate programs. In addition, Mercyhurst provides certificate and associate degree offerings at branch campuses in North East, Corry and the Booker T. Washington Center. Learn more at www.mercyhurst.edu.

About Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute:

Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute (MAI), led by world-renowned archaeologist James M. Adovasio, Ph.D., is a teaching, traditional research, and applied research working group composed of staff members from the anthropology/archaeology, applied forensic sciences and geology departments at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pa. MAI conducts archaeological and related field work all over the United States, Europe and the Near East. Through year-round activities, students have access to a wide variety of research opportunities in diverse environmental, topical and chronological settings. Learn more at <http://mai.mercyhurst.edu/>.

About OVIASC:

The Old Vero Ice Age Sites Committee is a registered 501(c) 3 non - profit organization organized in Indian River County in 2010. Our mission is to educate the public about significant Ice Age sites in our County, coordinate scientific excavation and study of these sites by creating projects in Community Archaeology, and raise funds for these projects. For more information on our activities contact us on the web at: www.oviasc.org.