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## **FAU Harbor Branch Partners with Smithsonian to Host Annual National Estuaries Day Festival**

**FORT PIERCE, Fla. (August 22, 2013)** – FAU’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and the Smithsonian Marine Station at Fort Pierce are teaming up to host a community celebration of National Estuaries Day (NED) on Saturday, Sept. 28 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Museum Pointe Park, 414 Seaway Dr., on South Hutchinson Island. This is the first time FAU Harbor Branch and Smithsonian have partnered to offer a single event for NED. The free family-friendly community festival will focus on the cultural, recreational and environmental importance of the Indian River Lagoon.

The festival will include live entertainment, vendors, hands-on activities for children, touch tanks, “Meet the Scientist” stations, demonstrations and discounted pontoon boat rides. During the celebration, event-goers can enjoy free admission to the St. Lucie County Aquarium, featuring the Smithsonian Marine Ecosystems Exhibit, and the St. Lucie County Regional History Center.

NED is an annual nationwide celebration of America’s estuaries – the vital coastal areas where freshwater and saltwater meet. The celebration, held each year on the last Saturday in September, provides a great opportunity to learn more about these invaluable ecosystems and how everyone can help protect them. To learn more, visit [www.estuaries.noaa.gov](http://www.estuaries.noaa.gov).

For more information, contact Carin Smith at 772-242-2230 or [carinsmith@fau.edu](mailto:carinsmith@fau.edu).

### **FAU -**

#### **About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute:**

*Founded in 1971, Florida Atlantic University’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute 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](http://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](http://www.fau.edu).*