

PHOTO ATTACHMENTS

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FAU Harbor Branch Awarded Grant to Continue Program for Indian River County Students

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (December 5, 2014) – A select group of high school students in Indian River County who love science will have the chance to study alongside some of the best researchers in the region, thanks to funding that was recently awarded to FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI). A 2014 Environmental Solutions grant for \$40,000 from Wells Fargo and administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will help support the second year of the Junior Scientist Fellows program, which is a partnership between HBOI and the Indian River Land Trust (IRLT). A check was presented recently to program leaders during a reception at HBOI.

“We seek to develop a long-lasting network of young people with authentic scientific research experiences in lagoon environmental management,” said program lead and Research Professor Dennis Hanisak, Ph.D. “These students are the next generation who will now be better able to make wise decisions for the Lagoon’s resources and coastal lands.”

The program allows local high school students to work alongside HBOI scientists on research projects that aim to provide solutions to real-world issues in the Coastal Oaks Preserve, a 185-acre environmentally sensitive property along the Indian River Lagoon that is owned and managed by the IRLT.

“The data we are obtaining on these coastal habitats is very important,” said IRLT Executive Director, Ken Grudens. “The notion that we are providing a college-level scientific experience for high school students to generate this information is priceless.”

The goal of the program is to engage youth in the science needed to manage critical lands, to restore and protect one of our area’s most important natural and economic resources.

“Wells Fargo is committed to supporting our youth and helping protect and preserve our most valuable commodity – our environment,” said Kate Wilson, Community Affairs Officer at Wells Fargo. “We are pleased to partner with HBOI to protect the Indian River Lagoon.”

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

Picture captions:

From left: Wells Fargo's Kate Wilson and Travis Robins, HBOI Interim Executive Director Dr. Megan Davis, HBOI research professor Dr. Dennis Hanisak and IRLT Executive Director Ken Grudens.

From left: Junior Scientist Fellows teacher Nicole Moreaux (Indian River Charter High School) with students Lauryn Pedreira (Indian River Charter High School), Guilia Grumblis (Vero Beach High School), and Ian Debus (Vero Beach High School).

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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.

About Indian River Land Trust

The Indian River Land Trust is a non-profit 501C(3) organization located in Indian River County. The organization's mission is to promote the preservation, conservation and improvement of natural resources and special places in Indian River for the benefit of the general public and future generations. The Land Trust's Vision is to preserve environmentally important land and water resources, protect scenic waterfront areas and to provide access for public recreation and education with an ongoing emphasis on the Indian River Lagoon and its watershed. As of today, the Indian River Land Trust has preserved over 900 acres including 8 miles of shoreline along the Lagoon.