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FAU Partners with Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute of Florida for Collaborative Research, Education and Training

BOCA RATON, FL (June 7, 2011) – Florida Atlantic University and the Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute (VGTI) of Florida in Port St. Lucie have reached an agreement to collaborate on research, education and training. The collaborative research will focus on novel cancer therapies, gene therapy and virus research that includes the study of the HIV virus, and the role of the immune system in cancer. The collaboration also will involve sharing facilities and equipment, co-hosting joint seminars and preparing joint grant applications to state and federal agencies.

“This interaction will contribute to the growth of the biotech workforce needed to meet the growing demands of the region,” said Ramaswamy Narayanan, Ph.D., assistant vice president for research in FAU’s Division of Research and associate dean for research and industry relations in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. “Our graduate students will work hand-in-hand with top faculty from VGTI to gain state-of-the-art experience in vaccines and gene therapy research. The collaboration can also help our undergraduate students through internships, and faculty will have an opportunity to work with VGTI scientists.”

FAU’s multidisciplinary doctoral program in integrative biology within the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science is said to be the first to interact with VGTI, whose research employs integrative biology and “computational biology” using mathematical and computational approaches to address biological questions to tackle human health issues in immunology. “All of our faculty/principal investigators come from academic backgrounds and wish to continue to work in an academic environment,” said John Schatzle, Ph.D., director of scientific affairs for VGTI. “We have opportunities to both contribute to graduate education, and also

benefit from a partnership whereby our faculty can continue their academic careers and can also mentor and train Ph.D. or M.S. students directly in their labs on thesis or dissertation projects.”

Based at FAU’s Center for Molecular Biology and Biotechnology on the John D. MacArthur Campus in Jupiter, FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Science, Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, as well as FAU’s College of Engineering and Computer Science and the College of Business will be involved in the collaboration with VGTL.

For more information, contact Ramaswamy Narayanan, Ph.D., at 561-297-2247 or rnarayan@fau.edu.

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About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. In commemoration of its origin, FAU is celebrating its 50th anniversary throughout 2011. Today, the University serves more than 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses and sites. FAU’s world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering & 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. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.