



University Communications & Marketing
777 Glades Road, ADM 286
Boca Raton, FL 33431
561.297.3020 phone
561.297.3001 fax

MEDIA CONTACT: Kristine Gobbo
561-297-1168, kgobbo@fau.edu

Governor Crist Signs Legislation Authorizing New FAU Medical Education Program

BOCA RATON, FL (May 15, 2010) – Florida Governor Charlie Crist today signed legislation authorizing the establishment of Florida Atlantic University’s independent medical education program. The approval comes after the doctor of medicine program was approved by the Florida Board of Governors in April and received approval by FAU’s Board of Trustees in February.

“This landmark legislation signed today by Governor Crist will create new and diverse opportunities at Florida Atlantic University that will benefit Floridians for decades to come,” said Nancy Blosser, chair of FAU’s Board of Trustees. “We are extremely grateful to the governor for his support of this key research and educational initiative, and we appreciate his foresight and wisdom in preparing for Florida’s future. We also extend sincerest thanks to Representative Adam Hasner and Senator Joe Negron, the sponsors of this legislation, for their vital leadership.”

“What an important day for Florida Atlantic University,” said John Pritchett, FAU’s interim president. “We are grateful to the governor, Representative Hasner, Senator Negron and all of our supporters who believe that FAU’s medical education program will serve as a leader, combining unique, state-of-the-art medical education with modern research.”

The new FAU medical education program will employ a unique Continuity Medicine Curriculum whose characteristics include a smaller, more interactive learning environment; interdisciplinary and community collaboration; patient-centered, self-directed learning; small learning communities; continuity of care, patient safety, and comprehensive, chronic disease management; early introduction of clinical training in multiple community-based hospital and outpatient settings; and a state-of-the-art medical simulation center.

In addition to offering the M.D. degree, FAU proposes to offer a dual M.D./ Ph.D. option in partnership with the Scripps Institute Kellogg School of Science and Technology, which would confer a doctorate degree. FAU estimates that up to 15 percent of its M.D. students could take advantage of this option.

“The Scripps Research Institute congratulates FAU for achieving independent status for its medical school, and we look forward to partnering with them to both expand the offerings of their MD program and create an innovative and exciting M.D./Ph.D. track,” said Harry Orf, Ph.D., vice president of scientific operations for Scripps Florida.

Student and residency training will be made available throughout hospitals in Palm Beach and Broward counties, including Boca Raton Community Hospital, JFK, Bethesda, Cleveland Clinic, Holy Cross, West Boca Medical Center, Memorial Health Care System of Broward County, and St. Mary's. Students will have the opportunity to work side-by-side with physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of patients.

"It is critically important that we invest in the next generation of physicians," said Steven Wexner, M.D., chief academic officer at Cleveland Clinic Florida. "Cleveland Clinic is dedicated to its mission of excellence in patient care, research and education. We are thrilled that FAU's medical students will be able to take part in this innovative education program. This new partnership with FAU will also help to address the shortage of trainees in accredited residency programs in South Florida."

FAU's medical education program will be housed at the Charles E. Schmidt College of Biomedical Science on the Boca Raton campus. The target date for the inaugural class to begin is fall 2011, with total enrollment of the program reaching 246 students by 2014.

-FAU-

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University serves more than 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses and sites. Building on its rich tradition as a teaching university, with a world-class faculty, FAU hosts 10 colleges: College of Architecture, Urban & Public Affairs, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Biomedical Science, the College of Business, the College of Education, the College of Engineering & Computer Science, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Graduate College, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. For more information, visit www.fau.edu <<http://www.fau.edu>> .