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PRESS RELEASE

Florida SBDC Network expands partnership with FIU SBDC to assist small business owners in the Florida Keys

MIAMI (October 25, 2018) – The [Florida SBDC at FIU](#), the small business development center within the [FIU College of Business](#), has expanded its partnership with the Florida SBDC Network and will now work with small business owners in the Florida Keys.

The Florida SBDC at FIU works with more than 900 business owners and entrepreneurs each year by offering no-cost, one-on-one business advisory services in areas such as access to capital, growth strategies, marketing, financial management, disaster planning, and more.

“We are excited about the opportunity to help businesses in the Keys grow and succeed,” said Jacqueline Bueno Sousa, regional director of the Florida SBDC at FIU. “In particular, we look forward to working with businesses still trying to recover from Hurricane Irma. Access to capital, along with disaster planning and recovery, will be major areas of focus in the region.”

Margie Smith has joined the Florida SBDC at FIU team as the Keys-based consultant. She will work with business owners and entrepreneurs in Monroe County to address the challenges of launching and growing small businesses. Smith, formerly CEO of the United Way of the Florida Keys, has worked in the banking and investment management sectors as well in the aviation and public relations fields.

Since it began in 2014, the College of Business’ Florida SBDC at FIU has helped launch more than 120 businesses in Miami-Dade County and assisted local entrepreneurs and small-business owners in creating or retaining 7,656 jobs; generating \$1.07 billion in increased sales; acquiring \$52.5 million in government contracts; and accessing \$109 million in capital.

“Through our partnership with FIU, we will continue our mission to assist aspiring and existing small businesses in the Florida Keys,” said Michael W. Myhre, CEO of the Florida SBDC

Network. “We are excited about the opportunity to bring additional expertise to the region and look forward to the success of our partnership in the years ahead.”

Launched in 1976, the Florida SBDC Network serves thousands of aspiring and existing small businesses statewide each year through its no-cost consulting, low-cost training, and research service offering. The network also offers hundreds of workshops each year, ranging from the basics to advanced business management. For businesses seeking capital, the network offers a [six-part capital access video series](#) that provides a fundamental overview of how to obtain financing.

-FIU-

About FIU Business:

Florida International University's [College of Business](#) plays a pivotal role in the development of global business leaders. With more than 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students, FIU Business is widely recognized for its expertise in international business, real estate, data analytics, entrepreneurship, healthcare management, and a broad range of financial services. Its faculty ranks among the Top 100 in the U.S. in UT Dallas' survey of business research productivity. For more information about FIU Business, visit <http://business.fiu.edu>.

About FIU:

Florida International University is classified by Carnegie as a “R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity” and recognized as a Carnegie Community Engaged university. It is a public research university with [colleges and schools](#) that offers [bachelor's, master's and doctoral](#) programs in fields such as business, engineering, computer science, international relations, architecture, law and medicine. As one of South Florida's anchor institutions, FIU contributes almost \$9 billion each year to the local economy. The university is ranked second in Florida in Forbes Magazine's “America's Best Employers” list and received honors in all categories of The Chronicle of Higher Education's 2017 “Great Colleges to work for.” FIU graduates are consistently among the highest paid college graduates in Florida and are among the leaders of public and private organizations throughout South Florida. FIU is Worlds Ahead in finding solutions to the most challenging problems of our time. FIU emphasizes research as a major component of its mission with [multiple state-of-the-art research facilities](#) including the [Wall of Wind Research and Testing Facility](#), [FIU's Medina Aquarius Program](#) and the [Advanced Materials Engineering Research Institute](#). FIU has awarded more than 220,000 degrees and enrolls more than 54,000 students in two campuses and centers including FIU Downtown on Brickell, FIU@I-75, the Miami Beach Urban Studios, and Tianjin, China. FIU also supports artistic and cultural engagement through its three museums: [Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum](#), the [Wolfsonian-FIU](#), and the [Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU](#). FIU is a member of [Conference USA](#) and more than 400 student-athletes participating in 18 sports. For more information about FIU, visit <http://www.fiu.edu/>.