FIU to name school for Chapman

By Joe Gutierrez

Florida International University's College of Business Administration is naming its graduate school of business after Alvah Chapman Jr., former CEO of Knight Ridder Inc.

The college will not offer a new program but a grouping of graduate business programs, said Sally Gallion, assistant dean.

Officials said this is the first time an FIU school, rather than a building, is named after an individual.

"Alvah Chapman is one of maybe three or four people that have not worked at the university, but have had a transcendent impact on it," said FIU President Modesto Madrigal. "When we agreed to be our chairman, it was a turning point in our history. It took a lot of courage and faith on the part of Alvah, because everyone wanted to do something for them, nonprofit or otherwise."

Mr. Chapman, who stepped down in 1988 as CEO of Knight Ridder, parent company of The Miami Herald, served on the university's advisory board in the early '70s and has served on the FIU Foundation since '88.

He was the foundation's chairman from '93-'98, and was later elected chairman emeritus, a position he still holds.

He was essential in bringing funding to the business school, especially to the Ryder Center and the Knight Ridder Center for Excellence in Management, according to Joyce Elam, dean of business administration.

In recognition of his professional accomplishments, FIU created a chair in his honor, the Chapman Chair in Business Ethics.

"We're naming the school after him in recognition for all he's done for the university and business school, but also just for who he is," said Mr. Elam. "His professional life represents all the values that we like to instill in all of our graduates. Naming the school after him is very inspirational. I think our graduates will be very proud of that name."

The official announcement will be made at a Nov. 1 gala dinner at the JW Marriott, with Gov. Jeb Bush as keynote speaker. The dinner, which will offer tables for $5,000, $10,000 or $25,000, would also be the start of fundraising to construct a business building, which would house the graduate schools as well as the FIU's business research departments.

While plans call for a $25 million project, $14 million has been set aside from state funds, according to Roger Wyman, FIU director of planned giving. The school is hoping to raise $500,000 from the dinner and $5 million total through private donations, which will be matched by the state's matching program.

According to Dean Elam, the school is hoping to move into the new building by 2006.

While the building would house the Chapman school, it would not be named after him.

"If we get a significant gift, then we would name the building after the donor," Mr. Wyman said. "That's what we do. However, naming the school after Mr. Chapman is more prestigious."