FIU'S COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION RECEIVES $286K USAID GRANT TO TRAIN CAFTA COUNTRY ENTREPRENEURS

MIAMI, Oct. 10, 2005 – The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded a $286,209 grant to Florida International University’s (FIU) College of Business Administration to train business executives in Central America and the Dominican Republic. The grant, combined with funding from Florida FTAA, Inc., helps to establish the Small and Medium Enterprises Center of Excellence (SMECE) at FIU. The Center will provide business education and executive training to entrepreneurs of small- and medium-size businesses in CAFTA countries.

The FIU College of Business Administration SMECE program will feature four weeks of Web-based instruction and an intensive three-day executive-level on-campus workshop that includes: classroom instruction by FIU professors and site visits to export-import companies in the Miami area. Entrepreneurs will learn strategies for accessing U.S. markets and procedures for dealing with port authorities, customs brokerages, and wholesale and retail outlets. FIU expects to train 40 entrepreneurs in the pilot program and significantly more in subsequent years. Recruitment for the initial SMECE program will begin this month.

“This innovative training program will help to improve knowledge in export management and increase skills of small and medium-size business entrepreneurs from countries that have signed the Central American Free Trade Agreement [CAFTA],” said Edward Glab, director of the Knight Ridder Center for Excellence in Management. "FIU has designed an executive education program with CAFTA in mind that will enable participants to fully realize the growth potential of their businesses." The Knight Ridder Center will manage the program.

Critical initial support to launch the project came from the Florida FTAA, an organization of eminent Floridians committed to facilitating the Free Trade Area of the Americas and its positive impact on the Florida economy. Their investment, along with future contributions from participants, will increase the SMECE program budget to more than $379,000.

"Early support from the Florida FTAA was crucial in helping us to develop a top-notch proposal for winning an award from USAID,” said Jerry Haar, professor of management and international business, newly-appointed associate director of the Knight Ridder Center, and principal investigator on the SMECE project.

About Florida International University’s College of Business Administration
Florida International University’s College of Business Administration, South Florida’s leading business school with unique expertise in international business, entrepreneurship, and information technology (IT) strategy, is the largest of the University’s professional schools. Among the College’s more than 25,000 alumni are some of South Florida’s most successful business leaders and entrepreneurs. Approximately 6000 students are enrolled in undergraduate business courses in its R. Kirk Landon Undergraduate School of Business and more than 900 graduate students study in its Alvah H. Chapman, Jr., Graduate School of Business every year. Another 1,000 participate annually in one or more of its professional and executive education programs.

For additional information about the College, its Landon Undergraduate School of Business, and its Chapman Graduate School of Business, please visit the College’s Web site at http://cba.fiu.edu.

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For Immediate Release

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