FIU’s COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROFESSOR RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS ENGINEERING AWARD

Amezaga Award Presented to Irma Becerra-Fernandez by the Association of Cuban Engineers

MIAMI, FL (March 17, 2003)—Florida International University’s College of Business Administration (CBA) announced that Irma Becerra-Fernandez, an assistant professor in the Decision Sciences and Information Systems Department, was recently awarded the distinguished Jose M. Amezaga Award by the Association of Cuban Engineers.

Becerra-Fernandez, currently spearheads several projects for NASA and is considered to be a pioneer among women in the fields of engineering and information systems. She developed Expert Seeker, a web-based application which serves as a centralized repository of experts within NASA. Her research focuses on knowledge management (KM) and KM systems, artificial intelligence, e-business strategy, and enterprise resource management. She, along with a team of FIU undergraduate and graduate students, also designed the knowledge management system (KMS) currently used by NASA,

“It’s quite an honor to receive this award,” Becerra-Fernandez said. “I am proud to be a member of this organization and it is very humbling to be honored by my peers in this way.”

The annual award was created in 1985 in honor of Jose M. Amezaga, a Cuban exile and founding member of the Association of Cuban Engineers. The award was named after him in recognition of his outstanding contributions to both the organization and the engineering profession. Candidates for the award must be members of the Association for at least 10 years and have held a leadership position on the Board of Directors of the Association. Winners are selected based on how they promote the engineering profession and assist fellow engineers through community work that creates a positive image for the Association of Cuban Engineers and the engineering profession in general.

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“Irma is an asset to the College, to the university, and to her profession,” said Joyce J. Elam, dean of the CBA. “Her vast achievements make her an excellent role model and an inspiration for our students and faculty alike.”

Aside from the technical aspects of her work, Becerra-Fernandez strives to provide students with valuable lessons they can apply toward their future careers. Since the Knowledge Management Lab opened in 1997, many of her students have gone on to work for Fortune 500 companies.

Becerra-Fernandez earned her Bachelor (Cum-Laude) and Master of Science (Summa-Cum-Laude) in electrical engineering from the University of Miami. She also earned her doctorate in electrical engineering from FIU. She resides in Miami with her husband and two children.

Florida International University’s College of Business Administration (CBA), South Florida’s business education leader with unique expertise in international business, entrepreneurship, and information technology (IT), is the largest of FIU’s professional schools. It enrolls approximately 3,400 students in its undergraduate program and more than 1,100 graduate students in its Chapman Graduate School of Business each year. It is South Florida’s top-rated business research school and one of only 435 business schools in the world accredited by the AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The College’s Chapman School offers the 6th largest part-time MBA program among this group. Business Week (October 21, 2002) ranked it among the best in the U.S., placing it in the third tier group along with American, Fordham, George Washington, South Carolina, Syracuse, Rutgers, Tulane, and others. The August 23, 2002 issue of America Economia, a premier pan-regional business journal, rated it among the top 50 international MBA schools for Latin American students. Hispanic Business (March 2002) ranked the CBA among the top five business schools for Hispanics. The National Hispanic Corporate Council recently selected the College as its academic partner because of its expertise in issues related to Latinos in the workplace and marketplace. The College also is one of only 30 business schools to have received a Department of Education grant to establish and support a center for international business education and research.

For additional information about the CBA and its Chapman School and to arrange an interview with Irma Becerra-Fernandez, please call Sally Gallion, Assistant Dean for Marketing, Communication, and Publications at (305) 348-6631, email gallions@fiu.edu or visit the College’s website at www.fiu.edu/~cba.

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