MIAMI, Mar. 16, 2006 – A group of 30 students from Florida International University’s (FIU) College of Business Administration will partner with Bangkok, Thailand–based Rajabhat Chandrakasen University, Mar. 16-27, 2006, in a joint effort to help disadvantaged Thai women transform their craft-making skills into revenue-generating, U.S.-distributed products. The experience will be captured in a student-made documentary following the program.

The American students are members of the FIU International Business Honor Society’s (IBHS) Global Leadership and Service Project (GLSP), and will use their spring break vacation to provide pro-bono marketing expertise to the Association for the Promotion of the Status of Women (APSW).

According to Dr. Robert Hogner, IBHS faculty advisor and associate professor of management and international business, students will combine marketing skills and hands-on community service involvement to create a business venture that establishes U.S. distribution channels to facilitate the sale of crafts made by women in Bangkok.

Hogner added that FIU students will also work at two community-based elementary schools: one in the Klong Toey slum area; and the other at Children's Creativity Foundation, in partnership with Chulalongkorn University’s international business program.

Organized in 1970, the APSW is a Bangkok-based non-profit, charitable organization, established to provide assistance to women and children who are victims of forced prostitution, rape, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, abandonment, physical and mental abuse. The APSW’s scope of activities reflect a commitment to the social and economic empowerment of women. The spring break 2006 programs marks the second year FIU IBHS students will work with women at the APSW’s Bangkok office where Thai-themed crafts and clothing are made.

“Our Bangkok outreach typifies the honor society’s pillars of academic excellence, promotion of educational and professional opportunities, and upholding ethics that cultivate the global leaders of tomorrow,” said Mark Elbadramany, president of the IBHS, and program leader for the Bangkok GLSP.

The joint FIU–Rajabhat Chandrakasen team will work for a second year onsite at a Klong Toey school. Students will help the school develop and market products to sell in Bangkok, and the U.S. through FIU’s International Business Honor Society.

“The marketing skills offered by our FIU business students complement the business needs of the APSW, which ultimately benefit Bangkok women,” said Hogner. “FIU’s business school creates global leadership and service projects that provide intense, hands-on learning experiences by merging leadership and business principles with corporate social responsibility, social justice issues and community service.”

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While the IBHS GLSP is in its second year, the 2006 Bangkok project marks the third global leadership and service initiative the College has executed. The inaugural program was held in Thailand (March 2005), followed by Nicaragua (December 2005), before returning to Thailand this spring.

The project model is the first of its kind and interest in replicating the GLSP has been expressed by other IBHS chapters at business schools around the country. FIU’s College of Business Administration is home to the national chapter of IBHS. The Bangkok 2006 initiative welcomes three students of international business visiting from Boise State University in Idaho, the University of Missouri in St. Louis, and the International University of Monaco in the Principality of Monaco.

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.

Information about the IBHS GLSP may be found at: http://www.fiu.edu/~ibhs/glsproject/.

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