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FIU’s COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND WINROCK INTERNATIONAL AWARDED U.S. AID SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP GRANT

$4.5 Million Grant to Promote Agribusiness and International Trade Capacity Development with Farmers in Honduras and Guatemala

MIAMI, Fla. – (Oct. 10, 2003) – Florida International University’s College of Business Administration (CBA) Executive Dean Joyce J. Elam recently announced that, as part of a grant awarded to Winrock International, the CBA was included in a $4.5 million/five-year funding package for The John Oganowski Farmer to Farmer program in Latin America. The program seeks to promote agribusiness and international trade capacity development in various world regions.

The CBA will provide business know-how to help farmers in Honduras and Guatemala learn to better identify trade opportunities and increase exports. The College will receive funds in the amount of approximately $868,000 throughout a five-year period and will send graduate student experts in the areas of marketing, entrepreneurship, information technologies, accounting and general business skills to provide technical assistance and training on running successful businesses to farmers and farmer organizations in these countries.

“The idea is to help these farmers create sustainable business models through our expertise and resources,” said Miguel Rey, CBA staff member who helped work on the grant proposal. “Our role is to teach them how to develop their export businesses for success.”

The Bioterrorism Act, signed in June 2002, dictates that every stage of the supply chain be registered with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Since many farmers in these areas have no computer or Internet access, the College will provide them with this access and coach them in understanding trade regulatory changes.

“Since 9/11 the U.S. government has become increasingly stringent about what can come into this country,” said David Wernick, research director for the Knight-Ridder Center for Excellence in Management in the College. “We want to make sure these farmers don’t get left out in the cold.”

During the program’s first year, the College will research the needs of the farmers in these countries and begin recruiting volunteers from its alumni groups, community professionals and graduate students interested in promoting grassroots economic development. Participants will (more)
Winrock – 2

travel to Guatemala and/or Honduras for a five- to six-week period during the second year of the grant to provide hands-on assistance to the farmers.

Winrock International representatives also will work with farmers, local organizations, research and educational institutions, and policymakers to improve agricultural productivity, sustainability, and income in these countries.

To make the project a truly sustainable development, the College will partner with local universities, Universidad Francisco Marroquin in Guatemala and Zamorano in Honduras, to ensure they have the capacity to take over the College’s role after the five-year grant period.

Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that works with people in the United States and around the world to increase economic opportunity, sustain natural resources, and protect the environment. By linking local individuals and communities with new ideas and technology, Winrock is increasing long-term productivity, equity, and responsible resource management to benefit the poor and disadvantaged of the world.

Winrock staff implements projects in 40 countries, including the United States, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Activities are funded by grants, contracts, and contributions from public and private sources. Winrock is headquartered on Petit Jean Mountain near Morrilton, Arkansas, and has offices in Arlington, Virginia; Salvador, Brazil; Beijing, China; Manila, Philippines; and New Delhi, India.

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 also is South Florida’s top-rated business research school and one of only 454 business schools in the world accredited by the AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The College ranks in the top 10 among these schools in the number of students it graduates annually, and the College’s Chapman School offers the 6th largest part-time MBA program among them. U.S. News & World Report just ranked the College’s undergraduate international business program 14th in the nation. Business Week (October 21, 2002) ranked it among the best in the U.S., placing it in the group with American, Fordham, George Washington, South Carolina, Syracuse, Rutgers, Tulane, and others. The August 15, 2003 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 College also is one of only 30 business schools to have received a Department of Education grant to establish and support an international business center.
For additional information about the CBA and its Chapman School, please call Assistant Dean Sally Gallion at (305) 348-6631 email gallions@fiu.edu or visit the College’s website at www.fiu.edu/~cba.

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