A retired Miami executive donated $5 million to FIU’s College of Business Administration, the largest cash gift the university has ever received.

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Florida International University’s College of Business Administration received its largest cash gift from an individual donor, $5 million from Miami businessman and philanthropist Landon.

The gift from Landon, retired chairman and chief executive of American Bankers Insurance Group, qualifies for the state’s matching funds program. That will bring in an additional $5 million, making it a $10 million gift to the university and the business school.

Landon, who ended his tenure with American Bankers six years ago and now dedicates himself full time to philanthropy, says one of

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Miami altruist donates $5M to FIU

Landon, from 1C

his goals is to make Miami a world-class city.

 Knowing that some 80 percent of FIU’s students come from Miami-Dade County, it’s key to continue to develop and enhance the university’s business school and its facilities, he said.

“They’re producing tomorrow’s leaders,” Landon said.

The College of Business Administration’s undergraduate school will be named the R. Kirk Landon Undergraduate School of Business.

The university’s Chapman Graduate School of Business, also part of the College of Business Administration, is named for civic leader and former Knight Ridder Chair-

man Alvah H. Chapman.

“A member of our family has come forth to help us solidify our position as an internationally competitive business school,” said FIU President Modesto Maidique, who is also a professor of management at the College of Business Administration.

Landon has long been involved with FIU. He was a member of the university’s original advisory board. He now sits on the FIU Foundation board, which oversees the university’s $70 million endowment fund and helps with fundraising for the school.

Promoting education has been a longtime mission for Landon.

While he headed American Bankers, he implemented such company innovations as creating a preschool for employees’ children. The company opened a public school at its corporate headquarters in 1987. An alumus of Georgia Tech, a gift from Landon helped facilitate the construction of a day-care center at the university.

Howard Lipman, vice president for university advancement and executive director of the FIU Foundation, said the gift from Landon “is a leadership gift.” It will be used toward the construction of a new building at FIU’s University Park Campus in West Dade.

The College of Business Administration is closely associated with the newly created Global Entrepreneurship Center, which just received a $3 million grant from the prestigious Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

Landon’s generosity has also extended to other major schools in South Florida. He gave $5 million to the student union at Barry University, where he is a member of the Board of Trustees, and a $1 million gift to the University of Miami’s School of Nursing.

Landon said another reason he gave this gift to FIU was because “they asked.”

Landon was courted by Maidique and Carlos Migoya, who sits on the university’s foundation board and is regional vice president of Wachovia Bank.