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FIU’S COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION REACHES OUT TO LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS THROUGH IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

MIAMI, Fla. – (March 1, 2004) – Florida International University’s College of Business Administration (CBA) is making a significant impact throughout Latin America by reaching out to provide expertise through several economic development initiatives to improve agribusiness and trade practices for various groups.

The projects include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), CAFTAction, and the Winrock/John Oganowski Farmer to Farmer program. Additionally, many CBA professors are sought after as guest speakers to help inform various groups overseas about issues that affect them, such as trade practices, energy conservation and emerging technologies.

“As Miami’s leading business school, especially in the area of international business, it is our responsibility and desire to do what we can to improve trade practices and competitiveness in our hemisphere,” said CBA Executive Dean Joyce J. Elam. “Through such research and outreach programs, we also help entrepreneurs by passing on the expertise of the College’s faculty and students.”

In a first-of-its-kind partnership with a university, the 61-year-old IICA signed an agreement in October for the College to help small- and medium-sized agribusinesses prosper in a global market. The College will provide training, feasibility studies, executive education, and other non-financial support to farming and agribusiness operations so they can transform raw commodities into more lucrative, competitive products.

“The IICA pact will foster an entrepreneurial culture in agricultural communities,” said Jerry Haar, professor of management and international business, who cultivated the program and acts as its manager.

Supported by a $700,000 USAID grant, which was awarded by Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA), the Alliance for CAFTAction joins the College’s Knight-Ridder Center for
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Excellence in Management in a coalition of 100 leaders and organizations aimed to unite business and community leaders and policy-makers.

Participating CAFTAction countries include, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama and Boliva. The creation of the Alliance emphasizes the key role that the business community must play in reaching out to civil society and the public sector in order to build the strategic partnerships needed for the successful implementation of CAFTA. Highlighted goals of CAFTAction include strengthening the region’s democracy, education, health, technology, and infrastructure.

In October of last year, the College was included in the $4.5 million/five-year funding grant from the USIA’s John Ognowski Farmert-to-Farmer program awarded to Winrock International. The College’s participation is being coordinated with Winrock through the FIU Eugenio Pino and Family Global Entrepreneurship Center’s Institute for Community Innovation During Winrock’s first year, the College has researched the needs of farmers in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala in order to help them identify trade opportunities to increase their exports. The College has recruited volunteers from its alumni groups, community professionals and graduate students interested in promoting grassroots economic development. Participants have begun visiting the region for five- to six-week intervals to provide hands-on assistance, 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 knowledge and expert advisors,” said Carmen Algeciras, coordinator of USAID programs for the College. “Our role is to teach them how to develop their export businesses for success by using their existing resources and learning to create new avenues to succeed.”

Through a series of lectures throughout the Americas Executive Professor Edward Glab, acting director of the College’s Knight-Ridder Center for Excellence in Management, is informing the region about the benefits of coming together as a common market in order to enhance income and help economies grow.

These lectures are another way the College is continuing to make an impact throughout the Americas. “They are excellent networking opportunities for the College—it’s great advertising,” Glab said. “By sharing our knowledge, we communicate that FIU has experts in many issues that affect our hemisphere and that the business school is a one-stop shot for any number of experts.”

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 30,000 alumni are some of South Florida’s most successful business leaders and entrepreneurs. Approximately 8,000 students are enrolled in its undergraduate business courses in its
R. Kirk Landon Undergraduate School of Business and more than 800 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.

The College is one of only 482 business schools in the world—about 25% of all business schools worldwide—accredited by the AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. It ranks in the top 10 among these schools in the number of students it graduates each year, and its Chapman School offers the 6th largest part-time MBA program among them. *U.S. News & World Report* (2005) ranked the international business programs in the College’s Landon Undergraduate School of Business the 9th best in the nation and the international business programs in its Chapman Graduate School of Business among the top 25 in the U.S. (*Best Graduate Schools* 2005)—the only Florida business school to make both lists. *Business Week* (October 11, 2004) has again ranked the College among the top 15% in the U.S., placing it in the group with American, Fordham, George Washington, South Carolina, Syracuse, Rutgers, Tulane, and others. For the past three years, *América Economia*, a premier pan-regional business journal, has rated it among the top 50 MBA schools for Latin American students. For the last five years, *Hispanic Business* has ranked the College among the top 25 business schools for Hispanics. *Hispanic Trends* (Summer 2003) ranked the College in its list of the Top 25 MBA programs for Latinos—the only Florida business school to make the cut. Additionally, in March 2004, *HispanicMagazine.com* ranked the school in its Top 25 colleges for Latinos. The College also is one of only 30 business schools to have received a U.S. Department of Education grant to establish and support a Center for International Business Education and Research.

For additional information about the College, its Landon Undergraduate School of Business, and its Chapman Graduate School of Business, please call Assistant Dean Sally Gallion at (305) 348-6631, e-mail gallions@fiu.edu or visit the College’s website at http://cba.fiu.edu.

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