



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

FAU program named finalist for community partnership award

BOCARATON -- The Florida Institute for the Advancement of Teaching (FIAT), a program at Florida Atlantic University, has been named a merit finalist for the 2009 Mutual of America Community Partnership Award (CPA).

FIAT is the first educational program within a university setting to be recognized with the CPA. To date, 140 partnerships throughout the United States have been recognized by the award program. A gift of \$15,000 from Mutual of America to FAU accompanies this award.

"We could not have selected a better example of the spirit of the award," said Thomas Gilliam, chairman of and chief executive officer of Mutual of America Foundation. "The FIAT program is an inspiring model of what can be done to establish a working partnership and what such collaboration can accomplish."

The organizations and the individuals behind these organizations who have played integral roles in the FIAT program's success were honored at a recent luncheon hosted by Mutual of America.

In a special ceremony at the luncheon, Mutual of America presented silver coins to individuals who have shown extraordinary dedication to advancing the FIAT program, including Valerie Bristor, FAU College of Education dean; Glenn Thomas, FAU's assistant dean of PK-12 schools and educational programs; David Rutherford, FAU's director of gift planning; and Phoebe Raulerson, FAU College of Education advisory board member.

FAU Interim President John Pritchett accepted coins on behalf of former FAU President Frank T. Brogan and former College of Education Dean Gregory Aloia. The coin presentation was a symbolic gesture of appreciation from Mutual of America.

The FIAT program's partners, which span eight Florida school districts, include three area colleges and are represented by such foundations as the Jim Moran Foundation, the Quantum Foundation, and Mary and Robert Pew Public Education Fund, received certificates from Mutual of America.

Providing practical, re-

search-based and scalable solutions for Florida's educational system, FIAT was established in 2002 within FAU's College of Education and is funded by gifts from corporate and family foundations as well as private donors, and through grants from targeted school districts.

In an effort to address the state's critical teacher shortage, FIAT was created to recruit, prepare and retain quality teachers in Florida schools.

Comprised of three innovative programs, Good FIT, SMaRT and AIT, FIAT is having a significant impact on the quality of education at more than 100 public and charter schools within the southeast region of the state. These schools are typically located in rural or urban areas and identified as struggling.

By supplying hands-on training to FAU and community college students who seek careers in teaching, each FIAT program is structured to offer institute participants increasing levels of classroom responsibility.

Since the Institute's inception, more than 1,000 students from FAU, as well as



from Broward College, Palm Beach State College and Indian River State College, have served as instructional interns, substitute teachers and student-teachers. By molding future teachers with valuable classroom experience, the FIAT program has improved the lives of close to 75,000 K-12 students in Palm Beach County alone. The Mutual of America Community Partnership Award, established in 1995, honors the contributions that nonprofit organizations, in partnership with public, private and other social sector organizations,

make to the public good. Each year, organizations take part in a national competition to demonstrate the value of their partnerships, their ability to be replicated and their capacity to stimulate new approaches to addressing social issues.

The 2009 CPA recipients were determined by a selection committee that included former New York Gov. Hugh L. Carey and Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Laureate and named professor at Boston University.

Issues and cultivate new ideas for partnerships.

"We are honored to be reog-

nized with this prestigious award," said FAU Interim President John Pritchett. "As FAU stands alongside such other 2009 honorees as the Barbara McInnis House of Boston, Massachusetts; the Family Connection of Dallas, Texas; and the Psychiatric Assertive Identification and Referral program of Indianapolis, Indiana, I feel a sense of pride in all that FIAT has accomplished for our region."
