



## Sights set on a School of Medicine at Florida International University

### Time is Right; Need is Great; Community Support in Place

**MIAMI, Fla. (July 8, 2004)** – Florida International University Officials announced their intention to open the first public School of Medicine in South Florida.

“We live in the largest metropolitan area in the country without a public School of Medicine,” said Florida International University President Modesto A. Maidique. “This also happens to be a diverse, relatively poor area with unfilled medical needs and a pool of talented young people ready for the opportunity to become physicians.

”Maidique made the announcement at FIU-University Park, standing alongside affiliates, including representatives of four major local hospitals: Baptist Health, Mercy Hospital, Miami Children’s Hospital and Mount Sinai Medical Center. The Florida International University plan does not call for the construction of a new teaching hospital rather it will train residents at affiliated facilities throughout the community.

“The most important element to understand about the FIU School of Medicine is that it will work with some of the best hospitals in South Florida to have an immediate impact on the quality and availability of medical care,” said Adolfo Henriques, chair of the FIU Board of Trustees, who unanimously back the School of Medicine plan.

Trustee and longtime supporter, Dr. Herbert Wertheim, has initiated the 40-Million-Dollar Wertheim Challenge in support of the FIU School of Medicine. Wertheim has pledged an initial of \$10 million and issued a challenge of an additional \$10 million in community support. The gift will be realized upon the Board of Governor’s approval of the School of Medicine proposal. The \$20 million total will be eligible, through the State of Florida Challenge Grant Program for major gifts, for an additional match bringing the total to \$40 million.

“I can’t think of a project with a greater potential to improve the quality of life in South Florida,” said Wertheim, President of Brain Power Inc., who has made several important donations to the university over the years. “In time, practically everyone in this community will be touched by the FIU School of Medicine.”

Nine years of planning came to fruition today when FIU’s plan for a School of Medicine was sent to the Board of Governors’ office in Tallahassee. The 17-member BOG was created in January 2003. The Board will review the plan and make a recommendation. Once approved and funded this would be only the second School of Medicine opened in the country in the last 25 years.

The new School of Medicine seeks to address a dire shortage of physicians at the national, state and local level and responds to a recent decision by the American Medical Association reversing a long-standing position that enough doctors were being produced at the nation’s medical schools.

Florida licenses 2500 new doctors each year. Only 500 of them graduate from the state’s four allopathic medical schools. Traditionally, the rest have come from other states and abroad. A national shortage of doctors and a dwindling supply of overseas physicians who can enter the country are likely to leave Floridians without appropriate medical care. By about 2011, the FIU medical school is expected to graduate the first group of about 40 doctors. Traditionally, 80 percent of FIU alumni continue to live and work in South Florida.

The School of Medicine plan is available on line at [www.FIU.edu](http://www.FIU.edu)



# FIU

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## **FIU In The News: Fri., July 9, 2004**

*Questions? Comments? Contact Maydel Santana-Bravo,  
Office of Media Relations, santanam@fiu.edu or 305-348-2232*

***The Miami Herald, Sun-Sentinel, El Nuevo Herald, Tallahassee.com, Orlando Sentinel, Diario Las Americas, Associated Press WLRN Radio, WIOD Radio, WTVJ-NBC 6, WPLG-Channel 10, WSCV-Channel 51, WLTV-Channel 23, WJAN-Channel 41***

**School of Medicine.** Florida International University announced on Thursday its bid to establish South Florida's first public School of Medicine and made public the 40-Million-Dollar Wertheim Challenge, which involves a pledge by Trustee Herbert Wertheim's of \$10 million, with a challenge to raise another \$10 million to be matched by the State for a total of \$40 million, reported print, radio and television outlets.

### ***El Nuevo Herald***

**Trustee.** Today's edition highlights Dr. Herbert A. Wertheim, FIU trustee, for his generous donation of \$10 million to South Florida's first public School of Medicine at FIU.

### **WQBA-1140 AM**

**School of Medicine.** President Maidique and Dr. Carlos Martini, Director of the FIU medical school project were guests on the popular Agustin & Bernadette Show for an hour and a half Thursday morning. Hosts and politicians expressed unconditional support for the School of Medicine at FIU. WQBA is the flagship station of Univision Radio.

### ***The Miami Herald***

**Sports.** Miami's bid to play host to the first round, second round or regional round of the men's basketball tournament in 2007 and 2008 was rejected by the NCAA on Thursday, reported today's edition. Rick Mello, FIU athletic director, is quoted in the article.

**-FIU-**

Office of Marketing & Media Relations

Division of University Advancement

University Park, PC 519, Miami, FL 33199 • Tel: 305-348-2232 • Fax: 305-348-3333 • [www.fiu.edu/news](http://www.fiu.edu/news)