



**PATRICIA AND PHILLIP FROST MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND FIU PARTNER TO  
ENHANCE SCIENCE EDUCATION**

MIAMI — November 18, 2015 — The Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science (Frost Science) and Florida International University (FIU) have created a partnership to strengthen science education through funding from the State of Florida.

As a primary academic partner of the museum, FIU will develop a pilot program in collaboration with Frost Science to provide real-world experience in science learning for Miami-Dade County preschool children based on the museum's Early Childhood Hands-On Science (ECHOS) program. ECHOS is an interactive early childhood science curriculum that has expanded to include family engagement, encouraging parents to work hand-in-hand with their children's teachers to create substantial early learning opportunities. The program has also received support from the Kellogg Foundation. FIU students will gain first-hand work experience in real classrooms focused on the importance of working with families to introduce science to preschoolers.

"For decades we have been missing a great opportunity - our youngest and most natural scientists were largely being ignored by the science education establishment," said Judy Brown, VP emerita of Education at Frost Science. "With a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and the collaboration of the Miami-Dade County Head Start program, ECHOS was created to address the opportunity presented by our youngest learners."

In addition, FIU students in the FIUteach program, a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) teacher preparation program, will receive training in science communication and complete internships at Frost Science, working with exhibit content developers and education experts in the development of field trip programming for elementary and secondary education students. This enhanced programming is being designed in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

"FIU is helping to create a pipeline of highly skilled teachers who inspire and challenge students in the STEM fields," said Laird Kramer, director of FIU's STEM Transformation Institute, a multidisciplinary collaboration across the FIU colleges of Arts & Sciences, Education, and Engineering & Computing. "The partnership with Frost Science will give FIU students the opportunity to experience and influence science education beyond the classroom in unique and exciting ways."

In December, the first group of early childhood education, elementary education, and special education students from the College of Education who completed the ECHOS training will be paired with teachers in preschool centers operated by Head Start, Early Learning Coalition providers and Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Thena C. Crowder Early Childhood Diagnostic and Special Education Center. They will commit at least 36 hours toward helping low-income children who are 3 to 5 years old learn about science through hands-on activities that help them develop crucial critical thinking skills. The centers are located across South Florida, including Opa Locka, Overtown, Liberty City, Little Haiti, Wynwood and Homestead. A second cohort of College of Education students will be trained in late January.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to reduce the gap in school readiness," said Daniela Foerch, an early childhood education instructor at the College of Education. "Head Start students will have access to Frost Science resources to gain a better understanding of science helping them learn through inquiry while applying the scientific method. Because we are teaching science through exploration, we expect to have a longterm impact on educational equity."

Frost Science, a community anchor for more than 65 years and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is unsurpassed in its commitment to serving the scientific, educational and cultural needs of children and adults, locally and abroad. With that goal in mind, the museum is constructing a new, world-class science and technology institution in downtown Miami's Museum Park, scheduled to open in summer 2016, with an indoor and outdoor aquarium, state-of-the-art Frost Planetarium, Exploration Center and Innovation Labs.

FIU is one of South Florida's anchor institutions and recognized as a Carnegie engaged university. With more than 55,000 students, it is one of the largest minority-serving universities in the United States and awards more STEM degrees to Hispanic students than any other university in the nation.

#### **About the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science (Frost Science)**

Frost Science aims to make a difference in people's lives by inspiring them to appreciate the impact that science and technology can have on every facet of our world. The museum will continue to inspire visitors in a new state-of-the-art facility designed by Grimshaw Architects currently under construction at Museum Park, in the heart of downtown Miami. The museum will be structured around an indoor and outdoor *Living Core* Aquarium of terrestrial and aquatic environments, featuring a Gulf Stream aquarium experience totaling over 500,000 gallons of salt water. The facility will also feature the state-of-the-art full dome Frost Planetarium, the Knight Learning Center, *Innovation Labs* and Cafe, Baptist Health South Florida People and Science Gallery, and an *Exploration Center* featuring permanent interactive exhibits: Feathers to the Stars and The River of Grass. Frost Science is supported by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners of Miami-Dade County. This project is supported by the Building Better Communities Bond Program and the City of

Miami. Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and a member of the Association of Science and Technology Centers. Learn more at [frostsscience.org](http://frostsscience.org).

**About FIU:**

Florida International University is recognized as a Carnegie engaged university. It is a public research university with [colleges and schools](#) that offers more than 180 [bachelor's, master's and doctoral](#) programs in fields such as engineering, computer science, international relations, architecture, law and medicine. As one of South Florida's anchor institutions, FIU contributes \$8.9 billion each year to the local economy. FIU is Worlds Ahead in finding solutions to the most challenging problems of our time. FIU emphasizes research as a major component of its mission. FIU has awarded over 200,000 degrees and enrolls more than 55,000 students in two campuses and three centers including FIU Downtown on Brickell, FIU@I-75, and the Miami Beach Urban Studios. [FIU's Medina Aquarius Program](#) houses the Aquarius Reef Base, a unique underwater research facility in the Florida Keys. FIU also supports artistic and cultural engagement through its three museums: [Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum](#), the [Wolfsonian-FIU](#), and the [Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU](#). FIU is a member of [Conference USA](#) and has over 400 student-athletes participating in 18 sports. For more information about FIU, visit <http://www.fiu.edu/>