OUTREACH

President Saunders in Tallahassee
President MJ Saunders visited Tallahassee this week, and met with several members of Legislative Leadership. Dr. Saunders met with Education Policy and Appropriation Chairs and their staff to discuss the restoration of the $300 million cut from last year’s budget. She also discussed the need for an alternative funding source for maintenance and the need for universities to have flexibility in spending. Finally, she spoke with policy makers about performance based funding.

COMMITTEE WEEK ROUNDUP

Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities
On Tuesday, February 12, 2013, the House Education Appropriations Subcommittee heard a presentation from the Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD). Representatives from FAU’s CARD center, which is one of the seven centers located throughout Florida, were on hand for the presentation.

CARD is the only state funded entity that offers essential support services for individuals and their families that are affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and related disabilities. These services include training families and professionals to work effectively with individuals with ASD, working with districts and agencies to develop educational programming for students, and connecting families to information and resources. The centers serve people of all ages, from infants to adults, and provide their support free of charge. In addition, these services provide the State with cost savings by identifying individuals with ASD early (reducing disability impacts), mainstreaming students (reduced special education needs), and workforce development (helping individuals find sustainable employment).

Since 2006, CARD’s client base has increased by 115 percent, from 12,900 individuals in 2006 to 28,171 today. However, over the course of that same six year period, CARD funding has fallen by 29 percent. Therefore, the centers are requesting a funding increase of $5.4 million over and above current 2012-

GOING FORWARD

Final Committee Week
Next week will be the final committee week before the start of the Legislative Session on March 3, 2013. There will be no committee meetings or legislative business the week of February 25, 2013 – March 1, 2013.

BILLS IN BRIEF

SB 546 – Targeted Economic Development (Ring)
Expanding the purpose of the Institute for the Commercialization of Public Research to include the commercialization of products developed by an innovation business; authorizing the institute to create corporate subsidiaries; providing conditions under which the institute may develop or accrue certain interests in companies or products; specifying conditions under which the institute may deliver and charge for services; and requiring that the institute create the Florida Technology Seed Capital Fund.

Last Action: 02/06/2013
Referred to Commerce and Tourism; Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development; Appropriations
13 funding levels, which will bring CARD back to its 2006 funding levels. It also should be noted that current Census data estimates as many as 216,755 Floridians are living with ASD. Statewide, CARD is serving 28,171 individuals, which is a penetration rate of only 13 percent.

- MEETING PACKET

Implementation of HB 7135 – Relating to Postsecondary Education
On Wednesday, February 13, 2013, the House Higher Education and Workforce Subcommittee heard a presentation from the Florida College System, the Board of Governors and the Department of Economic Opportunity regarding the implementation of HB 7135, which was passed in the 2012 Legislative Session. A similar presentation was given to the Senate Education Appropriations Subcommittee on Tuesday, February 12, 2013.

The presentation highlighted the section of the bill that established a formula for performance funding whereby state universities competed for additional funding to support engineering and technology programs that have high employment outcomes. FAU was one of 8 state universities that submitted an application to receive a portion of a $15 million dollar fund created to support this program. To evaluate the universities, the Legislature and the BOG developed performance criteria and a weighted scoring system.

The performance criteria included:

- Percentage of employed graduates who have earned degrees in targeted programs.
- Percentage of graduates who have earned baccalaureate degrees in targeted programs and industry certifications in a related field prior to graduation.
- Cooperative Education - Programs that combine classroom study with paid work experience.
- Internships - Courses that allow students to apply classroom theory in a practical work setting.
- Collaborative Partnerships with Business and Industry - Agreements between the university and partner(s) to provide instruction and/or research in a realistic work environment.
- Industry Employment Scholarship Programs – Provide a guarantee of employment or offer paid summer internship opportunities.
- Quantity of partnership agreements and level of student participation in the programs.

The top four universities each received $3.75 million.
The BOG believes that this program was a success and would like to see funding extended into year two. However, the BOG recognized that there were some challenges in implementing a new program and they identified areas that they hope participating institutions will focus their attention and data collection methods on as they begin to prepare new applications.

- Academic Program Array vs. Institutional Size (programs offered in targeted areas)
- Inclusion of Industry Certifications (need for improved data collection methodology)
- Formal Partnership Agreements (need to standardize informal partner relationships)
- Standardized Record Keeping for Student Activity (need for improved data collection methodology)
- Ensuring the Auditability of Records

- MEETING PACKET

SEA LEVEL RISE
The Southeast Florida State Delegation, made up of Senators and Representatives from Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties met this week to hear from water policy experts about the very real threat of sea level rise in South Florida. They were told that sea levels have risen by 9 inches in the past decade and could rise another 9 to 24 inches in the next 50 years, causing flooding, beach erosion and damage to homes, roads and other property. In response to the threat, the four counties entered into a compact in 2010, and are recommending funding for alternative water supply, fresh water storage areas, Everglades restoration and beach renourishment.

- BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Coordination of Online Degree Offerings
On Wednesday, February 13, 2013, The Strategic Planning Committee of the Florida Board of Governors offered a comprehensive plan to better coordinate the online degree offerings across the State University System.

The proposal, which calls for both long- and short-term actions, is the product of more than a year of work with our universities, the State College System, Florida's independent colleges and universities, state leaders and experts in the online learning industry. The Board expressed a willingness to seek funding from the Legislature to support this effort. It includes the following:

- The Board of Governors should use preeminence metrics, approved by the Board for use in university workplans, to determine a university that
would offer a new, separate arm of high-quality online degree programs to students in Florida and across the globe. The designated university should also create a research center to develop cutting-edge technology and instructional design of online programs and ensure the success of online students.

- State University System Chancellor Frank T. Brogan should form a systemwide workgroup to continue to determine ways in which universities and other higher education delivery systems can better coordinate online degree offerings now and in the future.

The recommendations will be presented to the full Board of Governors for consideration at its teleconference meeting on February 21, 2013. The goal is to deliver an online education framework to the Legislature prior to the start of Session in early March.