Update from Frank T. Brogan, Chancellor  
August 16, 2010

Long before we fully understood the phrase, "industry cluster," Florida’s space and aerospace sector captured the imagination of America. We owe it a level of attention in this time of transition, and — luckily for us — it is already replete with knowledge-based, high-wage opportunities.

In the past several decades, space-related and engineering research has translated into untold quality of life enhancements for Earth-bound citizens. We sometimes take these advancements in our society for granted. We sometimes forget the painstaking hours and commitment that so many researchers expend on "ideas" that can transform how we live and what we know.

Last week, I joined with a number of Florida’s household names (and future household names) from across this industry at the 2nd Annual Symposium of the Florida Consortium for the Advanced Aero Propulsion (FCAAP). Karen Thompson, the NASA Chief Technologist at Kennedy Space Center, awaits federal funding in this next cycle to execute an impressive array of opportunities for Florida’s universities. I was pleased that she delved into the strategic planning that is under way, and left more hopeful about NASA’s future in Florida as NASA is redoubling its efforts to strengthen connectivity and make discoveries with Florida academia.

How our System is involved in writing the next chapter of this industry with our private sector partners is critical to Florida’s future. It is not just exciting — it is incumbent on us to fulfill this obligation. In my keynote remarks at the symposium, I stressed the need for the formation and then dissemination of a new vision statement by NASA — one that we can help fortify. We cannot backslide or lose the vigor we enjoyed during the "space race" and the tenacity for progress and research that went with it. We cannot — and we will not — surrender the space issue.

Here again, our New Florida initiative, in partnership with the Legislature, can be restorative and take advantage of NASA’s new plans. Universities can be wildly successful — and are — in accelerating and sustaining recovery of certain
industries and the economic recovery overall. A few students approached me afterward to say they “get it” and share our commitment to this effort.

Rather interesting is that the same day I was with this esteemed group, the Chief Technologist at NASA in Washington, D.C., posted an open letter to the nation’s college students. I commend it to your attention: http://www.nasa.gov/offices/oct/college_letter_detail.html.

Finally, I want to thank Kirby Kemper, FSU’s Vice President for Research, and Dr. Farrukh Alvi, Director of the FCAAP and Professor in the FSU/FAMU College of Engineering, for their leadership in leveraging the “Centers of Excellence” model created in statute. The FCAAP is a four-university partnership including FSU, UCF, UF and Embry-Riddle University. The synergy it has created in about two short years shows the Legislature how our System not only collaborates but exponentially delivers. Dr. Alvi rightly told the crowd of executives, researchers, faculty, students and national leaders that, until recently, many of the consortium’s individual people and projects were better-known outside of Florida than inside our boundaries. I hope and trust that soon will change! Further, I congratulate his team and the commitment of graduate assistants for fielding 300 applications for 20 youth spots for a summer science academy just completed. Mentoring the next generation while we are teaching another is an important part of what makes our System one of the best in the nation. For more information, visit http://www.fcaap.com/.

**Legislative Leadership Continues Work on Oil Spill Issues, Receives Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) Data**

Last week, legislators gathered on the oil spill issues, and we have been in close contact with “Workgroup 5” of the House in particular. We have been asked to provide some important information related to the North Florida region and how the resources of the System can be brought to bear specifically for long-term economic development and sustainability. We are working through that complex conversation and will have more to report in the coming weeks. We learned on Thursday that Florida’s revenue projections are holding steady — an issue we will continue to monitor with an eye toward possible economic impact from the oil spill.

**System Universities’ Grant Proposals Reviewed, Selected for Gulf Research**

I spent a great deal of time this week on different briefings and dialogue regarding the oil spill recovery efforts. Supported administratively by USF, we continue to point to the Florida Institute of Oceanography (FIO) — a System asset and administrator of the BP $10 million received to date — as a concrete example of how our universities are making a real difference. One benchmark event last week was the announcement of the research proposals that will be funded through the FIO. We are working to guard against unnecessary duplication of other oil spill-related research that is underway and are committed
to assist state agency stakeholders through data collection and sharing during this time of recovery. To that end, I want to thank USF’s Dr. Ralph Wilcox and Dr. Bill Hogarth, USF’s media team, FAU’s Dr. Shirley Pomponi (chair of the FIO Council), and FSU’s Dr. Ross Ellington (chair of the Oil Spill Academic Task Force) for their continued leadership in this effort. For the list of projects selected by the FIO advisory panel, click at the end of the press release: http://fio.usf.edu/Home.aspx.

**Communications Update**

We have created a single, “master” e-mail account — communications@flbog.edu — that will come into your in-box as “Communications (Board of Governors).” You will see this e-mail name instead of the names of different persons who compile and send weekday clips, for instance. In addition, you may see press statements and press releases from this email account.