Update from Frank T. Brogan, Chancellor
October 7, 2010

2010 NEW FLORIDA INITIATIVE: First Phase of Funds Announced with $2 million for Commercialization of Research

The biggest news this past week is no doubt the release of $2 million for more than 20 projects for research commercialization grants. This is part of the $12 million total amid three categories of awards in our 2010 New Florida Initiative:

- $10 million: Scholars Boost Grant Winners and Clustering Grant Winners – to be announced.

You have been seeing – and will continue to see – great media coverage for this milestone. The press release, including a complete list of awards and project descriptions, is available here: [http://www.flbog.edu/pressroom/news.php?id=358](http://www.flbog.edu/pressroom/news.php?id=358).

Thank you to Governor Ann Duncan for representing the Florida Board of Governors on the Florida Technology, Research and Scholarship Board (FTRSB) and for assisting us in our press relations success to date as we continue forward.

The commercialization awards – in partnership with the Legislature and the FTRSB – emerge from the statutory outline that governs the review and evaluation process and application criteria. The release of this $2 million marks a significant milestone in our System-based advocacy. Now the work truly begins to follow these awards closely and monitor their accomplishments, to then share that with the Legislature. Overall, there were 45 proposals submitted requesting (a total of) more than $5 million, signifying a tremendous need through the System for promising discoveries and market-ready products!

As was discussed at the September Board meeting, an overview of the projects that will receive the remaining $10 million of the 2010 New Florida Initiative funding will occur at the next Board meeting, November 3-4, 2010. Another major press rollout discussing those winners will occur the following week (after the busy November general election week).

Chair Parker asked Governor Frank Martin, as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, to oversee the review of projects and have the committee present its
recommendations at the November Board meeting for the upcoming $10 million in awards. Governor Martin and his committee are holding telephonic meetings to review the projects and ensure we have the highest levels of inter-university and intra-university collaborations possible.

Business enterprises emanating from Florida’s state universities are nothing new – yet they should be happening with more regularity, and the Legislature acknowledges the exponential effect and return on investment that can be attained. The commercialization grants should attain clear results and contributions toward the Legislature’s commitment to help diversify the state economy in a progressive way. As Sen. Don Gaetz, R-Niceville, said: “If Florida is to be truly competitive in job creation, we must connect our higher education system to the needs of the economy. Our universities ought to be the cradle of economic development – that is the purpose of this commercialization provision within our 'Jobs for Florida' law: to encourage research that has value to Florida’s economy and then not stop there, but bring that research to market.”

As you’ll recall, Sen. Gaetz and Rep. Will Weatherford were primary sponsors of the 2010 bills that appropriated the $2 million for the commercialization awards. Sen. Evelyn Lynn and Rep. Bill Proctor are the respective higher education budget chairs and were co-sponsors of the bills. All four legislators were quoted in our press release.

Also, you may have noticed that the home page of our web site, www.flbog.edu, has new content, particularly with emphasizing the New Florida Initiative.

**Students, Students, Students …**

I attended the meeting of the State University System’s Council for Student Affairs at UCF in Orlando, to share time with the vice presidents for student affairs. I was pleased at the wide-ranging topics and focused discussion about student retention and student success. UCF’s VP, Dr. Maribeth Ehasz, ably serves as the Chair of this Council, and I was pleased to hear, among other important issues, that the group is attempting to infuse the New Florida Initiative into its work and priorities where appropriate.

I urged the Council, along with our Board staff liaisons, to coordinate a review and action plan for joint academic affairs and student affairs issues. The Council can educate the Board of Governors and our stakeholders on the unique demographics at the 11 institutions, as well as how successful student support programs and services line up, and how those then demonstrate improved student retention and increased graduation rates. This is especially helpful to our newer Board members, who are identifying and looking for strong linkages within the System to sustain and improve the student experience. Several VP’s were complimentary of the Board’s new committee structure, and I know Chair Ava Parker and the Board of Governors will find that feedback helpful and gratifying. UF’s Dr. Patricia Telles-Irvin led a discussion of current Council priorities, which include the availability of reasonable student health insurance and the increasing need for auxiliary learning aids for students with disabilities.

Finally, in response to some discussion at this group related to state and community colleges, I highlighted the optimism I have as to the legislatively created Higher Education Coordinating Council, with its organizational meeting coming up in late October (and that I’ve described in far greater detail in a recent “Update” here: http://www.flbog.edu/documents/2010_09_08.pdf). The Council of VP’s are among
several groups in the System with particular vested interest in the dialogue and whatever policy recommendations emerge from the HECC.

**February Meeting Set for Budget & Finance Committee to hear University Proposals on Tuition**

As a follow-up to my recent memorandum on the subject of tuition, the Budget & Finance Committee and its Chair, Governor Tico Perez, have scheduled a February 9, 2011 meeting in Orlando to hear any proposals on these items. Once the full Board has acted on the amended Regulations (at its November Board meeting), additional guidance will be distributed from our team, including proposal templates and due dates for review and committee preparation. In the meantime – from now until November, and from November until February – our office continues to express to the media’s remarkable continued interest that, until the regulation is in place, we are unable to comment on proposals that are not yet on the table for the Board committee’s review as it would be speculative.

Thank you for your leadership and support of the System.