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FIU co-sponsors the Urban Affairs Association Annual Meeting

The 45th Annual Meeting of the Urban Affairs Association (UAA) took place at the Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Miami in April. As local host to the conference, FIU faculty were part of a committee that had significant input in its content, planning and organizing. The committee was chaired by Nicole Ruggiano (Social Work) and included Jean-Claude Garcia-Zamor (Public Administration) and Malik Benjamin (Architecture). The theme of this year's conference was *Transnationalism from Above and Below: The Dynamics of Place-making in the Global City*.

Faculty from the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work, the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the Department of Biomedical Engineering, and the Center for Children and Families sponsored a special conference track on Urban Health, which included a myriad of presentations focusing on health issues within urban environments across the globe. FIU's Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED), the Center for Research on U.S. Latino HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse (CRUSADA), and the Latin American and Caribbean Center (LACC) also sponsored conference activities. Collectively, the University sponsorships provided registration waivers for 20 students who were presenting at the conference. More than 45 paper, poster, and panel presentations were given by FIU faculty and students, focusing mainly on the research conducted in the local community.



Local Host Committee members: Nicole Ruggiano and Jean-Claude Garcia-Zamor

At the opening reception, the UAA executive staff presented FIU President Mark Rosenberg with a plaque acknowledging the organization's appreciation of FIU's overwhelming support for the conference. They indicated

that FIU's participation in the 2015 conference was greater than any other local institution in the history of the UAA.



From left to right: Margaret Wilder, Executive Director of UAA; Mario de la Rosa, CRUSADA director; Mark B. Rosenberg, FIU President, and Michael Lee Owens, UAA Board Chairman, Emory University

During a Special Colloquy on the last day of the conference, Bruce Nissen, director of research at FIU's Center for Labor Research and Studies, received the UAA-Sage Marilyn J. Gittell Activist Scholar Award, and Joan Wynne from the College of Education was recognized with an honorable mention for the same award.

Before and after the conference, attendees had ample opportunity to learn more about Miami through a series of educational excursions planned and guided by FIU faculty. Ned Murray (Metropolitan Center) and Jean-Claude Garcia-Zamor led an outing highlighting gentrification in Midtown and Wynwood. Dr. Murray also hosted a tour focusing on rental housing preservation in Miami Beach. Roberto Rovira (Landscape Architecture + Environmental and Urban Design [LA+EUD]) organized a tour to view landscape architecture in Miami and Miami Beach. A tour of urban water management issues in relationship to the Everglades was planned by Leonard Scinto from FIU's Southeast Environmental Research Center. Finally, Valerie Patterson (Department of Public Administration) organized an outing featuring issues of revitalization in Overtown.

FIU faculty and students who presented at the conference are encouraged to apply for the 2015 Best Conference Paper Award, which will be presented at the 2016 Conference in San Diego. To be considered, papers must be submitted on the *Journal of Urban Affairs'* manuscript submission website by July 15, 2015 at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/juaf>