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HEALTH DEPARTMENT FACILITATES FIRST FLORIDA PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE DOLLARS

LANTANA, FL— Jean M. Malecki, M.D., MPH, the Director of the Palm Beach County Health Department has a vision for the future:- a collaborative, community-based, integrated approach to public health that will have long term benefit to the state. That vision, The Florida Public Health Institute , on the campus of what is now the A.G. Holley State Hospital, is well on its way to becoming a reality.

“I am proud to announce that the Florida Public Health Institute has received its official designation from the National Network of Public Health Institutes and is one of five projects selected to participate in the Fostering Emerging Institutes Matching Grant Program. The Institute will receive \$50,000 a year for two years that will be matched by \$50,000 from the Brumback Fund in Palm Beach County, and \$100,000 from the University of Miami: Miller School of Medicine;” said Dr. Malecki whose staff assisted in preparing the grant application.

The initial concept for the Florida Public Health Institute was presented to the University of Miami in 2003. The following year, with support from the Florida Legislature and then-Governor Jeb Bush, an Advisory Council consisting of local elected officials, Department of Health leaders, state legislators, university leaders and Palm Beach County Health Department Director Jean Malecki joined forces to move the project forward. In this collaborative initiative, the Health Department would work in partnership with the state, the Town of Lantana and other community organizations to create a center for excellence in public health. Since then, site plans have been developed and other colleges, universities and hospitals have joined the partnership.

In other recent steps forward, the University of Miami, Florida Atlantic University's School of Medicine and the Palm Beach County Health Department are undertaking a three-year initiative that includes training and develop a public health workforce, improving access to health care, developing health promotion programs, and mobilizing public/private collaborations to support these efforts.

Claude Earl Fox, M.D. MPH. has been appointed as the Executive Director for the Institute. Dr. Fox, who is also on the faculty at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine, is working to build the initial operational infrastructure and focus resources on the goals for the future set by the Institute's Board of Directors.

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