Local Team Wins National Ocean Science Florida Manatee Bowl

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (March 3, 2014) – Fort Pierce Westwood High School’s Marine & Oceanographic Academy (MOA) Team A was recently crowned the regional champion of the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (www.nosb.org), the third year out of the last four that MOA has won the competition. On Saturday, a high school competition testing the knowledge of a wide range of ocean-related topics, the “Florida Manatee Bowl” attracted 15 teams from Jacksonville to Miami to Florida Atlantic University’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute in Fort Pierce, FL. The MOA team defeated the Viera High School Team A and will advance against 21 other regional champions in the 17th Annual National Ocean Sciences Bowl at the University of Washington on May 1-4, 2014 in Seattle, Washington.

This month, approximately 2,000 students from more than 300 high schools participated at 22 sites throughout the country. MOA’s winning team consisted of William Clarizio, Oreo Graham, James Humphreys, Jeremy Johnson, and Jon Young, who were coached by teacher Scott McMillen. The other top teams were Viera High School Team A (second place), Miami’s MAST Academy’s Team A (third place), and Jacksonville’s Mandarin High School (fourth place).

“This is an opportunity for Florida’s high school students to showcase their interest and understanding of one of our greatest resources, our oceans,” explained Dr. Dennis Hanisak, FAU Harbor Branch’s director of education and coordinator of the Florida Manatee Bowl. “The National Ocean Sciences Bowl is a challenging and fun event, not only for the students, but also for their teachers, and the scientists and volunteers who hosted, organized and volunteered at this event.”

NOSB® seeks to interest students in the ocean sciences as a college major and potential career. Through this educational forum, the NOSB strives to encourage and support the next generation of marine scientists, policy makers, teachers, explorers, researchers, technicians, environmental advocates and informed citizens.

Students around the country spend months working with volunteer coaches to get ready for competitions, which pit four-student teams against each other in rapid-fire buzzer rounds of
multiple choice and short-answer questions, as well as in team challenge questions. Topics include ocean biology, chemistry, geology, physics, navigation, geography, and related history, literature, and public policy.

Since its inception 17 years ago, the NOSB® Florida Manatee Bowl has been co-hosted by Harbor Branch and the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, with the event alternating each year between Fort Pierce and Miami. Moderators and judges for the event are drawn from both institutions.

High Schools attending the 2014 Florida Manatee Bowl in Fort Pierce:
- Fort Pierce Central High School, Fort Pierce (2 teams)
- Heritage High School, Palm Bay (2 teams)
- Immaculata - La Salle High School, Miami
- Mandarin High School, Jacksonville
- MAST Academy, Miami (2 teams)
- South Broward High School, Hollywood (2 teams)
- St. Lucie West Centennial High School, Port St. Lucie
- Viera High School, Viera (2 teams)
- Westwood Marine & Oceanographic Academy, Fort Pierce (2 teams)

- FAU -

About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute:
Founded in 1971, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University is a research community of marine scientists, engineers, educators and other professionals focused on Ocean Science for a Better World. The institute drives innovation in ocean engineering, at-sea operations, drug discovery and biotechnology from the oceans, coastal ecology and conservation, marine mammal research and conservation, aquaculture, ocean observing systems and marine education. For more information, visit www.hboi.fau.edu.

About Florida Atlantic University:
Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of $6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU’s world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of three signature themes – marine and coastal issues, biotechnology and contemporary societal challenges – which provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU’s existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.