

[PHOTO ATTACHMENTS]

MEDIA CONTACT: Carol Lewis West
561-297-0245, clewis36@fau.edu

Marvin Weiner, Creator of the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, to Receive Posthumous Honorary Doctorate
Posters of Selections from the Collection Installed at Wimberly Library

BOCA RATON, FL (May 1, 2012) – Florida Atlantic University President Mary Jane Saunders will present a posthumous honorary doctorate of humane letters during the spring commencement ceremonies to Marvin Weiner, who devoted his adult life to collecting uniquely valuable items documenting the philosophical evolution and historical events that led to the birth of American democracy.

His son, Dr. Howard Weiner, will accept the award on his behalf during the commencement ceremony that will take place on Friday, May 4 at 9 a.m. in the Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium on FAU's Boca Raton campus. This honor will come as the university's Wimberly Library, which now houses the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, installs a permanent large-scale poster exhibition of selections from the collection on the west wing of the first floor. This rare and important collection, donated to FAU Libraries in 2006, consists of more than 13,000 items, including first and later editions of books, manuscripts and pamphlets that were printed before 1865. Marvin Weiner, a businessman, entrepreneur and philanthropist, died in 2010.

"Marvin Weiner devoted his life to creating what is now the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, which stands today as one of the most comprehensive collections of its kind in the world," said Saunders. "Florida Atlantic University is grateful and proud to be entrusted with the care of this remarkable collection, and it is our pleasure to award Mr. Weiner a posthumous honorary doctorate of humane letters as a tribute to his scholarly achievement."

Weiner enjoyed a successful career as a New Jersey businessman and entrepreneur. After his retirement, he and his wife, Sybil, moved to Boca Raton and became friends of FAU. The Weiners maintained their connection with FAU until Sybil passed away in November 2009, and Marvin passed away in June 2010.

Marvin Weiner's legacy lives on at FAU in the extraordinary collection that was his passion and that has become a priceless resource for students of American history. The Weiner

family, Dr. Howard Weiner and his wife, Judith; Herb Weiner and his wife, Sheila; Esther and her husband Richard Granade and granddaughter Danielle Poll, expressed their appreciation for the honorary doctorate.

“This formal recognition of our father’s life-long passion for books and scholarship, especially as they related to the concept of freedom and democracy in America, would have made him very proud and gratified,” said Herb Weiner, speaking on behalf of the family.

Weiner spent 65 years combing through bookstores, estate sales and catalogs in a tireless effort to add to his collection, which includes essays by such classical European philosophers as Spinoza, Rousseau and Hobbes. Publications in the collections span six centuries. Weiner was particularly inspired by Benjamin Franklin, and he considered this Founding Father to be his mentor. During the year that marked the 300th anniversary of Franklin’s birth, Weiner donated his collection to FAU. The gift established FAU as the major resource center in the southeastern United States for the study of the American Colonial period.

“Mr. Weiner’s acquisition of the collection was a major act of scholarship in itself, a determined intellectual pursuit to reproduce Thomas Jefferson’s library and gather the publications that reflected the intellectual currents that helped to produce the American Revolution,” said William Miller, dean of university libraries at FAU. “To quote one scholar, the collection is ‘nothing less than the intellectual history of the origins of the American Revolution. Reaching back to classical antiquity, the collection is an extraordinary assemblage of primary sources relating to the idea of freedom in the Western tradition.’”

Marvin Weiner wanted students to have hands-on learning experiences and to do research with the collection. The recently installed permanent poster display of materials from the collection, titled “Selections from the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection,” attempts to engage students and to entice them to come and visit the collection. A recently established Weiner Education Fund supports a graduate research award, an essay contest and young people’s educational events. During the spring semester, librarians launched a pilot program that allowed students to use a portion of the fifth floor suite where the collection is housed as a study hall, putting them within view of the collection.

Contact special collections at 561-297-2693 or lysca@fau.edu for more information.

Photo Captions

“Photo #1: Weiner.JPG:” Marvin Weiner, creator of the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at FAU’s Wimberly Library, with wife, Sybil Weiner.

“Photo #2: Weiner.JPG:” Portrait of Benjamin Franklin by William Bicknell, 1900, from the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at FAU’s Wimberly Library.

“Photo #3: Weiner.JPG:” *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine, 1776, from the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at FAU’s Wimberly Library.

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 serves more than 29,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses and sites. 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. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.