



UM President Donna E. Shalala (right) with Center for Latin American Studies Director Ariel Armony at the official launch of the Miami Consortium.

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MIAMI CONSORTIUM RECEIVES \$1 MILLION AWARD

FEDERAL GRANT DESIGNATES UM/FIU PARTNERSHIP A NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR STUDY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

Only a year ago, the University of Miami and Florida International University joined forces to create the Miami Consortium for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Now, the U.S. Department of Education has awarded the partnership a \$1-million National Resource Center grant, which designates it as one of the nation's top institutions for the study of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The recognition is highly appropriate, according to Consortium codirector Ariel Armony. "Built on more than 25 years of UM and FIU faculty, student, and community collaboration, the Miami Consortium establishes South Florida as *the* hub for political, commercial, cultural, and scholarly exchange between the United States and its neighbors to the South," he says. "It strategically positions the Miami area at the center of a broader global dialogue that connects the rest of the world to Latin America and the Caribbean."

The University of Miami in particular is unique in its multidisciplinary approach to Latin America and the Caribbean. "Few other universities have our breadth of expertise, which spans the professions and disciplines—including marine science, medicine, engineering, architecture, communication, law, the humanities, and the social sciences," says Armony, who also serves as director of UM's Center for Latin American Studies. "This is our edge: We can be national and international leaders in terms of our comprehensive approach to the region."

The National Resource Centers [NRCs] for Foreign Language, Area, and International Studies are funded through Title VI grants, established in 1965 by the federal government to strengthen foreign language education at universities

across the country. There are now 23 NRCs specializing in Latin America, including the Miami Consortium, which is comprised of the Center for Latin American Studies at UM and the Latin American and Caribbean Center at Florida International University.

With the Title VI funding, the Miami Consortium will expand its outreach to the community, from K-12 schools to community colleges. "This semester, as a direct result of our NRC grant, the Center for Latin American Studies helped facilitate a number of K-12 teacher training workshops about diversity in the Caribbean, the use of Rafael Soriano artwork in the classroom, and the instruction of business Spanish for elementary, middle-school, and high-school teachers," reports Armony.

The funding also supports travel opportunities for faculty, new-course development, and international conferences, and it brings leading scholars and professionals from Latin America and the Caribbean to campus. For example, Dr. Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida, president of the Latin American Studies Association and professor of political science at the University of São Paulo, Brazil, came to UM in March as the inaugural speaker of the Miami Consortium's Distinguished Speakers Series to discuss Brazil's evolving importance on the world stage.

"UM brings a wealth of contacts in the hemisphere and beyond to the partnership," says Armony, "as well as more than 200 affiliated faculty from all disciplines and professional schools, and the growing academic prestige of the University of Miami."