BOCA RATON, Fla. (March 31, 2014) — Florida Atlantic University’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine recently participated in its first “Match Day” to fill 36 slots in the medical school’s first residency program in internal medicine. “Match Day” is the day that graduating medical school students around the nation learn where they will spend the next three to seven years of their medical careers for the next phase of their training—the specialized program known as residency.

Match week is the nail-biting time of year that haunts and tantalizes fourth-year medical students with dreams of residency programs. Match Day 2014 culminated with the students learning if — and where — a hospital wants to train them to become license-eligible doctors.

Leading up to Match Day, each student lists in order of preference the residency program that he or she would seek to work with and each residency program then ranks its applicants in order of its own preferences. The National Resident Matching Program then uses a computer algorithm, developed in 1952 by Nobel Prize winning economist Alvin Roth, to place students in the program that they prefer. The computerized system tabulates the placements based on the list of preferred candidates by each program and each student submits their ranked preferences for residency training. Each residency program at a hospital has a fixed number of first-year positions that they can fill each year based on their accreditation.

“This first match day for our University’s residency was an extremely important day for Florida Atlantic University, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, our hospital partners and especially the students who were waiting to find out where they will be spending their next years,” said David J. Bjorkman, M.D., M.S.P.H., dean and executive director of medical affairs for FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine.

The first class of 36 residents in FAU’s internal medicine residency will begin in June. Following weeks of interviews with highly qualified medical school students from across Florida and the nation, the composition of FAU’s inaugural class has 39 percent with roots in Florida. Residents are coming from the University of Miami,
Florida International University, and the University of Central Florida, as well as medical schools across the nation including Johns Hopkins, Georgetown, Rochester, Tulane, University of Southern California, Nebraska, Kansas Kentucky, Wright State, and others. Three hold both an M.D. and Ph.D. as their step toward academic medicine careers at FAU.

“Palm Beach County provides a diverse and robust community to train physicians in all specialties caring for all socioeconomic classes,” said Mary Elizabeth Roth, M.D., vice dean for graduate medical education and designated institutional official in FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine. “We are pleased to be working in partnership with three outstanding hospitals that serve the diverse populations of Boca Raton, Boynton Beach and Delray Beach. Our inaugural class brings diverse interests and strengths to our participating hospitals.”

Boca Raton Regional Hospital is the primary site for the program with participation from Bethesda Hospital East and Delray Medical Center, three of the five hospitals participating in the Graduate Medical Consortium (GME) supporting FAU residency programs. This residency, the first for the cities of Boca Raton, Boynton Beach and Delray Beach, marks an important milestone in bringing additional trained physicians into these communities and is FAU’s first university-sponsored graduate medical education program. Furthermore, this residency program will provide the opportunity for FAU medical school graduates to continue their post-medical school training in Palm Beach County.

“Having additional residency programs in Palm Beach County will create a stronger and enhanced healthcare delivery system for us all,” said Bernardo Obeso, M.D., internal medicine residency program director in FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine. “About 50 percent of doctors choose to practice within 20 miles of where they complete their residency program. Our hope is to infuse in our county young, well-trained internists to serve our cities.”

Using a patient-centered approach through interdisciplinary teams of healthcare professionals, which will include residents, FAU’s program has partnered with the three participating hospitals using integrated conferencing with virtual classrooms. The FAU Medical Simulation Center will introduce residents to high risk procedures, while the use of electronic records and templates will help them master the transitions of care for high quality, lower cost care. Residents will learn from day one that patient safety and quality medical care are the hallmarks for lifelong learning of internal medicine. In addition, research and scholarly activity will be emphasized and facilitated by residency faculty and the partnering community hospitals as an integral part of this program.

“The excitement begins now as we work with the extensive faculty of internists and subspecialty physicians in the three hospitals to prepare the academic support of the 36 internal medicine residents,” said Diane Fitz, director of graduate medical education for FAU. “FAU appreciates the volunteer physicians on their affiliated faculty who make this residency and other residencies possible. The affiliated faculty provide the essential clinical practices and mentorship to shape great internists.”

In fall 2011, the FAU Consortium for Graduate Medical Education was formed in partnership with FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, Boca Raton Regional Hospital, Bethesda Healthcare, and Tenet HealthCare system’s Delray Medical Center, St. Mary’s Medical Center and West Boca Medical Center to establish
residency programs in specialties that would serve their communities, starting with internal medicine. The next programs submitted to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education are general surgery and emergency medicine. Both plan to start in June 2015 to support the match options for FAU’s first graduating class. Also proposed for 2016 and onward are obstetrics-gynecology, pediatrics, family medicine, and psychiatry. By 2022, the FAU GME Consortium hopes to host more than 400 residents in its five hospitals in specialties that will serve well the community and support succession of Palm Beach County’s aging physician population.

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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.