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VIRGINIA KEY, FLA. (May 25, 2006) – A University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science faculty earned top honors from another Florida university for her unique contributions to public health in 2006. The University of South Florida College of Public Health has named Dr. Lora E. Fleming, professor and co-director to the school's unique NSF NIEHS Center for Oceans and Human Health as the Florida Outstanding Woman in Public Health for 2006. The College bestows the award each year on a woman whose career accomplishments and leadership have contributed significantly to the field of public health in Florida.

As the only board certified occupational and environmental medicine physician and epidemiologist in South Florida, Dr. Fleming serves in a unique role at the University of Miami. In addition to her joint appointment in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine and the Rosenstiel School, she is the co-director of the National Science Foundation (NSF)-National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) University of Miami Oceans and Human Health Center – one of only four such centers in the United States. Additionally, she is the acting director and director of outreach and education of the University of Miami NIEHS Marine and Freshwater Biomedical Sciences Center and the associate director of the Florida International University (FIU)-University of Miami NIEHS ARCH Program.

Her work in the areas of marine and freshwater toxins, recreational microbes, environmental human health, and epidemiologic issues has been notably collaborative. Working with various Center colleagues and others, she has created educational materials concerning the human health effects of marine and freshwater natural toxins, and performed research in ciguatera fish poisoning, Florida red tides and cyanobacterial toxins, and the application of GIS to the marine and freshwater toxin diseases. Currently, she is involved in a study of the human health effects of aerosolized red tide toxins, the possible human health effects of microbial pollution in recreational beach waters, the exposure to arsenic among children playing on CCA-treated wood, and the development of K-12 environmental health curriculum materials. With a group of interdisciplinary colleagues, she is exploring the morbidity and mortality of U.S. workers in the National Health Interview Survey funded by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). As acting director of the Florida Cancer Data System, Florida's incident cancer registry, she works with researchers and students to promote work in cancer epidemiology and prevention in Florida. She teaches physicians and residents, and public health, medical, law, architecture, and undergraduate students in environmental and occupational health and epidemiology. She also acts as a consultant in occupational and environmental medicine and epidemiology both locally and internationally.

Dr. Fleming earned a joint MD/MPH degree from Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health. She completed her residence in family practice at Montefiore Hospital in Bronx, N.Y., and earned a Ph.D. in epidemiology from Yale Public Health School.

The Florida Outstanding Woman in Public Health Award was initiated by USF in 1988, and nominations are solicited from public health practitioners across the state. Past honorees include Dr. Lillian Stark, director of virology at the Florida Department of Health Tampa Branch Laboratory, and Dr. Jean Malecki, director of the Palm Beach County Health Department.

Rosenstiel School is part of the University of Miami and, since its founding in the 1940s, has grown into one of the world's premier marine and atmospheric research institutions.

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