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## **FIU Law launches family law practice aimed at representing moderate-income clients**

**MIAMI (July 24, 2017) - [FIU LAW Practice](#)**, an initiative of the [FIU College of Law](#), dedicated to helping local families, will offer affordable legal services to low- and moderate-income families who do not qualify for free legal services.

The practice, first-of-its-kind in Florida, will assist families that fall within 125 and 200 percent of the poverty guidelines. That means that a family of four in Miami-Dade county making between \$30,376 and \$48,600 may be good candidates for the services, which specialize in family law legal matters such as divorce, child support and domestic violence cases.

“Our mission is to increase access to justice for those who seek it while building relationships within the local community,” said Michelle Mason, senior associate dean who serves as the community liaison for the FIU LAW Practice. “In a recent study by the Justice Index Project, nearly 50 percent of Florida litigants appearing in court on a range of civil legal matters do so without legal representation, which may not be in their best interest.”

The practice will charge clients based on a sliding scale, with service prices ranging from \$75 - \$125 per hour. FIU LAW Practice will utilize the legal clinic’s current screening process to confirm eligibility based upon federal poverty guidelines and levels.

FIU LAW Practice will also serve as a legal incubator for recent law graduates, admitted to the Florida Bar. The incubator combines approaches used in medical residency programs with those used in a business incubator setting. The goal of this hybrid, apprentice-style approach is to assist new lawyers through both practical training and mentorship as they launch their careers. FIU LAW Practice will hire two fellows in the first year.

“The practice is an opportunity for families in the community to get sound legal help at an affordable rate,” said Karim Batista, managing attorney for the FIU LAW Practice. “There is also value for our law graduates who will gain real world experience allowing them to successfully transition into the practice, thereby making them an immediate and contributing asset to a law firm either as an entry-level attorney or as a solo practitioner.”

FIU College of Law will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 25, 2017 followed by a Legal Intake Event on Saturday, August 26, 2017. Services are scheduled to begin on September 11, 2017.

If you would like additional information about this initiative, please email [lawpractice@fiu.edu](mailto:lawpractice@fiu.edu).

**About FIU:**

*Florida International University is classified by Carnegie as a “R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity” and recognized as a Carnegie Community Engaged university. It is a public research university with [colleges and schools](#) that offer [bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral](#) programs in fields such as business, engineering, computer science, international relations, architecture, law and medicine. As one of South Florida’s anchor institutions, FIU contributes almost \$9 billion each year to the local economy and is ranked second in Florida in Forbes Magazine’s “America’s Best Employers” list. FIU graduates are consistently among the highest paid college graduates in Florida and are among the leaders of public and private organizations throughout South Florida. FIU is Worlds Ahead in finding solutions to the most challenging problems of our time. FIU emphasizes research as a major component of its mission with [multiple state-of-the-art research facilities](#) including the [Wall of Wind Research and Testing Facility](#), [FIU’s Medina Aquarius Program](#) and the [Advanced Materials Engineering Research Institute](#). FIU has awarded more than 220,000 degrees and enrolls more than 54,000 students in two campuses and centers including FIU Downtown on Brickell, FIU@I-75, the Miami Beach Urban Studios, and Tianjin, China. FIU also supports artistic and cultural engagement through its three museums: [Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum](#), the [Wolfsonian-FIU](#), and the [Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU](#). FIU is a member of [Conference USA](#) with more than 400 student-athletes participating in 18 sports. For more information about FIU, visit <http://www.fiu.edu/>.*