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### **Florida Independent College Fund Receives Support From Staples Foundation for Learning**

**DELAND, FL, (February 3, 2006)** – The Florida Independent College Fund (FICF), a not-for-profit organization for the independent colleges and universities in Florida, announced today it has received a \$10,000 grant from Staples Foundation for Learning. This grant will provide funding for the MentorFlorida! program at Barry University during the 2006-2007 academic year. Through this program, Barry University college students serve as role models for low-income youth and provide them with academic tutoring in problem subject areas.

“We are grateful to Staples Foundation for Learning for their commitment to MentorFlorida! and for supporting this important educational program,” said Kathy Burley, Director of the FICF. “This grant will provide opportunities for student mentors to teach, motivate and guide elementary and middle school students toward academic excellence.”

“MentorFlorida! pairs at-risk children with college student mentors who serve as educational role models and inspire youth to perform better in school,” said Joy Errico, spokesperson for Staples Foundation for Learning. “Staples Foundation for Learning is excited to support this program that brings educational opportunities to youth throughout Florida.”

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MentorFlorida! is a continuation of the highly successful mentoring program partnership with Barry University's Adrian Dominican School of Education. This program will provide on-line training materials for mentoring program managers and mentors, as well as education, reading, science, and math tutorials for participants. The goal of MentorFlorida! is to improve the quality of math and science teaching and learning in colleges, middle schools, and elementary schools.

The FICF is a not-for-profit organization that works closely with the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) to provide expanded access to a higher education for students from all backgrounds. The FICF strives to assist deserving, hardworking students in need of education and training that will result in a better-prepared and educated workforce. For more information about the FICF, please visit [www.ficf.org](http://www.ficf.org).

Launched in August of 2002, Staples Foundation for Learning, Inc. is a private foundation created by Staples Inc. to provide funding to charitable programs that support or provide job training or educational opportunities to all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. To date, Staples Foundation for Learning has awarded nearly \$6 million dollars in grants to non-profit organizations and is a national sponsor of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. For more information about the foundation or how to apply for a grant, please visit [www.staplesfoundation.org](http://www.staplesfoundation.org).

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