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**Contact MEUCE:** Tel: (305) 348-5949 Fax: (305) 348-6562



# News letter Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence -FIU

### VOLUME I, ISSUE 8

## O'Beirne talks about the Euro Challenge Competition

Currently Senior Advisor to the Ambassador at the European Union's Delegation to the United States in Washington, D.C., Maeve O'Beirne has served in several posts including as Press Officer (2000-2005), Speechwriter for several EU Ambassadors (1995-2000), contributor to Europe Magazine and a former editor of the Delegation's flagship publication, A Guide for Americans. Ms. O'Beirne shared with us her insights from her 20 years experience with the EU Delegation, a period during which the EU has changed, growing from 12 to 27 Member States, and adopting a single currency. Ms. O'Beirne visited MEUCE and the South Florida community in order to serve as a judge in MEUCE's 1st round of the annual Euro Challenge competition, which got underway on March 23, 2010.

#### Having served many years for the EU and Washington, why did you feel it was important to come here today?

I felt it was very important to come here today to see first-hand what the Euro Challenge competition involves. Despite my many years with the EU, this was my first time to judge a Euro Challenge contest and I have to say, I was very impressed by the experience, the commitment, and the high standard of preparation by the organizers, in particular Christine I. Caly-Sanchez at FIU, and by all the Florida teams and their mentors. Beyond that, I think it is really important to engage with high school students who are possibly already considering what they want to do when they grow up. I imagine this experience was formative, even transformational, for them, and perhaps we have among them a future Secretary of the United States Treasury! Personally, I welcomed the opportunity to

spend a few days away from Washington DC, where we are still waiting for spring, and to learn how people in Florida see the European Union and current issues generally.

Over the years, some of your work involved speaking to EU correspondents on a variety of topics such as trade, climate change, Iraq, and the EU enlargement, I find this fascinating because the competition covers these pressing EU issues. What advice could you give the high school competitors or American youths when researching this, or forming opinions? I think the first thing young Americans need to do is become aware of the EU and to understand why it is important to them. I wonder how many young Floridians know that the EU is the biggest provider of foreign direct investment in the state and that the EU is a major export destination for Florida? The same is true for the United States. The \$3.75 trillion EU-US transatlantic economy represents the largest, most integrated and longest-lasting economic relationship in the world. That means we have a lot in common and a natural interest in cooperating to solve global problems like climate change, the economic crisis, the search for clean energy, etc. Young Americans need to understand that the EU is something solid that the US can rely on. It is not, for instance, some loose grouping of countries that recently got together to experiment



Maeve O'Beirne Senior Advisor to the Ambassador

European Union Delegation to the U.S. in Washington D.C.

be durable, we have to be relevant and remind people of the benefits of European integration, not least of which is the more than a half century of unprecedented peace in Europe.

#### How about Ireland? What are its biggest challenges?

The economy and rising unemployment are the most pressing issues in Ireland at the moment. Ireland is a small open economy, so when the global recession began, Ireland felt it quickly. A big part of Ireland's problem was caused because of the overreliance of the Irish economy on construction during the housing boom and the so-called Celtic Tiger era, and the financial problems that ensued for Irish banks when the boom ended and developers could not repay their loans. We were vulnerable to the global economic situation, but we also learned the lesson of putting too much store in one form of economic activity. The Irish government is now busy trying to sort out the budgetary consequences of the property binge and restoring the banking sector to health. It has been a tough and costly exercise, but the challenge now is to convince Irish citizens that the lessons have been learned and that better supervision will prevent a recurrence of the speculative behaviour that led crisis. The process of rebuilding confidence in Ireland as a great place to do business has begun.

By Loraine de la Fe

APRIL 2010

with a single currency. It was founded on solemn treaties

more than a half century ago as a peace, reconciliation and

reconstruction process after World War II which left most of

Europe devastated. Its founding mission, first with 6 member

states and still today with 27, remains the preservation of

peace and prosperity in Europe. It is also important for highschool students to understand how the EU works. Unlike

NAFTA, the EU has common institutions and policies and

can make legislation that is applicable in 27 EU countries in

areas where it is more effective to have EU legislation than

national legislation. With the recent passage of the Lisbon

Treaty, the EU has become a powerful economic and political

With all the challenges that are facing the EU today, which

At the moment the economic situation is a

European integration. They are worried

about their immediate circumstances, pros-

pects and problems like the next rent check.

We need to communicate the benefits of the

EU in ways that are relevant to people and

the challenges and fears they are facing. To

actor on the world stage.

one do you feel is the most pressing?





Euro Challenge Judges at the 2010 Florida Competition

When North Miami Senior High 10<sup>th</sup> grader Emily Sell was asked why she felt it was important for students to participate in the Euro Challenge she replied: "We are the future generation. We are the ones who are going to be making global decisions in the years to come. Our ideas for policies will definitely play a role in future government decisions...It's important to get more kids on the bandwagon and contribute their ideas on global and domestic issues that affect the world." North Miami Senior High School was one of the ten schools that competed in the first round of the Euro Challenge competition in Miami on Tuesday, March 23, 2010. The other South Florida high-schools that competed in this year's Euro-Challenge Competition came from Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie counties. For a complete list of the teams please refer to:

http://casgroup.fiu.edu/miamieuc/events.php?id=72

The competition is as follows: each school consists of a team of 3-5 students and confronts a European country and a particular challenge currently facing the nation. Students chose from a list of complex issues ranging from the immigration crisis, population crisis, economic crisis, unemployment, among some. Students had had fifteen minutes to present their case and solutions in front of a panel of judges. The judges on the panel included several prestigious members of the academic, local and European communities: for more information on the judges please refer to <u>http://casgroup.fiu.edu/</u> events/

docs/72/1269457800\_judges\_bio.pdf.

According to one of the judges, Ret. Ambassador of Germany Volker Anding, it is important for students to "keep looking beyond the edge of the horizon because the world is a global village-globalization is here to stay. You have to be conscience of what goes on in the rest of the world. The EU is one of the major players in the world... it has direct influence in what goes on in the world and the US. Euro Challenge judge Honorary Vice-Consul of Poland Beata Paszyc agrees with the Honorable Anding in that

she hopes that "the students realize that the US is not an island, what is happening here has its roots in Europe. We can-



Dr. Mihaela Pintea, Dr. Volker Anding, Beata Paszyc

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## Florida's First Round of the Euro Challenge Competition

not forget that this country is based the European immigrants—Americans are not isolated individuals, but have multiple ancestries-- We are all interconnected with the world." For judge FIU Professor of Economics Mihaela Pintea, "it's wonderful for high school students to go outside their comfort zone. The fact that they prepare for competition, and are rewarded for their efforts, prepares them for life."

Indeed, there seemed to be a consensus among judges, teachers, and students on the skills-building aspect of the competition. According to Coral Reef Senior High School AP European History teacher Rafael Birriel the significance of the Euro Challenge has to do with "realworld application of what we learn in the classroom; It's the public speaking, being in front of a panel of judges, bringing them out of their shells is very important. They also learn the value of teamwork." Several students including 10th grader Ridhima Gurnani from Coral Reef Senior High emphasized their [teamwork]: "It also taught a lot of us better time management skills we would meet for several hours on a school day and then homework. The collaborative effort, working productively on the weekends --we had to adjust to everyone's schedule. And you were able to learn to allocate certain amount of time and not waste time." She adds that it was an inspiration to see the "government officials and representatives of the European society give us young people a chance to voice our ideas."

At the end of the competition, the three teams that won will compete in the finals in an all-expense paid to New York City sponsored by the Moody's Foundation on April 27<sup>th.</sup> The winning schools are Coral Reef Senior High School, G. Holmes Braddock Senior High School and Miami Palmetto Senior High School. They will be three among the 75 teams from seven states (New Jersey, North Carolina, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Florida) that will be competing in the finals for cash prizes. In addition to providing scholarships, the Moody's Foundation will also sponsor a one-day trip to Washington DC for the top team to visit the Delegation of the European Commission, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, and the International Monetary Fund.



### The Three Florida Winners



Coral Reef Senior High School



G. Holmes Braddock Senior High School



**Miami-Palmetto Senior High School** 

By Loraine de la Fe

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# **FIU Students Study in Prague**



Dr. Barbara Weitz Director of Prague Study Abroad



Since 1992, Florida International University has hosted the six-week Summer Czech Program. During the summer semester students have an opportunity to earn upper division credits in Humanities-related fields including English, Film Studies, Architecture, European Studies, History and Women's Studies taught by professors at Charles University in Prague as well as FIU Professors. In addition to taking courses, the program offers many field trips that allow students to engage with the city's lively culture and society.

Why Prague? According to Program Director Dr. Barbara Weitz, "Prague was the center of culture for 1000 years." She explains how Prague was and is "still the biggest promoter of Renaissance culture outside of Italy." And what makes it more interesting, is that it is authentic. Medieval and early modern Prague architecture is restored, not rebuilt as is done in other parts of Europe. In addition to learning about the city, Dr. Weitz guides the students to other parts of the Czech Republic including its mountainous regions, near the Polish border, and excursions to the Sudetenland.

For FIU Alum and History major, Miriam Kashem Prague was a perfect match for her interests: "The best thing about the study abroad was the experience of having history come



Sonia Sheron in Prague

alive. Seeing places that I had only read about, touching walls of famous buildings, and walking through old city streets are things you cannot get in a classroom." Ms. Kashem attended the Study Abroad program in

2008 and elaborates on how her professors enriched her learning experience by relating to the literature and history they were being taught by sharing their personal memories.

The interdisciplinary nature of the program allows for it to appeal to stu-



Miriam Kashem in the Sudetenland

dents in other majors as well. According to Sonia Sheron, recent graduate of FIU Theatre, who attended the program in 2007, "part of the Prague Study Abroad Program included attending the Prague Quadrennial, which is like the Olympics of scenography. The Prague Quadrennial is an International exhibition of scenography and theater architecture. It takes place every four years. Another point of interest that swayed my decision was the Karlovy Vary



Being a theatre major, Sonia heads over to Prague's premier film studio

## Prague Study Abroad (cont')



Film Festival. In addition to that, I was very interested to see a different part of Europe that is so traditionally noted such as Italy, or France."



For both participants it was truly difficult to point out their most memorable experience, yet both agreed that it was their walk through the concentration camp at Terezin, that impacted them the most. "It was hard to breathe while walking through there", said Miriam Kashem. However, the students also remarked their experiences walking around the city of Prague, seeing for themselves the Charles Bridge, Wenceslas

Square in which Ms. Sheron remarked, "You realize it is no longer a foreign city, but home.

According to Dr. Weitz, the Prague Study Abroad Program" is a life-changing experience. Students have told me for years afterwards that the trip was not only the most important thing they have, done, but it changed how they looked at the world, at themselves, at what they have. Some of them have changed their majors because of it. Some students stayed there, married Czechs and have gotten jobs there. I visit them every year." For Sonia Sheron indeed, the experience was more than a school field trip: "I don't think the Study Abroad experience helped me as a student as much as it has an individual. Sure it's incredible to see first hand the architecture and the monuments that one studies in books, but more importantly the overall experience opens your eyes to a new culture. It widens your view of the world, and helps you become a citizen of the planet rather than just a student at FIU."

Students interested in applying to the program can find more information on <u>http://www.fiu.edu/~weitzb/Prague-</u><u>Study.htm</u>.







Miriam drinks water from the High Tatras Mountains' Waterfall in Slovakia

# FIU Honor Students Study in Italy







This summer the FIU Honors College Italy not Italian but have lived there. "It helps a lot program will conduct its 13th annual study with perspective, not being Italian; we appreciabroad program in Italy. The Italy program is ate many things that an Italian would take for an interdisciplinary program that begins with a granted-because it's there." 14 weeks "Aesthetics, Values, and Authority in Italy". that there is always something new to see in The course covers various subjects including Italy, no matter how often one goes, or can see Italian culture and language, and class com- the same thing in a new light." Professor Knebines slide presentations, lectures, literature, ski attributes the success of the program to that film and field trips. More specifically the fact that the professors and organizers "are not course covers interdisciplinary subjects such afraid to let the program change organically, as ancient Roman government, History, Art with a program like this, you have to be flexi-History, and Italian cinema- in order to appeal ble; the country is changing, so the program to students who are not normally humanities should reflect that." According to the hundreds majors.

to take courses at the Italian Universities and changing experience" in which the learning is visit three distinct Italian cities: Rome, Flor- 'non-stop'. ence, and Padua (Venice). For Prof. John For more information about the program Honors College, what makes the program so italy/home.htm successful is that the professors involved are

preparatory course entitled Prof. Kneski emphasizes the excitement lies in of participants from the past Italy Study While in Italy, students have the opportunity Abroad Program, the program was "a life-

Kneski, Associate Dean & Senior Fellow, The please refer to http://www.fiu.edu/~honors/

By Loraine de la Fe







## Miami EUCE Awards Faculty Research and Faculty Curriculum Development Grants



**Dr. Kerstin Hamman** University of Central Florida



Dr. Carla Carlage Florida Atlantic University



**Dr. Markus Thiel** Florida International University



**Dr. Aimee Kanner** Florida Atlantic University



Each year, the FIU-MEUCE hosts a research grant competition that is open to faculty and PhD candidates at Florida International University, the University of South Florida, the University of Central Florida, the University of North Florida, and Florida Atlantic University. The competition provides award recipients with financial support for their research including but not limited to travel, archival/data acquisition, and research assistance. The purpose of the grant is to foster research concerning European Union issues. Awards range from 1,500 to 3,000 euros. Research grant money comes from the Delegation of the European Commission in Brussels.

For Dr. Markus Thiel, recipient of the Faculty Research Award the grant will help support his travel to Brussels and Vienna this summer. While there, he will be conducting research on the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), established in 2007, in order to improve human rights in Europe. "My research project focuses on the FRA's contact with civil society representatives in the agency's Fundamental Rights Platform." For Thiel, the grant means more than just monetary support for his project: "it simply motivates me, knowing that the Grant Selection Committee found my proposal worthy of support."

The other Faculty Research Project was awarded to Dr. Kerstin Hamann, Professor of Political Science at University of Central Florida in Orlando. Dr. Hamann's award will help her conduct research for her project entitled "The Politics of Industrial Relations: Spanish Unions from Dictatorship to the European Union."

In addition to funding faculty research projects, the FIU- MEUCE holds Curriculum Development Grant competitions throughout several universities in the State of Florida.

This year the FIU-MEUCE awarded three professors all based out of Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Aimee Kanner-Arias, Professor of Political Science, will use her award to develop her new graduate level course entitled "The European Union as a Global Actor." The next award recipients were actually for a joint project. Dr. Carla Calargé and Dr. Prisca Augustyn, both Associate Professors in the Department of Languages, Linguistics and Comparative Literature will use the grant to fund their course on "An Introduction to the EU and European Studies."

For more information on the research grants please see the following link:

http://casgroup.fiu.edu/events/ docs/65/1266437669\_research\_flyer.pdf

For more information on the faculty curriculum development grant, please see the following link: http://casgroup.fiu.edu/events/ docs/66/1266437788\_curriculum.pdf

By Loraine de la Fe





## **European Presence in Miami**



At the southeastern tip of the United States, just north of Latin America and on the threshold of the Caribbean, in recent years Miami has become a global crossroads for business, banking, film, fashion, art exhibition, music, cuisine, airline traffic, tourism, and many varied events. Although most people think of Miami as the capital of Latin America, Miami now enjoys another distinct flavor in all those areas: European!

Although the 6 European consulates (France, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom) in Miami boast large number of citizens registered at their sites, they agree that a large number of their citizens are not registered. Therefore, the numbers only tell a part of the story. Here are some figures on the most representative European communities in Florida and Miami:

Nationalities	Florida	Miami
British	150,000	N/A
French	30,000	11,200
German	150,000	N/A
Italian	22,939	N/A
Spanish	20,000	12,000

#### **Business**

The European business community stretches far and wide over the Greater Miami-Dade area. They seem to pop up everywhere, covering a wide range of services: Aviation/ Aerospace, Life Science, Biomedical, Financial Services, Information Technology/Telecommunication, Fashion-Lifestyle, Tourism, Gastronomy, furnishing, Film and Entertainment, amongst others.

- France: Airbus, Air France, Alstom, Areva, Bouygues Construction, Bureaux Veritas, Club Méditerranée, Danone Foods Latin America, Paul, Sofitel-Group Accor, amongst others.
- Germany: Audi, Eddie Bauer International, Helmann, Lufthansa, Porsche Latin America, SAP International, Schenker International, Siemens, amongst others.
- Italy: Alenia, Astaldi, Academia Barilla, Bertrand Yacht, Condotte, Costa Cruise, Ferrari, MagneGas, San Pellegrino, amongst others.
- Netherlands: CH Powell, Corporate Express, Eads Sogema Barfield Inc., KPMG, Martinair-Holland Cargo, Randstad, TMF Services Miami Inc., Univar, Nielsen Media Research,

amongst others.

- Norway: Norwegian Cruise Lines, amongst others
- Spain: Amadeus, Eulen, FCC, Grifols America LLC, Iberia, Ocean Auto Center/Ocean Mazda, Porcelanosa, Santillana USA Publishing, Telefonica, OHL, amongst others.
- Sweden: Eletrolux Home Products Inc., Ekman and Co, Sony Ericson, amongst others.
- United Kingdom: BAE Systems' Bovis Lens Lease, BBC America, British Airways, EMI Music Publishing Latin America, Glaxo Smith Kline, Grant Thornton, Hotel Inter-Continental Miami, Inmarsat, Perkins Power Co., Reuters America, St. Inv. Inc. –Avanti, Signature Flight Support Corp., Wunderman, amongst others.

#### **Banking**

All a long, commercial Biscayne Boulevard, one of Miami's main arteries facing the bay, and sophisticated Brickell Avenue, Miami's banking center, European banks dot the city's skyline, as they do all along the other main thoroughfares— LeJeune Road, Flagler Street, Tamiami Trail, and Ponce de Leon, among others. Here are just but a few: BNP Paribas, Credit Lyonnais, Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank, Banco Popular, Banco Atlantico, Banco de Sabadell, Caja Madrid, Barclays Capital Bank, HSBC, Lloyds TSB Bank.ABN AMRO Private Banking and V. LaSalle Bank...

#### **Fashion**

Fashion has not taken a back seat. In fact, there is a strong trend in what is now the "Miami Fashion Life-Style" and many European companies are showcasing clothing, shoes, jewelry, cosmetics, and accessories. Miami became a home for French and Italian multinationals. More than 35 French multinationals with 2,300 local employees are located in Miami-Dade County, including: Guerlain Latin America, Parfums Givenchy, Western Hemisphere Division, Longchamp, Parfum Christian Dior Latin America, L'Oreal, Cartier, Ferragamo Latin America, Bulgari Retail USA.

(Sources: The Beacon Council, Enterprise Florida, Trade offices)



## European Presence in Miami (con't)



#### Films/Festivals

Miami has become the film capital of the world only after Hollywood! Not a day goes by that the streets of Miami are not blocked off to shot yet another scene for an action movie. Miami sells, and moviemakers and film producers want to show their films in one of Miami Film Festivals. European film fans have also begun to support their own festivals, and year after year, their films festivals are attracting bigger and bigger crowds. At present, the following European festivals are screening films in our city: The Dutch, French, German, Italian, Sicilian, Spanish, and European Film Festivals, amongst others.

#### **Miami International Airport**

European companies have made Miami a city to be easily accessed from Europe. Gone are the days when Europeans had to fly to New York or Atlanta to transit to Miami. Today, Miami International Airport boasts a large number of direct flights from and to Europe (11 major cities in 7 European countries—12 European airline companies—see table on right)

#### **Port of Miami**

The Port of Miami, FL, known as the cruise capital of the world, serves as the embarkation point for 18 cruises ships operated by several major cruise lines. Norwegian Cruise line and Costa are two of them. The port of Miami, FL also serves as the gateway for more than 3 million passengers a year.

For incoming freight, there are multiple carriers who call the Port of Miami home for goods incoming from Europe. Maersk, CGM/CMA, Hapag Lloyd are amongst the many which serve our city.

The Port of Miami has 17 European sister seaports (10 in Spain, 1 in France, 5 in Italy, 1 in UK).

Company	Destination	Weekly	Average Non-
		Flight	stop flight time
GERMANY			
• Air Berlin	Berlin	N/A	N/A
<ul> <li>Lufthansa</li> </ul>	Dusseldorf	6	9 hours 5 min.
<ul> <li>Lufthansa</li> </ul>	Frankfurt	7	8 hours 45 min.
<ul> <li>Lufthansa</li> </ul>	Munich	3	9 hours 40 min.
FINLAND			
• Finnair	Helsinki	N/A	N/A
United Kingdom	T J	20	0.1
British Airways	London	30 7	8 hours 25 min.
• Virgin Atlantic	London	/	8 hours 40 min.
SPAIN			
• Iberia	Madrid	16	8 hours 30 min.
• Iberia	Tenerife	7	N/A
• Air Europa	Madrid	4	9 hours 10 min.
ITALY			
• Alitalia	Rome	5	9 hours 40 min.
• Alitalia	Milan	N/A	N/A
FRANCE			
• Air France/Delta	Paris (CDG)	14	8 hours 55 min.
• CorsairFly	Paris (Orly)	2	N/A
·			
SWITZERLAND			
• Swiss International	Zurich	7	9 hours 10
Airlines			

Sources: Miami International Airport, Port of Miami, The Beacon Council.

By Christine I. Caly-Sanchez



## European Presence in Miami (cont')



#### Art

Art Basel, sister event of Switzerland's Art Basel, is the most important art show in the US. Following its steps, many European artists are bringing their exhibitions to Miami and its galleries in the Miami Design District.

#### <u>Music</u>

The world of music is alive and well in Miami, and although Latin rhythms permeate the air, giving our city its Latin flavor, European music shows and festivals have also began to spring up in our city; here are just but a few:

- National Chopin Piano Competition
- Flamenco Spanish Festival
- International Tropical Baroque Music Festival

#### <u>Cuisine</u>

European cuisine has taken Miami by storm. Not only are there a large number of European restaurants in Miami, but also European food festivals: Food and Wine Festival, Great Wines of Italy.

#### **Other Varied Events**

Many, many other European events organized by European cultural associations also take place in our beautiful city. Here are just a few of the European Associations: Alliance Française of Miami, Miami Hispanic Cultural Art Center, Centro Cultural Español de Miami, Societa Dante Alighieri, Inc., German-American Social Club of Greater Miami, Inc., Chopin Foundation of the United States, Inc., The Miami Bach Society.

All in all, Miami continues to grow as an international city and "The Gateway to the Americas" is now becoming even more globalized, and as the new Panama canal project approaches its end, Miami's Latin and European communities will begin to join ties with the next big giant: Asia. By Christine I. Caly-Sanchez

### FACTS AT A GLANCE

Approximate number of Europeans living in Florida and Miami

Nationalities	Florida	Miami
British	150,000	N/A
French	30,000	11,200
German	150,000	N/A
Italian	22,939	N/A
Spain	20,000	12,000

#### • 6 European Consulates General:

France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom

- 12 Honorary Consulates: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Monaco, Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Switzerland
- 5 European Trade Offices: Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom
- Miami's 6 most important European trading partners: , United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Netherlands
- 10 European bi-national Chambers of Commerce: United Kingdom, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkish
  - Among those 10 European bi-national chambers of commerce, 5 (French, German, Italian, Spanish, British) organize common activities and events:
    - A monthly European Chambers of Commerce Newsletter
    - A monthly seminar series on business related topics that target an audience of local European-based companies
    - European Sport Activity Events

Sources: Consulates, European Chambers of Commerce, Beacon Council, U.S. Census Bureau





## **Contact us**

#### Florida International University

Modesto A. Maidique Campus, DM 441 C 11200 SW 8th Street Miami, FL 33199

- **Dr. Rebecca Friedman** Co-Director, MEUCE, FIU E-mail: friedmar@fiu.edu
- Christine I. Caly-Sanchez Associate Director, MEUCE, FIU Phone: (305) 348-5949 Fax: (305) 348-6562 E-mail: calyc@fiu.edu http://www.miamieuc.org



**University of Miami** 101-301 Ferré Building Coral Gables, FL 33146-3010

- **Dr. Joaquín Roy** Co-Director, MEUCE, UM E-mail: jroy@miami.edu
- Astrid Boening

Associate Director, MEUCE, UM E-mail: astridboening1@aol.com Phone: (305) 284-3266 Fax: (305) 284-4406 http://www6.miami.edu/eucenter

# **Book Announcement**







Dr. Joaquín Roy is Jean Monet Professor of European Integration, Director of University of Miami European Center and Co-Director of the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence. He is the authors and editor, and co-editor of 25 books which include *The Reconstruction of Central America: the Role of the European Community* (1991), and *Towards the Completion of Europe* (2006), among several others.

His last book on "Espana, la Union Europea y la Integracion latinamericana" is about Spain, the European Union and the integration of Latin America.

For more information on the book please go to the following site: www.aupresses.com