

Giving Back

Harbor Branch awarded grant for Indian River students

By Carin Smith
Your Newsweekly Contributor

A select group of high school students in Indian River County who love science will have the chance to study alongside some of the best researchers in the region, thanks to funding that was recently awarded to FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI).

A 2014 environmental solutions grant for \$40,000 from Wells Fargo and administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will help support the second year of the Junior Scientist Fellows program, a partnership between

HBOI and the Indian River Land Trust.

A check was presented recently to program leaders during a reception at HBOI.

"We seek to develop a long-lasting network of young people with authentic scientific research experiences in lagoon environmental management," said program lead and Research Professor Dennis Hanisak, Ph.D.

"These students are the next generation who will now be better able to make wise decisions for the lagoon's resources and coastal lands."

The program allows local high school students

to work alongside HBOI scientists on research projects that aim to provide solutions to real-world issues in the Coastal Oaks Preserve, a 185-acre environmentally sensitive property along the Indian River Lagoon that is owned and managed by the Land Trust.

"The data we are obtaining on these coastal habitats is very important," said Land Trust Executive Director Ken Grudens. "The notion that we are providing a college-level scientific experience for high school students to generate this information is priceless."



Wells Fargo's Kate Wilson and Travis Robins, HBOI Interim Executive Director Dr. Megan Davis, HBOI research professor Dr. Dennis Hanisak and Land Trust Executive Director Ken Grudens.