

FIU iREAL Concept Paper:
THE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC HISTORY AND HERITAGE
At the Military Museum and Memorial of South Florida

This iREAL paper proposes that FIU do what it does best: educate, in a relationship with the emerging Military Museum and Memorial of South Florida located on the grounds of Zoo Miami. This is not necessarily to advocate FIU assume ownership of the facility (it already has strong partnerships), but to join in creating the Educational Center of the facility: an **Institute for Public History and Heritage Studies** at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The K-thru-12 component will be under the aegis of the Miami-Dade County Public School System. Some aspects to begin the dialog are:

FIU history instruction of lecture, reading, and writing, would be augmented by hands-on research and instruction in Public History, historic preservation and museum science. All of the better universities offer learning in these popular growth fields to aspiring liberal arts students. FSU's Spanish Missions and the Institute on WWII and the Human Experience; as well as UF engagement with historic St. Augustine, are just a few successful models. Our educational center, grounded in historic preservation, and is now at the build-out phase for experience-based assessment in museum creation, administration, and best practice sustainability. It will generate trained graduates for the growing field of preservation, and position FIU to participate in the historic restoration of post-Castro Cuba, an approaching reality.

The Institute focus on the ethics of service, civics, and our military heritage engages intimately the growing FIU Veteran student body, and very large veteran's community of South Florida. Our direct constituencies include the important military commands of South Florida: SOUTHCOM, USCG Seventh District, SOCSOUTH, HARB and affiliates. Institute studies in Military History will attract top commanders, compliment the SIPA National Security Program, and facilitate FIU Research and Development initiatives towards the DOD.

The Institute's real connection to our Cold War heritage is striking, both in its incarnation as CIA Headquarters for the Caribbean, and for its importance to the roots of the predominantly Hispanic composition of the FIU student body, and the South Florida community itself.

Points to consider:

1. The Military Museum and Memorial is completely unencumbered.
2. The dirt under the historic building is owned by Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation.
3. The license for the facility is for fifty years, the longest time period there is.
4. Provisions in the license grant Miami-Dade County the option to assume entire ownership.
5. An MGM hotel and theme park of 100+ acres is going in adjacent to the Military Museum.
6. A European Jurassic Park of 30 acres is going in adjacent to the Military Museum.
7. A University of Miami academic village is going in adjacent to the Military Museum.

These developments a short drive from FIU main campus offer iREAL drivers to FIU, not only in Public History, Library Science, Hospitality Management, and Public Administration. The FIU School of Education can partner with Miami Dade Schools on the K-thru-12 curricula. It will enhance the FIU outreach to Zoo Miami. Entrepreneurial confluences and powerful possibilities for the internships critical to successful modern education are arriving. The Military Museum and Memorial offers it service, and presents FIU with fresh new canvas for research, engagement, assessment and learning.