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Florida A&M University to Host South Florida Medical Marijuana Community Forums

Tallahassee, Fla. – Florida A&M University’s (FAMU) Medical Marijuana Education and Research Initiative (MMERI) today announced two South Florida public forums as part of its goal to educate and inform the state’s diverse communities about medical marijuana and the dangers of illegal marijuana use.

The community events, scheduled for Fort Lauderdale on Sept. 7 and Miami Gardens on Sept 10, are free and open to the public.

MMERI Interim Executive Director Patricia Green-Powell, Ph.D., said FAMU MMERI is doing something that has never been done before. As pioneers in a fledgling industry, it’s crucial to get public input from all over the state in order to develop and refine a message that resonates with the people MMERI is trying to reach.

“These forums have given MMERI the opportunity to have a two-way conversation with members of Florida’s diverse communities,” said Green-Powell, who has been an educator for 36 years and served as the former interim dean of the FAMU College of Education.

“This message creation and delivery is particularly complex because we are first-movers in the medical marijuana space,” said Green-Powell. “And though MMERI’s work is informed by research, most Floridians are informed by folklore and illegal use when it comes to cannabis. Our job is to convey information and what can be complex in a way that everyone can understand. These forums are the first step in this process.”

The MMERI was launched in response to the Florida Legislature’s funding allocation to educate “minorities about marijuana for medical use and the impact of the unlawful use of marijuana on minority communities.” As part of the 2017 legislation, FAMU receives \$10 for every \$75 identification card purchased by individuals approved to buy medical marijuana.

The MMERI forum provides community members with an opportunity to engage in a two-way conversation with community medical marijuana experts.

MMERI’s objective is to:

- build a repository of information for medical marijuana education and research
- establish the University as a touchstone center for marijuana information
- fill in the gaps in medical marijuana research particularly as it relates to diverse communities

The research projects are expected to be completed by June 30, 2020.

Fort Lauderdale Forum:

When: Saturday, September 7, 2019 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Where: African American Research Library and Cultural Center, 2650 Sistrunk Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Miami Forum:

When: Tuesday September 10, 2019 from 10 a.m. to noon

Where: Betty T. Ferguson Recreational Complex at 3000 NW 199th Street, Miami Gardens, Fla.

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