‘Courage Takes Flight: The Life and Times of Harold Glasser’ Exhibition at FAU Library Honors WWII Bombardier, Former Miss Universe President

BOCA RATON, FL (October 21, 2011) – “Courage Takes Flight: The Life and Times of Harold Glasser,” an exhibition that highlights the distinguished military contributions of the World War II bombardier, as well as his 27-year tenure as president of Miss Universe, Inc., will be on display through Friday, December 16, at the Wimberly Library on Florida Atlantic University’s Boca Raton campus.

The extensive exhibition spans from Glasser’s birth in New York in 1918, to his death at his Highland Beach home in 2010. It vividly tells the story of a man whose successes in war and peace were based on tremendous courage, intelligence and insight.

“The exhibition shows what one can achieve when you apply yourself,” said Victoria Thur, special collections librarian and university archivist. “The exhibition showcases an enduring legacy of accomplishment.”

Glasser graduated from New York University, Columbia Law School and Harvard Law School. The attack on Pearl Harbor and the movie “Winning Your Wings,” a 1942 Army recruitment film starring James Stewart, motivated Glasser to give up a job at a law firm and enlist in the U.S. Army Air Forces. He achieved the rank of first lieutenant and earned 12 combat decorations.

The exhibition coincides with the 70th anniversary of the United States’ entry into World War II and features such items as Glasser’s bombardier jacket, pilot logs, his combat decorations, historic war photographs and even letters seeking Veteran Benefits due to radiation exposure.

The exhibition also follows the Miss Universe organization from its infancy in 1959 when Glasser took over as president, to the end of his tenure in 1986, when it had become an internationally recognized label. Through Glasser’s worldwide travels, he met statesmen, politicians and celebrities, many of whose letters and photos are included in the exhibition. A Miss Universe crown that Glasser designed and some of the handmade cards and love letters he and his wife exchanged during their marriage are also featured in the exhibition.
During his long and varied career, Glasser served as mayor of the incorporated Village of Saddle Rock, N.Y. Locally, he was chairman of the board of governors at the Polo Club in Boca Raton.

The exhibition was curated with materials from the library’s “Harold L. Glasser Collection,” which was established after Glasser’s widow, Marny Glasser, gifted the memorabilia to FAU this year to inspire younger generations.


The exhibition, which is free and open to the public, is inside of the special collections suite on second floor east, in the display cases outside of special collections and in the Marvin and Sybil Weiner suite on the library’s fifth floor. Hours are from 1 to 3 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. For more information, contact special collections at 561-297-2693 or lysca@fau.edu.

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Photo #1: A painting of Harold L. Glasser by E.P. Ziegler is among the exhibition items.
Photo #2: A Miss Universe crown designed by Harold L. Glasser is featured in the exhibition.

About Florida Atlantic University:
Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. In commemoration of its origin, FAU is celebrating its 50th anniversary throughout 2011. Today, the University serves more than 29,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses and sites. FAU’s world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.