Genealogist and Author Genie Milgrom to Discuss ‘Search for Jewish Roots’ at FAU’s Jewish Cultural Society Program

BOCA RATON, Fla. (November 3, 2014) — The Jewish Cultural Society at Florida Atlantic University will host Genie Milgrom, a genealogist and international lecturer, for a program titled “From the Spanish Inquisition to the Present: A Search for Jewish Roots,” on Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3 p.m. at the Wimberly Library, 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton campus.

Born in Cuba into a Roman Catholic family of Spanish ancestry, Milgrom’s fascinating journey to discover her roots has turned up 22 generations of grandmothers in an unbroken maternal lineage that dates back to the early 1500s. She also has proven that her family was Converso Jews before the Spanish Inquisition. Although the search for her paternal lineage is in the early stages, she has found two generations of great grandparents with Crypto Jewish lineages.

“This means that there is no lineage that is not Jewish,” said Milgrom. “What changed my life fundamentally was understanding that I was in a unique situation to help others struggling to find who they were and this mission of reaching out and in some cases just holding the boat steady for those following my path.”

After finding her ancestral roots, Milgrom began studying the Inquisition processes to determine migration patterns and occupations and reviewing Last Wills and Testaments and charitable foundations that were begun in the 1600s. “Slowly, I am trying to piece together that day of Jewish history that was lost to our people,” she said.

The Miami resident has authored two books, “My 15 Grandmothers,” which was published in 2012, and “How I found My 15 Grandmothers: A Step by Step Guide,” which was published in 2014, and she writes for academic journals and magazines.

Milgrom is also president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Miami; president of Colorado State University’s Society for Crypto Judaic Studies; and president of Tarbut-Sefarad Fermoselle in Barcelona, where she helps to disseminate information on villages that housed Crypto Jews.
The Jewish Cultural Society (JCS) organized in 2008 to advance Jewish cultural traditions and education at FAU and its libraries through philanthropic endeavors. The organization is the lead sponsor of FAU Libraries’ annual Kultur Festival, a celebration of Jewish music and arts that runs next year from Saturday, Feb. 28 through Saturday, March 7, 2015 on the Boca Raton campus.

“The JCS is thrilled to kick off our season by bringing this important and little-known chapter of history to the community,” said Evelyn Solomon, JCS’ president. “Genie Milgrom’s story serves as a wonderful springboard for others seeking their ancestral roots and for those interested in history.”

Admission to the lecture is free for FAU students with an Owl Card; $15 for the general public; $12 for JCS members; and $20 for JCS member couples. To purchase tickets, visit fauf.fau.edu/jcs-events or call Jackie Simpson at 561-297-3921.

For more information on the Jewish Cultural Society, contact Evelyn Solomon at 561-883-2933 or hi2evy@aol.com; Sandra Crain at 561-498-9223 or radac@bellsouth.net; or email jewishculturalsociety@fau.edu.

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Photo Captions

GenieMilgrom1.jpg: Miami author and genealogist Genie Milgrom will speak at FAU on Sunday, Nov. 16, at the Wimberly Library at FAU’s Boca Raton campus.

About Florida Atlantic University:
Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of $6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. 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. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of three signature themes – marine and coastal issues, biotechnology and contemporary societal challenges – which provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU’s existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu