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Florida Atlantic University Poll Finds Female Hispanics Driving Improved Consumer Sentiment

BOCA RATON, Fla. (January 13, 2015) – For the first time since the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative ([FAU BEPI](#)) began in August, a majority (52.6 percent) of Hispanics have a favorable view about the U.S. economic conditions over the next five years—with females leading the charge. Additionally, the Hispanic consumer confidence index continued to rise in December to a new high of 86.4, up from 81.3 in November, but it still lags behind the December high of 93.6 reported by the University of Michigan’s [National Consumer Sentiment Index](#).

“A plausible explanation for the increase in the consumer sentiment among Hispanics could be the improving labor market and falling gasoline prices”, said Monica Escaleras, director of FAU BEPI. “Female Hispanic consumers are leading the way in the improving mood of Hispanic consumers. However, lower income Hispanics appear to be keeping the Hispanic index lower than the national index.”

The Expectations Index also rose nearly five points from 81.6 in November to 86.1 in December matching the Michigan index (79.9 to 86.4) for the second month in a row. Optimism toward business conditions in 2015 also increased five points from 52.6 percent to 57.6 percent.

Females are the driving force behind both of these attitudes with 62.1 percent optimistic about business conditions (53 percent for males) and 56.4 percent of females are optimistic about the economic conditions of the country over the next five years (48.9 percent for males).

The Current Conditions Index was also up from 80.8 in November to 86.1 in December, but overall is down compared to the national index which is at 104.8. Driving down the current conditions index are the lower income Hispanics—40.6 percent of those with incomes of under \$25,000 say they are better off financially than a year ago compared with 57.8 percent of those with incomes between \$25,001-\$75,000 and 71 percent with incomes over \$75,000.

The polling sample consisted of 500 Hispanics with a margin of error of +/- 4.33 percent, and a 95 percent confidence level. The poll ran from December 1-31.

For more information about this survey and the initiative, visit www.business.fau.edu/bepi, or contact Monica Escaleras at 561-297-1312 or BEPI@fau.edu.

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About FAU BEPI:

The Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative Conducts surveys on business, economic, political and social issues with a focus on Hispanic attitudes and opinions at regional, state and national levels via planned monthly national surveys. The initiative subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research and is a resource for public and private organizations, academic research and media outlets. In addition, the initiative is designed to contribute to the educational mission of the University by providing students with valuable opportunities to enhance their educational experience by designing and carry out public opinion research.

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.