

# Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

*Legacy Project and  
Fellowship Program*



FLORIDA  
INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY

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Recent national and international events remind us of the continual need of strong leadership in government, civic leadership in society and diversity in public service. Current times are also an exciting era for women in leadership roles across the nation, including in foreign service and elective office.

Florida International University (FIU) invites you to support an innovative and collaborative **Fellowship Program** to further the legacy of a trailblazing American public servant: **Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, '75, '87.**

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**L**ike Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FIU recognizes that more must be done to ensure that our hometown’s future leadership is well prepared to lead while facing the realities of our national challenges, economic trends, and global dynamics.

FIU and our partners will establish a platform to honor the legacy and impact of Ros-Lehtinen, the first Hispanic woman elected to the U.S. Congress. The Project was launched in 2023 and is ongoing with a graduate student fellow organizing and preparing the expansive potential exhibit materials. The first Ros-Lehtinen Fellow cohort is expected in 2025 and an exhibit will be forthcoming in the fall of 2025.

**The Ileana Ros-Lehtinen Legacy Project and Fellowship Program will include:**

- **The Ros-Lehtinen Scholar and Legacy Collection**
- **Annual Ros-Lehtinen FIU Foreign Affairs Fellows and scholarships in Washington, D.C. and Miami**
- **Quarterly leadership seminars at FIU in Washington, D.C.**
- **Inaugural Historical Exhibit**
- **The Ros-Lehtinen Reading Room at FIU in Washington, D.C.**

***“I believe in the promise of America. Being a Cuban refugee, having come here when I was eight, I know that this is a shining city on the hill.”***

***– Ileana Ros-Lehtinen***

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FIU embodies the same bold energy, principled leadership, entrepreneurial spirit, and commitment to global leadership for which Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen is known. FIU has taken bold steps to catalyze engaged and experiential leadership opportunities in our nation’s capital, and the **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen Legacy Project and Fellowship Program** will help expand and enhance these opportunities.

Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen’s stature as a public servant in Miami, Tallahassee, Washington, D.C., and across the globe is unparalleled. She is the epitome of leadership in our beloved hometown of Miami and is respected around the world. The lessons to be learned of her trailblazing experience as the first Hispanic woman elected to the Florida House, the Florida Senate, and the U.S. Congress; first female Chair of the Foreign Affairs committee or any standing committee of the U.S. House of Representatives will be of value for generations to come.

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***“ No matter where you are from, no matter what your background is, no matter what your socioeconomic status is, every person can achieve his or her dreams.”***

***– Ileana Ros-Lehtinen***

### ***Ros-Lehtinen Scholar and Legacy Collection Project***

An annual twelve-month graduate student award for an FIU student in the Digital Humanities to catalogue and organize the Ros-Lehtinen Collection and curate an initial exhibit to lay the foundations for a permanent exhibit and archive. The graduate fellow will serve as the Ros-Lehtinen Scholar at FIU’s Steven and Dorothea Green Library.

Prior to retiring from Congress, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen donated an extensive collection of photographs spanning four decades of Florida and American politics to FIU. The initial exhibit will draw from these materials to present a dynamic and diverse exhibit featuring the many facets of the Congresswoman’s career.

### ***Annual Ros-Lehtinen Fellows in Washington***

Annual identification of Leadership Fellows from the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs each semester for placement in a paid, one-semester internship on Capitol Hill, particularly in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Each year, the university will curate and publish a journal of essays prepared by the Fellows cohort reflecting on the relevance of Washington’s lessons on today’s challenges.

### ***Quarterly Leadership Seminars***

In collaboration with the nationally-recognized Center for Leadership at FIU, quarterly leadership seminars will be hosted in Washington, D.C. with the Congresswoman and a range of individuals and organizations. These leadership seminars will also expand on the challenges and opportunities for women serving in public office and global challenges of our time.

### ***Inaugural Exhibit***

The exhibit will reflect on her historic election as the first Hispanic woman elected to Congress and the global changes that she witnessed in her three decades in Congress. This includes the end of the Cold War, 9/11 and the war on terrorism, and South Florida’s evolution into a cosmopolitan global region. The exhibit will highlight her career long commitment to human rights around the globe and her signature advocacy for her constituents.

### ***The Ileana Ros-Lehtinen Reading Room at FIU in Washington, D.C.***

In recognition of all the efforts of donors and inaugural committee for the Ros-Lehtinen Legacy project, the reading room of FIU in Washington, D.C. would be named in honor of the Congresswoman. A unique selection of books from the Congresswoman’s collection will be available for students and scholars to access during their visits to Washington, D.C.

# Ros-Lehtinen and FIU: *Bold Leadership in Our Nation's Capital*



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### *Inaugural Committee Gifts*

**Pioneer:** \$100,000

**Trailblazer:** \$75,000

**Leader:** \$50,000

**Mentor:** \$25,000

**Benefactor:** \$10,000

### *Florida International University*

Florida International University is the fourth-largest university in the nation. Miami, Florida's first and only public research university, it is a critical driver of Miami's economy and leadership. A top-ranked Carnegie research institution, it provides solutions to its federal research agency partners and will continue to produce the lions-share of corporate executives, elected officials, and cross-sector leaders in Miami for decades to come.

The Talent Lab at FIU in Washington, D.C. is a comprehensive program to ensure success for FIU students seeking the opportunity to make an impact on the world's greatest challenges through Fly-In Seminars, internships, and courses in the nation's capital.

Launched in 2008, *FIU's Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs* educates the leaders and changemakers of tomorrow through innovative teaching and research that advances global understanding, contributes to policy solutions, and promotes international dialogue. The Green School is a full member of the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs (APSIA), becoming the first university in Florida to achieve this prestigious designation and one of only 25 U.S. and 40 APSIA member schools in the world.

*FIU's Center for Leadership* is dedicated to exploring leadership through thought and practice through continuous research, providing opportunities for leaders to develop keen self-insight, and teaching leadership competencies that will equip them to meaningfully transform their organizations and their societies. In 2018, the Center was awarded two prestigious first-place LEAD Awards by HR.com.

### *Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, '75, '87*

A proud alumna of Florida International University, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen represented the state of Florida in elective office for over thirty years, including as the U.S. Representative for Florida's 27th Congressional District. Born in Havana, Cuba, at the age of eight, she and her family fled the oppressive communist regime of Fidel Castro and settled in Miami. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Education and her Master of Arts in Educational Leadership from FIU. Ros-Lehtinen began her career as an educator before being elected in 1982 to the Florida legislature, where one of her greatest contributions to millions of Floridians was the creation of the Florida Prepaid College Program, which became a national model for financing college tuition. While serving in Congress, Ros-Lehtinen pursued and obtained a Doctorate in Education, further pursuing her lifelong passion for education.

In 1989, she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming the first Hispanic woman to serve in Congress. In 2010, her colleagues selected her to serve as Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Her role on this committee was critical in shaping U.S. foreign policy and encouraging good governance around the globe, significantly contributing to this country's strong support for human rights, the democratic State of Israel, and opposition to Castro's dictatorship in Cuba. Additionally, she was a leader in the fight against Islamist extremism and support of free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. In the U.S. House of Representatives, she proudly led the fight to impose sanctions on human rights violators in Venezuela and Nicaragua. At the same time, she was a staunch supporter of pro-democracy movements and activists in China, Tibet, Taiwan, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and other countries around the world. Always a tireless advocate for the environment and the fragile South Florida ecosystem, Ros-Lehtinen was also instrumental in the cleaning of the Miami River, prevention of oil-drilling off the coast of Florida and helping create the Florida Keys Marine Sanctuary.



FIU IN WASHINGTON, D.C.  
WASHINGTONDC.FIU.EDU  
601 NJ AVENUE, NW #103, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
WWW.FIU.EDU