

# best *in class*

**Dr. Stephen Leatherman came to FIU 11 years ago intent upon making the International Hurricane Research Center the No. 1 hurricane mitigation center in the world. The center is on the verge of fulfilling that vision, “of doing great things to help people help themselves,” says Dr. Leatherman, after recently winning a \$10 million grant.**



## *Faculty*

**My passion:**

The reason I really came here is to help people get through hurricanes. My passion, and really what the International Hurricane Research Center is all about, is finding ways to lower the damage from these devastating hurricanes. Our goal at the center is to make it so that we can all get through Category 1, 2 and 3 hurricanes with little or no damage.

**On the Wall of Wind:**

This is the big, new science in hurricane research. It's a machine we've developed that generates hurricane-force winds up to a Category 4 storm. Soon we'll be doing Category 5 hurricane-force winds with rain and debris. It's the first of its kind in the world. Recently, we were awarded a \$10 million Florida Center of Excellence grant to continue our wind engineering research and outreach. The whole essence of this is to find a way to make buildings stronger, to make your house stronger, so it's more affordable to live here, so the insurance rates stay down and insurance stays available.

**My dream:**

My dream is to create a TV series, *Living With Hurricanes*. The format would be similar to a home makeover show, but we'd spend each segment making a house stronger against storms. I see it as an opportunity to share with the public in a meaningful way what we've learned from the Wall of Wind and other research.

**Stephen Leatherman, Ph.D.**

Professor and Director, FIU International Hurricane Research Center. A “country guy” at heart, Dr. Leatherman enjoys tending nearly two acres of land filled with more than 100 trees and “lots of flowers and fruits” in East Kendall. “Some people say it's overgrown. I say it's lush.”

*“A winning combination exists at FIU that allows great things to happen.”*