

Media Contact:
Ashley J. Martinez
(813) 974-8606
amartinez@floridacollegeaccess.org

PRESS RELEASE
FLORIDA C.A.N.!
4202 E. Fowler Avenue, ALN 190
Tampa, FL 33620



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2016 Florida FAFSA Challenge Winners Announced
Florida CAN recognizes schools and districts for boosting FAFSA completion rates

Tampa, FL – Florida College Access Network (Florida CAN) is pleased to announce the winners of the [2016 Florida FAFSA Challenge](#), a statewide campaign to increase the proportion of Florida high school seniors completing the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#). The Florida FAFSA Challenge encourages all schools and districts to set a FAFSA completion goal 5% higher than their rate as of March 31 of last year or alternatively, a goal that fits their school’s unique circumstances.

Florida CAN applauds all schools and districts that committed to helping more graduating high school seniors access financial aid for college and congratulates those that boosted their FAFSA completion rates this year.

“We are grateful to the many schools, districts and communities that pulled out all the stops to ensure their seniors had every opportunity to complete the FAFSA,” said Laurie Meggesin, Executive Director of Florida CAN. “The ultimate winners are Florida students who will now be able to afford college or career school next fall.”

“The Challenge has put a spotlight on schools, districts and communities working hard to boost FAFSA completion rates,” said Troy Miller, Associate Director for Research and Policy for Florida CAN. “We look forward to sharing these best practices to ensure that money is never the reason why students don’t go to college.”

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The winners of the 2016 Florida FAFSA Challenge are:

The Winners Circle

(Awarded by size of 12th grade class)

“MVP” (Highest FAFSA completion rate through March 31, 2016)

Large School: TERRA Environmental Research Institute, Miami, Miami-Dade County

Medium School: Pine View School, Osprey, Sarasota County

Small School: School for Advanced Studies (South), Miami, Miami-Dade County

Large District: Sarasota County

Small District: Gulf County

“Most Improved” (Greatest increase in FAFSA completion through March 31, 2016)

Large School: North Port High School, North Port, Sarasota County

Medium School: Mater Academy Lakes High School, Hialeah, Miami-Dade County

Small School: Imagine School at North Port, North Port, Sarasota County

Large District: Sarasota County

Small District: Calhoun County

“Fastest Lap” (First to reach 5% goal)

Large School: North Port High School, North Port, Sarasota County

Medium School: Mater Academy Lakes High School, Hialeah, Miami-Dade County

Small School: Imagine School at North Port, North Port, Sarasota County

Large District: Sarasota County

Small District: Jefferson County

A printable version of the Winner Circle can be found [here](#).

Champions

(Schools that set and achieved a FAFSA completion goal)

Schools (School, City, County):

Atlantic Technical College & Technical High School, Coconut Creek, Broward County

Hallandale High School, Hallandale Beach, Broward County

Nova High School, Davie, Broward County

Blountstown High School, Blountstown, Calhoun County

iPreparatory Academy, Miami, Miami-Dade County

Venice Senior High School, Venice, Sarasota County

A printable version of Champions can be found [here](#).

All-Stars

(All Florida schools and districts that raised their FAFSA completion rate by at least 5% through March 31st)

Schools (School, City, County):

Professional Academy Magnet at Lofton High School, Gainesville, Alachua County
North Bay Haven Career Academy, Panama City, Bay County
Palm Bay Preparatory Academy 6-12, Panama City, Bay County
Atlantic Technical College and Technical High School, Margate, Broward County
Hallandale High School, Hallandale Beach, Broward County
Monarch High School, Coconut Creek, Broward County
Nova High School, Davie, Broward County
Somerset Preparatory Academy Charter School at N. Lauderdale, N. Lauderdale, Broward Co.
Blountstown High School, Blountstown, Calhoun County
Oakleaf High School, Orange Park, Clay County
Lorenzo Walker Technical High School, Naples, Collier County
Marco Island Academy, Marco Island, Collier County
Archimedean Upper Conservatory, Miami, Miami-Dade County
Doral Performing Arts & Entertainment Academy, Doral, Miami-Dade County
iPreparatory Academy, Miami, Miami-Dade County
MAST Academy, Key Biscayne, Miami-Dade County
Mater Academy Lakes High School, Hialeah, Miami-Dade County
Mater Performing Arts & Entertainment Academy, Hialeah Gardens, Miami-Dade County
Miami Arts Charter, Miami, Miami-Dade County
Pinecrest Preparatory Academy Charter High School, Miami, Miami-Dade County
School for Advanced Studies (South), Miami, Miami-Dade County
Somerset Academy Charter High School, Homestead, Miami-Dade County
Somerset Academy Charter High School (South Homestead), Homestead, Miami-Dade County
Duval Charter High School at Baymeadows, Jacksonville, Duval County
Pine Forest High School, Pensacola, Escambia County
West Florida High School/Technical, Pensacola, Escambia County
Blake High School, Tampa, Hillsborough County
Florida Southwestern Collegiate High School, Ft Myers, Lee County
Oasis Charter High School, Cape Coral, Lee County
Leon High School, Tallahassee, Leon County
Bronson Middle High School, Bronson, Levy County
Marathon School, Marathon, Monroe County
Fernandina Beach High School, Fernandina Beach, Nassau County
Baker School, Baker, Okaloosa County
Orlando Science Middle High Charter, Orlando, Orange County
Osceola County School for the Arts, Kissimmee, Osceola County
Zenith, Kissimmee, Osceola County
A.D. Henderson University School & FAU High School, Boca Raton, Palm Beach County

Wesley Chapel High School, Wesley Chapel, Pasco County
Lakewood High School, St Petersburg, Pinellas County
Palatka High School, Palatka, Putnam County
Central School, Milton, Santa Rosa County
Imagine School at North Port, North Port, Sarasota County
North Port High School, North Port, Sarasota County
Pine View School, Osprey, Sarasota County
Sarasota High School, Sarasota, Sarasota County
Venice Senior High School, Venice, Sarasota County
Wildwood Middle High School, Wildwood, Sumter County
Vernon High School, Vernon, Washington County

Districts:

Calhoun County School District

A printable version of All-Stars can be found [here](#).

Florida CAN is awarding trophies to the fifteen schools and districts in the top award categories of “Most Valuable Player”, “Most Improved” and “Fastest Lap” and a certificate of achievement to all Florida schools and districts that met or exceeded a FAFSA completion goal. For a more detailed view of the results, including FAFSA completion rates for the winning schools and districts, [click here for the final leaderboard](#).

The Florida FAFSA Challenge is part of a suite of statewide initiatives collectively called College Ready Florida. These initiatives, which include Apply Yourself Florida! (Florida College Application Month) and College Decision Day, are designed to build a college-going culture and help all high school students, especially low-income students and those who are the first in their families to go to college, continue their educations beyond high school. If you are interested in receiving updates or learning more about the College Ready Florida initiatives, please complete [this interest form](#).

The Florida FAFSA Challenge is made possible thanks to the support of the [Helios Education Foundation](#) and [Swift Family Foundation](#).

About Florida College Access Network

The mission of the Florida College Access Network is to create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college & career preparation, access, and completion for all students. Our Big Goal is to increase the percentage of Florida residents who hold a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential to 60% by the year 2025. For more information, visit www.floridacollegeaccess.org.

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