



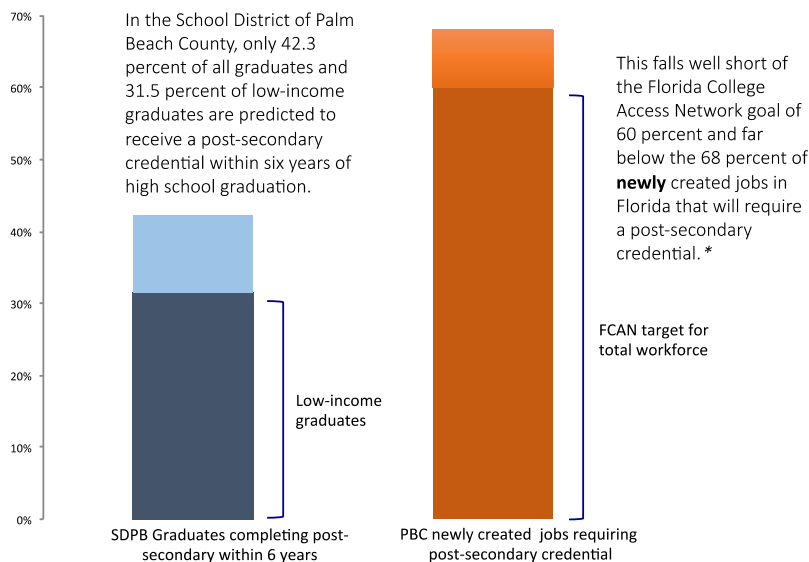
Position Announcement

Vice President United Way of Palm Beach County, Florida

The Opportunity

The United Way of Palm Beach County has accepted the role of backbone organization for a new collective impact initiative with the goal of increasing post-secondary access and completion among high school students.

The Florida College Access Network states that to be competitive, Florida needs to increase the percentage of individuals age 25 to 64 with a high-quality, post-secondary degree or credential to 60 percent by 2025. The Georgetown Center for the Workforce predicts that of all **new** jobs created in Florida by 2020, 68 percent will require a post-secondary credential. However, Palm Beach County graduates fall far short of these goals.



In May of 2015 a broad group of over 170 community leaders came together to discuss this issue. A collaborative group was formed, utilizing a collective impact approach, to create a strategic plan that would serve as a blueprint for the work moving forward. This collaborative group remains actively engaged in implementing this work, focused on improving college access and completion for Palm Beach County students. Over 40 partner organizations have been actively engaged thus far, including public and private colleges (awarding certificates, Associate's and Bachelor's degrees), the public school district, local government, nonprofit providers, funders, corporations, and civic and business organizations.

Our vision is that every Palm Beach County high school graduate completes a post-secondary credential within six-years of high school graduation that prepares them for a meaningful career with a sustainable wage.

Our mission is to collectively ensure an integrated and effective system of supports from middle school through post-secondary that empowers students for career success.

In designing and implementing this work, we are committed to the following ***guiding principles***:

- The term “college completion” includes ***any form of post-secondary credential***. This encompasses Bachelor's and Associate's degrees as well as professional certificates.
- The ***voices of students and parents*** are essential in designing approaches to increase access and completion.
- The initiative must intentionally consider all types of students and be ***inclusive*** of the many diverse communities within Palm Beach County.
- The route to and through college may be different for each student, requiring ***individualized options and supports*** that meet students' unique needs and interests.
- ***Collective impact*** provides a framework for collaboration, alignment and synergy that will most efficiently maximize community efforts to improve college access and completion outcomes.

In order to understand how best to improve college access and completion, we commissioned a research study of the needs of Palm Beach County students. This study included a review of performance data for Palm Beach County, a scan of current programs and services, and in-depth stakeholder conversations with the following groups:

- students in high school and in college,
- advisors to high school and college students,
- parents,
- community leaders,
- and providers of college access and completion support.

Based upon this research and effective practices in other communities, we determined the most promising areas to address first through our strategic plan.

Initial Areas of Focus

➤ *Parent engagement and support*

Parent support can propel a student to college or derail them. Many parents do not understand the long-term advantages of a college credential. Parents also need financial literacy regarding funding for college and an understanding of various post-secondary options.

➤ *Post-secondary advising for high school students*

High school counselors have numerous duties and responsibilities. While high school counselors should be supported to provide additional and more in-depth support for college access, they must also continue to address numerous student needs including social and emotional support, student course and program selection, and academic support toward graduation. The experience of other communities that have been successful in increasing college access shows that high school counselors alone cannot provide sufficient time or individualized attention to meet the college advising needs of all students. Successful efforts to increase college access in other communities have added support from external partners to high schools for dedicated, individualized post-secondary advising, including support from volunteers, professional staff, teachers, peers and online resources.

➤ *FAFSA completion*

A significant predictor of college access is completion of the FAFSA form (Free Application for Federal Student Aid.) The FAFSA form is generally required for consideration for all needs-based aid, not just federal aid. FAFSA completion rates at Palm Beach County high schools vary from 35 percent to 70 percent of graduating seniors. Fewer than 25 percent of Palm Beach students receive the state-funded scholarship, Bright Futures. Even at the highest levels, the Bright Futures scholarship covers less than 60 percent of tuition at a Florida public college. Therefore, for middle and low-income students, completion of the FAFSA form is essential for college affordability.

➤ *Scholarships, non-financial resources, and support services for college students*

Results in Palm Beach County and across the nation demonstrate that getting *to* college is much easier than getting *through* college. Our research revealed a number of barriers along the route through college that students must overcome in order to succeed. These include sustained funding for not only tuition but fees, books, and unexpected emergencies; academic advising support to select the best programs of study and necessary courses; navigation of rules and processes required for timely registration, withdrawal and payments; and social and emotional support to adjust to a college environment.

The Role

Through funding from numerous organizations and foundations, the collaborative is now ready to hire an executive leader to oversee implementation of this work.

Achieve Palm Beach County seeks an inaugural leader to drive the initiative from concept to execution, serving as champion, ambassador, collaborator and lead staff member in building the story, the staff, the strategy and the systems to guide the detailed work to follow.

Achieve Palm Beach County is a collective impact partnership including more than 40 education, government, nonprofit, business and philanthropic organizations committed to increasing college access and completion. The purpose of this partnership is to leverage the efforts of existing community providers by seeking alignment, integration and resources to fill gaps in services. It is not anticipated that the V.P. will be directly starting or managing new programs, but rather facilitating and enhancing the work of existing organizations within Palm Beach County.

While the V.P. will report to the United Way's Senior Vice President of Community Impact, a group of Executive Champions and an Operations Team of community leaders will provide guidance to the work and extend the reach and depth of the core staff team. Achieve Palm Beach County will ultimately have a small, focused staff as well as supporting consultants. However, the primary work will be managed through a collective impact model, utilizing Strategy and Support Teams of local community organizations.

The V.P. will be tasked to make Achieve Palm Beach County a reality, overseeing all operational, financial and relationship-management aspects of the new entity. Although much work has been done to date, Achieve Palm Beach County is today a vision, and the V.P.'s first responsibility will be to lead the move from concept to execution, molding today's deliberations into a cohesive, implementable and impactful strategy.

More particularly, the V.P. will be expected to ensure the following:

Relationship Management & Community Engagement

As the initiative's public face, the V.P. must cultivate effective working relationships with a diverse set of stakeholders, including students, families and an array of leaders in education, business and the nonprofit, philanthropic, civic and faith-based sectors. In addition to engaging with community groups and individual leaders, the V.P. will provide support and facilitation of Strategy Teams (initially formed around the four Areas of Focus listed earlier) and two Support Teams to focus on data and outreach/communications. Collaboration and relationship-building will be absolutely central to success.

Communications and Advocacy

As primary spokesperson for Achieve Palm Beach County, the V.P. must champion awareness of issues pertaining to college readiness, access and completion and promote the organization's contribution to a better future for Palm Beach County students. He/she

must ensure effective mechanisms and messaging to communicate Achieve Palm Beach County's activities and successes to a variety of audiences. The V.P. will also ensure that information is shared among the working Strategy and Support Teams in an efficient and effective manner that supports inclusive, transparent, and collaborative work.

Resource Development

While Achieve Palm Beach County has secured sufficient resources to support implementation for the near future, the V.P. will be required to generate additional resources for growth and sustainability. The V.P. will also lead development of resources to support implementation of initiatives within the Areas of Focus, including securing government and private grant funds, major gifts, and in-kind support.

Leadership and Management

The V.P. must develop and implement a sustainable strategy consistent with the founding vision. The mission is blessed with true resonance across a wide array of stakeholders and partners, but there are not yet any definitive work plans or full-time employees. The V.P. will not only build and lead the new staff, but he/she will be expected to model the commitment to impact and team community collaboration that has informed the work thus far.

Outcomes and Performance Monitoring

Achieve Palm Beach County is committed to measurable impact on college access, persistence and completion for Palm Beach County students. Within these long-term outcome measures are a number of specific student characteristics that must be tracked including demographic characteristics, program participation, and high schools and post-secondary institutions attended. An ability to understand and promote an outcome focus aligned to specific performance measures and targets is critical to success.

Financial Management

The V.P. will be responsible for developing Achieve Palm Beach County's annual budget, ensuring optimum resource utilization and sound financial stewardship.

The Candidate

The ideal candidate to lead Achieve Palm Beach County will be an effective, thoughtful executive with the proven ability to drive the founding vision from start-up to impact, ensuring that all students are provided with the support and resources to help them frame and achieve post-secondary and career goals.

The best candidates will be strategic thinkers who combine the attitude of a servant leader with the heft of demonstrated leadership success in environments requiring effective collaboration between and among community leaders, funders, students, parents, educational institutions, and a variety of program partners.

Qualified candidates will possess the following characteristics:

- Managerial success, grounded in best practices and the most current research, in initiatives or organizations that have made significant progress on educational outcomes, in spite of low expectations or entrenched barriers
- Practical experience in the development of truly impactful programs or initiatives within both start-up and institutional environments, with demonstrated growth in organizational resources, reputation, and reach
- Practical experience engaging families and other support networks to support students' aspirations and opportunities to achieve
- The proven ability to create and leverage broad-based momentum within an organization dependent on buy-in and support from an unusually diverse group of partners and communities
- Experience in building and maintaining strategic partnerships with for-profit corporations, and nonprofit organizations, including faith-based, government and philanthropic agencies
- An exceptional reputation among peers for influence, critical thinking, and problem-solving; demonstrated through an influential professional network
- A solutions-driven management approach supported by experience and hard data
- A record of creating and supporting staff teams of exceptional competence
- Focus and tenacity in pursuit of challenging goals
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, strong presentation and interpersonal skills
- Proven ability to develop and manage a budget, including efficient resource utilization.

To be the most competitive, a candidate to lead Achieve Palm Beach County must have an authentic understanding of the community context, and a demonstrated commitment to education and educational attainment. Post-graduate degree preferred, with a minimum of five years of executive level management experience.

To submit an application for this position, please send resume, cover letter, and salary requirements to: careers@achievepbc.org.

The deadline for applications is March 24, 2017.

Additional information on the initiative is available at www.achievepbc.org.