



MEDIA ALERT
ENLACE FLORIDA
4202 E. Fowler Avenue, SOC 107
Tampa, FL 33620

Media Contact: **Braulio Colón**
ENLACE Florida
(813)313-8903-cell, bcolon@enlace.usf.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, March 9, 2011

**Student Leaders Call For Better Teacher Evaluations, Financial Aid Reform, And A
More Efficient Higher Education System**

~Students represent delegations back home on Florida education reform~

Tallahassee, FL- Student leaders unveiled a set of education policy recommendations that include a call for improvements to how teachers are evaluated, financial aid reform enhancing the support for middle-income and low-income students, and a renewed focus on improving higher education productivity without diminishing quality while meeting future workforce demand in Florida. Fresh from debate at Florida's [3rd Annual Student Education Policy Conference](#), student leaders shared specific education policy recommendations during a student-led press conference in Tallahassee on this morning. Following the press conference, students met with key legislators and presented their resolutions during their visit to the Capitol. "One of the areas we were very interested in weighing in on is the debate surrounding improving teacher quality," said Andrew Hecht, student attending the University of Florida. "While we understand the value of including student learning gains as part of how a teacher is evaluated, we'd also like to see 'student feedback' become part of how teacher effectiveness is measured," said Hecht. During the press conference students also offered recommendations for improving Florida's financial aid system. Millie Ruiz, a student attending the University of Central Florida, believes that Florida and institutions should do more to support the unmet financial need of middle-income and low-income high achieving students trying to afford the increasingly high costs of higher education. "I believe there's more we can do to support this segment of our student population in Florida," says Ruiz. The list of student recommendations include establishing a trust fund set to provide grants to students from middle-income families as defined by the U.S. Department of Education and provide a tax credit to corporations who contribute to the trust fund. Student delegations recently met in Tampa to debate and come to consensus on education reform measures important to them. [ENLACE Florida](#), a statewide network promoting college readiness, access, and success for underrepresented students, is coordinating and facilitating the effort.

###