



MEDIA ALERT
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Tampa Organizations Come Together To Form Local College Access Network

~Mission is to expand college access programming to first generation, limited-income students in Hillsborough County~

Tampa, FL- Students in Hillsborough County may soon have more opportunities to participate in local community-led college access programming designed to prepare them for success in college. Today thirteen organizations came together to form [Hillsborough C.A.N.!](#), a local college access network with a mission to increase student access to high-quality, innovative, and proven community-based programs that prepare students academically, socially, and financially for college and postsecondary career training. “Our economy is changing quickly and it requires that more students receive an education beyond high school in order to compete,” said Braulio Colón, Interim Director for the [Florida College Access Network](#) (formally [ENLACE Florida](#)), the statewide organization facilitating the effort. “What the organizations represented here today have decided is that in order to reach the goal of having more students enter and complete college, we’re going to have to work alongside school districts in a more collaborative fashion to ensure we our leveraging all of our resources to develop and expand community-based services efficiently and more effectively,” said Colón. The new local college access network, Hillsborough C.A.N.!, is chaired by Bill Hoffman, President of the Hillsborough Education Foundation. “The Hillsborough Education Foundation focuses on student achievement in the public schools with the ultimate goal of students graduating high school ready to be successful in post secondary education and in a meaningful career,” said Hoffman. Other organizations represented in the effort include the Tampa Bay Academy of Hope, Brink Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, University of South Florida, Hillsborough Community College, B.E.S.T., School District of Hillsborough County, S.M.A.R.T., Boys and Girls Club of Tampa, Hillsborough County Crime Prevention, Bethesda Ministries, Hillsborough County Public Libraries, and Tampa Metropolitan YMCA. “We are thrilled that the Hillsborough College Access Network has been established and is creating a collaborative framework to further this work

throughout the community,” said Hoffman. “On a personal level I’m honored to be appointed Chair and look forward to working with the group to increase student success.” The Florida College Access Network engages communities for higher education and promotes college-readiness, access, and success for limited-income, first generation students through research, communication, advocacy, and community support with the Big Goal of increasing the proportion of working adults in Florida who have a postsecondary degree or credential to 60% by 2025.

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