

Application for the 2015-2016 College Reach-Out Program Taps # 16B037  
Section 5: Project Narrative, Items (A) – (D)

**Institution:** University of Florida

**GENERAL CONSORTIUM DESCRIPTION**

(A) Statement of Purpose: (Include the need for and expected results of the project.)

The University of Florida College Reach-Out Program (CROP) is responsible for identifying and recruiting economically and educationally disadvantaged students in grades 6 through 12 from targeted schools and assisting them in the admission to and successful completion of postsecondary education. Through developed relationships with school administrators and teachers, local libraries and community organizations, recruitment of students that meet both requirements and that are in need of academic and cultural enrichment, academic, personal, and career counseling, and the motivation to succeed will be accomplished. Without these recruitment efforts and special support services, many of these students would not consider postsecondary education as an option.

**Need for Project:** Focusing on academic excellence and rigor, career exploration, retention, college access and economic mobility, the College Reach-Out Program is critical for the rural, urban and suburban populations of Alachua County, since it will improve the success of students as they move toward postsecondary opportunities. This is apparent based on school and county demographics for the children and families that we plan to serve. Based on 2013 data, 24.9% of the population in Alachua County lives below the poverty level (in comparison with 16.3% for the state). When this is translated into the preK-12 school system, 47% of students are on free or reduced lunch based on data reported in October of 2014. Based on 2013-2014 FCAT 2.0 Reading data, at the Alachua County District level, 72% of Blacks, 40% of Hispanics, 28% of Whites and 63% of Students on Free or Reduced Lunch in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade were on an Achievement level of 1 or 2 and 73% of Blacks, 39% of Hispanics, 23% of Whites and 62% of Students on Free or Reduced Lunch in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade were on an Achievement level of 1 or 2. Based on 2013-2014 FCAT 2.0 Mathematics data, at the Alachua County District level, 72% of Blacks, 39% of Hispanics, 31% of Whites, and 64% of Students on Free or Reduced Lunch in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade were on an Achievement level of 1 or 2 for total FCAT 2.0 Equivalent Scores. Additional District data include:

- 1) Free/reduced lunch averages were 48.0% for Alachua County. The state rate is 52.4 %. (FL DOE 2014-2015)
- 2) Based on 2013-2014 data, at the Alachua County District level, 59.6% of Blacks, 70.5% of Hispanics, and 79.1% of Whites graduated. The graduation rate for Alachua County was 72.2%. (The Florida high school graduation rate for 2013-2014 was 76.1%.)

**Program Design:** The University of Florida College Reach-Out Program will serve 200 students. The program's goals are to increase student interest in academic excellence and enhance academic skills while preparing them for entrance into a postsecondary institution. The program will educate students and parents on effective reading, writing and math skills, new and innovative studying methods and goal setting techniques, which will keep the student focused and motivated to achieve her or his educational goals. Parents will attend workshops and visit college campuses so that they will be equipped with the information needed to motivate their child(ren) to succeed through middle and high school and achieve a postsecondary education. This project includes both a strong academic component and strong partnerships designed to:

- 1) develop and enhance basic skills by providing supplemental instruction and academic and career counseling;
- 2) provide students with rigorous coursework preparation through enrollment in Level II and III classes and foreign language classes;
- 3) provide exposure through cultural activities and educational field trips;
- 4) prepare students for college entrance exams;
- 5) provide behavior modification strategies through mentoring and educational experiences that will increase students' motivation, self-esteem, and confidence to succeed in their postsecondary educational pursuits;
- 6) provide guidance and assistance with postsecondary enrollment, retention and the financial aid process;
- 7) provide students with information on civic responsibility and citizenship;
- 8) expose student to Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) fields;
- 9) assist students in testing out of college remediation classes; and
- 10) provide support and/or resources for students in their first-year at a postsecondary institution.

The University of Florida CROP is proactive in ensuring that our outcomes are aligned with the learning outcomes of our institution. The University of Florida CROP expects to:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increase assessment scores to the state averages for 2013 as reported by the <i>Office of Assessment and School Performance</i>;</li> <li>2) Increase overall GPA of 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders to 3.0;</li> <li>3) Maintain promotion rates at 97% for 6<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> graders;</li> <li>4) Maintain a graduation rate at or above 95%;</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5) Increase the number of students enrolled in Honors/AP courses &amp; the number of students applying for Dual Enrollment by 2.8%;</li> <li>6) Decrease student truancy rate by 2%;</li> <li>7) Increase enrollment of eligible Caucasian students by 7%.</li> </ol> |
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These activities will collectively result in the long-term measurable outcome of increasing the number of CROP students who upon high school graduation are admitted to, and successfully complete postsecondary education. CROP is taking a proactive approach to ensure students are taking advantage of all services provided.

(B) Service Area: (List counties to be served by the project.)

The University of Florida will serve all middle and high schools and centers in Alachua County.

(C) Existing **Non-CROP** Programs:

The following institutional and community-based programs enhance academic performance of low-income, educationally disadvantage students in Alachua County: (1) Take Stock in Children, (2) North Florida Educational Talent Search, (3) The Reichert House, (4) Santa Fe College Upward Bound, (5) PACE Center for Girls, (6) National Achievers Society, and (7) Community-Based College-Access Program sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club and Mike Powell & Associates.

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Section 5: Project Narrative, Item (E)**

**Institution:** University of Florida

**GENERAL CONSORTIUM DESCRIPTION**

**(D) Past CROP Project Successes for 2013-2014**

Total Number of Participants:	103
Number in grades 6-11: <u>81</u>	Number promoted: <u>81</u>
Number in grade 12: <u>22</u>	Number graduated: <u>22</u>
Number of graduates enrolled in postsecondary education:	<u>21</u>

**Explain other past successes:**

- 100% graduation and promotion rates are due to excellent staff including tutors that ensure that students are completing the checklist requirements for each year.
- One student, who had excelled in Dual Enrollment courses, was encouraged to apply and eventually received the Gates Millennium Scholarship to Rice University.
- The Day in the Real World has grown significantly (over 120 students) and has provided students with the confidence to succeed. During this conference they learn about financial aid, budgeting, and the importance of developing studying habits that meet your individual needs.

**(E) Explain how the proposed project:**

**1. Employs innovative approaches:**

- A Day in the Real World Conference will introduce CROP students the challenges of maintaining one's self in today's society and strategies that may assist in "jumping those hurdles."
- Students will engage in a mentoring program between college students (mentors) and CROP students (mentees). Being involved in a mentoring relationship will open the opportunity for CROP students to deepen their relationship with the institutions and to jump start their careers by gaining insight and receiving support from mentors.
- Students will participate in hands-on instruction in critical STEM areas through specialty camps and hands-on institutes and take field trips with their instructors to connect college majors and career fields with subject areas.
- Students will become more conscious of sustainable jobs and the career opportunities afforded them.
- In response to Florida's Next Generation PreK-20 Education Strategic Plan, all students will be assessed on their basic mathematics and reading skills; these skills will be strengthened so that each student will perform at her/his grade level.
- Eight grade students and their parents will participate in well-planned and well-facilitated workshops that will prepare students to transition from middle school to high school.
- Ninth grade students will participate in a bridge program to strengthen their high school transition. Upper classmen will mentor 9<sup>th</sup> graders as well as 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents will participate in various workshops and opportunities that will assist them in overcoming social, academic, and emotional challenges of 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

- Parallel Parent/Student Workshops will be held to maximize parent and student participation and increase their awareness of academic preparedness.
  - Students will integrate community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities (Service Learning).
  - Pre-employment workshops (for securing student employment and work/study in college) will include writing resumes, reviewing job descriptions/expectations, completing job applications, complying with employer rules/workplace attire.
  - Project FUTURE (for males) and Sisters Achieving College Together (Sisters ACT) for females will include shadowing college students and attending a college program organized by student groups.
2. Provides a great variety of activities: Students will gain first-hand knowledge and appreciation for learning by:
- Visiting institutions/historical sites to stimulate students' desire to become academically, socially and culturally aware;
  - Participating in hands-on experience with STEM related activities through facilitated exposure (e.g. Santa Fe Kika Silva Pla Planetarium, and zoological parks such as the Santa Fe College Teaching Zoo);
  - Developing an appreciation for the arts through direct exposure (e.g. visiting art galleries/festivals, museums, UF Phillips Center for the Performing Arts);
  - Attending diverse workshop topics of engagement targeted to enhance students' knowledge and skills regarding high school graduation requirements and college admissions;
  - Broadening their social and historical awareness by planned visits to institutions/historical sites to stimulate students' desire to become academically, socially and culturally aware;
  - Increasing collaboration and cooperation with other state-sponsored educational preparation events such as Brain bowls, spelling bees, essay-writing contests, leadership conferences and service projects;
  - Participating in summer enrichment programs, weekly after-school and Saturday tutorial sessions (college/university premises) throughout the year, and residential programs at the University of Florida;
  - Attending test-taking and study skills strategy workshops for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, EOC and PERT exams; and
  - Participating in group/individual counseling on self-esteem, problem-solving strategies, peer-relationships, time-management, organization, etiquette, education/career planning, drugs, gangs, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, decision-making and health and nutrition issues.
3. Demonstrates an interest in cultural diversity:
- Students will attend and/or participate in Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Asian Awareness Month activities such as educational forums and speakers, plays, and fashion shows, as well as partner with campus student entities such as VISA (International Students), Asian Student Union, Black Student Union, and the Hispanic Student Union.
  - Each of the six sites will be sponsored by a UF international group that will provide them with knowledge about their country, customs, and culture in a program "Through My Eyes." At the end of the year, the CROP students will present at a showcase their sponsoring country. Forums will be held each semester giving CROP students an opportunity to meet and network with students and faculty from other cultures.
4. Addresses the unmet regional needs of varying communities:
- CROP will provide seniors with assistance to complete college applications and financial aid forms.
  - CROP will provide transportation for students who are engaged and are participating in the various planned programs, activities, and events.

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Section 5: Project Narrative, Items (F) – (I)

Institution: University of Florida

**GENERAL CONSORTIUM DESCRIPTION**

**(F) Executive Summary of Proposed Project (Include support strategies for *Just Read, Florida!* and program marketing /dissemination):**

Studies are conducted annually that support the significant impact and the critical role that outreach programs play in the lives of low-income and at-risk youth. The University of Florida has a proven track record of providing quality academic and cultural enrichment programs to our students to ensure high school graduation and matriculation at a postsecondary institution. Remaining committed to our purpose to strengthen educational motivation, our institutions will continue to provide enrichment programs that expose our students to academic excellence, team-building, negotiation skills, social skills, conflict resolution, confidence-building, and the performing and visual arts and sports. Our CROP project will include after-school, weekend, spring break and summer academic enrichment programs; character building, test-taking, financial aid, and college readiness workshops; educational tours; career and personal counseling; and mentoring for 200 academically and educationally disadvantaged participants. In addition, middle and high school students will participate in residency programs at the University of Florida.

In response to Florida's Next Generation PreK-20 Education Strategic Plan and in preparation for the Common Core State Standards, the programs will individually assess each student and determine her or his basic mathematics, writing and reading skills. To promote successful reading on a wider scale, students will participate in a 750,000-Minute Read-A-Thon and literary circles, hands-on science and mathematics experiences (including Algebra Nation) and health education programs. CROP students will be provided academic opportunities offered by Florida Virtual School, the Florida Education Fund, and various bridge programs. Project PRISM (Providing Research in STEM for Minorities) for high school students and Project SPARC (STEM Participation through Active Research Challenges) for middle school students will not only stimulate the interests of CROP students in the STEM areas, but will require involvement in their respective schools' science fairs.

Guidance counselors, teachers, and School District officials will continue to recommend prospective students based on state eligibility requirements. More importantly, current CROP students will serve as recruitment agents. CROP will also continue to build partnerships with local entities such as the Alachua County Library system, Department of Children and Families, Alachua County Department of Health, Partnership for Strong Families, Inc., the Southwest Advocacy Group (SWAG) Center, Children Alliance, the HIPPY Program and local churches to create opportunities for their students to participate in CROP and to offer services at their institutions and to their clientele. In addition, communications with the Physical Plant and Housing Staff at both UF and Santa Fe College will take place. Brochures, flyers and newsletters will be created to recruit eligible students. These CROP marketing tools will be distributed to parents, schools, community centers, public housing, faith-based organizations, and recreational centers and direct recruitment about the program will take place at schools (through tabling and faculty and school presentations) in August and May of each year. The National Student Clearinghouse will be used to track students enrolled in postsecondary institutions.

(G) Description of 2015-2016 Local Advisory Committee (Include schedule of meetings):

Dr. Michael V. Bowie (Director, UF College of Education), Dr. Sally Williams (UF Animal Science), Veita Jackson-Carter (Principal, Horizon Center), John Green II (Assistant Principal, Hawthorne Middle/High School), Mickey Rawls (Owner, Allstate Insurance Agency), Chinita Miles (CROP Parent), Debra Peterson (CROP Parent), Dr. Karen Woods (Vice President, Partnership for Strong Families), Shane Andrew (Administrator, Alachua County Public Schools), LaTroy Strappy (Assistant Principal, Newberry High School), Dr. Erica McCray (Associate Professor, Special Education), Kathy Teal (Counselor, Santa Fe High School) and CROP Student Representative. Tentative Meeting schedule: September 2015, January 2016, April 2016, and June 2016.

(H) Criteria to Identify Students for Participation:

Local middle and high school guidance counselors are assisting the institutions by identifying students who meet both academic and economic criteria of the program. CROP will have displays at middle and high school open houses and at events attracting parents/students from targeted areas. In addition, collaborations with community organizations of the same target population have been made to create a system that maximizes the services each student receives. All new students recruited in 2013-2014 will meet economic and academic guidelines. Economic Guidelines (Definitions): (1) <185% Poverty (Family's taxable income did not exceed 185% of the poverty level); (2) Participated in WAGES [Family received temporary cash assistance under WAGES (Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency)]; (3) Received Public Assistance (Family received public assistance) and (4) Free/Reduced Lunch (Student eligible for free or reduced fee lunch program).

(I) Schools to be Served; Criteria to Identify Schools for Participation; Schools to be Served That Were Graded "D" or "F" for 2012 and the Number of Students to be Served in "D" and "F" Schools. **If there are no "D" or "F" schools in your district, please state that in your response:**

**Middle Schools:** Ft. Clarke, Howard Bishop, Kanapaha, Abraham Lincoln, A.L. Mebane, and Westwood Middle Schools.

**High Schools:** Buchholz, Eastside, Gainesville, Loften, Newberry and Santa Fe High schools

**Schools serving Middle and High School students:** Hawthorne Middle/High School, P.K. Yonge Developmental School.

**Charter Schools and Centers:** Hoggetowne Middle School, Horizon Center, and Einstein Montessori School

These schools have been identified for participation due to their high percentage of low-income and/or educationally disadvantaged students, their low school graduation rate and/or the low number of students attending a postsecondary institution after graduation. In 2013-2014, Hawthorne Middle/High School received an F grade for the second year and Mebane Middle School received a D grade for the second year. No other schools were classified as "D" or "F" schools; however magnet programs increased school grades, thus misrepresenting the performance of many low-income, academically disadvantaged students. In addition, many of the elementary schools (Alachua, Duval, Lake Forest, Norton, Rawlings, Shell, and Waldo) that serve as feeder schools for our middles schools received D and F grades.