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Message from Complete Florida

Welcome! Spring semester is in full swing, and we would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy new year. We look forward to continuing to work diligently with all of our partners during 2020 to help adults return to college, not only to better their lives and their family's lives but to foster talent in the workforce that keeps the state's economic outlook bright and flourishing. As we contemplate the coming

months, we also want to take a few minutes to celebrate our 2019 accomplishments. We have compiled an [Academic Profile](#) that chronicles our collaborations and key outcomes. We are already off to a strong start in 2020 with the recent launch of a new communication platform, Salesforce, which will strengthen and customize our student and partner communication and outreach efforts. In addition, we have established a partnership with [Leap Tampa Bay](#), with their recent designation as a [Lumina Talent Hub](#) to establish a regional coaching model for returning adult learners in the Tampa Bay area. We look forward to the work ahead and appreciate the support of our partners.

Michelle Horton, Ed.D.
Director of Complete Florida



CLEP Test Saves Time and Money for FSCJ Student Earning Degree

Susan, 54, lives in Cooper City and is working toward her associate degree online at Florida State College at Jacksonville. When she completes that, Susan plans to earn her bachelor's degree in either business or legal studies. As a licensed title agent, she

serves as director of operations at a title company and says "the more I can learn, the better I can lead."

Though Susan already had a successful professional work history and graduated from the Legal Assistant Institute at Barry University in 1992 and become a certified paralegal in 1993, she decided to get in touch with Complete Florida after hearing a spot on the radio.

"It is very much a personal goal of mine to earn my degree," Susan said. "However, getting married, raising two children and having a full-time career delayed the process. Still, I am focused on finishing this in the very near future, and Complete Florida has taken a lot of stress out of the process."

Susan said her coach, Akilah Lewis, helped her understand how the more than 50 credits she had earned when she attended college years ago, right out of high school, would transfer into her current degree plan.

"Akilah and her counterparts at FSCJ are wonderfully responsive," Susan said. "They have always answered emails and phone calls quickly and have helped me through each and every step of this process."

Coach Akilah recently told Susan about a pilot program Complete Florida has with the College Level Examination Program (CLEP). This partnership is just one of various ways Complete Florida helps adult learners accelerate their time to completion. Students who take and pass a CLEP exam receive college credit for the course equivalency the exam is designed to meet. The fee for taking the test is usually \$89, but through Complete Florida's pilot program, a voucher takes care of the CLEP Exam.

"With my background in English from my legal writing career, I knew I was a strong candidate for the College Composition CLEP test and the free review courses through the Modern States Alliance website and other study materials that Complete Florida and FSCJ told me about provided essential preparation.

"Sure it was a bit nerve-racking to think of taking the test at first," Susan said. "But there was such minimal risk, I just had to try it."

In addition to the free online review courses Complete Florida told her about, which contain mock exam questions about grammar and research citations style among other topics, Susan decided to also purchase a CLEP prep guide for English Comp, which cost about \$20. The review book had examples of high-scoring essays for the timed-writing portion of the test.

"Once I told myself, 'Let's get this done. I can save time and money,' I was committed," Susan said. "And now look! After very little money for the review book and about a month of studying, I have now completed all of my English requirements because of the previous classes I had taken. I am proud of doing well, and will definitely consider taking CLEP again, maybe for some of the humanities courses I need."



FIU, CAEL Collaborate to Focus on Support for Latino Students

There are currently 2.2 million working-age adults in Florida who have started college and never finished. Complete Florida, an attainment program funded by the legislature, has a goal to help these individuals get the degrees they need for the jobs they want. This effort keeps talent pipelines filled with skilled employees that keep Florida's economy stable. Part of these efforts requires that Florida colleges and universities understand their adult learner populations. Who are they? What are their needs?

One of Complete Florida's partner institutions, Florida International University (FIU), focuses some of its efforts on students who are older than 25 and Latino. To enhance its support for Latino adult students, FIU is participating in a new initiative managed by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), in partnership with Excelencia in Education.

CAEL is a national organization that emphasizes supporting adult working learners. Last year, CAEL joined forces with Excelencia, another national organization focused on Latino student success, to form the Latino Adult Student Success Academy.

The initiative is helping 15 Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and emerging HSIs take steps to enhance services to Latino adult students. Each institution collects data and input from students and the institution and then uses that information to identify areas for improvement. Each institution then develops strategies and a plan to measure success along the way. All participating institutions are members of a community of practice, called an Academy. They meet in person annually to learn from each other.

"We know that peer learning can be powerful, and so it is important to include the Academy model in this focus on Latino adult students whose postsecondary experiences can be very different from students who transition directly from high school to college," said Marie Cini, CAEL's president.

[READ MORE AT COMPLETEFLORIDA.ORG](#)



Save the Date

Attend the next meeting of the Complete Florida Networking Group. The session, "**Everything You Want to Know About FAFSA but Were Afraid to Ask**," will be led by Daniel Barkowitz, assistant vice president for financial aid and veterans affairs at Valencia College. The meeting is at **11 a.m. Eastern Feb. 20**, and we will send a Webex invitation 48 hours in advance of the event. Please submit questions when you register for this free event.

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)

What We're Reading

- [Some College, No Degree: A Snapshot for the Nation and 50 States](#)
- [Nudging With Incentives: New Research Compare Efforts to Encourage Students to Re-Enroll](#)

Who Are We?

Complete Florida is a high-tech, low-hassle, online program for busy adults to finish their college degree and land their dream job. We provide free concierge coaching services for students returning to college.

[CompleteFlorida.org](#)

By the Numbers

20 Partner schools

200+ Degree programs

11,405+ Students working with a Complete Florida Coach

\$1.6 million+ Awarded in scholarships from Complete Florida

1,754 Graduates

Complete Florida and Salesforce

January's Networking Group focused on the use of Salesforce to strengthen partnerships with Complete Florida. If you missed this month's meet-up click the video above to see a demonstration of personalized partner portals and more using Salesforce.



What Students are Saying

"With a degree, I can take some of my skills from my years of mental health service into the mental health field and help others."

Monica
Florida International University

"I find myself in a unique position of being 50 and needing a bachelor's degree to go further in my field of information technology. I can continue to pursue my educational goals and set an excellent example for my two daughters."

Marty
Florida State College at Jacksonville

"My classes in educational studies and community leadership have hugely impacted my ability to lead my staff. They have been informative and include materials and videos that I have in turn used to coach the teachers at my preschool."

Courtney
St. Petersburg College

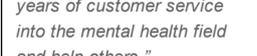
"I am taking my last class to earn my bachelor's in nursing and am gaining knowledge and experience to be prepared for what I will accomplish in the future."

Frances
University of West Florida

"My educational goals will provide stepping stones to re-entering the professional job market or exploring the world of self-employment after a recent large corporate displacement."

Robert
St. Thomas University

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