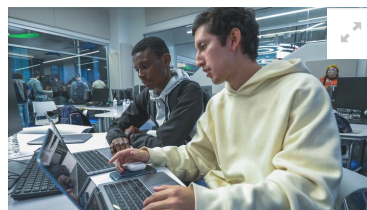


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EDUCATION

Education in Florida: Higher education institutions partner to expand training



Miami Dade College students participate in Miami Hack Week events at the school's Business Innovation & Technology Center in January.

GIORGIO VIERA/MDC 2022

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Florida International University

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Ron DeSantis

Person

Antonio Delgado

Person



By Ashley Garrett
Digital Producer, South Florida Business Journal
Jun 24, 2022

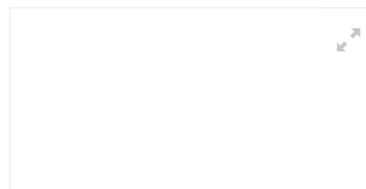
In this special report, the Florida Business Journals take a statewide look at how higher-education institutions are maximizing their impact.

With the start of a new fiscal year, Florida's higher education system is poised to usher in unprecedented state operating funding for colleges and universities.

Gov. Ron DeSantis signed the Freedom First budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 into effect June 2. The sweeping legislation includes allocations of funding for Florida's postsecondary institutions, including \$1.5 billion for state colleges and \$3 billion for state universities. That's an increase from the 2021-2022 fiscal year, when Florida's state colleges received \$1.3 billion and state universities received \$2.8 billion.

But for South Florida's higher learning institutions, the ability to provide exceptional educational and training opportunities extends far beyond just government funding. Many of the region's leading public colleges and universities are capitalizing on collaborations with industry partners to introduce and expand programs for students.

Miami Dade College, South Florida's largest postsecondary educational institution by enrollment, is particularly bullish on solidifying partnerships with local and national businesses. For example, the Miami-based college's alliance with Tesla provides an intensive 16-week electric vehicle training program through which students can gain the certification necessary for job placement as service technicians at Tesla Service Centers.





Miami Dade College students in the Tesla START program gain certification needed for job placement as service technicians.

COURTESY OF MIAMI DADE COLLEGE

Juno Beach-based Florida Power & Light Co. has been another high-profile partner of the school through its recent \$800,000 investment in scholarships for Black students interested in entering the tech workforce, as well as its hiring of students over the years for jobs in nuclear systems operations.

These strategic collaborations provide a “win-win” situation for both colleges and businesses to train and recruit students, says Antonio Delgado, Miami Dade College’s VP of innovation and technology partnerships.

“The funding that companies, foundations and government can provide means the college can unlock opportunities for students, many of whom are minorities or come from low-income backgrounds,” he said. “We’re able to provide more scholarships and affordability at the highest quality in everything that we do.”



Antonio Delgado, VP of innovation and technology partnerships at Miami Dade College

DEBORAH RODRIGUEZ/MDC 2021

Delgado, who previously served as the dean of MDC's School of Engineering, Technology and Design, now uses his extensive experience in technology program management and consulting to secure alliances with industry partners. This new role became essential as South Florida profited from a stream of notable businesses relocating to the region for business-friendly tax policies and warmer weather.

“We have seen an evolution in Miami over the last couple of years, with South Florida growing as a tech and innovation hub as many companies and people move here. We see how the demand for tech is growing,” Delgado said. “My position was created last year to make sure that we can have a better connection with the local ecosystem in South Florida to understand why companies are moving and growing here.”

Many other South Florida higher education institutions have developed their own partnerships with industry leaders. Florida International University recently teamed up with Miami-based IT company Kaseya to train students for jobs in technology and create a workforce pipeline for graduates, while Lake Worth Beach-based Palm Beach State College developed a partnership with Pompano Beach-based civil engineering company Keith to create internship and employment opportunities for students.

As the Covid-19 pandemic stifled hiring initiatives for many employers, businesses became increasingly interested in partnering with colleges and universities to tap into student populations. It’s a trend that Delgado expects will continue as industries such as technology flourish.

“The pandemic just accelerated the migration of companies and the need for technology talent in Miami and South Florida,” he said. “Instead of a challenge, that was an opportunity that unlocked millions of dollars in funding and allowed us to do better than we were before. It’s an opportunity to improve and get better.”

SOUTH FLORIDA'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Recent statistics indicate that total endowment and federal funding have significantly increased over the last five years. Here's the breakdown:

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY *Miami*

Total enrollment

2016: 55.1K | 2020: 58.9K | Percent change: ▲6.9%

New enrollment

2016: 4.6K | 2020: 3.8 | ▼18.2

Total endowment

2016: \$196M | 2020: 276 | ▲40.8

Tuition and fees revenue

2016: \$418.8M | 2020: 466.6 | ▲11.4

Total state and local funding

2016: \$8.4M | 2020: 9.0 | ▲7.6

Federal funding

2016: \$76.5M | 2020: 104.7 | ▲36.9

Other sources of revenue

2016: \$196.7M | 2020: 192.3 | ▼2.2

Total budget

2016: \$996.7M | 2020: 1.2B | ▲20.3

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY *Boca Raton*

Total enrollment

2016: 30.5K | 2020: 30.8 | Percent change: ▲0.9%

New enrollment

2016: 3.2K | 2020: 4.3 | ▲33.2

Total endowment

2016: \$215M | 2020: 285 | ▲32.6

Tuition and fees revenue

2016: \$208.2M | 2020: 240.7 | ▲15.6

Total state and local funding

2016: \$16.8M | 2020: 15.9 | ▼5.0

Federal funding

2016: \$25.6M | 2020: 30.9 | ▲20.8

Other sources of revenue

2016: \$134.7M | 2020: 149.1 | ▲10.7

Total budget

2016: \$694.2M | 2020: 806 | ▲16.1

SOURCES: FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS, UNIVERSITY DATA SETS AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY BUSINESS OFFICERS AND COMMONFUND INSTITUTE'S ANNUAL REPORT OF MARKET VALUE OF ENDOWMENT ASSETS

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