

smart path to college

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Oscar Garcia

From underachiever to standout student

Citi Postsecondary Success Program motivates high-schooler to excel

Oscar Garcia, a senior at Westland Hialeah Senior High School, credits the Citi Postsecondary Success Program (CPSP) with opening his eyes to the prospect of attending college and guiding him each step of the way toward his goal. “I’ve asked myself, would I have been able to have these opportunities had I not

had my mentors, and had my school not worked so diligently to create an atmosphere of success among our students,” he said.

Oscar’s story is a classic comeback tale. Despite the death of his mother when he was only six years old, he excelled during elementary school, with the love and support of his grandparents. As he approached his teens, however, Oscar lost his way and his grades plummeted.

“I entered high school not really caring,” said Oscar. I took English with Ms. Rodriguez in ninth grade and she noticed that I was struggling – not because I didn’t have the potential or the intellect, but because I just didn’t care. She guided me to join the CPSP College Club and things started picking up.”

Oscar’s participation in the CPSP club ignited his enthusiasm for going to college – yet he faced the stark reality of his poor high school performance thus far. Without an extreme academic makeover, college would remain only a dream. Encouraged by his teachers and counselors, he resolved to make up his deficits.

By the second half of his sophomore year, Oscar had turned his grades around from a C average to a B. He retook classes in which he previously performed poorly and doubled up on dual enrollment (college level)

courses after regular school hours. In fact, by the end of tenth grade, his coursework included a combination of 10 advanced placement and dual enrollment courses. Oscar ended his junior year on a high note with an A weighted average.

In addition to his laser-sharp focus on academics, Oscar set his sights on a summer program to prepare him for a college major in government or political science. He succeeded, being selected as a delegate to the prestigious People to People Ambassador Program in International Relations and Diplomacy.

Now a senior, Oscar hopes to attend University of Florida for his bachelor’s degree and then attend graduate school at Georgetown University. Not surprisingly, Oscar dreams of double majoring in political science and business, with a minor in international relations, when he goes to college. He says his campus visits played a pivotal role in shaping his understanding of college life.



Oscar on a CPSP college field trip

“The CPSP college trips are great. It’s the highlight of the year for a lot of us,” said Oscar. “Not only do we get time with each other and with our teachers to bond, it also gives us an out-of-home experience that really transcends what most of us have had. It gives us a personal view of how college students interact, how they live, and

what college really is about. I think that’s the best part.”

Citi Postsecondary Success Program – “The Smart Path to College” Leads to Success:

- **34% increase in college enrollment rates** at CPSP high schools, significantly outpacing results in demographically similar comparison schools, which only saw gains of 2%
- **69% growth in black students’ college enrollment rates** in CPSP schools versus a decrease of 6% in comparison schools
- **25% increase in Hispanic students’ college enrollment rates** in CPSP schools, significantly outpacing results in comparison schools which only saw gains of 5%
- **30% increase in college persistence** among students from CPSP schools versus a decrease of 8% in students from comparison schools
- **12% growth in graduation rates** among students entering 12th grade in CPSP schools outpacing results in comparison schools

Source: Evaluation by OMG Center for Collaborative Learning

The Education Fund’s Citi Postsecondary Success Program changes lives, say principals

“Smart Path to College” leads to a world of possibilities for students

In 2008, the Citi Foundation tapped The Education Fund in Miami Dade as one of only three organizations in the U.S. to receive a \$600,000 challenge grant as part of an new initiative called the Citi Postsecondary Success Program (CPSP). Citi challenged the participating organizations to create a model program that helps schools provide a visible path to higher education for all their students – a “Smart Path to College.”

Together with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami Dade College, local universities, and with coaching through FHI360’s Postsecondary Success Collaborative, The Education Fund embarked on the challenge to change the schools’ culture. To demonstrate how schools can change, three very different schools were chosen to participate. They had one element in common: more than half of their students lost their way on the road from ninth grade to college.

The program The Education Fund and its partners created:

- Works with schools’ staffs to take inventory of critical resources and instruction they should have and the steps they can take, beginning in the ninth grade, to help students get ready for college or other postsecondary programs.
- Brings high school students together with trained teachers and counselors to help them create and implement individual plans to achieve their “after high school” aspirations.
- Opens students’ eyes by taking them on college visits and ensures the students’ parents complete the required federal financial aid form.
- Builds new partnerships among nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, and others to provide additional services to make sure students are ready for college.



John Donahue, Principal
Miami Beach Senior High

As Miami-Dade’s initial five-year CPSP grant drew to a close in 2013, principals at three participating schools say CPSP has had a profound influence on their students.

“I can tell you, the concept of establishing a college-going culture is not easy,” said John Donahue, principal of Miami Beach Senior High. “It’s frustrating to see bright students underachieve when they think they have nothing to do after high school. Now, through the structured activities of CPSP, we have these kids participating in college clubs, going on college field trips and working on their portfolios and resumes after class.”

“With CPSP – The Smart Path to College, we’re embedding in students the idea that anything is possible,” said Bianca Calzadilla, principal of Miami Southridge Senior High. “Recently, one of our students told me proudly that



Guillermo Muñoz, Principal
Westland Hialeah Senior High

she had been accepted to Florida International University, which is my alma mater.

To me, that is such an affirmation of what can be achieved.”

Guillermo Muñoz, principal of Westland Hialeah Senior High for the majority of the program, said, “Before CPSP, most people felt if we graduated the students that was enough in itself. With the outreach to parents, the town halls and other campus events, we’re raising expectations not just

within the school but throughout the community.”

“The Education Fund is known for piloting innovation that works in our district,” said Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho. “The district has undergone deep budget cuts in recent years, and we rely more than ever on the private sector’s investment in our children. I applaud the Citi Foundation for funding this initiative and hope other area businesses will step up to keep it going in future years.”

“I applaud the Citi Foundation for funding this initiative and hope other area businesses will step up to keep it going in future years.”

- Alberto Carvalho
Superintendent
Miami-Dade County
Public Schools



CPSP student receives college scholarship

On the road to achievement

Student field trips to colleges raise enthusiasm and dispel fears

How can a high school student who has never even set foot on a college campus envision the possibility of attending college someday?

Having a firsthand glimpse of campus life shows students that college is a realistic and attainable goal. The CPSP model enables Miami-Dade students to visit schools in South Florida, across the state and even out of state.

“Our goal is to ensure all students experience at least one college campus, as research shows students with first-hand knowledge of the campus are better prepared to take on the demands of college work,” said Linda Lecht, President of The Education Fund.

Local visits lead to out-of-state journeys

In CPSP’s first year, students visited local institutions including Miami Dade College, Florida International University, Florida Memorial University and the University of Miami. Building on this success, College Club sponsors at the three schools worked together in Year 2 to propose a joint, three-day trip to visit five state schools outside of Miami-Dade County.

For this first out-of-county trip, The Education Fund’s CPSP staff painstakingly mapped out the logistics — from transportation, to meals and lodging, to on-campus activities. Many of the children had never traveled outside Miami-Dade County, let alone visited an actual college campus.



An experience of a lifetime: CPSP students visit colleges throughout the state.

Student reactions to the tour were overwhelmingly positive. One student remarked, “I definitely would recommend this tour... for anybody that has started high school because I think it’s very important to get out there and be exposed to these universities. It actually changes your perception... on what is to come in your life.”

Then, in the most ambitious effort yet, students at Westland Hialeah Senior High School took an out-of-state tour of Duke, North Carolina, Georgia Tech, and Georgia State University in spring of 2012. During the same period, Miami Beach Senior High students visited the University of North Florida, Flagler College, Savannah College of Arts and Design, Valdosta State, and Florida State College. In spring 2013, Westland Hialeah again went on the road, this time to Louisiana State, Loyola, Tulane, and the University of Alabama.

College Clubs offer an array of activities

Students consider the field trips one of the highlights of their involvement in CPSP College Clubs. Club members meet twice a month after school or weekly during lunch. Students receive targeted instruction in developing academic skills and research techniques, writing essays, taking college entrance exams, and researching appropriate careers with matching colleges.

“The most meaningful experience I had on the trip was seeing the motivation and extreme school spirit displayed at the university. It really lifted my spirits.”
- Field Trip Participant

The Club Sponsors, who are faculty members, target students who are the first in their family to attend college and those whose GPAs range between a C to a B, as they are the students who are least likely to receive college readiness and access support. However, all students are welcome to join, and existing club members routinely host membership drives at the beginning of the school year.

“College Clubs and the field trips help students understand the difference between private and public schools, as well as the difference between colleges, universities and technical schools,” said Blanca Calzadilla, principal at Miami Southridge Senior High School. “They also learn what it takes to apply to these different programs. Ideally, their exposure progresses over several years, so a student might be inspired by, say, a visit to Florida State, which would lead her to learn that school’s requirements and focus her future high school curriculum and her grades around that.”

Katrina Cordova, College Club sponsor at Westland Hialeah Senior High School, expressed her gratitude for CPSP’s model, which makes the trips affordable. “We have students from a very low socioeconomic status, so these kids would never have the opportunity to travel. With the CPSP model and subsidy, we are able to make these trips super affordable for them, and we allow them to pay in installments if they need to. You see the gratitude in the parents’ eyes; it’s touching. You know they don’t have the resources to do that with their children.”

Dr. Pablo Ortiz, M-DCPS Assistant Superintendent for Education Transformation, says college visits and other aspects of CPSP open students’ eyes. “We all know that it’s not good enough any more to simply walk across the stage at graduation and just hold that high school diploma. We are making it a priority for our young men and women to have the confidence of knowing that when they shake the principal’s hand, they have choices and they have been prepared to be successful, whatever their choice may be.”

“The student who took us for the tour shared with us how she struggled at first with some school work, but it didn’t lower her self-esteem, it made her stronger. She really reached out to me and made me want to try even harder.”

- Field Trip Participant

Asset Mapping: the foundation of CPSP – The Smart Path to College

Evaluation tool helps teachers build on curriculum strengths and address weaknesses

As any high school teacher or administrator can attest, every school is different. Student populations vary based on culture, economic level and a host of other factors. Faculty members bring a diverse set of skills and interests to the classroom. Administrators face unique instructional, operational and staffing challenges.

Given these disparities, how do leaders embed a college-bound culture in a school? In CPSP, the process begins with a technique called Asset Mapping, through which teachers evaluate four key areas of their school’s programming. Once strengths and weaknesses are identified, the maps recommend specific, research-based actions to enhance the strong points and fill in the gaps.

The initial Asset Mapping tool used was created by FHI 360 (formerly known as AED) based on research conducted by David T. Conley, Ph.D., founder and director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon. Dr. Conley also founded the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC), a nationally recognized leader in the field of College and Career Readiness.

“Before Asset Mapping, schools relied mostly on FCAT results to evaluate their progress. But, the FCAT is really just a minimal test for graduating from high school. Asset Mapping creates a whole paradigm shift by focusing schools on a set of strategies research shows schools need to have in place for *all* students,” said Linda Lecht, President of The Education Fund.

Each Asset Map calls for teachers to evaluate their school’s performance on a number of college-readiness activities, using a scale of 0-3. A score of zero means the activity is not present at the school at all. A score of 1 suggests that less than 50 percent of the school’s students are engaged in the activity; a 2 means more than 50 percent are engaged; and a 3 means the whole school is immersed in the activity. “On the initial Asset Map evaluation, it is not unusual for 70-80 percent of the answers to be a zero or 1 as many schools can point to a list of activities they have in place but few employ them with ALL students,” said Lecht.

Based on the results, the Asset Maps offer specific, research-based



A student and her parent learn to navigate college websites

actions to address deficiencies. The resulting “prescription,” guided by teachers at the school, is unique to each school. The goal is for all grade-level teachers, of all disciplines, and other critical school staff to teach college-going skills and provide college-going services to 100% of the student body.

“The process is very empowering to the schools, since they make the determination about where to focus,” said Lecht. For example, Westland Hialeah Senior High School identified an opportunity to revamp their ninth-grade orientation course. Miami Beach Senior High School instituted a school-wide homeroom period that gives students dedicated time to focus on college skills. Miami Southridge Senior High School focused on



Maria Sahwell, CPSP Coordinator
Miami Beach Senior High

teaching time-management techniques by providing daily planners to every student and providing time for teachers to review the planners with students on a regular basis.

Teacher commitment and dedication to the Asset Mapping process are vital to success, say school leaders.

“I joined Miami Beach Senior High in the summer of 2012,” said Principal John Donohue, “and my

first CPSP experience was a summer Asset Mapping workshop. I was amazed not only by the number of teachers present at a summer event – there were about 20 – but also by the quality of the work they accomplished in two days. It was very intense and very inspiring to me. I was just amazed that we had a teacher leadership team so committed to coming together for the benefit of kids going to college.”

“Asset Mapping is about identifying and activating the key players in the school. Not the administrators or department heads – yes, they are there, but it’s really teacher involvement we’re after,” said Maria Sahwell, CPSP coordinator at Miami Beach Senior High School. “As a group, we look at where we are and where we want to go, on many levels. We look at our gaps, educationally and otherwise, and figure out what we need to do to support the postsecondary process. I think Asset Mapping is one of the most revolutionary tools to come out of CPSP.”

“Asset Mapping is really where the buy-in comes in from the faculty.”

- Blanca Calzadilla
Principal
Miami Southridge
Senior High

Miami Southridge Senior High School Principal Blanca Calzadilla agrees: “Asset Mapping is really where the buy-in comes in from the faculty. Although I am the leader, the reality is that the teachers are the ones in the trenches. Who better than the teachers to examine what we need, how to accomplish it, and how to revise particular sections or components of the plan? These teachers create the foundation of our coursework to help get our students to the postsecondary level.”

Teachers use four Asset Maps to analyze their school's curriculum and college-preparedness culture:

THINK

Key Cognitive Strategies focuses on the development of mental processes and capabilities necessary for college-level work. They include: intellectual openness and inquisitiveness; analysis; reasoning, argumentation and proof; interpretation; problem solving; and oral and written expression. The Key Cognitive Strategies Map measures the services all students are provided for developing and strengthening these cognitive skills, as well as the learning opportunities and instructional practices a school provides that builds specific cognitive skills and habits of mind.

KNOW

Key Content Knowledge centers on the writing skills, algebraic concepts, key foundational content, and "big ideas" from core subjects students need to master in order to be ready for and succeed in college. These include the overarching skills of writing and research as well as knowledge and skills in the core academic subjects of English, Math, Science, Social Sciences, World Languages, and the Arts. Content Knowledge is measured by the degree to which a school provides, to all students, the learning opportunities and instruction needed for building content knowledge, as well as provides the organizational structures and supports for developing and strengthening content knowledge.

ACT

Key Learning Skills and Techniques (also known as Academic Behaviors) are a range of behaviors that reflect greater self-awareness, self-monitoring, and self-control on the part of students necessary for academic success. Learning skills and techniques are different from cognitive strategies in that they are independent of any particular content area. Learning Skills and Techniques are measured by the services and supports a school provides all students for developing their self-monitoring behaviors and study skills.

GROW

Key Transition Knowledge and Skills map (also known as Contextual Skills and Awareness map) assesses the degree to which a school helps all students develop an understanding of college admissions processes, college culture, tuition, financial aid, testing, college-level academic expectations, and resources available at college. It also measures whether a school helps all students develop the human relations skills needed to understand the norms of the academic culture and protocols for interacting with professors, and the abilities needed to collaborate with a diverse cross-section of academicians and peers.

Communities rally to support schools
Collaboration with civic groups, nonprofits and colleges magnifies CPSP's impact

It may take a village to raise a child, but instilling a college-going culture in thousands of high school students takes an entire county.

CPSP – The Smart Path to College calls for deep collaboration not only within the school, but also throughout the South Florida community. The Education Fund, with the support of M-DCPS, activated a CPSP Community Partnership of nonprofit organizations that share a common goal of increasing student access to, and success in, postsecondary education. The Community Partnership, now four years old, has evolved into a closely-knit group of leaders who coordinate their activities and help one another in the three schools.

Coordination is Key

"At the outset of CPSP, the District saw the value of getting the community organized, but we didn't have a complete handle on all of the local resources and their various missions," said Deborah Montilla, district director of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Division of Student Services. "The Education Fund helped us coordinate monthly Community Partner meetings, do a gap analysis, and begin scanning the environment as to what services were available to the schools. The Ed Fund also helped us identify schools that didn't have a strong program for college access and success already in place."

"The administrations at UM, FIU, FMU and MDC are much improved due to the dialogues we have [through] the Advisory Board."

*- Dr. Rolando Montoya
Miami Dade College Provost*

Advisory Board Convenes Educators

Like the community groups, educators also benefit from collaboration. The CPSP Advisory Board consists of provosts from Miami Dade College, Florida International University, and University of Miami; the three CPSP high school principals; M-DCPS's Chief Academic Officer and its Assistant Superintendent for Education Transformation; a Citi official; and staff from The Education Fund.

Principals find Advisory Board meetings especially helpful because they can share needs and concerns directly with provosts on issues such as dual enrollment, changes in university requirements for both student admittance and courses, and ways to better prepare their students for a postsecondary education. The provosts also help facilitate college campus visits by CPSP students.

Dr. Rolando Montoya, provost at Miami Dade College, sees yet another benefit. "CPSP has definitely contributed to an improved relationship between the colleges and universities in our area," said Dr. Montoya. "I would say the administrations at UM, FIU, FMU and MDC are much improved due to the dialogues we have together when we participate in the Advisory Board."



FAFSA Marathons Help Students and Parents Navigate Financial Aid

For many high school students who aspire to attend a college or career program, finding the money to pay for their education seems like an insurmountable obstacle. Through CPSP – The Smart Path to College, students and their families receive expert help to seek out financial aid opportunities and apply for grants, loans, work-study programs and scholarships.

It all begins with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Current and prospective college students must complete this form annually to determine their eligibility for financial aid. Despite its name, the application is not for a single federal program, but rather is a gateway of consideration for nine federal programs (including Pell Grants, federal student loans and federal work study) as well as hundreds of state-based aid programs and most of the aid available from individual educational institutions.



three evenings) and instructed to bring their tax returns. Sitting at a computer, parents and their children walk step-by-step through the online application process with an adviser.

Teams of admissions and financial aid staffers from Miami Dade College and Florida International University provide the expertise for the FAFSA

Marathons. “Having the college financial aid staff actually come out to the high schools is a unique aspect of our program,” said Linda Lecht, President of The Education Fund. “The enthusiasm and one-on-one attention these advisers bring goes a long way toward easing parents’ concerns about sharing financial information.”

Maria Sahwell, CPSP coordinator at Miami Beach Senior High School, said, “The FIU and MDC staff are amazing. These events might be the first or only opportunity parents have to talk directly with someone from the college. The conversations usually go beyond financial aid – parents can ask, ‘Is my kid going to be all right? Will they get what they need at your school?’”

Sahwell has seen FAFSA Marathon participation skyrocket at Beach High. “In Year 1 of CPSP, we hosted maybe 20 parents per session. At one of our most recent sessions, we had over 170 parents. We make personal calls to every parent to make sure we bring in even the ones who are really resistant. In many cases, those are precisely the families who need a Pell Grant the most, and who will qualify.”

In Year 5 of CPSP, a remarkable 50 percent of seniors’ parents across the three schools attended a FAFSA Marathon. As a result, the number of FAFSA online submissions at the three schools were some of the highest in the state.

Taking the FAFSA Marathon process a step further, Miami Dade College has even begun to allow seniors to register for fall classes during a FAFSA night. Dr. Rolando Montoya, Miami Dade College provost, said, “When we bring parents and students together with our admissions officers in the school setting, it is an ideal opportunity to admit some students on the spot.”

Citi Postsecondary Success Program – The Smart Path to College At a Glance

A postsecondary degree or career training is critical to breaking the cycle of poverty. Yet, for every 100 students who enter high school in the US, only 38 enroll in college. Of those 38, only 18 graduate with a Bachelor’s or Associate’s degree. To solve this issue, Citi Foundation charged The Education Fund with developing a model that transforms high schools.

GOAL

To break down the barriers to postsecondary and technical/career education and coordinate services for low-income students who need them most.

OBJECTIVES

- Help schools become “college-prep” academies that prepare students for postsecondary options
- Encourage students to see high school as a step toward enrollment in a two or four-year college/university or an accredited technical program
- Improve students’ persistence in postsecondary programs and increase their graduation rates

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

- Involve more high school staff in efforts to help students prepare for a postsecondary education
 - Strengthen ConnectEDU usage
 - Create and expand College Clubs
 - Encourage college field trips for a wide group of students
- Help schools create a unique research-based prescription to improve their college-going culture
 - Conduct Asset Mapping workshops to determine gaps
 - Create actions plans based on results of Asset Maps

- Monitor implementation
- Provide Professional development
- Engage parents
 - Offer FAFSA marathons
 - Host parent workshops & town hall meetings
- Establish CPSP Community Partners Coalition of area non-profits
- Establish CPSP Advisory Board of college administrators and school & district leaders
- Collect and evaluate data to sustain and expand CPSP locally, regionally and nationally

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- Original schools
 - Miami Beach Senior High
 - Miami Southridge Senior High
 - Westland Hialeah Senior High
- Schools joining as of 2013-14:
 - Barbara Goleman Senior High
 - Booker T. Washington Senior High
 - Hialeah-Miami Lakes Senior High
 - Homestead Senior High
 - MAST Academy at Homestead
 - Miami Jackson Senior High

Citi Foundation



Citi Foundation promotes systemic changes in school system

Other supporters provide \$500,000 in matching grants

Five years ago, the Citi Foundation brought its resources to bear on a problem of national significance: the low numbers of first-generation and low-income students who attend college, persist in their education and earn a degree. Now more than ever, postsecondary education means the difference between moving up the economic ladder and becoming trapped in a low-wage job.

“If we look at the economy today, we see the growth of opportunities for young people in organizations and jobs that require much higher skill levels than in past decades,” said Daria Sheehan, senior program officer of the Citi Foundation. “Since our foundation’s mission is the economic empowerment and financial inclusion of low-income families in the communities where Citi operates, education is a logical place to start.”



Daria Sheehan
Program Officer, Citi Foundation

The Citi Postsecondary Success Program (CPSP) was one of the foundation’s first major investments when launching its College Success program portfolio in 2008. Through CPSP, the Citi Foundation invested in three urban school systems:

Miami-Dade, Philadelphia and San Francisco. The strategy was to bring together local partners to create a clear path of services and supports that would demonstrate to students what they need to do to enroll in college and earn a degree.

“We were very intentional about where we wanted to work and the organizations with whom we wanted to partner,” said Sheehan. “We had a very strong history of successful initiatives in Miami-Dade with The Education Fund, including the Citi Success Fund and the Citi Family Tech program. One of Citi’s senior executives in South Florida, Barbara Romani, had served on the Ed Fund’s board for many years. We had long been impressed with the Ed Fund’s ingenuity as well as their ability to form partnerships with others, including businesses, other grant makers, community organizations, and the school system. So, we knew they had the skills to get this work done.”

To support and sustain CPSP, the Citi Foundation asked The Education Fund to match its \$500,000, five-year investment in Miami-Dade with local funding. South Florida’s philanthropic community rose to the challenge. (For a full list of funders, see page 8.)

“As we examined CPSP, we saw a complete package that addresses the college-going challenge from many different angles – specialized coursework, parent involvement, college clubs, help with financial aid forms and so much more,” said Gail Mixer, of the TriMix Foundation. “A powerful factor in our decision to fund CPSP was our meeting with students and teachers at Miami Beach Senior High. Hearing firsthand these students’ enthusiasm about achievement in high school and continuing their education really hit home for us.”

“As the Citi Foundation’s five-year initial commitment in Miami-Dade draws to a close, we see the profound impact CPSP has had on the students and the schools that participated in the program,” said Sheehan. “But, just as important, we have promoted systemic changes in the school district and in institutions of higher learning that are leading to a more comprehensive system of college-readiness services and supports for young people.”

The Citi Foundation has offered The Education Fund an extra year of funding, beyond the original five-year pledge, to promote CPSP’s successes and advocate for broader adoption of the successful strategies developed in Miami-Dade. “We hope to see this program replicated not only in other schools within the system, but in surrounding communities, across the state, and ultimately, nationally,” said Sheehan.



A CPSP Town Hall meeting gave parents the opportunity to ask questions about the college admissions and financial aid processes. The event, presented at Westland Hialeah Senior High’s auditorium, drew a packed house. It was also broadcast live on TV by Univision 23 and on radio by WQBA-1140 AM.

Lisa Ciacci joins The Education Fund

The Education Fund is happy to introduce Lisa Ciacci as the new director of the Citi Postsecondary Success Fund – The Smart Path to College. Lisa replaces Andrea Nobil, who managed the program for five years. Andrea departs CPSP at a time when the school model in Miami-Dade is well developed and is garnering results that are the best in the nation among CPSP schools.

Lisa joins The Education Fund from the College Board, a nonprofit membership organization committed to excellence and equity in education. As assistant director of the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center, Lisa created connections between K-12 districts and postsecondary education systems to identify pressing educational challenges and developed innovative solutions to facilitate student success. She built successful collaborations and partnerships with governors, legislators, state and national organizations and practitioners.

Lisa has a bachelor's in communications from the State University of New York at Cortland and a master's in education in school counseling from Long Island University. "Andrea Nobil leaves big shoes to fill, and I look forward to strengthening and expanding CPSP – The Smart Path to College's many successes," she said.

Contact Lisa Ciacci at lcacci@educationfund.org.

SMART PATH TO COLLEGE

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