

## Introducing the Commissioner's Leadership Academy...

Congratulations to 25 “cream of the crop” principals on having been selected to participate in the Florida Commissioner of Education's Leadership Academy. This honor is due to the proven leadership of principals who have demonstrated success in improving the academic performance of children. Participation will afford participants the opportunity to meet and work with the best and brightest of their colleagues statewide. The intent of the Academy is to:

- ❖ provide a group of principals with consulting skills that would enable them to work with other principals, their districts and the FDOE;
- ❖ use these successful leaders to mentor and assist other principals in how to use proven strategies and techniques to improve the leadership and professional skills of other principals to drive student academic achievement;
- ❖ provide these educational leaders with a “tool kit” of skills and techniques in support of these behaviors

The first session was held in Tallahassee on Oct. 15 – 17<sup>th</sup>. Speakers for the initial session, in addition to the Commissioner, will include such nationally recognized “change agents” as Lyle Kirtman, Dr. Todd Whitaker, and Dave Weber.

## Good News...

- Best wishes to Board member **Lori R. Hartglass** in her new position as a partner with **Arnstein & Lehr** in Miami-Dade.
- Congratulations to **Leonore Annenberg Scholarship** winner **Natalie Antunez** from Hialeah High School. Natalie recently learned that she has been named a **National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar**. It is an award granted by the College Board based on PSAT scores from the student's junior year.
- The **Council for Educational Change** has received approval for funding to provide a mentorship opportunity to a principal from the **Deborah L. Natansohn Foundation**. We will be partnering with **Angeline Flowers**, Principal of Charles R. Drew Elementary in Broward, as she implements a schoolwide STEM related magnet program.



## PASS<sup>®</sup> & Executive PASS<sup>®</sup>...

- **Alexis Perez** of **Dade Technology Solutions** is truly passionate about helping children at South Hialeah Elementary. He is aware that the community serves is composed primarily of children whose first language is not English and whose parents do not speak English. Mr. Perez acknowledges that this places the students at an academic disadvantage. That is why he has made it his personal goal to assist his school in providing resources to improve their academic success. He demonstrates his commitment by connecting South Hialeah Elementary with available resources. Where some community partners might assist or be involved for a year or two, Mr. Perez has been diligently donating goods for the past four years.
- New Executive PASS partnerships include: David Lawrence K-8 Center - Principal **Bernard Osborn** & Business Partner **Cory Clair** of **John Hancock Financial Network**; Highland Oaks Middle School – Principal **Cheryl Kushi** & Business Partner **Jacy Kline** of **ING Financial Partners**; Miami Edison Senior – Principal **Trynegwa Diggs** & Business Partner **Henry Petithomme** of **Youth Power Movement, Inc.** The Executive PASS program coordinator is **Boots Richards**.

## Save the Date...

The 2012 Leonard Miller Principal Leadership Award Event will be held on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Spotlight On....

Congratulations to the Principal and staff at Van E. Blanton Elementary School in Miami-Dade. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, the school was awarded \$100,000 on national television. Teacher **Rachel Faust** broke down in tears while being interviewed on the **Ellen DeGeneres Show**, when she was surprised with a check in that amount. The award was made on Ms. Faust's 24<sup>th</sup> birthday!



- Ms. Faust began her career at the school three years ago as a Teach for America teacher. She applied for the program as a senior in college and committed to remain at the school for two years. She fell in love with her school, her students, and her colleagues, and says she will not leave.
- Principal **Tangela Goa** and Assistant Principal **Keverette Wells** attribute the success of their school to the attitude that “nothing can get in their way.” Blanton is a school where 99% of the student population qualifies for the free/reduced price lunch.
- Ms. Goa was a part of two of the Council for Educational Change’s programs – the **John S. & James L. Knight Foundation** funded “Leader to Leader” program, and Executive PASS.
- Van E. Blanton was nominated by the Council for a grant from the **Leonore Annenberg School Fund for Children** for a school wide technology initiative.
- Last year, Ms. Goa received a bonus of \$25,000 from the district for improving student achievement.
- Van E. Blanton maintained its state accountability grade of A.
- Funding for the gift Ms. Faust and the school received came from **JCPenney Cares**. Ms. Faust stated that the school did not have the funding for her to be able to decorate and equip her first grade class the way she wanted it, so she spent \$1,000 of her own money, “because her students deserved it.”

## Helios Education Foundation...

Some 36 Hillsborough educators attended a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) workshop on September 15 in Tampa. The workshop is part of the ongoing STEM: Strong and Steady Project which is funded by the **Helios Education Foundation** and conducted by the Council for Educational Change in collaboration with Hillsborough County Public Schools. The project aims to develop the STEM instructional leadership of teams--Principal, Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor and STEM subject teachers from nine Hillsborough schools. The day long workshop offered STEM-related learning and interactive activities for the participants. **Dave Weber**, a nationally



renowned leadership expert, presented a session on *Leadership Redefined*. The workshop sessions provide a wealth of knowledge and innovative strategies which the project participants apply back at the school site and in classrooms. The workshop was also attended by **School District of Hillsborough County** leaders and staff with responsibilities in STEM subjects, such as math and science. The STEM Strong and Steady project is coordinated by Pete Bucholtz from the Council. **Larry Plank**, the Hillsborough Director of K-12 STEM Education, is the district's lead agent for the project.

### Dates to Remember...

October 15-17 – Commissioner's Leadership Academy

October 22 – Tampa Bay Focus Group

October 26 – Jose Marti MAST 6-12 Academy B-PASS® Kickoff