Dear Friend in Education:

I am happy and proud to report that the ENLACE FLORIDA initiative has grown from a concept into a statewide movement in just eighteen months. With strong advocates at eight universities, and their partner community colleges, and school districts around the state, ENLACE FLORIDA has already begun to make an impact on policies promoting college readiness, access, and success for Latinos, African-Americans and other under-represented students.

We are proud to have expanded our mission to advocate on behalf of all underrepresented students in Florida, so that ENLACE now means Engaging Latino, African American, and other Communities for Education. The expansion comes as a logical extension of the national ENLACE initiative. We understand that many of the barriers faced by Latino students also hinder the aspirations of other underrepresented students to prepare, enter, and compete in postsecondary education. With a strong showing of state support, the ENLACE FLORIDA network expanded from its original bases at USF, UCF, FAU, and FIU to the University of Florida, Florida State University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and the University of North Florida.

Though our network has expanded, ENLACE FLORIDA remains focused on promoting college readiness, access, and success through non-partisan research, communication, advocacy, and support. In each of these four areas we have made significant strides. Our research has been disseminated throughout the state, informing the public debate on education issues, raising public awareness, and mobilizing community leaders and public education stakeholders. We have made tremendous progress in opening the lines of communication statewide through effective media relations, e-communication, community forums, and most recently the revamping of our website redesigned to serve as a clearinghouse for relevant information on Florida’s K-20 education system.

As we continue our efforts advocating on behalf of Florida’s underrepresented students, we look forward to partnering with and supporting all organizations, from both public and private sectors, who share our dedication to improving public education in Florida.

Sincerely,

Paul Dosal
Paul Dosal, Ph.D.  Executive Director
ENLACE FLORIDA

Dear Friend in Education:

As you read through this report, I think you will find hope and inspiration in the work that is being done on behalf of Latino, African American and other underrepresented students around the state. ENLACE FLORIDA, which I am proud to serve, is developing into a powerful advocate for educational change.

As a businessman and a passionate advocate for public education throughout my career, I believe that a strong public education system is the foundation for a vibrant state economy. To compete in the global economy, Florida’s public education system must concentrate on eliminating the achievement gap and increasing high school graduation rates. I say this not just because I’m an advocate for social justice, but because a strong public education system is an economic necessity.

No other organization in Florida is devoted exclusively to research, communication, advocacy, and support for underrepresented students. I am confident that the ENLACE FLORIDA movement will continue to grow and gain strength. Its monthly policy briefs have delivered into a number of critical issues, ranging from the urgent need to expand the capacity of our higher education system, to the importance of teaching Latin American history in our high schools. By working closely with the Board of Governors, The State Board of Education, and school districts across our state, ENLACE FLORIDA is poised to make a lasting impact on our education system.

Please join us in our efforts to promote college readiness, access, and success for Latinos, African American and other underrepresented students.

Sincerely,

Charles P. Garcia
Charles P. Garcia, Senior Managing Director
Hispanic Capital Markets, Vfinance Investments Inc.
Chairman ENLACE FLORIDA Advisory Council
**ENLACE FLORIDA** is a statewide network funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and managed by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships to promote college readiness, access, and success for Latinos, African-Americans, and other underrepresented students through non-partisan research, communication, advocacy, and support.

**RESEARCH** - Publishing non-partisan, relevant policy research briefs in an effort to inform Florida’s education policy debate on college readiness, access, and success

**COMMUNICATION** - Opening the lines of communication statewide with all education stakeholders

**ADVOCACY** - Advocating on behalf of Florida’s underrepresented students

**SUPPORT** - Supporting all organizations dedicated to improving student achievement and public education in Florida

---

**ENLACE FLORIDA Leadership Team:**
Cheryl Fountain, Ph.D., University of North Florida
William Hudson, Ph.D., Florida State University
Gloria Laureano, Ed.D., University of Central Florida
Stephen Nettles, Ph.D., Florida State University
Bernard Oliver, Ed.D., University of Florida
Donna Parrino, M.A., University of South Florida
Nancy Poulson, Ph.D., Florida Atlantic University
Lidia Tuttle, Ed.D., Florida International University
Ralph Wilcox, Ph.D., University of South Florida

**ENLACE FLORIDA Executive Office:**
Paul Dosal, Ph.D., Executive Director
Braulio Colón, Assistant Director
Edwin Estevéz, Ph.D., Senior Researcher
Athanasia Fitos, Office Manager
Ana Torres-Ayala, Graduate Research Assistant
Bridget Collins, Graduate Research Assistant
Jayesh D’Souza, Graduate Research Assistant
Brendali Melgoza, Graduate Research Assistant
Diana Sinisterra, Graduate Research Assistant
Rachel Emas, Graduate Research Assistant

**ENLACE FLORIDA Advisory Board:**
Jorge L. Arrizurieta, Attorney - Miami
Cesar Calvet, Banking Executive - Orlando
Charles P. Garcia, Business Owner - Miami
Richard Gonzmart, Business Owner - Tampa
Lesley “Les” Miller, Jr., Former State Senator - Tampa
Jorge Ortega, Public Relations Executive - Miami
Hector A. “Tico” Pérez, Attorney - Orlando
Claudia Puig, Media Executive - Miami
John Quiñones, Attorney - Orlando
Georgette Sosa-Douglass, Attorney - Ft. Lauderdale
Research is our expertise and serves as the foundation of the ENLACE FLORIDA network. With a research team of state and national experts, our policy briefs focus specifically on Florida education issues. They are published monthly to inform the statewide debate on education reform.

Published Research:
✓ The Value of First Generation Matching Grants in Florida’s Financial Aid Program
✓ Should Undocumented Students Pay In-State College Tuition?
✓ Promoting Parental Involvement Through the No Child Left Behind Act
✓ Tuition, Access & Affordability in Florida
✓ Florida’s AP Program: State Achievement Masks Disparities at Local Level
✓ Higher Education on the Brink in Florida
✓ Preparing our Students to Engage, Communicate, and Compete in a Global Economy: The Case for Latin American and Caribbean History in K-12
✓ The Achievement Trap: The Plight of High Achieving, Low-Income Students
✓ Three Positive Results for Education Despite a Terrible Budget
✓ Toward a College Preparatory High School Curriculum in Florida
Upcoming Research:

- Update on Florida Workforce Development & Future Demand
- Florida’s Return on Investment for K-20 Education
- Governance of Higher Education in Florida
- Bright Futures Scholarship Program’s Impact on Limited Income Students
- The Value of Early Learning Programs and its Correlation to College Readiness
- Needs Assessment for Teacher Professional Development related to Undocumented Immigrant Students
- Aspirations, Access, & Challenges of Undocumented Immigrants Pursuing Higher Education
- The Impact of Cultural Competency Training on Student Achievement
- Enrollment & Retention of Students with Disabilities in Florida Higher Education
- Self-Efficacy of Freshman First Generation Undergraduate Students in Florida
Communication is the key to mobilizing a state network. ENLACE FLORIDA serves as the statewide education policy information clearinghouse for issues affecting underrepresented students. We are committed to opening the lines of communication for all education stakeholders through e-communication, quarterly regional cluster meetings, effective media relations, community outreach events, and college-going marketing initiatives designed to engage students and parents.

- **Our Statewide Network**
  The ENLACE FLORIDA network consists of 7 regional clusters made up of representatives from the university, community college, school district, community organizations, along with students, and parents. Each cluster meets to discuss the latest ENLACE FLORIDA research, to develop strategies to disseminate important information to key grassroots constituents, and share updates on other local accomplishments, initiatives, and events.

- **Press Coverage**
  ENLACE FLORIDA works closely with education reporters from media outlets statewide in an effort to maximize its reach and inform the general public on important education issues facing our state.

- **Community Events**
  ENLACE FLORIDA organizes community events bringing education leaders to the grassroots in an effort to raise community awareness on hot-button state education issues.
Upcoming Communication Efforts

- **Summit on Higher Education**
  Spurred by the recent budget cuts and subsequent state university decisions to cut back on enrollments, ENLACE FLORIDA calls for a Summit on Higher Education with representatives from both the private and public sectors.

- **New Interactive ENLACE FLORIDA Website**
  Expected to go LIVE in 2009, the new website will feature timely information on the education reform movement in Florida with links to national, state, and local education sites including media and independent education blogs. Visitors will also be able to subscribe to ENLACE FLORIDA’s new e-newsletter.

- **The Release of My Story**
  Words from Florida’s first Generation college students and their struggles to succeed in higher education. This collection of nearly 100 essays takes readers into the lives of those striving to become the first in their families to graduate from college.
**Advocacy** is our passion in action. ENLACE FLORIDA is the only organization advocating on behalf of all underrepresented students in Florida promoting college readiness, access, and success through non-partisan research, communication, and support.

- **ENLACE FLORIDA Day 2008**
  Over 150 1st generation college students came together in Tallahassee to walk the halls of our State Capitol, meet with elected officials, “tell their story”, and advocate for policies that will improve college readiness, access, and success for underrepresented students in Florida.

- **2008 Statewide Essay Contest**
  Students from around Florida were invited to “Share Their Story” for ENLACE FLORIDA’S first statewide essay contest. All participants were invited to participate in ENLACE FLORIDA Day in Tallahassee with the top five winners receiving scholarships to help pay for college.

  *Elisa Oliver was one of the finalists and was awarded a scholarship for her participation.*
Upcoming Advocacy

- ENLACE FLORIDA Statewide Essay Contest, January 2009
- Florida Model Legislature for Education Policy, February 2009
- ENLACE FLORIDA Day 2009, March 2009

Legislative Priorities

- College Prep Curriculum in Florida High Schools
- Four AP Course Minimum in Florida High Schools
- Hispanic Heritage Task Force/A Call for Hispanic American History
- Increased State-aid for Limited Income College Students
- Greater Stability in Higher Education Governance Structure
- High Quality & Equitable Pre-K System in Florida
- Increased Number of Highly Qualified Teachers in High-Need Schools

INVEST IN FLORIDA’S FUTURE

• By 2014, African-American and Hispanic students will account for 50% of Florida’s high school graduates

• Florida Department of Labor estimates that 4 of 5 new jobs over the next decade will require some form of postsecondary education
Support is a core component. ENLACE FLORIDA believes in partnership and seeks to support and form alliances with all organizations dedicated to improving public education in Florida.

ENLACE FLORIDA is proud to support the following organizations:
- AAHHE
- The College Board
- Excelencia in Education
- FASFAA
- Florida Board of Governors
  - NASH
  - Pathways to College
  - The Education Trust
- Florida Department of Education
  - College Goal Sunday
  - FACTS.org
  - Florida College Access Network Conference
  - Gear UP Grant
  - Social Studies Standards Review
- HYPE of Tampa Bay
- Imagination Library of Hillsborough County
- NALEO
- NASFAA

Expanding Support
- ENLACE FLORIDA will expand its support and build alliances with the following organizations in 2009 as we continue to promote college readiness, access, and success for all underrepresented students:
- Florida Virtual School
- KnowHow2Go Tampa Bay
- Take Stock in Children
- Council for Educational Change
- Urban League of Greater Miami, Inc.