

**What Florida College Presidents are Saying…**

**LAST MILE COMPLETION PROGRAM**

As classes start back on Monday, Governor Ron DeSantis, Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran, Tallahassee Community College President and Council of Presidents Chair, Jim Murdaugh, and 19 other Florida College System presidents are showing their support for the Last Mile Completion Program. These colleges agree to use existing resources to help these students before receiving funding from the legislature. The Last Mile Completion Program helps students who left college with 12 or fewer credit hours remaining, to complete their first degree.

**College Presidents**

“It is a problem when our students are running out of money before running out of college,” said Dr. Jim Murdaugh, President of Tallahassee Community College and Chair of the Council of Presidents. “Governor DeSantis has challenged Florida to move from No. 24 to No. 1 in the nation for its workforce by 2030, and the Last Mile Completion Program is a step in the right direction to achieve that goal.”

“A strong workforce is vital to the success of any community, and what makes it strong is the education and skill level of those who comprise it,” said Dr. Angela Falconetti, President of Polk State College. “As a college system it is important that we do everything in our power to help students complete that last stretch in reaching their higher education goals. The Last Mile Completion Program will serve to ensure students who are close to completing their programs do so and become the professionals employers need.”

“At Gulf Coast we’ve made some progress, through locally funded ‘Finish What You Started’ campaigns, to show those students they are in the home stretch and can complete,” said Dr. John Holdnak, President of Gulf Coast State College. “These students continue to receive assistance in applying for the various federal, state, and institutional funding options that are available to help them over the finish line.”

“It is important that our colleges remain innovative and responsive to the current and future workforce needs of our state; this includes finding ways to remove barriers students face despite their best efforts,” said Broward College President Gregory Adam Haile, Esq. “The Last Mile Completion Program is important to maintaining a qualified and skilled workforce as we ensure students make it to the finish line.”

 “As advocates for student success, and CEO’s of Florida Colleges, we have a duty and a calling to ensure that students in our higher educational system cross the finish line,” said Dr. Timothy Beard, President of Pasco-Hernando State College.