



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
CAREER AND ADULT EDUCATION

## **Quality Assurance and Compliance**

### **Virtual Desk Monitoring Review for Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant**

University of Miami

**February 3-7, 2025**

Final Report

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Florida Department of Education  
Division of Career and Adult Education

University of Miami  
**Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant (PCOG)  
Quality Assurance and Compliance Monitoring Report**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Division of Career and Adult Education (Division) within the Florida Department of Education (Department) has several key responsibilities, including leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation. These duties require the Division to oversee the performance and regulatory compliance of federal and state funding recipients. The Quality Assurance and Compliance (QAC) office plays a critical role in this process by designing, developing, implementing and evaluating a comprehensive quality assurance system, which includes monitoring. This system aims to ensure financial accountability, program quality and regulatory compliance. As stewards of federal and state funds, it is the Division's duty to regularly monitor the use of workforce education funds and regulatory compliance of providers.

## **II. AUTHORITY**

Pursuant to Section 1008.32, Florida Statutes, Rule 6A-20.046, Florida Administrative Code, the Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Request for Proposal and the Uniform Grant Guidance, also referred to as 2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, the Department is responsible for monitoring programs run by a sub-grantee or provider of supported activities to ensure adherence to relevant federal and state regulations.

## **III. QAC CORE MONITORING GUIDE**

The Core Monitoring Guide is designed to be utilized by any reviewer who is conducting an onsite or desk monitoring of any program currently administered by the Division. The guide includes a brief overview of each aspect of the monitoring design and the process, as well as objectives that can be used when agencies are monitored or reviewed. You can find the guide on the Division's website at <http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/compliance>.

## **IV. PROVIDER SELECTION**

The QAC office may apply any specific monitoring strategy to any federal or state-funded provider at any time. There may be circumstances that may warrant onsite monitoring, desk monitoring review or other strategies regardless of a provider's risk matrix score.

The University of Miami monitoring strategy was determined to be a virtual desk monitoring review (VDMR). Notification was sent to Mr. Joseph James Echevarria, President, on December 12, 2024. The designated representative for the agency was Ms. Michelle Fields. The Division's representative conducting the VDMR was Program Specialist Charles Davis of the QAC.

## V. UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

### Finance

The provider was awarded the following grant for fiscal year 2020-2022:

#### **FY 2020-22**

| <u>Grants</u>                    | <u>Grant Number</u> | <u>Grant Amount</u> | <u>Unexpended</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Pathways to Career Opportunities | 874-90310-1D301     | \$ 339,928.00       | \$ 97,969.25      |

Additional information about the provider may be found at the following web address:

<https://welcome.miami.edu/>

## VI. MONITORING ACTIVITIES

The monitoring activities include pre- and post-review planning, an entrance and exit conference, records review and interviews with administrators, if necessary.

### Onsite Visits

Since the provider did not have capitalized equipment above the \$5,000 threshold, an onsite visit was not required:

### Entrance and Exit Conferences

An introductory Teams meeting with Ms. Michelle Fields took place on January 27, 2025. An exit telephone meeting took place on February 5, 2025 to inform her of the final standing of the monitoring review.

| <b>Name</b>                     | <b>Title</b>                  | <b>Entrance Conference</b> | <b>Exit Conference</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Michelle Fields                 | Director, University of Miami | X                          | X                      |
| <b>Division Monitoring Team</b> |                               |                            |                        |
| Michael Swift                   | Program Specialist, QAC       | X                          | X                      |
| Chuck Davis                     | Program Specialist, QAC       | X                          | X                      |

### Narrative

In early 2023, the construction industry trade association Associated Builders and Contractors released a study that showed the construction industry would need to attract an estimated 546,000 additional workers on top of the normal pace of hiring in 2023 to meet the demand for labor. In 2024, the study revealed, the industry would need to bring in more than 342,000 new workers on top of normal hiring to meet industry demand. The University of Miami program began in the fall semester of 2023 with a cohort of 10 people from the South Florida community enrolled in its project manager segment. Miami-based Urban Related Construction partnered in the program, providing students with daytime construction jobs, while the University of Miami's Division of Continuing and International Education coordinated classroom coursework and assignments. Miami Dade College sponsors the initiative, which was also supported by the Department's PCOG Program. During the one-year program, students learned how to read architectural and engineering drawings; conduct and interpret construction surveys; create building layouts; learn construction management terminology; and apply the fundamentals of construction mathematics, including linear algebra, geometry and trigonometry, to building projects. They also

conducted construction cost estimates, learned about Florida and international building codes, and reviewed Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards and certification protocols

## **VII. OBSERVATION**

- A. **ADMINISTRATION** refers to the management and supervision of programs, the structure of programs and services, grant oversight and other administrative areas.
- University of Miami serves as a sponsor for programs and grants, particularly those connected to workforce.
  - The University of Miami Heating, Ventilation and Airconditioning (HVAC) team created changes to the original apprenticeship program package to meet the needs of their employer partners. After identifying key areas of need in their community, the HVAC apprenticeship was enhanced to a Building Automation Technician, capable of managing, maintaining and operating multiple smart building systems. With both employer partners in need of that type of skilled labor, they identified subject matter experts to advise and teach the necessary skills, then created and submitted the curriculum to the state for final approval. The increased set of technical skills brought to the apprentices by their employer partners improved their versatility and employability when entering the workforce.
  - To ensure that the labor force was strengthened for the region, the University of Miami developed a Workforce Apprenticeship division that worked collaboratively with community partners, business leaders and other academic institutions to develop this workforce program.
- B. **DATA AND ASSESSMENT** refers to all the data and assessment system components, including test administration, test security, data collection, entry, reporting and procedures. The use of data in program decision-making is also explored and commented.
- The PCOG team requested that the monitoring staff confirm University of Miami's PCOG enrollment numbers submitted to the PCOG office. Enrollment data was requested for the following occupations:
    - HVAC Technician
- C. **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION** refer to those elements that contribute to student learning and skill acquisition.
- No curriculum and instruction were observed during the monitoring review.
- D. **TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT** refer to a review of the technology and equipment used by students and instructors in the classroom; addresses access, availability, innovation, use and condition.
- All inventory with the value of \$1,000 or more met the criteria set forth by federal, state and local guidelines and is included within their fixed asset system.
- E. **RECORDS REVIEW** refers to reviewing the records and documents supporting compliance with federal and state rules and regulations. In addition, a sampling of financial and programmatic records is reviewed.

Documents reviewed were:

- Procedures for finance and procurement
- Policies and procedures for property management
- Inventory records
- Procurement records
- Standards of Apprenticeship manual
- Employee/employer Prepprenticeship contract
- Instructional and on-the-job training manual

**F. FINANCIAL** refers to aspects of the federal fiscal requirements that providers must meet when expending federal funds, including financial management, procurement, inventory management and allowable costs.

- The Finance Director ensures the efficient management of PCOG grant funds. The following components of their financial policies and procedures manual were reviewed:
  - Budget Implementation
  - Cash Management
  - Methods of accounting
  - Fiscal internal controls
  - Records and reporting
  - Inventory Management
  - Procurement
  - Conflict of interests
- Monitoring staff conducted a grant budget analysis of University of Miami's grant.

**G. COLLABORATION** refers to the collaborative agreements, partnerships or memoranda of understanding that are in place to benefit an agency's programs and students.

- University of Miami has numerous collaborations and MOUs within the local community. They often offer additional educational and job experiences to students. The list of partners includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - CareerSource South Florida
  - Miami Dade College
  - City of Miami
  - Turner Construction
  - Siemens
  - Johnson Controls

## **VIII. RESULTS**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Program Concerns</b> | 1   |
| <b>Area</b>             | Program Registration  |
| <b>Details</b>          | <p>1. Per Chapter 29 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 29.5 ‘Standards of apprenticeship,’ eligibility for approval and registration by a Registration Agency required the program to have “an organized, written plan (program standards) embodying the terms and conditions of employment, training, and supervision of one or more apprentices in an apprenticeable occupation, as defined in this part, and subscribed to by a sponsor who has undertaken to carry out the apprentice training program.”</p> <p>2. While the University of Miami reported initiating apprenticeship activities in Fall 2023, the university never submitted program standards to the Department for registration.</p> |
| <b>Effectiveness</b>    | <p>1. Grant-funded programs must register the program with the Department.</p> <p>2. The absence of any registered apprenticeship program raises concerns and could adversely impact future funding.</p>  |

## IX. SUMMARY

After completing the monitoring review and receiving any additional information requested, a preliminary report is sent to the provider for their review. The Division monitoring team lead may consider comments at their discretion. Once the final report is approved, it will be sent to the agency head and a copy will be sent to the provider's designated contact person. The final report will also be posted on the Department's website, at:

<http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/compliance>

Once all outstanding corrective action plan items have been completed (when applicable), the Division will issue a closure letter to the agency head and designated contact person. This letter will signify the end of the monitoring process and that no further action is required.

On behalf of the Division, the monitoring team would like to extend their appreciation to all participants in the University of Miami VDMR. A special thanks is offered to Ms. Michelle Fields for her participation and leadership during this process.



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