



## COVID Education Innovation in Florida

### HBCU College Fair (Broward, Miami-Dade, Osceola, Palm Beach and Polk Counties)

With in-person college recruitment placed on permanent hold during the pandemic and in-person college visits a nostalgic experience of the past, how do schools inform students about the array of exciting possible choices of colleges and universities? Enter the virtual college fair. Enter, also, collaboration and cooperation across counties, school districts and partnerships to create a fair that leveraged shared responsibilities and resources rather than individual schools or districts having to reinvent the wheel each time.

While Broward County Public Schools have hosted Historically Black College and University (HBCU) recruitment tours for years originating with travelling bus tours, this year the District successfully collaborated with multiple school systems including, Palm Beach, Miami Dade, Polk, and Osceola, to make it even “bigger and better” to showcase its first “All-In on HBCU’s College Virtual Fair” in January 2021. The three-week event featured 34 HBCU schools, including many outstanding Florida HBCUs like St. Augustine University, Bethune Cookman and Florida A&M. For two weeks in the afternoons and evenings, students could access colleges of their choice for one-hour Zoom presentations and interactions about the college campus, academic offerings and application how tos.

The event culminated in a call to action for two nights in February with a virtual series offered on All-In on College Applications and the importance of Soft Skills. The event ended on a high note with more than 700 participants Zooming in for an All-In on FAFSA help session with the tag line ‘Join us as we guide you step-by-step through the application process. Let’s get this money!’

To meet students and parents at their level of need, all events were held at night for easy access. With the use of closed captioning in six different languages, including Spanish, Creole, and Portuguese, even non-English speakers could fully participate. In addition, all sessions were recorded for review at families’ leisure and “on-demand”. This new virtual college showcase format is here to stay as a more comprehensive means to reach across multiple physical areas and reach more people at their point of need.

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Additional Information:

[WPTV News Story](#)

The Consortium elevates the impact of Florida’s local education foundations through advocacy and providing a collegial community for ongoing learning, shared resources and support. These nonprofit organizations are aligned with nearly every school district in our state and collectively they raise more than \$80 million annually to innovate learning, power potential and celebrate success.

We believe strong collaboration is essential to ensure school success. Our effort to capture, elevate and share education innovations discovered amid the disruption of the pandemic is offered in that spirit.

Our **Top 10 Takeaways: COVID Education Innovation** report can be accessed at [educationinnovationspotlight.com](https://www.educationinnovationspotlight.com)