

## *College Reach Out Program (CROP) 2011-2012*

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September 1, 2011 – August 31, 2012



The goal of the Florida Gulf Coast University College Reach Out Program is to develop program activities that continually bring participants into contact with educators, University staff, community supporters, and college students who encourage, support and entice them to diligently work toward high school graduation and matriculation into post-secondary education.

One of the greatest strengths of the Florida Gulf Coast University Program is the use of an On-Site Coordinator (OSC) at participating public schools who meets with the students 2 hours per week giving them opportunities for academic support and advising on a regular basis. During this time, the On-Site Coordinator uses the CROP Coordinators' Manual providing resources and activities developed to enhance the educational and personal growth of the students. The Coordinators are trained by and work closely with the FGCU Outreach Staff in meeting the needs of participants in the programs. Activities bringing students to the University are planned throughout the year. These experiences are important strategies used to meet program goals, build mentoring relationships and provide a university experience for participants.

Activities developed for the program are geared toward gaining the students' interest in and eventual matriculation into a post-secondary program. Many of the activities suggested by the program encourage the OCS to support the "Just Read, Florida!" initiative, as well as the math/science initiative. The Coordinators have many resources, including books and materials provided by the CROP Program. Reading lists for appropriate grade levels are provided in the manual. Summer Programs highlight reading, math and history experiences. These initiatives are additionally supported by Florida Gulf Coast University based workshops, leadership opportunities, engineering and science experiences throughout the year providing continuous interaction with University level students who have an interest in those particular fields.

In schools with strong College Reach-Out Programs, the students themselves are the best marketers. For newer programs a different approach is needed. Many schools have open houses and orientations either before school starts or very early in the fall term. These opportunities will be used to disseminate the information about the Program and to target the recruitment specifically for 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders. This approach has been found to increase CROP membership. FGCU Outreach staff attendance at school-wide career and college day programs is an opportunity to inform students about the Program. The OCS Coordinators contact principals, teachers and staff members at their respective schools marketing the program and requesting colleagues to forward names of students who "fit" with the College Reach-Out Program participants. Support of partnership programs, such as the FGCU Scholars Program, provides marketing experiences, too.

For more information on the CROP program, see <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/CROP/>