

Training on Tap

A roundup of leadership programs statewide

By Michelle Ertl

They make you forge your own path. And just when you've gotten your footing, they make you retreat. They put you with strangers, test your limits, push your boundaries, and make you find your cheese. They dangle you behind out over thin air. Even at lunch, they feed your mind while you brown-bag your belly. And when they're done, they've transformed you into a lean, mean leading machine.

Leadership training programs at campuses across Florida come in every level of intensity, but they all share a common goal: building students' skills. Read on to find the program that suits your style in our third annual leadership training roundup.

Private Schools

Florida Southern College

What: If there's a path to take for leadership development, Florida Southern College students can find it in Pathfinders, a leadership development program comprised of select groups of freshmen. Students qualify based on GPA and an essay describing their leadership experience and their desire to be leaders on campus. The chosen Pathfinders attend a retreat followed by short monthly sessions that allow participants to explore the concept of leadership while improving their own skills.

The Pathfinders build a strong leadership foundation by completing the program's four points of leadership: service, vision, challenge, and growth. Through service, the participants strengthen their personal foundations, vision allows them to focus on their personal and organizational qualities, challenge pushes the participants beyond their comfort zones, and growth enables students to record their experiences. After the students complete the yearlong program, they can develop into Navigators, students who later become leaders of the Pathfinders program.

Why: "By creating a network of leaders committed to not only Pathfinders, but the college and the community at large, we will establish a legacy of leadership," says Stephen Bellah, leadership coordinator. "I love the impact it has on our first-year students."

Who: Contact Bellah at sbellah@flsouthern.edu, call the student activities office at 863-680-4625, or visit www.flsouthern.edu/stdntlife/studentactivities/Pathfinders/about.htm.

Jacksonville University

What: Jacksonville University's LEAD@JU program takes students on a fundamental journey that teaches and builds leadership

meetings and creative group projects. At this level, students study leadership styles and principles extensively. They're encouraged to attend special programs offered not only on campus, but in the city of Jacksonville as well.

The last level, the Capstone, is based more on group projects and the independent study of leadership styles in professional settings. Students attend meetings, conduct independent and group projects, and explore leadership in their desired career path. Capstone leaders meet and network with significant leaders in the Jacksonville community. Students assist in leading the annual retreat.

Why: "The mission of the program is to increase student interest in leadership and to enhance student abilities as leaders, both within our campus community and for their years beyond campus," says David Eberhardt, program coordinator and assistant dean of students for community development.

Who: Contact Eberhardt at deberha@ju.edu.

Rollins College

What: The Leadership Education and Development program at Rollins College is open to any and all students—veterans and rookies—who wish to gain leadership experience by participating for an entire year, a few weeks, or even just a couple of days. The Fall Leadership Retreat is a place to get the students on the ropes—literally. The ropes challenge course gets students excited about applying their own leadership qualities and prepares them for many changes

headed their way.

Later in the fall, the LEAD program offers EMERGE—an eight-week seminar program focused on the Leadership and Social Change model. The program focuses on understanding self-leadership through different activities and speakers, and its goal is to have participants understand what leadership means to them. VENTURE is also an eight-week seminar, but instead of the focus being on the individual, the program concentrates on leadership involvement in groups.

Why: "The LEAD program is so effective because we meet students at every level—we allow anyone and everyone to find a place," says Corey Ellis, assistant director of student involvement and leadership.



Forging Ahead: Florida Southern's Pathfinders navigate their way through many challenges during the year-long program.

skills from the ground up. The program, which provides events, retreats, meetings, discussions, and group projects, is run by faculty, administrators, and even student leaders and encourages a serious commitment without a serious amount of time.

The flexible program offers three different levels of involvement, all concluding with the annual leadership retreat. The Foundation Level, in which students get exposed to the basics, provides monthly meetings with guest speakers who discuss various leadership topics. Throughout the level, students amass credit points for each activity they're involved in, leading to certification at the end of the program.

The Core Level consists of weekly

Who: Contact the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership at lead@rollins.edu, call 407-646-2624, or visit www.rollins.edu/osil/lead/index.htm.

Florida International University

What: The Center for Leadership Development and Civic Responsibilities at Florida International University offers students a great amount of choices when it comes to leadership programs. The programs focus on leadership development through training, education, and experiential learning.

For those who wish to start from the beginning, FIU offers two introductory leadership programs. First, the Academy of Emerging Leaders is a semester-long program consisting of monthly meetings and a retreat at Pigeon Key. The meetings include simple leadership talks, projects, and even workshops—consistently encouraging students to engage in various community service projects. Second, the ENGAGE program covers various leadership topics at workshops held every other Friday during the semester. The workshops include sessions on running meetings, delegating groups, conflict resolution, and team building.

For many students, leadership simply becomes a way of life, and FIU created a place in its program where students can live leadership as a lifestyle. The Leaders in Residence program also offers students a chance to incorporate leadership into their everyday lives. The program runs annually, establishing a living/learning community through educational programs, mentoring experiences, community service involvement, and cooperative living.

Why: FIU offers and promotes these programs to provide leadership education and experiential opportunities to all students. “Through unlimited accessibility, our program allows students to develop leadership skills that enable them to make a difference on campus,” says Alton Austin, leadership facilitator.

Who: Contact the Center for Leadership Development and Civic Responsibilities at 305-348-1402 or visit www.fiu.edu/~leaders.

Public Colleges

University of Central Florida

What: As recently accepted LEAD (Leadership, Enrichment, and Academic Development) scholars, University of Central Florida freshmen get the chance to participate in the program’s Residentially Enhanced Experiential Leadership retreat. The REEL program started in August of 2001 with 60 participants and has grown to more than 120. The program offers a choice of two sessions, each one taking participants to an overnight retreat in Leesburg, Fla. Participants get a chance to meet and connect with fellow LEAD scholars before fall classes begin. UCF staff members and 20 LEAD scholar program participants, who serve as REEL counselors (RCs), run the event.

Getting on TRAC for Leadership

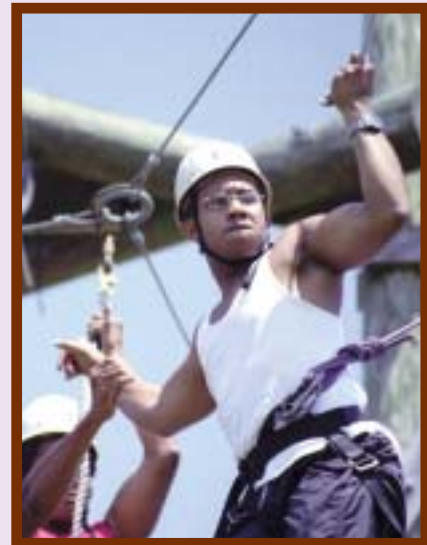
Organizations systematically keep track of their growth and support. Colleges and universities monitor that their students stay on track within their degree programs. Businesses consistently track the progress and labor of their employees. Whether you’re new to an organization, school, or business, or whether you’ve been engaged for some time, it’s important to get on track and stay on track in the future. The TRAC program at **Florida International University** provides its participants with the skills and motivation to get things on track for a better tomorrow.

Staff members at FIU’s Team Ropes Adventure Challenge offer a flexible program that encourages all types of organizations: corporate groups, non-profit organizations, school groups, and departments. The two-part course is custom-designed, can accommodate groups of up to 100, and is open to anyone over the age of 8. Full-day and half-day programs are offered every month of the year and every day of the week. The program can easily become a vital tool in your team’s development—a tool that can be utilized again and again. “TRAC and the ropes course experience have become a well-loved tradition and essential part of the staff retreat,” says Daniele Conners from the Person Residential College at the **University of Miami**. “Attending TRAC gets the staff off to a great start in team-building and sets a positive tone for the year.”

Participants in the two-part adventure course work as a team, solving structured problems that promote leadership through emphasis on motivation, high energy, and teamwork. The low element course consists of problem-solving exercises. The high element course promotes positive risk taking and self-esteem through various physical challenges.

TRAC’s professionally trained staff members promote two teaching philosophies that encourage the participants’ choices to lead themselves and the team’s ability to benefit wholly from the experience. The “Challenge By Choice” teaching philosophy lets someone determine his own level of participation and, as a result, makes him responsible for his own success and development as a team member. The “Full Value Contract” philosophy contains a series of guidelines that emphasize the importance of well-conceived and implemented plans.

TRAC gears toward leadership and team development by improving individual and group



COURTESY FIU

Hanging Out: The ropes course helps participants get the hang of using their skills.

awareness. “The reason why TRAC is such an important tool for leadership teams is the transformation that happens over a very short period of time,” says Vivian Perez, FIU’s assistant director of marketing and guest relations. “After overcoming so many challenges together, participants leave knowing each other better and with a new sense of self-confidence.” By improving how team members relate to each other, TRAC believes that participating organizations will see a vast improvement in quality of work and leadership. Meredith Ginsburg, a youth leadership associate from the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, says, “The group really came together. Many of them didn’t know each other prior. I learned how dedicated each individual member was to making the team succeed.”

So, if your team members are in need of a challenge to further their potentials, improve their abilities as leaders, and discover their hidden talents, calling on the TRAC program may give you the place to get it into gear.

Contact Perez at vivian.perez1@fiu.edu, call 305-919-5712, or visit www.fiu.edu/~trac/about.htm.

Bite This: The TRAC program fosters self-confidence and encourages team unity by challenging participants to use everything they’ve got—including their teeth.



COURTESY FIU

During the two-day retreat, participants engage in several activities—The Game of Life simulation and the Who Moved My Cheese activity have proven to be favorites. In The Game of Life, REEL participants walk in the shoes of people different from themselves. The students wear nametags, coded in terms of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, ability, disability, and gender. Who Moved My Cheese is a two-hour discussion based on Spencer Johnson's book of the same name. The book explores how certain people deal with the change of a shifting environment. The RCs facilitate a discussion about the many changes that occur during the transition from high school to college, and counselors share their personal experiences with participants.

Why: The REEL program is unique because it engages students from the very beginning. After check-in at their dorms, they're literally whisked away on a bus to the retreat just hours later. Through leadership activities and the program's focus on personal development at an early stage, students can meet new friends, find out about themselves, and become leaders in a non-threatening environment. "REEL is one of the greatest programs that LEAD Scholars and UCF has to offer new students," says Mikki Pannozzo, assistant director of the LEAD Scholars Program. "Our goal is to foster an environment in which students build an open and honest

community of scholars based on learning, leadership development, diversity, and values before classes begin."

Who: Call Pannozzo at 407-823-2223 or visit www.lead.sdes.ucf.edu and click on LEAD programs, then REEL.

University of South Florida

What: Would your ideal leadership program be described as a key tool in developing skills in first-year students? If so, the Emerging Leaders Conference offered at the University of South Florida is just what you're looking for. Over the course of a two-day retreat, established student leaders assist with team-building activities that teach participants communication, group dynamics, and trust. Students who have demonstrated leadership qualities either in or outside the classroom and have been selected by both faculty and students leave USF's campus by bus for a weekend trip at

Chinsegut Hill Conference Center in Brooksville, Fla.

The Emerging Leaders Conference is a 14-year-old event that has sought to provide students with an opportunity to learn, grow, and enhance their leadership skills. The program teaches participants to consider leadership roles not only during school, but also in their lives beyond. "I learned so much about myself and the other extraordinary people that were at the conference," says participant Stephanie Freedman. "Best of all, I made friends with some of the most talented and inspiring people at USF."

Why: "With the aid of student facilitators and lead advisors, students find, through a variety of activities, exercises, and games, that they have both the strength and ethical conviction to pave a better tomorrow for not only themselves, but for their peers and friends," says Alicia Keating, a leadership development graduate assistant.



Hit the Deck: USF's Emerging Leaders are floored by some of the activities during the annual conference. Exercises like these teach students to embrace leadership roles both on campus and off.

Who: Contact Keating at akeating@admin.usf.edu or call 813-974-5781.

Community Colleges Broward Community College

What: Broward Community College knows that leaders are in demand for the new millennium—people with skills and techniques like team-building, effective communication, problem solving, and conflict management. Students at BCC can get skill-building experience on and off campus in two-hour, full-day, and weekend seminars. "The mission of the program is to take first-year college students and introduce them to different leadership styles and prepare them to be active in student organizations," says Erin Boyd, admissions



Find more leadership training programs with links at www.floridaleader.com

coordinator. The Leadership Weekends program gives students a chance to meet others, discover their own leadership possibilities, and participate in experiential activities that put the students' skills into action.

The Leadership Seminar Series offers one-day seminars focusing on specific topics. The Saturday sessions bring professional presenters to motivate, inspire, and educate participants. Upon completion of the series, students will receive a specialized Student Leader certificate.

The Student Organizational Leaders Training Day focuses on the leadership roles within student organizations. The full-day program winds up on a ropes course challenge where organization leaders focus on team-building, conflict management, collaboration, and motivation.

Why: "This program is designed to take students with little or no formal leadership training and introduce them to different

leadership styles through various facilitators and activities," Boyd says.

Who: Contact Boyd at eboyd@broward.edu, call 954-201-8997, or visit www.broward.edu/locations/central/studentlife/leadership_c.jsp.

Central Florida Community College

What: The future is looking bigger and brighter for Central Florida Community College's leadership program. The program may be young, but it's devoted to making a lasting impression on the CFCC community. The program

enhances students' leadership skills through speakers, dinners, lunches, and retreats

The Leadership Development Series consists of an annual dinner event and monthly lunches where speakers discuss various leadership topics. The etiquette dinner guides students through the technicalities of formal dining. The monthly lunches cover topics such as communication skills, stress management, developing a leadership style, and discovering the leader within.

Why: The mission of CFCC's program is simple: "We just want to provide our students with opportunities to develop skills that will help them be successful in life," says Dr. Lindsey Dedow, coordinator of the Center for Civic Education and Leadership Development.

Who: Contact Dr. Dedow at 352-854-2322 ext. 1578 or visit www.cfcc.cc.fl.us/student/stdntleader.htm.