



## UCF Hosts First All Partners Institute



Tim Only, graduate from Evans High, A UCF-Certified Community Partnership School, delivered the Keynote at the first All Partners Institute, hosted by the UCF Center for Community Schools.

When Tim Only spoke as the keynote at the very first All Partners Institute, hosted by the UCF Center for Community Schools, he said that his future felt uncertain when first stepping onto Evans High's campus.

"I didn't know if I would have the support I needed or how many caring adults would come into my life."

But that same year, Evans High was growing into something more than a school. In 2013, the campus adopted an innovative and research-based strategy that would remove barriers to Only's learning and support the student to thrive in life. When something as seemingly small as a toothache made paying attention in class near impossible, he was offered access to dental care right there on campus. When facing challenges at home, the school provided mental health resources otherwise too difficult for him to access.

But it is not as simple as providing resources, according to Cynthia Williams, assistant professor in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics. In a panel of healthcare partners Williams facilitated, panelists spoke about how engagement is key to getting students and families to use and benefit from the resources.

The panelists were just some of the 220 Community Partnership School professionals attending the institute. With 17 healthcare organizations, 21 school districts, 23 universities or colleges, and 15 nonprofits at the event, all 36 Community Partnership Schools statewide had a chance to network and share best practices in support of each school community's unique needs.

Mary Little, a professor of exceptional student education at UCF, also talked about how university and district partners can recruit, prepare and retain effective educators within Title 1 schools through clinical experiences, mentorship, professional learning and on-the-job supports.

Abe Fernandez, who is vice president of collective impact and director at the National Center for Community Schools and Children's Aid, spoke about the causes of chronic absenteeism, what is being done to change and prevent it, and the scope of the positive impact on children.

"There are some really negative outcomes for students who are chronically absent. But it's important to know that even the kids who come regularly are impacted. This is a whole school issue."

Summer Pfeiffer, vice president of governmental relations at Children's Home Society of Florida, and Janet Owen, vice president for government and community relations at UCF, spoke about the importance of public funding for Community Partnership Schools, and fostering mutually supportive, ongoing relationships with elected officials.

It has been 10 years since Only, uncertain of his future, walked onto Evans High's campus, the first year the Community Partnership Schools™ model was implemented. Today, he is thriving with an undergraduate degree in criminal justice and is pursuing a master's degree. Only says through the model, caring adults connected him to resources and support that still serve in his growth today.

Only says, "I know how important it is for a kid to have that support, to have that unconditional love."



Partners from Miami Community Partnership Schools at the All Partners Institute Awards Celebration.

### DIRECTOR'S NOTE

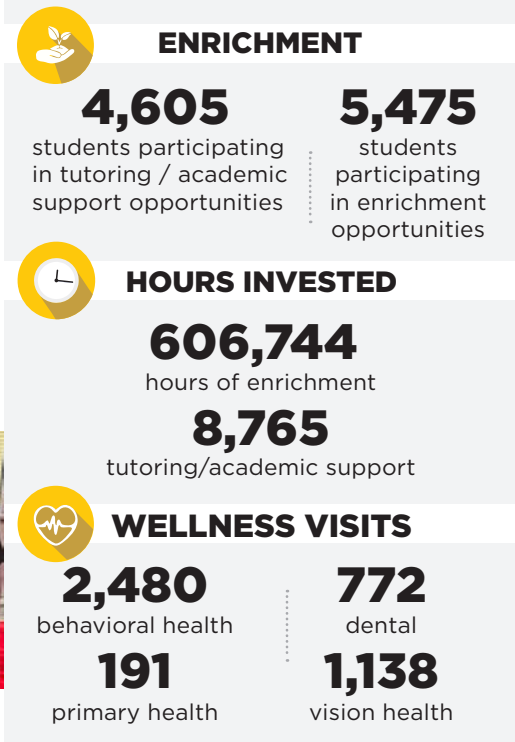


The first All Partners Institute this year harnessed the breadth

of knowledge and resources available through Community Partnership School networks. By bringing together core partners including school districts, nonprofits, healthcare providers, and universities/colleges — and forging new partnerships with other CPS champions — participants were provided opportunities to strengthen their partnerships and deepen efforts serving students and families. The success in launching Community Partnership Schools has ignited interest across the state to adopt the model. In response, we are requesting \$11 million this legislative session (up from \$7 million funded last year) to continue funding Community Partnership Schools across the state. Thank you for your dedication to addressing the unique needs of students and their families. Together, we are making a difference.

**Dr. Amy Ellis, Director**  
UCF Center for Community Schools

## Q2 2023 COMMUNITY SUPPORT



# Boys and Girls Club and CPS Partner to Help Kids Grow

“The community might have lots of resources and opportunities but not everyone has access to them,” says Lendward Griffin, Senior Director of 21st Century Clubs at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida.

That is where Community Partnership Schools and the Boys and Girls Club come in, says Griffin. They collaborate to offer parent and community events. Students without enough food at home are given Weekend Food Bags.

Through this partnership, the school is able to provide resources that students, families and communities wouldn't otherwise have access to.

“We're collaborating on the academic portion of it, too, so that kids who attend Community Partnership Schools and the Club are more inclined to make better grades and better decisions.”

Over the 2021-22 school year, 54% of Community Partnership School students who took part in the Club improved their grades in English Language Arts courses and improved 26% in Math courses.

“We take things like grades, progress reports, in-school suspensions and behavior referrals and figure out what is going on with the student. We use that data to help the students become their best selves and amplify their voices.”

Griffin says in everything the Club does, especially with Community Partnership Schools, they want to give students the necessary tools to be successful.

“Community Partnership Schools has been a great partner to say, Hey, this child



Lendward Griffin, Senior Director of 21st Century Clubs at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida

needs this. Let's figure out a way to make it happen.”

They also want to build trust with families and make sure families feel confident in what they are doing.

“It is about following through with actions and showing up consistently for them. It is about having conversations.”

The Club is dedicated to building relationships with parents, partnering with the school to offer parent nights with resources like financial literacy or how to eat healthy as a family.

Griffin says he got into this line of work to help children and he knows the importance of having someone to look up to.

“We help kids understand that they can be anything they want. It is good to have somebody who believes in you. And for me, it is not just their smiling faces, but helping them problem solve. It is seeing them grow.”

Like with one student at The Webster School, A UCF-Certified Community Partnership School, who was struggling in school — Griffin says after joining the Club, she made it on the A/B Honor Roll for the first time — and now the student is an influential leader at her school and the Club.

## DID YOU KNOW?

▶ Through community partnerships, **Edward H. White Academy of Leadership** (Duval) provided health services valued over \$53,000 to the school community, serving a total of 521 students. Services included STD and HIV screenings, sports physicals, vision exams, prescription glasses, and mental health counseling.

▶ Through their Blessings-in-a-Backpack program, **The Webster School** (St. Johns) provided over 300 food packages per month (roughly 72 packages weekly), valued at \$501 for this quarter.

▶ **Sulphur Springs K-8** (Hillsborough) hosted their annual Trunk-or-Treat event that saw a 60% increase in attendance and a 125% increase in volunteers.

▶ Young Engineers of Tallahassee selected **Sabal Palm Elementary** (Leon) to design and implement the Pathways After School Program for 20 Sabal Palm Elementary students in grades 2-5. Through the eight-week program, students participate in several STEM enrichment activities, enjoy a snack, and receive homework help — an in-kind value of \$15,120.00 (\$756 per student).

▶ At **Crystal Lake Elementary** (Polk), community volunteers contributed 485 volunteer hours supporting food distributions, during and after-school tutoring, and enrichment programs with an in-kind value of \$11,659.

▶ Community Health of Northwest Florida continues to provide the Mobile Dental Unit services to **C.A. Weis Elementary** (Escambia). The program provided exams, x-rays, cleanings, and sealants to 79 students; 73 students were referred for additional services.

▶ **Orange Park High** (Clay) received \$8,651 from the U.S. Tennis Association Florida Foundation for programming and equipment, providing 100 students with introductory tennis lessons in physical education classes during a seven-week after-school tennis program.

▶ Through the University of Florida's Women Building Women program, **Howard Bishop Middle** (Alachua) has provided 12 mentors to work with 12 students every week, a \$5,748.96 value. The program connects middle school girls with a college mentor to share goals and future life interests, conflict resolution and peer relationships.

## CERTIFICATION CORNER

# Celebrating Newly Certified Howard Bishop Middle

Congratulations to **Howard Bishop Middle** (Alachua) for meeting each of the 12 rigorous standards to better serve students, families and their communities.

UCF certification represents years of intentional, dedicated work to build partnerships that align to student success and wellbeing.



Howard Bishop Middle