



A Union of Professionals

AFT Innovation Fund

UNITED TEACHERS OF DADE



WE EDUCATE MIAMI

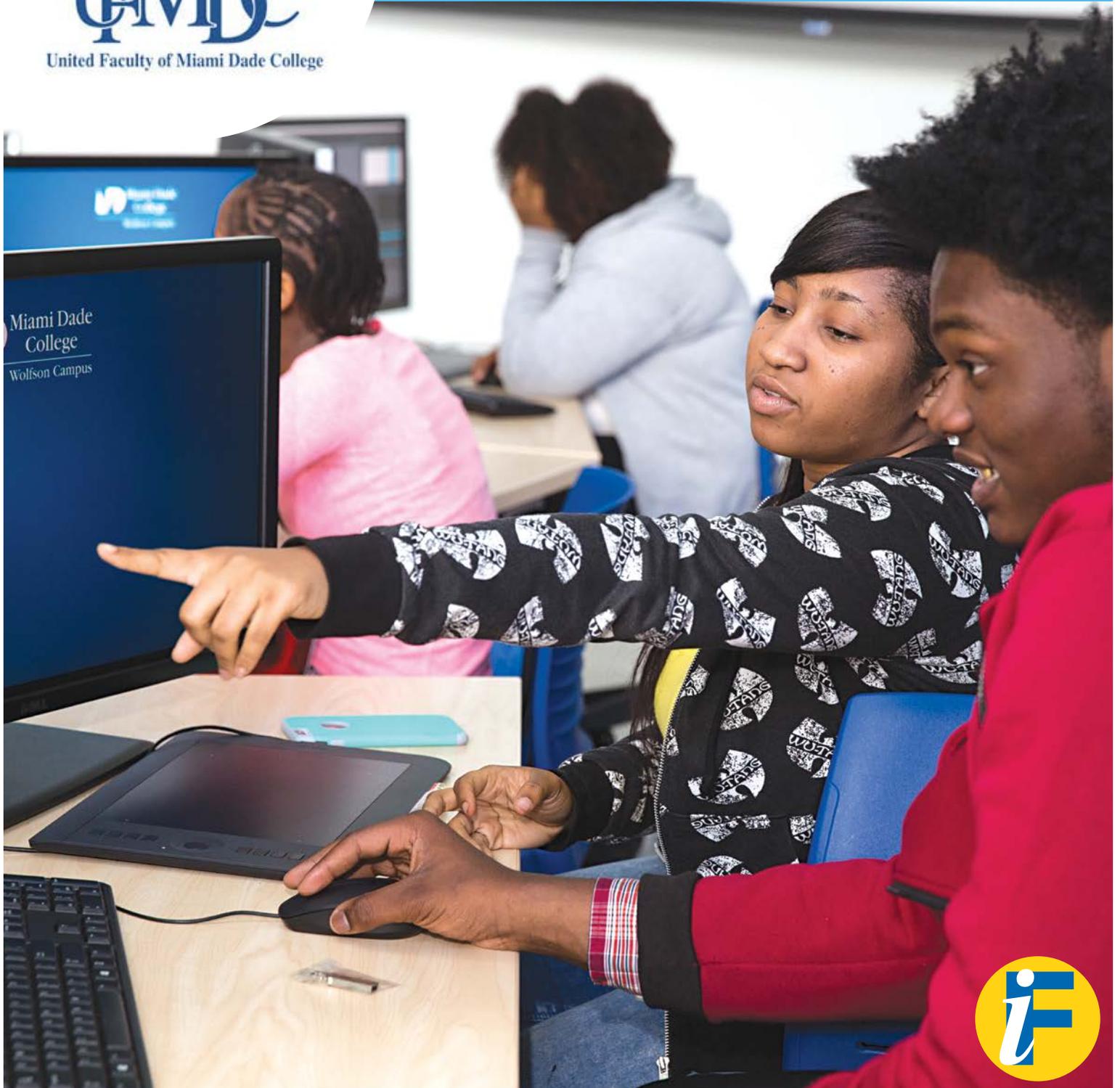


United Faculty of Miami Dade College



CREATING PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS TO COLLEGE AND CAREERS IN DIGITAL MEDIA

UNITED TEACHERS OF DADE and THE UNITED FACULTY OF MIAMI DADE COLLEGE





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CREATING PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS TO COLLEGE AND CAREERS IN DIGITAL MEDIA

PROGRAM GOALS

- To increase the high school graduation rate of enrolled students;
- To increase high school industry certification completions; and
- To Increase the college credits earned while in high school.

Summary

As part of the AFT's Promising Pathways initiative launched in 2015, the United Teachers of Dade (UTD) and the United Faculty of Miami Dade College (UFMDC) were awarded an AFT Innovation Fund grant to improve access to community college-level coursework and gain exposure to fields in digital media and design. The Miami C-Tech Pathways Program was the result of collaboration among various stakeholders that assisted in the development and implementation. Stakeholders included Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) teachers and administrators, the M-DCPS Department of Career and Technical Education, Miami Dade College-North Campus' Academic Affairs Office, and Miami Dade College's School of Entertainment and Design Technology.

The Miami C-Tech Pathways Program encourages high school students to enroll in a digital media program to become college and workforce ready through college preparation classes, earning college credits and industry certifications.

In its One Community, One Goal Initiative, the Beacon Council (Miami-Dade County's official economic-development partnership) identified digital media as being one of the targeted industries having great potential for exponential growth in the county. Graphic design services jobs in Miami-Dade County are forecast to have 3.6 percent annual growth rate through 2020.

Miami C-Tech provided students with various engagement activities through curricular and co-curricular interventions. These activities included industry certification preparation and exam, college-readiness preparation programs, extended classroom expe-

riences, academic and career advisement sessions, and dual-enrollment courses. In the two years since launching, over 150 students participated across four schools earning 103 industry certifications, 23 dual enrollment credits, and three college certificates. For further information visit <https://www.miamictech.org>.

Program Leaders

- **KARLA HERNANDEZ-MATS**
President, United Teachers of Dade
- **ELIZABETH RAMSAY**
President, United Faculty of Miami Dade College
- **LUPE DIAZ**
Executive Director, Department of Career and Technical Education, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- **JACQUELINE PEÑA**
Dean of Faculty, Miami Dade College-North Campus
- **HAROLD SILVA**
Director, Miami C-Tech Pathways Program

Program Contact

UNITED TEACHERS OF DADE
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Community, Industry, Postsecondary and District Partners

- American Federation of Teachers
- AFT Innovation Fund
- iTech @ Thomas A. Edison Educational Center
- M-DCPS Department of Career and Technical Education
- Miami Dade College (MDC), North Campus President's Office, North Dean of Faculty Office, and North New Student Center, Miami Animation and Gaming International Complex, School of Entertainment and Design Technology, Wolfson Campus New Student Center
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Miami Edison Senior High School
- North Miami Beach Senior High School
- Paper Lab Studios
- United Faculty of Miami Dade College
- United Teachers of Dade
- William H. Turner Technical Arts School



The AFT Innovation Fund was established in 2009 to identify, nurture and bring to scale union- and educator-led innovations in public education. As an initiative of the AFT, the fund's reach is nationwide. To date, the fund has made more than 45 investments. These investments position the AFT and its affiliates, in collaboration with school districts and the communities in which they work, as leaders and engaged partners in improving outcomes for our members and the people they serve.

“In Miami, the United Teachers of Dade and the United Faculty of Miami Dade College have partnered and invested in students’ futures in the exciting and growing field of digital media and design. They’ve focused on preparing students for successful transitions to college and career by helping them earn industry certifications and college credits while still in high school, giving them a major leg up on their career path and completing their degrees. This partnership is profoundly impacting the lives of students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.”

—Randi Weingarten, AFT President

PRESIDENTS’ REFLECTIONS

Through Miami C-Tech Pathways, I was able to directly observe how vital career and technical education is for our students and for our union members. This project created a greater consciousness of the need for learning opportunities for students and teachers alike that included dual enrollment, extended classroom experiences, professional development, and college and career readiness. The world of digital media is expanding at such a rapid rate, keeping up with workforce demands is crucial. This initiative has helped us to advocate for essential programs like these that have been all but eradicated in our educational system due to unfortunate policy emphasis on testing mandates.

I also saw firsthand the vital role that our collaboration played among different stakeholders in our community. Our partnerships with the United Faculty of Miami Dade College, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Miami Dade College allowed us to make this journey so successful, re-emphasizing the fact that relationships matter. Additionally, our passionate educators showed us just how important unionism is, and how high-quality education is achieved through union work. We are confident that the high-quality programming we offered through digital media experiences will secure students’ futures as we continue to increase opportunities and decrease academic and income gaps in our community.

KARLA HERNANDEZ-MATS,
UTD President



The C-Tech Pathways Program is unique in its design. Students earn valuable industry certifications by completing college credits while still in high school, which can stack and be applied toward an associate degree. It also addresses challenges many underserved students experience. It provides test-prep courses, transportation vouchers, one-on-one mentoring, and other wraparound services for participants. The courses offered are in the high-demand area of digital design and animation. As part of the C-Tech program, for example, students learn HTML programming and use industry-standard programs such as Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop.

The Miami C-Tech Pathways Program has also designed professional development workshops for UTD teachers taught by UFMDC. It is truly an integrated partnership designed by educators to address the needs of students. As the first cohorts of C-Tech students graduate from local high schools, already equipped with college credit certificates, we are gratified to note their progress both in college and in the workforce. They are already beginning to make their mark in the fast-growing tech sector in Miami.

ELIZABETH RAMSAY,
UFMDC President



OUR MISSION

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Lorretta Johnson
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EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



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