



Valencia College Board of Trustees Foundation Report February 1, 2024

Helios Education Foundation Partnership

Valencia College and the Valencia College Foundation have had a strong and impactful partnership with the Helios Education Foundation for a number of years. In 2018, Central Florida's leaders in education, with funding from Helios Education Foundation, launched [the Central Florida Education Ecosystem Database \(CFEED\)](#), a research project intended to increase student success by enhancing student learning, increasing academic achievement, and ultimately outlining a supportive, continuous pathway toward education success. The collaboration, which engages Orange County Public Schools, the School District of Osceola County, Valencia College, and the University of Central Florida, launched CFEED to link partners, data, and highlight opportunities for student support all along the education ecosystem. This groundbreaking partnership and collaboration is yielding important and impactful data to serve our students and our community.

The Helios Education Foundation was founded with one purpose: To create opportunities for students in Arizona and Florida to succeed in postsecondary education. By using research and data to identify the best ways to improve student success, Helios aims to increase the number of students who read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade, the number of students who enroll in college, and the number who complete a postsecondary degree. Since 2006, Helios has invested over \$324 million in education initiatives in Arizona and Florida.

Central Florida Helios Transfer Scholars Program

To build on this strong partnership, in June 2023, Helios Education Foundation awarded Valencia College and the University of Central Florida a \$1.3 million grant to launch a pilot program that the CFEED, Valencia and UCF teams believe will boost transfer student success.

Grant Purpose: Many Valencia students complete their AA degree requirements prior to completing the Common Program Prerequisites (CPPs) for their intended major. Students have the option to complete their CPPs at Valencia or at UCF. Data indicates that students who complete their required CPPs at Valencia are more likely to graduate. Based on CFEED data, the new pilot program provides select transfer students with Helios-funded incentives for the following:

- \$500 toward the completion of up to three courses at Valencia to complete the Common Program Prerequisites aligned with a student's degree pathway. This award is designed to incentivize students to complete their CPPs at Valencia College, even if their financial aid will not cover those courses.

- \$250 for having completed an Associate in Arts degree and the Common Program Prerequisites prior to transfer to UCF. This is designed to reward students for being “transfer ready.”
- \$500 financial aid award for part-time students to continue their studies at UCF part-time to allow the students to acclimate to the new environment and prevent “transfer shock,” the academic and social disorientation experienced by students following a transfer from one institution to another. The \$500 award is also designed to supplement their financial aid in the transition from Valencia to UCF.

The Helios grant continues through Summer 2024. Valencia and UCF teams are also looking at early success metrics for participants from Fall 2023, such as student retention, re-enrollment, and course success for all student participants.