

LEADERSHIP

BREVARD

Class of 2023

Leadership Brevard Community Acceleration Project Summaries

➤ *"Project FAFSA Liftoff!"*

Elevate Brevard

In an educational career, the FAFSA is the first step toward economic stability; opening doors to financial assistance for college. According to the Florida College Access Network, "58% of Florida high school seniors who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) qualify for a Pell Grant, one of the largest forms of federal aid available to low-income students. Currently, Florida ranks 48th in the nation for FAFSA completion, [with FL seniors missing out on over \$300 million annually in Pell grants, \$8 million in Brevard County] . Florida College Access Network (FCAN) started the Florida FAFSA Challenge in 2015 to encourage all Florida schools and districts to increase FAFSA completion by 5 percentage points over the previous year". United Way of Brevard has stepped up to champion this FAFSA challenge in Brevard Public Schools (BPS). Eastern Florida State College (EFSC), BPS, Elevate Brevard and the United Way of Brevard will work together to provide resources that will assist high school seniors and families in submitting completed FAFSA applications, with a goal to increase the district by 5 percentage points from last year's 55% completion rate, to at least 60% FAFSA completion. From October 1, 2022 through April 15, 2023, the 2023 LEAD Brevard CAP Team will: be trained on how to complete the FAFSA, be cleared as a BPS volunteer, volunteer at FAFSA Events (BPS and or EFSC), assist students and families one-on-one with FAFSA completion, promote FAFSA completion, and collect/report qualitative data such as questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, and interviews with families and students on how the community can better serve students and families regarding FAFSA completion. In addition, the 2023 LEAD Brevard CAP Team will assist adult Brevard County residents with completing the FAFSA if they are interested in returning to school. Assistance will be provided from 2023 LEAD Brevard CAP members to students and families at the 9 high schools that have had a 5-year average of 50% or below in FAFSA completion rates: Astronaut High, Bayside High, Cocoa High, Eau Gallie High, Heritage High, Merritt Island High, Palm Bay High, Space Coast Jr/Sr High, and Titusville High; in addition to adults Brevard residents wanting to attend college. Together, we will Elevate Brevard by increasing FAFSA completion rates!

➤ *"Let's Get Wild! Leverage Florida Wildlife Hospital's 50th Anniversary to Help Further its Mission to Keep Wildlife Wild"*

Florida Wildlife Hospital

Participants will create a plan to mark Florida Wildlife Hospital's (FWH) 50th anniversary by researching and learning about FWH, its history, its mission, its current operations, and the level of awareness for the hospital among members of the Brevard community. Using this information, they are asked to

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develop a comprehensive outline of recommendations on unique ways in which the hospital should commemorate this major milestone. Recognizing that CAP participants are prohibited from fundraising

activities, this project would focus on the generation of ideas that could be implemented by FWH staff, volunteers and its board of directors.

The plan might include:

- Marketing and branding suggestions
- Engaging ways to capture and promote FWH's rich history
- Educational outreach program(s) with local schools
- Community outreach program (s) including methods to engage additional volunteers, community partners/business and/or corporate sponsors
- Ways to leverage the anniversary to increase monthly and annual memberships (donors)
- Suggestions for an attention-getting and exciting capital project
- Ways to incorporate the 50th anniversary into existing annual FWH events

Why choose the FWH CAP? Since 1973, FWH has served the Brevard County community by rehabilitating sick, injured and orphaned Florida wildlife and then releasing these animals back to their homes. As the area continues to experience explosive growth, and new housing and commercial buildings are constructed on previously undeveloped lands, the impact on native wildlife increases dramatically.

As one of the only facilities of its kind in this community, FWH routinely cares for more than 5,000 animals each year, including otters, bobcats, squirrels, possums, songbirds, bats, pelicans, raptors, tortoises, turtles and many more. For more information about the organization, please visit floridawildlifehospital.org

➤ *"A Vision for the Future – A Never Ending Legacy"*

Green Gables

Green Gables is a 126-year-old Queen Anne style home built by William and Nora Wells as a winter home in 1896. In 2010, Green Gables at Historic Riverview Village, Inc., was created, incorporated and became a 501(c)(3) in order to save the home from imminent demolition. The home has since been listed in the US National Register of Historic Places, and the process has begun to complete the purchase of the house from the original family. The purchase is facilitated by Green Gables being awarded a State of Florida Special Category Matching Grant from the Florida Historical Resources Division.

As our organization will now be a homeowner, and have much home rehabilitation in front of us, we have some immediate needs. As Green Gables CAP project, we are asking for help in 4 areas.

First, development of community partnerships with businesses, organizations, local government and other nonprofits.

Second, help in recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Third, establishment of an intern program that would partner with local colleges, high schools, charter schools, and organizations such as scouting.

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Fourth, a plan to help involve community partners in our fundraising efforts.

This will allow us to create a strong foundation for Green Gables to become an integral part of the community as we continue to develop Green Gables as a community center, an education center, and a museum. In addition, we are preserving and protecting close to an acre and a half of green space on the Indian River for everyone to enjoy.

Through development of these strategic partnerships within the business, government, education and nonprofit sectors Green Gables will be able to reach the stated goals.

We have much work ahead of us to make the house, Green Gables, as grand as it was at the turn of the century. We hope with your help, we are able to engage the community to see what an asset this house and riverfront property is to Melbourne and Brevard County.

➤ *"Connecting community members and police departments in Brevard County"*

Hey, Blue!

Hey, Blue! Is a not for profit organization dedicated to facilitating meaningful connections. Inspired by the extraordinary acts of heroism displayed by both individual community members and first responders during 9/11, EcoSchool co-founder, John Verdi, wanted to build a platform that could bring police officers and communities together with a shared purpose.

Connection- driven projects like Preschool Story time and the Hey, Blue! Mobile platform is just the start of a larger movement designed to create an awareness of our shared humanity.

Hey, Blue! Is seeking to bring our platform to the Cocoa, FL. community. In order to accomplish this goal, we feel there are certain steps that are needed in order to bring community, police officers and local businesses together. We are seeking the help of LEAD Brevard to help us with the creation and implementation of:

1. Design Thinking Workshops:

Hey, Blue! Is requesting the LEAD Brevard cohort's help in organizing the community to come to Center for Collaboration in Rockledge (date(s) TBD) to participate in a 4-hour long workshop surrounding the design, feedback and implementation of the Hey, Blue! Platform.

Deliverables:

A. 25-50 community members, Cocoa PD Command Staff and local government officials to participate in the session.

2. Sharing the message:

Hey, Blue! Is requesting the assistance of the LEAD Brevard cohort to amplify the messaging and branding of Hey, Blue! towards connection events throughout the time of the cohort, leading up to a final event happening the week before May 4th, 2023. All connection events will happen within Cocoa, FL.

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Deliverables:

- Event 1. Story time at Emma Jewel Charter Academy
- Event 2. Hey, Blue! Plate Special at a local restaurant or home.
- Event 3. Connection event to beta test the Hey, Blue! Platform

3. Participation:

Hey, Blue! Is requesting that at the event(s) planned that the LEAD Brevard cohort will be updated on Hey, Blue! And actively share the messaging at the events in order to facilitate greater participation.

Deliverables:

- A. Story time(s): at least one member of the cohort team to accompany Hey, Blue! Into the classroom to perform the Hey, Blue! Story time. One member of the cohort to assist in the documentation of the event (social media and pictures)
- B. Hey, Blue! Plate Special: at least one member of the local Cocoa City Government as well as the Police Chief and local community leaders to participate in the dinner.
- C. Mobile Platform Beta Test: Entire cohort to participate in beta test to accomplish the goal of having 200+ Positive Connections that will fuel a donation to a local not for profit organization.

➤ *"A Community Collaboration"*

Recycle Brevard

Recycle Brevard is an independent 501(c)3 Florida non-profit organization, 100% funded by sponsorships and donations, 100% run by volunteers.

Founded to be a resource for the community with the goal of diverting more waste from our landfills, Recycle Brevard has established several programs free of charge to educate and assist residents to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle surplus items ordinarily considered trash.

Teracycle with Recycle Brevard is among those programs and aims to help expand what is recycled beyond what is normally collected curbside.

Challenges

- Educate the public on what is accepted in the program
- Communicate to the public the availability of this incredible resource
- Cover such a long area our county represents to offer the option to participate in this program to all Brevard residents

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Objectives

- Establish a system of drop-offs locations to facilitate the participation in this program
 - Establish a network of community partners and participants
- CAP Goals
- Research and develop up to 15 drop-off locations throughout Brevard County
 - Engage up to 12 community partners to support our program
 - Create a strategy for spreading the word about this important resource and gather adopters

While Brevardians have easy access to the recycling of cans, bottles, paper and cardboard, the majority are unaware that most other items in their trash bin may also be recycled. Recycle Brevard is seeking a CAP team to collaborate on innovative ways to broadcast the many other ways citizens may decrease their contributions to our limited landfill space.

➤ *"Agents of Change"*

Sharing Center of Central Brevard

We have many programs in place and a vision for moving forward that relies heavily on the help of a volunteer workforce. Volunteers have been the backbone of our programs since we began providing emergency basic needs assistance to Central Brevard residents in 1978. Since the pandemic began in 2020, we have seen a drastic decrease in volunteers in all areas. This project will take a structured and professional approach to cultivate new volunteers and steward the relationship between staff and volunteers. Our project proposal includes three objectives: create a multifaceted recruitment campaign for volunteers, develop a plan of action to increase volunteer retention, and facilitate a strategy for recognition of volunteer achievement and performance. These objectives are outlined for the purpose of having measurable and attainable goals, we look forward to brainstorming with you on how to meet each one. The focus will be to recruit volunteers who are motivated by a desire to serve our mission and retain volunteers who find the work itself rewarding. Our desired outcome is to recognize an increase in the number of volunteer hours recorded monthly throughout the project. All strategies developed will stay focused on achievement of our organization's mission and goals. Project members will be required to have the technology to communicate and collaborate with one another. The administration of the Sharing Center of Central Brevard is willing to support this project and supply all necessary resources to ensure success. We have office supplies, access to necessary technology, and Canva premium to create communications. At completion, the project initiatives will be sustained through the employee in the position of resource development who is also a liaison for this project. We look forward to collaborating with class members to develop a plan to meet deliverables within the time span of the project.

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➤ *"Affordable Housing Advocacy Group"*
South Brevard Sharing Center

Affordable housing has become a major issue in Brevard County. The Community Acceleration Project (CAP) would assist our agency in launching a community awareness/advocacy campaign to bring the issue to the forefront. Specifically, the CAP would:

1. Research what other like communities are doing to address the affordable housing issue,
2. Assess what is already happening here in Brevard County.
3. Formulate a strategy/plan that would feasibly work in Brevard County.
4. Present these findings/ideas to the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners, Palm Bay City Council and Melbourne City Council.