



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2021

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FLAGLER TECHNICAL COLLEGE RECEIVES HEALTH LITERACY GRANT THANKS TO FLORIDA BLUE FOUNDATION

Palm Coast, FL (August 20, 2021) – Flagler Technical College is pleased to announce it has been awarded a one-year, \$5,000 grant for the implementation of a health literacy program to benefit its Adult General Education, ESOL, and Early Childhood Education students. Fourteen programs across the state of Florida have been awarded one-year, \$5,000 grants for the implementation of a health literacy program to benefit their adult education, ESOL, and family literacy students.

This grant, awarded by **Florida Blue Foundation** and the **Florida Literacy Coalition**, will integrate health and nutrition information into Flagler Technical College’s curriculum. The focus is to help students acquire the knowledge, literacy skills, and resources that will help them navigate the medical system and make informed health decisions. More than 21,000 students from programs throughout Florida have benefited from this grant program initiative since 2009. More than 19,000 students from programs throughout Florida have benefited from this Initiative since 2009.

There is a growing recognition among health care providers and adult educators around the country that limited English language and literacy skills can have a significant impact on one’s health. According to the National Adult Assessment of Literacy, 14% of Americans cannot comprehend basic health information. The study indicates that health illiteracy is especially prevalent among: 1) adults who did not complete high school, with 49% having below basic health literacy, and 2) foreign-born adults who speak English as their second language.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, it has never been more important for people to be informed about good health practices and available resources. People who lack literacy and health literacy skills are much more likely to use medications incorrectly, have at least one chronic disease, spend more time in the hospital, and are four times more likely to have poor health than people with higher health literacy skills. The potential for cost savings and improved health outcomes are significant. Adult education, literacy and family literacy programs can play an important role in helping people to acquire these skills.

“Our mission is to help people and communities achieve better health,” said Susan Towler, vice president of the Florida Blue Foundation. “By improving health literacy in our state, we are addressing one of the obstacles to good health and health equity in our communities. Through our partnership with the Florida Literacy Coalition, we are making an immediate impact to help people keep themselves and their families healthy during the pandemic, while creating sustainable change throughout our communities.”

The Florida Health Literacy Initiative provides training, resources, and funding to assist Florida ESOL and family literacy programs to integrate health education into their instruction. The objective is to help students develop basic literacy and English language skills while gaining information to make informed choices regarding their health and nutrition.

“The continued support of this Initiative reflects Florida Blue Foundation’s strong commitment to helping adult learners, many who are new to this country, become informed health advocates for themselves and their families,” said Greg Smith, executive director of the Florida Literacy Coalition. “We look forward to our continued partnership with Florida Blue and this year’s grant recipients to help adult learners throughout our state achieve better health through education.”

During the 2021 – 2022 academic year Flagler Technical College will deliver health literacy content consisting of, but not limited to, medication safety, nutrition, healthy snack and dessert planning and preparation, and promotion of walking and physical movement for improved health. Students in FTC’s Health Sciences and Early Education programs will create presentations, distribute visual aids, and develop project-based learning activities for FTC’s Adult General Education (ESOL, ABE, GED) students, parents, and children. In addition, this project will include the development of age appropriate health activities for FTC’s New Beginnings Daycare Center children. FTC will also present opportunities to students and staff to “Get Their Move On” by teaching them the importance of moving more throughout the day and participating in competitive events.

“Learning how to navigate the health care system is an important part of living a healthy lifestyle,” said Renee Stauffacher, Director of Flagler Technical College. “We are excited to be able to implement this curriculum into our programs here at FTC. Especially with the COVID-19 pandemic that is currently upon us, this grant is helping our students communicate with health care professionals not only for themselves, but also for their families and friends.”

More information is available on the Florida Literacy Coalition's website at floridaliteracy.org
For questions, please contact Heather Surrency at Surrencyh@Floridaliteracy.org .

About FTC:

Flagler Technical College (formerly Flagler Technical Institute) is your local resource for career and community education. FTC is the adult division of the Flagler County School District and accredited through the Council on Occupational Education (COE). FTC's Career and Technical Education program focuses on high-demand trades to meet the business and industry needs in Flagler and surrounding counties. Students learn practical specialized skills from industry professionals in a personalized and hands-on learning environment. The college also partners with flagship programs in the county high schools to create a seamless transition from secondary to post-secondary education. GED and ESOL classes are offered through the Adult Education programs while providing an authorized Pearson Vue testing site to complete certifications and licensing. FTC's Community Education and Resource programs offer community classes, summer camps, extended day programs, day care, and enrichment programs. FTC's Step-Up program helps the adults with disabilities population lead meaningful and productive lives, explore their potential, develop a sense of community, and pursue independence and employment. For more information visit FTC's website at www.flaglertech.edu

About the Florida Literacy Coalition:

Established in 1985, the Florida Literacy Coalition (FLC) promotes, supports and advocates for the effective delivery of quality adult and family literacy services in the state of Florida. As a statewide umbrella literacy organization and the host of Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, FLC provides a range of services to support more than 300 adult education, literacy and family literacy providers. Special emphasis is placed on assisting community-based literacy organizations with their training and program development needs.

About Florida Blue Foundation

Florida Blue Foundation enables healthy communities by making grants, building coalitions and embracing solutions that create a meaningful impact in our communities. More than 6.5 million Floridians have received services as a result of our community investments since our founding in 2001. The Florida Blue Foundation's programs are focused on advancing mental well-being, improving health equity, impacting food security and addressing systemic racism and resulting health disparities. It is a trade name of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation, Inc., an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. For more information, please visit www.FloridaBlueFoundation.com.