

CASE FOR SUPPORT

**GO FOR
LAUNCH**
THE CAMPAIGN FOR UCF'S NEXT MISSION



**College of Community
Innovation and Education**

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

**PURPOSE LED
COMMUNITY FOCUSED**



TOGETHER WE CAN DO GREAT THINGS

Society faces complex challenges — from access to housing and teacher retention to public safety and mental health — that require novel solutions and urgent results. While the scale and ramifications of these and other current realities can be overwhelming, the University of Central Florida dares to address them.

As a melting pot for diverse ideas, energizing experiences and fresh perspectives, our College of Community Innovation and Education is reimagining ways to tackle the issues that impact the well-being of Central Floridians and the world around us. Our nationally ranked academic programs, high-impact research, and prominent public and private partnerships are merging technology and human inventiveness to improve lives in ways that we never thought were possible.

The world is moving faster than ever. Aging populations. Artificial intelligence. Poverty. Extreme weather events. What will their impact mean to us? Philanthropy, industry collaboration and an engaged citizenry play a vital role in how the College of Community Innovation and Education approaches these and other pressing problems — and supports the ability of our faculty and students to find answers to deeper questions.

We invite you to board a historic mission. Go for Launch is more than a UCF philanthropic campaign — it's our commitment to shape what's possible. Prepare us for liftoff. Be an engine that propels the College of Community Innovation and Education to unimaginable heights. The trajectory is clear: innovation, impact and opportunity. Our future. Your move.

WHAT STUDENTS SAY



PASSING OF TORCH

When he reflects on his childhood move to Florida to escape gang violence in Los Angeles, **Mauri Antonio** says Amy Lohrmann's story speaks to his soul. Amy, a UCF graduate who worked as a Seminole County probation officer, was murdered by her husband in a domestic violence incident that ended in his suicide. Her parents, Robert and Renee Kuritar, established a scholarship in Amy's memory.

"My professors are amazing and actually understand where I am at, and where I need to go in life," says Mauri, a criminal justice major and recipient of the Amy Kuritar Lohrmann Memorial Endowed Scholarship. "I am honored to carry on her legacy and use this scholarship to advance my education. I am the next generation of law enforcement, and this feels like a passing of the torch."

DID YOU KNOW?

Led by **Irene Pons '00**, a senior lecturer in legal studies, a team of UCF faculty and students won four Suncoast Regional Emmy Awards for video documentaries about migrant life along the Arizona-Mexico border.

NEW MEANING FOR LIFE BEYOND WAR

As an interpreter in Ukraine witnessing the horrors of war, the brutal truths convinced **Marianna Kaplinksa** that counseling was her career path. Now a graduate student in UCF's clinical mental health counseling program, Marianna credits the Dr. Kenneth E. Pete Fisher Endowed Scholarship she received for providing her with the financial means to afford tuition as well as the inspiration to endure a five-hour roundtrip commute from Jacksonville to attend classes in Orlando.

"This is a transformational experience," says Marianna, who also works as a phone interpreter. "It's doable because I want it. The most important thing is motivation."



AI SOLUTIONS FOR NONPROFITS

After immigrating with her family from Cuba to Miami when she was just two years old, **Ketty Dones '23 '25MPA\MMN** went through childhood believing college was an unattainable reality. But thanks to scholarship support, Ketty is not only the first in her family to graduate from college, but she recently earned dual master's degrees in public administration and nonprofit management from UCF.

"I always think about the Key Biscayne Community Foundation and other nonprofit organizations that helped me receive funding to go to school," says Ketty, who works with the Applied AI Innovation Initiative at UCF to provide local nonprofit organizations with technical assistance for AI-integrated solutions that help drive their missions. "It's full circle for me now. I feel that I can give back to my local community in understanding not just the challenges nonprofits face but also how I can help them in the future."



WHAT DONORS SAY



PAYING IT FORWARD

As he completed his second master's degree from UCF, **Travis Leslie '16MS '25MECM** established the Travis M. Leslie Emergency Management Endowment to provide scholarships for students who choose to serve their communities.

"It's a pay-it-forward situation," says Travis, who served as deputy sheriff in Orange County for two decades before returning to school. "I would like to pay it forward because some people may really want to do this but can't because of the cost. **I want this scholarship to be the bridge that helps overcome financial obstacles.**"



CLEARWATER VISIONARY REWARDS ASPIRING PUBLIC SERVANTS

During his 19 years as assistant city manager for the City of Clearwater, **Michael Delk '92MPA** was an original visionary who helped launch the \$84 million Imagine Clearwater project, which transformed the downtown waterfront into a vibrant, sustainable community hub. Now retired, Michael has shifted his focus from the economics of downtown Clearwater to the financial viability of students pursuing careers in public service.

"It's important for cities to provide more services to more people, more efficiently," says Michael, who, with his wife, Mary Kay, established a \$50,000 planned gift in support of public administration students. **"And it's increasingly important to the proper functioning of government to have strong, moral and ethical public servants."**



ACTING NOW FOR SAFER TOMORROW

Partnering with the College of Community Innovation and Education enables you to support students, faculty and programs that shape the future workforce and drive our economy. **The Orlando Police Foundation** chose to invest in the next generation by establishing an endowed scholarship that will fund annually two students studying criminal justice and legal studies.

"One of the biggest changes you're seeing in police work is the community and the cooperation," says Eric Smith '93, Orlando's police chief. **"When it comes down to it, we work for our community. With their buy-in, [we're] making our community a lot safer."**

WE WORK HERE

STRENGTHENING FIRST RESPONDER RELATIONSHIPS

Researchers at the College of Community Innovation and Education are equipping Central Florida first responders with tools to address the unique challenges they face and build more resilient relationships with their partners. The specially tailored curriculum is offered free of charge to participants through Project Harmony, a Department of Health and Human Services-supported initiative of UCF's Marriage and Family Research Institute.

"I don't think we can underestimate the impact of the occupational demands of being a first responder, not only on the individual but on the family dynamic at home," says Sejal Barden, a professor of counselor education and Project Harmony's principal investigator. **"They keep our communities safe, so the least we can do is provide a service back to them."**



MATH AMBASSADOR TO THE WORLD

With data science and artificial intelligence becoming transformative tools in mathematics education, **Sarah Bush** is helping teachers and students to analyze and interpret mathematical data in a more impactful and efficient way as a member of the U.S. National Commission on Mathematics Instruction.

"To be part of this commission is so exciting," says Sarah, a UCF professor of K-12 STEM education and Lockheed Martin Eminent Scholar Chair in the College of Community Innovation and Education. **"It's our voice in mathematics education to the entire world. This appointment is effortlessly synergistic with UCF's focus on STEM and AI, and it only further elevates the pioneering work we're doing here."**

DEVELOPING LEADERS TO HELP WEATHER STORMS

Growing up in coastal Louisiana, **Claire Knox** lived through several hurricanes and saw communities completely devastated. She is adamant about preparing students with the skillsets to pursue careers in emergency management and make an immediate impact after graduation.

"Living along the bayou, coastal wetlands are our first line of defense against disasters," says Claire, a professor and academic program coordinator who was honored with the Emergency Management Educator of the Year award from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) – a testament to her role in building U.S. News & World Report's No. 1-ranked emergency and crisis management master's program at UCF. **"I learned how government response works, and I also saw community members and organizations rise to the challenge. It drives so much of my passion for designing our program that will help our students go into their communities and make them more resilient."**





OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTNER



CITIES REIMAGINED

Cities everywhere are growing. The United Nations reports more than 83% of the U.S. population lives in urban areas, up from 64% in 1950. By 2050, American cities will house 89% of the nation's population. Keeping up with this staggering growth poses formidable challenges. How will municipal and community leaders address congestion, crime, pollution, affordable housing, inequality and a host of other intractable issues that will stem from such an influx of people?

While cities are breeding grounds for urban problems, they can also be testing grounds for creating vibrant and prosperous neighborhoods where people want to live, work and play. Support for our Urban Innovation Lab at UCF Downtown is the next step for enabling our students, faculty and industry partners to actively pursue sustainable urban solutions through hands-on projects and collaborative research.



BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT

The verdict is in. Judging by their success at competitions over the years, aspiring law students have made a case that UCF annually ranks as one of the top Moot Court teams in the nation. The competitions, which require students to analyze complex legal issues, craft persuasive arguments and present them convincingly before judges, mirror the challenges they will face in appellate courtrooms. Between research and practice, the commitment is significant, but many laws schools and employers look favorably on UCF students who participate in moot court. Your support heightens this awareness.

"These students have high aspirations and are some of the best UCF has to offer," says Jason Fiesta, an

associate lecturer in legal studies who doubles as the faculty advisor and coach of UCF's Moot Court team. **"If you name a law school, we have students who matriculated there."**

Anna Barker plans on following in their footsteps to law school. Prepping for the Moot Court competitions convinced her she was on the right path.

"Our program is very competitive," says Anna, a National Merit Scholarship recipient and incoming president of the UCF Moot Court team for 2026-27. "We're nationally ranked and have been for years — that's a pretty big deal and definitely carries weight with the top law schools."



GREAT PLACES TO GIVE

STUDENTS

Through the generosity of alumni, donors and public-private partnerships, philanthropy supports our students by providing essential financial aid, improving campus resources and funding specialized programs, often addressing the gap between tuition costs and affordability. Through scholarships, fellowships and emergency funding, your gifts reduce student debt and boost retention rates. You further influence student success by enhancing research opportunities, upgrading facilities and promoting support services.

PROGRAMS

When our students have access to better teaching methods, more information and modern technologies or tools, we elevate their intellectual curiosity and expand their learning potential. Your gift to the area that best matches your passion will help us to strengthen and expand our innovative programs, modernize facilities, and create a robust and engaged learning community for our students outside the classroom.

FACULTY/RESEARCH

Your gifts to establish endowed professorships, faculty fellowships and joint academic appointments help to attract the top researchers and educators from around the world to the College of Community Innovation and Education. Here, they will empower our students with catalyzing ideas and transformative opportunities to solve industry challenges.

WAYS TO GIVE

The College of Community Innovation and Education offers many meaningful ways to make a difference. From establishing a named scholarship to funding interdisciplinary programs and facilities, you can create life-changing opportunities for the next generation of dreamers, doers and innovators — all while building your philanthropic legacy.

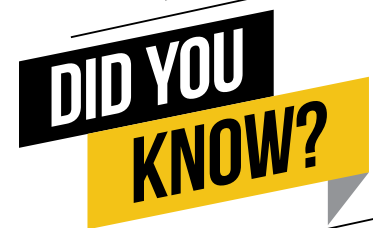
Endowed Professorships and **Directorships** secure the long-term academic excellence and prestige of the college by attracting and supporting top-tier faculty, cutting-edge research and student fellowships.

Scholarships reward our exceptionally talented students and help them bridge the gap in financial aid, focus on their studies and complete their education on time. Whether you choose to contribute to an existing scholarship fund, create a new one or leave a legacy of support through an endowment, your gift opens doors for motivated students who will fuel Florida's most vibrant economic sector and make our world a better place to live.

Planned Gifts such as bequests, beneficiary designations and charitable trusts create a legacy at the College of Community Innovation and Education by providing long-term support for students, faculty and innovative programs.

Naming Opportunities offer donors a chance to support the college while honoring the memory of a loved one or paying tribute to someone who has shaped their lives.

Sponsorships help fund programming and networking events held throughout the year. From brand exposure to networking opportunities with top job candidates, sponsorship offers you exclusive access to our community.



THE COLLEGE OF
COMMUNITY INNOVATION
AND EDUCATION OFFERS
**56 SCHOLARSHIPS TO
UNDERGRADUATE AND
GRADUATE STUDENTS
ANNUALLY TOTALING
MORE THAN \$107,000.**

(2025-2026 Disbursement)

WHY UCF, WHY NOW

The future starts here. Located in Orlando, the University of Central Florida is a leader in developing human capital to meet the needs of the world's largest economy. UCF is the second-largest university in the nation, with about 70,000 students enrolled annually and more than 400,000 alumni worldwide — each of them serving as brand ambassadors, boosting UCF's national and global reputation.

With programs ranging from public administration and criminal justice to legal studies, teacher education and counseling, we can identify mutually beneficial partnerships that align your interests with the College of Community Innovation and Education's resources and expertise. Opportunities abound in supporting student scholarships, enabling research, funding academic programs and facilities, and promoting initiatives with involved citizenry, businesses, nonprofits, government and beyond. No matter which area you choose to support, we want to hear from you.

OUR STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

TOP 15

**MOST INNOVATIVE
UNIVERSITY IN U.S.**

(U.S. News & World Report)

#1

**SUPPLIER OF GRADUATES
TO U.S. AEROSPACE AND
DEFENSE INDUSTRIES**

(Aviation Week)

#1

**EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

(U.S. News & World Report)

#1

**GRADUATE VIDEO
GAME DESIGN PROGRAM
IN THE WORLD**

*(The Princeton Review and
PC Gamer Magazine)*

#1

**CHOICE FOR MODELING
AND SIMULATION
ADVANCED TRAINING
FOR DOD**

#1

**COLLEGE FOR
HOSPITALITY
IN THE WORLD**
(CEO World Magazine)

#6

**ONLINE BACHELOR'S
PROGRAMS**
(U.S. News & World Report)

#9

**BEST GRADUATE PROGRAM
IN STUDENT COUNSELING
AND PERSONNEL**
(U.S. News & World Report)

#17

**BEST ONLINE
GRADUATE PROGRAM
IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**
(U.S. News & World Report)

\$229M

**RESEARCH
EXPENDITURES**

70K

STUDENTS ENROLLED

436,588

DEGREES CONFERRED

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**Advancement
and Partnerships**