



MEDIA ALERT
FLORIDA C.A.N.!
4202 E. Fowler Avenue, BEH 236
Tampa, FL 33620

Media Contact: Lalita Llerena

(813) 974-8606
lalita@usf.edu

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, September 26, 2012

More Undergraduate Certificates Awarded In FL Than Any Other Degree

~ New report highlights the importance of certificates and encourages communities to learn more about their economic value, where they're offered in Florida, and differences in quality~

Tampa, FL- The ongoing discussion around increasing the number of Americans with a postsecondary education tends to be narrowly defined to college degrees—not certificates. A new [report](#) released today by the [Florida College Access Network](#) (Florida C.A.N.!) discusses the importance of the postsecondary certificate in Florida and makes the case for why certificates should be included as part of state goals for increasing degree attainment.

“When you look at the list of the fastest growing industries in Florida and the education requirements of those jobs it becomes clear that the certificate has the potential to provide those who earn them a high-skill, high-paying job and the opportunity to pursue higher levels of education,” said Braulio Colón, Executive Director for Florida C.A.N.!

According to the report, Florida awards a high number of certificates relative to its population when compared to other states. The 2009-2010 academic year marked the first year that more certificates (83,670) were awarded in Florida than bachelor’s degrees (83,386). The steep rise in undergraduate certificates awarded is almost entirely accounted for by private, for-profit institutions up 107-percent since 2003-04. Certificates awarded by public higher education institutions decreased by 1.8-percent during the same period.

“This credential has been shown to provide an affordable alternative to a traditional college degree for those looking for an advantage in the labor market,” said Colón. “As we move forward, we must ensure the quality of these postsecondary degrees is high and that they indeed translate into good paying jobs in the local economy,” said Colón.

The report recommends (1) a clear definition for “high-quality” postsecondary certificate, (2) high-quality certificates be counted toward state postsecondary degree attainment goals, (3) student advisement on the potential benefits of certificates be improved, and (4) communities develop plans for improving college and career readiness, access and completion.

To view the entire report, [click here](#). Also available on the Florida C.A.N.! website as a companion to the new report is a [regional breakdown](#) of Florida employment projections by industry, occupations and education requirements. For more information, visit www.floridacollegeaccess.org and click on “Research & Data”.

Florida C.A.N! receives support from the [Florida Department of Education](#), [Helios Education Foundation](#), [Lumina Foundation](#) and the [University of South Florida](#).

###

About Florida College Access Network

Florida College Access Network’s mission is to create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college & career preparation, access and completion for all students. Our Big Goal is to increase the proportion of working-age adults in Florida who hold a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential to 60% by the year 2025. For more information, visit www.floridacollegeaccess.org.