

Best Practices: Lessons Learned by a South Florida Non-Profit Community Based Organization while Designing and Implementing a Career Exploration Evidence Informed Framework in Urban Communities

Abstract (100 words maximum): The panelists in this symposium work at a non-profit community-based organization in South Florida, they will share best practices that the agency has learned over the last 13-years while delivering family strengthening programs in urban at-risk communities. The agency's *All A's* evidenced informed framework is a career exploration strategy designed to help children, youth and adults. *All A's* prepares disadvantaged, underemployed adults and youths with quality self help skills thus assisting them to become productive members of society. This session will be of interest to faculty, staff, students, and employees of community-based organizations working in urban communities.

Description of the practice, initiative, approach, or activity (250 words maximum)

All A's was designed to support of the agency's family strengthening initiatives in South Florida. *All A's* uses evidence informed strategies poised to be an inclusive curriculum that teaches self-determination and adaptive behavior skills. The framework incorporates problem based learning and adult learning theory and follows the Universal Design for Learning. Since 2012, the agency has served over 8500 youth and 4,000 adults using the framework.

The framework addresses educational underachievement and career readiness in at risk populations. It is used to enhance participants **AWARENESS** of setting SMART goals to achieve future goals and career aspirations. Participants are provided with **ACCESS** to resources and opportunities for creating and implementing an **ACTION** plan as they pursue and **ACHIEVE** their goals.

All A's promotes protective factors and expose youth to career pathways in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) related fields. Youth participate in college tours, job site visits, job shadowing, high school visits, online college and career preparation assistance, service learning projects, STEM projects, and the Winning Futures[®] mentoring program. Adults are assisted with résumé development; learn job search strategies, interview techniques, job shadowing experiences, computer and financial literacy programs. Adults and youth are also given the opportunity to complete industry-recognized certifications in high demand industries (food service, general labor, and construction), and test preparation for the General Educational Development Test.

Goal(s) of the symposium (50 words maximum)

The purpose of the symposium is to provide attendees with best practices from the lessons learned by the panelists while delivering the All A's framework in urban communities. Panelists will focus on:

1. **Participant Engagement**
2. **Partnership Maintenance & Funding**
3. **Staff Recruitment and Retention**
4. **Performance Measurement and Evaluation**

Format/agenda of the symposium (250 words maximum)

The symposium will include the use of a PowerPoint presentation, a video testimonial from a youth and adult participant and allow for group discussion at the end.

Introduction & Symposium Goals (5 minutes): Newton Sanon, President & CEO

Description of the All A's Framework (10 minutes): Dr. Rehana Seepersad, Training and Education Manager

Participant Engagement (Reentry Population and K-12) (5 minutes) Jeanette Gordon Marshall, Program Manager Re-entry Services

Partnership Maintenance and Funding (5 minutes) Arlene Connelly, Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships

Staff Recruitment and Retention (5 Minutes) Keisha Hill-Grey, Program Manager

Performance Measurement and Evaluation (5 Minutes) Robyn Mclymont, Division Director Youth and Family Services

Group Discussion Questions and Answers (10 minutes)

Participants Biographies (50 words maximum)

- Newton Sanon, President & CEO, Opportunities Industrialization Center of South Florida (OICSFL)
- Arlene Connelly, Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships, OICSFL
- Robyn Mclymont, Division Director Youth & Family Services, OICSFL
- Dr. Rehana Seepersad, Training and Education Manager, OICSFL
- Jeanette Gordon-Marshall, Reentry Services Manager, OICSFL
- Keisha Hill-Grey, Program Manager, OICSFL