

WORKFORCE INITIATIVES

(Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties)

Destination Graduation

Destination Graduation, designed as a workforce development, education, and employer partnership, is a comprehensive mentoring and academic intervention program designed for high school students who are unmotivated or unsuccessful. Students are selected for the program when identified as high school students seriously at risk of dropping out based on criteria such as: low basic skill scores; retained in grade; low FCAT scores; involvement with the judicial system; high absenteeism, absent parental influence and failing grades. The project takes a holistic approach in design providing academic, character and workplace readiness development. Our goal for the student is not only to graduate, but do so prepared for post-secondary education and/or to enter the workforce successfully.

Community businesses' participation includes career day presentations as well as paid and unpaid work experiences in addition to regular employment.

Destination Graduation takes students through workshops to help get their grades up, learn job skills, and even sets them up with employment.

The program provides work-readiness training, one-on-one mentoring, individualized academic assistance, and incentives to attend school regularly, improve grades and graduate.

Students learn about the world of work through summer employment which provides meaningful work experiences to help students acquire the skills necessary to look for, obtain, and retain a job. The work experience activity provides career exploration in various industries and helps students with career choices. Students earn an hourly stipend during their summer employment.

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Florida Relay 711

The Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. (SFWDB) partnered with the School District of Lee County and community businesses in 2010 on a pilot demonstration project for high school students at Cape Coral and Dunbar High Schools. The project was designed to provide Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services, such as mentoring, academic enrichment, work readiness and other workforce development services to a selected number of students. The desired end results are to help keep students in school and help increase the high school graduation rate.

- This Southwest Florida program is unique in the state of Florida and is expanding to more and more schools every year. 105 at-risk students have graduated since the program inception resulting in a 94% graduation rate.
- Of the graduates this year, 62% are attending college, 8% are starting technical training, 10% are joining the military, and 20% are working full-time.
- Destination Graduation has grown from two schools in one county to fifteen schools our five counties serving over 300 students.

Young people are the fabric of this country's progress and future economy and SFWDB focuses on providing youth with the work readiness skills and preparation they'll need to compete in the local and global job market.