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# Miami Dade College Receives Prestigious Achieving the Dream's Leah Meyer Austin Award

February 24, 2017

**MIAMI, Miami Dade College** (MDC) received the renowned **2017 Achieving the Dream's Leah Meyer Austin Award** (LMA), which annually recognizes an institution that has demonstrated outstanding achievement in designing a student-focused culture that permeates all levels and structures of the organization.

MDC is a national model of student achievement. Starting in 2011, MDC teams analyzed student data, developed hypotheses about obstacles to completion, reviewed literature, and conducted surveys and focus groups. They adopted a guided pathway model to redesign academic and student services that support a student's journey. Named for the college's mascot, "Shark Path" is an intentional weaving of strategies, programs, activities, and interventions that aligns academic and support services and guides students from before they enter college all the way to completion of a credential and transition to either a baccalaureate program or



the workplace. The Shark Path includes academic maps that help students reach graduation as quickly as possible while incurring minimal financial burden.

This year's award, sponsored by the Kresge Foundation, is accompanied by a \$25,000 prize in recognition of the colleges' student success work. The award was announced at the opening session of DREAM 2017 National Convention in San Francisco.

### **About Achieving the Dream**

Achieving the Dream leads a national network of more than 200 colleges dedicated to helping their students, particularly low income students and students of color, achieve their goals for academic success, personal growth, and economic opportunity. Achieving the dream is working toward closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success through a change process that build colleges' institutional capacities in seven critical areas. More than 100 coaches and advisors and 15 state policy teams are working throughout 35 states and the District of Columbia to help Achieving the Dream reach more than 4 million college students.

### **About Miami Dade College**

Miami Dade College (MDC) is the higher education institution with the largest undergraduate enrollment in the America, with more than 165,000 students. It is also the nation's top producer of Associate in Arts and Science degrees and awards more degrees to minorities than any other college or university in the country. The college's eight campuses and outreach center offer more than 300 distinct degree pathways including several baccalaureate degrees in education, public safety, supervision and management, nursing, physician assistant studies, film, engineering, biological sciences, and others. In fact, its academic and workforce training programs are national models of excellence. MDC is also renowned for its rich cultural programming. It is home of the Miami Book Fair, Miami Film Festival, the *MDC Live Arts Performing Arts Series*, the National Historic Landmark Miami Freedom Tower, a major sculpture park and large art gallery and theater systems. MDC has admitted more than 2,000,000 students and counting, since it opened its doors in 1960. For more information please visit [www.mdc.edu](http://www.mdc.edu).

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