

Miami Dade College wins national prize for graduation, degree rates by minority students

BY COLLEEN WRIGHT

APRIL 02, 2019 07:06 PM, UPDATED APRIL 02, 2019 08:01 PM

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/article116497318.html>

President Barack Obama awarded Eduardo Padrón a Presidential Medal of Freedom during a ceremony at the White House. "He is one of the world's preeminent education leaders." said Obama. Padrón is the President of Miami Dade College (MDC).BY WHITE HOUSE

Miami Dade College was recognized Tuesday as one of the highest achieving community colleges in the nation.

MDC is one of two Florida colleges, along with Indian River State College in Fort Pierce, to win the Aspen Prize. The Aspen Institute's biannual prize recognizes colleges for outstanding rates of certificate and degree completion, success after graduation in the labor market and in transfer to four-year institutions and equity in access and success for students of color and low-income students. The prize included a \$350,000 cash prize to each college, according to a press release from the Florida Department of Education.

MDC and Indian River State College were selected as co-winners out of a pool of 1,000 community colleges nationwide at a ceremony held in Washington, D.C.

MDC was named a finalist in distinction in the prize's inaugural year in 2011. The college was credited for providing higher education opportunities for a mostly minority and low-income student body.

The Aspen Institute cited MDC's 43 percent graduation and transfer rate for students of color, compared to the national average of 35 percent, and its 47 percent bachelor's attainment rate for transfer students above the national average of 42 percent.

"This award is an affirmation of what we've been aspiring to for so many years at MDC, mainly to ensure open access and academic excellence can go hand-in-hand," said MDC President Eduardo Padrón in a statement. Padrón, who has served as president since 1995, [has announced he is stepping down this summer](#).

Broward College in Fort Lauderdale was also named a finalist for the prize.

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/education/article228754574.html>