

School for Advanced Studies Getting Results

By [Ari Odzer](#)

It has small classes full of academic achievers and strivers, but it's not an elite private academy. The School for Advanced Studies, or SAS, gets the results of a Ransom Everglades or Pine Crest School, with no tuition. (Published Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2016)

It has small classes full of academic achievers and strivers, but it's not an elite private academy. The School for Advanced Studies, or SAS, gets the results of a Ransom Everglades or Pine Crest School, with no tuition.

"This is not for the faint of heart, this is a program that requires individuals to be courageous in being able to leave their home school and also to be resilient," explained Omar Monteagudo, the SAS principal.

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SAS has five campuses, all of which are inside Miami-Dade College buildings. The newest SAS location is Doral, within the Miami-Dade College West Campus. It's strictly for juniors and seniors, who earn an associate's degree and a high school diploma simultaneously. The first two years of college, essentially, are tuition-free, which amounts to about a \$90,000 savings at most private universities.

700 students, spread out over the five campuses, make up the SAS student body. It takes a certain type of kid to succeed here.

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"These are individuals that don't have a problem being able to collaborate with adults, being able to be in a classroom, and also not be intimidated by the fact that they're being addressed by a college professor or by other students," Monteagudo said.

One of the most impressive features of SAS is that its graduates really do go on to the best colleges. Every Ivy League school, Stanford, Duke, MIT, Georgia Tech, and Johns Hopkins all have SAS alumni currently attending. It's one of the biggest attractions for students to transfer into the program.

"When I graduate I want to attend MIT, so to provide a great opportunity for my dream to come true, I came to SAS," said SAS student Jevens Mompoin.

Obviously, it's not a traditional high school. There is a prom, but SAS doesn't have sports teams or a marching band. Athletes can go to SAS and play for their home schools. What this place offers is high-level opportunity.

"After you graduate from SAS, you're much more marketable to other ivy league schools and universities,"

said Camila Valle, a SAS student.

They call SAS “the dream factory” for a reason.

“This is a game changer, these are students that are not only earning their AA’s, but are also walking the halls of Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, Yale, Columbia,” said Montegudo.

Fifty-nine percent of SAS graduates go on to one of the country’s top 50 universities, and many of them are the first in their families to go to college. You could say academic dreams do come true here.

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