

FLORIDA COUNCIL ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS



2014

# ANNUAL REPORT

ENGAGING

EDUCATING

EQUIPPING

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR ATTORNEY GENERAL

It is my privilege to present to you the 2014 Annual Report for the Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys.

This annual report highlights the importance of the Council's work and its impact on Florida. I urge policymakers, community-based organizations and local government officials to support the important work being done by the Council.

Under Dr. Regnier's leadership, the Council has concentrated its efforts on developing programs and services based on sound practices that will improve the lives of black males. In 2014, the Council focused its efforts on researching strategies to help reduce dropout rates in schools.

It is the Council's hope that this report will bring awareness to both citizens and the leaders of Florida about socioeconomic disparities and the disproportionate number of minority children in the state's child welfare system. The Council also hopes that this awareness will encourage community partnerships throughout the state to help local communities and grassroots organizations model effective programs and best practices that will have a positive impact on the lives of Florida's black males.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Bondi".

Pam Bondi

Attorney General



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, I am delighted to present this year's annual report to Governor Rick Scott, Speaker of the House Will Weatherford, Senate President Donald Jay Gaetz, Attorney General Pam Bondi, state agency heads, community advocates, community organizations and the citizens of the State of Florida. I wish to offer congratulations and special thanks to Attorney General Bondi for her continued support and to her staff. I also wish to offer congratulations and thank you to Governor Scott who made his staff available to the Council and offered guidance as needed.

It is with pleasure that I can say this year the Council has finally reached a time of action. Over the past year, the Council has continued to heighten the awareness of issues that impact black males and to highlight promising practices from local communities across the State. The Council will continue its work to identify and propose recommendations that will alleviate the negative factors that impact the success of black males throughout the State of Florida.

In early 2015, the Council will host its first Day of Dialogue at Bethune-Cookman University to address educational disparities among black males. I want to encourage you to visit the Council's website at [www.cssbmb.com](http://www.cssbmb.com) for future updates related to the Council's work. In closing, the Council offers this year's annual report with enthusiasm as we begin to fulfill our vision for a future where black men and boys can make the same level of achievements as others across our richly diverse state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eddy Regnier".

Eddy M. Regnier, Ph.D.  
Chairman

### MISSION

*The Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys is to research and propose measures that improve conditions affecting black men and boys.*

### VISION

*Florida is committed to engaging, educating, equipping and encouraging all black men and boys to successfully achieve their full potential.*



# COMMITTEE UPDATES

## Health and Families

**Strategic Objective:** Annual decrease of obesity as reported by the Florida Department of Health

Healthiest Weight Initiative: Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make choices about healthy eating and active living.

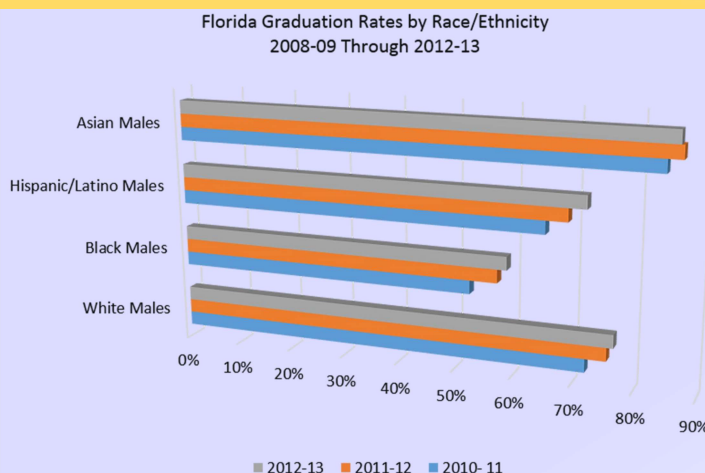
During the 30th National Preventing Crime in the Black Community Conference held in Jacksonville, Florida, Dr. Catherine Howard, the Program Coordinator for the Healthiest Weight Florida Initiative, partnered with the Council to educate the conference attendees. Dr. Howard shared some innovative prevention strategies to promote the Healthiest Weight Initiative in the minority community.



## Education

**Strategic Objective:** Increase graduation rates for black males

The educational performance of black males in the public school system across Florida continues to be of great concern to the Council. Data provided by the Florida Department of Education reveals some performance indicators on how black males are progressing through Florida's K – 20 education systems compared to males in other racial groups. Educational achievement levels are directly related to negative factors that impact the employment status and the realization of success in the lives of black males.



### Special Initiative: “Day of Dialogue” — Focus Area - Education

The Council remains committed to promoting positive educational outcomes for black males in Florida's public education system. In an effort to heighten awareness about the high performing school districts and effective educational strategies in school districts across the State, the Council will host an event in early 2015 titled “A Day of Dialogue” focused on Education.

# COMMITTEE UPDATES

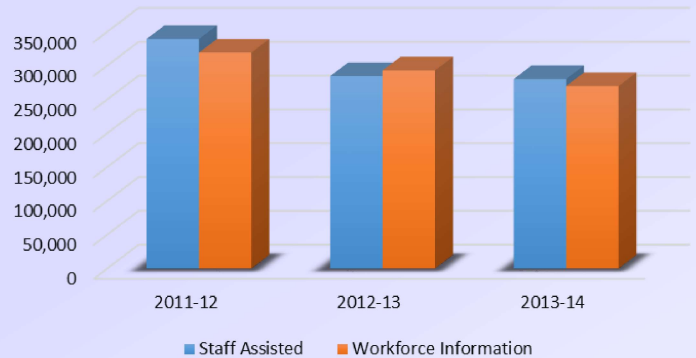
## Employment and Economics

### **Strategic Goal:** Annual increase in the number of black males obtaining jobs

Brand Identity: CareerSource Florida rebranded its entire workforce system aligning the names of its state board, 24 regional workforce boards and nearly 100 career centers — becoming the first in the nation to do so. The rebranding effort is demonstrating its success at improving awareness and access to publicly funded employment and training services by enhancing the visibility of workforce organizations and career centers throughout the state.

The CareerSource Florida workforce system and its partners are acutely aware of the employment barriers faced by black males and are open to seeking innovative strategies that will improve employment outcomes.

### Workforce Services - Black Males



### **Special Initiative:** Increase the number of minority-owned businesses

Startup Quest ® is a nationally recognized entrepreneurship training program that connects teams of qualified participants with successful CEOs and entrepreneurs to learn the steps needed to transform an invention or discovery into a product for the marketplace. Visit [startupquest.org](http://startupquest.org) for more information.

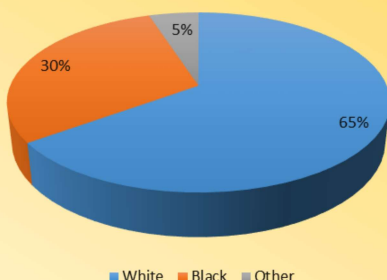


## Criminal Justice and Crime Prevention

### **Strategic Objective:** On annual basis, “Smart Justice” strategies will increase statewide for black males

The Florida Department of Corrections has indicated that the statewide success rate for Probation offenders has risen from 42.3% in January 2011 to 58.80% in July 2013. For FY 2013-14, the racial breakdown of successful probation completers is reflected in the chart below:

### Successful Completers Probation Supervision 2013 - 14



### **Strategic Objective:** By 2015, diversion programs will be implemented in all Florida counties

The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) civil citation initiative addresses a youth's behavior at his or her first encounter with the juvenile justice system, and provides an alternative to arrest for first-time misdemeanants. Civil citation is currently available in 59 of Florida's 67 counties. In fiscal year 2012-13, 95% of the youth who successfully completed civil citation remained crime free up to 12 months later.

Between September 2013 and August 2014, 21,402 youth were eligible to receive a civil citation. Of the 21,402 eligible, 8,257 (39%) were issued a civil citation. Of the 8,257 who received a civil citation, 1,657 were black males. Black males and black females are diverted to civil citation at a higher rate than their white counterparts.

## “The Impact of Father Involvement on Improving the Graduation Rates of Black Male Students in Florida”

### Abstract

Research confirms that father involvement is at the nexus of black boys' self-identity, psychological wellbeing, emotional health and academic achievement. While academic progress can be affected by many factors, this study examines the effect a father's presence has on the growth and academic potential of children, with a specific emphasis on black boys. Father absenteeism can have debilitating implications on the future of children, particularly black males, many of whom begin their lives in disadvantaged conditions. Research for this report was conducted to assist the Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB) with determining how increased father engagement can be used as an effective measure to help offset the academic achievement gap between black boys in Florida and their educational peers. To facilitate this goal, this study examines two comprehensive programs: the “Everyone Graduates Center,” whose services address increasing graduation rates and decreasing dropout rates in the United States, and the “National Fatherhood Initiative,” which has developed several programs designed to improve parenting skills among fathers. Working with state, county and district-level education systems, the Everyone Graduates Center has helped the country move closer to achieving its 90 percent graduation rate by 2020. Although the graduation rate of black students in Florida rose 10.9 percent from 53.7 percent in 2008-2009 to 64.6 percent in 2012-2013, black males fared lower each year compared to their Asian, White, and Hispanic counterparts.



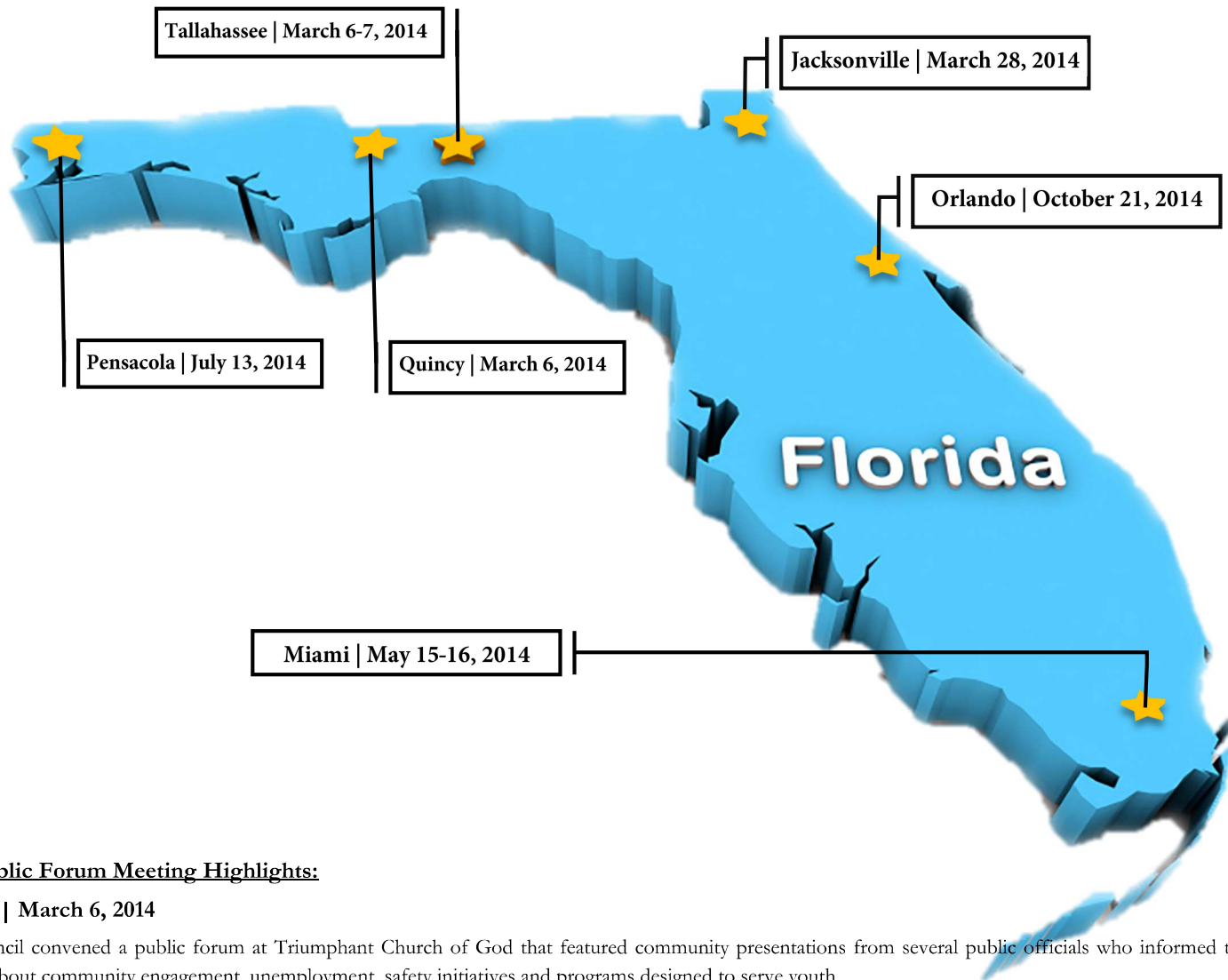
The graduation rate of Florida's black male students in 2012 was 58.9 percent compared to 86 percent for Asian male students, 76.7 percent for white males, and 71.9 percent for Hispanic males. In order for the nation to achieve its 90 percent goal by 2020, it is working to improve the graduation rates of young male students of color. The National Fatherhood Initiative has had measurable success with helping fathers develop parenting skills that have proven successful in enhancing their children's academic performance. NFI programs such as the “Community Mobilization Approach,” “24/7 Dad,” and “InsideOut Dad,” use applied research concepts that indicate a father's engagement impacts a child's social, emotional and academic competencies.

This report provides inspection of positive outcomes related to these programs in order to assist the CSSBMB with its objective of improving the graduation rates of black male students through the increased and substantive involvement of fathers.

*\* To read the complete report and information regarding future research, please visit: <http://www.cssbmb.com>.*

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys convened key public forums, symposiums, workshops, panel discussions and media outreach over the past year. The forums, conducted in various locations across the State, are important public engagement opportunities that impact the Council's work. These public initiatives provide key information to the Council about the local perspectives of community members, current community issues, existing policies, and laws that affect the lives of black men and boys.



## 2014 Public Forum Meeting Highlights:

### **Quincy | March 6, 2014**

The Council convened a public forum at Triumphant Church of God that featured community presentations from several public officials who informed the Council about community engagement, unemployment, safety initiatives and programs designed to serve youth.

### **Tallahassee | March 6-7, 2014**

The Council's annual business meeting was held at the State Capitol's Senate Office Building and offered an opportunity for Council members to educate legislators about issues such as the Council's research efforts, budget requests, strategic plan, "Day of Dialogue," and annual report.

### **Jacksonville | March 28, 2014**

The Council held a public forum at the Jacksonville Urban League that highlighted strengthening the academic achievement, increasing graduation rates, and decreasing dropout rates of black males.

### **Miami | May 15-16, 2014**

At the invitation of U.S. Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson, Council Chairman Eddy Regnier attended a two-day conference, where he participated in a round-table discussion titled, "My Brother's Keeper: Supporting Boys and Men of Color from Birth through College and Career."

### **Pensacola | July 13, 2014**

The Council convened a public forum at City Hall that provided an opportunity for leaders and members of the Pensacola community to discuss strategies to address issues that affect black men and boys in Panhandle area.

### **Orlando | October 21, 2014**

Council members led a workshop during the 2014 National Faith Symposium held at the Rosen Plaza Hotel to highlight their efforts to build partnerships that promote the values of learning, family, prosperity, unity and self-worth.



# COUNCIL MEMBERS



Chairman  
Eddy M. Regnier, Ph.D.  
Clinical and Forensic Psychologist  
Assessment and Psychotherapy Services



Vice Chair  
Lois A. Scott, Bureau Chief  
Department of Economic Opportunity



1st Vice Chair  
Edison O. Jackson, Ed.D., President  
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2nd Vice Chair  
Argatha Rigby-Gilmore, Police Chief  
Lake City Police Department



Gilbert D. Barnes, Victim Services Administrator  
Florida Department of Corrections



Damon T. Rich, Administrator  
Agency for Health Care Administration



Dennis Baxley, Representative  
Florida State Representative, District 23



Albert Simpson, Jr., Ph.D., Reverend  
Philemon Missionary Baptist Church



Rob Bradley, Senator  
Florida State Senate, District 7



Malone D. Smith, IT Director  
Department of Children and Families



Oscar Braynon II, Senator  
Florida State Senate, District 36



Craig Swain, Disproportionate Minority Contact Specialist  
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice



Rod Duckworth, Chancellor  
Division of Career and Adult Education



Shawn Thomas, Reverend  
Mt. Zion Progressive Missionary Baptist Church



Thad Fortune, Administrator  
Department of Management Services



Alan B. Williams, Representative  
Florida State Representative, District 8



William Hardin, Manager  
Business Operations Unit



Paul Wilson, Administrative Director  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools



Mike Mason, Director  
Florida Department of Health

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DECEMBER 2014

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