ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Together, UCF and Valencia College have created a campus in the heart of downtown Orlando focused on inspiring individuals to achieve their dreams. This transformational project kick-started Orlando’s public-private Creative Village. Both schools increase access for students, provide pathways into high-demand career fields, foster meaningful collaboration with our neighbors and improve countless lives through the power of education.
BY THE NUMBERS

- **8,023** Total Enrollment UCF + Valencia (Fall 2021)
- **15** Acres
- **237** Sections of Co-listed Courses Offered
- **40+** Academic Programs
- **75,923** unique visitors to UCF Downtown website
- **250** Faculty + Staff
- **742** Events Held on campus
- **30** external news stories about UCF Downtown
NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Following a hiatus during the pandemic, Downtown Market Days resumed in Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 to increase student engagement opportunities on campus and with the downtown Orlando community.

Featured vendors included Addition Financial, Tupperware, Black Bee Honey, and Discover Downtown, in addition to Registered Student Organizations and on-campus departments.

In October 2021, First Year Programs hosted the inaugural It Happens Downtown Immersive Experiences event as part of UCF Family Weekend. This program allowed UCF and Valencia College students, and their guests, the opportunity to see the downtown campus and the downtown Orlando community in a whole new way!

In addition to the on-campus welcome and tour, multiple downtown Orlando excursions were offered including the Lake Eola Farmer’s Market, Swan Boats, downtown walking tours, and the Orlando History Museum. Registration for the event topped 130 students and guests.
More than 200 guests gathered at UCF Downtown’s James M. Seneff Plaza to dedicate the campus to the community and celebrate the success of the campus. UCF President Alexander N. Cartwright thanked the many donors and elected officials who helped make the campus a reality. Among the donors who made the campus possible was James M. Seneff, for whom the plaza and fountain are named. Orlando City Commissioner Regina Hill spoke of the impact the campus has already had on the city of Orlando — especially on the Parramore neighborhood. With the shared campus in Parramore, she says, “We have the most robust educational ecosystem in the entire state.”

Dr. Phillips Academic Commons earned LEED Gold certification from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), a third-party green building rating system globally recognized as a symbol of sustainability. The new designation represents UCF’s 30th LEED certification. UCF mandates LEED certification for all new construction and major renovations, which promote occupant health and productivity through indoor air quality, mindful building materials, access to daylight and more.
The United to Promote Cultural Awareness (UPCA) committee hosted the 2nd annual Juneteenth celebration with a panel discussion, Embracing History: Juneteenth Celebration. Panelists included:

- Representative Geraldine Thompson, District 44, Former Senator and Founder of
- Commissioner Regina I. Hill, District 5
- Derek Bruce, Orlando Office Managing Shareholder, Gunster Law and General Counsel of the African-American Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida

The event was co-moderated by Darryl Gordon, UCF Black Faculty and Staff Association President, and Rudy Darden, Valencia College Professor and Peace and Justice Institute Facilitator.

UCF, in collaboration with the Parramore Education and Innovation District, held its first Black and Gold Takeover Day at Jones High School. The event introduced students to the many opportunities available to them at UCF through classroom presentations, spirit competitions, tabling from various registered student organizations and programs, a selfie station, photo opportunities with Knightro, and more!

READ MORE ONLINE
ACADEMICS

RANKINGS

1. Graduate Video Game Design in the World (Princeton Review)

3. Graduate Emergency and Crisis Management

13. Graduate Nonprofit Management

13. Top Undergraduate Game Design Programs in the World (Princeton Review)

29. Public Management and Leadership

29. Public Budgeting and Finance

39. Public Administration Graduate School

39. Best Public Affairs Programs

46. Graduate Health Care Management

Source: US News & World Report, unless otherwise noted.

UCF’s College of Business was ranked as one of the Best Part-Time MBAs for 2023

During the 2021-2022 academic year, UCF Downtown had 237 co-listed classes for undergraduate students. Co-listed courses allow students to take their general education program courses – like English, math and science – with a Valencia faculty member and are offered at the reduced state college course rate.
The Communication and Media Building received a classroom renovation project, completed in August 2021, upgrading finishes in two classrooms and three conference rooms, along with updating technology available in the rooms.

A UCF Downtown Social Impact website was launched to highlight research projects from UCF Downtown faculty.

VISIT THE WEBSITE

Ross Wolf celebrated two accomplishments this year. In February 2022, he was appointed associate provost for UCF Downtown, which elevates his role from assistant provost that started in April 2019. As associate provost, Wolf oversees campus academics and operations, partnerships, initiatives and community relations for the downtown campus that serves more than 7,500 students.

In March 2022, Wolf was named an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow for the 2022-23 academic year. Following nomination by the senior administration of their institutions, 46 Fellows were selected nationwide. The program seeks to strengthen colleges and universities by preparing VPs, deans, department chairs, and other administrators for senior and executive academic leadership roles through mentorship, interactive retreats, and advanced skills development. Wolf will complete his Fellowship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill under the leadership of Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz (pictured right).
Grant Hayes joined UCF on Aug. 1 as Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education. Hayes is familiar with UCF, where his leadership roles over 17 years included interim dean, executive associate dean, assistant dean, department chair, and professor in the former College of Education and Human Performance. Hayes will oversee CCIE’s efforts to advance academic excellence, research and the success of students from all academic backgrounds while bolstering community partnerships.

The Executive MBA program completed its week-long international residency in Portugal and Madrid, learning first-hand about the complexities and complications facing today’s global supply chain from global logistics firm DB Schenker.

The first cohort of School of Global Health Management and Informative Master’s in Health Administration administrative interns joined the HCA Florida UCF Lake Nona hospital.

Adam Parrish, lecturer and GEP coordinator in Communication, along with other NSCM faculty organized Free Speech Week events from October 18-21, 2021. More than 800 students attended three events over the three days.
A $2 million grant from Helios Education Foundation helped to launch the UCF Downtown Scholars Initiative in Fall 2021. The Initiative creates new pathways to success at UCF for qualified students at Jones, Evans and Oak Ridge high schools in Orlando. Inspired by Helios' leadership and generosity, the university is also contributing funds to the new initiative, resulting in a combined investment of $3.25 million.

The Association of College Unions International (ACUI) has recognized the University of Central Florida and Valencia College's collaborative UnionWest at Creative Village for a 2022 Outstanding Facility Design Award by CannonDesign. The ACUI Facility Design Awards recognize excellence in the design of student-centered facilities that support campus community building and student learning.
Deanna Sellnow, professor in Communication, was awarded $248,664 by GOV – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to study Effectively Communicating Uncertainty in Tropical Cyclone Intensity Forecasts.

The Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy received two new endowments focused on inclusion of under-represented demographics in the video game industry: $100,000 from Iron Galaxy Studios and $125,000 from Electronic Arts.

Florida Blue awarded Downtown Student Services a $25,000 Community Grant to provide opportunities for local K-12 students to engage with UCF. The funding was used to create and implement an inaugural Black and Gold Takeover Day at Jones High School and the establishment of an engagement plan with Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) School students.

Maria Harrington, associate professor in Games and Interactive Media, received the Outstanding Digital Learning Artifact Award from the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) for her work on “The AR Perpetual Garden App.”

Harrington’s Virtual UCF Arboretum Project was also awarded $25,000 by Epic Games.
The Office of the Associate Provost for UCF Downtown launched a Community-Engaged Scholarship Impact Assessment Grant. The small-grant competition was designed to correct for the gap in research funding for to follow-up with the end-users of research outputs to assess impact for an organization, neighborhood, community, or city. The two $5,000 grants were awarded to Erica Fissel and Trenton Marsh, researchers who completed a funded or unfunded community-engaged research project in downtown Orlando.

Robert Littlefield, director of the Nicholson School of Communication and Media, and his wife, Kathy, established and funded The Littlefield Speech and Debate Scholarship to support two scholarships – one for speech and one for debate.

Michael Strawser, assistant professor and undergraduate program coordinator for Communication, was awarded $4,500 by National Communication Association for Advancing the Discipline.

The Association of University Programs in Health Administration named the School of Global Health Management and Informatics the winner of the organization’s 2022 Engagement with AUPHA – Established Member Program Award.

The award recognizes programs for their engagement with and contribution to AUPHA, a global network of academic institutions, faculty and organizations dedicated to improving healthcare delivery through excellence in healthcare management and policy education.
A two-year grant from the Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network, which is part of the National Institutes of Health’s Helping to End Addiction Long-term Initiative, is collecting evidence that will contribute to expanding treatment and access to medication for people in the justice system who struggle with opioid-use disorder.

In problem-solving courts, an interdisciplinary team led by a judge works collaboratively to manage cases, aiming to reduce criminal offenses by using therapeutic approaches to address addiction and other underlying issues. Barbara Andraka-Christou, an assistant professor of global health management and informatics and the project’s principal investigator, says the goal is to rehabilitate those with substance use disorder who have been accused or convicted of drug-related crimes or have lost custody of children due to drug use. Courts will mandate treatment for substance use disorder, and many court participants have opioid use disorder.

Su-I Hou, professor and founding director of the School of Global Health Management and Informatics, and Christian King, assistant professor in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics, were awarded a Florida Blue Foundation Food Security grant to study barriers to effective screening for food insecurity in outpatient clinical settings. The grant was awarded in collaboration with Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida and the Alliance for Community Health.

UCF Pegasus Professor Naim Kapucu was selected to join the National Academy of Public Administration’s (NAPA) 2021 Class of Academy Fellows. He is one of 39 leaders selected for the honor. In addition, Kapucu was named a Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Applied Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University/Australia & Flinders University (AUS).
During a globally streamed ceremony at St. Catherine’s Church in Vilnius, Lithuania on December 29, Thomas Bryer, a professor of public administration, was honored by Gitanas Nausėda – President of the Republic of Lithuania – with a 2021 Global Lithuanian Award for contributions to scientific progress in the country.

Bryer’s award represents the culmination of multiple professional endeavors in Lithuania, including his leadership in the development of a dual-degree program between the UCF School of Public Administration and Kaunas University of Technology (KTU).

Timothy Sellnow, associate director of Graduate Studies, Research and Creative Activity was named Pegasus Professor for his work as an international leader in Risk and Crisis Communication. He is amongst the top 10 most-cited scholars in his field and has published seven books and over 100 articles.

Claire Knox, associate professor and founding director of the Master in Emergency and Crisis Management Program, received the Kay C. Goss Innovation and Technology Award from the FEMA Higher Education Program.
Young-joo Lee, professor and nonprofit management academic program coordinator, was appointed to the editorial board of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly.

Staci Zavattaro, professor of Public Administration, was awarded the Best Article Award by Public Integrity and Best Book Review by Public Administration Review. She was also named Editor-in-Chief of Administrative Theory & Praxis.

Jeremy Hall, professor of Public Administration and director of the Ph.D. in Public Affairs program, is Editor-in-Chief of Public Administration Review and serves as president of the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration.

Doug Goodman, director of the School of Public Administration, serves as Vice-President of the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration.

Thomas Wan and Varadraj Gurupur, faculty in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics, were granted a U.S. Patent on decision support system helping hospitals prevent heart failure readmissions.

The American Health Information Management Association awarded Varadraj “Raj” Prabhu Gurupur, an associate professor in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics with an Innovation Award, which honors individuals focused on moving health information into the future of the healthcare and wellness industry.
UCF DOWNTOWN
LIBRARY

The Addition Financial Downtown Library had 14,737 visits, with 2,146 interactions at the information desk.

660+ books and media were checked out.

694 items were sent out from the Downtown Library and more than 870 items were received.

Finally, more than 1,620 hours were logged on the desktop computers in the library, which were used nearly 1,300 times.

UCF DOWNTOWN
IT & TECH LENDING

The IT team responded to more than 1,670 tickets from students, faculty and staff across the downtown campus.

Tech Lending continued to supply technology materials to the campus community, ranging from graphing calculators to DSLR cameras, microphones, iPads, laptops and webcams.
Downtown Student Services engaged with students more than 98,000 times.

Downtown Student Services established a First Year Programs team, which included the addition of a new First Year Programs Coordinator position. The team hosted the campus’s inaugural summer and fall orientation sessions for first time on campus (FTOC) and first time in college (FTIC) students, reimagined the Weeks of Welcome program for fall and spring, created new annual events like Family Weekend and the Downtown Amazing Race, and more. The team also developed an integrated SLS course with Valencia College for all Downtown students.

Weeks of Welcome included more than 23 events and saw over 3,600 contacts over both semesters.

UCF Downtown and Valencia College Downtown Campus hosted the inaugural Downtown Amazing Race. Students from both UCF and Valencia College were invited to explore our downtown community as they raced to complete a list of immersive challenges and tasks.

Through these challenges, 9 teams of students were able to experience and interact with a variety of local businesses and unique downtown experiences like bouldering and mural hunting. Students loved being able to experience their downtown community in a new way.
FIRST STOP

- **7,266** Total student contacts with First Stop
- **35** Events held
- **1,000+** Total number of students who participated in First Stop events

No. 1 service provided: Financial Aid assistance

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

More than **2,300** students participated in **53** Student Engagement events including, Bubble Splash, Spirit Day, Glow Jam, a Pulse Memorial site visit, Parramore Clean up and visits to Orlando Magic and Orlando Pride games. The team also established two downtown traditions, which include an annual Bubble Splash event that will take place during Homecoming Week, and an annual visit to the Pulse Memorial, in partnership with OnePULSE Foundation and the UCF Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement Office of Diversity Education and Training.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Student Success worked with students more than **7,200** times.

- **89%** of students will be graduating with high impact practices, which are real-world experiences that blend classroom learning with opportunities such as undergraduate research, studying abroad, internships, and more.

- **75** students connected with peer tutoring via the Student Academic Resource Center. Nearly **400** students utilized the Learning Support Center and Writing Center on campus.
TESTING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Testing & Accessibility Services works with downtown students, faculty and staff to provide accommodations to all students on campus. Accommodations ensure that students with disabilities are not disadvantaged in their education simply because of their disability.

WELL-BEING

RWC@Downtown had students access its facility more than 20,000 times and students participated in group exercise classes more than 680 times.

In collaboration with Blue Swan Boulders, RWC introduced community climbs for Parramore youth between the ages of 12 and 17. 12 kids were awarded 10 visit punch-passes to Blue Swan Boulders.

Student Health Services had more than 500 appointments, an 87% increase from the year prior.

Counseling and Psychological Services held nearly 200 appointments with students, more than a 400% increase from the prior year.

Conduct and Care Services held 257 meetings with students.
WELL-BEING

Downtown Student Services received over 800 lbs. of food donation from a Communiversity event which was held at UCF Downtown. The donation stocked the Downtown Pantry the entire 2021-22 year and 132 pantry bags were distributed to students. Additionally, 100+ lbs. of food from the donation was donated to Knights Pantry on main campus.

Koru mindfulness, the only evidenced-based mindfulness curriculum designed for college-aged adults, was offered for the first time on campus helping students build skills to manage their stress.

SNAP education and couponing classes were provided to students to aid in food security resources.

Free HIV testing and risk reduction counseling was offered to all students, staff and community members.

STUDENT OUTREACH SERVICES

In March 2022, the Office of Student Outreach Services hosted three UCF McKnight Centers of Excellence teams for the 2022 Virtual Brain Bowl Competition at UCF Downtown. The teams represented fourth through twelfth-grade students from Orlando Science Charter, Renaissance Charter, Edgewater High School and Jones High School. Students met over a period of several months and trained with local volunteer coaches.

All three UCF teams placed in the top four of the state. The highest-winning UCF team was the sixth through eighth-grade math team, which came in first place against Palm Beach County and North Florida teams. UCF’s ninth and tenth-grade students came in third place and the UCF ninth through twelfth grade Black History/Culture Team came in fourth place.
UNIONWEST STUDENT HOUSING

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Nicholson School of Communication and Media sponsored and hosted the 12th Annual International Crisis and Risk Communication Conference from March 7-9, 2022. The conference’s theme — Bridging the Gaps: Dialogue and Debate in Difficult Times — was held virtually and in-person at the Marriott in downtown Orlando, where a global audience of professionals and academics could comfortably gather to discuss best practices.

UCF Downtown hosted 177 community events, with several community organizations and nonprofits receiving free or discounted space on campus.

The Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy had more than 60 speakers and engagements with industry personnel via in-class lectures, workshops, industry portfolio reviews and guest speaking and recruitment presentations.
Monthly Parramore Community Engagement Council meetings continued to bring together residents, business owners and faith leaders in Parramore, along with representatives from UCF Downtown and Valencia College Downtown, to collaborate on community-led opportunities.

These included:

- As a result of a conversation about illegal drag racing causing a community hazard, Orlando Police increased patrols of its Parramore community unit in order to decrease illegal drag racing.

- In partnership with the Red Cross, Orlando Fire Department, UCF Downtown and Valencia College Downtown and Christian Service Center, volunteers visited nearly 100 homes over two weekends in March to install free fire detectors for families. They also offered free batteries for homes with existing fire detectors.

- A Great Hire Event resulted in 10 candidates hired on the spot with 15 individuals scheduled for follow up interviews with companies. A Financial Literacy Training Series is also underway, in partnership with 5/3 Bank and Chase Bank, and includes both in-person and Zoom options for attendees.
The Office of the Associate Provost launched a UCF Downtown Student Ambassador program focused on organic social media reach.

The UCF Speech and Debate Team placed 5th overall in 2022 National Pi Kappa Delta national competition.

FIEA Alums Rafael Brochado (pictured left) and Guillaume Bailey were awarded a $1 million National Science Foundation grant to help develop their first virtual reality (VR) game, Tablecraft.
**STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS**

Four master’s in health administration students enrolled in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics earned administrative fellowships. These highly competitive national fellowships are only available to students who graduate from a CAHME accredited programs.

- Daniella Eslava, Baptist Health Jacksonville
- Jirick Hunter, Univ of Colorado Health- Southern Region
- Versace Nicolls, Oschner Health
- Judah Soray, Deland Fellowship in Healthcare & Society at Brigham and Women’s Hospital

Students from the School of Global Health Management and Informatics established the first American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) registered student organization at UCF – ACHE @ UCF Student Organization.

The American Health Information Management Association awarded its Triumph Rising Star Award for Fall 2021 to UCF alumnus Phillip Duong. Duong works at Nemours Children’s Hospital in Orlando and holds leadership roles in three health information associations. Advocacy and public policy are passions for Duong, and he has volunteered at the Florida Health Information Management Association’s Hill Day events in 2018 and 2019. He prioritizes using social media to engage with peers about health information.