



Draper Notes

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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SANTA FE COLLEGE NAMED NATION'S TOP COLLEGE

TALLAHASSEE – Santa Fe College has earned one of the nation's top accomplishments for achievement among higher education institutions, winning the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence over national contenders.

The Aspen Prize is awarded every other year. As the winner, Santa Fe College earned \$800,000 with the award. Indian River State College was also one of only ten finalists for this year's prize as Florida was one of only three states with multiple finalists.

In each year the Aspen Prize has been awarded, 14 of the 28 Florida College System institutions have been eligible for this award - ranking them in the top 15 percent of community colleges nationwide. Valencia College won the inaugural prize in 2011, and Broward College and Santa Fe College were named to the top 10 in 2013.

"Congratulations to Santa Fe College for this incredible accomplishment. Every student, staff and faculty member can be very proud of their work today. I am so appreciative of the important role Florida colleges play in preparing students for success in college, career and in life," said Commissioner of Education Pam Stewart.

"I would also like to congratulate Indian River State College for being recognized as one of the top colleges in the nation," continued Stewart. "President Massey is our state's longest serving college president and his dedication is a model for all public servants."

“Acceptance of the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence brings the understanding that it recognizes every community college in this country,” said Dr. Jackson Sasser, president of Santa Fe College. “Santa Fe College is proud to share the award with the students, employees and trustees of all community colleges in our country.”

The Aspen Prize, awarded every two years, recognizes outstanding institutions selected from an original pool of more than 1,000 community colleges. With a singular focus on student success, the Aspen Prize assesses community colleges' achievements in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, high rates of employment and earnings for graduates, and high levels of access and success for minority and low-income students.

For more information on the Aspen Prize, go to www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/college-excellence.

For more information on the nation's best college system, go to www.floridacollegesystem.com.

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