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IMPORTANT UPDATES ON SCHOOL CHOICE IN FLORIDA

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Clenol Jean
Miami Union Academy

Clenol Jean was an average student until he reached the seventh grade and transferred to his assigned middle school. It was then that he began to develop bad habits and his attitude towards school changed.

Clenol's mother, Clenide Jean, started to receive phone calls from Clenol's teachers reporting that he was either not in class, or when he was in class, he was not paying attention. His lack of motivation and attention to her classes caused his grades to decline and his grade point average (GPA) dropped below a 2.0.

Distraught with the direction her son was going, Clenide began searching for options when she learned about the Step Up For Students Scholarships administered by Florida P.R.I.D.E. Once Clenol's scholarship application was ap-

proved, Clenide enrolled him in Miami Union Academy.

Clenol is currently a tenth-grade student at Miami Union Academy, and has attended this school of choice for the past two and a half years.

Since attending Miami Union, Clenol's attitude towards schools has changed drastically and his grades have improved. His GPA is now above a 3.0, and he no longer skips classes.

Clenol is actively involved in his community and school, including the performing arts programs offered by Miami Union. The chorus programs have enabled Clenol to develop an amazing talent in singing. His voice is so impressive that he was invited to perform during the Step Up For Students Donor Appreciation Rally on December 10, 2007, at Miami Union Academy.

Want to nominate your student for our Student Spotlight?
Visit www.stepupforstudents.com/parents.htm to send us your story.
Or contact Jillian Metz at jmetz@feff.org or call (866) 590-5364.

HIGH MARKS



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



OF STEP UP FOR STUDENTS

GOVERNOR CRIST CELEBRATES SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS AND DONORS

Rep. Ronald Brisé, Former Congresswoman Carrie Meek as well as over 500 attendees joined Governor Charlie Crist on Dec. 10 at Miami Union Academy for the fourth annual donor rally where corporations were thanked for their contributions to the scholarship program.

Gov. Crist commended the corporations, Wachovia, CVS Caremark and Waste Management, who have made this program a success and whose donations have made parental choice an option for thousands of Florida's disadvantaged parents.

Former Congresswoman Carrie Meek was presented with an appreciation banner from students at the "Building Futures, Bridging Gaps" rally who thanked her for supporting educational options and congratulated The Carrie Meek Foundation for partnering with Step Up For Students in distributing K-12 scholarships to economically disadvantaged students in North Miami-Dade.



Former Congresswoman Meek was thanked for supporting educational options and partnering with Step Up For Students.

Festivities included a personal story from Melody Cherfils, a graduate from Miami Union Academy and former Step Up For Students Scholarship recipient. Before receiving the scholarship, Melody had a GPA of less than 1.0 and was considering dropping out of her assigned public school.

Miami Union Academy successfully graduates 98 percent of its students and 90 percent continue on to higher education. Cherfils was among the

Gov. Crist greeted Marquita Forsett and her twin boys at the "Building Futures, Bridging Gaps" Rally.

success of her classmates and graduated in 2006. She currently attends Oakwood College in Huntsville, Ala.

Rep. Brisé, D-Miami, was the Master of Ceremonies at the Rally and is an alumnus of Miami Union Academy where he is a member of the board of directors. Brisé is the Vice President of the Black Caucus and continuously pledges his support of the scholarship program and honors his promise of representing his constituents' best interest.

Representatives from event sponsors Albertson's, Chico's Charities, Florida Crystals, Lowe's, Tarmac, Burger King, SDE and Wachovia were pleased by the opportunity to interact with the students who receive the scholarships that the corporations are funding.





MEET THE SCHOLARSHIP STAFF



Ana Maciel,
Program Director

Meet Ana Maciel who has enthusiastically worked for Florida P.R.I.D.E. since August 2002 as the program director. Prior to joining Florida P.R.I.D.E., Ana worked as the office manager for a carpet cleaning company providing accounting services for over 10 years.

Ana may be a familiar face from the school and parent meetings throughout the P.R.I.D.E. portion of the state, which serves the southern half of Florida. In addition, she is bilingual and

hosts many of the Spanish application meetings. Ana enjoys working with both parents and schools to help them achieve their scholarship goals. She also loves being part of a program that can change the lives of so many children and their families for the best.

Ana lives in Tampa with her husband and two sons who attend a local private school. In her free time, Ana enjoys spending time with her family and friends.

WELLSTUDENT

Stay Healthy in the New Year

{5 Tips for Your Children}

- 1 Add healthy food when you can:** Find ways to add healthy foods into foods your child already likes. You can put blueberries in pancakes, chopped fruit on cereal, or small pieces of broccoli in macaroni and cheese.
- 2 Help them learn:** Encourage your kids to draw or doodle pictures of healthy foods or write a poem. Post on the fridge and make sure they know you are proud.
- 3 Sit down together:** Try to set aside your meals as family time. Turn off the TV and enjoy eating together.
- 4 Keep healthy snacks on hand:** Bring healthy snacks when you pick them up from school, after sports practice, and at other times when you know their stomachs will be grumbling.
- 5 Make healthy food and meals fun:** Try cutting up food into fun shapes or making faces out of fruit and vegetables. Putting healthy snacks such as oatmeal cookies or dried fruit into a fun bag can turn healthy foods into a cool snack for your child.



Florida KidCare

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GOT QUESTIONS? 2-1-1 MAY HAVE THE ANSWER

Where do you turn for information on after-school programs, or getting adequate care for an aging parent? When you need help finding information about rent assistance, food banks, job training, or health resources where do you go?

Did you know there is a single number you can call that will help you navigate the local and state resources as well as area nonprofit services?

Simply dial 2-1-1 and you will be connected with important community services and referral information in most of the counties in Florida. This great 2-1-1 network is an effort of 11 active 2-1-1 regional and local call centers that currently serve 33 of our 67 counties, and provides access to 75 percent of our population. They have eight additional call centers under development. The 2-1-1 service is funded through local and state sources including local United Ways and other nonprofits.

All too often people become confused or discouraged by the challenges of the system, and they never find out about the programs and services that might be able to help them solve their problems. Because they don't get help, bad situations tend to get worse, and our society pays the price.

Next time you need help locating services for you and your family, or you are facing a crisis in your life simply call 2-1-1. It is a simple way for people to find out where they can turn and what they can do to help themselves.



DONOR CORNER:

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste Management, Inc. (WM), the leading provider of comprehensive waste and environmental services in North America, is one of the newest Step Up For Students partners.



The company has demonstrated its commitment to the environment, communities and people through its unique programs and services and now, WM is making a positive impact in the lives of Florida's children by providing \$1 million for scholarships for at least 267 low-income students.



A check for \$1 million, from Waste Management Inc., will provide scholarships to 267 low-income students.

program," stated Waste Management Inc. of Florida's Vice President John Casagrande.

"As a corporate custodian, it is our responsibility to address the needs of our communities, including the education of our youth," added Jeff Sabin, Government Affairs Manager for Waste Management, Inc. of Florida. "Waste Management has a strong commitment to making a positive difference in our environment and our communities."

Waste Management offers a full range of environmental services to more than 20 million residential, industrial, municipal and commercial customers. Additionally, the company uses its knowledge and resources to benefit the environment through programs that focus on recycling and waste diversion, providing renewable energy and resource conservation, and safe collection and disposal of waste.

Step Up For Students applauds Waste Management for its dedication to the environment, our communities and our children.