

Voyage Mark II Project

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Lead Organization

College of Central Florida

3001 SW College Road, Ocala, FL 34471

Dr. Allan Danuff / (352) 854-2322 ext. 1673 / danuffa@cf.edu

Team

Dr. Mark Paugh

Katie Hunt

Matt Matthews

Partner Organization

Phi Theta Kappa (Kappa Nu Chapter)

3001 SW College Road, Ocala, FL 34471

Point of Contact

Brian Holloway / (352) 362-7870 / hollowb@patriots.cf.edu

Team

Emily Ferguson

Anisette Marin-Almodovar

Kelsey Meekins

Donna McDaniel

Kylie Engle

Community

Ocala, located in north central Florida's "horse country," offers tourists winding neighborhood paths lined with oak trees and hanging Spanish moss trellises. If the prospect of canoeing down a crystal-clear stream amid the largest sand pine forest in the world sounds appealing, Ocala and surrounding Marion County are more than worth your time.

Ocala and the surrounding area's freshwater streams, rolling hills, and clean air have remained untouched and have been used in Hollywood films. Silver Springs is located nearby to Ocala, a natural landmark and a 350-acre natural park. Otherwise, tourists would appreciate the central location of Ocala, only a one-hour drive from both coasts. Residents and tourist can see live launches from Cape Canaveral and visit NASA's Kennedy Space Center which is only 2 hours away.

Students at the College of Central Florida pursue careers in fields that they are passionate about. Over time, the college's footprint has grown to include the Marion County campuses of Ocala, Vintage Farm, Hampton Center, and Appleton Museum of Art, as well as the Citrus Campus in Lecanto and the Levy Campus in Chiefland. What began as a two-year college that offered certificates and associate degrees has grown into a four-year institution that offers baccalaureate degrees in a variety of workforce programs. CF offers associate degrees, associate degrees in science, bachelor's degrees, and certificates. Our emphasis is on delivering high-quality education that meets the needs of our community, with more than 150 academic paths to choose from.

The College of Central Florida offers a club setting for all students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The aim is to introduce its members to the various career possibilities in the fields of STEM. In addition to taking part in on-campus activities, club members also have the chance to visit scientific facilities, engage scientists and hold internships throughout the summer.

The College of Central Florida has been ranked among the best in the state and the nation for academic programs, affordability, and overall quality.

CF is recognized among the top 50 Community Colleges in the nation for 2021 by Intelligent.com., and among those colleges was recognized for the Best Job Placement Rate. In evaluating the institutions, they prioritized affordability, program selection, reputation, faculty, and course delivery methods, including online, in-person, and hybrid classes. The comprehensive research was based on an assessment of 1,187 accredited colleges and universities in the nation.

In a separate ranking, Intelligent.com ranked CF's Associate in Business Administration Degree Program among the top 50 in the nation for 2021. Among those 50 colleges, CF was also named Best for Certificates. The comprehensive research guide is based on an assessment of 188 accredited colleges and universities in the nation. Each program is evaluated based on curriculum quality, graduation rate, reputation, and post-graduate employment.

Best Value Schools has ranked CF No. 11 on its 2020 Best Colleges in Florida list. CF joins the ranks of University of Florida, University of Central Florida, and University of West Florida, which appear in the top five. Rankings are based on the number of online programs, graduation rate, and tuition cost.

“CF continues to deliver a high-quality learning experiences and is committed to student success,” said Dr. Jim Henningsen, CF president. “The recent rankings are a testament to the work of our faculty and staff.”

Strategic Objectives in STEM & STEAM

STEAM education is key to current and future student success. It is said that students with a solid STEAM education perform better on standardized test such as the ACT and the SAT. According to stemcadia.com STEM also prepares students for future workforce, offers ability to earn twice as much as non-stem jobs, and promotes gender equality. In 2016, Jennie Kroeger wrote a blog for the College of Education at FSU. In the blog she wrote "As a nation, our education industry has recognized a shortcoming in our students. We've fallen behind other industrialized countries in terms of STEM-related fields, which include Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Not only does a STEM-focused education open student to new subjects, it also allows for different learning methodologies to be utilized. Creativity in class structure promotes innovative thinking in your students. When you put a spotlight on project-based learning - which is common in STEM - you provide opportunities for authentic growth and development. Perhaps you see yourself observing a group of young students as they attempt to create a working light out of wire, batteries, a switch, and a small bulb. The only direction you offer is that the switch must be used. While walking around the room, you listen as students work together to create their light, periodically calling the students together to offer guidance through questioning. Ultimately, teachers in STEM fields have the opportunity to give their students room to explore, experiment and solve problems logically. Teaching STEM in elementary grades opens the door for teachers and students to become tomorrow's movers and shakers. Young children with a strong foundation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics will go on to play an integral role in our nation's global competitiveness and economic stability."

The goal of bringing the Voyage project to Ocala, Florida is giving opportunities to families and individuals in our area who are unable to visit the Kennedy or Houston Space Centers the ability to learn and get excited about our solar system. At the College of Central Florida, we are bringing the Voyage project to our main campus to increase our focus on STEAM. Voyage is a permanent sculpture with 13 stanchions each containing a laser-sculpted in 3 dimensions inside solid crystal block for each planet that is being represented. The stanchions also contain a story board that will provide text and visual imagery to deeper the observers understanding of our solar system. A great example of a STEAM (STEM + Arts = STEAM) educational project. It is our hope doing this unlocks the imagination and dreams of future generations. It is also our goal to encourage future generations by building a solid foundation of and interest in space and STEAM studies. We want our addition to the campus to help promote and expand CF's STEAM studies for years to come. While encouraging future generations and our youth to reach for the stars.

Community Engagement

The following are the goals for bringing the Voyage Mark II to Ocala, Florida:

- Permanent sculpted and laser etched 1 to 10 billion scale model of the Solar System. Displayed through the center of the College of Central Florida Ocala main campus
- Host ribbon cutting and opening gala. Invitations to local and regional STEAM teachers and Professors. As well as city leaders and students
- Provide an exhibit that is open to the public to promote learning about our place in the solar system
- Provide scheduled tours for student's grades K-8 via the College of Central Florida's STEM club
- Encourage science classes and students grades 9-college senior to visit the campus and do a self-guided tour
- Team with the Appleton Museum to have brochures created and available to visitors.
- Incorporate Voyage Mark II into campus tours for new students
- Phi Theta Kappa's Kappa Nu Chapter will host a yearly fellowship event for the Florida Region of Phi Theta Kappa to visit our campus and view exhibit.(During Space Week)
- Extend offer and give assistance to other regional colleges if they decide to explore adding the exhibit to their campuses
- With Voyage, College of Central Florida can designate campus as a STEM education destination site for pre-college student groups

Project Cost Breakdown

<u>Base Cost</u> (includes fabrication)	\$37,500
<u>Name Engraving</u> (instead of vinyl lettering, the engraved names with black backfill at the top of the 10 tall stanchions)	\$3,950
<u>Shipping</u> w/refurbished crate	\$2,200
<u>1st 5 Seed Grant</u> (Provided to the first five communities to sign contract for purchase)	(\$5,000)
Total Purchase Request	\$38,650
Without Seed Grant	\$43,650