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## **Collaboration lands major career training grant for Lincoln Park**

**Fort Pierce/June 22** – “Quality of life starts with a good job!”

So began the list of priorities for the Common Good Initiative’s Lincoln Park Career Pathways proposal, an undertaking that will unite five organizations in fostering financial independence for Fort Pierce’s Lincoln Park residents.

Allegany Franciscan Ministries of Florida (AFMFL) launched the Common Good Initiative in Lincoln Park in 2014. On Tuesday, AFMFL approved a \$415,000 grant which will fund career training for 176 Lincoln Park residents over a two-year period.

“We believe this pilot program will be transformative for the Lincoln Park community; a game-changer for residents in accessing training and job placement,” said Upendo Shabazz, the regional vice president for AFMFL. “It is a huge opportunity to work with all the partners involved in this program.”

Starting in January, three training pathway certification programs will be offered – Certified Production Technician (CPT), Certified Logistics Associate (CLA) and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). In addition to 100 percent of the tuition cost, the grant also covers classroom computers, student transportation, meal stipends, child care, a dedicated career consultant, marketing and outreach.

The Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC) prepared the grant proposal in partnership with Indian River State College (IRSC) and CareerSource Research Coast (CSRC).

“The EDC and our partners are extremely grateful to Allegany Franciscan Ministries for their commitment to the Lincoln Park Community and for their generosity and foresight in funding all the expenses students in the program may encounter,” said Peter Tesch, EDC president. “Too often we don’t recognize how unanticipated out-of-pocket expenses can derail what could have been a life-changing training opportunity.”

The classes will be held in the Lincoln Park community, at IRSC’s Blackburn Center on Avenue D. IRSC’s Corporate and Community Training Institute (CCTI) will be the training provider. CSRC and CCTI will partner to deliver the logistics program. Tuition will be covered either through the Allegany grant or

through state funding for those students who qualify for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grants.

“IRSC is proud to be a part of such an initiative which has the potential to positively boost the lives of residents in the Lincoln Park community. With the opportunity to access two funding sources for this program, all interested Lincoln Park residents will now have the ability to participate in this career pathway training program,” said Pamela Welmon, D.Ed., Vice President of Applied Science and Technology for IRSC.

The grant will also fund a career consultant based in the Lincoln Park community, hired by IRSC to build awareness of the program, handle outreach, student recruitment and screening, and assist with individual acceptance into the program.

“In addition to working together on developing the grant proposal, CSRC, the EDC and IRSC have all committed substantial in-kind matches for the grant. The levels of cooperation among all the organizations involved has been unprecedented,” said CSRC President/CEO Brian Bauer. “We have high hopes for the outcome of this two-year program which aligns with our local workforce development area’s strategic goal for building a skilled and qualified talent pipeline.”

CSRC has committed to leverage a portion of its WIOA formula funding allocations for training and support costs of those participants who qualify. IRSC is funding a program coordinator, faculty time, and providing the classroom facilities at a cost of more than \$100,000. The EDC led the proposal initiative, will conduct program review and coordinate employer engagement with the graduates through the Treasure Coast Manufacturers Association.

### **About the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County**

The EDC is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting economic vitality in St. Lucie County through the attraction, retention and expansion of businesses in the community. The EDC works in partnership with local governments and the private sector to advance its goals of creating more and better-paying jobs for residents, broadening the tax base and improving St. Lucie County’s economic quality of life. Contact the EDC at 772.336.6250 or <http://www.youredc.com>.

### **About Allegany Franciscan Ministries of Florida**

Together. Connected. Empowered. Allegany Franciscan Ministries is deeply committed to healthier, safer and more connected communities in which our most vulnerable residents can live, learn, work and play. To date, this faith-based organization has contributed \$88 million through 4004 grants to 1519 organizations. For more information, visit <http://www.afmfl.org>.