



***POWERING UP***

**NAF's 2016  
Distinguished Academies**



## DISTINGUISHED ACADEMY

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*"It is important that we take the time to pause and recognize the tremendous achievements of these distinguished academies. As part of NAF's network, these academies have gone above and beyond to provide not only the industry-vetted curriculum, but the resources, mentors, and work-based learning opportunities—including internships—to continue ensuring that our students are college, career, and future ready. Their delivery of the NAF educational design is a testament to what we can do as a network of education, business, and community partners, to deliver high quality learning experiences for our future leaders."*

— JD Hoye  
President, NAF

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## Tracking Progress to Achieve Quality

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Research shows that students in NAF academies achieve better results than those students in the same school district who are not in NAF academies. NAF's highest performing academies realize even greater student outcomes.

NAF's annual Academy Assessment measures an academy's strengths and challenges in implementing NAF's results-driven educational design. The assessment is designed to help all academies measure their progress and increase their alignment to NAF's standards, reflecting national standards developed by researchers and members from similar career or pathway organizations. Model academies reach the highest scores on the assessment. From these schools, a subset of academies are recognized as Distinguished Academies for achieving additional thresholds, demonstrating exceptional fidelity to an educational design that prepares students for college, career, and future success.

Thirty-two academies in NAF's network have reached Distinguished status based on the 2015-16 Academy Assessment. Twenty-eight of these academies have reached this status more than once and four are new to the roster. Four have earned Distinguished status all six years that this system has been in place. What follows are exemplary practices from the four new and four veteran Distinguished academies that can be implemented in more academies.

## THRESHOLDS

## CHARACTERISTICS

## WHERE QUALITY GROWS

- Open enrollment
- 50 or more students per grade
- Fully implemented program with at least four NAF courses and one graduating class
- Acquired the necessary human, financial, and technical resources needed to support the academy
- Integration of NAF courses into at least five core classes
- Fully implemented work-based learning program

- Established student recruitment and orientation program
- Committed principal
- Strong academy leadership
- High academic expectations
- Use of data to measure and improve performance
- Consistent messaging on college attendance and career options
- Dedicated guidance counselor(s)

In analyzing data of those academies that have increased in quality as measured by NAF's Academy Assessment, there are several areas of focus that have led to the most improvement:

- Increasing support to strengthen recruitment, course integration, and academy leadership
- Increasing capacity across the academy team
- Engaging the advisory board in the Academy Assessment process so they understand the expectations for their involvement
- Increasing proportionate representation of the business and higher education communities on the advisory board
- Aligning academy growth to district initiatives
- Increasing the number of business partners participating on the advisory board
- Establishing additional partnerships to increase internship opportunities
- Strengthening recruitment strategies to increase enrollment in the academy
- Collaborating to effectively integrate career themes across core subject areas



## Columbia Heights Educational Campus ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

Washington, DC

### Promising Practice: College Readiness

To ensure high school students are future ready, the NAF Academy of Hospitality & Tourism at Columbia Heights Educational Campus focuses first on career readiness when it comes to curriculum implementation. NAF students complete their four required NAF courses prior to their senior year. This enables them to connect with post-secondary opportunities while still in high school. During their senior year, they are able to continue with Hospitality Management Dual Enrollment classes at local colleges in Washington, DC. The dual enrollment partners in DC include, George Washington University, Montgomery College and the University of the District of Columbia. In addition, all NAF students are required to take AP English and complete their capstone classes during their junior and senior years. The academy experience provides a solid preparation for college & careers and the capstone classes solidify the AOHT mission.

## NEWLY DISTINGUISHED



## Lancaster High School ACADEMY OF FINANCE

Lancaster, NY

### Promising Practice: Work-Based Learning

Lancaster High School Academy of Finance's work-based learning program follows NAF's continuum, allowing for discovery, exploration, and practice through mock interviews, coaching, and job shadows. But what is most impressive about the academy is that, since 2008, they have achieved 100% internship placement. In that time, the academy has placed 440 students in paid internships—each with a minimum of 120 hours and as many as 180 hours. Students participate in an internship class to prepare, followed by attending an internship fair where they are interviewed by advisory board members prior to their internship. Many students are empowered to secure their own internships without the assistance of the advisory board.

## VETERAN DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIES

Reaching Distinguished status for the past 6 years



## **Hialeah Gardens High School ACADEMY OF ENGINEERING**

Hialeah Gardens, FL

### **Promising Practice: Project-Based Learning**

The students at the Academy of Engineering at Hialeah Gardens High School recognized a problem in their community. Situated in a booming residential area with a bustling warehouse district near a major highway with an entrance to a shopping center, traffic jams were common by the school. The academy partnered with the Florida Department of Transportation to investigate the flow traffic on the neighborhood roads and nearby state roads surrounding their school. Academy of Engineering students worked with engineers to determine traffic patterns during the busiest times of the day, analyzed their findings, and created viable solutions to eradicate the congestion. They presented their recommendations to the school board and to city planners, council, and police department to ensure that students, parents, and teachers can get to school safely and on time, as well as allow community members to travel about more efficiently. In a “real world” setting, students were able to perform field observations, collect data, identify solutions, and prepare reports to share with officials who may implement their ideas.



## **Northeast High School ACADEMY OF FINANCE**

St. Petersburg, FL

### **Promising Practice: Parental Involvement**

Northeast High School Academy of Finance established the Parents Advisory Liaisons (PALS) to provide administrative assistance to the academy director and open the lines of communication between the school and the parents. As the academy needs shifted, PALS modified its role to include: introducing new families to the academy, recruiting mentors and internship providers, and raising funds for academy programs. Realizing parents are knowledgeable sources, great advocates, and often untapped resources, parents are able to clarify academy expectations for prospective families and introduce new students to existing students in the academy. But parents at this academy do more than that. They also raise funds for scholarships and student travel for business competitions, and recruit business partners to provide work-based learning activities. Since 2003, \$80,000 has been raised in scholarship funds, providing five to eight scholarships to NAF seniors per year.



## Harmony Magnet ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

Strathmore, CA

### Promising Practice: Creative Implementation of NAF Curriculum

Harmony Magnet Academy of Performing Arts uses NAF's Information Technology, Finance, Health Sciences, and Hospitality & Tourism curriculum combined with NAF's work-based learning continuum to apply the future-ready learning experience in its arts setting. All students are required to take graphic design, world history (which embeds NAF's Geography for Tourism curriculum), and business economics. Many also take NAF's physiology, event planning, and video production courses. While all NAF academies are required to teach four NAF courses, Harmony offers up to six NAF courses. Pulling on its strength in performing arts, career awareness activities are uniquely implemented through the Career Kids capstone project. Academy of Performing Arts students audition for a role portraying various careers. Selected students meet "peer mentor" students from the nine NAF academies in PUSD, research a related occupation, and portray an industry professional to 6th graders across the district. The performances serve as career awareness for the younger students.



## Southwest Miami Senior High School ACADEMY OF FINANCE

Miami, FL

### Promising Practice: Collaboration and Community Support

Southwest Miami Senior High School's Academy of Finance benefits from strong district support, teacher collaboration, community partnerships, and parental involvement. Academy subject and core teachers work together to ensure student success. Over the last six years, Southwest has achieved 100% paid internship placement for 375 students. The academy works closely with the advisory board, business partners, the district CTE office, and community members to secure internship positions for students. Parents are a key factor in producing a successful internship experience for students. Parents understand they must oversee and facilitate transportation needs of students to and from the job site. Parents also monitor aspects of the "soft skills" students need to enter the work place and be successful. These skills include wearing the proper attire to work, ensuring students are well groomed, encouraging students to report on time, as well as a host of other aspects employers expect from any employee in their firm.

## Coral Gables Senior High School ACADEMY OF FINANCE

Coral Gables, FL

### Promising Practice: Middle School Recruitment

Coral Gables Senior High School Academy of Finance has developed an effective way to connect with the incoming freshmen of their academy and assist them with their transition from middle school to high school. Through the Freshman Camp, upperclassmen in the AOF serve as team leaders and facilitate workshops for the rising 9th grade students. Students review math and reading standards, learn about managing a school enterprise, and get lessons on banking. Students who served as team leaders reported that they felt more bonded with the 9th grade academy students due to their time working at the camp and that the new students to Coral Gables appear to have an easier time adjusting to high school since they have developed friendships and have become acclimated to the campus during the week-long camp. The school principal has been able to fund staffing for the freshman experience through a \$150,000 grant, while advisory board members and business partners donate time and funds for lesson planning, materials, and snacks.

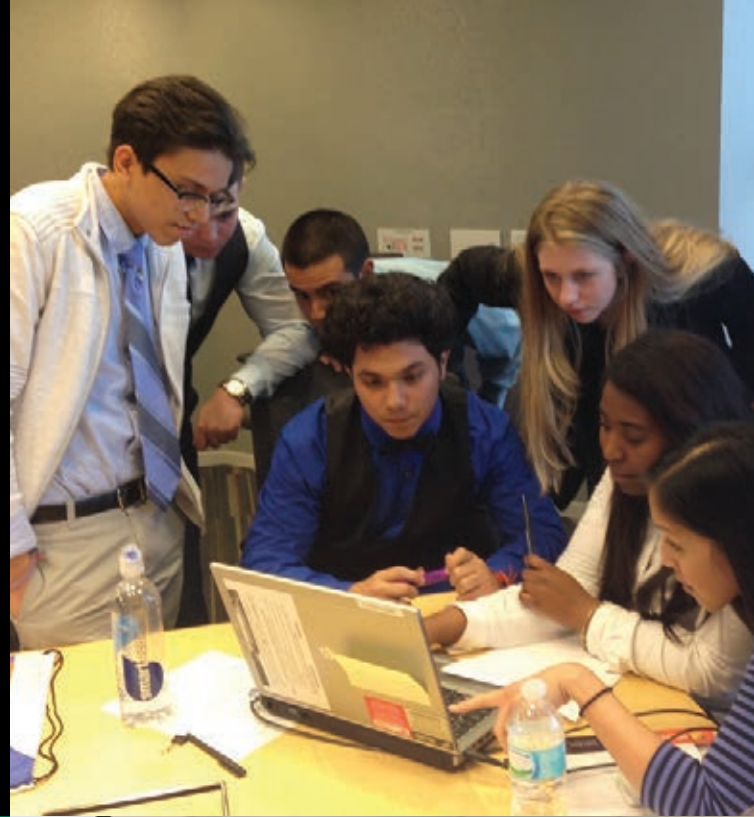
## Crooms

## ACADEMY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Sanford, FL

### Promising Practice: Tech Fest and Support for Students

Crooms Academy of Information Technology provides additional support to students through various programs and events. The academy's comprehensive tutorial program provides remediation for all academic and technology content areas. A guided study program includes a 30-minute study hall and an Academic Advocate who connects with each student to ensure they are on track. Virtual mentors are provided through a partnership with IBM, as well as in-person mentors from the Business Advisory Council and volunteers from the community. The academy's signature event, Tech Fest, is a conference for students to learn more about careers in technology. The conference also serves as the academy's major fundraising event, which over the past ten years has provided \$106,000 in scholarships to academy students.



### 6 Years Distinguished

Crooms  
Academy of Information Technology  
Sanford, FL

Lancaster High School  
Academy of Finance  
Lancaster, NY

Northeast High School  
Academy of Finance  
St. Petersburg, FL

Southwest Miami Senior High School  
Academy of Finance  
Miami, FL

### 5 Years Distinguished

Academy of Finance and Enterprise  
Long Island City, NY

Apex High School  
Academy of Information Technology  
Raleigh, NC

Miami Beach Senior High School  
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism  
Miami Beach, FL

### 4 Years Distinguished

Harmony Magnet  
Academy of Engineering  
Strathmore, CA

Pathways Academy of Technology & Design  
East Hartford, CT

### 3 Years Distinguished

Alonzo & Tracy Mourning Senior High School  
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism  
Miami, FL

City Polytechnic High School  
Academy of Engineering  
Brooklyn, NY

Coral Reef Senior High School  
Academy of Finance  
Miami, FL

High School, Inc.  
Academy of Finance  
Hartford, CT

J.P. Taravella High School  
Academy of Finance  
Coral Springs, FL

Justin F. Kimball High School  
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism  
Dallas, TX

Mater Academy East Charter High School  
Academy of Finance  
Miami, FL

Miami Central Senior High School  
Academy of Information Technology  
Miami, FL

Northport High School  
Academy of Finance  
Northport, NY

Porterville High School  
Academy of Finance  
Porterville, CA

Scotlandville Magnet High School  
Academy of Engineering  
Baton Rouge, LA

Timber Creek High School  
Academy of Information Technology  
Orlando, FL

### 2 Years Distinguished

A. J. Moore  
Academy of Health Services  
at University High School  
Waco, TX

Hialeah Gardens High School  
Academy of Information Technology  
Hialeah Gardens, FL

Jean Ribault High School  
Academy of Finance and Business  
Jacksonville, FL

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School  
Academy of Finance  
Parkland, FL

Miami Lakes Educational Center  
Academy of Health Sciences  
Miami, FL

Palomares  
Academy of Health Sciences  
Pomona, CA

Porterville High School  
Academy of Health Sciences  
Porterville, CA

### Newly Distinguished

Columbia Heights Educational Campus  
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism  
Washington, DC

Coral Gables Senior High School  
Academy of Finance  
Coral Gables, FL

Harmony Magnet  
Academy of Performing Arts  
Strathmore, CA

Hialeah Gardens High School  
Academy of Engineering  
Hialeah Gardens, FL



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