



# Osceola County News Release

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## Osceola Commission Gifts 2022 Seniors with More than \$12 million

### *Osceola Prosper Allows Free College or Technical Education*

*Osceola County, Florida* – Gathered in gymnasiums and auditoriums across Osceola County’s public high schools Monday – the first day after Spring Break -- students, teachers and administrators had no idea why.

It was a life-changing announcement. Osceola County Commissioners’ launch of a more than \$12.4 million transformational program known as *Osceola Prosper* will allow every 2022 graduating senior a free college or technical education through Valencia College and Osceola Technical College (oTECH). CareerSource Central Florida is helping to support funding aspects of skills training.

“The Osceola County Commission wants you to succeed. We believe you can succeed. And we’ve got your back, so you can succeed,” Osceola Commission Chairman Brandon Arrington told students at Liberty and Poinciana high schools. “This is an incredible graduation gift and it celebrates each and every one of you. It’s my hope that this helps you achieve your dreams – or even to dare to dream for something you never thought possible before today.”

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic Osceola County has provided millions of dollars for career training and education. Monday morning’s action by a County government is a level of support unseen in Florida -- or the **nation, officials said.**

Prior to a press conference in front of the Historic Courthouse on Monday, all five commissioners made early morning visits to 10 public high school and announced the program during pep rallies that saw an outpouring of emotion as students realized the unlimited possibilities.

#### **“QUOTE FROM A STUDENT!”**

The program is open to all members of the 2022 graduating class from Osceola County high schools, charter schools, alternative high schools, private schools, or home schooling.

“I want to thank the Osceola County Commissioners for their determination to make college or technical training possible for every graduating senior in the county. This is an incredible gift and a dream come true,” said Dr. Kathleen Plinske, Valencia College president. “We know that post-secondary education – whether it’s an industry certification or a college degree – makes a huge difference in the earning potential of high school graduates.

*Osceola Prosper* represents a tremendous investment, not just in the students and their families, but in the county's economic prosperity."

To qualify students must:

- Apply to Valencia or Osceola Technical College and register for at least one course, an Accelerated Skills Training program, or an Osceola Technical Program in Summer 2022, Fall 2022, or Spring 2023.
- Complete the 2022-23 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by July 15, 2022 (for fall enrollment), or by December 1, 2022 (for spring enrollment). Students not eligible to complete the FAFSA may self-certify they are not able to do so.

Through *Osceola Prosper*, Osceola County will provide:

- Free application to Valencia College
- Scholarships to cover tuition and fees not otherwise covered by other grants or scholarships for one credential (Associate in Arts degree, Associate in Science degree, Technical Certificate, Accelerated Skills Training, Vocational Training).

In addition, the county will offer a \$500 stipend to support related expenses for students who demonstrate financial need.

The County is following through on a previously approved strategy to use ARPA funds to have a long-term transformational impact on the community.

More information, including FAQs and contact information, is available at [OsceolaProsper.com](https://OsceolaProsper.com).

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