“When I walked into Miami Northwestern in the morning, it was as if there was a sense of opportunity at that school...it was as if that school was going to take me where I needed to go. I just had to grab that opportunity and run with it. The Education Effect has brought me to places where I had never thought. I didn’t know I was going to be in an Agro-Ecology program at FIU and have a $26,000 scholarship. When I was younger I always dreamed of being in the medical field. Now I am actually going towards my dream.”

– Angie Fleuraissaint, Miami Northwestern Class of 2012

Aquaponics Lab and Organic Garden

The Aquaponics Lab and Garden is a centerpiece for hands-on learning across a variety of disciplines including science, business, culinary arts and social studies. The Aquaponics Lab is the most comprehensive of its kind in Miami-Dade County.

Plant it Forward

Partnering with the FIU Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Chase has expanded its support by launching Plant it Forward, an innovative nutrition, education and social entrepreneurship outreach program.

Service Learning

Students from FIU and Liberty City schools engage in Service Learning, a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote academic enhancement, personal growth and civic engagement.

Financial Literacy and The Bull Investment Fund

The development of the Bull Investors Financial Literacy and Investment Fund enables Miami Northwestern students to benefit from the premier resources of FIU’s State Farm Financial Literacy Lab in the College of Business Administration.

Panther For a Day and Early College Exposure

The Panther For a Day program provides critical exposure to the university setting and academic and career pathways through extended learning visits which provide meaningful hands-on experiences. The program has also inspired internships and mentoring programs for Miami Northwestern and FIU students.

Golden Scholars

Designed to remove barriers to higher education for low-income students who have achieved the required GPA and demonstrated significant capabilities and interest, the Golden Scholars Bridge Program is an alternative admissions program supported by a collaborative commitment from FIU’s departments of Pre-Collegiate Affairs, Academic Advising, Enrollment and Admissions and the Office of Engagement.
Our Goals
Supporting the school’s goals toward 100 percent graduation, the partnership addresses three main initiatives:
• Improve teaching and learning
• Enhance parental and community engagement
• Create an environment conducive to student success that promotes pathways to post-secondary education

How do we define success?
• An environment of high expectations is established.
• All students succeed academically.
• Academic talent is retained in Liberty City.
• Community and parents are engaged with school and vice-versa.
• Students are better prepared to enroll, persist and complete college.
• Numbers of students of African-American descent applying and enrolling at FIU increases.

The growth of a partnership
Ignited in 2010 by a planning grant and the support of the Children’s Aid Society, FIU forged an educational partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools in Liberty City. The vision was built upon the strengths and needs uncovered in asset-mapping and qualitative and quantitative assessments with key stakeholders.

In 2011, The Education Effect, FIU’s university-community school partnership, was launched with a seed investment of $1 million by JPMorgan Chase. The partnership, now in its third year, has garnered impressive short-term results and solidified a longer-term vision for growth and sustained impact to improve educational outcomes in one of Miami’s most economically challenged and culturally rich neighborhoods.

The Education Effect aligns university expertise, resources and research-based intervention strategies to address the pressing educational and social needs of students at Miami Northwestern and its feeder schools.

What we’ve achieved:
• Supported the school in achieving a “B” grade, up from its historical “D/F” grade
• Increased the percentage of students earning 3.0 GPA or higher from 15% to 45%
• Increased graduation rate from 64% to 80%
• Increased number of students accepted to post-secondary education by 10%
• Improved students’ learning skills:
  • Students reading on grade level increased from 19% to 30%.
  • Students performing in the bottom quartile (lowest 25 percent) in reading demonstrated learning gains from 48% to 63%.
  • Students performing on grade level in biology increased from 52% to 70%.
  • Students performing on grade level in math increased from 33% to 53%.
• Engaged more than 1,000 elementary, middle and high school students in visits to FIU
• Empowered 150 students with comprehensive skills in finance and investment through a financial literacy program
• Tripled the number of college credit courses available to Northwestern students and quadrupled the number of students participating

Making a difference in Liberty City
“I am from the Liberty City area and I attend Florida International University. I am the first person in my family to attend college or university. Because of The Education Effect, you see kids talking about college, talking about how they are ready to go and start a new life after high school. It’s really touching because a lot of people doubt you – ‘you’re not going to be anything, look at where you are from’ – and to change that misconception in real, real nice. Now, walking the streets of Liberty City and my neighborhood where I grew up, I realize that I am the future of Liberty City.”

– Shaquilla Thomas
Miami Northwestern Class of 2012

“Miami Northwestern has served as a center of pride for our Liberty City community. ‘The West’ was always known as a powerhouse for athletics – and it still is. But it had also been known as a school struggling academically for the past 15 years. Today, Miami Northwestern has a new goal – to become a powerhouse in academics as well.”

– Wallace Aristide, Miami Northwestern Senior High School principal