



Alan J. Levy, Chair
Dominic Calabro, Vice Chair
Emily Howell Rogers, Secretary
Bruce O'Donoghue, Treasurer
Mary Lee Kiracofe, Executive Director

December 2, 2011

Dear "Sunshine State" Teacher:

Congratulations! You have been selected by your district's Sunshine State Scholar to attend the awards program on Feb 16-17, 2012 in Orlando. We look forward to your joining us as we recognize Florida's top STEM 11th graders and introduce them to an array of postsecondary opportunities in Florida.

Because teachers play such a critical role in each student's success, we think it important for you to be included in the Sunshine State Scholars program. On a daily basis you make a difference in these students' lives and their future decisions. At this event not only will you celebrate your student's success, but we hope that you also will learn about STEM-related programs of study throughout Florida and take new information back to your classroom.

Attached is an agenda which provides more details about the program. In addition, please carefully read the following:

- The Florida Education Foundation will provide hotel accommodations for you at the [Doubletree Hotel](#) at the Entrance to Universal Orlando on Thursday, Feb 16.
- We have established a room block but you must make your own hotel room reservations. Call 800-327-2110 (or click on the hotel link above) and indicate that you are with the group, "Sunshine State Scholars." You will be asked to present a credit card to cover any incidentals aside from your room cost.
- We urge you to make your reservation as soon as possible. The room block will expire January 15, 2012 or when all rooms are taken—whichever occurs first.
- Parking at the hotel will be your expense at \$9/day.
- The Foundation will provide a stipend to defray your travel costs to and from Orlando. We will provide a form for you to complete when you sign in and pick up your name badge and program materials at the SSS registration desk.
- The Foundation will provide the following program meals: Welcome Reception on Thursday evening, Feb 16, as well as breakfast and Awards Luncheon on Friday, Feb 17 at the hotel.
- Attire for the event is business casual. In addition to scholars, parents, and university representatives, other guests include corporate sponsors and statewide leaders.
- Universal Orlando is providing theme park guest passes for the Scholars to use on Friday, Feb 17 or Saturday, Feb 18. Any unclaimed or extra passes will be distributed to teachers via a drawing.

We are thrilled that you will be joining us and we look forward to seeing you there. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 850-245-9655.

Best regards,

Mary Lee Kiracofe



Overview

Established in 1997, **Sunshine State Scholars** originated as a statewide math and science competition. It has matured into an exciting comprehensive initiative recognizing Florida's top students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), introducing them to exciting internship and career opportunities, and recruiting them to attend Florida's Colleges and Universities—increasing the likelihood that they will join Florida's future workforce.

Each school district throughout Florida selects and names their top 11th grade scholar based on established academic criteria. In February 2012, these scholars, their parents and teachers will convene in Orlando to

- Receive recognition for their achievements;
- Meet STEM industry leaders, learn about career possibilities, and see examples of the latest innovations and discoveries in Florida;
- Talk with representatives from Florida's Colleges and Universities about special programs of study and internship opportunities; and
- Experience why their home state is the best place to learn and pursue an exciting career.

Sunshine State Scholars is a collaboration between the Florida Education Foundation (FEF), the State University System, the Florida Division of Colleges, and the Florida Department of Education.

Learn more about exciting opportunities for participation and support. Contact Mary Lee Kiracofe at 850-245-9655 or e-mail: marylee.kiracofe@fldoe.org.

Today's scholars are tomorrow's talent!



2012 Sunshine State Scholars

February 16-17

[Doubletree Hotel](#) at Entrance to Universal Orlando
5780 Major Blvd Orlando, FL 32819
800-824-8798

Thurs. February 16

3:00 – 5:30 p.m. Arrival and check-in

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

WELCOME RECEPTION

Scholars, Parents, Teachers, Sponsors, and Representatives from Higher Education and STEM industries

INNOVATIONS & DISCOVERIES

Guests eat, mingle and observe informal demonstrations of Florida's latest scientific and technological advances

Fri. February 17

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST

9:00 – noon

CONCURRENT EXHIBITS & RECRUITMENT

Meet with representatives from Florida Colleges and Universities - both private and public-- and learn about amazing career opportunities from leaders in Florida's STEM industry

OPTIONAL WORKSHOPS

9:00 am - Professional Development for Teachers tbd

10:00 am - Show Me the Money: Financial Assistance in Today's Market

11:00 am - The Competitive Edge: Strategies for Submitting a Successful College Application

12:30 p.m.

AWARDS LUNCHEON

Each Scholar to be formally recognized
Guests include parents, teachers, sponsors, representatives from Florida Colleges and Universities and STEM Industries
Guest Speaker – to be announced

2:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

Attire for this program is business casual.

[To reserve your exhibit space, click here.](#)

[View a YouTube video](#) of the 2011 Sunshine State Scholars program.