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11-14-2014

Choose Ohio First: Franklin University Does Its Part for an Important Ohio Educational Program

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Recommended Citation

Franklin University, "Choose Ohio First: Franklin University Does Its Part for an Important Ohio Educational Program" (2014). *Learning Showcase 2014*. 63.

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Choose Ohio First: Franklin University Does Its Part for an Important Ohio Educational Program

Choose Ohio First
Franklin University

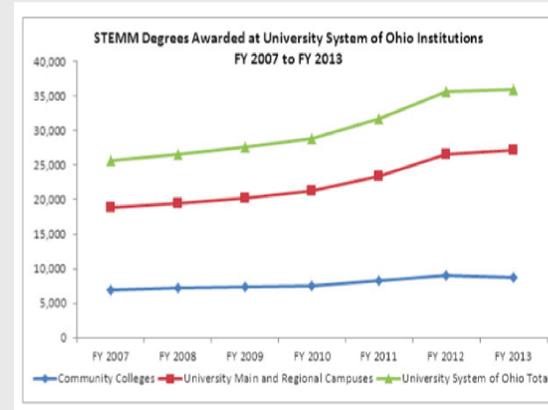
Introduction

Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medicine (STEMM)-related disciplines are critical to the future success of the State of Ohio and the nation. Many employers in Ohio cannot find the STEMM talent they need to stay competitive and grow in the global marketplace. Even during the most recent economic downturn, STEMM skills have remained in high demand – for the STEMM workforce there are 2.3 jobs for every unemployed person; for the non-STEMM workforce there are 3.9 unemployed people for every job. The primary objectives of the Choose Ohio First (COF) scholarship program are to support increased participation and retention of students majoring in STEMM and STEMM education fields and in so doing to advance the economic growth of each region of the state. COF has become the state's premier model for recruiting and retaining talented students in STEMM and STEMM education fields. The COF scholarship program ensures that an increased number of students enter the STEMM teaching profession and graduate from some of the most innovative programs that the state has to offer.

Franklin University is The University of Opportunity, as stated in the University's mission. We strive to provide "high quality, relevant education enabling the broadest possible community of learners to achieve their goals and enrich the world". Additionally, a primary University strategic goal in our recently updated strategic plan is to "expand student access to education by developing new educational partnerships". The Choose Ohio First (COF) program complements our mission and strategic vision as it extends our students' access to the University's educational opportunities through the financial, co-curricular, and professional development aspects of the program.

Results

- Growth in STEMM degrees awarded increased from 25,635 total students in FY 2007 to 35,615 total students in FY 2012, representing a 38.9 percent increase – this increase occurred despite a 5.9 percent decrease in overall statewide college enrollment at Ohio's public institutions.
- Growth in STEMM degrees has also increased year to year despite a transition from quarters to semesters in 2012.
- Graduation outcomes for the 2008 cohort of Choose Ohio First Scholars that started at Ohio's community colleges show that within four years of entering college, 63 percent of Choose Ohio First students earned a certificate or degree, while an additional 29 percent of COF students had not earned their degrees, but were still enrolled. The graduation outcomes for non-COF students show 19 percent of students earning a certificate or degree in the same timeframe.
- Graduation outcomes for universities show that 72 percent of COF students had earned a certificate or degree in four years versus 44 percent of non-COF students who had graduated or were still enrolled.
- On average, COF students earned 11 more credits in four years than their non-COF counterparts.



Franklin University Programs

Another goal stated in Franklin's strategic plan is to "enrich the Franklin student experience by providing exceptional services, utilizing a co-curricular approach to growth and development and supporting educational goal attainment." These goals are directly supported by the Choose Ohio First program, as we are called to engage, grow and develop the COF scholars both in and out of the classroom. The members of Franklin's Choose Ohio First Committee provide exceptional service to our COF scholars through advising, financial aid counseling and program administration. Our co-curricular activities, like the **Speaker Series**, and the **Scholar Showcase** enrich the student experience for our COF students and help them connect their classroom learning to real-world experiences. This scholarship motivates students to work harder in the classroom, which is another example of how the COF program is aligned with Franklin's commitment to support educational goal attainment. The Choose Ohio First program has been a tremendous opportunity for Franklin University. We are pleased to be able to have this program on campus as a way to enhance our ability to deliver on our commitment to providing opportunities for our students.

Conclusions

A 2011 analysis of the COF program by Tripp Umbach found that the program is having a positive effect on the state's economy. The analysis conservatively estimates that receipt of COF funds led to the support of 477 jobs and more than \$59 million in economic output within the state. Economic output includes the institutional expenditures made for COF Scholars, the personal spending of staff and students of the program, labor income from the co-op/internship opportunities, innovations and entrepreneurship opportunities led by COF scholars, and other local economic activity. By the same conservative estimates, it was found that, by 2016, COF programs will lead to the support of 843 jobs, more than \$110 million in economic output around the state, and \$4.5 million in state and local tax revenue. These are conservative estimates based on annual impacts and do not take into consideration cumulative effect. Moderate and aggressive estimates trend much higher.

"The COF scholarship has allowed me to go beyond my financial limitations and continue the pursuit of my degree instead of having to stop and return when I could afford more classes."

Choose Ohio First @ Franklin University

It is clear that the COF program is has positively impacted Franklin's MIS/CS graduation rates, which supports both the program's goals and the University's goals. In addition to increasing graduation rates, Franklin students are already contributing to Ohio's technology workforce. **Over 80% of Franklin's Choose Ohio First scholars work full-time**, and **roughly 60% of those students currently have jobs within the tech industry**. As many of our scholars are already personally and professionally established in Ohio, it is likely that they will remain in Ohio after graduation. 79% of our currently employed scholars indicated that they believe that their degree will provide them an opportunity for advancement at their current place of employment. 100% of our 8 graduates this year are employed full time. 88% are working in a tech-related job.

Choose Ohio First @ Franklin University

- In 2013-2014, Franklin contributed:
 - \$44,000 in direct tuition assistance to 44 scholars
 - \$25,950 in additional direct costs (Faculty and staff time, events)
- 159% of required match for the year
- Student enrollment increased by 50% over the previous year (22 to 33 students, 44 awarded in 2013 – 2014)
- Refined scholarship requirements
- Additionally, our COF scholar retention has improved over last year. 50% of the scholars awarded in 2012-13 were retained in the COF program into the 2013-14 year, and 55% of those students will be retained into next year (2014-15). Of this year's newly awarded cohort (2013-14), **64% have already submitted renewals for next year**.

Further information

Please visit <https://www.chooseohiofirst.org/> for further information about this wonderful program.

Choose  Ohio First