

---

**CIVIC**  
ENGAGEMENT  
**CIVIC**

---

**Community College Students and Civic  
Engagement: Twelve Select Best Practices**

*St. Petersburg College is committed to the goals of the Closing the Gap:  
The Florida College System Civics Literacy Initiative.*

December 2014

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
<b>SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE</b>	<b>1</b>
Citizenship Ambassador Initiative	1
Civic Engagement Homeless Project	2
Civic Engagement Collaboration With Pinellas County Schools	4
Junior Achievement Classroom Volunteers	4
Melrose Elementary Mentoring Project	5
MUN/Global Classrooms Civic Engagement Project	6
SPC Seminole-Ridgecrest 360 Project	7
Model United Nations Team	8
Campus Model Legislature – State & National	9
<b>APPLIED ETHICS</b>	<b>10</b>
Ethical Discussions	10
The Jane Till Non-Profit Startup Series	10
Pinellas County High School Ethics Bowl	11
<b>PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>12</b>
Public Policy & Administration Civic Initiatives	12

## INTRODUCTION

St. Petersburg College is committed to strengthening our institutional commitment to civic engagement. As we continue to create pathways for the college to promote civic engagement, we have compiled a list of best practices for civic engagement within academic scholarship. This serves as a snapshot of our best practices within our college wide civic engagement initiative, and we look forward to broadening our scope to evaluate and capture our other institutional commitments in this area. We hope this helps advance other institutions' efforts, and we look forward to collaborating with our partners in the 28 college system while we work towards making civic literacy a reality for all Floridians.

## SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

### CITIZENSHIP AMBASSADOR INITIATIVE

**Summary of the project:** St. Petersburg College in partnership with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has developed a workshop model for engaging students and members of the community at large in preparing for the United States Civics Exam. Professors deliver brief multi-media lessons, which are followed by Student Ambassador led lesson materials prepared by the USCIS. Through these lessons applicants are exposed to all 100 possible questions on the USCIS Civics Exam. St. Petersburg College in connection with this initiative also hosted a USCIS Naturalization ceremony where a Federal Judge administered the oath of allegiance for 100 new citizens.

**Goals of the project:** The heart of the Citizenship Ambassador Initiative is community engagement through civic leadership. As a community institution with a large diverse population this initiative provides an opportunity for students to connect with the community. Student leadership takes place through the sharing of knowledge, growth in civic leadership, sharing of cultural backgrounds, and a greater awareness of the members of the larger community. Students gain in their awareness of the global breadth within their own community as well an appreciation for the privilege of United States citizenship.

- Ambassador Application Process – Ambassadors must be in good academic standing and complete an essay explaining their interest in the initiative.
- Ambassador Training – Ambassadors must complete a training session which includes an understanding of their responsibilities, the role of cultural sensitivity, and an overview of the Naturalization process.
- Ambassador Lesson Review – Ambassadors are provided with class lessons and answer keys prior to the workshop for review purposes.
- Workshop Format – Each workshop begins with an “ice breaking” exercise to welcome new participants. The workshops are then divided into three separate lessons using the following format:

- Faculty present a brief lesson, based on an outline provided by USCIS.
- Student Ambassadors lead one-to-one tutoring, working with guests through USCIS worksheets.
- Faculty lead review of the USCIS questions with the entire group.

**Outcomes:** St. Petersburg College’s pilot year of the Citizenship Ambassador initiative included a dozen workshops, with 50 student volunteers, and participants from 25 countries including: Albania, Brazil, China, Columbia, Dominican Republic, England, Egypt, Guyana, India, Israel, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Latvia, Panama, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania, Syria, Thailand, Vietnam, United States, Venezuela and Zambia. The interaction within the workshops as well as the ability to observe a Naturalization Ceremony resulted in greater civic engagement and appreciation. This experience can best be summarized in the words of one of our charter Student Ambassadors, Vlora Bekteshi Neziri, “I’m so honored to do this, because it’s important to inspire people and give them hope. That’s the least I can do.”

It is the goal of St. Petersburg College to help build a bridge of citizenship between our students and the members of our community participating in the naturalization process. Faculty will serve as volunteer instructors leading workshops on Citizenship. Our students will be civically engaged by playing the important role of “Citizen Ambassadors” in this initiative, welcoming and sharing their knowledge of government and history. This role will foster the student’s own efficacy by highlighting the value of their own privileges as American citizens. It is our hope that the sharing of information will further result in the sharing of cultures, providing our students with the opportunity to not only teach, but also to learn.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT HOMELESS PROJECT

**Summary of the project:** St. Petersburg College participates as a collaborative partner with the 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Outreach of the Public Defender’s Office. The psychology internship program is milieu therapy based. Carefully selected St. Petersburg College students complete a four-hour training in Milieu Therapy and an eight-hour training in working with homeless populations. Then, the psychology interns begin a shadowing and skill-development process prior to working with residents in small teams and facilitating listening groups. In partnership with Pinellas Safe Harbor, St. Petersburg College students are working with the local homeless population to provide support, identify areas of need, and bridge residents to community resources.

Pinellas Safe Harbor provides an alternative to incarceration, while bridging its residents to community resources. Pinellas Safe Harbor is supported by the city of St. Petersburg, the Pinellas County government, and the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office.

**Goals of the project:** The primary goal of the project is to provide a milieu of support for the local homeless population placed at Pinellas Safe Harbor. Pinellas Safe Harbor is run by the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office, and the psychology internship program helps residents transition to Pinellas Safe Harbor, listens to the concerns of the residents, holds listening groups to cultivate a

therapeutic environment at Pinellas Safe Harbor, and bridges residents to needed resources to provide the residents with an opportunity to resolve the issues contributing to perpetual homelessness. The model has been implemented at Homeless Emergency Project and Pinellas Hope.

### **Synopsis of the methodology and timeline:**

- Middle of prior semester, email colleagues to identify qualified and interested students to apply for the internship program.
- Review candidates GPA, academic course work, number of W's, and faculty recommendation.
- During the middle of the prior semester, interview candidates with a representative from Pinellas Safe Harbor and the professor. The interview is intended to provide information about Pinellas Safe Harbor and its protocols, as well as to identify and select candidates. After introductions and an explanation of the psychology internship program and Pinellas Safe Harbor, the interview proceeds as follows:
  - Explain your thoughts on the homeless situation in our county.
  - Explain what you perceive to be the difference between a homeless person and yourself.
  - Though you will receive training, what would you do if a resident became elevated and started turning their anger toward you? During this point in the interview, we explain safety protocol, the Sherriff's office presence, the requirement to work in teams, and the requirement for a team member to carry the emergency call box.
  - Though you will receive training, what do you think you would do if a resident communicated suicidal thoughts? If the resident said they were joking, would you change what you would do? During this point in the interview, we explain the required protocol for suicidal or homicidal ideation.
  - Though you will receive training, how do you think you would handle it if a resident made inappropriate comments toward you or someone in your team or tried to hug you or someone in your team? At this point in the interview, we explain the dress code, the no-touch policy, appropriate boundaries with residents, and how to handle it if a resident makes an inappropriate comment to a member(s) of the team.
  - The next portion of the interview discusses academic course work, academic planning with electives, and the time commitment.
- Candidates are selected, contacted, and registered. Mentors contact selected interns.
- The Friday prior to classes, students attend the Milieu Therapy Training, given by the Clinical Director of the Public Defender's Office.
- The following Friday, students attend the eight-hour training at Pinellas Safe Harbor where they meet with their District Intern Supervisor, their Intern Supervisor, their Intern Supervisor Assistants, mentors, and the Sergeant, case managers, and security personnel.
- After both of the trainings are completed, psychology interns schedule their two-to-three week shadowing experience.

- After the District Intern Supervisor or Intern Supervisors release the intern from shadowing, psychology interns begin working in teams in both the resident pods and observing listening groups.
- By approximately week four (depending on the developing skill set of the intern), interns facilitate listening groups and begin special projects. Special projects are resident-focused needs and activities created by each psychology intern. An example is the “Journaling Project.”

**Outcomes:** Pinellas Safe Harbor houses 450 residents. This internship course can be repeated up to four times, and it is offered each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Each semester, up to 17 psychology interns are selected. Approximately 30 percent repeat the course more than once.

- Summer Semester during the eight-week semester, psychology interns served 1,680 hours at Pinellas Safe Harbor.
- Thus far in Fall Semester, psychology interns have served 1,164 hours.
- Thus far in Fall Semester, psychology interns have had 1,125 resident interactions in pod sessions.
- Thus far in Fall Semester, psychology interns have had 939 resident interactions in listening group sessions.

## Civic Engagement Collaboration with Pinellas County Schools

### Junior Achievement Classroom Volunteers

**Summary of the project:** St. Petersburg College in partnership with Junior Achievement prepares students to go into elementary and middle school classrooms to teach lessons on the civic roles of the individual, workers and consumers within the community. The student volunteers, using Junior Achievement resources bring to life the principles of the free enterprise system in a manner appropriate to the grade level.

**Goals of the project:** St. Petersburg College students bring lessons on civics and the free enterprise system into local classrooms. The goal of this program is to partner with an established Civic education leader and provide students with a leadership and service model, which allows them to grow and impact the local community.

**Summary of training and classroom volunteers:** Junior Achievement provides the training as well as the classroom materials necessary for students to teach the elementary and middle school lessons.

The Elementary Program includes six grade specific themes:

- Ourselves
- Our Families
- Our Community
- Our City
- JA More than Money
- Our Nation

The Middle School Program includes:

- JA Global Marketplace
- JA Economics for Success
- JA Personal Finance

St. Petersburg College students, further prepare, expand and ultimately present the lessons within the classroom. Students work in groups of two or three to present a series of 5 lessons in either one full-day format or spread over the semester in 5 individual sessions in a weekly or bi-weekly format.

**Outcomes:** In 2014, over 100 St. Petersburg College students presented Junior Achievement lessons to over 1000 Elementary School students in Pinellas County providing a connection between learning and service for all. This allowed St. Petersburg College students an opportunity to develop leadership skills and provide valuable civic lessons all while supporting our local elementary and middle schools.

### Melrose Elementary Mentoring Project

**Summary of the project:** Pinellas County Schools and St. Petersburg College share a commitment to cultivating engaged and prepared students in the k-12 system. Melrose Elementary School is one of the lowest performing elementary schools in the state with a large portion of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders failing to matriculate into 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Mentoring has been shown to improve student success and community investment. Third graders who are repeating the grade were chosen and assigned to SPC students for a 40 minute once a week lunch mentoring period. Both Psychology and American National Government students complete a Pinellas County Schools training program and make a commitment to complete a semester worth of mentoring. SPC mentors meet their students at a pre-determined time and give both academic and interpersonal support to the students and the school.

SPC collaborates with other community partners to provide a steady and meaningful stream of mentors to Melrose Elementary. These mentors strengthen the school by increasing its resources

and individually impact the common goal of lifting students with additional needs into the next level of success.

**Goals of the project:** The primary goal of the project is to provide additional resources and civic capital to Pinellas County Schools. The mentoring program helps both SPC students connect with their community and adds resources to the school.

**Synopsis of the methodology and timeline:**

- Pinellas County Schools and SPC continue to develop collaborative projects to increase success in the K-12 system while cultivating civic opportunities and growth for SPC students.
- At the beginning of the semester, a call to students advertising the program is initiated.
- Students undergo mandatory training and Pinellas County Background checks.
- Candidates are selected, contacted, and assigned to their Pinellas County student.
- Students check in on a weekly basis with Pinellas County staff to discuss their student and any other issue that may benefit the child.
- At the end of the semester, students are required to turn in a verification form and write a paper detailing their experience.
- During weekly meetings (e.g. Psychology Club) students share their experiences with student peers at SPC regarding their interactions with the children at the school.

**Outcomes:** Melrose Elementary is reporting progress in the socialization and academic progress of their students. Academic indicators of Melrose students will be ready for our review at the end of the Pinellas County School semester. Participating SPC students are successfully completing their courses and adding a robustness to class discussions about the importance of civic virtue. Additionally, SPC students are learning real-life application of the content covered in their coursework. In this way, the program enhances student engagement on and off campus. Data regarding student success as it relates to participation in this program will be examined at the end of the academic year.

**MUN/Global Classrooms Civic Engagement Project**

**Summary of the project:** Global Classrooms is an innovative educational program that engages middle school and high school students in an exploration of current world issues through interactive simulations and curricular materials. Global Classrooms cultivates literacy, life skills and the attitudes necessary for active citizenship. At the core of Global Classrooms is Model United Nations, wherein students step into shoes of UN Ambassadors and debate a range of issues on the UN agenda. For over 60 years, Model UN has thrived in highly selective high schools and colleges – institutions with the resources to match a strong student interest in world affairs. Prior to 2000, when Global Classrooms was created, students in economically disadvantaged public schools rarely had the opportunity to participate. Over the past decade, Global Classrooms has worked in 24 major cities around the world, helping bridge the gap in the Model UN

community between experienced programs and traditionally underserved public schools or schools new to Model UN. Global Classrooms is distinguished by its teacher and student resources that develop critical thinking, conflict resolution and communication skills for middle and high school students.

St. Petersburg College partners with Pinellas County Schools to host over 500 local middle school students in mock Model United Nations sessions at the SPC Clearwater Campus. St. Petersburg College MUN students serve as facilitators to share their leadership and mentoring skills with younger students new to the process.

**Goals of the project:** This unique collaboration provides SPC student leaders the opportunity to mentor and guide their younger cohorts through the process of communication and conflict resolution as well as respectful and diplomatic negotiation in a mock UN setting. It also provides exposure for young public school students to a college campus and processes that they might not otherwise have experienced.

The overarching goal is to make a difference in the lives of both student groups, form relationships between them and be a collaborative partner with Pinellas County Schools in promoting greater civic learning and knowledge of diplomacy and global affairs. The project serves to develop global citizenship skills for both SPC and Pinellas County students.

### SPC Seminole-Ridgecrest 360 Project

**Summary of the project:** Psychology students at the Seminole campus are giving back to the community. Students enrolled in PSY1012 General Psychology and DEP2004 Human Development Across the Lifespan are given the option to participate in a Civic Engagement assignment to provide an out-of-classroom experience. The students volunteer as tutors and/or mentors through a program called Ridgecrest 360. The SPC-Ridgecrest 360 collaboration connects Psychology students with an action-oriented, collaborative group of individuals and organizations from within and outside the Greater Ridgecrest Community to effect short- and long-term positive change for children of the Greater Ridgecrest (Largo, FL) Community on their educational and developmental journey from cradle to career. The SPC-Ridgecrest 360 collaboration also supports the efforts of the Seminole Community Educational Ecosystem (SCEE), an educational partnership among the St. Petersburg College-Seminole Campus and the elementary, middle and high schools in the Campus' general service/Greater Seminole/Largo/Pinellas Park Central Pinellas area.

**Goals of the project:** This collaboration offers a unique opportunity for SPC students to volunteer at nearby elementary schools and/or at more than a dozen organizations including SPC, Bridging the Achievement Gap (BTAG), the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Friends of Ridgecrest, and the Juvenile Welfare Board to name a few. The goal is for SPC students to make a difference in the schools and community by providing tutoring and mentoring and other service opportunities. Students also have a unique opportunity to shadow the school

counselors, viewing the challenges presented by today's diverse student population through a mental health perspective. Students observe, participate in, and assist in the implementation of programs aiding students with understanding self and others, peer relationships, coping strategies and effective social skills, communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution, substance abuse education, and multicultural/diversity awareness. Through this partnership with Ridgecrest 360, SPC works to provide a safe, consistent, and supportive relationship for the Ridgecrest community.

**Methodology:** St. Petersburg College Psychology students are provided the option to participate in this civic engagement opportunity. Students that participate in this program are asked to commit to a minimum of one hour per week (the same day every week) for a minimum of 10 weeks during the fall and spring semesters. A paid teacher is always in the room to give direction and offer support to both students and adult volunteers; we serve under their guidance. After completing their minimum 10 hours of Service Learning, each Psychology student produces a written assignment that allows Psychology students to integrate course content (psychological theory as it applies to cognitive development) while also understanding the importance of civic engagement. Completion of the service hours and written assignment are integrated as a graded course assignment.

All volunteers must pass a Pinellas County Schools background check and go through an orientation provided by Anona United Methodist Church (UMC) that includes a day to observe the program before commitment occurs. Once the orientation is completed, the Volunteer Coordinator introduces volunteers to the school staff, tutoring teachers, other volunteers and their two students. The Psychology instructor supports the students throughout the course of the civic engagement.

**Results:** This collaboration was first piloted in the Fall of 2013 with one student. Since that time, 38 students have participated in the collaboration (Spring 2014 and Fall 2014). Qualitative data suggests that this collaboration is having a positive impact in the classroom. We are currently working to cultivate meaningful quantitative data to assess the positive impact of this partnership.

## MODEL UNITED NATIONS TEAM

**Summary of the project:** St. Petersburg College supports a Model United Nations Team that competes on the state, national and international level. Students go through a rigorous application process and the team is chosen by faculty who support the program. Team members spend many weeks researching the countries they will represent in competition and they work on diplomatic skills like debate, public speaking, coalition building and problem solving. At conference, our students work closely with students from around the country and from scores of other nations.

**Goals of the project:** The Model United Nations Team creates engagement on all possible levels. The fostering of leadership and consensus building are additional goals of the project. Global understanding and a true sense of global community is the mission of the Model United Nations.

**Outcomes:** St. Petersburg College has provided opportunities for students to be engaged in a significant academic simulation that closely mirrors the international diplomatic process. The program provides real leadership opportunities for our students and it exposes them to a career possibility that they otherwise might not have considered. Our students have won several awards placing our team among the top in state, national and international competitions. We have had several students take leadership positions in the Model United Nations organization and we have had at least two dozen students choose a career in the field of international relations.

## CAMPUS MODEL LEGISLATURE – STATE & NATIONAL

**Summary of the project:** The Social and Behavior Science Department has supported the SPC Student Government Association and Civics Club in hosting semi-annual Model Legislature sessions on campus as a way of promoting civic learning and engagement. The activity immerses students in a simulation of the Florida State legislature in the fall and the United States Congress in the spring. The students have an opportunity to write, debate, and vote on legislation as well as play leadership and or consensus building roles.

**Goal of the project:** The goal of this project is to actively engage students in a simulation of the legislative process allowing them to experience first-hand the process involved in civic dialogue and compromise necessary to pass legislation. This project further develops issue awareness and procedural understanding as well community building on campus.

**Outcomes:** The On-Campus Model Legislature initiative continues to provide a laboratory for the growth of civic leadership and community engagement. This initiative provides SPC students the opportunity to deepen their connection to their community and fellow students as well as their civic leadership. Students consistently acknowledge their growth in advocacy and understanding of the legislative process through their participation in this initiative. The greatest benefit of this initiative is its ability to awaken leadership and connection in students.

# APPLIED ETHICS

## ETHICAL DISCUSSIONS

**Summary of the project:** The purpose of the Ethical Discussions initiative is to engage the SPC community in a civic dialogue on the ethical dilemmas of our time. The themes discussed in the spring 2014 were: “Is the Use of Civilian (USA) Drones Acceptable?” and “Should Pet Owners Eat Meat?”

The fall 2014 civic dialogue was on “SURROGACY: Is Renting a Womb Morally Acceptable?” The discussion focused on surrogacy in India and why many American couples prefer India to the United States for surrogacy. This civic dialogue was held on five SPC campuses: Clearwater, Downtown, Gibbs, Seminole and Tarpon Springs.

**Goal of the project:** The goal of this initiative is to engage the SPC community, particularly students in civic dialogue, on issues of our time. This initiative is designed to help students to be critical and evaluative thinkers who can think on their feet.

**Results:** Students are clearly interested in this initiative. The spring 2014 sessions were attended by about 50 students. The fall 2014 sessions were attended by about 120 students.

**Frequency of implementation:** The Applied Ethics Department is going to continue to offer the civic ethical discussions every semester to SPC students and community.

## THE JANE TILL NON-PROFIT STARTUP SERIES

**Summary of the project:** The Jane Till Non-Profit Startup Series is a program designed to educate St. Petersburg College students on the value of community service and assist them with launching their own 501(3)c charity organization. The aim of the project is to help students become aware of areas of need and help them engage meaningfully in their communities. Participating students will take part in an eight-week training program focused on developing, launching, and maintaining their community service project. Two-hour workshops led by experienced faculty will be held weekly at the four major SPC campuses (St. Petersburg Gibbs, Clearwater, Seminole, and Tarpon Springs); students from each campus will have the opportunity to compete for a financial prize to help get them started. The campus-level winners will advance to a college-wide final and have an opportunity to compete for \$5,000 in seed money to launch their charity.

The 2015 Series kicks off in late January; the instructional sessions begin in February and run through late March 2015. Individual campus competitions will be held in mid-April, and the college-wide final round at the end of that month. SPC Applied Ethics Faculty will work with students on laying the foundation for launching a non-profit organization, covering such topics as mission and vision statements, business plans, supervising volunteers, ethics in community service, setting up a board of directors, and so on. The instructional sessions include both

instructional time and working sessions for participants to craft their vision. The organizers anticipate that up to 70 students will take part, though since this is a nascent project, it is difficult to forecast. The competitive portion of the program will be judged by community partners active in the non-profit arena, so students will receive feedback from experienced, sagacious experts.

The Applied Ethics Institute anticipates that this will be a recurring annual program held each spring semester.

## PINELLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL ETHICS BOWL

**Summary of the project:** The Pinellas County High School Ethics Bowl is a division of the National High School Ethics Bowl. Teams from participating schools compete against one another in forming arguments about contemporary ethical issues. The Ethics Bowl is not a “debate,” as such, but the students spend hours researching case studies and working to prepare their best ethical arguments for presentation and critical examination, and, in turn, use critical thinking skills to examine the arguments of others. Though competitive, the aim of the Pinellas County High School Ethics Bowl is to help young minds develop critical thought and focus that thought on timely issues.

The Pinellas County High School Ethics Bowl is held each February at the Seminole Campus of St. Petersburg College. As many as eleven Pinellas County high schools have sent teams of three to five students, and some schools field more than one team. This offers them the opportunity to interact socially and engage in ethical discussions with students from the entire demographic spectrum of Pinellas County. The bowl is sponsored by the school district and by the SPC Applied Ethics Institute. The former supports the recruitment of coaches and funding for teams, while SPC provides the necessities for the competition (case studies, facilities and catering, and recruitment and training of officials). The winner from the Pinellas Bowl advances to the National High School Ethics Bowl, and, in fact, the inaugural national champion was St. Petersburg High School!

The Pinellas County bowl is a continual success that provides hundreds of students with opportunities to become more informed, thoughtful, citizens.

# PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

## PUBLIC POLICY & ADMINISTRATION CIVIC INITIATIVES

**Summary of the project:** St. Petersburg College has built into their baccalaureate program on Public Policy & Administration a foundation of learning committed to community service and civic engagement. The myriad of steps that their students are required to complete for their critical thinking, policy analysis, and expert interviews are among our nation's best practices within government service. Both theoretical and practical applications addressing governments, businesses and citizen groups in the development of civic engagement, leadership, sustainability, social change, and the interdependence of social issues, public policy and international contexts are part of curriculum. Case studies and class exercises are employed to help students develop skills in multi-party negotiations, conflict resolution, crisis and resource allocation and decision making. Emphasis is placed on introducing students on how to prepare for a life dedicated to public service, policy leadership and civic engagement. Course content is guided by an understanding that the relationship between civic engagement, leadership and public communication in an era of globalization and instant communications is integral in facilitating, mitigating and dealing with the challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Goals of the project:** A few examples of St. Petersburg Colleges Public Policy & Administration baccalaureate degree program projects that are unique, complex and interactive are:

- State and Local Government and Public Policy (PUP 3040) — This course requires active civic engagement within local government. The student must select and research an ordinance of interest, attend a government meeting, interview expert witnesses within government, and perform a comprehensive policy analysis.
  - Policy Leadership (PUP 3033) – This course requires the same active civic engagement as the course above, but with an added component: the student must present her/his findings to a governmental body with the purpose of influencing policy development, analysis, decision making, implementation, and improvement.
  - Public Policy Leadership Speaker Series Luncheons — For our Fall and Spring Semesters we host an interactive luncheon with a government leader/professional whose expertise allows our students the opportunity to see, hear and feel first-hand how decisions, leadership and departmental responsibility/accountability, community service and civic engagement really works. Upon closure of the keynote speaker's presentations, students have a question/answer session that has proven to be profound and transparent. To date, our speakers have been carefully chosen from International, National, State and Local positions that represent all three branches of government – Executive, Legislative and Legal. They have included a Military General from U.S. Central Operations, past Governor, Secretary of State, Appellate Court Justices, State Senator, State Representative, County Administrator and City Manager.

- Project on Accountable Justice — the mission of the Florida State University Project on Accountable Justice (PAJ) is to advance public safety through evidence-based practices and policies in Florida and beyond. A partnership between Florida State University, Baylor University, St. Petersburg College and Tallahassee Community College, PAJ is a collaborative public policy research laboratory determined to find answers through data and across the spectrum of academic disciplines for practical application in juvenile and criminal justice policy deliberations. St. Petersburg College representatives serve on a distinguished Executive Committee guiding the operation. Public Policy and Administration students are briefed throughout the process – from the inception of this executive committee up to the present time. A recent editorial posted November 18th, 2014 that was carried in newspapers across the State of Florida that was pushed by PAJ is asking questions about the quality, accountability, professionalism and best practices that have been applied to Florida’s Department of Corrections.

**Outcomes:** Since its inception in the spring of 2011, the Public Policy and Administration baccalaureate program at St. Petersburg College has prepared its students for positions in government by requiring face-to-face, active civic engagement. Following a recent Public Policy and Leadership Speakers Series Luncheon, student Adrianna Hulland summed-up her thoughts on the program: "Public policy is exciting and promising; it's collaborative diplomacy at its best, with good people, good food, and the opportunities of a life time. I love what we do! Public policy and administration is the right career for me."

The program has grown significantly within the past three years from 12 students to about 250. Many student successes have come to pass as a result of internships and networking with government officials within the local community. During the past year several students have received employment opportunities as a result of networking with government officials which is part of their required coursework. The best way to get students excited about government and servant leadership is to encourage active civic involvement and celebrate and share student successes with program participants.

---

*For more information, please contact:*

Joseph Smiley, Ed.D  
Dean, Social & Behavioral Sciences  
[smiley.joseph@spcollege.edu](mailto:smiley.joseph@spcollege.edu)  
727-712-5783 Phone  
727-499-9001 Fax

St. Petersburg College  
P.O. Box 13489  
St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3489