

Abstract Submitted  
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**Development of the Future Physicists of Florida** A. WADE, University of West Florida, C. WEATHERFORD, Florida A&M University, P. COTTLE, Florida State University, S. FANNIN, Lincoln High School, W. ROBERTS, Florida State University, M. FAUERBACH, Florida Gulf Coast University, L. PONTI, Augusta Raa Middle School, J. SEAR, The School of Arts and Sciences — We present the development of the “Future Physicists of Florida” (FPF) comprised of Florida university physics professors, middle and high school science teachers, and backed by the Florida Legislature. Our purpose is to address the lack of incoming college freshmen ready and willing to become physics majors. We will discuss the building of FPF and the development of a pipeline for middle and high school students predicted to produce the optimal number of bachelor’s degrees in STEM. We will also discuss our use of community-building activities to educate the students, and their parents and teachers about the educational value of taking physics before going to college and potential careers in physics, to entertain them with fun physics related activities in order to peak their interest in physics, and to ultimately inspire the students to become physicists.

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