

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

University of Central Florida and One Idea Foundation Partner to Study Learn to Start's Impact on Workforce Readiness

Orlando, Fla. - August 11, 2025 - The University of Central Florida and the One Idea Foundation (OIF) have announced a groundbreaking research partnership to study the Learn to Start (LTS) program - a nationally recognized education model focused on preparing high school students to enter the workforce with purpose, confidence, and real-world skills.

In collaboration with UCF's College of Community Innovation and Education and led by Dr. Michele Gill, the **Learn to Start Research Center** will examine how LTS equips students with the skills, agency, and mindsets necessary to thrive in an unpredictable and evolving workforce. The initiative, formally titled *“Evaluating the Efficacy of the Learn to Start Program: A Pilot Study on Market-Ready Skills Development and Educational Outcomes for High School Learners,”* is being funded and supported by the **One Idea Foundation**, LTS's nonprofit affiliate.

The two-phase research initiative launches in Summer 2025 and will engage approximately **500 students**. The study will evaluate whether students who complete the LTS program demonstrate improved alignment with career goals, greater productivity through industry-based projects, and enhanced competitiveness through program credentialing and professional networking with industry partners.

“This is a crucial moment for education and industry,” said Gary Conroy, Founder and CEO of Learn to Start. “Our partnership with UCF will allow us to demonstrate—through rigorous, academic research—that students who are aligned, productive, and competitive are better prepared not just for college or careers, but for life,” added Conroy. “The data we’ve gathered from

over 10,000 students from around the world shows that LTS students are prepared to make an immediate contribution to the workforce which, over the long-term, will help ease the talent shortage faced across industries."



The LTS model centers on a unique framework of **Human Development Outcomes™ (HDOs)** that help students define their personal identities, develop practical skills, and build professional portfolios that reflect real-world accomplishments. Unlike traditional assessments such as GPA, test scores or International Baccalaureate programs, the HDO framework emphasizes story, failure, relationships, mentorship, and student-driven innovation—key factors in developing fully-formed, market-ready individuals.

"UCF is proud to be part of a partnership that will have a measurable, real-time impact on how students are prepared for the workforce," said Dr. Michele Gill. "This is not only about academic research—it's about transforming communities and empowering students with purpose and agency while creating a pipeline to the workforce."

The research will include a pilot study with data collection on student performance, and a final report by July 2026.



About Learn to Start

Learn to Start (LTS) is a leading education innovation company redefining how individuals learn, grow, and prepare for the future. Designed as a K to Market™ solution serving all K-12 and higher education learning institutions as well as serving workforce partners, the LTS program equips learners with essential skills in self-awareness, creativity, risk-taking, and career readiness through a research-backed curriculum and a transformative technology ecosystem. With its Human Development Outcomes™, LTS partners with schools, districts, and institutions around the world to create the next generation of aligned, productive, and competitive individuals ready for the modern marketplace. Learn more at www.learntostart.com.

About University of Central Florida's College of Community Innovation and Education

The University of Central Florida's College of Community Innovation and Education (CCIE) is a multidisciplinary academic hub located in downtown Orlando, dedicated to addressing real-world challenges through education, research, and community partnerships. As UCF's anchor college for civic engagement, CCIE integrates diverse programs—including teacher education, public administration, legal studies, and health management—to prepare students for leadership in public service and education. Its strong emphasis on applied research and community-based learning makes it an ideal collaborator for initiatives that bridge academic theory with marketplace needs. For more information go to <https://ccie.ucf.edu/>.