

By Senator Smith

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Senate Resolution

A resolution designating January 27, 2026, as "UCF Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, the University of Central Florida (UCF) is a public research university in Orlando which was founded in 1963 as Florida Technological University, and

WHEREAS, Florida Technological University was created to meet the technical and engineering workforce needs of the state's growing aerospace and defense industries and the expansion of the nation's space program along Florida's Space Coast, and

WHEREAS, in 1978, Florida Technological University was renamed the University of Central Florida to reflect its expanded academic mission, growing student enrollment, and broader service to the Central Florida region and the entire state, and

WHEREAS, UCF has now grown into one of the largest universities in the United States, enrolling more than 70,600 students, and is the largest university in this state by enrollment, and

WHEREAS, UCF's 12 colleges offer more than 250 academic degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and professional levels, and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of President Alexander N. Cartwright, UCF has expanded enrollment in engineering and technology-related programs to more than 21,000 students since 2020, representing an increase of approximately 25 percent and strengthening this state's pipeline of talent in high-demand

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fields, and

WHEREAS, UCF is classified as a Carnegie Research 1 institution, recognizing very high research activity, doctorate production, and significant contributions to innovation and discovery, and

WHEREAS, UCF is closely connected with the Central Florida Research Park, one of the largest research parks in the United States, allowing for collaboration among industry, government, and academia, support from hundreds of companies, and growth in high-wage jobs aligned with defense, aerospace, modeling, and advanced technology sectors, and

WHEREAS, UCF is recognized as a national leader in modeling, simulation, and training technologies, an industry cluster that generates billions of dollars in economic activity for Central Florida and the entire state, and maintains longstanding partnerships with federal agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Department of War, and the United States Space Force to support research, education, and workforce development in space-related disciplines, and

WHEREAS, the Princeton Review and *PC Gamer* have recognized UCF's Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy graduate game design program as one of the top two programs of its kind in the world 5 of the past 6 years, from 2019 to 2025, and

WHEREAS, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, UCF has had the No. 1 emergency and crisis management graduate program and the No. 9 best online undergraduate programs in the nation two years in a row, 2024 and 2025, and its computer science programs are ranked among the nation's top 25 for 2025, according to

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cyberdegreeseu.org, and

WHEREAS, UCF established the Pegasus Partnership Program in 2019 to create structured, long-term collaborations with leading private-sector employers which align academic programs, research, and workforce development with industry needs, and

WHEREAS, UCF has developed strategic partnerships with major global employers through the Pegasus Partnership Program, including BNY, Lockheed Martin, and Siemens, which have expanded student internship opportunities, applied research collaborations, and corporate investments in Central Florida, strengthening the region's innovation-driven economy, and

WHEREAS, UCF is nationally recognized for expanding access to higher education and promoting economic mobility among its graduates, and

WHEREAS, UCF has produced more than 400,000 alumni worldwide, many of whom contribute to this state's workforce, economy, and civic life, and

WHEREAS, designating a day in recognition of UCF also provides an opportunity to honor the legacy of Florida Technological University, NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

That January 27, 2026, is designated as "UCF Day" in Florida in recognition of the University of Central Florida's contributions to higher education, research, innovation, workforce development, and economic growth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to President

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88 Alexander N. Cartwright, Ph.D., President of the University of
89 Central Florida, as a tangible token of the sentiments of the
90 Florida Senate.