

To: 5-F's School District Improvement Plan POC

From: The U-Can! Man

www.johntheucanman.com

"Dear Mr. Isom,

"Commissioner Pam Stewart asked our office to respond to your email regarding your proposed plans for school improvement efforts in Florida. Your story is inspiring, and we thank you for your interest in and commitment to educational excellence for our students.

"We wish you the best of luck in helping students reach their full potential."

-Samuel Foerster, Deputy Chancellor for School Improvement and Student Achievement, Florida
Department of Education

January 16, 2014

It is with great excitement and enthusiasm that I reach out to you today. You are one of the 10 Florida high schools I have chosen to benefit from my inspirational message (schools are listed below and also on my website). How did this begin? I was relaxing at home, enjoying a break after my college graduation in 2013. While I was watching WCTV, the local news station, the Florida preliminary high school grade reports for 2013 were mentioned. The reporter stated that Florida high schools had increased the number of schools earning A's but also had increased the number of schools earning F's. This news pricked my heart and led me to research the schools on the list. I noticed that my former high school, Jefferson County High School, was one of those that had earned an F.

To combat this problem, I prepared a proposal with my co-author Mandie Gossage and sent it to Commissioner Pam Stewart. The letter and response can both be found at the top of the page on www.johntheucanman.com. Below is our offer of help to each school. We want to work with each high school to supplement your school improvement plan, using our positive stories and examples to drive the movement. By doing so, we will sharpen the students' will to learn and highlight the resources the schools are already providing. If you look at a lot of success stories, you'll see that often an effective inspirational message served as the turning point.

What am I offering these 10 schools? My five-element "I Give Hope" tool consists of the following:

1. The U-Can! Man- My ongoing story, communicated on my website, and my proven F.A.M. motivational plan
2. You- Your ongoing story, which can be shared with others on my website
3. Self-Quiz located in my second book to help keep you on track
4. My first book, describing my 25-year military journey
5. My second book, detailing my five-year college journey

This proposal is innovative because it is cost-effective and driven by the pure power of motivation. We all need superheroes to look up to, and The U-Can! Man can help fulfill that role/purpose. These 10 schools will take the improvement plan more seriously if they know what they are striving to be, and then their attitude will shift to focus on thriving, not striving.

The U-Can! Man's website is one resource students in these 10 schools can turn to for help. Each time they visit the website, they'll see a live testimony that is real and relatable. The local newspapers and other media elements will be sharing our journey to *Fabulous-Focused-Favorite-Famous-Friends*. The key to our plan working is every team member knowing that someone believes in you and sees what you can be versus what you are now. This is the U-Can! Man's sole focus. I am confident that we are

what we think, and our thoughts drive our actions. I see 10 schools full of future *Fabulous-Focused-Favorite-Famous-Friends*.

Possibly the most important addition to your school improvement plan is to utilize Mandie Gossage's and my student self-quiz. This proven self-quiz will place every student, parent, and school staff/faculty/administration member on the same page. The self-quiz will be in the hands of:

1. Students
2. Parents
3. School staff, faculty, administration
4. Church leaders (especially youth leaders)
5. Business leaders (especially Chamber of Commerce members)
6. Sports teams at all schools
7. Sports teams at the YMCA and in other sponsored sports leagues
8. All coaches in the community
9. Colleges in the community
10. The U-Can! Man

This quiz is the most important tool that Mandie and The U-Can! Man created. Also, it is arranged in such a way that parents can get involved and even churches, businesses, and the like can play a major role. This self-quiz will help everyone from A students all the way through F students. It is designed to be proactive and show all parties whether a student is doing his/her best.

The following quote is from fellow team member Edward Carter, who saw his own son's grades improve once he started listening to the U-Can! message. I believe it perfectly summarizes how we want our schools' success to be measured.

"We would like to measure our success in terms of grade improvement. When your team fully embraces our strategy, we would like you to monitor your improving grades to see what a difference our collaboration has made. Every class exposed to our methods, every school event in which The U-Can! Man speaks in person or remotely, is geared toward raising the grades of all students. Our self-quiz is designed to measure the progress of students at all levels. I 100 percent believe that if students actually take this quiz, if their parents actually ask them these questions throughout the school year, grades will undoubtedly be better. The website and tools that make up our motivational system are all designed to tell and show the students U-Can! I am committed to impressing U-Can! into the minds and culture of today's students. The U-Can! Man himself saw his GPA increase from 2.07 to 3.70, and I know others can have the same experience. The United States Secretary of Education has said, in so many words, 'We need more parent involvement, community involvement, local church involvement, and other forms of positive support.' This support system is meant to engage our students in innovative ways and to influence them to be and do their best. This is our measuring stick. We are here to help your students improve their grades. With student improvement plans already in place, plus our methods of sharpening students' focus to increase plan effectiveness, greater academic success is guaranteed."

If you think this offer can help your school, please contact me at theucanman@gmail.com or call me at (229) 548-5003. I am available for conference calls or to visit schools in the Valdosta area. I would require funds for gas and living quarters if your school wished for me to stay in the area and spend time telling the students U-Can! If you can gather local parents, church members, business persons,

and other key community members, I will be able to share with them the importance of the self-quiz team work.

Focus Appreciation Motivation (FAM) will also be a main focus. The FAM program and its results are discussed later in this letter. I will be contacting the Governor, the President and First Lady of the United States, and other local and national leaders to help provide incentives for students at these 10 schools and others to adopt FAM. This is an easy task for me, because I have over 30 years of experience with FAM and have become a master of it.

For members of the school staff, your job will simply be to aggressively attack the school improvement plan. Those who excel at fueling the school improvement plan will be recognized and celebrated for their efforts. I love the plans I have had the opportunity to read over. They are thoughtful and well-intended. I 100 percent believe that if the plans are implemented along with our student self-quiz, all schools partnering with us will see their grades rise.

Finally, I pose the following questions to each school:

1. What do you have to lose?
2. Could your awesome school benefit from this innovative tool?
3. Would you like to have my story serve as an example to add value to your school improvement plan?
4. How would you like to see the school improvement plan increase grades every year?
5. Do you agree with Nelson Mandela, who stated, "It always seems impossible until it's done?"
6. Do you agree with Henry Ford, who stated, "If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right?"
7. Can your school, grade-wise, become *Fabulous-Focused-Favorite-Famous-Friends?*

If you agree, then let's get to work together!



One Word: Change

Two Words: Change Yourself

Three Words: Change Yourself Often

Four Words: Change Yourself Often, Early

Five Words: Change Yourself Often, Early, Today

Every second, minute, hour, and day. The key to dealing with change is to think not in terms of you dealing with the change, but instead with change dealing with you as you initiate your own purposeful changes. The key to winning the change life battle is found in The U-Can! Man's one through five words above.

I have also learned that change synonyms can help you look at the man or woman in the mirror and do what the late legendary singer Michael Jackson sang in his song "Man in the Mirror:"

I'm gonna make a change, for once in my life it's gonna feel real good,
Gonna make a difference, Gonna make it right.

I made a change in my life when I went from running from education to embracing education as I enrolled in, progressed through, and, five years later, graduated from college with honors (see www.johntheucanman.com for more of my story). The beginning of my success was my initial decision to make that change. If I can, U-Can!

It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that Mandie Gossage and John The U-Can! Man join forces to present a unique, one-of-a-kind book to help others prepare to enroll in, progress through, and graduate from college. This book is a practical tool that U-Can! use to help fill in some of the blanks and answer some of the questions you or your team might have. This Innovative Marketing Strategy (IMS) will be shared throughout America through many sources and will be a super resource for millions. Our book is an easy read, meaning you can get through the entire text in one sitting. However, the many practical tips included are meant to be validated by application. Mandie and The U-Can! Man made sure the information provided could be used for many years. We have developed this resource from the U-CAN! perspective. Several things make this book unique:

- The authors have never spoken to each other in person or heard each other's voices (we hope to change this after our book is published).

- Mandie and The U-Can! Man have communicated via social media, mainly email, from June 2008 through the present.
- The word “Man” is in both of our names. MAN stands for Meeting A Need.
- We each wrote our portions of the book while living in different areas of the nation, Mandie up north and The U-Can! Man down south.
- Our goal is not to get rich but to provide up-to-date materials to make others well off in the area of education.
- Mandie and The U-Can! Man started our efforts to Meet A Need in August 2013. That need was to help improve education in the USA. We finished our manuscript in October 2013.



Our Book will show How U-Can! Grow:

From: 1 A (2.07 GPA) in high school, Jefferson County High School 1978-1982

To: 30 A's (3.70 GPA) in college, Valdosta State University 2009-2013 (Cum Laude)

“If I Can, U-Can!”



The U-Can! Man “I Give Hope” 5 Element Tool

- 1) The U-Can! Man Website/My Ongoing Story/FAM
- 2) You Your Ongoing Story
- 3) Self Quiz Performed by All
- 4) Book #1 The U-Can! Man’s 25-Year Military Journey
- 5) Book #2 The U-Can! Man’s Five-Year College Journey

www.johntheucanman.com

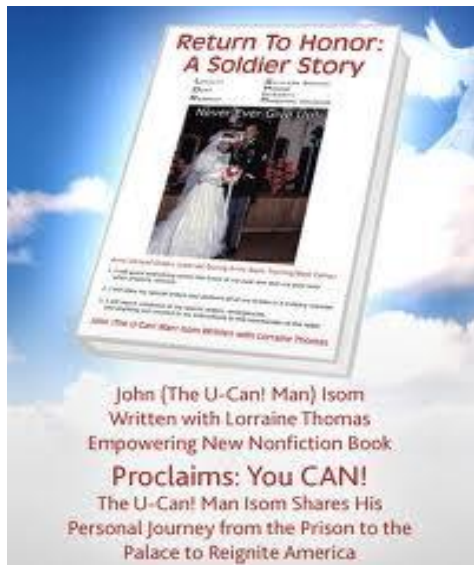
Website Tabs A-H

- A. The U-Can! Man EBC Team & Book #5
- B. Graduating With Honor: If I Can, U-Can! & Book #2
- C. 14,000 Blazers By Fall 2015 & Book #4
- D. The U-Can! Man 10 Florida 5-F’s HS & Book #6
- E. Voices of VSU Ambassadors & Book #3
- F. One Hour of Hope 10 Videos & Book #1
- G. The U-Can! Man Presentations
- H. The U-Can! Man Dream

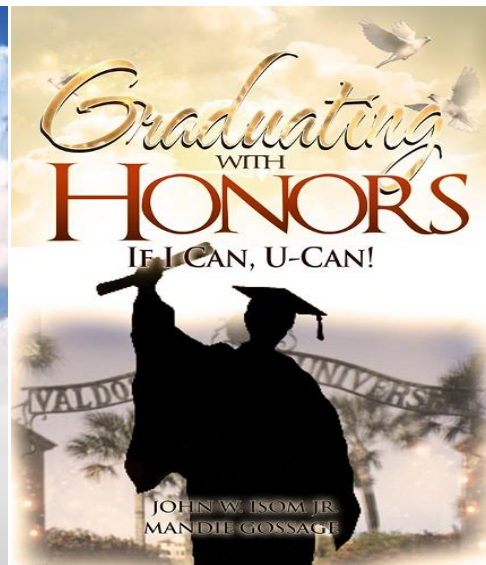
Books, the only items available for purchase

Book #1 My Life Story http://www.amazon.com/dp/1438976747/ref=rdrr_ext_sb_ti_hist_1

Book #2 My College Story <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00HNY8SAU>



Book #1



Book #2

I am one of you, been there done that; if I can, U-Can! Below is my C to A story.

The U-Can! Man Went

From: 1 A (2.07 GPA, C Average) in high school, Jefferson County High School 1978-1982
To: 30 A's (3.70 GPA, A Average) in college, Valdosta State University 2009-2013 (Cum Laude)

**What Do I Think About My New 10 Team Members?
Together We Will Become 5-F's**

Fabulous- Focused- Favorite- Famous- Friends.

I say to every member on our 5-F's 10 Teams today

U-Can!

Increase-Improve-Inspire

The U-Can! Man's Proposed 10 Florida High Schools 2014-2019 (5 Year) Give Hope Strategy

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Florida Department of Education | <u>Website</u> |
| 2. Hawthorne Middle/High School | <u>Website</u> |
| 3. West Gadsden High School | <u>Website</u> |
| 4. Hamilton County High School | <u>Website</u> |
| 5. Willis Peters Exceptional Center | <u>Website</u> |
| 6. Lavoy Exceptional Center | <u>Website</u> |
| 7. Jefferson County Middle/High School | <u>Website</u> |
| 8. Acclaim Academy of Florida, Inc. | <u>Website</u> |
| 9. Crossroads Academy | <u>Website</u> |
| 10. High School at Palm Springs | <u>Website</u> |
| 11. Mosaic Digital Learning Academy | <u>Website</u> |
| 12. The U-Can! Man (Story) | <u>Website</u> |

I 100% Believe U-Can!

School: _____

Self Quiz: _____

Student: _____

Parents: _____

The U-Can! Man: Signed

Self-Quiz for Students (From Graduating With Honors: If I Can, U-Can!)

Many have asked me what my secret is that helped me go from a 2.07 GPA in high school to a 3.7 GPA in college. And in turn I've also asked many other college students performing at various levels academically what they thought was the key to scholastic success or failure. Some confided why they thought they were failing a class while others shared their tips for excelling. For five years, I asked these questions of myself and of other college students. One theme I noticed was that the students who were doing well asked more questions of themselves, doing self-assessments early and often. It seemed the main difference between those who succeeded and those who struggled was not how smart each student was but how early each student realized that he/she needed help.

After my second year of college, I started asking myself what I call the AT-PODS (AT – Possibility Opportunity Door Students) questions. I made it a point to try to have almost all “yes” answers. Mr. Charles Ward, my algebra professor at South Georgia College for three semesters, gave me some advice that helped me pass this self-test: “John, you have learned many ways to learn in your college classes. Make sure you remember that one size does not always fit all. Make sure you always remember modification. You may have to modify some of the techniques you have learned in order to do well in your future classes.” As you use this exam to assess your current performance, also assess your learning techniques. Mastering the art of knowing when to modify can make all the difference. Why am I doing well or not doing well in class?

AT-PODS Questions:

- 1) Y__ N__ Did I come to class every day?
- 2) Y__ N__ Did I take notes and participate during class?
- 3) Y__ N__ Did I study with my best effort?
- 4) Y__ N__ Did I speak with my professor about any concerns?
- 5) Y__ N__ Did I realize I was having problems comprehending?
- 6) Y__ N__ Did I use any resources available for assisting me?
- 7) Y__ N__ Did I take advantage of the Student Success Center?
- 8) Y__ N__ Did I have a clear understanding of the class syllabus?
- 9) Y__ N__ Did I notify my classmates when I was struggling in class?
- 10) Y__ N__ Did I do my best every day in class?
- 11) Y__ N__ Did I have fun?
- 12) Y__ N__ Did I blame other people for anything?
- 13) Y__ N__ Did I believe U-CAN? (U-You C-Capture your message, moments, and memories A-Attack every assignment with your best effort N-Never be defeated)

Tally up the number of yeses and the number of nos throughout your school year:

Where I Am:	# of Y Answers:	# of N Answers:	Should I Make a Modification?
After my first week of a new semester			
After my first exam			
After my midterm			
After my final exam			
After finishing all classes for the semester			

I don't believe in the term “at-risk student.” When I first started college, I was not at-risk but AT-PODS, and if you track your performance using this quiz, you will be too.

Focus Appreciation Motivation

December 2013



The U-Can! Man



www.johntheucanman.com

Focused Appreciation Motivation (FAM) History

FAM is: U-Can! Type Recognition

“Creating a FAM Position”

While stationed at the United States Army Recruiting Headquarters (USAREC) from 2001-2004, I submitted a suggestion through the Bright Ideas program. This suggestion, called [Focused Appreciation Motivation \(FAM\)](#), was created after 15 years of being a member of USAREC and working with thousands of fellow Army Recruiter leadership and staff. The bottom line of my idea was that the majority of the people I interviewed, whether they were leaders, staff members, or recruiters, shared how being appreciated for the work/service they provided was at the top of their list of requirements for motivation.

The Army Recruiting Command had incorporated new and improved software and systems to help ensure our Army would not only meet but exceed its recruiting goals now and in the future. With this new way of doing business, there suddenly was a need for employees to do more than was previously required of them. While they rose to the challenge, it seemed that the promised output by the systems in place was not being delivered as expected. Based on my observations, I realized what the problem was.

We needed Focused Appreciation Motivation. I realized that while most agreed that the new systems were outstanding, the work required of them had increased and the level of appreciation for their work really hadn't. I often asked all people in the command, "If you were king or queen for a day, what would you do to bridge the gap between yourself and the new systems in place?" Without fail, they would answer, "Find a way to recognize the people and teams doing the work."

The normal once a year or every now and then recognition is never ok, but it's especially hard to put up with if you're struggling. Earlier in February 2002 I'd submitted an article titled "Sharpening the Basics During Bathing Months" (<http://www.johntheucanman.com/files/70212344.pdf>), which was geared toward helping increase production in the May – June time frame. This article ended up being a four-star award winner. However, later that year, in September 2002, I submitted the FAM suggestion. After going through the process, it was adopted 100% in May 2004.

Later that year, I was assigned as Chaplain Recruiter at the 1st Brigade Army Recruiting Command in Fort Meade, Maryland. This assignment allowed me to help with FAM implementation and experience its results. I was asked for my advice on helping the 1st Brigade increase its production for new recruits. This was another opportunity to expand FAM. I suggested an incentive program called "Circle of Giants" (<http://www.johntheucanman.com/files/77074102.pdf>). This idea was quickly adopted and 100% implemented. The results were amazing, and once again I could experience the awards and rewards that the Circle of Giants earned. My Chaplain Recruiting team won every award offered. This program was successful mainly because it had its basis in Focused Appreciation Motivation.

The fact that I have seen the effects of FAM in action has made me realize that it is still needed to help many corporations, universities, churches, and other organizations. Due to downsizing and increasing demand, it is more important than ever that employees do more than the minimum required in order for the team to perform at high levels. In some cases, downsizing is occurring without consent. The United States of America entered recession in 2007 and has been working itself back to the desired levels. New and better ways to get things done are being created through innovation. This means that more work is getting done more quickly, but it also means that for employees to avoid being laid off, the mission has to be achieved. Here, FAM becomes the elephant in the room. Either a few are using FAM and the masses are not, or no one is actually using FAM. The solution is making FAM available for everyone. I found out that when FAM was in place, people did more than was required of them and in a lot of cases they also went the extra mile for others. If you think FAM can help your team, contact The U-Can! Man so we can create FAM in ways your team has not considered before. I know that FAM works, and I am fully persuaded that the difference between future success and future failure is FAM. Thank you, and I hope to meet with you so we can figure out FAM for you and your team. The dedication in Mandie's and my new book, *Graduating With Honors: If I Can, U-Can!* (see www.johntheucanman.com) expresses FAM throughout. Our book's dedication is one of the best examples of FAM.



Stokely
Signature Designs