

One Size Fits All Approach:

“You have learned a lot, and your challenge with your sociology degree is to go out and be a ‘do gooder.’
If you can create a one-size-fits-all product, you will be able to help solve problems around the world.”

Dr Chet Ballard

Senior Capstone, Sociology 4990 Fall Semester 2013

Sign Your Name if You Agree to Perform U-CAN!

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

I agree to Perform U-CAN! _____ Semester: _____

Email Me Your Results: theucanman@gmail.com or jisom@valdosta.edu

The U-Can! Man, My U-CAN! Grades: 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___



5 Years (2009-2013) Later, I Have Mastered U-CAN!

U- U- (YOU)

C- Capture Your Message, Moments, Memories

A- Attack Every Syllabus with Your Best

N- Never, Ever Give Up!

CAN-U

The U-Can! Man and Mandie Gossage’s innovative book will be released December 2013. Its goal is to teach/show U-CAN! This is a proven recipe for success.

Success Equals: I-Can! U-CAN!

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Secretary of Education Ernie Duncan

Before October 20, 2009, the next show

After receiving our publisher Lorraine Thomas's proposed front cover for mine and Mandie Gossage's book on November 10, 2013, I was in our bedroom flipping through the channels, trying to find a football game. I ran across the Georgia Public Broadcasting Station, and I noticed that the Secretary of Education, Ernie Duncan, was holding a town hall-type session. With our book on the verge of being released, I took the time to watch the rest of the session. I took notes with our book in mind. I noticed that there were many ideas and thoughts that Secretary Duncan addressed. The main point was that America has a 30% dropout rate. He also kept talking about high-performing schools and what they seem to have in common. One of the main things he kept saying was that these schools had a lot of "best" items occurring daily. They were:

Best Practice

Best Incentives

Best Talent

Best Principles

Best Teachers

Best Students

Best Pay

Best Turn arounds.

Best Parents

Best Performing

The one thing that caught my attention was the need to help students and parents in poor performing situations. I realized, more than ever before, the importance of Dr. Ballard's words: "If you can find a one-size-fits-all solution, you will be able to solve many problems." That was my goal from day one—helping others enroll in and graduate from college. The advantage provided by our book is that it is full of fresh ideas, inspired by the Race to the Top challenge issued in June 2009. Our educational success is dependent upon going to places where Secretary Duncan cannot go: within the minds of individual students. The idea of U-CAN'T is planted in the minds of so many students, parents, and school faculty/staff. The most important aspect of our book and website is that they are available to those 30% who might otherwise drop out of school, providing them exposure to positive peer pressure. But more than that, they will receive the message U-CAN! This is the message that the U-Can! Man brings into the equation. Once those 30% start hearing and digesting U-CAN!, the turnaround will increase.

I remember talking to international students at Valdosta State University and other universities over the past five years. Most of them said that our educational system was easier than the systems they'd come from. They'd say they loved our classes and curricula. What I soon realized is that they came from a U-CAN! educational culture. They are not smarter or less smart than Americans. The huge difference is that American students are being fed a huge dose of U-CAN'T.

These are the U-Can! Man's findings over the past five years of research starting at ground base. I have strong hopes that the American educational system will see a lot of turnaround stories. Our book should

be placed in large quantities in those 2000-plus schools that are producing 80% of our country's dropouts. It was written with them in mind. The fact is, U-CAN! will be there when other people leave, when teachers and parents leaves, when the U-Can! Man leaves.

It is amazing that I happened to see this program tonight as Mandie and I were looking into Lorraine's suggested front cover. I feel like this was the moment that made me see the entire process and all its difficulties were worth it. Teachers came and left, my family came and left; however, I thank God U-CAN! was always there telling me U-CAN! Below are 25 notes I took as I intently listened to Secretary Duncan. It wasn't until the end of the program that I realized it was a rerun. The announcer said, "Thanks for joining us today. Our next broadcast will be October 20, 2009."

- 1) There are 2000 schools that produce 80% of the dropouts in America.
- 2) There are negative peer pressures and positive peer pressures.
- 3) Most of the time, negative peer pressure gets the press/spotlight.
- 4) We need to highlight the positive peer pressure; it needs to get press.
- 5) African Americans and Latinos are a major part of America's 30% dropout rate.
- 6) Poverty is real and plays a part in the daily decisions of parents who live in poverty.
- 7) However, we must seek out ways to help these children and families; they deserve a chance.
- 8) America's parents need to be held more accountable and responsible.
- 9) America's teachers have to expect great things from their students and be ready to help.
- 10) America's students have to be held accountable and responsible for learning how to learn.
- 11) America needs a dramatic decrease in our dropout rate.
- 12) America needs a dramatic increase in our graduation rate.
- 13) We need this decrease and increase as soon as possible.
- 14) Parents should not have to choose between work and meeting with teachers.
- 15) Parent and teacher teams need to be experiencing successful moments together.
- 16) Involvement, great expectations, and safe schools need to become our reality.
- 17) Children perform best when they have full knowledge that their schools are safe and secure.
- 18) Safe and secure involvement on children's way to school, at school, and on the way home from school is key.
- 19) Everyone needs to be involved to keep schools safe, including the janitor, cooks, and custodians.
- 20) This also includes teachers, both full time and part time, substitute teachers, and anyone placed in a position of authority.
- 21) Teamwork is the foundation to having safe schools and a culture of amazing learning.
- 22) Parents need to step up, teachers need to step up, and students need to step up.
- 23) Parents are children's first teachers and their most long-term teachers; their role is never ending.
- 24) I am unbelievably hopeful that we can get our schools turned around.
- 25) We can do this if we come together and expect great things, and if we are accountable.

These 25 statements are addressed in our book, Return To Honor: A Soldier Story
<http://www.blackgospelpromo.com/press627.htm>

5 Year College Journey 5 Book Series

Book #1: Graduating With Honors: If I Can U-Can!- Release date December 2013

Website: www.johntheucanman.com A Positive Peer Pressure

Book #2: Voices of VSU Ambassadors- To be released July 2014

Book#3 TBD

Book#4 TBD

Book #5 TBD

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