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When 2+2 Equals More Than 4

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When 2+2 Equals More Than 4

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Monday October 15, 2018

By Eric F. Spina

By Eric F. Spina, University of Dayton President, and Steven L. Johnson, Sinclair Community College President

(This joint piece originally appeared on [LinkedIn](#).)

Before Oscar Ntakontagize even enrolled in his first chemical engineering class at the University of Dayton he worked in a campus lab where he fabricated and tested advanced composite materials.

As Lauren Fields began classes at Sinclair Community College this fall, she auditioned and won a spot in the University of Dayton Dance Ensemble, which partners with the world-renowned Dayton Contemporary Dance Company to stage two major productions a year.

Other students make the less-than-two-mile trek from Sinclair to the private, Catholic university to swim in the RecPlex's eight-lane pool or join an intramural soccer team. They all travel to the University of Dayton's campus at least once a semester to meet with their

academic advisers to ensure the courses they're taking will seamlessly transfer to one of 30 bachelor degree programs.

Many universities and community colleges ink articulation agreements, typically known as "2+2" partnerships, as they seek to assure students their courses will transfer. But the UD Sinclair Academy is unusual and unusually deep — and we believe a model in higher education.

Here's the idea. Students in the Academy are collegiate "dual citizens," who hold student ID cards from both institutions from the minute they start taking classes.

For the first two years, they pay one of the lowest tuition rates in Ohio at one of the top community colleges in the nation, saving approximately \$40,000. Once they earn their associate's degrees, these students seamlessly embark on their junior year at one of the country's pre-eminent private universities, where their net tuition was locked in at the rate in effect when they entered the Academy. Also locked in: financial aid packages of up to \$21,000 in merit scholarships, a \$2,000 textbook scholarship, a \$3,000 study-abroad scholarship and additional need-based grants funded by the University of Dayton as well as federal and state government.

The UD Sinclair Academy, now in its third year, is already opening doors for students from various racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds, including many first-generation college students.

As more families look at ways to reduce the cost of a bachelor's degree, this partnership stands out for the way we're reducing the financial barriers, increasing opportunity, and ensuring that these students are part of the communities at both Sinclair Community College *and* the University of Dayton from day one.

It's a noteworthy initiative. It's putting a bachelor's degree within reach of far more students than ever before. Since nearly 90 percent of Sinclair Community College graduates stay in the Dayton region, this program will produce a more educated workforce for a region that's reinventing itself for the knowledge economy.

Sinclair Community College and the University of Dayton, historically partners and friends, have distinctive missions that are only strengthened through this partnership. Through the UD Sinclair Academy, we are working together across institutional lines to increase opportunity and serve our student and community needs.

We're driven by one overriding belief — all talented students, no matter their ZIP code, deserve entryway to a high-quality, affordable college degree.