



NEWS

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THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY LAUNCHES **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR LOW-INCOME COLLEGE BOUND** **STUDENTS**

Prairie State College & One Million Degrees Partner with Housing Authority for Student Success

CHICAGO – Today the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) announced a new community college scholarship program for disadvantaged students who reside at HACC properties or receive housing vouchers called the HACC Scholar's Promise.

During a City Club appearance, HACC Executive Director Richard Monocchio formally announced the HACC Scholar's Promise and underscored the value and importance of education. He said that each year a child spends in a high-poverty neighborhood, the chances of going to college decreases.

"The implications of poverty and inadequate housing on a young person's educational outcomes and their future success is undeniable, and we firmly believe that stable housing with education opportunities can be a platform for academic achievement among these disadvantaged youth – which is why we are so excited about the HACC Scholar's Promise," said Monocchio.

Monocchio also pointed out that 19 million families are housing insecure and remain on housing wait lists, are homeless, unemployed or paying more than half their monthly income on rent which is why higher education can help build economic stability and self-sufficiency.

The HACC Scholar's Promise is dedicated to improving the quality of life for the next generation's future. To start, 40 low income students who meet eligibility criteria will be selected and assigned long-term personalized coaching, tutoring, financial assistance, academic advising, personal supports, life skills and career readiness. Ultimately, the students will complete the program and earn a college degree to launch them into promising careers and four-year universities.

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HACC Scholar's Promise

HACC Scholar's Promise partners, Dr. Terri Winfree, President of Prairie State College (PSC), and Paige Ponder, Chief Executive Officer of One Million Degrees, applauded the concept and partnership and pledged support and resources to ensure the successful outcomes of students.

"This is a very exciting project and one that will provide forty additional students the opportunity to attend PSC. Through this program, we are making PSC accessible to students who would not otherwise be attending college. This is a great effort to change the cycle of the lives of the residents of the housing authority. Giving them an education provides them an opportunity for a career, thus moving out of the housing and on to a more prosperous life," said Winfree.

Complementing Prairie State's academic resources, One Million Degrees will work with the college and housing communities to provide on-going support for students to receive their associate's degrees, transfer to four-year institutions, and launch upwardly mobile professional careers.

"One Million Degrees is proud to meet an important south suburban community need by supporting motivated students in their pursuit of an associate's degree. We are thrilled to extend our long-term partnership with Prairie State College to welcome the HACC Scholar's Promise students into the OMD community," said Ponder.

One Million Degrees is the only organization in Illinois – and one of few in the country – exclusively committed to serving and graduating community college students. Students in the program receive academic, personal, professional, and financial supports to succeed in school, work, and life. In the 2016 – 2017 academic year, OMD will serve 700 community college scholars across Illinois.

A recent Pew Research Report stated that unless something is done to boost the number of young people earning postsecondary credentials, millions of Americans will continue to be limited in their economic mobility.

Without a college degree, children born in the lowest fifth of the income distribution have a 45 percent chance of staying in the bottom, and just a 5 percent chance of moving to the top. Yet when these same children go on to earn a college degree, their chances of making it to the top nearly quadruple, and their chances of moving out of the bottom increase by 50 percent.

The HACC Scholar's Promise is a true partnership between government, education and corporate philanthropic agencies collaborating to achieve student success.

To participate in the HACC's Scholar's Promise, students should complete the One Million Degrees application: www.onemilliondegrees.org/apply.

For more information, please visit us at: www.thehacc.org; www.facebook.com/theHACC; www.twitter.com/theHACCtweets, or www.onemilliondegrees.org.

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