



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Joe Vladeck, Organizational Advancement Manager  
jvladeck@collegeforward.org, 512.879.0023

## **COLLEGE FORWARD EXPANDS PROGRAM TO GREATER HOUSTON**

### ***Classes Begin at Robert E. Lee High School and Eisenhower High School***

HOUSTON, TX – February 3, 2011 – College Forward, a nonprofit organization that provides college access and college persistence services to economically disadvantaged students, is expanding its award-winning program to the Greater Houston area. The organization will offer classes to eligible juniors at Robert E. Lee High School in Goose Creek CISD and Eisenhower High School in Aldine ISD. Classes will start the first week of February.

Founded in 2003 by Lisa Fielder and Doreen Wise, who is CEO of Medical Research Consultants in Houston, TX, College Forward addresses the desperate need to expand college access for economically-disadvantaged high school students in Texas. Students in the program are first-generation college degree candidates, low-income, or both, and attend twice-weekly after-school classes throughout their junior and senior years of high school. After enrolling in college, students receive college “persistence” services until they earn bachelor’s degrees.

This year, College Forward will serve more than 2,000 students, from 14 partner high schools in 9 school districts across Greater Houston and Greater Austin. Since launching in 2003, College Forward has built an extensive track record of success: 99.5% of high school students in the program are accepted into college, and 87% of college students are still pursuing a bachelor’s degree or have graduated.

The expansion to the Greater Houston area is part of a goal to ensure that more students receive the critical and highly effective services College Forward provides. Hosted by the Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District, College Forward’s Greater Houston office is the first additional site for the organization, and the first step of a five-year expansion plan. College Forward decided to launch in Houston because of the dynamic academic environment. Houston has a history of fostering innovative solutions to education’s most intractable challenges, is home to successful charter school networks, and is the largest Teach for America site in the United States. Kathy Rose, College Forward’s Houston Director, will lead a staff of AmeriCorps members. “As a longtime member of the Houston community, I’m excited that College Forward’s nationally recognized program is coming to serve our students,” Rose said.



College Forward's expansion to the Greater Houston area is funded by grants from the Greater Texas Foundation, the Simmons Foundation, the Powell Foundation, the Texas Pioneer Foundation, the OneStar Foundation, the KDK-Harman Foundation, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, and the Meadows Foundation.

ABOUT COLLEGE FORWARD: College Forward provides college access and college persistence services to motivated, economically disadvantaged students, in order to facilitate their transition to college and make the process exciting and rewarding. We believe that access to higher education is the right of every young Texan. [www.collegeforward.org](http://www.collegeforward.org)

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