



college forward

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **New college access initiative expands to Round Rock**

*AUSTIN, Texas* — On August 27, local nonprofit organization College Forward will once again expand its after-school college access program, this time to Stony Point High School in the Round Rock Independent School District. The expansion, funded by a grant from Impact Austin, will allow College Forward to serve an additional 80 low-income and first-generation students over the next two years, empowering them to attend and succeed in college.

Since its founding in 2003, College Forward has grown from a small after-school program at Jack C. Hays High School to a comprehensive program serving over 400 students in seven schools, the families of those students, and nearly 100 College Forward graduates through a one-of-a-kind college retention program.

College Forward students are economically disadvantaged, will be the first in their family to earn a college degree, or both. During after-school classes, AmeriCorps members coach students through the college application process, providing everything from intensive ACT/SAT preparation to help with financial aid forms. And their mentoring pays off: every student who completes the program is accepted to at least one college or university.

Impact Austin, a philanthropic organization of women seeking to make a meaningful, long-term positive change in Austin, chose College Forward from more than 120 applicants this June as one of four \$104,000 grant recipients. Their generosity will fund the Stony Point expansion as a two-year pilot program. "We are thrilled to award College Forward this grant," said Rebecca Powers, founder of Impact Austin. "They are proving that we can make a real difference in the educational lives of our young adults."

Dr. Jesus Chavez, Superintendent of Round Rock ISD, is enthusiastic about College Forward, stating, "Our students will benefit tremendously from College Forward's unique services. We are excited to welcome the program this fall." At Dr. Chavez's request, Stony Point High School, with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students in Round Rock ISD (31.9% according to the Texas Education Agency), will be the first in the district to welcome College Forward, with the possibility of expanding to additional schools in the future.

Entering Stony Point is only one of many recent developments for College Forward. This fall marks the first full year of the program at Travis and Crockett High Schools in AISD. The organization also recently kicked off a new fundraising event, a Schoolhouse Rock Sing-A-Long, on the second Friday of every month. And they have expanded their retention program so that once students enter college, they continue to receive guidance and support.

◆ **100%** of College Forward's students have been **accepted into colleges nationwide**

◆ College Forward students' **ACT scores increased** by an average of **22%**

◆ College Forward's high school graduates are awarded an average of over **\$16,000 each in scholarships and grants**

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