

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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College Forward expands with AmeriCorps*Texas
College Forward partnership for higher education

Austin, TX — College Forward, a local non-profit college access program, has recently become one of just six projects in the Austin area to receive an AmeriCorps*Texas grant. AmeriCorps*Texas is a program funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) that connects individuals to organizations that address the most critical needs in their communities. Members dedicate 10 months to a year of service in exchange for a modest living allowance and an educational award.

“We believe the AmeriCorps*Texas grant will affect higher education in two ways” said Lisa Fielder, Executive Director of College Forward. “In the short term, it will directly benefit program participants by helping each one build a bridge to college; in the long term, we plan to share our most successful programs with other organizations who can administer them to under-served students across the state.”

The grant will provide College Forward with the resources to enhance what has already been a key factor in its success: collaboration. A partnership of universities—St. Edward’s University, Southwestern University, Texas State University, and University of Texas at Austin—and surrounding school districts will enable College Forward to expand from three high schools in 2005-2006 to seven high schools in the 2006-2007 school year.

Sandra Dowdy, Assistant Superintendent for the Del Valle Independent School District where the majority of students are considered economically-disadvantaged, will welcome College Forward to Del Valle High School this fall. “We see more hope for our students through working with a program such as College Forward,” Dowdy remarked.

Direct service is provided by part-time and full-time AmeriCorps*Texas members, allowing university students to gain valuable experience while still in school. Within the next 10 years, College Forward expects to directly or indirectly help thousands of low-income students earn bachelor degrees.

Support from the TG Public Benefit Program, along with Cartis Group, an Austin design agency, has allowed College Forward to update its communications strategy, including the launch of a brand-new website, www.collegeforward.org.

College Forward provides college preparatory 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.

The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and background to serve their communities and country through three programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America. For more information visit www.nationalservice.gov.

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