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One Million Degrees' Student Support Services to Expand to Chicago Housing Authority Residents

Dec. 12, 2018, Chicago, IL—Backed by a new \$500,000 grant, One Million Degrees (OMD) is expanding its comprehensive community college student support services to more Chicago Housing Authority residents attending the City Colleges of Chicago.

The new partnership between OMD, Chicago Housing Authority, and the City Colleges of Chicago is designed to set students on a path to complete their associate degree and launch careers that will enable them to achieve financial security and upward economic mobility. Nationally recognized researcher Dr. Sara Goldrick-Rab and her team at the Hope Center for College, Community and Justice based at Temple University will evaluate the program.

The Kresge Foundation is providing the funding via a three-year grant as part of its work to better align and strengthen urban higher education ecosystems.

College pays off and is especially transformative for public housing residents. The prospects of self-sufficiency, including the likelihood of a positive exit from government-supported housing, increase by 11 percent for each year of college completed¹. But for positive effects to occur, students must complete degrees.

The new collaboration builds on the Chicago Housing Authority's [Partners in Education program](#), which offers public housing residents attending City Colleges support for tuition, books and fees. Kresge's investment will expand OMD's individualized student-centered supports, including mentoring, tutoring, professional development, and financial stipends, to more Partners in Education participants. The Hope Center will provide data and analysis to support program improvement and assess impact.

"One Million Degrees sees how our vibrant community and an ecosystem of supports help hard-working students complete their degrees and launch their careers. We're grateful for Kresge's investment to expand our services to hundreds of CHA residents attending City Colleges in the next three years and together, scale our collective impact," said Paige Ponder, CEO, One Million Degrees.

"CHA's mission has long been to pursue innovative opportunities and programs that help residents become self-sufficient, and education is a proven pathway to that goal. But there also needs to be guidance and that's where this grant comes in, as these funds will help CHA residents with the ever-

¹ <https://www.housingcenter.com/research/research-reports/the-education-boost/>

important counseling support. We thank The Kresge Foundation and our partners for investing in the future of our residents,” said Eugene E. Jones Jr., CEO, Chicago Housing Authority.

“This partnership will provide 600 public housing recipients with critical supports to start and complete credentials and degrees,” said Bethany Miller, a Kresge Foundation program officer. “It’s also exciting because through the evaluation, it will provide further evidence to the public housing authority community on how to best support housing recipients as they pursue a postsecondary education.”

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About One Million Degrees

[One Million Degrees](#) accelerates community college students’ progress on career pathways to economic mobility. OMD provides comprehensive supports to community college students, including tutoring, volunteer coaching, financial assistance and professional development. OMD Scholars graduate at twice the state average with the skills and experiences necessary to launch upwardly mobile professional careers. OMD currently partners with 10 Chicago-area community colleges, including the seven City Colleges of Chicago, Harper College, Prairie State College, and South Suburban College and leading Chicago area employers and other organizations to foster postsecondary and career success.

About the Chicago Housing Authority

The [Chicago Housing Authority](#) is the second-largest public housing agency in the nation, providing safe, stable and affordable housing to approximately 64,000 low-income families and individuals at family, senior, scattered site and mixed-income properties and through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program that enables families to rent in the private market, while supporting healthy communities in neighborhoods throughout the city. CHA has utilized the flexibility of the Moving to Work agreement to test innovative, locally-designed strategies that use federal dollars to more efficiently help residents become self-sufficient and to increase housing choices for low-income families.

About the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice

[The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice](#), based at Temple University in Philadelphia, is home to an action research team using rigorous research to drive innovative practice, evidence-based policymaking, and effective communications about the strengths and challenges facing #RealCollege students.

About The Kresge Foundation

The Kresge Foundation was founded in 1924 to promote human progress. Today, Kresge fulfills that mission by building and strengthening pathways to opportunity for low-income people in America’s cities, seeking to dismantle structural and systemic barriers to equality and justice. Using a full array of grant, loan, and other investment tools, Kresge invests more than \$160 million annually to foster economic and social change. For more information visit kresge.org.