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Colo. Department of Higher Education announces finalists for new grant program to address the attainment gap

Lumina Foundation pledges \$200,000 to boost program aimed at closing Colorado's postsecondary attainment gap

DENVER – March 29, 2016: Earlier this month, the Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (Scholarship Initiative) announced finalists for the newly formed Collective Impact Initiative Grant program. On Friday, the finalists convened for a kickoff event (photographs available upon request).

The Collective Impact Initiative Grant program will provide resources for community groups to work together to reduce the attainment gap.

The attainment gap is the persistent divide between Coloradans who historically attain a postsecondary certificate or degree and those who are from minority and rural communities who are far less likely to continue their education beyond high school.

In December at a convening with the Governor and over 80 advocates from community groups, the Scholarship Initiative committed \$450,000 to the grant program. Lumina Foundation joined the Scholarship Initiative in this effort, committing an additional \$200,000 to the grant program, in part to afford the finalists the technical assistance necessary to complete their grant applications and prepare for implementation.

“Colorado has one of the largest attainment gaps in the nation. To meet the needs of the workforce, we must – not only enroll more underserved, minority students into college, but also make sure they graduate,” said Lt. Governor Joe Garcia, executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education. “The Collective Impact Initiative Grant program does as the name of the grant suggests. It unites community under a common agenda so that we can achieve a swifter and greater impact than if we were working alone.”

The finalist community groups are as follows with the lead organization listed first:

Goodwill Industries of Denver

- Aurora Public Schools, Community College of Aurora, Aurora Public Schools Foundation, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Zero Dropouts

Colorado Education Initiative

- Ute Tribes, Ft Lewis College, San Juan BOCES

Colorado Mountain College Foundation

- Colorado Mountain College, Aspen Community Foundation, Summit Foundation, Youth Foundation, Yampa Valley Community Foundation Garfield RE-1, Garfield RE-2, Garfield 16, Steamboat Springs, East Grand, Eagle, Buena Vista, Summit, Lake and Aspen

Lamar Community College Foundation

- Lamar Community College, Lamar RE2 School District, Prowers County Department of Human Services, Friends of Lamar HOPE Center, Southeast Colorado Creative Partnership

DenverCAN

- FirstBank, Metropolitan State University of Denver, Mile High United Way, Goodwill Industries of Denver, Emily Griffith Technical College, Denver Scholarship Foundation, Denver Public Schools, University of Colorado Denver, Office of Children's Affairs- City and County of Denver, Community College of Denver

Adams County Education Consortium

- Adams County Youth Initiative, Adams County District 12, Adams County District 27J, Adams County Westminster 50, Front Range Community College, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Latin American Education Foundation

- Brighton School District 27J, Boys & Girls Club of Brighton, Servicios de la Raza, Hispanic Advisory Council for 27J

Pueblo Community College

- Colorado State University Pueblo, Pueblo City 60, Pueblo School District 70, South Central BOCES, Pueblo Workforce Center, The Latino Chamber of Commerce Pueblo, Inc., Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce, Pueblo County Department of Social Services, Pueblo Economic Development Corporation, Catholic Charities of Diocese of Pueblo, Pueblo Triple Aim Corporation, National Center for School Engagement, GOAL International, Crossroads Turning Point Inc., Teach for America - Colorado

Morgan Community College Foundation

- Morgan Community College, Brush City Government, Brush RE-2(J), East Morgan County Hospital, Fort Morgan RE-3, Morgan County Department of Human Services, One Morgan County, Weldon Valley RE-20(J), Wiggins RE-50(J)

Trinidad State Junior College

- South East Workforce Center- Trinidad, Trinidad School District, South Central Workforce Center- Alamosa, Alamosa School District

The next step in the Collective Impact initiative Grant process is for finalists to complete their applications by June 30, 2016.

After that, the Scholarship Initiative will select 3-4 awardees, and they will receive \$150,000 in grants annually for two years, with the expectation that they match the grant with \$50,000 each year. Awardees will be selected by August 19, 2016.

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