



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Emily Seaman
Director of Communications
617-423-6300
eseaman@tsf.org

The Des Moines I Have a Dream Foundation receives national award for excellence in educational access.

Des Moines, IA – April 10, 2017 – The Des Moines I Have a Dream Foundation has received the 2017 National Partnership for Educational Access and Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Award for Excellence in Educational Access at the NPEA annual conference in Boston, MA.

The Award, sponsored by NPEA and the Cooke Foundation, recognizes excellence in supporting underrepresented students on the path to and through college and for demonstrating: effective practices in supporting underrepresented students; commitment to using data to inform and improve programming and practices; support for students’ personal growth and success; a commitment to sustainability and long-term success; leadership in the community; and creative problem-solving and innovation in meeting the needs of their constituents.

The Des Moines I Have a Dream Foundation was recognized with this award for its Dreamer Academy program at Findley Elementary and Harding Middle School, which provides long-term, integrated support for students and families starting in elementary school and continuing to and through post-secondary education. Through the Dreamer Academy, the Des Moines I Have a Dream Foundation works in partnership with public schools, and builds a strong culture of college and careers for underserved students at an early age.

Through its unique college savings account program that allows students to earn money into college savings accounts starting in kindergarten, to its coordination of more than 30 partner organizations, businesses, and higher education institutions, the Dreamer Academy is strengthening the educational outcomes for its partner schools and elevating the value of education for over 500 students in Des Moines.

“We are thrilled to be selected for this year’s Award. We’re proud of the work we’re doing in Des Moines to make sure more kids graduate from high school with the tools they need to succeed in college and beyond, and we appreciate the national recognition this award gives to our Dreamer Academy program”, said IHDF Executive Director, Emily Westergaard.

“NPEA congratulates the Des Moines I Have a Dream Foundation on their receipt of the Award. NPEA is committed to supporting programs in their work with students and Des Moines I Have a Dream Foundation demonstrated a proven track record of success, dedication, and collaboration, and innovation

in supporting not only students, but families and the larger community as well," said NPEA Executive Director, Karin Elliott.

"The Cooke Foundation has a long record of providing grants to community-based organizations that open up equal educational opportunities to underrepresented students," said Cooke Foundation Executive Director Harold O. Levy. "We want this award to recognize an organization doing an outstanding job expanding college access for students who have financial need, and to encourage more organizations to join the effort. Our moral obligation as Americans is to provide the best education possible for our young people, and we need to develop their talents and brainpower to the fullest extent possible in our own self-interest, because our quality of life, our national security, and the future of our planet depend on it."

The Award was announced at the national NPEA Conference, Journeys to Success: Equity and Access for All Students in Boston, MA on April 7. For more information about the conference and the Award nominations process, please visit: www.educationalaccess.org/conference.php.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

The National Partnership for Educational Access (NPEA) provides a learning network for organizations and schools across the country that serve underrepresented students to ensure enrollment in and graduation from college. Through professional development, collaboration, and the dissemination of best practices, NPEA is working toward the day when all students have equal access to high-quality education and opportunities for college and beyond. For more information, please visit: <http://www.educational-access.org/>.

ABOUT THE JACK KENT COOKE FOUNDATION

The Cooke Foundation is dedicated to advancing the education of exceptionally promising students who have financial need. Since 2000, the foundation has provided over \$152 million in scholarships to nearly 2,200 students from 8th grade through graduate school, along with comprehensive counseling and other support services. The foundation has also awarded over \$90 million in grants to organizations that serve such students. www.jkcf.org

###