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**National Partnership for Educational Access and Jack Kent Cooke Foundation  
Announce Call for Nominations: 2017 Award for Excellence in Educational Access**

BOSTON, MA – January 31, 2017 – The National Partnership for Educational Access (NPEA) and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation are pleased to accept nominations for the 2017 *NPEA/Cooke Foundation Award for Excellence in Educational Access*.

The Award, sponsored by the Cooke Foundation, will recognize an NPEA Member Organization, Program, or School with a \$5,000 monetary award for 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.

"NPEA is thrilled to have the support of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation for this important Award. Through our annual conference and our day-to-day work of supporting underrepresented students on the path to college, we strive to form partnerships with like-minded organizations in the access and success field. The Cooke Foundation is a true champion in this work and we are proud to work alongside them," said NPEA's 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 winner will be announced at the national NPEA Conference, *Journeys to Success: Equity and Access for All Students*, taking place on April 5-7, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency Cambridge, Overlooking Boston, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For more information about the conference and the Award nominations process, please visit: [www.educational-access.org/conference.php](http://www.educational-access.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](http://www.jkcf.org)

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