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Chicago Scholars Receives 2018 National Partnership for Educational Access and Jack Kent Cooke Foundation *Award for Excellence in Educational Access*

BOSTON, MA – April 23, 2018 – On April 12, Chicago Scholars received the 2018 National Partnership for Educational Access (NPEA) and Jack Kent Cooke Foundation *Award for Excellence in Educational Access* at the NPEA annual conference in New Orleans, LA.

The Award, sponsored by the Cooke Foundation, recognizes excellence in supporting underserved students on the path to and through college and for demonstrating: effective practices in supporting underserved 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.

Chicago Scholars was recognized with this award for its demonstrated strength across all of the Award criteria. Their programming supports cohorts of 600 students through a seven-year, multi-tiered program that focuses on college access, college persistence, and career success, reaching students in each of 74 neighborhoods in their city. One unique aspect of the Chicago Scholars program model is their annual Onsite Admissions Forum, which offers early admission decisions to more than 170 college/university partners before any other students in the country and prior to admission decision deadlines.

“NPEA and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation have partnered for three years on the Award for Excellence in Educational Access and we are grateful for their support and commitment to NPEA and to the field. This Award recognizes and celebrates excellence and hard work in supporting underserved students on the path to college and shines a light on best practices from which we can all learn,” said NPEA’s Executive Director, Karin Elliott. “NPEA is thrilled that Chicago Scholars is this year’s Award recipient. In their nomination, Chicago Scholars demonstrated strength across all of the Award criteria in helping students from the Chicago community access and succeed in college and careers, in an effort to change the leadership landscape of their city and revitalize their communities.”

“We are honored to mark another year of continued partnership with NPEA and celebrate the accomplishments of this year's Award recipient," stated Seppy Basili, Chief Operating Officer at the Cooke Foundation. "Ambitious students with financial need benefit greatly

from advising and support, and Chicago Scholars has created an effective model for student success."

The Award winner was announced at the national NPEA Conference, *Standing Together in a Changing Landscape: A Call to Action*, on April 12, 2018 at the JW Marriott in downtown New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information about the conference and the Award nominations process, please visit: www.educational-access.org/conference.php.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

The National Partnership for Educational Access (NPEA) is a membership organization that connects the people, practices, and innovations essential for eliminating barriers to educational access and college and career success for underserved students. Working together, our members make it possible for all students to access high-quality learning opportunities and to thrive at every phase of their unique educational journeys. 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 awarded \$175 million in scholarships to more than 2,300 students from 8th grade through graduate school, along with comprehensive counseling and other support services. The foundation has also provided over \$97 million in grants to organizations that serve such students. www.jkcf.org

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