

THE OPRAH WINFREY FOUNDATION DONATES \$250,000 TO URBAN PREP ACADEMIES



CHICAGO – June 12, 2009 – Urban Prep Academies, which operates the country’s first all-boys charter public high school, announced today a \$250,000 donation from The Oprah Winfrey Foundation. The donation will be used to support ongoing programming at the Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men—Englewood Campus.

The Oprah Winfrey Foundation donation will activate a two-for-one match from a \$1 million anonymous challenge donation Urban Prep received in 2008. All donations made to Urban Prep will have triple the impact thanks to the Oprah Winfrey Foundation donation.

“This gift is amazing! We are so grateful to Oprah Winfrey and her Foundation for this generous donation and we applaud her commitment to increasing access to quality education,” said Tim King, founder and CEO, Urban Prep Academies. “The young men of Urban Prep are committed to their education, and our faculty and staff are committed to their success. The high-school drop-out rate for Black boys in Chicago is more than 60 percent. To combat statistics like that, we have to expand the educational and extracurricular opportunities available to students. The Oprah Winfrey Foundation’s gift helps us do just that. A donation from someone as passionate about education and young people as Oprah Winfrey is all the more meaningful.”

Each year, Urban Prep students participate in myriad programs and activities that enhance their high school experience, support their college readiness, and contribute to their growth as well-rounded individuals. Among the programs and initiatives, The Oprah Winfrey Foundation contribution will support is “Study UP!,” Urban Prep’s summer program that provides students the opportunity to participate in national and international summer college programs.

Urban Prep students are committed to achieving success. Even though only four percent of students in the Class of 2010 came to Urban Prep reading at or above grade level, after just two years at Urban Prep, 79 percent of them are on track to graduate. This compares to only 34 percent of students attending neighborhood public schools.

"Education is the key to young people achieving their fullest potential," said Letty Tanchum, interim executive director for The Oprah Winfrey Foundation. "We are pleased to support Urban Prep in its efforts to improve the quality of education available to young men in the city of Chicago. We're impressed with the significant accomplishments of Urban Prep students and the dedication of the school's faculty and staff. Continued support of these programs will ensure that students have the opportunity to achieve successful college experiences and fulfilled lives."

More than 50 percent of Urban Prep students come from the Englewood neighborhood, and 100 percent are African-American. Eighty-four percent of the school's students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 75 percent live in single-parent households.

"Ms. Winfrey's generous support to Urban Prep is an invaluable investment in the future of these inspiring young students," said Ron Huberman, CEO, Chicago Public Schools. "I share Oprah's great confidence that Urban Prep students will one day make a significant impact in their communities and help move other students closer to achieving their college and life goals."

Urban Prep Academies was founded in 2002 by a group of African-American education, business, and civic leaders led by Tim King who wanted to improve the educational opportunities available to urban boys. In 2005, this nonprofit organization was approved under Chicago's Renaissance 2010 initiative to open Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men—Englewood Campus. Urban Prep Charter Academy is the country's first and the state of Illinois' only charter public high-school for boys. Since accepting its first class in the fall of 2006, Urban Prep has been recognized internationally for its success in improving the academic and social emotional development of urban young men. Urban Prep will open two additional schools in East Garfield Park in 2009 and in South Shore in 2010.

Oprah Winfrey has long believed that education is the door to freedom, offering a chance at a brighter future. Through her private charity, The Oprah Winfrey Foundation, she has awarded hundreds of grants to organizations that support the education and empowerment of women, children and families in the United States and around the world. Among her various philanthropic contributions, she has donated millions of dollars toward providing a better education for students who have merit but no means. She also has developed schools to educate thousands of underserved children internationally and created The Oprah Winfrey Scholars Program, which gives scholarships to students determined to use their education to give back to their communities in the United States and abroad.



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