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## Thurgood Marshall College Fund Redesign Network Helps TAKS Test Scores Soar Among Disadvantaged Minority Students



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Media Contact: Phyllis J. Bailey –  
281-438-0985  
[phyllis@3brg.com](mailto:phyllis@3brg.com)

Thurgood Marshall College Fund Redesign Network Helps TAKS Test Scores Soar Among Disadvantaged Minority Students  
Royal High School students see improvement in test scores

BROOKSHIRE, TX – February 2, 2009 – The Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) Redesign Network announces the results of its college preparedness pilot program. The TMCF Redesign Network is a key project within the national school reform and partnership initiative and is supported by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The program's mission is to assess, identify, implement and improve best practices in school reform from across the country to drive enhanced performance in underserved school districts that largely serve minority students.

The Network established partnerships between historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and high schools that educate at-risk students. Through a competitive process, six benchmark schools from underserved communities across the country were selected to partner with five HBCUs. These colleges and universities were charged with implementing redesign initiatives at the high schools to better prepare students for college, thereby helping to close the academic achievement gap.

Royal High School partnered with Prairie View A&M University for the 2007-08 school year and made exemplary strides as a result of participation in the program. Reported below are some of the statistical results achieved through the partnership.

Preliminary TAKS test scores show significant improvement compared to scores in 2005.

Eighty-three percent of math students met state standards for the TAKS test. This rate is 90 percent higher than the 2005 levels.

Eighty-six percent of English language arts students met the state standards. This rate is 14 percent higher than 2005 levels.

Ninety-three percent of social studies students and 74 percent of science students met state proficiency standards.

The TMCF Redesign Network has successfully introduced the college experience to Royal High School students deemed "at risk." As a result of this introduction, more students have enrolled in secondary educational programs at various colleges and universities. The uniqueness of the redesign effort at Royal High School is due, in part; to a curriculum that holds students to a high expectation beyond that of the state of Texas. Due to the commitment of faculty members and administrators at Royal

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and Prairie View, students in the program are better prepared to excel academically and professionally on a global scale. "The achievements of the unique partnership between Prairie View A&M University and Royal High School indicate that the model is something that can be successfully duplicated across the country," said President George C. Wright. Prairie View's heritage is grounded in a commitment to educating students - at all levels - to be productive professionals and citizens of their communities and this partnership shows our commitment to that task. We are indeed delighted to help create a model for other institutions to

duplicate.

"Closing the achievement gap continues to be a priority for the Thurgood Marshall Fund," says

Dwayne Ashley, president and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund.

"For decades, HBCUs have been the largest producer of African-American public school educators in this country, training and preparing more than 58% of those who teach in public schools. Thus, the formula is simple... we have to be leaders in working with the nation to turn our schools around so that we can help to ensure that our children have an equal chance to go to college and to become productive contributors to society."

Schools participating in the program in several other states have also seen marked academic improvements among high school students. Those partnerships include:

Coppin State University/Coppin Academy High School #434- Baltimore, MD

Southern University/Capital Pre-College Academy for Girls/Boys - Baton Rouge, LA

Winston-Salem State University/Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy - Winston-Salem, NC

Texas Southern University/Texas Southern University Math & Science at Jones High School - Houston, TX

The TCMF Reform Network plans to broaden its impact by expanding and replicating its reform work in the future.

About Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Inc.

The Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Inc., named for the late U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice, was established in 1987 and represents 47 public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) located in 22 states with a population of well over 235,000 students. It is the only national organization of its type that provides merit-based scholarships and programmatic support to students attending the nation's public Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Over the last 21 years, Thurgood Marshall College Fund has awarded more than \$91 million in scholarships and programmatic and capacity support, enabling more than 7,500 students to attend public Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Thurgood Marshall College Fund also provides internship programs and joins corporate and foundation partners in providing leadership training and support to students preparing for undergraduate and professional schools. Thurgood Marshall College Fund is a 501(c) 3, tax-exempt organization.

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80 Maiden Lane, Suite 2204, New York, NY 10038 | Toll Free: (877) 690-8673 Tel: (212) 573-8888 Fax: (212) 573-8497

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