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Western Pennsylvania Council of HBCU Alumni

Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Heinz Endowments Funds Local HBCU Organization

Pittsburgh, PA...The significance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities is reflected daily in the everyday workings of society. From the Vice President of the United States to educators, dentists, and physicians and over half of African American professionals are graduates of HBCUs.

In efforts to continue exposing and connecting youth of the Pittsburgh Metropolitan region to the viable higher education opportunities provided by HBCUs, The Heinz Endowments has awarded \$50,000 to the Western Pennsylvania Council of HBCU Alumni. "This is exciting because the funding will fuel the Council's efforts to ensure that HBCUs are presented to our youth as an option for higher education and not excluded, as previously done," explained Vince Elliott founder and president of the Western PA Council of HBCU Alumni. Based in Pittsburgh, the Council is designed to promote the scholarship, legacy, and tradition of our nation's HBCUs through active community engagement, student recruitment, and the promotion of academic success and college completion throughout Western Pennsylvania. Projects include hosting the HBCU College & Transfer Fair, the HBCU Family Reunion Cookout, and Student Sendoff, HBCU College bus tours, and campus visitations.

Aiming to ease the HBCU application process, the Council has partnered with a national educational service, the Common Black College Application. The Atlanta-based organization provides a portal enabling students to apply to the network's over 60 member HBCUs, specifying their top four choices, for a nominal fee. Founded in 2000 by Virginia State University graduate Robert Mason, his goal is to minimize the stressful and expensive process of applying to college while increasing the number of students of color participating in higher education. Despite the unusual conditions of this past year CBCA officials report that as many colleges were struggling to attract students amid the Covid-19 pandemic, their applications increased 33 percent, to 24,000.

The Western PA Council of HBCU Alumni will begin connecting this regions youth to the Common Black College Application for free starting at their July 31, 2021 Family Reunion Cookout and Student SendOff being held at the Robert E. Williams Memorial Park in the Hill District 12-8 pm.

The Heinz Endowments is devoted to the mission of helping our region prosper as a vibrant center of creativity, learning, and social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Core to our work is the vision of a just community where all are included and where everyone who calls southwestern Pennsylvania home has a real and meaningful opportunity to thrive.

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Resource Information:

The Common Black College Application [https:// www.commonblackcollegeapp.com](https://www.commonblackcollegeapp.com) The Western PA Council of HBCU Alumni <https://www.wpchbcua.org/>
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