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Richardson ISD, Communities Foundation of Texas and United Way of Metropolitan Dallas Partner to Invest in Students' Futures

Richardson ISD Announces Participation in "Dollars for College" on North Texas Giving Day

DALLAS – September 19, 2019 – Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT) and United Way of Metropolitan Dallas (UWMD) are pleased to announce a partnership with Richardson ISD to support students through the Dollars for College program that is designed to provide low-income families with a safe, user-friendly, trusted and low-cost opportunity to build savings for their child's post-secondary education.

Dollars for College educational savings accounts will be opened, at no cost, for participating kindergarten and first grade students at three Richardson ISD elementary schools – Forest Lane Academy, RISD Academy and Audelia Creek Elementary. The Dollars for College accounts will be seeded with \$50, and linked to a student's individual 529 account to be set up by the parents. Funding for the program is generously provided by the W. W. Caruth Jr. Fund at Communities Foundation of Texas, The Meadows Foundation, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Boone Family Foundation, Wells Fargo and Dallas Social Venture Partners.

"In RISD, we like to say 'All Means All.' And one of our district goals is to ensure every student crosses the stage at graduation knowing they are supported by all of us – me, our Board, our teachers, our parents, our stakeholders and our partners," Superintendent Dr. Jeannie Stone said. "We strive to have all of our students ready for life after high school, and this new partnership helps do just that. We are extremely grateful to The Communities Foundation, United Way, and underwriting sponsors for helping RISD fulfill its mission to prepare all students for life after graduation."

Families can make deposits at any time in their student's individual account, and will also have opportunities to earn incentives and matching funds to grow their overall savings. When each

child is ready to pursue post-secondary education or training, they can access the 529 account funds for those expenses.

“Our long-term goal is to help increase access to postsecondary education for the more than 70 percent of economically disadvantaged students living and studying in Dallas County,” said CFT President and CEO, Dave Scullin. “We know that by investing in students early in their academic careers, we will spur their success in life overall. We look forward to partnering with Richardson ISD and our friends in the funder community.”

To support schools in implementing Dollars for College, Communities Foundation of Texas and United Way of Metropolitan Dallas will work with identified champions at the school and district level to help plan and coordinate family outreach activities, set up individual student accounts, data collection and evaluation, as well as provide overall program administration and accounting.

“We know that children who grow up with even a small college savings account are three times more likely to go to college and four times more likely to graduate,” said Jennifer Sampson, McDermott-Templeton President and CEO, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. “United Way is proud to partner in encouraging North Texas children toward earning a degree through the Dollars for College program. Together, we’re inspiring hope for a brighter future.”

Parents and guardians of students will be engaged with opportunities to learn more about the program and why saving for college is important beginning at an early age. More information is available by visiting risd.org/dollarsforcollege. To contribute to the Dollars for College program, visit <https://portal.cftexas.org/dollars-for-college>.

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About the Richardson Independent School District

Richardson ISD, located in Dallas County, includes most of the city of Richardson, and portions of the cities of Dallas and Garland (60 percent of RISD is in Dallas, with 35 percent in Richardson and 5 percent in Garland). RISD is comprised of 54 campuses that serve more than 39,500 students. Including administration and support, RISD maintains 70 facilities covering more than 6 million square feet with 35 million square feet of grounds. The school district has a long-standing reputation for educational excellence, and is continually recognized at both the state and national levels. RISD received a “Recognized” rating from the Texas Education Agency from 2006-2012, the largest, most diverse district in Texas to earn that rating over those consecutive years. From 2013-17, RISD received the *Met Standard* rating under the STAAR-based accountability system, and received a B rating in 2018 and 2019 from the state (both years scoring an 88). www.risd.org

About the Communities Foundation of Texas

Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT) works to strengthen our community through a variety of charitable funds and strategic grantmaking initiatives. The foundation professionally manages more than 1,000 charitable funds for families, companies, foundations and nonprofits and has awarded more than \$1.9 billion in grants since its founding in 1953. With the vision of

building thriving communities for all, CFT invests in programs like Dollars for College that improve the education and economic security of working families. www.cftexas.org

About United Way of Metropolitan Dallas

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas is a community-based social change organization that puts opportunity in the hands of all North Texans. Working with our determined supporters, we lead the charge to improve education, income and health—the building blocks of opportunity. We invite all change-seekers in our community to Live United to achieve lasting results right here at home. To give, advocate or volunteer, visit UnitedWayDallas.org.