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Texas Guarantor Awards Ohio Programs Nearly \$1M to Help Kids Go to College

Columbus, Ohio - Second only to its home state, Texas Guarantor (TG) recently invested nearly \$1 million in Ohio college access programs and higher education institutions to help promote college access and success, especially for underserved, low-income, and first-generation students.

Over the past three years, TG has expanded its focus outside of Texas to provide support nationwide. Ohio is nationally known for its organized college access infrastructure, creating a natural partnership between TG and Ohio service providers.

A push in college access for Ohio students has been gaining momentum for the past decade beginning with the creation of the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) in 1999. OCAN is the statewide coordinating body that links community-based organizations providing students with motivation, college counseling and support. Today, members of OCAN strive to promote access and success to Ohioans in virtually every area of the state. Last year college access communities raised nearly \$19 million in private funding to provide services to Ohio students. Additionally, its members helped secure \$84.5 million for students in the form of financial aid and awarded more than 5,000 need-based scholarships totaling nearly \$6.5 million.

OCAN, along with six members and one non-member were awarded funds from TG that range in amount from tens of thousands to nearly \$200 thousand (http://www.tgslc.org/publicbenefit/grants_0809.cfm). While the TG funding received by OCAN will be utilized toward need-based scholarships, other Ohio grantees will utilize TG funds for a variety of projects such as mentoring, high school advising, parent outreach, academic exploration, ACT preparation and tutoring.

The following programs will carry out these initiatives during the 2008-2009 academic year: Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, Holmes County Education Foundation, I Know I Can (Columbus City Schools), Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation, Ohio College Access Network, Ohio State University (BluePrint: College), University & College Access Network of Richland County and Walsh University.

"I am thrilled with TG's commitment to changing the lives of Ohio students," said Dr. Reginald A. Wilkinson, OCAN President and CEO. "This is a timely investment in our

state because it aligns with Governor Strickland's and Chancellor Fingerhut's plans to educate more Ohioans."

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*The **Ohio College Access Network (OCAN)** was founded in 1999, by KnowledgeWorks Foundation, in collaboration with the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Business Roundtable. OCAN works to establish college access programs across the state and is the first statewide coordinating body for college access programs in the nation. The goal of the organization is to help more Ohio students pursue postsecondary education through the work of local college access programs, which provide financial aid advising, last dollar grants, career guidance, and other services. Currently, 36 college access programs serve nearly 300 of Ohio's 612 school districts, and 17 private/parochial schools in 46 counties touching over 175,000 students annually.*

***About TG:** TG is a public, nonprofit corporation that helps to create access to higher education for millions of families and students through its role as an administrator of the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). Its vision is to be the premier source of information, financing, and assistance to help all families and students realize their educational and career dreams. Additional information about TG can be found online at www.tgslc.org.*