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Transforming Lives & Communities

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PHOTO RELEASE

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Youth Council Launched During Houston Housing Authority's First-Ever Youth Summit at TSU

Community leaders and mentors gathered with students in HHA programs to inspire college readiness and education as a pathway for economic mobility and success

Houston, TX – June 20, 2017 – With the goal of using education to break the cycle of poverty, the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) recruited students in within HHA programs to form a youth council during their first-ever Youth Summit, focused on encouraging college readiness.

HHA's Youth Summit took place Thursday, June 15 at Texas Southern University (TSU), where middle and high-school aged children connected with community mentors, toured the TSU campus and developed a youth council that will meet monthly to learn about college preparedness and financial aid.

"We want to expose [students] to a college campus, and show that there's a lot that this world has to offer," said HHA President & CEO Tory Gunsolley during the Youth Summit. "What young people need to do is to step up, take advantage and never be afraid to ask for help."

With a defined gap in education attainment based on socioeconomic status, the HHA believes it's paramount to help students in their programs gain equal access to college opportunities.

GOGO Business Communications president and Greater Houston Black Chamber Board Vice-Chair Joi Beasley was one of a number of local supporters who collaborated with HHA to be a part of the program.

"I applaud the Houston Housing Authority for its efforts – the truly have these young people's best interests at heart," said Beasley. "The agency is constantly working with partners and businesses like mine to develop new initiatives that benefit youth, individuals and families. Now more than event, young people need to know that there's an organization like the HHA cheering for them and making efforts to ensure their future success."



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PHOTO ONE CAPTION: During the Youth Summit, students learned about college readiness and participated in roundtable discussions with leaders and mentors from historically black universities and colleges, including Howard University, Xavier University and Fisk University.



PHOTO TWO CAPTION: HHA Board of Commissioners Chairman and TSU Assistant VP for Development LaRence Snowden attended the HHA's first-ever Youth Summit and gave a keynote speech to middle and high school aged students on the importance of education and college readiness.



PHOTO THREE CAPTION: 15 students attended the Youth Summit and toured the Texas State University campus. The Houston-area students got a headstart on their college journey and learned the value of higher education firsthand.

ABOUT HHA:

The Houston Housing Authority provides affordable homes and services to more than 58,000 low-income Houstonians, including over 17,000 families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program and another 5,700 living in 25 public housing and tax credit developments around the city. HHA also administers one of the nation's largest voucher program exclusively serving homeless veterans. More information about the Houston Housing Authority can be found at www.housingforhouston.com.

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