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I Know I Can Celebrates Its Largest Ever Donation to the Founders' Scholarship Program for Students Attending HBCUs

COLUMBUS, OH – [I Know I Can](#), Columbus' only non-profit organization focused on college and career readiness, today announced the largest ever multi-year donation to its Founders' Scholarship program for HBCU students from [Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Eta Nu Nu Chapter](#). The fraternity has committed \$100,000 to provide Columbus City Schools graduates with funds to attend the Historically Black College or University (HBCU) of their dreams. This donation brings the fraternity's total commitment to \$120,000 and will support multiple students each year throughout their college career.

For thirty-five years, I Know I Can has encouraged students to dream big, work hard, and reach their goals of going to college. In 2010, the organization established the I Know I Can Founders' Scholarship in honor of its founders: the late Art Kobacker, the late Clifford Tyree, Teckie Shackelford, and Bob Weiler. The Founders' Scholarships are awarded each year to high-achieving Columbus City Schools graduates who meet a set of specific criteria, including demonstrated financial need. The scholarship provides up to \$10,000 per year and is renewable for up to four years. To date, I Know I Can has awarded over 225 students with a Founders' Scholarship, committing over \$6 million to ensure their college dreams become a reality.

"The generous gift from the Eta Nu Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. will ensure that multiple students have the resources to attend and graduate from their preferred HBCU," said I Know I Can's Director of Development and Public Relations, Patrick Lynch. "We are honored that the fraternity chose I Know I Can as a partner to provide the resources that students need to begin building successful careers."

The \$100,000 donation was announced during a check presentation at the National Pan-Hellenic Council of Columbus' Step & Stroll Competition. "We believe that our multi-year gift to I Know I Can's Founders' program will significantly ease the financial burden that families incur over the course of a college student's career, which on average lasts five years. Given that the



U.S. Supreme Court has banned the use of race as a consideration in college admissions, it is our hope that the Divine 9 community, as well as other organizations that endeavor to make college attendance a reality for young people, follow our lead by increasing the size of their donations to this worthy cause," said Matthew Coleman, Basileus of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Eta Nu Nu Chapter.

The first cohort of Columbus City Schools graduates who will receive funding from this gift will be selected in April 2024 and will begin their college journey in the fall of that year.

About I Know I Can

Currently in its 35th year, I Know I Can serves over 30,000 students from Columbus City Schools, Reynoldsburg City Schools, South-Western City School District, and Whitehall City Schools. IKIC achieves its mission, "to inspire, enable, and support Columbus students to pursue and complete a postsecondary education," by focusing its service efforts on three proven areas critical for success in postsecondary success.

- Early awareness services that enhance aspirations through exposure to career possibilities, knowledge of career requirements, college and job site visits, and postsecondary cost planning for student in grades 6-10.
- Access services that increase the number of college-ready 11th and 12th grade students by supporting the completion of critical milestones including: ACT/SAT, college applications, and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
- Summer melt prevention and college persistence efforts that address the disproportionate number of low-income students who plan to go to college but never get there, and by assisting students who do enroll by supporting them as they navigate social, academic, and financial barriers to completion.

In addition to these efforts, I Know I Can awards more than \$1.9 million in grants and scholarships annually to deserving students. Learn more at www.iknowican.org or @iknowican88 on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

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I Know I Can staff members accept a \$100,000 donation from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. to support their Founders' Scholarship program for students attending HBCUs.