NEWS RELEASE

Dreaming Big - Achieving the Dream Announces the Winners of the 2012 DREAM Big for College Scholarship Contests

4 Community college students awarded scholarships for expressing creativity and inspiring others to complete college and pursue their dreams

Silver Spring, MD (January 21, 2013) – As part of its efforts to engage students in the national conversation about community college success and completion, Achieving the Dream (www.achievingthedream.org) recently selected the four students who will be receiving scholarships through the DREAM BIG for College contests. These two scholarship contests encouraged students to leverage their artistic and creative talents in order to share their inspiring stories of triumph and hope, and motivate others to complete college and pursue their dreams.

In conjunction with GOOD Maker, Achieving the Dream launched the first of these two scholarship contests in September 2012, DREAM Big for College and Your Future, which asked community college students to submit self-made videos about their dream job, and how their community college is helping them get there. Over 100 inspiring video diaries were submitted, from which three grand prize recipients were selected and profiled:

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<th>1st Place: $1,500 scholarship</th>
<th>Melissa Leon, South Texas College</th>
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<td>Not able to speak English when she first moved to America, she is now studying psychology in hopes of fulfilling her dreams to develop a mental health center. Leon says, “STC has been supporting me since the day I moved to this country… because of all their help, I believe I have the potential to reach my dreams…”</td>
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2nd Place: $1,000 scholarship
Jessica Kranson, St. Clair County Community College
Kranson is currently enrolled in the nursing program at her community college. She hopes to one day become a nurse practitioner; a job she says means, “being there to help others wherever and whenever we can.”

3rd Place: $500 scholarship
Chip Moyo, Tarrant County College
Moyo is currently enrolled in the business administration program at her college. She hopes to one day open a school of the arts in Southern Africa, and devote her time and talent “to pouring inspiration and hope to those that are broken, poor, hopeless, or have a dream.”

“Who better to motivate and encourage community college students than their peers? They are right there with them working to complete and succeed,” said Nicole Melander, Achieving the Dream Chief Technology Officer. “We have been overwhelmed by the passion and creativity students have expressed in their DREAM Big for College submissions, and look forward to finding new ways to share their stories with our networks through this campaign in the months to come.”

In addition to the DREAM Big for College and Your Future video challenge, Achieving the Dream also launched the DREAM Big for College student design contest in December 2012 and named the winning design in January 2013:

Alexander Rey, Miami Dade Community
Grand Prize Winning Design: $1,000
Rey, a student, husband, and father submitted the winning artwork. “My design was just a representation of my life, and the process I've been going through in order to achieve my dream of becoming a graphic designer,” said Rey.

This contest, which encouraged students to submit a piece of artwork that expressed creativity and initiative, and that would inspire other students to “finish what they start,” was hosted on Achieving the Dream’s Facebook page. Fans of the page were able to vote on the designs and judge them based on creativity, originality, and demonstration of the theme.

“More than 1,500 practitioners, policymakers, and thought-leaders from the community college reform movement will be convening at DREAM,” said Lauren Lewis, Communications Manager for Achieving the Dream. “This is an incredible opportunity for the winning student’s design to be seen by our entire National Reform Network and by the people working every day to improve community college student success.”

Achieving the Dream plans to continue its student-centered DREAM Big for College campaign with future contests. It has been widely successful thus far, engaging students across multiple platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, to get their voices heard and uplifted directly to the ear of influencers.

**DREAM Big for College**
The DREAM Big for College campaign leverages multiple platforms (Facebook and Twitter) to fast-track students' voices directly to the ear of influencers. Through DREAM Big for College, the nation is hearing from students about what it takes for them to stay in college and earn their certificate or degree. Launched in 2012 in conjunction with a T-shirt design contest and a student video contest, the campaign continues to leverage prize contests that engage students’ artistic and creative talents as they share their inspiring stories of triumph and hope, and provide their important perspective into the national reform movement.

**Achieving the Dream, Inc.**
Achieving the Dream, Inc. is a national nonprofit that is dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree. Evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, Achieving the Dream is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional improvement, 2) leading policy change, 3) generating knowledge, and 4) engaging the public. Conceived as an initiative in 2004 by Lumina Foundation and seven founding partner organizations, today, Achieving the Dream is leading the most comprehensive non-governmental reform network for student success in higher education history. With nearly 200 colleges, more than 100 coaches and advisors, and 15 state policy teams - working throughout 32 states and the District of Columbia – the
Achieving the Dream National Reform Network helps 3.75 million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams.

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