UNCF Celebrates 75 Years of Lighting the Way to Better Futures

12 Texas mayors hosting the annual North Texas UNCF Mayors’ Masked Ball to benefit deserving students and historically black colleges and universities

DALLAS (PRWEB) February 23, 2019 -- In 75 years, UNCF (United Negro College Fund) has empowered nearly half a million students to earn college degrees. As the largest and most effective minority education organization in the United States, UNCF also actively supports 37 private historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and advocates for minority higher education. As it marks its major milestone, UNCF is planning a year-long celebration via its fundraising events across the country including the annual North Texas Mayors’ Masked Ball set for 6 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 23 at the Hyatt Regency Dallas.

More than 700 guests are expected to attend including event host Mayor Mike Rawlings; event chair Texas State Sen. Royce West; Dr. Michael L. Lomax, president and CEO, UNCF; and host committee members Mayor Rob Franke, city of Cedar Hill; Mayor Karen Hunt, city of Coppell; Mayor Curtistene McCowan, city of DeSoto; Mayor Barry Gordon, city of Duncanville; Mayor Robert C. Dye, city of Farmers Branch; Mayor Jeff Cheney, city of Frisco; Mayor Lori Barnett Dodson, city of Garland; Mayor Clyde C. Hairston, city of Lancaster; Mayor Rudy Durham, city of Lewisville; Mayor David L. Cook, city of Mansfield; and Mayor Harry LaRosiliere, city of Plano.

“I am pleased to host the UNCF Mayors’ Masked Ball again this year along with 11 other area mayors. Last year, we raised more than $800,000. This event is important because it supports education for minority students,’’ said Rawlings. “Many sponsors have invested in the work of UNCF to ensure that more students from Dallas can receive a college education at a historically black college or university, and for this, I am very grateful. Investing in the college education of our young people will impact Dallas for many generations.”

“This Texas-sized investment in our students and our HBCUs is invaluable,” said Lomax. “We are bringing 12 mayors together to change the narrative about HBCUs and forge better futures for deserving students and, through them, for all of us.”

Benefitting HBCUs and students of color, events like the North Texas Mayors’ Masked Ball helped UNCF gain the resources to provide more than $9.5 million in scholarships last year to students from Texas. “For every scholarship UNCF gives a student, there are nine other students we must turn away,’’ said Kristie Patton Foster, area development director, UNCF. ‘‘UNCF is committed to providing as many students as possible with the necessary tools to improve their lives, and the North Texas Mayors’ Masked Ball helps to ensure they get to and through college successfully.”

The economic benefits of HBCUs extend beyond the students they educate and are equally important to the communities they serve. With the release of UNCF’s landmark study, HBCUs Make America Strong: The Positive Economic Impact of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, graduates from Texas’s nine HBCUs generate $1.3 billion in total economic impact and 11,490 jobs annually for the state.

The signature black-tie gala will feature a VIP reception, silent auction and music by local favorite, Manhattan. Additional entertainment will be provided by young singing sensation Skye Turner. UNCF will also host the Mask Off after-party, an event for young professionals to celebrate for a great cause. Immediately following the main event, this unique experience will be a way to have fun while giving back to the next generation of
leaders.

This year, UNCF will honor the North Texas Boulés of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity with the UNCF Masked Award for being beacons of hope and supporters. Long-time friend and supporter of UNCF, Hunt Consolidated, Inc., also returns as presenting sponsor, as well as premiere sponsor AT&T. Evan Anderson, NBC 5 weekend anchor and UNCF-member HBCU Dillard University alumnus, is slated to serve as the event emcee.

For media coverage opportunities, please contact Cynetra McMillian at 202.854.0007 or cynetra.mcmillian(at)uncf.org. Follow this event on social media @UNCF #UNCFDallas #UNCF #UNCF75 #UNCFNorthTexas.

About UNCF
UNCF (the United Negro College Fund) is the nation’s largest and most effective minority education organization. To serve youth, the community and the nation, UNCF supports students’ education and development through scholarships and other programs, supports and strengthens its 37 member colleges and universities and advocates for the importance of minority education and college readiness. UNCF institutions and other historically black colleges and universities are highly effective, awarding 17 percent of African American baccalaureate degrees. UNCF administers more than 400 programs, including scholarship, internship and fellowship, mentoring, summer enrichment and curriculum and faculty development programs. Today, UNCF supports more than 60,000 students at over 1,100 colleges and universities across the country. Its logo features the UNCF torch of leadership in education and its widely recognized motto, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste."® Learn more at UNCF.org or for continuous updates and news, follow UNCF Florida Region on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at @UNCF.
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