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GATES MILLENNIUM SCHOLARS PROGRAM ANNOUNCES NEW 1,000 SCHOLARS FOR THE CLASS OF 2010

FAIRFAX, VA (April 22, 2010) - UNCF—the United Negro College Fund—today announced that the nation’s largest minority scholarship program, the Gates Millennium Scholars Program (GMS), has awarded good-through-graduation college scholarships to this year’s cohort of 1,000 students. The Class of 2010 Gates Millennium Scholars represents 45 states, the District of Columbia and three U.S. territories: American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The scholarships can be used to pursue degrees in any undergraduate major at the college or university of the recipients’ choice.

Established in 1999 with the goal of developing the next generation of America’s leaders, UNCF’s Gates Millennium Scholars Program is funded by a \$1.6 billion grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. To date, over 13,000 students have received GMS scholarships, attending more than 1,500 schools, including Ivy League colleges, flagship state universities and UNCF member historically black colleges (HBCUs).

In addition to financial assistance, Gates Millennium Scholars receive academic support, mentoring and leadership training. As a result, recipients have an average five-year graduation rate of almost 80 percent, 45 percent higher than the six-year rate for all college students.

“The 20,000 young men and women who will attend college as Gates Millennium Scholars will make a major contribution to helping the United States fulfill President Obama’s goal of regaining for America world leadership in the proportion of citizens with college degrees,” said Michael L. Lomax, Ph.D., UNCF President and CEO. “The Gates Millennium Scholars Program is an investment in both the futures of these students and the country’s economic and social strength and competitiveness.”

UNCF’s management of the Gates Millennium Scholars Program is a partnership with the American Indian Graduate Center Scholars (AIGCS), the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) and the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF) to serve Gates Millennium Scholars in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

“Of all the ways to increase opportunities for lower-income youth, education is the most important,” said Margaret Daniels Tyler, Senior Program Officer at the Gates Foundation. “By supporting a diverse cadre of students to earn their degrees, we can help develop the next generation of leaders in communities across the country. That is what the Gates Millennium Scholars Program is all about.”

For more information about GMS and a list of the Class of 2010 Gates Millennium Scholars, visit www.gmsp.org.

About GMS

The Gates Millennium Scholars Program (GMS), funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was established in 1999 to provide outstanding low income African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian Pacific Islander American, and Hispanic American students with an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education in any discipline they choose. Continuing Gates Scholars may request funding for a graduate degree program in one of the following discipline areas: computer science, education, engineering, library science, mathematics, public health or science. The goal of GMS is to promote academic excellence by providing thousands of outstanding students, who have significant financial need, the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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, strengthens its 39 member colleges and universities, and advocates for the importance of minority education. UNCF institutions and other historically black colleges and universities are highly effective, awarding 18 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 900 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 www.UNCF.org.