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**Business-Higher Education Forum receives major grant from USA
Funds to support college readiness and access work**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF), an organization of Fortune 500 CEOs, leaders of colleges and universities, and foundation executives which informs members, policy makers, and the public on issues of strategic importance to both business and higher education, has received a grant of \$184,010 from USA Funds, the nation’s leading education loan guarantor. The award will help to advance the Forum’s latest initiative, “Boosting K-12 Student Achievement: Promoting College Readiness for All.” The initiative focuses on engaging corporate, academic and foundation leaders to address *the* pivotal issues in K-12 education: the need to improve student achievement and to promote college readiness for all students.

“The generous support of USA Funds will enable BHEF to promote a more effective corporate response to the challenges facing public K-12 education. Through our new initiative, we plan to engage corporations and their foundations in supporting strategies that promote college readiness, awareness and access,” said BHEF chairman Herbert M. Allison, Jr., Chairman, President and CEO of TIAA-CREF. “We share USA Funds’ commitment to expanding educational opportunities for all, and particularly among those groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education.”

BHEF’s initiative seeks to: 1) increase support for practices that are effective in improving student achievement and in promoting college readiness and degree attainment; 2) promote leadership by the business community, in particular, to

dramatically improve K-12 student achievement, especially in science and mathematics; and 3) change public attitudes about the need to prepare all students for college level work.

The USA Funds grant will fund research to: identify and engage corporate and academic leaders on the issues of college readiness, awareness and access; identify the most effective strategies and programmatic models to promote these goals; provide research and technical assistance that can guide the philanthropy of corporations and foundations in these areas; identify the most effective means of disseminating the research and findings; and devise a set of principles to guide implementation of a future public awareness campaign.

“USA Funds is pleased to partner with the Business-Higher Education Forum on this project to bring greater visibility, particularly in the business community, to the critical areas of postsecondary preparedness and access,” said Carl Dalstrom, USA Funds president and CEO. “BHEF’s strong cross-sector membership, composed of key leaders from the corporate, university and foundation communities, makes it uniquely positioned to engage leaders from all three communities in accomplishing the objectives of this project.”

The Business-Higher Education Forum (“BHEF” or “the Forum”) is an individual membership organization composed of Fortune 500 CEOs, leaders of colleges and universities, and foundation executives. The organization informs members, policy makers, and the public on issues of strategic importance to both business and higher education, and works to influence public policy and practice on these issues. BHEF has been a leading voice in the public policy debate on the need to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (“STEM”) education in the United States. Its latest initiative aims to improve K-12 student achievement, particularly in science and mathematics, and to promote college/work readiness for all of America’s students.

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