



July 6, 2017

## **Navient Foundation contributes \$10,000 to TeenSHARP program to increase underrepresented students' access and success at college**

WILMINGTON, Del., July 06, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- College is more important than ever, with degree completion correlated with financial health and career success down the road. Though many high schoolers will go on to pursue higher education once they graduate, the path to college may seem less clear for some than it is for others. TeenSHARP, a nonprofit organization, seeks to prepare and encourage talented African-American and Latino students to attend and thrive at our nation's top colleges.

Navient Foundation, the company-sponsored philanthropic fund, contributed \$10,000 to TeenSHARP's College Access Ambassador Training program. Intended for grades nine through 12, the four-year program is designed for teens who demonstrate high academic promise and leadership.

"TeenSHARP is committed to lowering barriers to elite college education for youth who have been out-privileged for far too long," said Tatiana Poladko, founder and executive director, TeenSHARP.

Despite never getting less than an A on her report cards, one TeenSHARP participant, Alejandra, learned she was still behind in mathematics and Spanish, making her less likely to get accepted into an elite college.

"Pre-calculus was the highest level of math offered at my school and I had only formally taken one year of Spanish," she said. "As a junior, I learned that the expectation was that I should complete four. TeenSHARP developed an action plan for me to take courses after hours at Wilmington University, Del Tech and University of Delaware."

Alejandra credits TeenSHARP for leading her down the road to academic success and, ultimately, her admission into Wesleyan University in Connecticut with a full scholarship, where she begins this fall.

"My eyes were filled with tears when I found out I had been accepted," she said. "I know that without TeenSHARP's support, I would have never known the ways in which my academic journey was lacking, not to mention being able to find solutions to address those areas."

Held at University of Delaware every Saturday from August through May, the TeenSHARP program offers college-level seminars, one-on-one academic advising and mentoring, academic tutoring in various disciplines, meetings with inspiring professionals, leadership coaching, college campus tours and parent coaching.

Over the course of each student's training, participants strengthen their personal academic skills, develop a deep understanding of the college admissions and application process, and take steps to bridge disparities in college awareness and enrollment in their communities.

"Degree completion is one of the best ways to increase your career and financial success, and it all starts with strong preparation before entering college," said Sheila Ryan-Macie, senior vice president, Navient. "We are proud to support TeenSHARP to not only help open the door to higher education for more at-risk students, but support them to complete their degrees."

Those with a college degree are better off financially than those without, according to [Money Under 35](#), a study conducted by Navient and the global market research company Ipsos. Degree holders are more likely to be employed, earn higher wages, have a higher credit score, and buy a home than those without a degree.

Learn more about [TeenSHARP](#).

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### **About Navient**

Navient (Nasdaq:NAVI) is a leading provider of asset management and business processing solutions for education, healthcare, and government clients at the federal, state, and local levels. The company helps its clients and millions of Americans achieve financial success through services and support. Headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware, Navient employs team members in western New York, northeastern Pennsylvania, Indiana, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and other

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