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Press Release

For Immediate Release

Three Xavier University of Louisiana Students Awarded Scholarships by Kevin Hart’s “Help From The Hart Charity,” a New \$600,000 Scholarship Program

UNCF, KIPP team up with charity to help 18 students attend HBCUs

WASHINGTON, DC (Aug. 7, 2018)—Following up on his generous \$100,000 scholarship gift made through UNCF (the United Negro College Fund) to four deserving college students back in 2015, actor and comedian Kevin Hart has joined forces with UNCF and KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) to help 18 more KIPP students earn a college degree—including three [Xavier University of Louisiana](#) students: freshman Lauryn Williams, junior Daja Brooks, and junior Mack Williams.

Through a new UNCF scholarship program launched in partnership with Kevin Hart’s “Help From The Hart Charity” and KIPP Public Schools, the \$600,000 scholarship will provide funding to support KIPP students from eight different cities, attending 11 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

“Xavier University is grateful for the generosity of Kevin Hart and the work of the UNCF to continually make certain that no mind is wasted,” said Dr. Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University of Louisiana. He added, “Like Mr. Hart, Xavier recognizes that all of our youth have the potential to achieve great things. It is only through creating pathways to opportunities in the K-12 pipeline and insuring funds to pursue secondary education that we will enable them to meet their own potential.”

“Education and knowledge are powerful,” said Hart. “I just wanted to do my part in providing opportunities for our future leaders, especially from my Philly hometown, and show support for HBCUs. This is just the beginning; trust me when I tell you there are a lot more kids who want to go to college who don’t have the money to make it happen.”

UNCF is the largest provider of college scholarships for students of color in the U.S., awarding more than \$100 million in college scholarships annually to deserving students. [The 18 “Help From The Hart Charity Scholarship” recipients](#) have been selected based

on their academic and personal accomplishments and may receive substantive renewable awards based on need.

“The ‘Help From The Hart Charity Scholarship’ will not only support students, but will also demonstrate support for HBCUs,” said UNCF CEO and President Michael L. Lomax. “Research shows that [HBCUs matter](#), and that HBCU students are having a positive college experience, but they also have an unmet financial need. Together, Kevin and KIPP have made an investment that will have a significant impact. We can’t thank them enough for their support, and we want to congratulate these 18 students for keeping their eyes on their goal of a college education.”

Hart’s gift to fund this new scholarship program puts him in line with many other renowned celebrities who have supported UNCF over the years. “Giving back to build better futures is the name of the game, and we hope that others like Kevin will understand why educational investments are so important, especially now, and step up to help more deserving students,” said Lomax.

“Nothing brings me greater joy than to see the hard work of these 18 KIPP students recognized by Kevin Hart and UNCF through this generous scholarship program,” said John Fisher, chair of the KIPP Foundation Board of Directors. “Michael Lomax has been a longtime KIPP supporter and friend and a tireless champion for young people. We are incredibly grateful to both UNCF and Kevin Hart for their partnership and support to help our students thrive in college and achieve their dreams.”

Lomax added, “Over the last decade, UNCF has been building a relationship with the KIPP public school network, and we are so excited that KIPP’s board of directors and their Chairman John Fisher are behind this outstanding new venture. There are more than 1,300 KIPPsters currently enrolled at HBCUs, and together, we are bringing resources and shining a spotlight on these students who are doing all they can to get a college education. This unique partnership will help UNCF continue to bridge the gap from high school success to college achievement and enables UNCF to help more students get to and through college.”

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About UNCF: *UNCF (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 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 nearly 20 percent of African American baccalaureate degrees. UNCF awards more than \$100 million in scholarships annually and 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 more than 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 on Twitter at [@UNCF](#).*

About KIPP Public Schools: *KIPP, the Knowledge Is Power Program, is a national network of 224 public charter schools dedicated to preparing students in educationally underserved communities for success in college and life. KIPP schools are part of the free public school system and enrollment is open to all students. Started in 1994 as a middle school program, KIPP has since expanded to enroll 96,000 students in all grades from pre-K through high school. Nationwide, KIPP students complete four-year college at a rate of 36 percent, comparable to the national average for all students and approximately three times higher than the average for students from low-income families.*

About Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier was recently ranked as the nation's #2 HBCU (Historically Black College and University) by [College Consensus](#), a unique college ratings website that aggregates publisher rankings and student reviews, in its newly released publication, [Best HBCUs for 2018](#). Xavier was also among the four colleges selected by Beyonce and her [BeyGood Foundation](#) as the recipient of a Homecoming Scholars Scholarship Award announced after her much lauded performance at Coachella.

That's just the latest in national accolades Xavier has received as one of the best universities in the country. Most notably, XULA is ranked as the best value among southern regional colleges and universities in the 2018 edition of "Best Colleges" by the U.S. News Media Group. Xavier also ranked No. 1 in its grouping, heading the list of only 15 schools that qualified for the Southern Region category listed under "Great Schools, Great Prices."

At Xavier eXcellence awaits yoU. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana visit us online at www.xula.edu or follow us on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter @XULA1925. Take a moment to learn more about how Xavier is preparing students for the future at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD4mb-jYZC8>. To book interviews about our recent accomplishments and/or to speak with our experts in the field of pharmacy, education, premed, public health, science, technology, math, business, English, communications and the arts, contact Diana Hernandez at (504) 520-5120 or dhernan1@xula.edu.