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Michigan College Access Network Announces \$282,000 in Awards for Local College Access Networks

October 19, 2011 – Lansing, MI – The [Michigan College Access Network](http://micollegeaccess.org) (MCAN) announces eleven communities will collectively receive \$282,000 to support college access and success initiatives. The planning, startup, and collective impact grants are designed to help Michigan communities establish and strengthen local college access networks. Currently, MCAN supports 41 local networks across the state.

These local college access networks will coordinate programs, services and resources that lower the barriers preventing students, particularly low-income and first-generation students and students of color, from pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities. In each community, leaders in education, the nonprofit sector, business, government and philanthropy will work together to design a local strategy to foster a college-going culture and dramatically increase the college participation and completion rates.

Four communities were awarded \$8,000 planning grants to convene a leadership team to explore the community's current college access needs. They will then design a plan to build a college-going culture and deliver a comprehensive set of college access services. Three communities were awarded a \$50,000 startup grant to begin implementation of its college access strategy. Four communities were awarded a \$25,000 collective impact grant to support community-based local college access networks that are coordinating individuals from broad cross-sector entities within their community to affect larger-scale social change.

Planning grant recipients:

- Allegan County College Access Network
- Huron Valley College Access Network - *servicing Commerce, Highland, Milford, White Lake Townships, Milford Village*
- Lenawee County College Access Network
- Marquette Alger College Access Network – *servicing Marquette and Alger Counties*

Startup grant recipients:

- Barry County College Access Network
- Keweenaw College Access Network – *servicing Baraga, Houghton and Keweenaw Counties*
- Lansing College Access Network

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Our Goal: 60% college attainment by 2025

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Collective Impact grant recipients:

- Montcalm Ionia College Access Network
- Muskegon Opportunity – *Muskegon County*
- St. Clair County KnowHow2GO
- Sturgis SUCCESS

“These local college access networks play a critical role in helping build and sustain a vibrant economy in Michigan,” said Brandy Johnson, director of the Michigan College Access Network. “By developing a cross-sector alliance, the community works together in identifying current assets and gaps to ensure they are building a strong and highly successful college access strategy.”

Currently, 35.6 percent of Michigan’s 25 to 64 year olds possess at least an associate’s degree, ranking Michigan 33rd among all states. Michigan’s rate lags behind the national average of 37.9 percent. It is MCAN’s goal to increase Michigan’s postsecondary educational attainment rate to 60 percent by the year 2025.

Funding from the U.S. Department of Education’s College Access Challenge Grant made this round of MCAN grants possible. The next round of grants will be awarded in March 2012.

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About Michigan College Access Network

As the leader in the state’s college access movement, MCAN’s mission is to dramatically increase Michigan’s college participation and completion rates, particularly among low-income students, first-generation college students, and students of color. MCAN also supports two statewide college access initiatives: MichiganCAP, a one-stop-shop for students to plan, apply and pay for college at www.michiganacap.org, and KnowHow2GOMichigan, a public awareness campaign designed to encourage and prepare low-income students and their families to take the necessary steps toward college (www.knowhow2gomichigan.org).

For more information, visit www.micollegeaccess.org. You can also find MCAN on Facebook at www.facebook.com/micollegeaccess.

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