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GET SCHOOLED, AT&T AND NATIONAL COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK ANNOUNCE EXPANSION OF COLLEGE TEXT HOTLINE

ORLANDO, FL – September 28, 2015 – To ensure more young people have access to the information they need to go to college, today the Get Schooled Foundation announced the expansion of the College Text Hotline for the 2015-16 school year during a panel at the 20th Anniversary National College Access Network (NCAN) Conference. AT&T’s support of the Text Hotline program expansion will help students and their families navigate the often complex process of applying and paying for college and will provide an easy way to have their questions answered in English or Spanish by expert trained volunteers.

As a result of the program expansion, any student in the U.S. can text 335577 to get answers on where to apply to college, how to apply and how to navigate the financial aid process and pay for college.

AT&T’s support of the program is part of the company’s signature education initiative [AT&T Aspire](#). AT&T Aspire drives innovation in education to promote student success in school and beyond.

“Technology is fundamentally altering education by removing barriers so that every student can pursue her goals,” said Nicole Anderson, Executive Director of Philanthropy at AT&T. “This exciting program with Get Schooled will use the technology most familiar to high school students so they can get answers to their college application questions wherever they are – at school, at home or anywhere in between.”

The Text Hotline enables students to use their preferred communication channel to connect with an expert in their community who can answer questions about college applications and financial aid. In 2015, the Pew Research Center¹ highlighted the importance of phones and texting in the lives of teens. Nearly 90 percent of teens have access to a phone and 90 percent of those teens exchange texts. According to Pew, a typical teen sends and receives 30 texts per day.

“As college has become a critical stepping stone in preparing for career and life, it is important that *all* students can get their questions answered so they can make informed decisions,” said

¹ <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/09/teens-social-media-technology-2015/>



Marie Groark, Executive Director of Get Schooled. “At Get Schooled we believe passionately in meeting students where they are with the expertise they need. Thanks to AT&T’s support and NCAN’s partnership, we will be able to use text to do just that.”

Get Schooled has partnered with NCAN, a membership organization that touches the lives of more than two million students and families each year, to implement the Text Hotline across the country. Up to 50 NCAN members will be able to use the Hotline at no cost to connect with college-bound students in their communities to help them navigate the college application and financial aid process.

“To help more high school students get the information they need about college, we have to reach them where they are, and that’s on their phones,” Kim Cook, NCAN’s executive director, said. “The Text Hotline is a great opportunity to expand college access support in a community or state.”

Beginning in January of 2015, Get Schooled has used text to offer financial aid and general support to its students. All told, texting has proved a popular resource among Get Schooled students and their families with close to 125,000 texts exchanged since the beginning of the year. Through text, many parents and students have asked questions about financial aid deadlines, where to find key forms, the availability of aid for part-time students and how to apply to college, among other items. In a follow-up survey, more than 97 percent of those who texted questions found the service helpful.

State and city-based college access organizations like NCAN can opt in to the Text Hotline in their communities before October 31, 2015. Students seeking free assistance can text the following:

- In English, text “college” to 335577
- In Spanish, text “colegio” to 335577

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About Get Schooled

Get Schooled is a non-profit organization that directly engages and motivates students to graduate from high school and succeed in college. Get Schooled is the premiere education brand for young people – linking students with high quality, cutting edge resources and tools they need to succeed. Get Schooled has developed a track record of success because it engages with young Americans using the media, technology and popular culture that is an integral part of their lives. Get Schooled's work is boosted by partners like Viacom, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Google, the Taco Bell Foundation for Teens, Capital One Bank and Comcast. Since 2010, Get Schooled has engaged more than 5 million young Americans and has built a network of more than 2,000 middle and high schools.



About Philanthropy and Social Innovation at AT&T

AT&T Inc. is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. In 2014, nearly \$127 million was contributed or directed through corporate-, employee-, social investment- and AT&T Foundation-giving programs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T's signature education initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring.

About NCAN

Founded in 1995, NCAN's mission is to build, strengthen, and empower communities committed to college access and success so that all students, especially those underrepresented in postsecondary education, can achieve their educational dreams. With its members and partners, NCAN develops and supports programs and policy solutions that help more students aspire to, apply to, enter, and succeed in college or other postsecondary training. NCAN's hundreds of members span a broad range of the education, nonprofit, government, and civic sectors, including national and community-based nonprofit organizations, federally funded TRIO and GEAR UP programs, school districts, colleges and universities, foundations, and corporations.