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U.S. DREAM ACADEMY RAISES \$3.5 MILLION DURING 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION EVENT

Oprah Winfrey announces surprise donation of \$2.5 million in continued support of youth education

SILVER SPRING, MD, October 3, 2023 — The U.S. Dream Academy, a 501(c)3 nonprofit that inspires and invests in the lives of children of incarcerated parents, celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a “Power of A Dream” celebration, presented by Amway, welcoming 400 supporters on Monday, October 2nd at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC. The U.S. Dream Academy surpassed their fundraising goal, raising \$3.5 Million to continue its programs and outreach to empower children (DreamKids) impacted by parental incarceration.

During the festivities, guests were surprised when Oprah Winfrey appeared in a video message praising the work of the team and the leadership of Dr. Wintley Phipps, ending the video pledging a \$2.5 million donation. The gift is in line with the two decades of generous support from Ms. Winfrey, who has donated over \$10 million to support the mission of The U.S. Dream Academy.

“Education is one of the forces that helped me be who I am in the world today. I’m a believer in helping children be the best that they can be, as this Academy has done for a quarter of a century,” said Oprah Winfrey in the surprise video message.

“The U.S. Dream Academy is so blessed to consider Oprah Winfrey as our biggest champion and supporter over the course of these 25 years,” says Dr. Wintley Phipps, U.S. Dream Academy Founder and CEO. “Words cannot express our deep gratitude to Oprah as we celebrate our 25th anniversary. This donation will be life-changing to so many more kids who will benefit from our afterschool and mentoring programs. We are

grateful to Orpah, our corporate sponsors and the many individual donors who helped us exceed our goal!

The 25th anniversary gala had other evening highlights and special guest speakers such as:

Alumni Keynote Speaker: Withney Simons, U.S. Dream Academy Alum, Entrepreneur and Head Image Consultant at Connaisseur Paris

Entertainment: Jennifer Holliday, GRAMMY and TONY Award winning Broadway Actress, Recording Artist and Gospel Singer

Special video message from **Maryland Governor Wes Moore**, a long time supporter of US Dream Academy

Special Performances & Appearances: Wintley Phipps, GRAMMY nominated Gospel Singer, and Founder and CEO of U.S. Dream Academy with a special collaboration by award winning Takoma Academy Chorale and DC DreamKids.

Mentor of The Year Award (sponsored by QTS): DANIEL GUERRERO

Daniel Guerrero, a mentor at U.S. Dream Academy Learning Center in Salt Lake City, was named the 2023 Mentor of The Year. Daniel has been in the mentorship program since March of 2022. Growing up, Daniel lived in a single parent household with three other siblings. Looking back at his time in Mexico, Daniel said he “wasn’t on the right path” even at a young age. He believes without a doubt, had he been there longer, the trajectory of his life would have been much different. Comparing the parallels of his own life with the DreamKids, Daniel understands the importance of having a program to impact kids in a positive way.

“On behalf of the U.S. Dream Academy, we were pleased to award \$10,000 at the gala to three students as well as receive a commitment for \$32,500 per year in scholarships from Washington Adventist University for DreamKids who attend their college,” said Diane Wallace Booker, Founding Executive Director of U.S. Dream Academy. “These scholarships paired with Oprah Winfrey’s surprise gift announcement, really made our 25th anniversary celebration very special.”

Since 2001, the annual Power of a Dream Gala has raised more than \$20 million to assist with the provision of high-quality after-school programs specifically tailored for children living in high-risk communities.

About The U.S. Dream Academy

The U.S. Dream Academy, founded in 1998 by GRAMMY nominated gospel singer Wintley Phipps, is a national after-school program that aims to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration and help our nation's children reach for their dreams. The mission of the U.S. Dream Academy is to inspire and invest in the lives of children of incarcerated parents and families in communities harmed by systemic inequities through high performance relationships with caring adults. We seek to maximize young peoples' potential by building dreams, perseverance, academic skills, and character. Through academic, social, and values enrichment, we empower children (our DreamKids) impacted by parental incarceration to believe in themselves and to succeed. The Academy is currently operating Dream Centers in 7 communities (Dream Cities) nationwide including: Baltimore, Houston, Orlando, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, San Bernardino, and Washington, DC, as well as through our safe, secure "Virtual Village" online platform, which enables mentors to connect with their mentees from anywhere in the world. More information at: <https://www.usdreamacademy.org/>

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