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SUMMER SEARCH RECEIVES NEARLY \$1 MILLION TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO INNOVATE AND SCALE PROGRAM MODEL

Funding to support launch of group mentoring pilot, a key initiative in Summer Search's innovation agenda to reach significantly more students

SAN FRANCISCO—July 17, 2014—Summer Search, a national youth development nonprofit organization, has received a multi-year grant that will allow it to develop, test and evaluate a key innovation concept: group mentoring.

Research shows that positive peer relationships, which can be fostered through group mentoring, are a powerful and proven mechanism of achieving results in college access and success efforts. This is especially true for first-generation and low-income youth, the target population that Summer Search serves.

The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation has awarded Summer Search \$894,500 to support the organization's innovation efforts to scale their program and reach more students. It is the largest investment in Summer Search's innovation efforts from an institutional partner to date.

"We are grateful for this catalytic investment from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation because it marks a tipping point for Summer Search and brings us closer to our organizational goal of establishing a multi-million dollar innovation fund to scale our program model," said Amy Saxton, CEO of Summer Search. "By testing new strategies we will unlock our potential to serve exponentially more low-income youth and increase their likelihood of becoming college-educated leaders."

Summer Search will launch group mentoring as the first nationally-supported innovation pilot program at two of its regional sites. By introducing more time with peers—in group sessions facilitated by professional mentors—Summer Search will leverage the role of peers in building and strengthening college-going identities among students, while simultaneously building efficiencies into the service model.

“Summer Search is an impressive program that blends professional mentoring and skill-building opportunities that successfully prepare and support students on their path to earning a college degree,” said Todd Penner, Team Lead, College Preparation & Completion at the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. “The Foundation is excited to support Summer Search’s efforts to identify a strategy to reach even more students with their unique, game-changing program.”

Currently, Summer Search serves more than 3,000 low-income high school and college students annually across seven regional sites. The grant will fund infrastructure and resources needed at the national and local level to manage, implement and evaluate the group mentoring pilot program to ensure reliable and replicable outcomes—including a portion of four new positions within the Summer Search network.

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About Summer Search

Summer Search is a national youth development nonprofit organization. We work with low-income high school students to transform what they believe is possible for themselves. We help students in seven cities across the country develop the skills and character traits they need to become college-educated leaders who give back to their families and communities. Learn more at www.summersearch.org