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Cristo Rey Network Announces 2009 University Partners

For Immediate Release

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Chicago, IL – The Cristo Rey Network launched its University Partner Initiative today with over 20 colleges and universities from around the country joining as National University Partners. A complete list of the University partners is found below.

The University Partner Initiative emerged as one of the key recommendations from the Cristo Rey Network's Summit on Postsecondary Success held at Georgetown University in July 2008. The initiative seeks to formalize and deepen strategic relationships with colleges and universities committed to ensuring college success for Cristo Rey Network students. University Partners have committed to assisting the Cristo Rey Network expand its levels of support for its graduates and schools in a number of ways – through scholarship programs, job sponsorship, pre-college summer enrichment programs, academic support programs, and more. Similarly, University Partners are exploring new opportunities to further the Cristo Rey Network's mission by hosting professional development conferences and providing research support for the ongoing longitudinal study of Cristo Rey Network graduates.

Rob Birdsell, President & CEO, commented, "This is a breakthrough moment for the Network and our students. We are excited to work together with our University Partners in our common mission to ensure college success for all Cristo Rey Network graduates."

Founding National Partners

Boston College, DePaul University, Fordham University, Georgetown University, Loyola University Chicago, Marquette University, Wesleyan University

National Partners

Bentley University, College of the Holy Cross, Creighton University, Dominican University, Fairfield University, Harvard University, Saint Mary's College (IN), Santa Clara University, Saint Mary's College of California, St. John's University (MN), St. Peter's College, St. Thomas University (FL), Suffolk University, University of Saint Mary

About the Cristo Rey Network

The Cristo Rey Network, founded in 2002, comprises 22 schools that use an innovative work-study model to provide a quality, college prep education to economically challenged young men and women in urban communities across the United States. The principal benefactors of the Cristo Rey Network have been the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Cassin Education Initiative. Cristo Rey Network schools provide a Catholic, college prep education to economically challenged young people in urban communities. In 2008-2009, 22 schools serve more than 5,300 students. Ninety-five percent of Cristo Rey students are racial minorities; 34 percent are African American and 55 percent are Latino. The schools educate students of all faiths and cultures; this year 37 percent of Cristo Rey students are non-Catholic. Ninety-nine percent of the Network's 2008 graduates were accepted in a two or four year college and, through their work-study jobs, students earned more than \$27M toward their tuition. For more information visit:

www.cristoreynetwork.org.