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Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund to Receive DC Chamber's Choice Community Service Award

Washington, DC, October 20 -- On Saturday, October 29, the DC Chamber of Commerce will present its prestigious Community Service Award to the Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund at their 67th Annual Gala. The 2005 DC Chamber's Choice Awards is the premiere black tie event of the year that helps raise awareness of the business achievements of DC region's leaders and to honor those who make a difference.

The Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund was founded in 1996 by Susie Kay, who taught American Government at H.D. Woodson High School in Washington, DC for over a decade. Kay was frustrated to see that despite their hard work and dedication, even her brightest students had little hope of ever attending college or achieving professional success because of racial and socio-economic barriers. Determined to support these students in reaching their full potential, she and a small group of friends organized the first Hoop Dreams 3-on-3 Charity Basketball Tournament. The tournament, which was planned as a one-day, one-time event, was a great success, raising money to seed the first four academic scholarships and forging new relationships between Kay's students from "across the river" and leaders from the Hill and the DC business community.

Over the past ten years, Kay and a group of dedicated volunteers, supporters, and a small staff have grown the effort into a year-round non-profit organization that seeks not only to support and empower the young people it serves, but also to open channels of communication and build bonds of understanding between diverse communities in the District.

The Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund offers students a comprehensive support network, helping them navigate the post-secondary education experience, from the application and selection process through graduation and into the professional world. The core program comprises academic college scholarships, a college prep mentoring program, Princeton Review SAT test preparation, service-learning, and internship programs.

Since 1996, Hoop Dreams has brought together over 800 students and mentors; facilitated hundreds of internships; engaged over 1,000 volunteers in community work; and helped nearly 750 students reach college with 1,100 college scholarships and renewals totaling nearly \$2.5 million. The vast majority of Hoop Dreams' students are the first in their family to attend or graduate from college and come from a single parent household.

Hoop Dreams is proud to have well over 125 college graduates and more on the way, many of whom have returned to volunteer and mentor with the organization, completing a full circle of community service.

For information about the Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund call 202.414.4774 or visit www.hoopdreams.org.

For information about the DC Chamber's Choice Awards visit <http://www.dcchamberawards.org/>.