



News Release

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Freedom House Announces Innovative Alliance with UniversityNow to Improve the College Readiness of Boston High School Students and Recent Graduates

This partnership seeks to significantly improve college readiness by providing inner-city students free, high quality college readiness courses on UniversityNow's self-paced, online learning platform.

BOSTON, MA, August 26, 2013 — Freedom House, a community organization focused on education, technology, and leadership development programs for inner-city youth in Boston, Massachusetts, has announced a pivotal alliance with UniversityNow, a higher education social venture headquartered in San Francisco, California. The goal of the program is to help high school students and recent high school graduates transition successfully into college. Piloted this summer at the Global Classroom during Freedom House's Summer Institute, students were provided free access to UniversityNow's online curriculum, including math and academic strategies courses. The pilot's initial results demonstrated an improvement in math skills (with more than 80% of participants showing improvements over pre-test abilities) and an improvement in students' attitudes towards math (with 82% stating that their view of math learning had changed for the better). Findings from the pilot will provide a solid base for the introductory launch of the fall program at Freedom House.

UniversityNow provides high-quality college education through its online learning platform, employing a unique model of instruction, which features exceptional faculty, self-paced learning and cutting-edge adaptive technology. The model promotes greater student-instructor engagement and more customized student feedback. The partnership will further UniversityNow's mission of making high quality and affordable higher education available to people everywhere.

Gene Wade, CEO of UniversityNow and himself an alumnus of Freedom House's Project Reach program, believes this type of partnership offers a cost-effective and replicable strategy for improving the college readiness, and ultimately the workforce readiness, of urban youth. "To better prepare our youth for the challenges of the global marketplace, it's imperative that students earn a quality college education and learn the competencies and the skills that employers value," offers Wade. "Over 20 years ago, the Project REACH program at Freedom House helped prepare me for college and career success. I am grateful for the opportunity to help Freedom House continue fulfilling its important mission."

Dating back to 1949 when it served as a meeting hub for social justice in the underserved Roxbury community, Freedom House has since evolved to become a transformational center providing educational programs with the mission to close the opportunity divide and eliminate disparities in educational attainment for low-income, immigrant, and minority students. Through its Global Classroom, Freedom House is maximizing networks, technological advances, and resources to enhance students' college-readiness levels.

Freedom House CEO Katrina Shaw can envision the College Success Program partnership with UniversityNow as a key component in the organization's vision for providing local students and neighborhood residents with affordable access to post-secondary education. "By introducing this pilot program of technology-assisted learning to our students through our Global Classroom, we are opening up the path for our community to attain life-long learning and help prepare a workforce that can better compete for jobs in our global economy," said Shaw. "The College Success Program offers our students the three most critical and basic needs of learning -- affordability, accessibility, and acceleration."

About Freedom House

For 64 years, Freedom House has served as a hub for Boston's diverse urban community and a catalyst to promoting equality and civil rights. Today, Freedom House's mission is to transform the economic and cultural fabric of high-need communities through education and leadership development, and its vision is to be an educational beacon in the community that will inspire, educate and motivate all people to commit to lifelong learning and civic engagement. Freedom House is committed to its work of devising strategies to overcome systemic educational and social justice issues, and policies that affect Boston's inner city communities particularly in raising academic achievement in high school and increasing student persistence towards post-secondary graduation. Most recently, the organization has evolved to focus on Vision 2015 which bridges its civil rights legacy to the 21st century need to advance education, technology, and leadership development in the inner-city Boston communities through programs such as PUSH (*Preparing Urban Students for Success in High School and Higher Education*), CommUniversity, and the Global Classroom. Learn more at www.freedomhouse.com.

About UniversityNow

UniversityNow's mission is to make a high quality college education available to everyone who seeks it by building the most affordable and accessible network of accredited universities in the world. Headquartered in San Francisco, CA, UniversityNow operates two universities that offer Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degree programs: Patten University, which is regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and New Charter University, which is nationally accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council. UniversityNow's breakthrough learning platform employs a unique model of individualized instruction, self-paced learning, and cutting-edge collaborative technologies designed to facilitate student-to-instructor and peer-to-peer learning and support that is customized to each student's needs. UniversityNow also makes it possible for working adults with tuition assistance benefits to earn a college degree with minimal out-of-pocket costs. Learn more at www.unow.com

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