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**DELTA TEACHER EFFICACY CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO
EXPAND RANKS OF EDUCATION CHANGE AGENTS**

Education Recharge Rally in Houston, TX to bring together community stakeholders and educators to increase graduation rates among socially and economically disadvantaged, urban youth.

Washington, DC - July 14, 2015 - The Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF) and the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (DST) have joined forces under the umbrella of their joint project, the **Delta Teacher Efficacy Campaign (DTEC)** to issue a nationwide “Call to Action” in support of teachers who motivate all of their students to achieve academic success regardless of life circumstances. The interactive **DTEC Education Recharge Rally** scheduled for **Tuesday, July 28, 2015, 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.** at the **Four Seasons Hotel, Ballrooms A, B and Foyer, 1300 Lamar Street, Houston, TX**, serves to heighten the public’s awareness about teacher efficacy and the positive impact it has on learning, academic achievement, prospects for graduation, and college entrance among urban, at-risk students.

“The availability of effective teachers for every child is a social justice issue. We’re working to ensure that 80 percent of students graduate from high school with the knowledge and academic preparedness needed to complete college by 2025,” stated **Carolyn E. Lewis, Delta Research and Educational Foundation president**. DTEC is funded by a three-year matching grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with a goal of enhancing teacher effectiveness that promotes learning and achievement for all children along with uniting educators and community stakeholders as active change agents for education.

The anticipated 400 audience members, gathering under the event banner of “Change Agents for Education,” will hear energizing presentations by featured speakers, **Gwendolyn E. Boyd D.D.**, president, Alabama State University and 22nd National President, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and **Manuel “Manny” Scott**, one of the original Freedom Writers and a nationally-renowned motivational speaker. **Cynthia M.A. Butler-McIntyre**, 24th National President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will serve as Mistress of Ceremonies.

“An invitation is extended to the Houston community to join us as we reach out and recruit more change agents for education who know that motivated and inspired teachers are keys to a child’s successful education journey,” said **Paulette Walker, Ed.D, president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (DST)**. “I believe that our children are not at-risk. They are all at-promise. It will take all of us to make sure each child knows and believes that a positive and hopeful future can be theirs,” Walker added.

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is the largest school district in Texas, and the seventh largest in the United States. It consists of 283 schools with 215,157 students. Some 75.5% of the students are economically disadvantaged; 62.1% are Hispanic; 24.9% are African American; 8.2% are white and 3.6% are Asian. The dropout rate for African American students as officially reported in 2013 was 14.3% as compared to a 4.0% dropout rate for white students.

“Central to DTEC is the drive to increase the awareness and application of teacher efficacy. We’re working to increase the confidence and skills of teachers, particularly those working with at-risk and underserved students,” said **Johni Cruse Craig, Ed.D, DTEC project director**. “Increased teacher efficacy leads to better outcomes in academic performance and graduation rates. Education is a heart matter,” she added.

In addition to the community advocacy strategy, DTEC established the Teacher Efficacy Academy (TEA) and enrolled 180, certified K-6 grade school teachers currently serving as classroom teachers in urban school districts. Participating teachers received free professional development designed to enhance their knowledge of teacher efficacy along with instructional strategies on literacy and math. The Academy’s success prompted DTEC to enroll another teacher group in the fall and expand participation for teachers through grade 12.

Beginning in August 2015, DTEC and community partners in 40 cities nationwide will host interactive Town Hall Meetings to expand the understanding and the importance of teacher efficacy in relationship to student academic achievement. The overall advocacy goal is to substantially increase awareness among education supporters and expand the ranks of educational change agents in each target community.

The Gates grant also funds the research that increases the body of qualitative and quantitative literature devoted to teacher efficacy. Publication of the academic research on the subject will appear in the 2016 edition of DREF’s scholarly journal, *PHILLIS: The Journal for Research on African American Women*.

The Education Recharge Rally is open to the public, with limited seating available. Houston-area educators, parents, business owners, city officials and members of the Houston-area community-at-large are invited to attend. Tickets are \$40 in advance and \$50 on-site.

For more information about DTEC, the Town Hall Meetings, Delta Research and Education Foundation, and to purchase tickets in advance, visit www.deltafoundation.net.

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