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WABASH COUNTY STUDENTS WILL “WALK INTO FUTURE”

Event will celebrate students’ activities as part of the Wabash County Promise

INDIANAPOLIS (9-25-2013) - State Treasurer Richard Mourdock, Chairman of the Indiana Education Savings Authority, and The Wabash County Promise announced that they will host a “Walk Into My Future” event on September 27, 2013, at Manchester University. The event is a culmination of a new matching grant program for all kindergarten through third grade students in Wabash County, the Wabash County Promise (or the Promise).

The Wabash County Promise is the result of a countywide collaborative, including school, business, church, and community partners, to create a college-going culture. The effort encourages students and their families to obtain the information and tools necessary to increase access to and success in post-secondary education. This includes supporting college and career discovery, academic readiness, and educational savings from an early age. The Promise was developed by the Wabash County YMCA, which now serves as the lead agency.

With the support of presenting sponsor Beauchamp McSpadden, over 1,060 students in kindergarten through 3rd grade established a CollegeChoice 529 Direct Savings account during registration for each school district this August. At registration, students received a \$25 initial gift into their new accounts from Parkview Health, enrollment sponsor of the Promise.

During September, “College Savings Month” in Indiana, Wabash County students are completing activities in their classrooms to begin to identify career aspirations and understand how education beyond high school will help them achieve success. Students are also inviting champions in their lives to invest in their college savings accounts. Students who raise \$25 in champions’ contributions will receive a matching grant of at least \$75 from a coalition of public and private partners.

The month of college and career-themed activities culminates with the “Walk Into My Future” event, where the county will collectively celebrate students’ aspirations and champions’ contributions. Manchester University will host a day-long event where students will see and experience the many facets of campus life. “Manchester University is excited to be the very first university that many of our Wabash County students visit,” said Jo Young Switzer, President of Manchester University. Switzer believes, “Dreaming of college when children are six can make it a reality when they are eighteen.”

As of July 2013, only 6% of kindergarten through 3rd graders in Wabash County had college savings accounts. Today, over 65% are now saving thanks to the efforts of the Wabash County Promise.