

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact:** Chris Gonzalez  
713/303-6417 (cell)  
[cgonzalez@kipphouston.org](mailto:cgonzalez@kipphouston.org)

**Contact:** Marisa Ramirez  
713/743-8152 (office)  
713/295-0712 (cell)  
[mrcannon@uh.edu](mailto:mrcannon@uh.edu)

**KIPP AND UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT KIPP ALUMNI**  
Landmark Agreement will Promote Strategies to Improve College Completion

HOUSTON, Nov. XX, 2011— A new partnership between the University of Houston (UH), KIPP Houston and the KIPP Foundation, signed late last month, will provide support to KIPP alumni who attend the University of Houston. The initiative aims to address challenges faced by first-generation college students from low-income families, thereby promoting strategies to increase college completion rates among these students.

The new partnership is part of an increased emphasis on college completion for UH and its companion schools in the University of Houston system. UH System chancellor and UH president Renu Khator has designated improving college completion rates as a “no excuse” priority.

“When a Tier One university joins an institution with a record of academic excellence such as KIPP, great things can happen,” said Khator. “Our two institutions have an opportunity to impact a state and national challenge – supporting students as they move to their graduation day and into leadership roles in their communities.”

KIPP, which stands for Knowledge Is Power Program, is a national network of open enrollment, college preparatory charter schools in 20 states and Washington, DC. Founded in Houston in 1994, KIPP sets high academic standards for its students, who attend classes for an extended school day, and a mandatory summer school. With a track record of preparing students for success in college and in life, KIPP’s high expectations apply to every student with a focus on results and a “no shortcuts” approach to student success. KIPP Houston consists of 20 charter schools serving nearly 8,000 students in grades pre-k through 12, over ninety percent of whom are from low income families.

According to U.S. Census data, only 30 percent of all Americans aged 25-29 have earned a college degree. For students living in the bottom economic quartile, only 8 percent complete college by their mid-20s. By contrast, 36 percent of KIPP Houston students have completed a four-year college after finishing eighth grade at a KIPP middle school ten or more years ago, and an additional 4 percent have earned an Associate’s degree. Twenty-seven percent are still working toward a college degree.

“Our partnership with UH is an exciting new way for us to keep showing that demographics do not define destiny,” said Mike Feinberg, Founder and Superintendent of KIPP Houston. “Our 32,000 KIPPsters nationwide are proving every day that children from any walk of life can excel and climb the mountain to and through college.”

Beginning in summer 2012, UH will host a pre-college seminar for KIPP students and their families to further educate them about the UH application and admissions process and the expectations of college-level coursework. In addition, UH has committed to developing a suite of support systems that will help KIPP alumni succeed on campus. These supports include the designation of a liaison at the university who is familiar with KIPP and the partnership;

facilitation of older KIPP students mentoring younger students; and a data sharing agreement between KIPP and UH. The university will also address the financial need of all KIPP students.

KIPP and UH officials will work together to set students up for success at all levels of their education, by aligning KIPP curriculum with UH's requirements for entry-level courses. The partnership will also designate KIPP schools as off-campus work-study sites for UH students, so that KIPP Houston schools will become locations for UH student teachers.

"This partnership is a landmark opportunity for both us and UH," said Richard Barth, CEO of the KIPP Foundation. "We hope this collaboration will serve as a catalyst for other similar partnerships between universities and K-12 public schools, so that we put more young people on the path to success in college and beyond."

**For more information about the University of Houston visit [www.uh.edu](http://www.uh.edu)  
For more information about KIPP Houston and KIPP Foundation visit <http://kipphouston.org/>**

### **About the University of Houston**

The University of Houston is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized by The Princeton Review as one of the nation's best colleges for undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city, UH serves more than 39,500 students in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region in the country.

### **About KIPP**

KIPP – the Knowledge Is Power Program – is a national network of open-enrollment, college-preparatory public charter schools with a track record of preparing students in underserved communities for success in college and in life. KIPP was founded in Houston in 1994, and has grown to 109 schools serving over 32,000 students in 20 states and Washington, D.C. Over 95 percent of students enrolled in KIPP schools are African American or Hispanic/ Latino, and more than 80 percent qualify for the federal free and reduced-price meals program. To date, over 85 percent of students who have graduated from KIPP middle schools have matriculated to college. To learn more, visit [www.kipp.org](http://www.kipp.org)