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Racine, Kenosha Counties Earn National Recognition with Lumina Talent Hub Designation

Through a rigorous application process, Kenosha and Racine Counties have earned a Talent Hub designation from Lumina Foundation.

Racine - With goal of increasing post-secondary credential attainment rates to 60 percent of adults in our region, UW-Parkside, Gateway Technical College, Higher Expectations for Racine County, and Building our Future Kenosha County are working together to accelerate proven strategies, streamline post-secondary systems, and close equity gaps for students.

Currently, less than half of adults in our region, in Wisconsin, and the country, have post-secondary credentials, and as indicated in our Racine County Labor Force Survey, 55% of hard-to-fill jobs will require post-secondary credentials in the next two years. Across the country, institutions are working to make college completion attainable for all students, and as a Lumina Talent Hub, Racine and Kenosha Counties have been elevated as national leaders in this work.

Lumina Foundation designated just 17 communities as Talent Hubs as a result of their work to attract, retain, and cultivate talent. At the post-secondary level, partnerships are committed to working together, utilizing data, evaluating outcomes, aligning resources, and addressing inequities to improve the educational and economic well-being of all members of the community. Each community designated as a Talent Hub will receive \$350,000 in grant funding that will support local efforts to educate more people, allowing community and post-secondary institutions to better meet the specific needs of residents. Lumina will provide these funds in partnership with the Kresge Foundation.

“These communities are the creative and entrepreneurial engines that power our nation,” said Jamie Merisotis, president and CEO of Lumina Foundation. “For our country to meet growing demand for an educated workforce, we must bolster community-based efforts that are tightly focused on increasing the numbers of people in cities across the country with education and training beyond high school.”

As a Lumina Talent Hub, Higher Expectations for Racine County, Building our Future Kenosha County, UW-Parkside, and Gateway Technical College will work together to further implement and strengthen the strategies that work for our region’s students including; remediation reform and math pathways, stronger community partnerships to support student success and reduce “stop-outs,” the creation of a local college access network, and strong partnerships among our post-secondary to maximize credit transfers and shorten completion time.

Talent Hubs are a product of Lumina’s Community Partnerships for Attainment, which has awarded more than \$10 million in grants to 75 cities across the country, including a 2015-16 grant to support work in Racine County. This initial grant enabled Higher Expectations for Racine County and its partners to launch pilot programs with a

focus on equity and community engagement, including UW-Parkside's Summer Scholars program and College-Focused Community Conversations with Racine Unified students.

"We are thrilled to be designated as a Lumina Talent Hub. We appreciate the acknowledgement of our work to date that this designation signifies, and we welcome the national spotlight and the accountability that will come with it," said Jeff Neubauer, Executive Director of Higher Expectations for Racine County.

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Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. Lumina envisions a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. The Foundation's goal is to prepare people for informed citizenship and for success in a global economy. For more information, visit www.luminafoundation.org.

The Kresge Foundation is a \$3.5 billion private, national foundation that works to expand opportunities in America's cities through grantmaking and social investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services, and community development in Detroit. In 2016, the Board of Trustees approved 474 grants totaling \$141.5 million, and made 14 social investment commitments totaling \$50.8 million. For more information, visit www.kresge.org.

The University of Wisconsin-Parkside is an inclusive, multicultural university granting graduate and undergraduate degrees, preparing students for success in their professional, civic, and personal, lives. UW-Parkside is proud of its student success in signature academic programs including pre-med and pre-health, computer science, criminal justice, and theatre arts. Dedicated faculty and staff fulfill the university's mission to serve communities on and beyond campus.

For more information, visit www.uwp.edu.

Gateway Technical College provides education and hands-on, real-world training through 65 different programs provides the foundation students to earn the skills to a new career – or better themselves in their current one. Gateway values and serves our students and communities from Kenosha County, Racine County and Walworth County through a nationally recognized innovative approach to career and technical education.

For more information, visit www.gtc.edu.

Higher Expectations for Racine County brings together a range of partners that are committed to student success. Together, this partnership identifies what works and aligns time, talent and resources behind proven strategies to ensure students in Racine County can succeed.

For more information, visit www.higherexpectationsracinecounty.org.

Building our Future (Kenosha County) is a network of community leaders representing all sectors of Kenosha County committed to improving student outcomes. This partnership unites existing programs, organizations and community resources to reach our shared goals.

For more information, visit www.buildingourfuturekc.org

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