



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Joye Griffin, UNCF, 703-205-3480, joye.griffin@uncf.org

Gina Coplon-Newfield, Second Nature, 617-571-4523, gcoplon-newfield@secondnature.org

The Kresge Foundation Donates \$1.8 Million to UNCF in Support of 'Green Building' at Minority-Serving Institutions

FAIRFAX, Va. (November 12, 2009) - The United Negro College Fund (UNCF), the nation's largest and most effective minority education organization, announced today that it has received a \$1.8 million grant from The Kresge Foundation in support of the Building Green at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) Initiative. This initiative is the inaugural project of the Facilities and Infrastructure Enhancement Program (FIEP) of the UNCF Institute for Capacity Building (ICB). The program will focus on facilitating the green transformation of UNCF member institutions and that of other minority-serving institutions.

The Building Green at MSIs Initiative will build knowledge and capacity through a series of Building Green Learning Institutes, Technical Assistance Workshops, and \$20,000 mini-grants to help MSIs both incorporate principles of sustainable design and energy efficiency into their building projects and to overcome barriers that often include small endowments and low in-house expertise in green building practices. Working with MSIs to overcome these barriers will be critical to achieving the Initiative's two goals:

- 1) To increase the number of buildings and structures on MSI campuses that register for and achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification; and
- 2) To increase the number of MSIs that are signatories of the [American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#) (ACUPCC).

Learning Institutes will be held in Atlanta, GA, Minneapolis, MN, and San Antonio, TX in 2010.

UNCF will partner on the Initiative with Second Nature, an organization with expertise in advancing sustainability and green building with leaders in higher education. Additionally, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund have agreed to participate in and promote the initiative.

"Environmental sustainability and green building are two of the nation's most important 21st century imperatives, and minority-serving institutions want and need to become as green as possible as fast as possible," said Michael L. Lomax, PhD, UNCF president and CEO. "But MSIs work within strained budgets even in the best of economic times, and in tough economic times, it is difficult for MSIs to make the necessary investments. We believe that this Initiative will help them find the way toward affordable sustainability, and we are grateful to The Kresge Foundation for making it possible."

The Building Green at MSIs Initiative will impact more than 400 colleges and universities by highlighting the importance of building green and the measures under-resourced schools can take both to reap the benefits of green building and to adopt energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable practices. This funding paves the way for a future comprehensive green initiative for MSIs that includes components related to sustainable campus design and construction and curriculum enhancement.

Institutions often view green building as an expense or a luxury that is unaffordable rather than as an investment. And typically, green building construction costs are 1-2.5 percent higher than those for non-green buildings. However, investing in a green initiative pays medium-term returns in savings on energy, water use, and waste disposal that often amount to ten times the increased expenditure during the life-cycle of a building or its renovation. In the case of HBCUs, for example, retrofitting and/or renovating historic structures that are energy-inefficient and have high operating costs would yield significant medium- and long-term savings.

"From our research and experience, minority-serving colleges and universities want to cut operating costs, reduce waste and pollution, and protect human health through sustainable building practices, and we're thrilled to work with UNCF to boost that capacity," said Dr. Anthony D. Cortese, President of Second Nature.

"With decades of experience, MSIs have led the higher education community in their ability to enroll, support, educate, and graduate students from minority groups. And they are best equipped to implement principles and practice of sustainability and green building," said Kresge Foundation Program Director William F.L. Moses.

About UNCF

The United Negro College Fund (UNCF) is the nation's largest and most effective minority education organization. To serve youth, the community, and the nation, UNCF supports students' education and development through scholarships and other programs, strengthens its 39 member colleges and universities, and advocates for the importance of minority education. UNCF institutions and other historically black colleges and universities are highly effective, awarding 18 percent of African American baccalaureate degrees. UNCF administers more than 400 programs, including scholarship, internship and fellowship, mentoring, summer enrichment, and curriculum and faculty development programs. Today, UNCF supports more than 60,000 students at over 900 colleges and universities across the country. UNCF's Institute for Capacity Building (ICB) strengthens the overall capacity of its 39 member private HBCUs by focusing on six programmatic areas: enrollment and retention, fundraising, academic programming and faculty development, financial management, executive leadership, and governance and campus facilities. Learn more at www.UNCF.org.

About Second Nature

[Second Nature](#) is a Boston-based nonprofit organization that works to accelerate movement towards a sustainable future by helping senior college and university leaders in making sustainability the foundation of all learning and practice in higher education. Second Nature is the lead supporting organization of the [American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#) (ACUPCC), which has been signed by more than 650 school presidents who are committed to eliminating carbon emissions on campus and training students to help society address the climate crisis.

About The Kresge Foundation

The Kresge Foundation is a \$2.8 billion private, national foundation that seeks to influence the quality of life for future generations through its support of nonprofit organizations in six fields: health, the environment, arts and culture, education, human services, and community development. In 2008, it awarded 342 grants totaling \$181 million. For more information, visit www.kresge.org.

###