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CAVALIER JOHNSON

COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Future for large numbers of Milwaukee students made brighter by key partners

**Statement of Common Council President Cavalier Johnson
October 3, 2020**

Milwaukee is made stronger when community partners offer extra and much needed extra support for students and education, and I want to thank Northwestern Mutual for stepping in and committing \$2.5 million to schools and education initiatives in the city.

The NML funds will support the company's philanthropic strategy of investing in educational pathways to close the achievement gap in Milwaukee, and I am pleased that it has specifically committed support to increasing the "number of quality seats" in several Milwaukee Public Schools to address social, racial and economic disparities in the city.

NML recognizes the disparities that contribute to the academic achievement gap, creating obstacles that prevent diverse and talented students from reaching their full potential. We are grateful that the company is committed to creating paths to long-term educational and employment success for students of all backgrounds, and that it is looking to cultivate a pipeline of diverse talent for valuable opportunities at NML and throughout Milwaukee.

To date, Northwestern Mutual has invested about \$53 million in education over the past 25 years. The MPS schools that would receive NML funding in this latest round include Golda Meir, Forest Home Avenue School, Reagan High School and Rufus King International Baccalaureate High School.

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NML has also allocated \$100,000 to support City Forward Collective and Milwaukee Public Schools in addressing the ‘digital divide’ by providing wireless mobile hotspots with data subscriptions and home internet services to over 5,000 students. And previously, the company announced a \$1.6 million donation to All-In Milwaukee, which will provide 80 Milwaukee-area students with scholarships through the college completion and career placement program.

I want to also offer a sincere ‘THANK YOU!’ to former Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele, who recently made a generous \$500,000 donation in support of free tuition scholarship programs at Milwaukee Area Technical College, bringing his total investment in the MATC Promise programs to \$1.25 million.

Mr. Abele, whose philanthropy has made a positive impact across Milwaukee in many forms, previously donated \$250,000 to help establish the MATC Promise program for High School Graduates, which covers tuition and fees for eligible students after federal and state financial aid is applied. He also later gave an additional \$500,000 to support the expansion of the program to returning adult students.

Providing access to higher education to Milwaukeeans with lower incomes is a key way to improve equity in our city and in society, allowing students who never thought they would have a chance of finishing up their studies or even attending college to fulfill their dreams. The continued generosity of Chris Abele can help make many of those dreams come to fruition for students who are committed to putting in the hard work.

On behalf of Milwaukee and the future scholars they will be helping, I offer sincere thanks and appreciation to Northwestern Mutual and to Chris Abele.

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