



BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Contact:

Lisa Kreinbring
Henry Ford Learning Institute
(248) 259-4066
press@hfli.org

Kristen Kinley
Ford Motor Company
(313) 337-2786
kkinley@ford.com

Eli Yim
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
(206) 709-3400
media@gatesfoundation.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
10.03.07**

Henry Ford Learning Institute Launches National Network of Community-Based High Schools with Support from the Ford Motor Company Fund and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Henry Ford Academy: Power House High in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood will be the first in an expanded network of schools that will prepare low-income and minority students for college and career

CHICAGO, Ill. — Henry Ford Learning Institute (HFLI), Ford Motor Company Fund, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and community partners today announced a combined \$11.5 million investment to launch a national network of small high schools modeled after Henry Ford Academy in Dearborn, Mich. The investment will provide underserved students in urban centers with quality, real world learning environments, a college-going culture, and high academic standards at community-based Henry Ford Academies (HFA).

Chicago's Henry Ford Academy: Power House High, which opens its doors next year and eventually will serve 460 students, will be the first in this expanded HFA network. The new Academy is part of Chicago Public School's Renaissance 2010 initiative, which is working to develop or transform 100 schools in the city by 2010.

Ford Motor Company Fund's \$8.5 million investment will help HFLI build the foundation for the national network of schools. Much of the funding will go directly toward supporting new Henry Ford Academies. A \$3 million grant from the Gates Foundation will support the launch of five Henry Ford Academies in Midwest urban communities, including Power House High. The Ford Fund and the Gates Foundation grants also will help HFLI maintain strong partnerships with local communities and develop educational improvement plans as the network expands.

"To achieve a sustainable future, we must be thoughtful stewards of our resources, and there is no resource more precious than our children," said Bill Ford, executive chairman, Ford Motor Company. "Our children are our future. Providing them with an education that enables them to succeed in the world is the most important thing we can do for them, and for ourselves."

In 2003, HFLI was formed through a partnership between Ford Motor Company and The Henry Ford, a world premiere American history destination located in Dearborn. HFLI was established to develop a national network of small public schools modeled after Henry Ford Academy. Founded in 1997, through a partnership between Ford Motor Company, The Henry Ford and Wayne County (Mich.) Regional

Education Service Agency, HFA combines a community-based, real-world learning environment with a rigorous core curriculum to improve overall student achievement. A successful example of a “public school in a public space,” HFA is located on the grounds of The Henry Ford and offers students the opportunity to continue Henry Ford’s legacy of learning through experience. Students use the world-class exhibits and programs at The Henry Ford as tools to discover and explore the richness of American innovation - past, present, and future. Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Henry Ford Academy has graduated seven classes.

All future academies will be located in prominent public spaces, such as cultural institutions, community organizations, or universities, providing students with a content-rich and visible learning experience often lacking in traditional school models. Each model will be customized to meet local needs and take advantage of each school’s unique location and community partners.

In Chicago, the academy will be located in the historic power house of the original Sears, Roebuck and Co. world headquarters, providing a base for relevant learning experiences. The curriculum will use the renovated building’s “green” features to enhance lessons on the environment, clean technologies, and sustainability. The adjacent Homan Square Community Center also will provide students with access to primary health care, health education, a technology resource center, a YMCA, gymnasium and swimming pool, and family support services.

“This new community school is a model of what can happen when the public and private sectors work together to benefit our city,” said Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley. “In Chicago we lead by example and this school is going to be a model for the whole country—it’s a community anchor that will prepare our students for college and for success in their careers and in life.”

Partnerships with local employers, including Ford Motor Company, will provide students exposure to future work opportunities through internships and other important workplace and learning experiences. Siemens Building Technologies, the Chicago-based headquarters of a global company at the forefront of energy management and energy sustainability for buildings, will team with the school to help develop curriculum on sustainability, offer paid internships to Academy grads, and access to emerging energy efficiency technologies for Henry Ford Academy: Power House High students.

As part of Ford Fund’s overall \$8.5 million grant to HFLI, \$1.25 million will support planning and operations of the Henry Ford Academy: Power House High, along with \$400,000 from the Gates Foundation. The power house, which will include the school and space for other community-based activities, will be officially named the Charles H. Shaw Technology and Learning Center to honor Homan Square developer Charlie Shaw. A capital campaign to support construction costs is underway.

While Chicago has made progress in recent years preparing its young people for successful futures, it remains a challenge to graduate *all* students from high school ready for college and work. According to *Education Week’s* recent “Diplomas Count” report, only 52 percent of high school students in Chicago graduated on time in 2004, although the official Chicago graduation rate as calculated by the state is 73.4 percent for the class of 2006. In the North Lawndale community of Chicago, the state graduation rates for the three area public high schools range from 59.6 percent to 73.7 percent for the class of 2006 according to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Henry Ford Academy in Dearborn reports that through the course of its 10-year history it has had a cumulative graduation rate of more than 90 percent. Eighty-eight percent of its graduates have been accepted into college, and in 2007, nearly 100 percent were accepted into higher education. Students at HFA in Dearborn represent 28 communities in Wayne County, with nearly 70 percent of students coming

from Detroit. Student attendance averages 96 percent, even though many students travel long distances to get to school each morning.

“Ford Motor Company Fund and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation share HFLI’s core belief that all students can achieve at high levels when they are provided with quality educational experiences,” said Deborah Parizek, executive director of Henry Ford Learning Institute. “These grants support the development of sustainable learning environments — public schools in public spaces that involve community partners, localize a proven academic program to incorporate local resources, and make public education a truly public endeavor.”

To date, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has invested more than \$1.7 billion to improve high schools, supporting more than 1,800 schools in 47 states and the District of Columbia, including more than \$66 million in the Chicago area.

“All students, regardless of income or background, should have access to a high school education that truly prepares them for success in college and in life,” said Allan Golston, president of U.S. Program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “We are proud to partner with Ford Motor Company Fund to build a network of Henry Ford Academies, creating more high-quality educational options for students here in Chicago and across the country.”

Ford Motor Company, which has been producing cars in Chicago since 1914, has been a leader in education reform beginning in 1997 with the launch of the Henry Ford Academy and in 2004 with the launch of the Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies, or Ford PAS. The PAS program helps local communities bring together business, higher education, and K-12 education to envision a more sustainable system of high school education, and offers cutting-edge curriculum to more effectively teach math, science, social studies, and language arts. The PAS program currently reaches more than 20,000 students in 23 states.

###

Henry Ford Learning Institute is an innovative nonprofit organization dedicated to the belief that education reform cannot take place within an educational system that isolates students and teachers from the community and separates teaching and learning from the real world. We envision a future where public education becomes a truly public endeavor, engaging a community to create vibrant educational models, leverage underutilized local resources, and remove boundaries between learning and the real world. To this end, HFLI creates innovative small schools that bring national and local community resources into the educational process and help to create thriving communities where education is everyone's responsibility. For more information on HFLI, visit www.hfli.org.

Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services is committed to creating opportunities that promote corporate citizenship, philanthropy, volunteerism and cultural diversity for those who live in the communities where Ford does business. Established in 1949 and made possible by Ford Motor Company profits, Ford Motor Company Fund supports initiatives and institutions that foster innovative education, auto-related safety, and American heritage and legacy. National programs include Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies, which provides high school students with academically rigorous 21st century learning experiences, and Driving Skills for Life, a teen-focused auto safety initiative. The Ford Volunteer Corps, established in 2005, continues Ford's legacy of caring worldwide. Through the Volunteer Corps, salaried employees, union members, retirees and their families participate in a wide range of volunteer projects in their communities. For more information on programs made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services, visit www.ford.com.

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people’s health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, the foundation is led by CEO Patty Stonesifer and co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.