



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 12, 2019

South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Launches Multi-Media Advertising Campaign to Encourage Minority Males to Enter the Teaching Profession

COLUMBIA – South Carolina is one of only four states to participate in **Project Pipeline Repair** (PPR), an exclusive initiative of the **State Higher Education Executive Officers Association** (SHEEO) utilizing collaborative partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and state higher education agencies to cultivate a highly qualified pool of minority male teachers, and change the “teaching narrative” and critical role of minority males, through targeted and early recruitment. Claflin University is the partnering HBCU in South Carolina. State project leads from all participating states were responsible with identifying exposure opportunities and supporting related programmatic activities. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has provided generous support, used in part to promote the profession, raise awareness of the need, and support recruits.

South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) has partnered with **Banton Media**, a full-service marketing agency out of Myrtle Beach, SC, to design, develop, and deliver an integrated multi-media advertising campaign. The campaign will highlight the importance of minority male educators in the teaching profession, including existing and aspiring minority male educators, hoping to encourage minority males in high school and beyond to pursue teaching as a career. Banton Media’s services for the campaign (scheduled to launch in early August) will include Graphic Design, Photography & Video Services, Website Development, Public Relations, Social Media, Digital Advertising, Streaming TV, and other traditional media.

Why the need? Recent data from the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) estimates that since 2014, ethnic and racial minorities make up more than half of the student population in U.S. public schools, yet people of color make up about 20 percent of teachers and a mere 2 percent are black men. South Carolina data reflects the national distribution. Statewide, people of color make up about 22 percent of teachers in South Carolina with black men representing 2.8 percent and other male ethnicities at even lower percentages as reported by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Dr. Rusty Monhollon, CHE’s President and Executive Director, believes “Project Pipeline Repair is not only an opportunity to address the racial and gender disparities in our educational workforce, but it is also a viable solution to addressing the teacher shortage crisis that we currently face as a country and state. We must elevate the discussion to consider unconventional methods and untapped resources as possible solutions to this crisis. Minority men are an untapped resource, especially in the field of education.”

“This work is not new to South Carolina but requires concerted efforts and collaborative participation from essential stakeholders to create a pipeline of high quality and efficacious teachers and educational programs. CHE and other state agencies joined these efforts over three decades ago”, explained Dr. John Lane, Director of the CHE Division of Academic Affairs. “PPR is one of several initiatives developed to improve teacher education, and ultimately raise student academic achievement and address the teacher shortage crisis in South Carolina. However, it has uniquely helped CHE think about the role of HBCU’s contributing to education preparation.”

Dr. Regine Rucker, Program Manager in the Division of Academic Affairs with CHE and the project lead, added “We were pleased to work with SHEEO and Claflin on this transformational project. Representation matters! It is imperative to do our best to provide an educational environment for all students that is inclusive and mirrors the national and global landscape. If efforts to prioritize the recruitment, retention, and advancement of minority males (students, teachers, and administrators) at all levels of our educational system are to succeed, we must hear from them directly. Their insight and perspective on the challenges faced as minority men, as well opportunities missed, is often absent from many conversations, including education. Through this project, we wanted to give a face and voice to the experiences of minority males as students and professionals.”

The SHEEO Project Director of PPR, Dr. Denise Pearson, underscored “Project Pipeline Repair: Restoring Minority Male Participation and Persistence in Education Preparation Programs is an innovative and bold attempt to collaborate with states toward mitigating teacher shortages, increasing teacher diversity, and shifting to a more productive narrative about the teaching profession. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, through the leadership of Drs. John Lane and Regine Rucker, demonstrates a commitment to student success and educational equity, with clear acknowledgement of the relationship between policy and practice. It remains an honor to work with the Commission on this initiative – I look forward to building on what we started almost three years ago with generous funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.”

For more information, visit <https://minoritymaleeducators.org/>

Contacts:

Dr. Regine Rucker, Program Manager, Academic Affairs
O-803-737-1354

Dr. John Lane, Director, Academic Affairs
O-803-737-0141

-###-

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), established in 1967, serves as the coordinating board for South Carolina’s 33 public institutions of higher learning. It acts both as an oversight agency on behalf of the General Assembly and as an advocate for higher education. The Commission is responsible for assuring a balance between student and taxpayer interests and institutional policies, aspirations, and needs. CHE is committed to access, affordability, and quality in the state system of higher education through coordination, regulation, advocacy and oversight, as directed by the General Assembly.