



THE HARVEST NETWORK OF SCHOOLS
Harvest Preparatory School/Best Academy/Mastery School

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For immediate release

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Harvest Network of Schools Celebrates 25th Anniversary with “25 Years Matter” Campaign

As a new school year is ushered in for staff at the Harvest Network arriving for their first day of professional development, the Harvest Network of Schools launches the celebration of its 25th anniversary under the theme “25 Years Matter.” The precursor to the Harvest Network of Schools is Seed Daycare, founded by Eric and Ella Mahmoud in 1985 in their north Minneapolis home. In 1992 – in response to parents whose children were aging out of the daycare and who had embraced the high-quality, African-centered curriculum of Seed – Harvest Preparatory School was founded as a private school. It is the anniversary of Harvest Prep (the first school in the Network) that has sparked the anniversary celebration! In 1998, in an effort to serve more children at no cost, Harvest Prep became a public charter school. Best Academy (2008) and the Mastery School (2012) followed with a shared mission, approach, and Gap-Closing academic framework.

Since its founding in 1992, Harvest Preparatory School and the other two schools in the Network have educated thousands of children, and its influence and impact in the north Minneapolis community has mattered greatly in the lives of individual children, their families, and the broader community. Many of its scholars have gone on to success in high school, college, and career, and some have returned to the Harvest Network of Schools as staff. Twenty-five years has resulted in many accomplishments:

- Hundreds of alumni have graduated from high school and college!
- 2017 Home of WCCO "Excellent Educator" Loretta Hall
- 2010-2016 Harvest Preparatory recognized as a "Beating the Odds" school by *Star Tribune* for seven consecutive years
- 2016 Home of MN Teacher of the Year Abdul Wright (first black male, first charter school teacher, youngest recipient)

- 2015 Harvest Network of Schools established
- 2013 Profiled on CNN's *Black in America* with Soledad O'Brien
- 2013 Best Academy receives national honor among top 5 best schools for educating boys of color (COSEBOC)
- 2012 THIRD school opened - Mastery School
- 2009 Best East and Sister Academy opened (programs of Best Academy)
- 2008 SECOND school opened - Best Academy (grew out of Boys Academy program)
- 1998 Harvest Preparatory became one of Minnesota's 1st charter schools
- 1993 Prince made \$200,000 gift to expand Olson Highway campus
- 1992 Harvest Preparatory founded by Eric and Ella Mahmoud as a private school (grew out of Seed Daycare, founded in 1985)

Over the coming year, the Harvest Network of Schools will celebrate its "25 Years Matter" campaign with yard signs, social media, and print and radio stories about the many accomplishments over the nearly three decades of educating children in north Minneapolis. A community celebration will be held at a future date. The schools are now enrolling students in grades K-8. Interested parties may call 612-876-4191 for enrollment information or visit www.harvestnetworkofschools.org.

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The Harvest Network of Schools (HNS) is a charter management organization based in north Minneapolis that manages three public charter schools: Harvest Preparatory School (K-4) and Best Academy (K-8), both located at 1300 Olson Memorial Highway; and The Mastery School (K-5) located at 4021 Thomas Avenue North. HNS serves nearly 1,200 scholars and exists to unleash the potential of its scholars and transform community using education as a lever for change.

www.harvest.networkofschools.org

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