

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**URBAN LEAGUE OF METROPOLITAN DENVER
OPENS NINE ONLINE LEARNING CENTER SITES
FOR COLORADO'S AT-RISK CHILDREN**

Denver, CO - Today, Urban League of Metropolitan Denver announced the opening of nine Learning Center Sites hosted in churches throughout metro Denver where students can access Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op's (Hope Co-Op) web-based curriculum. Hope Co-Op is a virtual charter school designed to meet the needs of all Colorado students in grades K-12, especially those considered at-risk. The nine Urban League Learning Center Sites will provide a supportive environment where adult mentors can encourage and assist students to excel academically and graduate.

"While other students across the state enjoy the benefits of online education in their homes, many at-risk students have been denied these opportunities simply because their parents must work and cannot provide the mentoring role required for at-home online learning," said Sharon Alexander-Holt, CEO of Urban League of Metropolitan Denver. "Now, for the first time, we are bridging the digital and education divide by delivering online education to at-risk students at Learning Centers in their very own communities."

The churches hosting Urban League Learning Center Sites that offer grades K - 12 are:

- New Birth Temple of Praise, Bishop Acen Phillips
- Bethel Church of God in Christ, Pastor Elder Edward V. Holmes
- Concerned About You, Inc., Reverend Willie Simmons
- Friendship Baptist Church of Christ Jesus, Pastor Paul Burleson
- Graham Memorial Community COGIC, Sr. Pastor Dr. Patrick Demmer
- I Believe GOD Ministries, Bishop Samuel Byrd
- Light of Life Church of God in Christ, Pastor Roy Sudds
- Lowry Community Christian Church, Pastor Larry Brown
- Macedonia Baptist Church, Dr. Paul Martin

"Our children shouldn't have to travel across town to get a good education," said Pastor Elder Edward Holmes of Bethel Church of God in Christ. "By hosting a Learning Center we not only help our kids, we are strengthening our entire community."

Each Learning Center Site will host Hope Co-Op's innovative learning model that provides online curriculum, access to mentoring and technology to students. Hope Co-Op students work on different Hope Co-Op lessons at different grade levels at the same

time in a supportive environment.

"Churches sit at the epicenter of the African American community," said Bishop Acen Phillips of New Birth Temple of Praise. "As education is one of the greatest challenges facing our communities, it makes sense that we should play a role in bringing solutions to our families. Working with the Urban League and Hope Co-Op, we can change the statistics that endanger our children and our future." According to a 2006 Piton Foundation report, only 44% of Denver's African-American students are graduating from high school.

"I'm proud to say, Urban League is playing a role in the expansion of Hope Co-Op," continued Alexander-Holt. "You only need to walk into Learning Centers equipped with Hope Co-Op and look at the students' faces filled with excitement, pride and determination, faces that previously expressed apathy, despondence and defiance, to see we're making a difference."

For more information, call Urban League's Hope Co-Op hotline at 303-388-5861, ext. 111 or visit www.denverurbanleague.org. For more information about Hope Co-Op visit www.HopeCo-Op.org.

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