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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release
February 15, 2007

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The Chicago Public Education Fund makes significant investment in first-of-its-kind joint master's degree/National Board Certification[®] program for Chicago teachers

National-Louis University to receive \$280,000 for program to recruit and support new National Board Certified Teachers

Chicago, February 15, 2007 – On the heels of Chicago's record number of more than 170 new National Board Certified Teachers – announced in early January – a new program is being launched to support more teachers through the rigorous certification process. With a \$280,000 investment from The Chicago Public Education Fund (The Fund), a venture capital fund for public education, National-Louis University will develop and launch a joint Master of Education/National Board Certification program, a first-of-its-kind for Chicago.

The National-Louis University program will add to a growing number of universities nationwide looking to create greater alignment in advanced degrees in teaching with National Board Certification. The university will modify its existing Interdisciplinary Studies Master's degree program starting in April 2007, which currently serves 80 to 120 Chicago teachers per year, to integrate the practices and requirements of National Board Certification.

National-Louis University, which serves an estimated 1,700 Chicago teachers annually across all its graduate degree programs in teaching, will invest nearly \$400,000 of its own resources into the program. "This is not only a new program, it is the logical next step for our university," said Richard Pappas, President of National-Louis University. "We have historically been a leading model in the country for teacher preparation and training, and we see National Board Certification as the ultimate achievement for all our teachers coming out of National-Louis."

While other Chicago universities, such as Roosevelt University and Chicago State University, offer teachers graduate credits for engaging in the National Board Certification process, the National-Louis University program is the first program in the city to fully integrate National Board Certification into a master's degree curriculum and program, effectively making them part of one unified process.

"As a venture philanthropy, we seed new ideas that have strong people behind them and significant potential to make a deep impact system-wide," said Janet Knupp, Founding President of The Fund, which has allocated more than \$6 million for National Board Certification in Chicago over the past 7 years. "We saw in partnering with National-Louis University a tremendous opportunity to get higher education more deeply involved in this effort, which will help build the momentum we've seen in National Board Certification and sustain it for the long-haul."

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Mayor Richard M. Daley, Chicago Public Schools and The Fund jointly set a goal to have 1,200 Chicago teachers achieve National Board Certification by 2008. To date, 646 teachers in the district have achieved that distinction.

Currently, the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Teachers Union both offer National Board Certification support programs. This year they are serving more than 350 Chicago teachers preparing to submit certification entries to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) – the Arlington, VA-based nonprofit that manages National Board Certification.

“Chicago has been a leader in National Board Certification among large urban school districts across the country,” said Joseph Aguerreberre, President and CEO of NBPTS. “We are pleased to see National-Louis University add another quality avenue for Chicago teachers pursuing National Board Certification and fully expect it to be a national stand-out as well.”

About The Chicago Public Education Fund

As a venture capital fund for public education, The Chicago Public Education Fund is an unprecedented catalyst for improving school leadership and student achievement system wide. Launched by a group of corporate and civic leaders, The Fund brings private sector dollars and expertise to high-impact programs aligned with Chicago Public Schools priorities. Find out more at www.cpef.org.

About National-Louis University

National-Louis University began as a teacher of teachers; teaching remains not just the University’s strength, but its calling. In 1886, founder Elizabeth Harrison took the idea of early childhood education and built around it one of the first four-year colleges for teachers. Today, in the process of educating students, faculty in National College of Education, College of Arts and Science and College of Management and Business continue to act on some of the most urgent problems of our time and our society. They are innovators, animated by an intense dedication to their students and a commitment to building more effective and more caring schools, communities and societies.

About National Board Certification

Teachers pursuing National Board Certification must demonstrate their teaching knowledge and skills through a series of rigorous performance-based assessments. These include work samples, classroom videotapes, subject-area competency exams, and a thorough analysis of how their students learn over time. The certification process, managed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, can take up to three years to complete. To date, 55,000 teachers nation-wide have achieved certification; 646 Chicago teachers have done so.

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