



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank G. Jackson



From: **Office of the Mayor**

Elizabeth Day
College Now of Greater Cleveland
216-635-0165 or eday@collegenowgc.org

Andrea V. Taylor, Press Secretary
Office of the Mayor
(216) 664-4171 or (216) 857-7998

Myrt Price, Press Assistant
(216) 664-3691 or (216) 857-6888

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland Announces New Executive Director

CLEVELAND – The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland, launched by Mayor Frank G. Jackson last October, announced today that Valerie Raines, Vice President of Corporate Philanthropy at KeyBank Foundation, will take on the role of Executive Director of the Higher Education Compact effective October 1, 2012.

Currently, Ms. Raines is vice president of corporate philanthropy for KeyBank Foundation, which implements the company's charitable contribution strategy. In this role, she oversees education and arts and culture grant making in northeast Ohio.

"I am confident that Ms. Raines will be able to build upon the Compact's progress in year one and keep us on the trajectory that we've set for reaching our goal of increasing the number of Cleveland students who are prepared for college, have access to higher education opportunities and complete their degrees," said Mayor Frank Jackson.

Previously, she was program director for capacity-building grants at United Way of Greater Cleveland and vice president at the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Foundation. Ms. Raines' early career includes nearly 20 years as a college admission and financial aid professional at Connecticut College, Oberlin College, and Laurel School. In these roles, she helped students access higher education, successfully transition from high school to college and achieve a college degree. Ms. Raines earned a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and a master's from Case Western Reserve University. She serves as treasurer of the Woodruff Foundation in Cleveland and on the scholarship committee for the Harry R. Horvitz Foundation. In 2010, she was among 15 leaders chosen by the Council on Foundations for their leadership program for emerging foundation executives.

"Along with her work at various non-profit and charitable foundations, Ms. Raines experience in working with students as they transition to college as well as throughout their college experiences will be a great asset in her new role as Executive Director of the Compact," said City of Cleveland's Mayor Jackson. "Her intimate understanding of the community and its needs, coupled with her strategic planning expertise, will ensure that the work of the Compact continues to move forward to meet our benchmarks to increase college completion."

-more-

The Higher Education Compact launched in October, 2011, bringing together 15 Ohio colleges and universities, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, and more than 60 business, philanthropic and community partners to focus on college readiness access and completion in Cleveland. In its first year, the Compact delivered the first Financial Aid Awareness Month, focusing on increasing the number of CMSD high school seniors completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) from 47% in 2010-2011 to 54% in 2011-2012. Additionally, the

Compact hosted “Degrees by Design,” its first annual best practices symposium, which drew a capacity crowd of more than 300 practitioners and other community members interested in increasing college attainment in Greater Cleveland. The Compact will release its first dashboard of college readiness, access and persistence indicators later this fall.

About the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland

The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland is a collaborative partnership among the City of Cleveland, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, 15 Ohio colleges and universities, and more than 60 community organizations that seeks to remove the obstacles that prevent Cleveland youth from going to and succeeding in college. Launched in 2011, by Mayor Frank G. Jackson, the Compact’s goal is to align the efforts of member organizations to best use limited resources and increase the city’s number of college graduates. Building on success in Cleveland, the work of the Compact will expand to include other municipalities within Cuyahoga County.