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PHOENIX PROJECT TO LAUNCH VIRGINIA'S FIRST STATEWIDE PROGRAM FOR FUTURE NONPROFIT LEADERS

Inspired by the idealism of today's students and the need to address the challenge posed by the imminent retirement of Baby Boomers who make up 75% of the nonprofit sector's leadership, the Phoenix Project announces its 2007 Nonprofit Leadership Program that transforms committed undergraduate and graduate students into effective civic entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills and connections to succeed in Virginia's nonprofit sector.

The 2007 Nonprofit Leadership Program will be held from June 10th to August 4th in Petersburg, Virginia, a city of 33,000 located 25 miles south of Richmond that is arguably Virginia's most distressed community. "Petersburg is a wonderful environment for our students to live and learn," said Greg Werkheiser, Executive Director of the Phoenix Project. "The City faces numerous serious challenges, but is filled with individuals and organizations committed to addressing these challenges, focusing on issues from economic development to education to public health. Our students have a unique opportunity to gain valuable experience with a whole range of nonprofits while being of service to a community in need, and this challenging context is critical to preparing Virginia's future civic entrepreneurs."

Up to 40 undergraduate and graduate students drawn from throughout Virginia through a competitive application process will participate in the Nonprofit Leadership Program. The Program begins with a three-week academic session in which students study nonprofits with a highly regarded faculty, develop skills in workshops run by leading practitioners, put lessons to the test through extensive simulations, and hear from and connect with numerous guest speakers who are among Virginia's most successful nonprofit leaders. Participating students will be awarded six transferable college credits. The Program's final five weeks are spent working on important capacity-building projects for local nonprofit organizations that address Petersburg's community and economic development challenges while giving students an incredible breadth and depth of experience.

Executive Director Greg Werkheiser spent seven years crafting the youth leadership programs that as part of the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia have become a must-attend program for Virginia's future political leaders. Through the Phoenix Project Werkheiser is turning his attention to the nonprofit sector. "We must prepare now to hand over leadership of our critical social and civic institutions to a generation that is prepared for tomorrow's challenges."

John Ambrose, a law student at the College of William and Mary, participated in the 2006 Nonprofit Leadership Program Pilot. "More than anything, I walked away with a strong sense of

accomplishment, a new set of friends and contacts, and a strong desire to remain involved in the nonprofit sector.”

Both undergraduate and graduate tracks are offered and students from all Virginia colleges and universities are eligible to apply. The deadline for applying to the 2007 Program is March 7th. Applications and additional information about the Program can be found at www.phoenixproject.org/leadership/nlp.

The nonprofit Phoenix Project builds partnerships between Virginia institutions of higher education and distressed communities while preparing the next generation of nonprofit leadership. To learn more about the Phoenix Project please visit www.phoenixproject.org.

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