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CONTACT: Julie Rosenthal
[202-486-3059](tel:202-486-3059) or
Julie@jrcommunications.com

**VOTING IS NOW OPEN FOR THE 10TH ANNUAL DC-CAPITAL STARS TALENT COMPETITION
FEATURING THE REGION'S MOST TALENTED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

*Top 10 Finalists Will Compete for College Scholarships during a Performance at
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 5, 2017) – The DC College Access Program (DC-CAP), a non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging and enabling all District public and public charter high school students to enroll in and graduate from college, invites the public to vote for the best DC high school performers to participate in the 10th Annual DC-CAPital Stars Talent Competition. The theme for this year's competition, "Harlem Renaissance Revival", will showcase the outstanding artistic abilities of college-bound students from the District of Columbia. Cast your vote at www.dccap.org/gala.

More than 260 students applied in the early fall across the three categories of vocal, instrumental and dance. Starting today, the audition videos for the top 39 students will be posted on DC-CAP's website for online voting from now until December 30, 2017 at midnight. Votes will then be tallied alongside a local panel of judges to select the top 10 finalists who will then get a chance to showcase their artistic abilities at a special performance on Wednesday, February 28, 2018 in the Eisenhower Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. A celebrity panel of judges, along with help from the audience, will select the winners who will receive DC-CAP college scholarships to be applied towards the student's first year of college. Past celebrity judges have included **Patti Austin** (Grammy Award® winning artist), **MC Lyte** (Hip-Hop recording artist, speaker and actress), **Patti LaBelle** (multi Grammy Award® winning singer, songwriter and actress), **Donnie Simpson** (Radio One disc jockey and TV personality), **Fik-Shun** (*So You Think You Can Dance* Season 10 winner) and more. Following the performance, DC-CAP will host a gala reception.

"The scope of auditions submitted each year for our annual talent competition is impressive," said Argelia Rodriguez, President and CEO, DC-CAP. "Our local high school students show a true dedication to their art and to their pursuit of a college education. We can only imagine what our 10th annual event will bring to the table this year in terms of competition."

Serving as DC-CAP's largest fundraising event, the 10th Annual DC-CAPital Stars Talent Competition is open to all DC public and public charter high school students.

Since 1999, DC-CAP has been instrumental in doubling the number of DC students who enroll in college and tripling the college graduation rate. DC-CAP provides direct counseling and financial assistance to students who might otherwise never have the opportunity to go to college and the organization has awarded nearly \$39 million in scholarships since the program's inception.

Gala tickets include the performance and reception and are \$500. Sponsorship packages begin at \$5,000. For more information, please contact Natalie Bennett, 202-503-2580 or natalie.bennett@dccap.org.

About DC-CAP

DC-College Access Program (DC-CAP) is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to helping all DC students prepare for, enroll in, and graduate from college as the cornerstone of a successful future. Since 1999, DC-CAP has worked with parents and educational partners, inspiring, counseling and providing fundamental support to help under-resourced DC students believe that college is possible, find the path to get there and complete their education. By building long-term relationships and connections, DC-CAP is with students every step of the way, navigating the complex waters of the college application and financial aid process, as well as providing integral support while in college. This year alone, DC-CAP's 38 college resource centers located in nearly every DC public and public charter high school reached 18,000 students and their families. When DC-CAP was founded in 1999, less than 25 percent of DC public high school graduates enrolled in college and only 15 percent went on to earn a college degree. To date, DC-CAP has helped 29,000 students enroll in college, currently supports 7,300 students enrolled in more than 600 colleges and universities across the US through its retention division, and has celebrated the success of 8,700 (and counting) college graduates. For more information, visit www.dccap.org or follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

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