



**For Immediate Release**

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## **St. HOPE Public Schools Opens First National School in Harlem**

*Sacramento, CA (August 12, 2008)*— After three years of envisioning, researching and preparing, Sacramento-based St. HOPE will officially open their first out-of-state charter school tomorrow in Central Harlem. St. HOPE Leadership Academy kicks-off the 2008-2009 school year with a total of 150 students in grades 5-7, and will gradually expand to reach full K-12 capacity in fall 2012. Class sizes for the 2008-2009 school year are set at 25 per class, with 50 students in each grade.

St. HOPE's founder, Kevin Johnson, will tour the school on Wednesday and meet with educators and students on Thursday. A short assembly on Wednesday morning is also planned and will be attended by a team of St. HOPE staff from Sacramento.

"St. HOPE's national expansion is just one indicator that our educational model in Sacramento is working. In five short years we've taken what was a failing Sacramento high school and made it into a competitive, college preparatory environment where test scores are up and dropout rates are down," said Rick Maya, executive director for St. HOPE. "Our new school in Harlem is being met by eager parents and educators who've seen that charter schools work, particularly St. HOPE charter schools. We couldn't be more pleased."

Similar to St. HOPE's charter schools in Sacramento, St. HOPE Leadership Academy will hold students to a higher standard than other area schools. Students will receive a rigorous standards-based curriculum, an extended school day and year, a defined character development program and low student to teacher ratios.

"This is an exciting day for parents, students and educators in New York City because we're offering a new choice in college preparatory education. It's quite obvious by the amount of applications we received that this school is very much needed in Central Harlem," said St. HOPE Leadership Academy Founding Principal, Ventura Rodriguez.

For more information, please contact Lesley Miller at (916) 442-1394.

(MORE)

### **About St. HOPE**

Founded by NBA All-Star and Oak Park native Kevin Johnson in 1989, St. HOPE began in 1989 as an after school program in a portable classroom at Sacramento High School. Today, the nonprofit community

development corporation works to revitalize inner-city communities through public education, civic leadership, economic development and the arts. In 2003, St. HOPE formed St. HOPE Public Schools, a pre-K-12 independent charter school system that provides high-quality education to nearly 1600 students in six small schools in Sacramento. Through its Nonprofit Business Model, St. HOPE has also brought 11 businesses, over 200 jobs, and \$7.5 million in development projects to Oak Park.

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