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## **Award-Winning Non-Profit Taps Political and Non Profit Veteran Keith Andrew Perry as Executive Director**

*College and Career Connections looks to expand and serve more low-income youth under new leadership*

**Washington, DC** –Keith Andrew Perry, a former senior aide to former Mayor Sharon Pratt and Chief of Staff to Councilmembers Kwame Brown and Marion Barry, has been named the new Executive Director of College and Career Connections (CCC), an award-winning non-profit serving D.C. youth with an early college and career exposure program.

Perry, a native Washingtonian, is a graduate of Morehouse College and the Howard University Law School. He is a veteran of DC government, the non-profit sector and DC politics, having been appointed by former Mayor Sharon Pratt, as Special Assistant to the Director of the Department of Human Rights and Minority Business Development, and as Administrator of Community Services for the DC Department of Parks and Recreation. He is a former Senior Executive with the national office of the League of Women Voters, and served as Executive Director of the Consortium for Youth Services, Inc. Most recently, Perry authored a novel, *War Anthem*, about DC politics and social tensions caused by gentrification.

Perry succeeds founding Executive Director, Deann Ayer, who served for the organization's entire four year history. Ayer, currently serving as Far Northeast Weed and Seed Coordinator for PSA 602 said, "I am thrilled to hand the reigns over to Keith. He brings the experience and connections that we need to increase the visibility of CCC and diversify our support base so that we can grow to serve additional local youth with the award-winning program that we have built over the past several years."

College & Career Connections' mission is to effect a radical transformation in the aspirations and capacity of youth from the District's low-income communities to graduate from high school and pursue higher education. In Ward 7 and 8, six out of every ten students will drop out of school, most before 10th grade. CCC serves youth before they drop out – with an intensive, research based, school-embedded, early career and college exposure program at partner schools. Through CCC's program, youth develop the motivation, skills, and knowledge they need to enter high school with a plan to graduate and pursue higher education. Over 90% of students in CCC's workshops report learning valuable information about the importance of staying in school and how to prepare for post-secondary education.

"The College and Career Connections, OnTrack! program, provides a space for children to dream and I'm committed to making it available citywide." We begin an important conversation with students about preparing for college and a career and with the public and private sectors focused, in unprecedented fashion, on education and workforce development, we're ready to be a strong partner" said Perry.

College and Career Connections Board Chair, Danielle Smith said, "CCC is excited to welcome Keith Andrew Perry as our Executive Director. Keith's experience working in the nonprofit and government sectors, enthusiasm for youth and public service, and deep knowledge of the District of Columbia will greatly benefit our organization as we look to build and expand on CCC's valuable work in the DC community. I am extremely confident in Keith's ability to lead CCC through the next phase of growth so that we are able to provide high-quality early college and career programming to more DC youth."

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