CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY RECEIVES $100,000 AWARD FROM COUNCIL OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND WALMART FOUNDATION

ATLANTA (June 7, 2010) — Clark Atlanta University (CAU) has received a $100,000 award from The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and the Walmart Foundation, as a winner in the Walmart College Success Awards.

Through the awards program, 30 CIC member colleges and universities, selected through a competitive application process, received substantial grants to help strengthen exemplary programs that support the education of first-generation students. All award winners have an undergraduate enrollment that includes at least 30 percent first-generation students among the most recent classes of first-year students.

CAU President Carlton E. Brown, said, “We are extremely pleased with this support from The Council and the Walmart Foundation. First-generation students can face many obstacles in their matriculation, primarily because they travel on a road that has not been paved by parents and other family members. These students do not have the benefit of shared wisdom about the collegiate experience and therefore can be at a disadvantage. However, our history is replete with the stories of those who have made great contributions to this society based on success as a first-generation college student.”

(more)
With an estimated 40 percent of its entering classes comprising first-generation college students, CAU intends to support this population by helping them make supportive connections and successfully navigating their freshman year. The University’s W.E.B DuBois Student Engagement and Retention Program, for example, assigns first-generation students to a faculty mentor during their first year of matriculation. This strategy, coupled with programs ranging from the “CAU Experience” (freshman orientation) and peer mentoring, to the yearlong First-Year Seminar and study skills workshops, helps ensure that these students are able to effectively integrate programs and resources that bolster their academic pursuits. The University also strives to help these students bridge financial gaps whenever possible.

Walmart Foundation President Margaret McKenna said, “The 20 colleges and universities selected for the initial awards in 2008 have done a great job in rising to the challenges of retaining and graduating first-generation students. The Walmart Foundation is proud to provide the opportunity for an additional 30 institutions to participate in the program and contribute to the growing body of knowledge on how best to support these students.”

In announcing the award winners, CIC President Richard Ekman said, “We are delighted by the recognition that this second grant from the Walmart Foundation gives to the role played by private colleges in educating first-generation students. Much attention has been focused recently on higher education as a key to making the United States workforce stronger and the country more competitive in the 21st century world economy. As the federal government and philanthropic leaders call for increased degree completion in higher education, small and mid-sized private institutions are an underutilized resource in this effort.
Private colleges also enroll comparable or higher percentages of lower-income and first-generation students to public institutions and they require far less subsidy by state governments to succeed in meeting these national goals. Most importantly, small and mid-sized private institutions have moved beyond a focus on access to a record of unequalled success in retaining and graduating low-income and first-generation students.”

The CIC/Walmart College Success Awards program will include a conference in 2011, online networking opportunities, and a final publication on best practices from both cohorts to be disseminated at the end of the grant period in 2013.

For more information about the CIC/Walmart College Success Awards and the programs of the 30 winners, visit the CIC website at

www.cic.edu/projects_services/walmart_college_success.asp.

About CAU
Formed in 1988 by the consolidation of two historic institutions, Atlanta University (1865) and Clark College (1869), Clark Atlanta University is the largest of the United Negro College Fund institutions with an enrollment of nearly 4,000 students. Clark Atlanta University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097: Telephone 404-679-4501) to award the Bachelor’s, Master’s, Specialist and Doctor’s degrees. The Carnegie Classification lists CAU as a Research University – High Research Activity. CAU is listed as one of the best southeastern colleges by The Princeton Review and has been selected to the Washington Monthly’s 2008 list of best colleges and universities. National business and consumer publications rank Clark Atlanta high among the best buys in American higher education.

About The Council of Independent Colleges
The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) is an association of more than 600 independent, liberal arts colleges and universities and higher education affiliates and organizations that work together to strengthen college and university leadership, sustain high-quality education, and enhance private higher education’s contributions to society. To fulfill this mission, CIC provides its members with skills, tools, and knowledge that address aspects of leadership, financial management and performance, academic quality, and institutional visibility. The Council is headquartered at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC. For more information, visit

www.cic.edu/.
About Philanthropy at Walmart
Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are proud to support the charitable causes that are important to customers and associates in their own neighborhoods. The Walmart Foundation funds initiatives focused on education, workforce development, economic opportunity, environmental sustainability, and health and wellness. From Feb. 1, 2009 through Jan. 31, 2010, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation gave more than $512 million in cash and in-kind gifts globally, $467 million of which was donated in the U.S. To learn more, visit www.walmartfoundation.org.

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