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**AG COAKLEY ANNOUNCES GRANT FUNDING STEMMING FROM CURE  
LOUNGE SETTLEMENT**

*Funding Provides Support to African-American Students Seeking Higher Education*

**BOSTON** – Addressing a group of youth and staff at a community-based Dorchester nonprofit, Attorney General Martha Coakley awarded \$28,500 in grants to four organizations that provide support to African-American students seeking higher education opportunities. The funding stems from a February 2011 [settlement](#) obtained by the Attorney General’s Office against the Cure Lounge nightclub in downtown Boston, after the establishment allegedly discriminated against African-American patrons.

“While we cannot change the actions of Cure Lounge the night of the incident, I am pleased that something positive has resulted from our settlement and that we are able to award these grants to help African-American students fulfill their academic ambitions,” said Attorney General Coakley. “This funding will help ensure that these young adults have the tools to prepare and apply for higher education, and allow them to pursue a path to personal growth and academic achievement.”

Coakley made her announcement today during a visit to Freedom House in Dorchester, one of the four grant recipients. She was joined by Boston City Councilor-At-Large Ayanna Pressley and Gail Snowden, CEO of Freedom House, along with representatives from the other three grant recipients—Cambridge College, Bottom Line Inc., and the United Negro College Fund.

“I want to thank Attorney General Coakley for her swift response to my request for an investigation and for ensuring the funds from the resulting fine were distributed to organizations committed to giving more African-Americans the opportunity to go to college,” said Ayanna Pressley, Boston City Councilor-At-Large. “Boston’s college and universities attract talented students from across the county and world but we need to make sure our own young people have that same chance for a brighter and more secure future. When we talk about retaining talent, we can’t forget about the talent inherent in Boston’s own neighborhoods; talent that sometimes, sadly, goes wasted. These mini-grants will help nurture that talent and allow more of Boston’s young people to secure the future they deserve and the life they dream of.”

“On behalf of Freedom House, I would like to thank Attorney General Martha Coakley and her office for this grant to support our educational programming. Providing young urban adults the opportunity to get in to and succeed in college is our major priority,” said Gail

Snowden, CEO of Freedom House. “Access to a quality education, resources and support to realize their full potential puts young people on the path to successful careers. Freedom House’s mission is to promote educational excellence, positive youth development and educational achievement and economic self sufficiency for Boston’s most distressed neighborhoods. The commitment of the Attorney General’s office to invest in helping young people graduate from college will have positive ripple effects for families and for the community.”

“Access to education is at the heart of Cambridge College’s mission,” said Cambridge College Interim President and Provost, Dr. Joe Lee. “We are very grateful to the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office for supporting us as we expand the opportunities available for African American adult learners to pursue higher education through our successful partnership with the Mother Caroline Academy and Education Center in Dorchester. These incoming students will experience Cambridge College’s commitment to an educational experience that honors and empowers them as they explore the expectations and requirements of college life through our Principles and Processes of Adult Learning Course.”

“Bottom Line is grateful to have the Attorney General’s Office as a partner in our effort to help Massachusetts’ low-income, minority students succeed in college and beyond,” said Greg Johnson, Executive Director of Bottom Line, Inc. “The path to a college degree can be overwhelming for even the most talented students if they don’t have guidance and support. Thanks in part to the Attorney General’s Office, Bottom Line will be able to provide that ongoing support to more than 1,600 students from Boston in the coming year.”

“UNCF is delighted to be awarded a mini grant from the Attorney General’s Office supporting African-American students seeking higher education,” said Janice Cooper, Area Development Director of the United Negro College Fund. “The grant will be used to provide scholarship support to high school student who are planning to attend college next year. In addition to demonstrating need, we want to provide support to young men and women who are making a positive difference in their community.”

The grants were awarded to non-profit organizations with a proven history of success in outreach and support to the Massachusetts African-American community, and who are committed to preparing African-American students for higher education. The four grantees will provide support to more than 250 college-bound African-American high school students and adults in Boston and Worcester. That support includes direct scholarships, college counseling services, assistance in the college application and financial aid processes, and college preparatory classes. Bottom Line, Inc. in Boston and Worcester will receive \$8,000, Cambridge College in Cambridge will receive \$7,500, Freedom House in Dorchester will receive \$5,000 and the United Negro College Fund in Boston will receive \$8,000.

The funding for these grants was the result of a [settlement](#) between AG Coakley’s Office, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) and Paige Hospitality, Inc. d/b/a Cure Lounge. The settlement resolves allegations that Cure Lounge abruptly and without merit shut down an event in November 2010 following the Harvard-Yale football game because a vast majority of the attendees were black. The owner and operator of Cure Lounge was ordered to make a payment to the Commonwealth, issue a public apology, and send its staff to anti-discrimination training. The settlement required the majority of the payment to be given in the form of grants to entities that provide support for African-American students seeking higher education opportunities.



**(Left to Right): Ingrid Tucker (Executive Director, Mother Caroline Academy), Attorney General Martha Coakley, Joe Lee (Cambridge College Interim President), Councilor Ayanna Pressley, Janice Cooper (UNCF Area Development Director)**