



## College Access **KnowHow2GO** Campaign Q & As

### **The Campaign**

#### **Why are you launching the College Access KnowHow2GO campaign?**

- The college-going rate among certain segments of the population—low-income students, ethnic minorities, families without a college-going tradition—continues to lag that of other groups.
- Research conducted for this campaign showed that low-income and first-generation students have high aspirations for college – nine of every ten low-income teens intend to go – but they do not have clear information on what steps they need to take.
- Additionally, campaign research showed that particularly in low-income households, parents expect the student to take the lead in pursuing college.
- The Lumina Foundation for Education and the American Council on Education (ACE) are joining with the Ad Council to launch a national public service advertising (PSA) campaign designed to encourage low-income and first-generation students to take the steps necessary to go to college. This unified, national PSA effort combines education, community-based, and government partnerships to raise awareness among low-income students about preparing for college and what it takes to get there.

#### **What do you hope to accomplish?**

- KnowHow2GO has two central campaign goals: to raise awareness about the steps it takes to prepare for college and to motivate low-income, first-generation students to turn their dreams of going to college into a reality.
- KnowHow2GO seeks to demystify college for low-income students, many of whom are baffled by the process for gaining access to higher education.
- We hope that as a result of this comprehensive campaign more low-income and first generation students will take steps early to prepare for college.

#### **How large is the gap between income levels and college enrollment?**

- According to research published in June 2005 in *Postsecondary Education Opportunity*, 75 percent of students from high-income families complete college by age 24, yet only nine percent of students from low-income families complete college by this age.

## **Why aren't low-income students getting to fulfill their dreams?**

- Many students from low-income families have a misperception of the college preparation process. Some students think if they do well in school that is enough. Other students know some of the steps, but do not know all of them or that there are actual steps student must follow.
- For the most part, however, students and parents from low-income families are missing the information on how to make college happen. Low-income families are hampered by a lack of accurate information, a glut of misinformation about the college application process and lack the information sources that sort everything out.
- To the extent that low-income families talk about college, discussions tend to focus on “the dream” of higher education rather than the actions that are necessary to achieve the dream.
- A main focus of the campaign is to reposition attitudes about college, from dream to action-oriented goal.

## **Aside from the PSAs, what is the Lumina Foundation for Education and the American Council on Education (ACE) doing to extend the reach of the new campaign?**

- In addition to the media components of the campaign, KnowHow2GO will utilize a network of grassroots partners, including mentor and youth-serving organizations, who will reinforce the campaign in local communities throughout the country.
- Momentum is expected to build over several months, as the campaign gains currency. To date, the initiative has forged alliances with California, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska and Ohio to link students to readily available local resources. There is strong interest in implementing the campaign in twelve other states.
- The campaign messages can be customized, as well, to direct kids to local resources. In Massachusetts, for example, the PSAs promote a new state Web site, ReadySetGotoCollege.com. California ads promote KnowHow2GoCalifornia.org.
- ACE will tap into the nearly 2,000 colleges and universities and higher education associations that comprise its membership to further expand the campaign's reach.

## **Why did the Ad Council take on this campaign?**

- The Ad Council has a rich history of using the power of communications to create positive social change on behalf of issues facing our country during the last six decades. Many of the organization's campaigns have successfully changed attitudes and behaviors, and ultimately, changed the social norm in our country.
- In fact, one of the Ad Council's most successful campaigns in history has helped provide minority students with the resources to go to college during the last three decades. Developed on behalf of the United Negro College Fund, the campaign features the memorable tagline “A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste.” Since its launch 35 years ago, the campaign has helped more than 350,000 minority students go to college.
- After speaking with the higher education community, the Ad Council became convinced that the college enrollment gaps for low-income and first-generation students represented a serious problem in our country – one in which advertising and awareness could make a difference. In developing the campaign, we sought to change the public perceptions about how and when to prepare for college.

## **Who paid for the development of the campaign and how much was it?**

- This campaign was funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education. The creative work itself was developed pro bono. Per the Ad Council's model, the Lumina Foundation is covering the production and distribution costs associated with the campaign, valued at approximately \$2 million for the duration of the campaign (over the next two years).

## **Who created the PSAs?**

- Publicis New York created this campaign *pro bono*. Publicis is a global advertising agency that has worked on advertising campaigns for BMW, Coca Cola, Marriott and Whirlpool, among others.
- All Ad Council PSAs are produced *pro bono* by the nation's leading advertising agencies.

## **When and how are the ads being distributed?**

- The KnowHow2Go campaign will distribute the public service advertisements to 210 media markets in January, including materials in Spanish and English.

## **How long will the campaign run?**

- The campaign will run for approximately 2 years.

## **Who is purchasing the advertising time and space for the campaign?**

- All of the ads will run and air in advertising time and space that is donated by the media. The Ad Council has received more than \$1 billion in donated media for its campaigns each year since 1998.
- The average Ad Council campaign receives \$30 million in donated media support annually.

## **Who is the campaign's target? And why?**

- The KnowHow2GO campaign primarily targets low-income students in grades 8 to 10, and secondarily, their parents and adult influencers to encourage them to start the college preparation process early.

## **The PSAs**

### **Describe the campaign? What are you trying to communicate?**

- KnowHow2GO is a multi-media campaign that features television and radio PSAs, outdoor and print advertising, and an interactive website ([www.KnowHow2GO.org](http://www.KnowHow2GO.org)) that delivers guiding information to students, parents/adults, and organizations. There is also a free campaign brochure available though the 1-800 number provided by the Department of Education.
- KnowHow2GO focuses on four creative messages that speak to young people directly to help them understand the steps necessary to go to college. Those steps are: "Be a Pain," "Push Yourself," "Find the Right Fit" and "Put Your Hands on Some Cash."

### **How many new PSAs are available and can you describe them generally?**

- There is one new television PSA (available in :15, :30, and :60 lengths), 2 radio spots (available in various lengths), two print ads (available in various newspaper and magazine sizes), outdoor (available in 30-sheet, 8-sheet, and bus shelter sizes), and web banners (available in various sizes).
- The research-based PSAs capture the aspirations of students for the future, while shining a light on their lack of a clear path to get there.
- In a poignant television spot dubbed “Paper Airplane,” students launch loose-leaf gliders from school buses, rooftops and schoolhouse windows. Adults on the ground open the planes to find a message from the students: Can You Help Me Go to College? The ad’s voiceover reminds viewers that “big dreams and good grades aren’t enough to get into college.”

### **Are the PSAs available in Spanish? If not, do you have plans to develop Spanish-language work in the future?**

- Television and radio advertising will be available in upcoming weeks.

### **Why did you decide to focus on the creative strategy?**

- These new PSAs are compelling and we’re confident that the creative is on target to break through to the consumer.
- The Ad Council conducted both quantitative and qualitative research to define the key messages and creative concepts of the campaign. Focus group testing showed that the PSAs were motivating to the target audience. Therefore, we are confident that these research-based ads will encourage countless students and adults to seek more information about the college application process.
- After more than 60 years of public service advertising, the Ad Council has found that PSAs need to be compelling and research-based to get people emotionally engaged and to create behavioral and attitudinal change that is often deep-seeded. It has to break through the clutter of commercials so that it lives on the consumers’ mind long after the 30-second spot.
- This campaign is compelling and eye-catching and presents the important message using a strategy that is backed by solid research. There is also a very clear call-to-action.

### **Are there any fulfillment materials?**

- All of the new PSAs direct audiences to visit a new comprehensive website, [www.KnowHow2GO.org](http://www.KnowHow2GO.org) where they can find tips for students and parents by grade-level on the college preparation process.
- Through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, students and parents can also access a toll-free number (800 433-3243) to request a new brochure containing tips on preparing for college. The Department is providing fulfillment and printing costs for the student/parent brochure.

## **Research and Evaluation**

### **What kind of research was conducted during the development of this campaign?**

- Lumina Foundation and ACE reviewed existing research on the attitudes toward college held by low-income students and their families. The groups also commissioned new research that directly influenced the campaign's creative content, which was developed by Publicis New York.
- In March 2006, a series of in-home "ethnographic" interviews were conducted to provide qualitative data about the attitudes of low-income families toward college. Researchers concluded that parents and students in these families live in a "bubble" that limits access to credible information.

### **Did you consult with any experts in developing the campaign?**

- In developing this campaign, we met with experts in the field of college access, including national organizations that provide college access services to the campaign's targeted youth (low-income students in grades 8 to 10).
- The campaign was shared with the Time Warner Foundation, the Gates Foundation, and many other foundations with an interest in improving postsecondary student access and success. It has also been shared with a number of other national and local youth serving organizations.

### **Why do you believe this campaign will succeed?**

- This work, like all of our PSAs, is based in solid research provided by the Lumina Foundation and ACE and tested by Publicis New York and the Ad Council. Young adults were motivated by the advertising.
- There was extensive market research conducted for this campaign (see the following question). The Ad Council conducted both quantitative and qualitative research to define the key messages and creative concepts.
- Focus group testing showed that the PSAs motivated people and connected them to the issue in an emotional way that inspired them to learn more about it and do something.
- We believe this campaign will succeed because it is based on research with both the expert community and our target audience. The PSAs were tested with focus groups, which revealed that our target audience finds them effective and motivating (see the following question).

### **How and with whom did you test the ads to determine their effectiveness? What was the reaction?**

- The Ad Council, in partnership with Russell Research, conducted research with students throughout the country in September to test the new PSAs for effectiveness.
- Three-fourths of the students who viewed the ads indicated that they would be "likely" to visit the website for more information, with one-third saying they "definitely" would visit it.

### **How will you measure the success of the campaign?**

- One of the important criteria for all Ad Council campaigns is that they produce measurable results.

- The Ad Council will track the number visits to the campaign website. We'll also track the number of materials downloaded.
- To help evaluate the campaign's effectiveness and impact, we are conducting a phone tracking survey, measuring trends in awareness, ad recognition, and relevant attitudes and behaviors. One was conducted prior to the launch (pre-wave) and a post-wave study will be conducted following the launch to determine the awareness of the issue and the advertising and the effectiveness of the PSAs in causing an attitudinal and behavioral change.
- The Ad Council will also monitor the donated media the campaign receives to determine its success.