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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **THE NEIGHBORHOOD ACADEMY - 22ND ANNUAL CONVOCATION, SPEAKER DR. ASA J. LEE, PRESIDENT AND PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGICAL FORMATION FOR MINISTRY AT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

**Pittsburgh, PA – Sep 7, 2022**

Today The Neighborhood Academy will begin its 22nd academic school year with 149 students in grades 6-12. After two years of virtual and hybrid settings, this year's Convocation Ceremony will be held in-person in the school's gymnasium. Guest speaker, Dr. Asa J. Lee, President and Professor of Theological Formation for Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, will deliver the Convocation speech to nearly 200 people including students, faculty, staff, parents, board members and donors.

This year welcomes the Class of 2023, who persevered through the COVID-19 with technology- based learning and experienced no learning gap throughout the pandemic. Faculty transitioned to virtual learning in March 2020, as each student had already been equipped with laptops, courtesy of Comcast's Internet Essential program. Students returned to classroom learning (hybrid format) beginning Fall 2020, and fully, in-person, masked attendance in Fall 2021. While no student escaped the devastation of the pandemic, faculty, staff, counselors, volunteers, parents, and donors joined forces to lessen the impact of learning loss on our vulnerable students.

“As we enter the 2022-2023 school year, how fortuitous for us to welcome Dr. Lee, who is an educator and a minister to inspire students to excel during this school year”, said Head of School Dr. Anthony Williams. “Dr. Lee is a friend to The Neighborhood Academy and supports our rigorous, structured, faith-based approach to education”. The need for this type of education is clear as students transition to a sense of normalcy and

strive to soar above the challenges of the past two years, and launch toward a brighter future.

**About The Neighborhood Academy:**

Founded in 2001 by Ms. Josephine B. Moore, and Reverend Thomas E. Johnson, The Neighborhood Academy is a private, independent, college-preparatory school for grades 6-12 that serves youth regardless of income. Beginning in 1993 as an innovative summer school program for at-risk youth in Larimer, it is now in its 22nd year of operation.

Designed to meet the needs of families who demonstrate financial need, its mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty by empowering youth and preparing them for college and citizenship. The school is dedicated to developing the minds, bodies, and spirits of students so that they become fully productive members of society. To date 100% of graduates have been accepted to four-year colleges/universities, and alumni boast a 75% five-year college graduation rate, with 90% returning to the Pittsburgh workforce.

For more information about **The Neighborhood Academy**, please call (412) 362-2001 or visit [www.theneighborhoodacademy.org](http://www.theneighborhoodacademy.org).

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