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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **ECMC Foundation sponsors Atlanta training on “PERSIST: A Comprehensive Guide for Student Success in Higher Education” for TRIO Student Support Services and Ronald E. McNair Programs**

ECMC Foundation introduced “PERSIST” – a practical resource guide for higher education professionals to increase the persistence rates of low-income, first-generation college-going students – to 118 SSS and McNair grantees April 19, at the Atlanta Westin Hotel. Attendees engaged in a full-day interactive session, the first of three national trainings; the second training will take place Thursday, May 24, in Chicago and the third in Denver on Thursday, June 14.

The distinguished training team, led by Sue Misock, Training Director, included: Sidney R. Childs, Director of the SSS Program, Bowling Green State University; Rebecca Dukstein, Associate Director, Educational Talent Search, University of Kansas; Oscar Felix, Director of the Center for Educational Access and Outreach, Colorado State University; Adeluisa G. Judal, CEO, InterActive Solutions Consulting; and Adrell Lawrence Pinkney, Director of Housing/Student Activities & Organizations, Southern University at New Orleans.

“PERSIST” is a toolkit for postsecondary educators to help at-risk students successfully navigate the varied aspects of the college experience. Right now, low-income, first-generation college-going students who are finally able to enroll in higher education are the least likely to graduate. Clearly, access to higher education alone is not enough.

“PERSIST” provides strategies to help retain these students and can be used in a variety of settings: as part of a freshman orientation/seminar; in conjunction with academic support groups and programs; and as a resource for academic, student services and financial aid advisers at all types of postsecondary institutions.

ECMC Foundation, a nonprofit educational foundation affiliated with ECMC Group, worked with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Federal TRIO Programs to develop an outline for a practical resource toolkit to address the increasing problem of low postsecondary persistence rates. ECMC and the Office of Federal TRIO Programs successfully partner on “Realizing the College Dream,” a college access curriculum that supports low-income, first-generation college-going students. “PERSIST” is the logical next step in a continuing effort to level the playing field so every student, regardless of background, has the opportunity to successfully participate in higher education. JBL Associates, a consulting firm specializing in postsecondary education, wrote the guide based on recent research suggesting that factors such as student engagement and institutional commitment are critical to increasing student persistence rates.

(more)

Some representative comments from training participants include:

- This manual is an awesome tool that I cannot wait to take back to my organization. This is clearly the best training I have ever attended.
- The training and toolkit are two of the most valuable resources I have been exposed to in a long time. Thank you. I plan to pass the toolkit on to the graduate assistants in my three departments.
- Excellent information, ideas and presentation. This format certainly held my interest and addressed needs that we see on a daily basis.

“PERSIST” is available as a binder, on CD, and can be downloaded at [www.ecmcfoundation.org](http://www.ecmcfoundation.org). To receive your FREE CD, please contact ECMC Foundation at [info@ecmcfoundation.org](mailto:info@ecmcfoundation.org).

If you are interested in training 100 or more higher educational professionals in your school or organization, please contact Vicki Whebbe at [vwhebbe@ecmc.org](mailto:vwhebbe@ecmc.org).

### **About ECMC Foundation**

ECMC Foundation, an ECMC Group company, helps low-income, first-generation college-going students further their educational goals. Through innovative outreach programs, we convey to students the importance of completing high school, and continue our mission by developing and distributing programs that focus on college access, retention, and success. ECMC Foundation partners with government agencies, educational institutions, and other foundations to make the dream of higher education a reality. ECMC Foundation’s affiliate, Educational Credit Management Corporation (ECMC), also serves the higher education industry as the designated Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) student loan guarantor for the Commonwealth of Virginia and state of Oregon. For more program and service information, visit [www.ecmcfoundation.org](http://www.ecmcfoundation.org) and [www.ecmc.org](http://www.ecmc.org).

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