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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 20, 2022

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Showcasing Successful Pandemic Recovery Strategies: First Lady of the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, and Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Visited Horizons at Albertus Magnus College

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – Today, **Dr. Jill Biden, First Lady of the United States, Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, the Secretary of Education, Ned Lamont, Governor of Connecticut, and Justin Elicker, Mayor of New Haven** joined students, teachers and parents from Horizons at Albertus Magnus College and Horizons at The Foote School in a showcase of summer learning and its critical role in pandemic recovery.

Joining these elected officials on the visit were Lorna Smith, CEO of Horizons National; Jose Oromi, Executive Vice President of Horizons National; Dr. Marc M. Camille, President of Albertus Magnus College; Aaron Dworkin, CEO of the National Summer Learning Association; and Stephanie Kadam, Director of Horizons at Albertus Magnus College.

Horizons at Albertus Magnus College was launched with the support of Connecticut's Accelerate American Recovery Plan funding, made available through the American Rescue Plan Act. It is an affiliate of Horizons National, which leads a national network of high-quality, evidence-based education and youth development programs specifically designed to support the learning recovery of K-12 students.

"The American Rescue Plan recognized the critical role summer learning programs play in learning recovery, and provided the funds to launch our Horizons site, which will go on to serve students in our community for years to come," said Stephanie Kadam, Site Director of Horizons at Albertus Magnus College.

During the visit, second grade **Horizons students read Jarbari Jumps to VIP guests** and participated in a conversation about the book, learning to swim and doing your best. The First Lady and Secretary Cardona, along with other VIPs, also participated in a **STEM Lego activity** with first graders, where students and guests worked together to build the robot "Mr. Learnie."

These activities highlighted English language arts, STEM, swimming and social-emotional learning activities that regularly take place as part of Horizons programs.

"We are so grateful for the additional opportunities that the American Rescue Plan has given Horizons National to expand our partnerships in New Haven, and around the country. These funds allow us to support more young people and inspire the joy of learning," shared Lorna Smith, CEO of Horizons National. "Horizons at Albertus Magnus College is one of 74 Horizons sites across the country, but there are millions more students who can benefit from programs like ours – all we need is the funding to make it available."

While this site was made possible by state and federal funding, and launched to support students through the education crisis created as a result of COVID-19, Horizons at Albertus Magnus College joins a network of Horizons programs in the U.S., including 10 others in Connecticut.

"It's such an honor for Albertus to host the First Lady of the United States and the Secretary of Education, both of whom are educators," said Dr. Marc M. Camille, President of Albertus Magnus College. "Horizons and Albertus share similar mission-centric commitments to education equity and opportunity, ultimately in support of elevating lives and dreams through education. Today's visit by Dr. Biden and Dr. Cardona shines a bright light on the wonderful Horizons at Albertus Magnus College program, which serves young children from our neighboring New Haven and Hamden communities."

Horizons programs successfully demonstrate how community-based organizations can work with government partners and educational institutions to accelerate learning recovery today and for years to come. The infrastructure created by the American Rescue Plan funding is meeting students in a moment of need, but will also go on to exist for many years and support generations of students to come.

"The National Summer Learning Association is proud to elevate the summer learning programs doing amazing work for our young people across the U.S.," shared Aaron Dworkin, CEO of the National Summer Learning Association. "Horizons National is one of our award-winning partners, meeting thousands of students and families in this moment and working to reach even more communities. We are honored that First Lady Dr. Biden and Secretary Cardona chose to visit Horizons programs to see first-hand the positive impact of the American Rescue Plan Act funding, and why summer learning opportunities are essential for all students."

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