

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Mayor Gulley: New Bessemer scholarship will provide at least \$10,000 toward college for every Bessemer City High School graduate.

Mayor's new "Bessemer Built" program begins with the class of 2027, with tuition support available at Miles College, Lawson State Community College and Stillman College

Bessemer, Ala., Aug. 14, 2026 - Today, Bessemer Mayor Kenneth E. Gulley announced that every Bessemer City High School graduate will be offered the Bessemer Built Scholarship, a scholarship of at least \$10,000 toward tuition at the participating institution the student chooses: Miles College, Lawson State Community College or Stillman College. The scholarship will be available to all Bessemer City High School graduates through the graduating class of 2030.

Mayor Gulley announced the Bessemer Built Scholarship at Bessemer City High School as the first program under Bessemer Built, a new initiative designed to help local students live, learn, work and thrive in and around Bessemer.

Bessemer Built will offer graduates three forms of support: a scholarship of at least \$10,000 toward tuition; access to workforce development training in fields including technology and the skilled trades; and four-year tuition scholarships for a limited number of students each year at Miles College and Stillman College.

"Talent is everywhere in Bessemer. Opportunity should be, too," Mayor Kenneth E. Gulley said. "Bessemer Built tells our young people that when they are ready to take the next step, their city is ready to invest in them. We want our students to live, learn, work and thrive in and around Bessemer and to see this as a place where they can build a good life."

The scholarship will help students continue their education near home while laying the groundwork for stronger connections among Bessemer High School, participating colleges and future employers. Program partners will release eligibility requirements, deadlines and award details at bessemerbuilt.com.

Kimberly Hines, Vice President of Philanthropy, QTS:

"Bessemer Built reflects what can happen when a community comes together around its students and their future. QTS is proud to fund this scholarship program and support Mayor Gulley's vision to expand educational opportunity, strengthen workforce pathways and create new

opportunities for Bessemer students. We are committed to being a long-term partner in Bessemer, and this scholarship is just one example of the investments we plan to make to support the community's growth and success for years to come."

Dr. Bobbie Knight, J.D., President, Miles College

"The Bessemer Built Scholarship Fund represents the kind of intentional investment that can change the trajectory of students, families, and communities for generations. At Miles College, we believe access to higher education must be connected to opportunity, and this partnership will help Bessemer students see a clear pathway from the classroom to meaningful careers and long-term economic mobility. We are proud to stand with The Same House, QTS, and Bessemer City Schools in creating opportunities that allow talented young people to remain connected to their community while preparing to lead in Alabama's growing workforce."

Dr. Cynthia T. Anthony, President/Lawson State Community College:

"We see this as a unique opportunity for students to focus on their future. The investment being made today can pay dividends for years to come as scholarship recipients continue their education and graduate prepared to enter the workforce. Those of us in higher education know all too well that financial pressures can become a barrier. For some of our brightest students, concerns about paying for college can lead them to think a degree is out of reach. Lawson State is proud to be part of an effort that gives students greater access to education and a clearer path toward careers—especially computer science, cybersecurity, and education---where well-prepared graduates are urgently needed."

Dr. Yolanda W. Page, President, Stillman College:

"This investment is about more than scholarships—it is about possibility. It affirms that every deserving student deserves a clear pathway to higher education and a future filled with promise. As Stillman College advances toward our ASCEND 2030 vision of serving 1,000 students, we remain committed to expanding access, empowering scholars, and fulfilling our mission to prepare leaders who will make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world. We are honored to partner with The Same House and QTS to help make that vision a reality for the students of Bessemer."

Rodney Bullard, Chief Executive Officer, The Same House:

"Trust is built when communities have a voice in what gets created, who benefits and what lasts. For Bessemer, this scholarship reflects a clear priority: give young people more ways to continue

their education and build their future close to home. The Same House will keep the city, the schools, the colleges and funders working toward that goal, with the community's priorities at the center."

The scholarship is funded by QTS, Bessemer Bulit's lead corporate supporter.

The Same House, a public benefit enterprise that convenes community partnerships, will serve as its long-term steward. Through its Community Quarterback model, The Same House has and will bring together the city, schools, participating colleges, community leaders and funders to coordinate the work, maintain accountability and keep future efforts grounded in priorities set by Bessemer residents.