

THE PENSOLE LEWIS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & DESIGN
PETITIONS TO BECOME THE NATION'S FIRST HBCU TO REOPEN

Pending state legislation and government redesignation, PLC will carry on the memory of Violet T. Lewis in Detroit and become the first HBCU in the country to focus on Design

(October 12, 2021, Detroit, MI) – Today the PENSOLE Lewis College of Business and Design (PLC) has proposed draft legislation for state authorization to be recognized as Michigan's single HBCU with the intention to become the nation's first-ever re-opened HBCU. PLC is the dream school-made-reality by Dr. D'Wayne Edwards, founder of the PENSOLE Design Academy in Portland, Oregon, and controlling stockholder of the previously closed Detroit-based HBCU, Lewis College of Business. Partnering with the College for Creative Studies (CCS), PLC will open in March 2022 and serve aspiring Black creatives, designers, engineers, and business leaders.

"The Lewis College of Business was first created in 1928 as a secretarial school for Black women. After relocating to Detroit in 1939, it became a critical source of economic impact for the city's Black community. GM, Ford, and Michigan Bell hired their first Black office employees from the school. 82 years later, and 14 years since it lost its accreditation as HBCU, I am honored to be resurrecting Violet T. Lewis's legacy in Detroit," says Dr. Edwards.

"As a predominantly Black city, Detroit should have an operating Historically Black College. Not having one has been a hole in our educational landscape for too long," says Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan. To have the first HBCU anywhere to reopen happen in Detroit would be a tremendous demonstration of how our city is coming back as a city of opportunity for people of color...

...The partnership between PENSOLE and CCS seems like a perfect match, and I fully support Dr. Edwards in his efforts to have the Michigan Legislature designate PENSOLE Lewis College of Business and Design as Michigan and Detroit's only HBCU."

Among the college's founding supporters are Dan and Jennifer Gilbert via [The Gilbert Family Foundation](#), and leading retailer Target. For each partner, the commitment to launching PLC is part of larger ongoing initiatives supporting the economic future of local and diverse communities.

The investment from the Gilbert Family Foundation comes as part of the organization's ongoing, \$500 million joint commitment to their hometown of Detroit to drive access to economic and social opportunity and increase equity for residents of Detroit.

"Dan and I are committed to investing in and developing programs that build wealth and create equitable access to opportunity for Detroiters," says Jennifer Gilbert, entrepreneur and co-founder of The Gilbert Family Foundation, " We are proud to contribute to the PENSOLE Lewis College of Business and Design and know that this historic institution will once again cultivate a diverse talent pipeline and further cement Detroit's legacy of innovation."

For Target, the collaboration is part of its [Racial Equity Action and Change \(REACH\) strategy](#), formed in 2020 to accelerate Target's work to advance racial equity, and its new five-year, [\\$100 million commitment](#) to fuel the economic prosperity of Black communities.

"With a deep history in democratizing design, Target is proud to support Dr. D'Wayne Edwards and aspiring Black designers through the PENSOLE Lewis College of Business and Design," said Amanda Nusz, senior vice president of corporate responsibility at Target and president of the Target Foundation. "This partnership represents an important part of our broader commitment that aims to support the next generation of Black talent, expand the impact of Black-led movements and voices, and create economic opportunity in Black communities across the country."

As part of the reinstatement process PENSOLE Lewis will request authorization from the Michigan Department of Education to operate as an educational corporation and through draft legislation will invite the Michigan State Legislature to recognize PLC as an HBCU in the state of Michigan.

Prior to its official opening and reinstatement, PENSOLE Lewis will operate in partnership with and under the auspices of the College for Creative Studies in Detroit. CCS is working with Dr. Edwards to gain the legal and legislative approval needed to establish PENSOLE Lewis, which includes designation as an accredited educational program. An agreement is being drafted to establish a joint venture between CCS and PLC to allow PLC to offer accredited educational programs.

"CCS's partnership with PENSOLE Design Academy is driven by our strong commitment to develop diverse creative talent and long-standing commitment to the City of Detroit. Together, CCS and PENSOLE will create a new resource to support the aspirations of Detroiters," Don Tuski, College for Creative Studies President says, "The fact that PENSOLE chose CCS, Detroit and the Lewis College of Business is a testament to CCS's robust alumni network of minority footwear designers, Detroit's design legacy, and the impact of this historical HBCU on Detroit."

PLC will be located in CCS's state of the art A. Alfred Taubman Center for Design Education until its permanent home in Detroit is selected and developed. Enrollment for PENSOLE Lewis's program is expected to open December of this year

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Media Contact:

Kelsey.Rohwer@edelman.com

About PENSOLE-Lewis College of Business and Design (PLC)

The PENSOLE Lewis College of Business and Design will become the nation's first-ever reinstated HBCU. Founded by Dr. D'Wayne Edwards, the founder of the PENSOLE Design Academy in Detroit, PLC will resurrect the Lewis College of Business in Detroit. Beginning in March 2022, PENSOLE Design Academy, in collaboration with the College for Creative Studies (CCS), will offer programs across design,

sustainability, business, STEM, and more, serving young Black creatives across industries. For more information please visit <https://pensole.com/pensolelewis>

About The Gilbert Family Foundation

The Gilbert Family Foundation is a private nonprofit foundation founded by Jennifer and Dan Gilbert to accelerate a cure for neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1) and build economic opportunity and equity in the city of Detroit. The Gilbert Family Foundation supports groundbreaking, cutting-edge research aimed at eradicating NF1, a genetic disorder that causes tumors to grow on nerves anywhere in the body. Additionally, the Foundation supports the economic stability and mobility of residents in Detroit by investing in wealth-building opportunities and breaking down systemic barriers such as inequitable property tax debt among low-income homeowners. In 2021, the Gilbert Family Foundation and their partners at the Rocket Community Fund made a joint \$500M, ten-year commitment to Detroit. For more information on the Gilbert Family Foundation, please visit gilbertfamilyfoundation.org.

About Target

Minneapolis-based Target Corporation (NYSE: TGT) serves guests at more than 1,900 stores and at Target.com. Since 1946, Target has given 5% of its profit to communities, which today equals millions of dollars a week. For the [latest store count](#) or more information, visit Target.com/Pressroom. For a behind-the-scenes look at Target, visit Target.com/abullseyeview or follow [@TargetNews](#) on Twitter.

About College for Creative Studies (CCS)

Located in the heart of Detroit, the College for Creative Studies is a world-class institution that educates artists and designers to be leaders in the creative professions. A private, fully accredited college, CCS enrolls more than 1,400 students pursuing Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees. CCS alumni have been on the leading edge of every field of design, with a robust network of alumni from historically underrepresented backgrounds currently working in the booming athletic footwear business.

Students in the BFA program can major in Advertising Design, Art Practice, Communication Design, Craft and Material Studies, Entertainment Arts, Fashion Design, Illustration, Interior Design, Photography, Product Design and Transportation Design, in addition to a dual major Art Education program. Students in the graduate program can major in Art Education, Color and Materials Design, Design for Climate Action, Motion Design, Transportation Design, and User Experience Design.