

# News Release

South Seattle Community College

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2008

## **Inaugural 13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship Recipients to be Honored**

*Event celebrates launch of guaranteed tuition scholarship for all Cleveland High School seniors.*

*I will never forget the first day of school. It was one of the most exciting and fearful moments of my life, and then I realized that school could be the key to my success and career goals.*

- Nimal D.

(Seattle, WA) Nimal wants to become a nurse, Sochetna a computer programmer, and Joana a detective. They and their classmates are now much more likely to achieve their dreams with the help of an innovative scholarship program offered by South Seattle Community College.

This new initiative, the *13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship*, is the first of its kind in Washington state, and gives every graduating senior in Cleveland High School's Class of 2008 the opportunity to attend South tuition-free for one year, regardless of grade point, test scores or other factors. Forty-one students, almost half the high school's senior class, applied for and received the scholarship, which is funded by financial aid and/or scholarship funds raised through the South Seattle Community College Foundation.

The scholarship was created to address data from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges that shows the enormous difference just one year of college can make in terms of earnings and a student's likelihood of continuing in higher education. Similar programs have been initiated at Ventura College (CA) and Tulsa Community College (OK).

"We know that students who enroll in college directly from high school are more likely to succeed, but many don't continue simply because they can't afford it," explains South Seattle Community College Foundation Interim Executive Director Elizabeth Pluhta. "The *13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship* removes the financial barrier that might prevent many students from pursuing higher education."

Cleveland's multicultural and diverse student body reflects that found on the South campus, making it a natural selection as the first high school selected to participate. In the future, the Foundation hopes to expand the scholarship program to include other area high schools.

The *13<sup>th</sup> Year Scholarship* recipients will be honored at a ceremony on Wednesday, May 14, from 5-7 pm at the Alhadeff Grill on the college campus. Attendees will include scholarship recipients and their families, Cleveland High School representatives, members of the South Seattle Community College Foundation, and campus community. The event is open to the public and light refreshments will be

served from 5-6, followed by the program from 6-7 pm. RSVP at 206 764-5809 or [ssccfoundation@sccd.ctc.edu](mailto:ssccfoundation@sccd.ctc.edu). Additional information may be found at [www.southseattle.edu/13thyear](http://www.southseattle.edu/13thyear).

### **About South Seattle Community College**

South Seattle Community College serves a multicultural population of 15,000 students each year from an 87-acre, wooded campus in West Seattle, and satellite campus in the Georgetown and Beacon Hill communities. Its programs include college transfer, professional/technical careers, distance learning, basic and transitional studies, and lifelong learning. South is one of the Seattle Community Colleges.

### **About the South Seattle Community College Foundation**

The Foundation is comprised of business and community leaders who generously contribute their time and resources to enrich lives, build hope and fulfill dreams. Each year the Foundation provides more than \$1 million for student scholarships, tutoring and academic support resources, faculty professional development and program equipment.

### **About Cleveland High School**

Cleveland High School is structured around two theme-based small learning Academies (Global Studies and Health, Environment & Life/HEAL) plus an Arts conservatory. Current enrollment is 676 students, with 94% students of color, and 63% eligible for free or reduced lunch program.

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