

News Release

South Seattle Community College

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2010

South Awarded College Spark Washington Grant

Award enhances “Promise” to graduating seniors.

South Seattle Community College has been awarded a two-year, \$82,500 capacity building grant from College Spark Washington to support the college’s **13th Year Promise Scholarship**.

Now in its third year, the **13th Year Promise Scholarship** guarantees one tuition-free year at South to every Cleveland High School graduating senior, regardless of grade point, test scores, or other factors. The program is funded by financial aid and/or scholarship funds raised through the South Seattle Community College Foundation.

The scholarship was created to address data 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. Since the program launch with the Cleveland High Class of 2008, nearly 60 **13th Year Promise Scholarship** students have enrolled at South.

The College Spark Washington grant focuses particularly on strategies to achieve the critical 45-credit momentum benchmark, the “Tipping Point,” which has proven to be a strong indicator of eventual graduation and success. Funding will enhance the existing **13th Year Promise Scholarship** program by building capacity in three major areas:

1. Dedicated staffing - Multiple research and reports reference the importance of a single point of contact for students, often referred to as a navigator. A coordinator specifically assigned to **13th Year Promise Scholarship** students has been brought on board.
2. Transitioning into the 13th Year Academy – 13th Year students attend an intensive full-day, week-long workshop, called the Summer Bridge Program to improve their skills in math and English with the goal of placing into college level courses. The transition to the 13th Year Readiness Academy will lengthen and intensify this experience for Cleveland High seniors, beginning at the start of the senior year.
3. Facilitating the high school to college math alignment – Few 13th Year students are “college ready” in math, although all have passed the WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning). The grant will provide for faculty stipends to enable collaboration between South faculty and Cleveland High math instructors to research how to better meet college entrance thresholds.

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“The *13th Year Promise Scholarship* is a powerful combination of a guaranteed scholarship and additional student services, and it continues to produce positive, life-changing results,” said Elizabeth Pluhta, executive director of College Advancement and the South Seattle Community College Foundation. “This grant provides important resources to enable us to further support student achievement.”

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 campuses in the Georgetown and Beacon Hill communities. Its programs include college transfer, professional/technical careers, eLearning, basic and transitional studies, and lifelong learning. The college also offers a four-year Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree in Hospitality Management. Visit the website at www.southseattle.edu.

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About College Spark Washington

College Spark Washington funds programs in Washington state that help low-income students become college-ready and complete their degrees. Grantees include community organizations, technical and community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, other educational institutions, and public agencies. Since beginning grant-making in 2005, College Spark has awarded more than \$14 million to college readiness and retention programs throughout Washington state. For more information about College Spark, go to www.collegespark.org.

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