

News Release

South Seattle Community College

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Graduation a Celebration of Success

South Seattle Community College will celebrate the success of its graduating class of 2004 on June 17 at 7:30 p.m. in the Jerry Brockey Student Center.

Many stories of achievement will come to pass on commencement day, a display of the hard work and dedication of students and the role community colleges play in helping them to achieve their dreams. One of the many stories of success can be found in college transfer student C' Ardiss Gardner, or CC to the people that know her.

CC's long academic journey at South began when she was 18 years old and a young mother of a daughter. Beginning her studies in 1994, she soon decided that she would be better served by leaving school and entering the workforce, where she held two jobs. Trying again to continue her studies in 2001, CC was sidetracked by an order of bed rest during the pregnancy of her second child, a son. She was still able to earn 10 credits. Determined to finish her associate's degree, CC entered the college again in spring 2003 and was able to complete her degree. This was no easy task, as it required taking 25 credits each quarter, while holding down a full-time job as a lead technical software tester. The average academic load is 15 credits.

"It was never a question of whether I would complete a college education," she said. "The only question was when and where. I thought it was important to teach my children that your circumstances do not define who you are. You define who you are. I thought what better way to teach and show them this than by example."

CC also credits an instructor at the college, Michael McCrath, with giving her a push to apply to colleges that she might have never considered – Smith, Brown, Columbia, Tufts, and Yale. She also applied to local schools as well, University of Washington and Seattle University.

With no rejection letters yet, CC has been accepted to Brown University in the Ivy League. She has the goal of receiving a bachelor's in psychology and the eventual dream of attending law school at Harvard with an eventual career in public policy.

"My husband and children have been very supportive and are very excited about the move," CC said.

CC's story shows how South Seattle Community College students can live the school motto of "Start Here, Go Anywhere." The college congratulates the achievements of all of its graduates of 2004.

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