

News Release

South Seattle Community College

6000 16th Avenue, SW, Seattle, WA 98106-1499 • www.southseattle.edu • (206) 764-5300

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 12, 2004

Wine Studies Grant Supports Future Professionals

South Seattle Community College's Northwest Wine Academy has received \$100,000 in state funding to help expand a program where students gain valued skills for future employment.

The Workforce Development grant will cover equipment purchases and a facility remodel so that the college can increase program capacity and graduate 180 students by 2006. The well-received program exceeded the initial goal of 60 students in its first year by enrolling 68 in the program's first quarter in spring 2004.

In deciding to start the program, the first at a community college in Western Washington, the school consulted with research and industry professionals. They indicated a major need for a wine training presence in the region. There are more than 240 wineries in Washington, with 61 on the west side of the state.

Keith Love, vice president at Ste. Michelle Wine Estates, had this to say about South Seattle Community College's creation of a wine program:

"While Washington State's all-star grapes are grown in Eastern Washington, most of our wines are sold and consumed in the Puget Sound region. So, South Seattle Community College's new wine program is a welcome addition to its course offerings."

This industry support is a bridge for students to cross from graduation to employment choices in the labor market, and the wages are competitive. The following are positions, including wages, that graduates will most likely pursue according to labor market research:

- Grocery Wine Department Assistant \$22,000 - \$28,000
- Wine Steward or Retail Wine Buyer \$25,000 - \$40,000
- Sales Representative \$25,000 - \$70,000
- Merchandiser (entry-level) \$22,000 - \$24,000
- Food & Beverage Service \$22,000 - \$50,000
- Tasting Room Staff – Manager \$25,000 - \$51,000
- Special Events Staff – Manager \$18,000 - \$58,000

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For more information contact: Michael May, Public Information Office, (206) 768-6873