Grainger partners with South Seattle Community College to address shortage of skilled workers in Washington

Seattle (Oct. 14, 2008) – With baby boomers retiring from the ranks of the skilled trade workforce in Washington and across the country, a growing number of labor experts predict a shortage of trained industrial workers in fields such as welding, electrical, plumbing and construction management. To aid this need, Grainger, a local distributor of facilities maintenance supplies, recently awarded a Tools for Tomorrow scholarship to South Seattle Community College student Muhammad Nawaz during a presentation at the neighboring Grainger branch.

“Students like Muhammad represent the best and the brightest of the future of skilled labor,” said Steve Porter, District Branch Services Manager at Grainger. “Grainger is proud to partner with South Seattle Community College through our Tools for Tomorrow scholarship program. Together, we can help ensure the communities of Washington have trained professionals ready to meet the demand for skilled trade workers.”

Nawaz, a Burien, Washington resident student studying automotive technology at South Seattle Community College, was nominated by the school’s faculty to receive the award. His nominating instructor describes him as an outstanding student who learns quickly, is skilled at diagnostics and is willing to take on any project assigned to him. Nawaz is one of 35 technical students across the nation who will receive a $2,000 scholarship and, upon graduation, a Westward® tool package from Grainger to support him in his future career.

“I am grateful for Grainger’s generous contribution that will help further my career,” said Nawaz. “This scholarship provides me an opportunity to focus on my studies and professional goals of becoming an automotive technician and working at a local repair facility.”

“The automotive industry in Washington is in critical need of highly skilled workers with an understanding of today’s tools, technologies and processes,” said Malcolm Grothe, Executive Dean of Workforce Education at South Seattle Community College. “With the increasing demand for these skilled individuals, it is essential that we continue to invest in their talent, and Grainger is doing just that through this scholarship program.”
Media interested in conducting interviews or obtaining more information about Grainger should contact JP Clark, Regional Communications Manager – West, at (949) 255-5690. For more information about South Seattle Community College, please contact Candace Oehler at (206) 768-6873. Students attending South Seattle Community College who are interested in applying for a scholarship should contact the Dean’s office for professional technical programs.

**About Grainger**
Illinois-based W.W. Grainger, Inc. (NYSE: GWW), with 2007 sales of $6.4 billion, is the leading broad line supplier of facilities maintenance products serving businesses and institutions in Canada, China, Mexico and the United States. Through a highly integrated network including more than 600 branches, 18 distribution centers and multiple Web sites, Grainger’s employees help customers get the job done.

**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, distance learning, basic and transitional studies, and lifelong learning. The college also offers a four-year Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree in Hospitality Management. South is one of the Seattle Community Colleges.

South Seattle Community College student Muhammad Nawaz proudly accepts his 2008 Grainger *Tools for Tomorrow* scholarship.

Back Left to Right: Brian Hughes (South Seattle CC Instructor), Heather Foss (South Seattle CC Development Officer), Casey Banks (Grainger- Eugene Customer Service Manager), Jake
Leonard (Grainger- Account Manager), Mike Roberg (Grainger- Customer Service Manager), Brad Nollmeyer (Grainger- Branch Manager), Shawn Wagner (Grainger- Sales Specialist), Ayanle Ismail (Grainger- Sales Team Lead), Tom Sassmann (Grainger- Mobile Branch), Steve Porter (Grainger- District Branch Services Manager)

Front Left to Right: Kim Motley (Grainger- Sales Team Lead), Muhammad Nawaz (South Seattle CC Student Scholarship Recipient) Becky Murphy (Grainger- Sales Team Lead), Dave Rimple (Friend of Muhammad)