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GRAINGER PARTNERS WITH SOUTH SEATTLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO ADDRESS SHORTAGE OF SKILLED WORKERS IN WASHINGTON

Grainger Tools for Tomorrow® scholarship program supports future leaders in industrial trades.

Seattle (December 28, 2009) – 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 Grainger Tools for Tomorrow® scholarship to South Seattle Community College students Robert Wilson and Walter Lawrence during a presentation honoring the students' achievements.

"Students like Robert and Walter 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."

Wilson is a Seattle, Washington resident student studying Welding and Fabrication Technology. After Robert completes his studies, he would like to find an internship at a welding/fabrication company. Within the next 10 years, he would like to start his own welding and fabrication business

Lawrence, also from Seattle, is in the Automotive Technology program. Lawrence has a background in Public Relations; researching green initiatives and is interested in converting cars into electric vehicles. He would like to help evolve hybrid technology to help lessen our vehicles impact on the environment.

Wilson and Lawrence are among 50 technical students across the nation who will receive a \$2,000 scholarship and, upon graduation, a Westward® tool package from Grainger to support them in their future careers.

"I am grateful for Grainger's generous contribution that will help further my career," said Wilson. "This scholarship provides me an opportunity to focus on my studies and professional goals of becoming a welder and having my own shop."

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Said Dr. Malcolm Grothe, executive dean of Workforce Education at South Seattle Community College, “The automotive industry in Washington continues to need highly skilled workers, with demand fueled by emerging technologies, increasing numbers of hybrid vehicles and a focus on low carbon emissions. With these scholarships, Grainger continues to demonstrate its community support and commitment. South is proud to partner with them in educating tomorrow’s workforce.”

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

For more information about Grainger Industrial Supply, the sponsor of the Grainger Tools for Tomorrow® Scholarship Program, visit www.grainger.com.

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 students Robert Wilson (L) and Walter Lawrence (R) were presented their 2009 Grainger *Tools for Tomorrow*® scholarships by Mike Gartman (Center), Seattle Branch Manager. Wilson and Lawrence are among the 50 technical trade students across the nation who will receive a \$2,000 Grainger scholarship this year.