Unique scholarship program welcomes students
13th-Year Promise program is first of its kind in Washington State.

Thursday, September 13, 2012
12:15 - 1:30 pm
Olympic Hall Auditorium
South Seattle Community College
6000 16th Avenue SW
Seattle, WA 98106-1499

High school graduates from Cleveland and Chief Sealth high schools will be welcomed to South Seattle Community College as new 13th-Year Promise Scholarship students in a September 13 campus celebration.

Nearly 100 students have received the scholarship, and several current 13th-Year Promise students will explain how the scholarship program has made a difference in their lives. Following the brief program, the incoming students will meet faculty, staff and community members at an informal reception, with light lunch refreshments.

The groundbreaking scholarship program, the first of its kind in Washington State, guarantees every graduating senior from the two high schools the opportunity to attend South tuition-free for one year, regardless of grade point, test scores or other factors.

The 13th-Year Promise Scholarship was developed because research 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. This critical “tipping point” has been identified as a high school diploma and one-year of higher education or a technical credential. The scholarship is also designed to increase the access to higher education for our community’s students, particularly those from underrepresented groups, including students of color, low-income and first-generation college students.

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The scholarship also removes the financial barrier that might prevent many students from pursuing higher education, explained South President Gary Oertli. “As students are being asked to bear a larger share of the costs associated with college, initiatives like our 13th-Year Promise Scholarship become even more important,” he said. “South is committed to keeping the pathway open to higher education for those who might not otherwise be able to continue after high school.

Oertli noted that the 13th-Year Promise Scholarship has addressed the governor’s recent call to develop funding strategies that provide students with affordable higher education opportunities, and create innovative funding sources through individual and business donations.

13th-Year Promise Scholarship students receive more than a free year at South. They also are provided with a wide array of student services designed to help them succeed. All incoming scholarship recipients participated in a year-long Readiness Academy during their senior year in high school, where they became familiar with campus programs and resources, while learning how to form positive attitudes that will enhance their chances of success.

A designated 13th-Year Promise Scholarship coordinator serves as their dedicated contact and is on hand to help with everything from completing financial aid forms to just being a good listener.

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**About South Seattle Community College**

South Seattle Community College serves a multicultural population of 15,000 students each year on an 87-acre, wooded campus in West Seattle, and satellite campuses in the Georgetown and Beacon Hill communities. The college is distinguished by a four-year Bachelor of Science (BAS) degree program in Hospitality Management, innovative professional technical programs, and outstanding college transfer, distance learning, basic and transitional studies, and lifelong learning programs. South is one of only six institutions in the nation designated as an Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI)-serving institution. South is one of the Seattle Community Colleges.

**About the South Seattle Community College Foundation**

The Foundation is comprised of business and community leaders who generously contribute their time and resources to enrich lives, build hope and fulfill dreams. The Foundation has assets of more than $10 million and provides more than $1 million for student scholarships, tutoring and academic support resources, faculty professional development and program equipment each year.

**Contacts**

Elizabeth Pluhta, Executive Director  
Foundation and College Advancement  
elizabeth.pluta@seattlecolleges.edu  
(206) 934-5141

Mike Munson, Interim Director  
Communications & Marketing  
mike.munson@seattlecolleges.edu  
(206) 934-6875