



SEATTLE
CENTRAL
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

NORTH
SEATTLE
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

SOUTH
SEATTLE
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

SVI SEATTLE
VOCATIONAL
INSTITUTE

Georgetown
Campus

NewHolly
Learning Center

Seattle Maritime
Academy

Wood
Construction
Center

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Seattle Community Colleges receive \$3 million grant to develop innovative strategies to increase number of graduates

'Potential to change the direction of a great many lives'

SEATTLE – Seattle Community Colleges has received a \$3 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to increase the number of students who complete college-level coursework and earn a certificate or degree.

The three-year Pathway to Completion grant addresses a key barrier for students who enroll at the community colleges. “After they take their placement tests, almost two-thirds of our new students are required to take pre-college math courses,” said Seattle Community College Chancellor Jill Wakefield. More than half of these students never make it to college-level coursework, she said. “We have the potential to change the direction of a great many lives by accelerating students’ progress through pre-college-level classes.”

Research shows that only one-third of students who are required to take pre-college math complete the math courses within a year, and only 13% who start at the pre-college level earn a degree or certificate within three years – costing time and money and leaving students without a key credential.

Work started in January on the three-year grant project, which includes mandatory orientation, intensive advising, early alert systems, a student success course and an accelerated math curriculum. An advisor dashboard will also be implemented, with new tools to help staff, faculty and advisors access comprehensive profiles of students and assist with guiding their academic progress. Students will also be able to monitor their own progress and checkpoints online.

One aspect of the grant is focused on working with the Seattle Public Schools to align high school math and English curricula with college-level course requirements. This work will set the stage locally for the transition to the national Common Core high school curriculum to be implemented across the state by 2015.

These new grant-funded initiatives will have an immediate impact on students at the Seattle Community Colleges. Shared data, research and innovations will benefit students throughout Washington State by giving them the skills they need to go on to further study and earn one or more credentials that lead to meaningful employment.

The grant complements and builds on a number of initiatives already under way at campuses across the Seattle district, Chancellor Wakefield said. “Completion could not be more important to our students, to our colleges and our region during a time of shrinking resources and expanding needs for skilled workers to rebuild our economy.”

The Seattle Community College District

The Seattle Community College District educates and trains more than 51,000 students every year at Seattle Central, North Seattle and South Seattle Community Colleges; the Seattle Vocational Institute; and four specialized training centers, including the Seattle Maritime Academy, Wood Construction Center, New Holly Learning Center and the Georgetown Campus.

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