

Seattle Colleges Announces Constance W. Rice Partner of the Year

SEATTLE — The [Seattle College District](#) announced today that [Vigor Industrial](#) has been named its 2014 Constance W. Rice Partner of the Year. Vigor was chosen for its partnership with [South Seattle College](#) to provide space for the [Harbor Island Training Center](#), which serves maritime and industrial fabrication companies across the region and trains the next generation of welders.

This annual award honors business or community leaders whose contributions elevate Seattle Colleges and its students, and who inspire others by working in partnerships to achieve mutual success. It is named for Constance W. Rice, who served as vice chancellor for institutional advancement, interim president, senior vice chancellor and trustee for the district. The many partnerships Dr. Rice forged over more than 20 years continue to positively impact students and the colleges, and benefit education, equity, and the health and welfare of under-represented youth.

The award will be presented on Wednesday, December 10, 7:30 a.m., at a breakfast program at The Brockey Conference Center at South Seattle College. Marlena Sessions, CEO of the King County/Seattle Workforce Development Council, will speak on *Workforce needs in our region and how Seattle Colleges and its partners address them*. Media can RSVP for the program [here](#).

Vigor built the 8,000-square-foot training center, outfitted with weld booths, a computer lab, dedicated tool room, and machining equipment. The college developed a 20-week welding intensive curriculum to produce skilled workers for industrial careers at Vigor's shipyard and other area manufacturers. The instructors are industry professionals, and students certify in six months for family-wage careers.

Since launching last fall, there has been an 85 percent completion rate. Eighty percent of graduates are working in the industry, with an average salary of over \$45,000 per year, while 10 percent continued their welding studies. In addition to the program, the center is used after hours to train and certify incumbent workers, making them eligible for higher-level jobs.

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About Seattle Colleges

The [Seattle College District](#) is Washington state's largest college district, with nearly 50,000 students enrolled each year. It is comprised of Seattle Central College, North Seattle College, South Seattle College, Seattle Vocational Institute and four specialty centers. The district offers more than 135 workforce education and training programs that lead to bachelor's degrees in high-growth industries,

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associate degrees in various disciplines, certificates in professional-technical programs and transfer degrees to universities throughout the United States.

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