



*For Immediate Release –May 4, 2010*

## **College Spark grants almost \$1.4 million to boost college readiness and graduation rates for low-income students in Washington**

College Spark Washington announced grants totaling \$1.395 million to fourteen organizations in the state to support college access and retention for low-income students.

Research shows that students who begin planning for college in elementary and middle school dramatically increase their chances of succeeding in the post high school world, yet often students don't begin planning for college until their junior or senior year of high school. Schools, community-based organizations, colleges and families all play an important role in helping young students prepare for and succeed in college.

Twelve of this year's grantees are enhancing programs to increase the college readiness of low-income students. Other grantees are providing support for low-income adults completing degree programs, increasing services for students in rural areas, and building the capacity of programs to effectively serve more students.

Together, all grantees promote College Spark Washington's mission to help low-income Washington students become college-ready and graduate from college.



### **Recipients of 2010 College Spark grants:**

Academic Link (Edmonds) -- \$149,000 over three years to develop and provide a system of academic and social support to improve the college readiness of at-risk 7th graders in Edmonds School District.

Alliance for Education (Seattle) -- \$150,000 over two years to develop a coalition among community-based organizations and Seattle Public Schools focused on building cohesive strategies aimed at improving the college readiness of low-income students in Seattle.

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Bellingham Technical College (Bellingham) -- \$100,000 over two years to pilot a remote delivery model in rural Whatcom County focused on increasing access to adult basic education and providing more opportunities for geographically isolated low-income adults to pursue higher education in rural areas of Whatcom County.

Clark College (Vancouver) -- \$87,894 to develop an online Academic Early Warning System that will enable faculty and student support staff to identify individual student issues that may impede academic progress and offer related supports.

Clover Park Technical College Foundation (Lakewood) -- \$50,000 to support the Pierce County Careers Connection in their efforts to increase participation in allied health dual enrollment courses, college-prep, and career exploration activities among rural, low-income students in Pierce County.

College Access Now (Seattle) -- \$100,000 over three years to expand college readiness services within Seattle Public Schools and to develop organizational infrastructure.

Edge Foundation (Seattle) -- \$50,000 to conduct outreach to schools and youth-serving organizations to build their capacity to identify low-income students with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder and connect such students with effective interventions.

Educational Service District 112 (Vancouver) -- \$147,900 over three years to institute an after-school program focused on increasing personal and social skills, improving academic achievement, and reducing college readiness barriers faced by low-income middle school students.

Hopelink (Bellevue) -- \$136,677 over two years to expand and evaluate the impact of a collaborative project between Hopelink, Bellevue College and Washington State Employment Security focused on providing coordinated services that help low-income adult students reduce barriers to staying in school and attaining a credential.

Mary Walker School District (Springdale) -- \$70,000 over three years to build a network of small school districts, colleges, and other community partners focused on developing and implementing an action plan aimed at increasing college success among low-income rural students in the region.

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South Seattle Community College (Seattle) -- \$82,500 over two years to expand and enhance their 13th Year Promise Scholarship program, which provides outreach, college readiness programming, and 13th year scholarships to low-income Cleveland High School students transitioning to South Seattle Community College.

Treehouse (Seattle) -- \$75,000 to pilot a new model of college readiness services through partnership with over twenty middle and high schools, featuring weekly college readiness workshops and intensive support to foster youth.

Wenatchee School District (Wenatchee) -- \$96,082 over three years to transition a volunteer founded and run mentoring program into a staffed college readiness mentoring program for low-income high school students.

YMCA of Greater Seattle (Seattle) -- \$100,000 over two years to develop a transition program focused on helping 9th grade students in West Seattle academically and socially prepare for college eligibility and admission.

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*College Spark funds programs in Washington state that help low-income students become college-ready and complete their degrees. Our grantees include community organizations, technical and community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, other educational institutions, and public agencies.*

*For more information about College Spark, go to [www.collegespark.org](http://www.collegespark.org).*

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