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Five Washington colleges awarded \$2.5 million in grants to implement Guided Pathways

SEATTLE – College Spark Washington and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) select five colleges to receive Guided Pathways implementation grants totaling \$2.5 million over five years.

Guided Pathways is an evidence-based approach that simplifies choices about college courses, informs and supports those choices, and directs students into an intentional, comprehensive program of study that leads to a credential. “The process from college entrance to program selection to degree completion is streamlined, providing students with a much clearer, more efficient path to completion,” said Christine McCabe, Executive Director at College Spark Washington. There is a growing body of evidence pointing to comprehensive implementation of Guided Pathways as an effective strategy for increasing college completion rates and closing completion gaps for low-income students and students of color.

Five colleges, of eighteen that applied, were selected to receive implementation grants including:

- Everett Community College
- Peninsula College
- Pierce College
- South Puget Sound Community College
- South Seattle College

The selection criteria focused on identifying colleges that are in the best position to fully implement Guided Pathways. “These colleges have a history of implementing large-scale reforms, experience working cross-departmentally to implement large scale changes that impact both instruction and student services, and solid work on closing the equity gap for low-income students and students of color,” said Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC Deputy Executive Director for Education Services. “They also have the enthusiasm and readiness to implement Guided Pathways with faculty engagement.”

With this initiative, five colleges will receive Guided Pathways implementation grants this year. A second cohort of five additional colleges will be selected to receive implementation grants in 2018. Each college will receive \$500,000 in grant funding over five years.

During the first implementation year, the five pilot colleges will create plans for how they will implement Guided Pathways. To support their efforts, SBCTC will provide colleges with technical assistance, convene teams quarterly, and facilitate opportunities for the pilot colleges to learn from other Guided Pathways colleges in the nation and experts in the field of institutional change management. All of Washington's community and technical colleges will be encouraged to attend a subset of these events.

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College Spark Washington funds programs across Washington state that help low-income students become college-ready and earn their degrees. Grantees include community-based organizations, K-12 schools and districts, community and technical colleges, four-year colleges and universities, educational nonprofits, and public agencies. Since 2005, College Spark has awarded more than \$45 million to college readiness and degree completion programs throughout the state.

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges is led by a Governor-appointed board and provides leaderships, advocacy, and coordination for Washington's system of 34 public community and technical colleges. Each year, about 386,000 students train for the workforce, prepare to transfer to a university, gain basic math and English skills, or pursue continuing education.