



**EQUITY
CAN'T
WAIT**



A campaign for social **justice**,
economic **opportunity**,
and community **recovery**

OVERVIEW

Racial equity, and social equity more broadly, have surged as public issues. People from Black and Brown communities have not only suffered a lopsided share of sickness and death in the pandemic, but borne the brunt of massive and continuing job loss. Younger workers, people of color, and people with no postsecondary credential have *lost employment at rates 25 to 50 percent higher* than holders of bachelor's degrees.

People of goodwill across our city and our country wonder **how to bend the arc of justice toward genuine inclusion and true equity** — and bend it durably.

The Seattle Colleges are a key part of the answer. North, South and Seattle Central Colleges each have a distinct personality and curricular focus. But all share a commitment to being the best open-access colleges anywhere, welcoming students regardless of background, past academic performance, citizenship status, or age.

What this means is this: We can be — and very often are — the springboard to better opportunity and brighter lives for people pushed to the margins. Every year more than 41,000 people enroll in our programs.

- **43% of our students are from families of color**, primarily of lower income.
- **48% are first-generation** college students.

It's gratifying that every spring we graduate thousands of Seattleites, a big share from communities historically underserved by higher education. But we're not doing well enough. At the Seattle Colleges, similar to other institutions of higher ed, **underserved students complete their programs at lower rates**. At the Colleges, this equity gap is 12 points.

Knowing that **2/3 or more of today's jobs require a postsecondary credential**, we won't rest until this gap is closed — and closing it will take resources. *Equity Can't Wait* is a multipronged campaign to overcome key barriers.

41,213

attend the Seattle Colleges.*

28

These students' average age.
Twenty percent are **parents**.

\$59K

These students' median family income. This compares to \$113K for students at the University of Washington. Fifty-five percent of our students **work 16 hours a week or more** — often substantially more.

#1

Seattle's rank nationally among big cities in percentage of young adults with a bachelor's degree. Yet only 40% of Washington's young people earn a bachelor's by age 26.
Implication: **Local young people — more than half of whom are people of color — aren't competing for our region's best jobs.**





Did you know?

40% of Americans pursue higher education at community colleges like Central, North and South Seattle Colleges

1¢ of every philanthropic dollar given to higher education goes to community colleges

Isn't it time we close the gap?



\$50M for educational equity

Support Students

- **Deliver fully on Seattle Promise**, the partnership among Seattle Colleges, the City of Seattle and Seattle Public Schools that provides the city's new high-school graduates with two years of free tuition and comprehensive support services.
- **Bridge the equity gap with targeted programs**, such as alternative math pathways and transfer opportunities to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- **Enhance student support services**, acknowledging the mountain of evidence showing the huge difference well-resourced mentorship, counseling, tutoring and other assistance make in student success.
- **Expand availability of scholarships** and safety-net grants.

Power Innovation

- **Keep programs and curricula responsive** to fast-evolving employer and community needs.
- **Create flexible learning options**, including micro-credentials and short-term training.
- **Create a center for excellence in online community college education**, letting faculty of the Colleges harvest learnings from teaching online during the pandemic and be positioned for continued, and potentially growing, demand for such classes.

Strengthen Capacity

- **Recruit and retain diverse, talented faculty** who truly reflect our community.
- **Create the physical infrastructure for future-facing education**, including "smart" classrooms to support the evident need for hybrid in-person/online instruction, as well as improved or new facilities for student wellness and education in future-facing fields like IT.



To learn more or to help, please contact us:

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130 FIELDS OF STUDY | 49,239 GRADS SINCE 2008 | >\$1B IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

