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July Issue

Newsletter



Newsletter Highlights

- **Update: KCP Partners**
- **Student Resources**
- **Educator Resource**
- **July Poem**
- **College & Career News**
- **Events**

**Reflecting on the Umoja Summer Learning Institute:
Strengthening our Commitment to Student Success**

Recently, King County Promise (KCP) staff members within the Highline Promise Program had the opportunity to attend the Umoja Summer Learning Institute (SLI). The SLI is a week-long, immersive institute focused on the Umoja Community model, offering insights into its philosophy, pedagogy, and best practices regarding the Umoja mission to enhance the cultural and educational future of African American and other students. We are excited to share some of the invaluable learnings and takeaways from some of the KCP staff who had the opportunity to attend. These reflections and learnings made at the SLI, can help shape our approach to serving our students within the Highline Promise Partnership and broader King County Promise program.



While the week was filled with learnings regarding Umoja practices, curriculum, and resources, one of the key themes that kept arising was the Umoja practice of "Everybody's Business." Umoja describes the practice of "everybody's business" as such, "We are a village, acting in accord, and unafraid to be seen and heard as we do our work, leveraging every voice and source of information to do our best by our students... we cover and pitch in on each other's work, even while we maintain our areas of expertise. When a program event or program need comes up, we all inquire and support. And particularly when it comes to our students, we all stay aware of their progress, their challenges and crises, and their successes."

This practice directly aligns with the King County Promise model of intentional and cross sector collaboration, and reminds us that the work we do cannot and should not be done alone. Collaboration and communication are essential for the success of our students. The Umoja SLI facilitated connections between representatives from different institutions including nearly all of the Highline Promise partners, enabling learning from one another and strengthening of a shared vocabulary and understanding. As organizations and practitioners build stronger relationships centering on student needs, trust, and transparency, they can maximize and leverage their individual strengths to better meet the needs of our students.



Lupe Samifua, a Promise Staff Member from Highline College shared his learnings, "we definitely can take this Umoja Practice and use it as a reminder of how the success of our target student populations requires all the stakeholders to be intentional, present and communicating successes/challenges.

Additionally, Haley Edwards, an Education Advocate from Northwest Education Access said, "Even outside of the context of Promise, having co-conspirators to connect our Black students to on each campus (specifically ones that understand postsecondary institutions are not designed with the youth we serve in mind) can make the difference in finding

Our students' success depends on all of us working together."

"belonging' for Opportunity Youth and traditional K-12 students alike."

Along with building a deeper understanding of Everybody's Business, and the 14 other [Umoja practices](#), attendees had opportunities to build connections with other Promise Staff and strengthen cross organizational ties. These attendees recently had the opportunity to share these learnings to those who were unable to attend at a recent Highline Promise Planning retreat. PSCCN's hope is that this knowledge supports Promise Partners through shared grounding in partnership values and vocabulary, ensuring that promise staff are better prepared to support our students in their educational journeys and equipped with the values and vocabulary to sustain transformational change for our communities.



Special thanks goes to our Promise Partners who proposed the Umoja Summer Learning Institute as a shared professional development opportunity, and to the King County Department of Community and Human Services in procuring professional development funds to support partners' attendance. As we integrate Umoja practices into our King County Promise Programming, we are confident that we will create an environment where all students can thrive and achieve their goals. Together, we will continue to work collaboratively, communicate openly, and support one another, because our students' success is truly "Everybody's Business."



Empowering first-generation students to succeed through mentorship.

Cynthia Cruz-Bernardino graduated from Western Washington University in 2021 with a BA in Human Services and a minor in Education and Social Justice. Cynthia wrote for Ready WA about her journey as a first-generation student, navigating the culture shock of college, and how she helped other students succeed.

Find the blog in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

Education Week: Meet the High School Student Helping Her City Study Reparations for Black Residents.

"In Kansas City, Mo., earlier this month, a 13-person commission to study reparations for Black Americans started its work. Commission members include nonprofit executives, academics, a doctor, a lawyer—and a rising high school senior.

Madison Lyman, 17, attends Lincoln College Preparatory Academy, a 1,000-student public school that opened in 1865, originally for Black students only. Serving on the commission is an honor and a privilege, she said, but she wasn't sure at first that she should do it." [Read more.](#)

The Hechinger Report: Many flagship universities don't reflect their state's Black or Latino high school graduates.

The coming Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action could widen those racial gaps." [Read more and learn national data](#) through a series of graphics.



Tips I wish I would have heard my senior year.

Senior year in high school is a whirlwind of emotions and activities. WWU student and Ready WA Student Storyteller Arianna wished she had gotten advice about managing her senior year, so she reached out to seniors from her former high school to gather tips and put them together in an infographic. Find a link to the piece and sample social content below to share with students and adults who support them.

For more information check out the [Full infographic jpg](#) and [infographic pullouts](#).



Education First, with funding support from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, recently launched the application for [Limitless, a Postsecondary Enrollment Learning Network](#). Limitless will support up to 25 partnerships across Washington state who are working to support high school to postsecondary transitions. Each partnership will feature local K-12 and higher education partners, who will share information, experiences, and expertise in removing barriers and supporting students in finding and following their path forward.

From the archives: How students reengage and achieve their goals through Open Doors. High school was challenging for the two students featured in [this blog from the Ready WA archives](#). Read how they began to thrive through their experience with Open Doors.

Vitaes.com: Follow along! [Vitaes.com](#) cultivates a video library of informational interviews with BIPOC professionals to support BIPOC students in exploring career options.



THE BOOT: A JOURNAL OF SEATTLE YOUTH

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Summer Young Writers Workshop

[The Boot/Young Writers Workshop](#) is a 7-8 week writing intensive program aimed at developing the creative writing skills of Seattle's young creatives. Our program's aim is to develop the artistic, and rhetorical capabilities of young people, while giving them the tools needed to understand their social environment. Youths engage in intensive writing workshops on a weekly basis that foster an understanding of key literary devices, techniques, and styles. Students write about relevant topics related to life, social issues, emotions, and human relations. The program ends with each student producing an original literary work (poem, narrative, story, journal entry, song) for publication in our literary magazine also titled the Boot (which is now on its 39th publication). Lastly, all students are required to participate in a final reading of their work in front of a live audience.

You can follow The Boot/Young Writers Workshop on Instagram [@theswedcenter206](#)

Local Writing Organizations & Resources

Summer can be a fruitful time to consider creating your own poetry (or other writing project). It is often challenging (and fruitless!) to attempt this alone. Luckily, our region has many different resources to support you as a new writer or as an experienced author.

Check them out below:

- [Local Writing Organizations | The Seattle Public Library \(spl.org\)](#)
- [King County Library System | Writing Events](#)
- [Pierce County Library System | Writing Lab](#)
- [North Seattle College](#) & [Seattle Central College](#) feature continuing education classes in writing, check out your local college for resources.



College and Career News in Washington State:

The Washington State Board of Education:

- [Performance-based Pathway](#)

The Seattle Times:

- [Seattle Schools digs itself out of deficit — for now](#)
- [A look at WA's most and least diverse colleges shows how affirmative action ban has played out](#)
- [Budget cuts, school closures top issues in Seattle School Board election](#)
- [Private WA colleges pledge diversity in wake of Supreme Court affirmative action ruling](#)
- [Here's how to prepare to start paying back your student loans when the pandemic payment freeze ends](#)
- [Summer internships for students to explore potential career pathways](#)
- [Providing pathways through college: Expert guidance helps students complete a degree](#)

The Seattle Times - [WATCH](#):

- [Flat funding, the "McCleary Fix" and other school finance issues explained WATCH](#)
- [Live Q&A: Ask experts about WA school finance trends, challenges WATCH](#)
- [Seattle schools chose integration. But then it fell apart WATCH](#)

- [A 'sisterhood' graduates with new doctorates in Indigenous-centered education](#)
[VIEW](#)



**Live Internet Webinars
Better FAFSA Better Future Webinar Series,
June–July 2023**

Federal Student Aid will host 11 webinars this summer starting this month. These live webinars will discuss the implementation of the FAFSA Simplification Act, the FUTURE Act, and what schools will need to know about upcoming changes for the 2024–25 award year. The webinars in the summer series will be offered in June–July 2023. [Click on this link](#) for more information.

Webinar Dates:

- FSA: [2024-25 FAFSA Demonstration](#) (July 25)
- uAspire: [Preparing for FAFSA Simplification](#) (Aug 16)



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