# NEWSLETTER
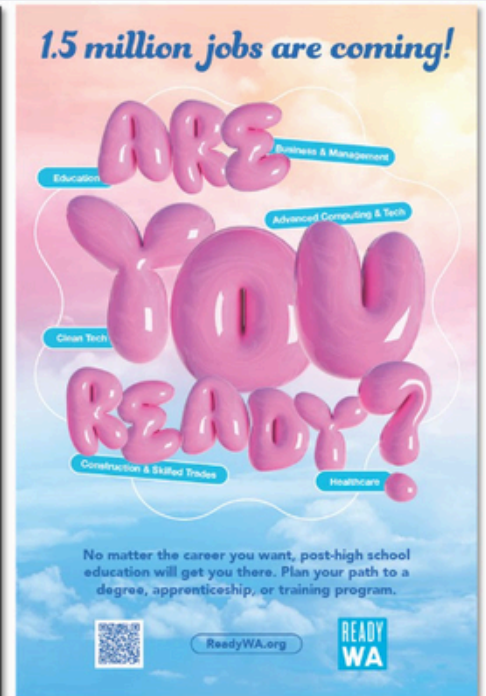
**October 2024**

**psccn**
Puget Sound College and Career Network



## HIGHLIGHTS

- PSCCN Updates
- Postsecondary Opportunities
- Student Resources
- Partner Content
- College & Career News

## CHRISTOPHER'S HOLD

### BECOMING A MAN (BAM)
### YOUTH GUIDANCE

This month we are sharing the second installment of our Joy Campaign. Promise youth are learning to survive and thrive, despite an education system designed to perpetuate colonialist ideals and support only some students. In this series, we aim to highlight ways youth are claiming joy in their academic journeys, and the ways in which navigators are enabling them to stay resilient.

Our second spotlight comes from a conversation with Njoli Brown, a Becoming a Man (BAM) specialist at Highline Public Schools. BAM is a school-based counseling program that guides young men to learn, internalize, and practice social cognitive skills, make responsible decisions for their future, and become positive members of their school and community. BAM integrates clinical theory and practice and men's rites of passage work in its youth engagement. With 25 years of experience working in education, he is only 2.5 months into this role. As such, some of his insights have to do with seeing Highline Public Schools relative to other places he has worked.

### CONDITION FOR JOY #1: PEER SUPPORT

Students thrive when they have supportive relationships and a sense of connectivity to their peers. BAM circles become powerful not when students are doing fine, but when they encounter challenges. Njoli begins to see scholars become empowered to tackle challenges and support each other by having reflective and introspective conversations with peers about taking responsibility for difficult choices, how to apologize, or how to navigate sticky academic and professional situations.

Peer-to-peer accountability s is very different from youth to adult. For most students, friends are what keep them showing up to class. BAM circles help heighten expectations of what friendship means and explicitly build in and strengthen that peer support.

Students are experiencing joy when they can be **culturally engaged and academically engaged at the same time**. In this district, cultural arts are welcomed and are validated as part of valued academic learning, not just something people do after school on the side. For example, students can be a part of a Mariachi band or learn a style of Pacific island dance. Students are more engaged when they can feel direct connectivity with the outside world, like when they see how academics are connected with the aspirations they have for themselves. As another example of how culture is woven into the curriculum, there is an American history class taught in Spanish from the lens of Latin America.

**CONDITION FOR JOY #2: CULTURALLY AFFIRMING LEARNING**

**CONDITION FOR JOY #3: VALUING PROGRAMS THAT GROW STUDENTS**

The school district has a culture of welcoming and prioritizing programs like BAM. Njoli has worked in similar programs and often the attitude from the school is more dismissive. "You do that young men's group in the stairwell. Do it fast so the kids get to wherever they have to be." In Highline Public Schools, they have their own room with snacks, swag, and resources. Teachers, administrators, and students are all enthusiasts for giving their Black and brown young men an opportunity to participate. Multiple staff assist in identifying students that would best fit the program and there is a waitlist. This lift creates the conditions that enable the students to do the deep work on identity, mental and emotional wellness, and self-reflection together.

## FINANCIAL AID Training

**SAVE THE DATE**

**9.20.2024**

REGISTER NOW

PSCCN & WSAC are partnering to offer a FAFSA & WASFA Financial Aid 101 Training, for valuable insights into the application process.

Topics covered in this training will include:
- An Overview of FAFSA
- A walkthrough of the FAFSA and WASFA platforms
- An overview of the corrections process
- Student scenarios
- And more!

Date: 9/20/2024

Time: 9 am to 11 am

Green River College Kent Campus

*Refreshments will be provided

**Register Here!**

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## COMPUTER SCIENCE GRANTS NOW OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

Two computer science grants are now available for application, with a submission deadline of September 6th. All applications must be submitted through the new EMGS system.

- FP 777 Computer Science and Education (2024-25): This grant supports K-12 computer science education initiatives.
  - Planning ($5,000): For SCRIPT training, helping districts and state-tribal education compact schools (STECs) develop CS implementation plans, particularly for those without existing programs.
  - Implementation (up to $30,000): Supports early-stage CS programs, including costs for hardware, software, curriculum, and educator development.
  - Sustainability (up to $15,000): For more established CS programs requiring additional support.

- FP 656 AP Computer Science Initiative (2024-25): Awards typically range from $6,000 to $8,000 for projects that implement AP Computer Science coursework, including industry partnerships, curriculum, professional development, and technology needs.

For more information and to apply, please visit the EMGS system before the deadline.

# YEAR 2
## Activity

King County Promise (KCP) partners have implemented a range of initiatives designed to support and engage priority students in various communities. Here is a glimpse of these efforts during Year 2, that were focused on enhancing accessibility, fostering educational equity, and building strong connections with students and their families. This summary highlights key successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

## Community Integration and Safe Spaces:

The Congolese Integration Network (CIN) has been instrumental in creating safe spaces for students to discuss challenges and seek assistance. Through bi-weekly sessions, CIN has provided a consistent platform for students to share experiences, receive homework help, and access guidance on educational pathways. Notably, CIN facilitated access to FAFSA application courses, crucial for students navigating post-secondary education. These efforts have not only met immediate student needs but also expanded outreach, including support for recent migrants enrolling at Renton Technical College (RTC).

## Enhanced Student Support at Renton Technical College:

KCP's commitment to student success at RTC has been evident through initiatives led by their previous Promise Navigator, such as organizing individual enrollment appointments for high school re-engagement programs and establishing a drop-in space for students, including those with children. These spaces have served as hubs for community building, tutoring, and campus navigation support. Regular feedback mechanisms have ensured these initiatives remain responsive to student needs, maintaining strong relationships and sustaining program momentum.

## Expanding Partnerships and Outreach:

KCP has actively expanded its reach through targeted outreach. The Northwest Education Access (NWEdA) team has engaged with young people at various partner sites, offering workshops on career exploration, financial aid, and program navigation. Tailored sessions, including those for Spanish-speaking communities, have led to new student referrals and strengthened connections with potential referral partners in South King County.

## Cultural and Community Engagement:

Centro Rendu has focused its outreach on the Latinx community, particularly at-risk youth in South King County. Through the Re Route program, in partnership with the Kent School District, Centro Rendu has engaged families and identified potential Promise students. Participation in culturally significant celebrations, such as Día de los Muertos and Posada, has fostered community and raised awareness of the Promise program, leading to increased enrollment and advocacy within the Latinx community.

## Strategic Outreach and Engagement:

The Highline Promise program has employed strategic outreach initiatives, including a postcard mailing campaign that reached approximately 500 prospective students. Combined with College 101 class visits and information sessions, these efforts have informed students about the Promise program and its benefits. Early enrollment opportunities and personalized support have been prioritized, enhancing collaboration among stakeholders and ensuring comprehensive student support.

## Program Adaptation and Sustainability:

Despite challenges, such as staff turnover, KCP partners have demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement and sustainability. For example, Youth Guidance has worked to rebuild capacity after taking over the BAM program from Southwest Youth and Family Services (SWYFS). These efforts reflect KCP's dedication to serving priority students, even amid transitions and staffing changes.

## Conclusion:

Conclusion: Through strategic partnerships, community engagement, and culturally responsive programming, KCP partners have made meaningful strides in supporting students' educational journeys. As these initiatives continue to evolve, KCP remains dedicated to enhancing accessibility, fostering equity, and ensuring the long-term success of all students within the program.

# College and Career News in Washington State

Education Department's decision to defer "batch corrections" could delay aid to students this Fall. Degree inflation.

Biden-Harris Administration Awards More Than $44 Million to Improve Postsecondary Education Access and Completion for Rural Students | U.S. Department of Education

A New Problem With Four-Year Degrees: The Surge in College Closures - WSJ

**College Students Are Already Regretting Their Student Loans (msn.com)**

Redefining First-Generation College Students: An Inclusive Perspective (forbes.com)

**New survey shows financial stress for college students (wjla.com)**

1 in 5 Educators Say They've Experienced Long Covid

Thank you for your continued support.
Contact us at psccn@psesd.org