



Portland Community College Future Connect Scholarship Program Update

Priority for acceptance into Future Connect is given to Multnomah County students who were identified early in high school as needing academic intervention and have participated in Summer Youth Connect programming.

Cohort One (Students entering Fall 2011)

144 Students enrolled in Multnomah County from 28 schools

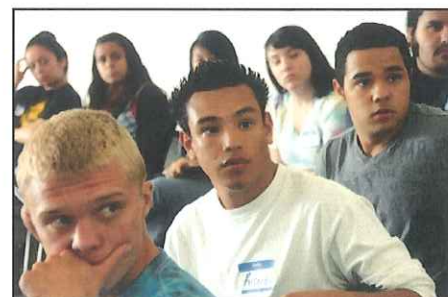
- 89% low-income
- 65% students of color
- 83% first-generation (neither parent completed college)
- 70% Fall Term to Fall Term retention rate (about 20% of students from similar backgrounds who do not receive these types of intensive services are retained from Fall Term to Fall Term)
- Students who completed the first year averaged a 2.82 GPA
- 28% of Future Connect students begin college taking ESOL or Developmental Education
- Primary reasons students left the program – lost or unstable housing, chose to work, academic performance



Cohort Two (Students entering Fall 2012)

200 students enrolled in Multnomah County from 28 schools

- 92% low-income
- 62% students of color
- 83% first-generation (neither parent completed college)
- 91% Fall Term retention for students who have entered Fall Term 2012 out of high school
- 52% testing into ESOL or DE



Program Supports and Structure

Students receive a minimum scholarship of \$600 per year to attend PCC (some students receive more, depending on financial need). College Success Coaches are key to the student support. They perform outreach with 28 specific area high schools/alternative schools, provide intensive advising, case management, and teach college success courses. Coaches have a caseload of no more than 60 new, incoming students. The Future Connect team provides students with intensive college orientations, college tours, access to scholarships, and connections to paid internships with the City of Portland.

Next Steps for Future Connect Students

Currently, we have three scholarship programs specific to Future Connect students who are transferring from PCC to a 4-year college or university.

- 25 scholarships available at PSU for students completing Future Connect with a transfer degree
- 3 full tuition scholarships to Lewis and Clark College
- 10 scholarships for students to attend any Oregon University of their choice



Funding

Budget per cohort approximately \$760,000 (up to 200 students in a 2-year cohort).

- \$380,000 from the City of Portland
- \$380,000 matched by PCC and private funds raised by the PCC Foundation

Over \$1.1 million in matching funds have been raised for the first four cohorts of Future Connect. Three cohorts of students have been fully funded.

Some of the Future Connect donors include:

- Meyer Memorial Trust
- Yoshida Family
- NW Natural
- Edwards Lienhart Family Foundation
- James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation
- Pacific Power
- Howard S. Wright Construction
- Greg Goodman and City Center Parking
- US Bank
- PGE Foundation



Future Connect Students are Achieving Their Goals

Raquel Barajas is a 19-year-old student from Reynolds High School who will be transferring this winter to Pacific University with a \$10,000 scholarship based on her 3.0+ GPA. Raquel is interested in studying Psychology at Pacific and she has been a leader in the Future Connect program since day one.

Tan Nguyen is a 20-year-old second year student who graduated from Parkrose High School and is currently studying molecular biology. Tan has already been co-admitted to PSU and he is receiving both the Renaissance Scholarship worth \$1,000 per term at PSU and the additional PSU - Future Connect Scholarship worth \$1,200 per term. Tan has completed several 300 level courses already at PSU and he also completed a 400 hour internship within the City of Portland Water Bureau as part of his Future Connect internship.

Christian Miranda is a 20-year-old, second-year Future Connect student who will complete his transfer degree this spring. Christian has helped raise his family alongside his sister after the loss of his mother in high school. Upon entering PCC, Christian held a job at Carl's Junior where he thrived as a hard worker and long-time employee. Once Christian had the chance to work within the Bureau of Environmental services as part of the Future Connect internship – he quickly took advantage of this opportunity and found a path in engineering to his liking. Christian is now headed to Oregon State University. Christian is receiving the Renaissance Scholarship that will provide him with \$1,000 per term while at OSU.

Marius Ibuye is a second-year Future Connect Student who has excelled his entire career here at PCC. Marius' journey started 12 years ago as he left a refugee camp in the Congo. From there Marius found himself living with his family in Portland and as a David Douglas High School graduate. Marius is transferring to Oregon State University this fall to pursue his dream of becoming a pharmacist. He has also received the Renaissance Scholarship.

Aaron Munoz is a 20-year-student who graduated from Roosevelt High School. When Aaron came to PCC he tested below college level in math, reading and writing. The Future Connect staff connected him to our Project Degree cohort model style classes for developmental coursework and within two terms he was taking college-level courses and ready to enter the program he has always wanted to complete; the auto paint program at Rock Creek. This Spring Term 2013, Aaron will complete this program and begin looking for a job in his field.

The Oregonian

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EDITORIAL



Agenda 2013

Improve educational funding and function

Unlocking doors to college

Intensive help for disadvantaged, low-income college students in Oregon offers clues to broader success for every community college and university

Jose Esparza, a "success coach" for students at Portland Community College, describes his goal in simple terms.

"We believe in students," he says, "until they are ready to believe in themselves."

Esparza helps disadvantaged students navigate a college campus well enough to earn a degree, get job certification or transfer to a university. This work is part of PCC's mission to help more students thrive in college, rather than simply enroll and fend for themselves.

Efforts like these deserve attention, as Oregon tries to push all of its community colleges and universities to boost their students' graduation rates and job prospects. Though colleges can't easily provide success coaches to all students, they can certainly boost their overall graduation rates by working to lower the barriers that disadvantaged students so starkly face.

PCC offers several programs aimed at assisting first-generation, lower-income students, including a Future Connect scholarship program and numerous partnerships with high schools in the Portland metro area. Despite ongoing funding challenges, PCC's work has received attention from the state for helping students who might otherwise lack the foundation to succeed.

The extra help varies, but it often includes individual counseling, financial aid, career planning and tutoring. Esparza, for example, teaches a college-survival class, where students learn about time management and the importance of persistence. He says he also helps students navigate the financial aid office and deal with any red flags before classes start: Routine problems with class registration or payment can permanently derail a first-time college student.



BETH NAKAMURA/THE OREGONIAN

Portland Community College's Sylvania campus.



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Meanwhile, PCC says it's trying to make registration, financial aid and transferring credits more customer-friendly for all students. It's working especially closely with Portland State University, where many PCC students transfer in search of a bachelor's degree. It's more efficient to simplify the process for everyone, college leaders are finding, rather than maintain systems that require a lot of hand-holding.

Oregon remains in the middle of a massive restructuring of its education system from preschool to college.

The intent is to redefine success around what comes next, so that preschoolers are ready for kindergarten, high schoolers are ready for college or career training, and college graduates are equipped to land a decent job.

"We just need to step up our game, all of us, pre-K to 20," says retiring college president Preston Pulliams.

This process has exposed some real weaknesses in Oregon's education system, including below-average funding and unsustainable spending. And it has revealed how many teenagers leave high school — both as graduates and dropouts — without the academic preparation, career guidance or personal grounding to be successful adults. Oregon needs significant reinvestment and reform at the K-12 level to boost the state's 68 percent graduation rate and to make sure more high school students know how to pass a college class, nail a job interview and work toward a goal.

Meanwhile, Oregon needs more people like Jose Esparza to fill in the gaps.

And colleges need to care as much about the success of their graduates as they do about the size of their next incoming class.

The Oregonian

Hillsboro councilors give big thumbs up and \$100,000 to PCC's Future Connect program

By Andrew Theen, The Oregonian
March 06, 2013

HILLSBORO -- An innovative Portland Community College scholarship and life skills program is officially expanding to Washington County.

The Hillsboro City Council voted unanimously and enthusiastically on Tuesday to fund PCC's Future Connect Scholarship Program to the tune of \$100,000.

Hillsboro's stamp of approval helps create a two-year pilot program for 50 area high school students. Future Connect focuses on at-risk and low-income first generation college students, helping them navigate potential barriers both before they hit PCC campuses and after. Staff counselors essentially serve as life coaches and mentors, and help students through financial aid assistance. Participants receive at least \$600 a year to attend PCC, but so-called "Success Coaches" provide additional benefits and support.

They "learn the language of being a college student," Pam Blumenthal, PCC's Director of Prep Alternative Programs told the council.

Several other PCC administrators, a Future Connect student, Hillsboro School District staff and Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce President Deanna Palm joined Blumenthal at the meeting. They testified before the council in support of expanding the two-year old program to Hillsboro.

The group presented the program as a key component of building the region's future workforce while simultaneously reaching at-risk youth. It was a friendly crowd.

"I'm so grateful that you brought this to us," said Councilor Steve Callaway, also Principal of L.C. Tobias Elementary School.

Council President Aron Carleson, who is also the Executive Director of the nonprofit Hillsboro Schools Foundation, said the program would close the loop between the workforce training programs available at PCC's Rock Creek Campus and needy students in the region.

Birgitte Ryslinge, Interim President of PCC's Rock Creek Campus, said that two out of five Washington County high school graduates of color don't go on to college. She told the council that research shows funding and support services can successfully help that population stay in school and go on into the workforce.

Raquel Barajas, 20, testified before the council in support of the program. The Gresham resident is a Future Connect participant and said it's "helping me see my future."

Her grade point average went from 1.9 to a 3.3, Barajas said. She is headed to Pacific University with a \$10,000 academic scholarship. Barajas wants to be a psychiatrist. She thanked her Future Connect coach for nurturing her motivation and dedication to her education.

Councilor Olga Acuna, also an Assistant Principal at Hillsboro High School, said that there are some 450 students in the district like Barajas that could benefit from the program. "I'm hoping that in the future, we could expand," she said.

Funding for the pilot program in Washington County will come from a community service fee tied to the city's enterprise zones. The property tax abatement program stipulates that money in the fourth and fifth years a company participates go toward "community services." Future Connect is currently operating exclusively in Multnomah County, but Beaverton is also examining the program.

PCC officials said Hillsboro was ahead of Beaverton in implementing the program. Ryslingle said the goal is to start recruiting Hillsboro students in the spring and have them enrolled in the program by the fall.

Hillsboro's \$100,000 will jump-start the program, but it is bolstered by both public and private financing.

-- Andrew Theen