

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 7, 2005

Education Assistance Foundation awards \$500,000 in grants throughout Washington State

SEATTLE – Education Assistance Foundation (EAF) announced today 19 grant awards totaling \$500,000 to organizations across Washington State who meet EAF’s mission to support access to postsecondary education for underserved students in Washington and to encourage undergraduate students to complete their degree programs. This is EAF’s inaugural grant award and marks the emergence of a new foundation committed to students and families in Washington.

EAF and its subsidiaries have been supporting access to higher education since 1978 through the management of student loan programs, primarily in Washington State. In December 2004, EAF created an endowment of approximately \$120 million from proceeds of its former student loan operations. Funding for these initial grant awards was made possible by an agreement with Northwest Education Loan Association (NELA) and USA Funds.

“Building upon over 25 years of success in the student loan business, EAF now has the opportunity to support students pursuing postsecondary education in even more creative and innovative ways.” said Ned Lange, Chairman of the EAF Board. “These initial grants provide EAF with an opportunity to learn more about the needs of the community as well as existing programs that are helping students and families across the state,” added Christine McCabe, Executive Director. “Our knowledge base is growing, and we are very excited about the possibilities.”

Grants approved are listed below by program type:

College preparation and access programs

Central Washington University (Ellensburg, WA) <http://www.cwu.edu> - \$30,000 for development of a teacher training math program designed to enhance the skills of high school math teachers in five rural high schools who do not have access to higher level math courses.

GirlsFirst, YWCA (Seattle, WA) <http://www.ywcaworks.org/page/136> - \$33,000 to develop an alumni component for the GirlsFirst Program focused on junior and senior high school girls and their parents. GirlsFirst provides an intensive three-week summer Leadership Academy for girls of color entering high school, along with ongoing skill building, tutoring, mentoring, and goal-setting support.

R. Merle Palmer Minority Scholarship Foundation (Tacoma, WA)

<http://www.palmerscholars.org/> - \$15,000 to cover the cost of recruitment and support services provided to Palmer Scholars, which supports low-income, underserved and, in many cases, first-generation students of color to gain admission to and graduate from higher education.

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Rainier Scholars (Seattle, WA) <http://www.rainierscholars.org/> - \$25,000 to support Academic Counseling & Support Services (ACSS), the second in a four-step program, that prepares students of color for success in college.

Seattle Education Access (Seattle, WA) <http://www.seattleeducationaccess.org/> - \$25,000 to provide financial assistance, academic advising, career counseling, and advocacy for homeless or previously homeless youth and young adults who are pursuing postsecondary education.

Summer Search Foundation (Seattle, WA) <http://www.summersearch.org/> - \$10,000 to provide mentoring and college preparation support for low-income juniors and seniors.

Treehouse (Seattle, WA) http://www.treehouse4kids.org/programs/coaching_to_college/index.htm - \$15,000 to support Coaching-to-College which teams foster youth with volunteer coaches who help with selecting and applying to college, seeking out financial assistance, including scholarships, and linking students with other support services.

Washington MESA (Statewide) <http://washingtonmesa.org/> - \$50,000 to expand current services to include pre-college planning and parent involvement activities. Funds will be used to offer more mentoring, tutoring and workshop opportunities for juniors, seniors and parents to ensure that students take the steps necessary to be accepted into the college of their choice.

Bridge and/or transitional programs

Cascadia Community College (Bothell, WA) <http://www.cascadia.ctc.edu/> - \$10,000 to maintain outreach services to residents of seven low-income housing complexes and to provide financial assistance to low-income residents who want to pursue higher education.

Clover Park Technical College (Tacoma, WA) <http://www.cptc.edu/> - \$31,736 to adapt college orientation materials, establish a peer mentoring program, and conduct a needs-assessment of students who drop out of college.

Community Colleges of Spokane (Spokane, WA) <http://www.ccs.spokane.edu/> - \$25,000 to develop a bridge program connecting Institute for Extended Learning students to postsecondary education opportunities, including career exploration and workshops covering college success strategies and financial aid.

Green River Community College (Auburn, WA) <http://www.greenriver.edu/> - \$26,940 to introduce a new approach to orienting and supporting low-income and/or first-generation students who require developmental (remedial) courses in reading, writing and/or math.

Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA) <http://www.plu.edu/external/> - \$40,000 to support participation in the 2005-2006 Summer Challenge Program for 30 low-income students who have been conditionally admitted to PLU.

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Shoreline Community College (Shoreline, WA) <http://www.shoreline.edu/> - \$21,269 to develop and pilot four new workshops and information sessions on the benefits and costs of postsecondary education and financial resources available to college students and their families. Outcomes include a personalized education plan and increase in the number of low-income students applying for financial aid.

St. Martin's University (Olympia, WA) <http://www.stmartin.edu/> - \$24,650 to initiate a nine-day Summer Bridge program for 25 first-generation and/or low-income entering freshman.

Degree completion and/or retention efforts

Bellevue Community College (Bellevue, WA) <http://www.bcc.ctc.edu/> - \$17,056 to develop a staff/faculty mentoring program targeted at low-income, first-generation and/or disabled students.

Eastern Washington University (Cheney, WA) <http://www.ewu.edu/Home.xml> - \$22,500 to expand collaborative learning groups linking faculty, student facilitators, and learning process specialists with low-income, first-generation students.

Heritage University (Toppenish, WA) <http://www.heritage.edu/Main.php> - \$45,000 to provide basic college skills software and the hardware and training to fully utilize these resources aimed at improving WSAL and WEST-B tests for low-income students.

Yakima Valley Community College (Yakima & Grandview, WA) <http://www.yvcc.edu/> - \$27,840 for tutoring for YVCC Grandview students and the development of a Distance Learning Guide designed to familiarize distance-learning students with online processes and learning expectations.

Education Assistance Foundation (EAF), a Seattle-based nonprofit foundation, supports access to postsecondary education for underserved students in Washington State and encourages students to complete their undergraduate degree or certification program. EAF manages an endowment of approximately \$120 million and, through proactive grant-making, EAF and partner organizations address issues that keep low-income, first-generation and non-traditional students from obtaining their postsecondary educational goals. EAF website is under development and is scheduled for completion in early October. Please plan to visit EAF at www.educationassistancefoundation.org.

Northwest Education Loan Association (NELA), a not-for-profit company, assists students and parents in planning for college and understanding financial aid by providing information, training and outreach activities. For 25 years, NELA has successfully administered the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) and guaranteed student loans against default. Since 1978, NELA has helped nearly 800,000 students reach their dreams of higher education. The company headquarters are in Seattle, Washington. More information is available at www.nela.net. In October 2003, NELA opened the Center for Student Success in Seattle and on the Web (www.centerforstudentsuccess.org). This college access center provides free information, tools, counseling and expertise to build better futures through higher education.

USA Funds is a nonprofit corporation that works to enhance postsecondary education preparedness, access and success by providing and supporting financial and other valued services. USA Funds links colleges, universities, proprietary schools, private lenders, students and parents to promote financial access to higher learning. Established in Indianapolis in 1960 to help families finance rising college costs, USA Funds has grown to become the nation's largest guarantor of loan made under the Family Federal Education Loan Program (FFELP), the largest federal source of financial aid for higher education. During the past 44 years, the USA Funds guarantee has supported a total of nearly \$115.5 billion in financial aid for higher education, served more than 13.6 million students and parents and thousand of educational and financial institutions. More information is available at www.usafunds.org.

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