



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON **DREAM PROJECT**

# 2008 Program Update

What we've done, where we're at, and how we're growing...

With updates from January 2010



THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
**DREAM PROJECT**

The Dream Project is a unit within Undergraduate Academic Affairs at the University of Washington.

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# About the Program

The Dream Project is a student-initiated high-school outreach program that operates as a University of Washington course, partnering UW students with first-generation and low-income high school students to help them achieve the dream of attending college. The program's dual-focus approach strives not only to help these high school students, but also to teach UW students about important social issues through a unique, hands-on experience.

## **We believe that every student has the right to higher education.**

Poverty, familial background, and access to resources should not preclude any student from accessing higher education. We work closely with our high school Dream Scholars to help them overcome adversities and to achieve the highest level of education in order to reach their dreams. Higher education includes technical colleges, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities.

## **We believe in the power of education to inspire empathy.**

Through learning about and discussing issues of social inequality and access to education, undergraduate Dream Team mentors develop the communication skills necessary for open dialogue with others from different backgrounds. Through shared experiences and stories, we strive to create stronger relationships with our Dream Scholars knowing that we can learn from them as much as they can learn from us.

## **We believe in providing vehicles for student leadership and engagement.**

College students become critical thinkers by developing creative solutions to complex problems. Students in the Dream Project run the day-to-day operations of the program and maintain relationships with donors and community partners. Students have real power to affect change in the organization and the greater community by holding various positions of leadership.

## **We believe that we are one part of a larger effort and collaboration is critical to our success.**

We see ourselves as serving only one part of the P-20 continuum; therefore, we coordinate our efforts with schools, community organizations, colleges and universities to maximize student achievement. We work closely with administrators, families, and partner programs to tailor our efforts to the needs of the students at each high school.

## **We believe in the impact of meaningful student-to-student relationships.**

Dream Project mentors, all of whom went through the college admissions process just a few years earlier, develop interpersonal relationships with our Dream Scholars in order to establish trust and to foster long-lasting friendships. We create a "community-in-waiting" for them on the college campus that will support them throughout their higher education experience.



## 2009 STATISTICS

- High-school Dream Scholars: 457 at nine high schools and other community programs
- UW Dream Team Mentors: 207 in Winter 2010
- Money raised by students: Over \$351,000 as of Jan. 2010

## HIGH SCHOOLS

- Academy of Citizenship and Empowerment  
Highline Public School District
- Chief Sealth High School  
Seattle Public School District
- Cleveland High School  
(ADDED SPRING 2009)  
Seattle Public School District
- Evergreen High School  
(ADDED SPRING 2009)  
Highline Public School District
- Foster High School  
Tukwila School District
- Global Connections High School  
Highline Public School District
- Ingraham High School  
Seattle Public School District
- Odyssey: The Essential School  
Highline Public School District
- Renton High School  
Renton Public School District

**“The Dream Project attitude of do-what-it-takes-to-get-it-done has rubbed off. Where there was previously a belief, now is paired with action.”**

— High School Counselor



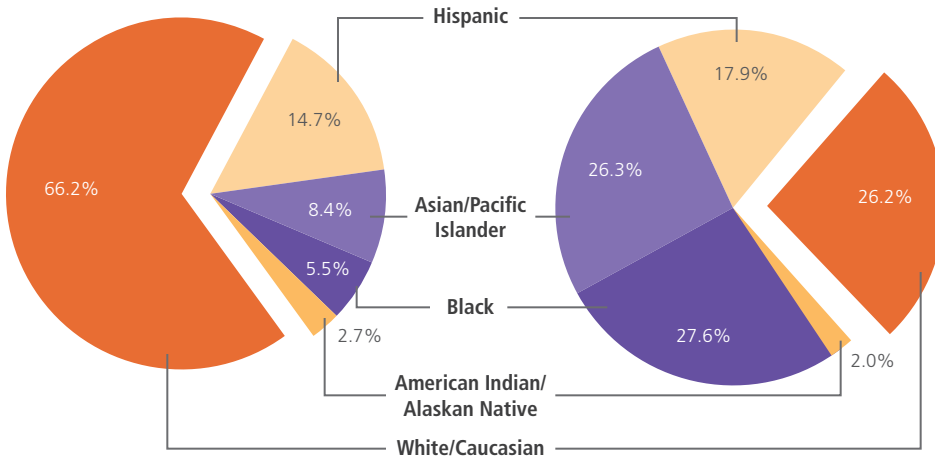
# Our Target Population

## High School Student Demographics By Race/Ethnicity

The Dream Project partners with high schools that serve a higher number of under-represented students. Students of color and students from low-income households are less likely to apply to, gain admission to, and persist in college. Dream Project partner high schools also have a lower presence of college readiness programs and community-based organizations when compared to other urban Seattle high schools. Students at Dream Project partner high schools are less likely, on average, to step foot on a college campus than the average Washington State high school student.<sup>1</sup>

### ALL WASHINGTON SCHOOLS

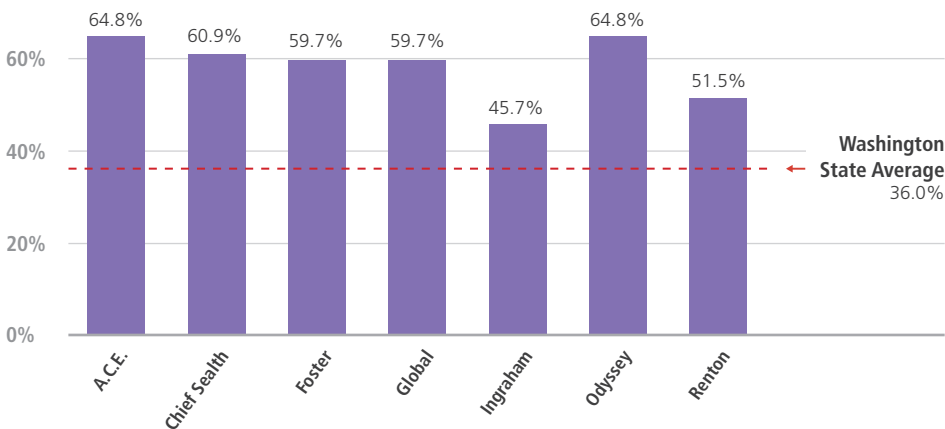
### DREAM PROJECT SCHOOLS



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Washington State Report Card, October 2007.

## Percentage of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunch

Dream Project partner high schools serve a higher number of students who receive free or reduced price lunch than the average number from high schools across Washington State. Most of these students will be the first in their families to attend an institution of higher education, which means they often lack the social and monetary capital necessary to apply to and pay for college.



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Washington State Report Card, May 2008.

1. Levine, A. & Nidiffer, J. (1996). *Beating the odds: How the poor get into college*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

## 2006-2007 WASHINGTON STATE HIGHER EDUCATION PARTICIPATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY

### OVERALL

American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.60%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8.60%
Black	3.75%
Hispanic	5.37%
White/Caucasian	64.97%
Nonresident Alien	2.92%
Unknown race/ethnicity	12.89%

### 2-YEAR

American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.62%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.94%
Black	4.23%
Hispanic	5.70%
White/Caucasian	64.23%
Nonresident Alien	2.26%
Unknown race/ethnicity	15.01%

### 4-YEAR

American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.58%
Asian/Pacific Islander	10.58%
Black	3.17%
Hispanic	4.76%
White/Caucasian	65.86%
Nonresident Alien	3.71%
Unknown race/ethnicity	10.34%

Source: Intergrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Fall 2006.

“Students born and raised in poverty are three times as likely not to graduate from high school...[and] twenty times as likely not to graduate from college.”<sup>1</sup>

Updated January 2010

# By the Numbers

Each Dream Scholar is expected to apply to at least three colleges or universities during the fall of their senior year of high school. They have collectively matriculated at more than 36 four-year schools and seven community colleges.

## Overall acceptance data for 2006-2007 Dream Scholar Cohort:

Dream Scholars	103
Dream Scholars reporting data	79
Accepted to 4-year institution	49
Attending 4-year institution	43
Attending 2-year institution	34
<b>TOTAL ATTENDING COLLEGE</b>	<b>77</b>
Percent of total Dream Scholars	74.7%
Percent of reporting Dream Scholars	97.5%

## Overall acceptance data for 2007-2008 Dream Scholar Cohort:

Dream Scholars	252
Active Dream Scholars <sup>1</sup>	206
Dream Scholars reporting data	172
Accepted to 4-year institution	121
Attending 4-year institution	113
Attending 2-year institution	55
<b>TOTAL ATTENDING COLLEGE</b>	<b>164</b>
Percent of total Dream Scholars	66.7%
Percent of active Dream Scholars	81.6%
Percent of reporting Dream Scholars	97.7%



## WHERE OUR DREAM SCHOLARS ARE

Our Dream Scholars are attending the following colleges and universities:

### 2-YEAR

- Bellevue Community College
- Centralia College
- Everett Community College
- Highline Community College
- Renton Technical College
- Seattle Central Community College
- South Seattle Community College

### 4-YEAR (PARTIAL LIST)

- University of Washington
- Western Washington University
- Central Washington University
- Washington State University
- Eastern Washington University
- Seattle University
- Pacific Lutheran University
- University of Washington Bothell
- University of Washington Tacoma
- Northwest University
- University of Puget Sound
- St. Martin's University
- Whitworth University

**TOTAL NUMBER OF DREAM SCHOLARS ATTENDING COLLEGE: 245**

as of January 2009

1. High School Leads determine whether or not a Dream Scholar is considered "active," based on attendance and participation in Dream Project events. This designation was not made during the 2006-2007 year.



## UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON-SPECIFIC DATA (SEATTLE CAMPUS ONLY)

### University of Washington acceptance data for 2006-2007 Dream Scholar Cohort:

Dream Scholars applied	42
Percent of total Dream Scholars	40.8%
Dream Scholars accepted	31
Dream Scholar acceptance rate	73.8%
Overall UW acceptance rate	64.7%
Dream Scholars attending	24
Dream Scholar admit-to-enroll yield rate	77.4%
Overall UW admit-to-enroll yield rate	45.6%

### University of Washington acceptance data for 2007-2008 Dream Scholar Cohort:

Dream Scholars applied	105
Percent of total Dream Scholars	51.0%
Dream Scholars accepted	65
Dream Scholar acceptance rate	61.9%
Overall UW acceptance rate	60.8%
Dream Scholars attending	53
Dream Scholar admit-to-enroll yield rate	81.5%
Overall UW admit-to-enroll yield rate	45.9%

### University of Washington acceptance data for 2008-2009 Dream Scholar Cohort:

Dream Scholars applied	114
Percent of total Dream Scholars	unavailable
Dream Scholars accepted	68
Dream Scholar acceptance rate	59.6%
Overall UW acceptance rate	57.7%
Dream Scholars attending	54
Dream Scholar admit-to-enroll yield rate	79.4%
Overall UW admit-to-enroll yield rate	43.5%

**TOTAL NUMBER OF DREAM SCHOLARS AT UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON-SEATTLE: 136<sup>2</sup>** as of January 2010

2. Includes transfer students who did not initially matriculate at the UW and, therefore, were not counted in previous years' cohort totals at left.

# Research-Supported Methods



## Youth-Centered Approaches<sup>1</sup>

Effective community-based organizations place youth at the center of organizational programming. Therefore, the Dream Project:

### Builds on youths' strengths

Dream Project mentors do not assume that the high school participants come to the program with deficiencies; rather the mentors **recognize and value the skills and strengths** the high schoolers bring with them to the college application process. Acknowledging youths' worth and encouraging achievement based on that worth allows for a more trusting and committed relationship between the mentors and the high schoolers. The Dream Project creates a **culture of shared knowledge** and humility of practice such that everyone at the table—college students and high school students alike—acknowledges what they bring and what they take away from each exchange and each relationship.

### Provides personal attention to youth

Personal, **one-on-one connections** between mentors and high schoolers create strong relationships that last well beyond graduation and college matriculation. College students exchange email addresses and cell phone numbers with the high school students so that conversations regarding admissions essays can be continued during holiday breaks, on weekends, and late at night. Visitations to the high schools or local libraries and coffee shops are often scheduled outside of regular visit times so that busy students can stay on track for completing applications and meeting financial aid deadlines.

### Reaches out to youth

Effective organizations **actively advertise to youth** using media and relationships that are familiar to youth. The Dream Project has **permeated the social struc-**

**ture** of the high schools so that younger siblings and friends learn about the program before they hear about it from counselors or teachers. Furthermore, students are actively recruited into the program through letters and emails rather than expected to apply when and if they hear about it.

### Peer-Peer Mentorship<sup>2</sup>

Successful community-based organizations recognize **from whom, with whom, and where** youth gather information that shapes their learning and aspirations. Interpersonal relationships for youth, especially with peers, deeply shape youths' ambitions and motivation to learn and incorporate learning into their life goals.

The Dream Project partners college students who are only a few years older than the high school participants. Natural friendships transpire, allowing high school students to easily envision themselves as college students. Trust and confidence builds between mentors and high schoolers, allowing for **mutual learning and growth**. Many high school students join the Dream Project once they come to campus; these students **"pay it forward,"** returning to their alma maters to mentor younger friends and siblings. Youth recognize and take note of what they learn when they are aware that someone knows them as an individual and actively cares for them.

### College Student Development<sup>3</sup>

The Dream Project provides formative and meaningful experiences for its college student mentors, which in turn,

increases the likelihood of their persistence to graduation. Time spent in programs like the Dream Project stimulates personal as well as academic growth for participants.

The **connections** that students make between in-class and out-of-class experiences correlate with gains from **holistic learning**. Students read about educational equity and hear from college admissions experts in class and apply this knowledge to the relationships they have with the high school students. This builds both critical thinking skills and empathy—critical skills that students can carry with them as active and engaged citizens.

**"Experimental"** or **non-traditional** classroom courses and experiences stretch students' thinking and encourage them to **take academic and personal risks** in a **safe environment**. Students in the Dream Project learn about their abilities as a leader and mentor. They hone their communication skills and build lasting friendships by helping sustain a student-run non-profit organization.

The Dream Project is an experiential learning course, where a **diverse group of students** must solve real and urgent problems regarding the management of the program and its partnership with hundreds of high school students. Working with others from various backgrounds and educational experiences increases students' **openness to diversity**, helping them associate positive outcomes with differences among peers. Students appreciate and welcome different stories and viewpoints so that the program can continue to improve.

**"It creates an opportunity for students to be inventive, but it also does something very tangible. It creates an opportunity for UW students to be creative, to think in terms of equity and fairness and justice and to bring that to life."**

— Dr. Edward Taylor  
Dean and Vice Provost of  
Undergraduate Academic Affairs

1. McLaughlin, M. W. 2000. Community counts: How youth organizations matter for youth development. Washington, DC: Public Education network. 2. Storz, M. G. & K. R. Nestor. 2008. "It's all about relationships." In F. P. Peterman (ed), Partnering to prepare urban teachers, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc. 3. Pascarella, E. T. & P. T. Terenzini. 2005. How college affects students: A third decade of research (Jossey-Bass Higher & Adult Education). San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

# Structure & Leadership

The Dream Project is run and operated by undergraduates at the University of Washington with support from faculty and staff. Dr. Stan Chernicoff serves as the faculty adviser for the program, drawing on thirty years of experience teaching at the UW and working with new student programs. Dream Team mentors can participate in various leadership positions in the program, allowing them to affect real change and to address urgent organizational challenges.

## Steering Committee

Program-wide decisions are made by a five-person student steering committee. Each member of the committee is responsible for a different aspect of the project: classroom planning/curriculum, student leadership development, high school relationships, program advancement, and organizational expansion.

## High School Leads

High school leads manage all aspects of their respective high school's visits. Each high school lead coordinates the efforts of approximately 15 Dream Team mentors and 30 high school students. They work closely with school administrators, students' families, and the local community to serve the needs of the area.

## Committee Heads

In order to organize all major events and programs within the Dream Project, the steering committee selects a committee lead—typically an emerging student leader. The committee lead works closely with a steering committee member and a small group of interested Dream Team mentors to execute the event or program.

## Think Tank

Students in the class who are interested in a leadership position are encouraged to attend a weekly forum called "Think Tank" where they can introduce their ideas and gain feedback. After gaining approval from steering committee members, these emerging student leaders are empowered to implement their ideas.

## Advisory Board

The advisory board is composed of UW staff with experience in educational programming; it meets quarterly to approve large expenses and to provide advice for the student leaders.

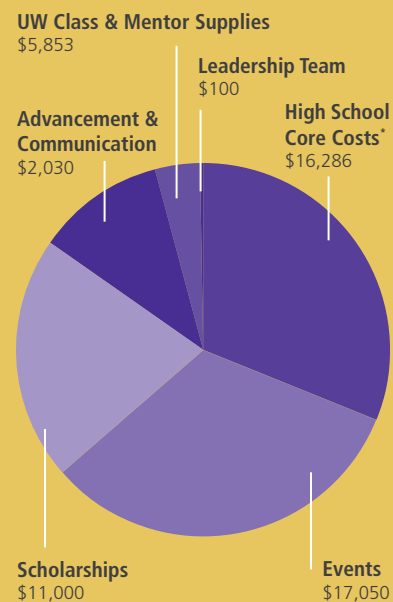
**"This has become the best crucible for leadership on campus. It projects an image of the university that there's a place for students to develop friendships and meaningful connections."**

— Dr. Stan Chernicoff  
December 14, 2007, Chronicle of Higher Education



## ANNUAL EXPENSES

The Dream Project funds its daily operations and activities through funds raised entirely by students in the program. Dream Project students learn to cultivate relationships with donors and to effectively research grant opportunities.

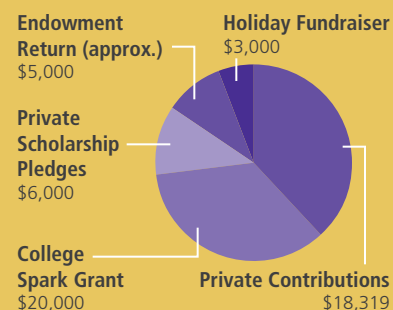


### \*Our Core Costs

The core costs of the Dream Project cover expenses for our day-to-day involvement at the high schools, including transportation and materials.

## FUNDING SOURCES

Every dollar that funds the Dream Project is the result of students' efforts.



# A Year in the Dream Project

Mentors meet weekly with a cohort of high school students for a full year, from spring of their junior year through the winter of their senior year. Mentors establish relationships with their students as the foundation to their work on standardized test preparation, admission applications and essays, and financial aid and scholarship applications.

## JUNIOR YEAR

- SPRING
- Students meet their Dream Team mentors and begin forming relationships. Transcripts are examined to ensure that students meet **core course requirements** for college admissions or create action plans for meeting missing requirements.
  - Students experience college life for a day by coming to the UW campus, attending a college class, and touring the campus for the annual **Spring BBQ**.

- SUMMER
- Students attend **intensive SAT/ACT preparation courses** provided by the Education Access Network.

## SENIOR YEAR

- AUTUMN
- Students polish application essays and **complete college applications** for at least three schools.
  - Over 125 high schoolers fill Mary Gates Hall during **Admissions Workshop Weekend** to work on college applications and essays with campus writing tutors, Dream Team mentors and UW admissions counselors.

- WINTER
- Students shift their focus to completing the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** and applying for **scholarships**. Financial aid **workshops** are held at each high school, allowing students and their families to work directly with UW Financial Aid Officers and Dream Team mentors.
  - The Dream Project hosts a **Scholarship Workshop Weekend** on the UW campus to assist high school students in completing and submitting both local and national scholarship applications.

- SPRING
- Nine Dream Scholars who will be attending the UW in the fall are selected to receive a **"Live the Dream" scholarship**. Students are honored at an event on campus that includes distinguished campus and community guests.



## PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Each Dream Scholar is given a Participant Workbook in the Spring of their junior year to serve as a companion guide through the college admissions process. Dream Team members compile and update the contents annually. It covers topics and themes including:

- An overview of the college admissions process with terms and definitions
- Fill-in worksheets for college entrance requirements
- Interactive flowcharts to see if a student has met core requirements
- Registration information and practice guides for the SAT and ACT
- Brainstorming activities for writing personal statements
- Tips on how to apply for financial aid and scholarships

**"I started out fearing college at first, and then, after partnering with all the UW students, it gave me a sense of confidence in going to college and wanting to go to college and knowing where to go."**

— **Michael Peralta**  
Renton High School '07  
"Live the Dream" Scholarship Recipient

Updated January 2010

# Where We're Going

## New Initiatives to Better Serve Our Seattle Dream Scholars

We constantly think about new, creative ways to better serve our local high school students and undergraduate mentors.

- **Outreach to 9th & 10th Graders.** Many of our 11th and 12th grade students apply to college not having ever learned the differences between high school graduation requirements and college entrance requirements in the state of Washington. To ensure that our Dream Scholars are well-prepared for applying to college, we are starting presentations to 9th and 10th grade students that focus on the college application process and how they can better prepare for it.
- **College Tours in Washington State.** While we bring our Dream Scholars to the University of Washington campus for a Spring BBQ during the spring of their junior year, we also want to take them on tours to other college campuses around the state of Washington so that they can envision themselves on any college campus they choose to attend or are accepted to outside of the University of Washington.
- **Outreach to Central/Eastern Washington.** To help more high school students in the state of Washington—particularly areas that traditionally have not received as much reach from the Washington’s flagship university—understand the process of applying to college, we intend to organize and facilitate short-term outreach trips to different areas of the state.

## Expanding Locally to Reach More Students

Our growth allows us to reach farther and deeper to impact more students.

- **Seattle-area High School Expansion.** We add at least one additional partner high school each year. Continued growth in our class allows us to serve more and more high-schoolers every quarter.
- **Dream Project at the Bothell Campus.** Students at UW Bothell created a Dream Project on their campus in 2009, working in three high schools in the Bothell area. Their program recently received a grant from the State Farm Foundation to help grow their operations, and they will see Dream Scholars matriculate on to their campus in autumn 2010.

## Scaling Up Nationally

As part of our efforts to help more students across the country successfully transition to college and complete their degrees, we are working to share our effective model with other colleges across the country.

- **Sharing with other colleges.** As a result of our efforts to share our model, our program, and our materials with students and administrators at other colleges, new Dream Project chapter sites are forming around the country. Most recently, a group of five students from Colorado State University visited Seattle for five days to learn and plan for a new Dream Project on their campus.
- **Targeting universities in urban centers around the U.S.** We have identified ten universities as first targets for a national scale-up of our program and plan to start the expansion process in the coming months.

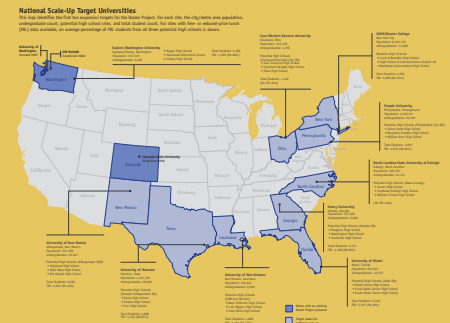


## CONTACT US

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
DREAM PROJECT



For more details about our national scale-up plan, see the map included with this report.



# National Scale-Up Target Universities

This map identifies the first ten expansion targets for the Dream Project. For each site, the city/metro area population, undergraduate count, potential high school sites, and total student count. For sites with free- or reduced-price lunch (FRL) data available, an average percentage of FRL students from all three potential high schools is shown.

