SUCCESS WITH STATE PARTNERSHIPS: TACOMA STEAM NETWORK

Students need strong science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) skills to pursue Washington's highest demand career pathways - from building airplanes to monitoring the health of apple crops to researching cancer treatments. Over the past few years, students in Tacoma have received a strong STEAM education thanks to partnership with the Washington State Legislature.

WASHINGTON STATE OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP
The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship is a commitment by state government and private-sector employers to increase the number of homegrown graduates prepared for the jobs key to our economy. In 2017, 132 Tacoma region students received college scholarships of up to $22,500 each to study STEM or health care.

COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION
In both 2015 and 2017, the Legislature approved funding to promote professional development, upgraded technology, and innovative efforts to engage underrepresented students and girls in computer science. The Tacoma region received $33,000 in state funding for computer science education, which allowed them to raise an additional $33,000 in private funds to support student learning.

CAREER CONNECT WASHINGTON
In 2017, Governor Inslee designated $6.4 million in federal funds from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to support Career Connect Washington, an initiative designed to connect 100,000 students over the next five years with employer internships, registered apprenticeships, and other career connected learning to prepare them with high-demand jobs. The newly formed coalition Career Connect Tacoma-Pierce County received $852,910 to collaborate with business, labor, and education to connect students with career connected learning.

STEM CAPITAL GRANTS
The Legislature authorized $4,290,000 for a STEM capital grant to create a larger STEM project at Washington High School.

WASHINGTON MESA
The Legislature approved $125,000 for expansion of the Washington MESA program to Tacoma Community College. This program will allow students historically underrepresented in STEM fields to receive the support they need to transfer to universities and earn STEM degrees.

We thank the Washington State Legislature for their engagement with STEAM education issues. These partnerships are a strong start, and we look forward to continued support to make the education system even stronger for Washington students.

Got questions? Contact Kyle Roffler at kroffler@graduatetacoma.org/253-272-1600.