

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 11, 2014

## **Highline Community College wins top diversity award**

OLYMPIA, Wash. – Highline Community College was awarded a prestigious Award of Excellence from the [American Association of Community Colleges](#) on Monday for increasing diversity and social equity on campus.

Highline was one of six colleges in the nation awarded at the association's annual convention in Washington, D.C. The national awards recognize innovation and promising practices that boost student achievement and help meet America's economic and workforce needs.

Highline was chosen for a campus culture that honors diversity and social equity, a mission statement and policies that embrace those core values, and a wealth of programs, services and events for people of all colors, faiths and sexual orientation. One of the most racially and ethnically diverse higher education institutions in Washington, Highline measures its own success based largely on the success of its diverse student population.

In naming Highline for the Award of Excellence for Advancing Diversity, the association credited the college's commitment to providing a safe learning environment free of discrimination.

"At Highline, diversity is a core value, a source of pride, and a daily call to action," said college President Jack Bermingham. "It's great when you are recognized for the soul of your institution."

Highline trustee Fred Mendoza cast Highline as a premier institution in the country for advancing diversity. "At Highline, diversity is not a project or a program, it's who we are. My sense and my observation is that diversity comes so naturally for us at Highline that we really don't need recognition, but it's nice when others see it. At the same time, we will not rest on our laurels."

Nearly seven of every ten students at Highline are students of color. Fifty-eight percent are women, and 53 percent of students enrolled in financial aid-eligible classes receive need-based state or federal aid.

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