

## REPORT

**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Quynh Nguyen, United Student Association (USA) President, South Seattle College

**Meeting Date:** March 14, 2024

**Subject:** Report – March Board of Trustees Meeting

### LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY DAY FEBRUARY 22:

On February 22, 8 South Seattle College students met with Senator Joe Nguyen and Representative Mari Leavitt to advocate for various issues, including housing costs, textbook affordability, the opioid epidemic and harm reduction, student pay equity, and increased financial assistance. Our students were involved in storytelling, expressing that their voices were heard and feeling accomplished as they practiced public speaking skills in political contexts. During the conversations, we gained further education on the specific details of financial advocacy efforts from Representative Leavitt, who also sponsored bill SHB2214/SB6300. Our team also raised the housing bills that Senator Joe Nguyen has been passionate about. Advisor Monica Lundberg provided tours of both legislative chambers, governor's office, and more. We even got to go on the floor of the Representative and use the gavel!

Prior to Legislative Advocacy Day, USA scheduled a meeting with the new financial director, Teresa Robinson. The purpose was to inform us about the new financial aid structural changes, the current services available in the financial department, and how the state regulates financial aid, assistance, and resource allocation. Additionally, we requested information about specific bills to enhance our professionalism and effectiveness in our advocacy efforts.

Esther Djamba, USA Vice President/Voter Educator, and Advisor Monica Lundberg, also organized a training session for our students participating in the advocacy effort. The training aimed to provide additional resources, support with research, and assistance in drafting stories to be presented in Olympia. There will also be a debrief and presentation follow-up with all participants to share learning.

### USA SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS & COLLABORATION:

USA sponsored two students and Advisor Monica Lundberg to attend the annual Washington Oregon Cascadia Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC) at Western Washington University on March 5.

On February 28th, we held a discussion with the district sustainability manager, Carolyn Burch. During the meeting, we educated ourselves on the importance of climate justice green house gas emissions, discussed methods to raise awareness of environmental matters more effectively, and provided some student input to the district. The USA Sustainability officer, Charles Askew, and Carolyn connected to plan and exchange thoughts for upcoming Earth Day planning and to implement programs aimed at gaining more student engagement and involvement in sustainability and environmental science topics.

#### **COLLABORATIONS WITHIN SSC AND DISTRICT:**

USA sponsored \$1,200 to EDIC to support funding for the Student of Color Conference at Green River Community College from April 18 to 20. This sponsorship covers the registration fees for 5 students. Additionally, USA is actively promoting these opportunities to the student body through word of mouth and on our social media.

Two USA officers, Amena Truong – Communication Officer, Jessica Phan – Marketing Officer, and USA Advisor, Monica Lundberg attended a district-wide discussion regarding email transition. The meeting addressed the enforcement of school email policies, ctcLink implementation, and the challenges associated with using personal emails for communication within the school and departments. Andrew Svec, Director of Communications, will follow up with the entire USA team to further discuss and gather student feedback during this transition.

On February 27, USA officers participated in a Focus Group meeting facilitated by Greg Dempsey, chair of the district Strategic Planning Committee. During the meeting, we received more information about the committee's logistics. As student representatives, we provided feedback and input on the questions posed. Additionally, we made efforts to distribute survey links and raise awareness about strategic planning to the student body.

#### **Quynh Nguyen**

USA President, South Seattle College