



2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Meet Our Students: Mike

Mike is studying Social and Human Services at Seattle Central Community College, and the recipient of SEA's 2010 Student Activist Award for his work empowering homeless youth and young adults in the U District.

Mike grew up in a low income family in Alaska; his mother left when he was three, and his father raised Mike and his younger brother on his own. After Mike's dad became disabled it became harder and harder to make ends meet. "When I was thirteen I had to go live with my aunt for six months because there was no power in the house and the state was getting ready to take me away," Mike told the SEA staff in a recent interview. "By that time my little brother was already in juvenile detention. When I got back to Alaska my dad and I couch surfed for awhile, and then lived in a car for the summer. We still didn't have a place to live when school started, so he brought me to the Division of Family and Youth Services and told me that he would rather see me in foster care than drop out of school." Mike was 14 and ready to start ninth grade.

Up until that time Mike had been doing well in school; his father was poor but loved his son. Entry into the foster care system made a bad situation worse. "At first they placed me in an emergency shelter for homeless youth in downtown Anchorage," Mike says. "I was one of the youngest kids there, and the older kids taught me a lot about drugs, alcohol, breaking the law. It was

pretty crazy, and I was angry at my dad for bailing on me." Over the course of the next year, Mike would be put in six different foster care placements, bouncing between foster families, group homes, and juvenile detention. "By the time I was 15 I was doing a lot of drugs," Mike says. "I was running away and

couch surfing with friends. Then my social worker gave me an ultimatum: either go to yet another emergency foster home or juvenile detention. The ultimatum approach didn't work that well," he said grinning. "I decided I would rather be on my own."

Seven months later the social worker finally relented: Mike would be "allowed" to move back in with his father. "But by that time the streets had a pretty good hold on me," Mike says. He became a father at 16, and tried twice to go back and finish high school, but was not stable enough to succeed there. "My dad couldn't control me; I think he felt defeated. I did odd jobs, sold drugs, flopped around... I was your typical teenager magnified." Mike continued to drift in and out of street life for the next ten years – sometimes having a place to live and sometimes not, mostly working, often traveling. "I usually had a job so I usually had a place to crash," he says. "I would contribute and I had a lot of friends, so it wasn't hard to find a place to stay. I paid my way and didn't take advantage of people's hospitality."

By 25, Mike was tired of always being on the move and ready to settle down. He moved back to Seattle to live with his girlfriend; he had lived in Seattle several times in the past and had ▶

▶ many friends here, including Brittney, an Education Advocate at SEA. "I ran into Brittney while I was job hunting, and she told me that if I was willing to put that much time and energy into looking for work I should think about going back to school," Mike said. "At the time, I had nothing better to do – it was like sure, why not? But after a quarter, when I found out how much fun college was, and saw that I was getting good grades, I was hooked. I don't ever want to quit now." Last quarter, Mike's GPA was 3.9 and he is on the dean's list. In addition to being a full time student, Mike works part time at Street Youth Ministry, where he helps homeless youth and young adults. He also volunteers with the Youth Council, which gives homeless youth a collective voice and a pathway to empowerment and social change.

Mike plans on continuing to study social work and his long term plan is to have a job that allows him to change the system, so that social work as it is practiced today is no longer necessary: "I want to help people help themselves so that they are self sufficient and don't need the system any more," Mike says. "I've been in every system and I know what kids go through. I know how hard it is and how helpless the system makes you feel. Too often social workers don't help very much – sometimes its more about how to keep getting a paycheck than what's best for the client."

"But SEA isn't like that," Mike continued. "If it wasn't for SEA I wouldn't be in school right now. SEA staff taught me how to work the system, how to navigate the bureaucracy for myself. Brittney 'took me by the hand' and showed me how to cut through the red tape and get funding for college, how to register for the right classes. Now I feel confident that I can jump through the hoops myself and get the job done. College is intimidating at first, and having an advocate there showing you how the system works is invaluable."



seattleeducationaccess
Turning College Dreams Into College Degrees

Seattle Education Access provides higher education advocacy and opportunity to people struggling to overcome poverty and adversity. Through our College Success Program, we help marginalized young people complete college degrees and success in meaningful careers.

Staff:

Antho Smith, Executive Director
Polly Trout, Outreach and Advocacy Director
Melissa Collett, Development Director
Brittney Ferrara, Education Advocate
Kelli Wilharm, Bookkeeping

Key Volunteers:

Elenya Paben, Book Access Coordinator
Guy Boster, Newsletter Design

Board of Directors:

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Seattle Education Access (SEA) is a 501(c)(3) charity incorporated in the State of Washington. Our Federal tax ID number is 04-3602577.

SEA is a Member Agency of the University District Service Providers Alliance (UDSPA), a coalition of agencies working together to create a comprehensive continuum of services for homeless and street-involved youth and young adults. The purpose of the UDSPA is to help member nonprofits share resources and work together efficiently as we pursue the shared mission of offering a full spectrum of compassionate, quality care to Seattle's homeless and street-involved youth and young adults. For more information, visit www.udsp.org.

The SEA newsletter is mailed quarterly. If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please let us know. All requests will be honored immediately.

Who We Served In 2010

At Seattle Education Access we help marginalized young people make strong transitions to local community colleges and universities, so they can overcome poverty by moving forward to meaningful professional careers.



419 students served in 2010
4,017 direct service staff hours
116 students received **\$62,140.49** in scholarships

30% of SEA students complete a program of study *
14% completed an AA/AS or BA degree
100% received free academic advising and career counseling

74% are enrolled in school in good academic standing or have graduated
74% are 1st generation college attendees
38% are 1st generation High School/GED graduates

100% are low-income
82% have experienced homelessness
15% have been in foster care **

Volunteer Hours in 2010
40 Tutors volunteered **682** hours
10 Special Project Volunteers donated **100** total hours
24 Leadership Volunteers donated **940** total hours
74 Total Volunteers worked a total of **1,722** hours

71% are people of color
22% are immigrants

34% are LGBTQ
30% are single parents
(73 children total)

36% Black/African/AA
29% White
7% Asian
16% Latino
2% Native American
8% Mixed Race
2% Other/Unknown

57% Female
41% Male
2% Transgender



* Longitudinal statistics based on students receiving scholarships or 5+ hours of direct service
 ** By partnering with agencies that specialize in serving former foster youth with have been able reduce the number of students served that can get comparable serves elsewhere.

FACT: The U.S. Department of Education states that only 41% of low-income students (66% of higher income students) enrolled in a four-year institution managed to graduate within five years.

College Success Program Overview

Our College Success Program model is tailored to meet the needs of the most marginalized students – such as currently homeless and living in extreme poverty. Many of the youth we serve do not have the safety net of a caring family, making them even more vulnerable to lifelong poverty unless they continue their educations until they are skilled employees.

Target Population: Low-income residents of King County between the ages of 16 and 30. A typical student in our program is a young adult who failed to complete high school due to trauma and poverty, now regrets that decision, and is highly motivated to complete his or her education.



Free academic advising, career counseling and tutoring: Our staff works with students to create an individualized academic achievement plan tailored to each student's gifts and goals. We teach students how to navigate the educational system, get federal financial aid, compete for private scholarships, make a budget, register for classes, fill out FAFSA forms, pick the right campus and degree program, and effectively access campus services. As needed, we match students with volunteer tutors to help them through tough classes.

Additional components of our program include GED completion and COMPASS test support through one-on-one tutoring, access to books through free book libraries, and access to technology through the Student Resource Center. Advocacy and social support is an important element of our services teaching students how to advocate for financial aid and other services. We stay involved through graduation "cheering on" each student and providing the social support that they would normally be receiving from family.

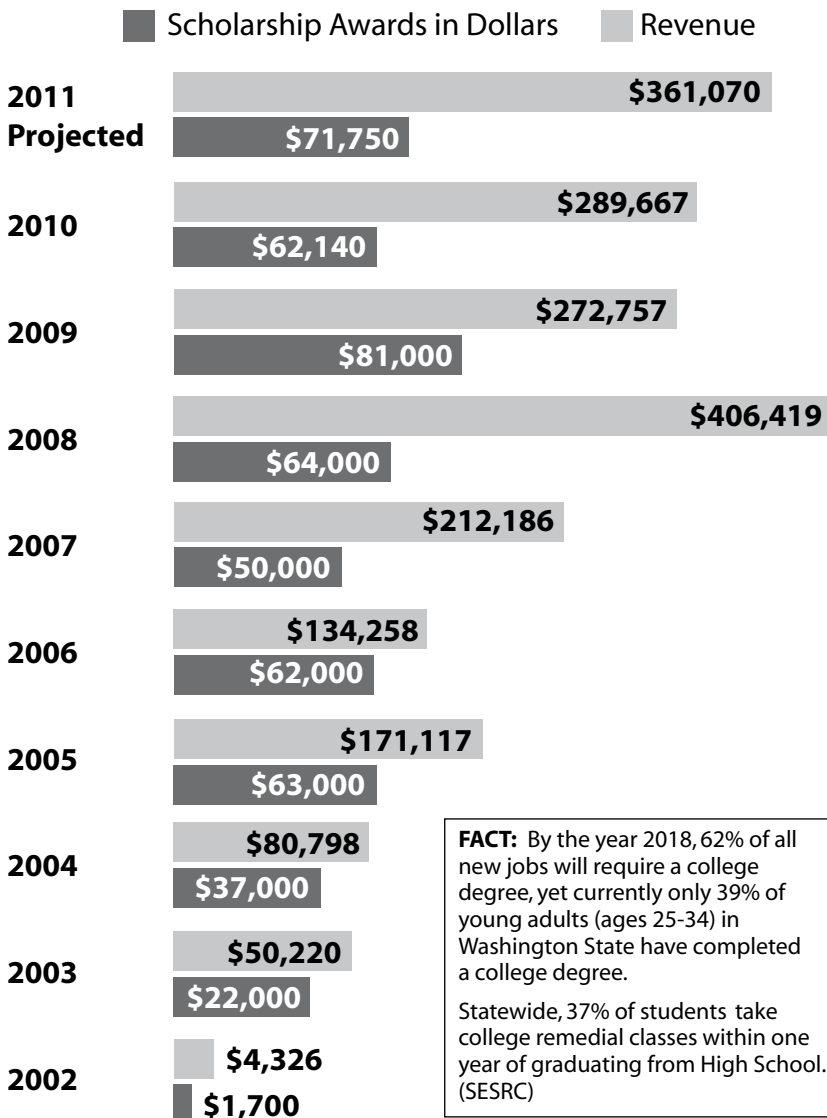
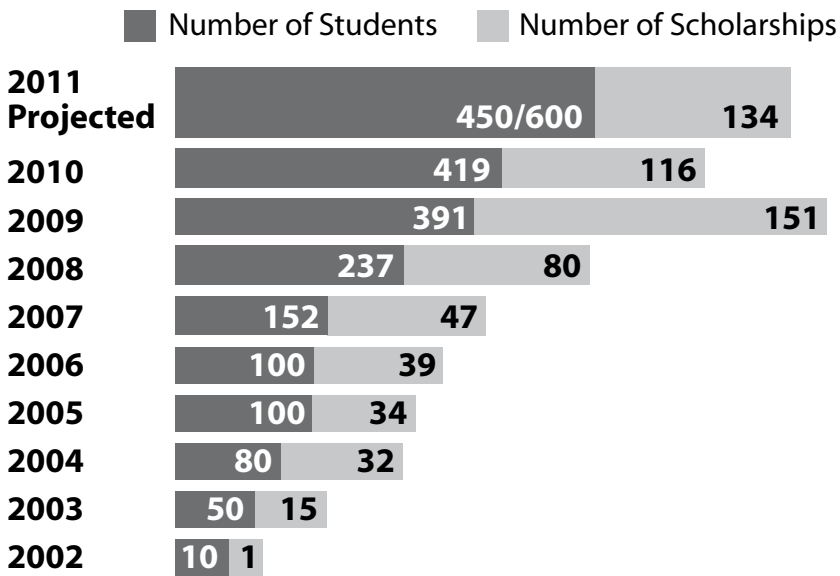
Gap Scholarships: We award financial scholarships for tuition and gap funding to supplement the financial aid package so students have enough money to afford safe and stable housing. Students apply for scholarships through SEA by filling out an application form, writing an essay and filling out a budget to show their need. Community volunteers and former SEA students review applications and interview candidates three times per year for Fall, Winter and Spring quarters.



Outreach & Partnerships: We focus our outreach on youth who are the most marginalized and who do not fit into the other college access agencies in King County. When speaking directly to young people, we encourage them to go to college and teach them the steps for college success. Our staff also gives training workshops to the staff of other organizations, teaching them how to promote a "college going culture" among their clients and empower underserved populations towards educational attainment. We have formal partnerships with the Seattle Metrocenter YMCA and the Career Connections program through King County WorkSource in Renton.

A sample of our partners: Seattle YMCA, King County WorkSource, United Indians of All Tribes Group Home, Teen Feed, University District Youth Center, Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets (PSKS), Auburn Youth Resources, ROOTS Young Adult Shelter, Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, College Success Foundation, New Horizons, and Corrections Connections.

Growth Over Time



Gap Scholarships Help Students Graduate

In 2010, Seattle Education Access wasn't able to give out the scholarships that students needed to succeed. We awarded less than 50% of what we had hoped even though the need for our services increased 61%.

Without this important funding, students may have to drop out of school and go back to living in poverty. Because of this decline in funding, we also had a decline in our success rate. Typically 91% of SEA students end each school year either in good academic standing, or are graduating. In 2010, this declined to 74%.

Volunteer Resource & Outreach Team—Meeting the Needs of Students

In order to better serve the students seeking additional support, an SEA graduate, Charlie Laroux Bettis, is leading a team of volunteers working to connect students with community resources.

Charlie started volunteering in the SEA Student Resource Center in Fall 2010. Through talking with current students, and her own experiences as a marginalized young adult, she wanted to be able to help SEA create a system to ensure that youth had as much support as they needed. The newly formed Resource Team is a group of volunteers who research resources needed by students that range from private scholarships, to jobs, utilities assistance and more.

The Volunteer Resource & Outreach Team helps SEA staff ensure that each student is still receiving individual attention and personalized support.

Executive Letter

Dear Friends,

In 2010 Seattle Education Access continued to grow as strong presence in our community. This past year we served over 400 young people in King County, helping them to make successful transitions to community colleges and universities, with a very small staff and a tight budget. All of our students come from low-income backgrounds—many have experienced homelessness—and a large portion is comprised of first-generation high school/GED graduates and first-generation college attendees. We continue to provide quality service to this ever-growing underserved population or young people who simply need our support.

Our amazing students are thriving and excelling in school with the help of Seattle Education Access! Many of our students who have succeeded in community college are transferring to four-year colleges and universities around the state and country! More than a few are now also attending and succeeding in graduate school.

Our students continue to be the Seattle Education Access success story. One student writes,

“Four years ago I would have never have believed that this day would come. Four years ago I would have never believed that I would be in college and approaching graduation. But I’m not the same person I was four years ago. The opportunity and support I have received that SEA has given me has changed how I see myself and the world.”

On the other hand, the tough economic times have been hard on Seattle Education Access students in many ways. The economy has impeded the organization’s ability to raise scholarship dollars from corporations and foundations in 2010. This has greatly affected our ability to fund scholarships for our deserving students. Meanwhile, many students have lost jobs or have been unsuccessful in finding work in the slumping economy. The financial assistance provided by Seattle Education Access to students is often the key to the student’s success. Our students need our help to pay for college more than ever before, and we believe the community will rise to the challenge in 2011.

We are extremely grateful to the students, staff, board members, community partners and volunteers who we have worked alongside in 2010 to create the beautiful and empowered community that Seattle Education Access is today. We are so grateful to all the community members whose generosity and support continue to allow our staff and students to be successful. We hope that you will continue to support our students in 2011 by contributing to our scholarship fund so to empower our young people to be successful in college and make their own dreams a reality. Together we will be more empowered through supporting each other in the life long pursuit of education.

Un abrazo,

Anthon Smith, Executive Director and Cristina Gonzalez, Board President



Executive Director Anthon Smith (left) pictured with Mike at the Benefit Breakfast in September 2010. Mike’s story is featured on the front page.

Financial Report • January 1 through December 31, 2010

Revenue

Foundations	\$178,380	59%
Corporations	\$8,534	2%
Individuals	\$58,264	18%
Benefit Breakfast	\$31,104	9%
Miscellaneous	\$3,336	1%
In-Kind	-\$37,700	11%
Total	\$317,318	

Expenses

Admin & Fundraising	\$57,525	21%
College Success Program	-\$216,404	79%
TOTAL	\$273,929	

Scholarship Awards

Tuition & Gap Scholarships	\$41,653	67%
Textbooks & Testing Fees	\$4,700	8%
Technology Awards	-\$15,787	25%
Total	\$62,140	

Average Scholarship award per student: \$536

Average cost to serve a student: \$654

Scholarship Review Process

Scholarships are awarded through an application process managed by a Scholarship Review Committee independent of the SEA staff. The Chair of the committee sits on the Board of Directors. SEA staff help students fill out the scholarship application along with a budget and a personal statement. The Committee reviews applications before each quarter (Fall, Spring and Winter), interviews students and makes decisions on awards.

Students can apply for a variety of needs including a home computer and printer, bus passes, textbooks, gap funding to supplement financial aid, child care, testing fees and even tuition.

Students who receive scholarships must maintain a 3.0 GPA and provide a copy of their transcripts to SEA at the end of the quarter.



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seattleeducationaccess.org
facebook.com/seattleeducationaccess
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2011 Event Calendar – Save The Date

March – Scholarships Awarded

June 5 – Achievement Party celebrating the successes of student graduates. Join us at the Grand Illusion Theatre, 4pm -6pm

September 14 – Annual Benefit Breakfast, 7am, Seattle Grand Hyatt. Look for your invitation this summer.

September – Scholarships Awarded

December – Holiday Fundraising Campaign.

December – Scholarships Awarded

For more information on any events, volunteering or getting involved, please give us a call at (206) 523-6200.

Meet Our Students – Every Month Sign-up for our online newsletter and get a student success story delivered to you once a month. To sign-up, visit our website or email Melissa@seattleeducationaccess.org
