



## The Program

**Ready to Rise** is a leadership development program that identifies, equips and supports the next generation of diverse leaders on the journey to a college degree and leadership in their home communities. Based on the success of Act Six and informed by extensive research on what works to help students persist, graduate, and return home to lead and serve, Ready to Rise uses a three-pronged approach to support students through critical parts of their college experience:

- 1) **Student Cohorts:** Having fun and learning together, participants develop relationships at home and on campus with other students who share their love of their community, desire for leadership and interest in getting a college degree.
- 2) **Mentoring and Peer Support:** Throughout the first year of college, participants meet regularly with a near-peer ambassador—someone who’s “been there” and can offer suggestions for navigating academic, social, family or other issues that come up.
- 3) **Real-World Leadership Development:** Throughout their college experience, participants grow as leaders through quarterly trainings; they’ll also increase their employability through internship opportunities and interactions with hometown community leaders.

## Eligibility

Ready to Rise seeks to work with underrepresented students who are:

- ✓ graduating from a high school within either Tacoma, Yakima Valley or Clark County, WA
- ✓ first-generation college students, low-income and/or students of color
- ✓ ready to use their education to make a difference on campus and at home
- ✓ planning to enroll at one of the following schools:
  - Central Washington University
  - Clark College
  - Tacoma Community College
  - University of Washington – Tacoma
  - Washington State University - Vancouver
  - Western Washington University
  - Yakima Valley College

## Goals

Ready to Rise will serve 1,000 students from the three communities (Tacoma, Yakima Valley, Clark County, WA) over five years. The first 120 high school seniors will be selected in the 2016-17 school year, with 160 selected in 2017-18 and 240 in each of the next three school years (2018-21).

With a goal of developing a diverse leadership pipeline specifically for underrepresented leaders in Tacoma, Yakima Valley and Clark County, Ready to Rise will:

- leverage community and school networks to identify and attract promising young leaders who can flourish with additional supports.
- develop meaningful, supportive relationships and ongoing connections with fellow students, community leaders and campus resources to encourage degree completion.
- help students connect what they’re learning in the classroom to their vocational interests and the real needs within their community; and
- connect students to real-world leaders to help them envision and prepare for a life of service and leadership.

## How it Works: An Overview

### Senior Year of High School

- Students apply and are selected
- Workshops for students and their families about college fit, financial aid and college enrollment
- Cohorts form; relationships develop
- Students receive \$500 cash stipend

### First Year of College

- Leadership development training
- Customized scholarship and community service opportunities via text
- One-on-one and small group connections with near-peer Ambassador to help support and guide students to campus resources
- Connect back with hometown leaders during summer

### Second Year of College

- Opportunity to serve as near-peer Ambassador
- Scholarship and service opportunities via text
- Vocational exploration workshops
- One-on-one and small group connections with others considering similar majors
- Focus on graduation/transfer (2-year) or declaring major (4-year)
- Connect back with hometown leaders and full network of Ready to Rise participants during summer

### Third + Fourth Year of College (4-year)

- Scholarship and service opportunities via text
- Internships/job shadowing focus
- One-on-one and small group connections with others in similar major/career path
- Focus on graduation and career preparation
- Connect back with hometown leaders and full network of Ready to Rise participants during summer

**Ready to Rise** is made possible through a grant to Degrees of Change from College Spark Washington to help 1,000 low-income students from three communities in Washington State stay on track and graduate from college while inspiring them to use their degrees to give back to their communities.

Degrees of Change proudly works with outstanding leadership foundations as affiliate partners to spearhead the local development of each Ready to Rise community effort: **Northwest Leadership Foundation** in the Tacoma area; **Portland Leadership Foundation** in Clark County; and **Yakima Leadership Foundation** in the Yakima Valley. Each leadership foundation brings a track record of college support success to help develop a diverse leadership pipeline for its communities.

For more information about Ready to Rise, contact your local affiliate or Degrees of Change.

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