

Submitter: Morgan pemberton

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB604

Going to college after experiencing the uncertainty of schooling when you are just a teen is extremely frightening. Many students have experienced in a blink of an eye something that is supposed to be constant; going to school, basically crumble in front of their eyes. Falling drastically with them is good academic and social aspects. Programs that focus on allowing students the chance to regain trust in the system and themselves is crucial to the success of our economy and society.

I personally participated in Western Oregon's Destination Western, which was funded by this grant. I have also served as a team member for the last three years; meaning I have witnessed the affects of realigning to the meaning of college education. I've seen students walk into the program, unsure about their ability to succeed, unsure if they would continue with education go through these programs completely different. The affects are not only immediately apparent but there is nothing that makes me feel more proud than seeing students, who told me 4 months ago they wanted to drop out, thriving.

I was one of these students, having been an underrepresented student. In high school, the covid pandemic pushed me further into thinking I was not half as capable as I should be. I was afraid I was not college ready. Destination Western, which was funded by Strong Start, helped me rebuild faith in my academic career, and set me up for success both personally and professionally. I'm now an active member of my college community and consistently on the President's list and it's all thanks to the support and resources awarded to me before my journey even started.