

# PHILANTHROPY

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## South Island Partnership works to bridge youth educational transitions

In an effort to build a more seamless transition from high school to college, Camosun College shares in a working partnership with five south Island school districts: Victoria, Saanich, Sooke, Gulf Islands and Cowichan Valley.

This South Island Partnership (SIP) offers high school students a head start in their post-secondary and career education through a wide assortment of courses and programs.

While students are still in high school, they can take a college course in science, health, business or sport education. These courses give students credit toward their high school graduation and college at the same time. In addition, high school graduates who follow up with university studies at Camosun will have “continuing student” status, which provides a priority registration date for their first semester of college courses.

The ACE IT (Accelerated Enrolment in Industry Training) program provides tuition-free trades training for high school students. The student’s high school schedule is adjusted so that he/she can participate in trades training in their high school or attend a Camosun trades program full-time during the school year. The student earns high school and college credits for the course work (dual credit) and will graduate from high school with significant post-secondary training already completed.

“LYNC programs and courses provide a win for all involved,” says Kelly Knister, South Island Partnership Coordinator. “Students win by getting a supported head start on their career or post secondary education, secondary teachers win by offering relevant programming, the college wins by meeting the needs of the community and local employers win with a ready supply of trained entry level employees.”

One of the biggest challenges SIP has faced is communicating effectively with its diverse audience about the transition programs, courses, initiatives and services offered. Through a grant from the Victoria Foundation, SIP wanted to develop a thorough marketing strategy to ensure students, parents and local employers are aware of and understand how to access its services. The main thrust of the grant is to engage College and Community Relations (CCR) staff and the South Island Partnership Committees to develop strategies for communicating with its three key audiences: the SIP organization, students and parents, and local employers and industry.

All partners that currently fund the south island project will benefit from this initiative of better communications with stakeholders and



High school students can get a head start on their post-secondary and career education through a partnership program with Camosun College. A grant from the Victoria Foundation will help raise awareness of the initiative.

an increased understanding of the programs and services offered. There are approximately 50,000 students currently in the region that could eventually access programs and plan for their transition to post secondary education and the workplace more efficiently and effectively. Each sector of our south Island economy is impacted by worker shortages. By creating closer linkages between secondary school programs and employers seeking skilled workers both local employers and the local economy will benefit.

The grant from the Victoria Foundation will enhance multi-media marketing strategies, a speakers’ bureau, a revised website, a manual and other tools for promoting the program’s benefits. An increased awareness and understanding of the South Island training options and work credit for at risk youth will open doors to local employers, industry representatives, secondary schools, college departments, students and parents.



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