

# Two Bellingham colleges ranked top 120 in the nation, compete for cash

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Photo courtesy [Whatcom Community College Facebook](#)

Bellingham Technical College and Whatcom Community College are both in the running to win \$1 million dollars from the Aspen Institute.

The non-profit organization selected 120 community colleges from more than 1,000 around the country, and only six were chosen from Washington State, including our two fine schools in Bellingham. The colleges were chosen based on their academic excellence for their students, meaning retention and completion rates, student performance, and affordable options for minority and low-income students, said the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

“Time and time again, Washington’s community and technical colleges make national news for their outstanding accomplishments,” said Jan Yoshiwara, deputy executive director for education. “These colleges are shining examples of our colleges’ deep commitment to their students.”

If the colleges choose to continue with the competition, they will move on to the next phases, which involves an in-depth study on how well the students at the schools learn, complete degrees, and, ultimately, get competitive wage jobs in their field. The last step is a visit from the Aspen Institute officials.

Along with BTC and WCC, Olympic College, Pierce College Fort Steilacoom, Renton Technical College, and Walla Walla Community College are the Washington schools eligible for the \$1 million. Winners will be announced in March of next year.

Good luck to both schools!