

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Pilot Scholarship Program Aims at Building Educational Equity**

### ***College of Marin Plans to Expand New Marin Scholars Program***

Kentfield, CA – Nov. 9, 2006 – The New Marin Scholars program, an initiative conceived by College of Marin Superintendent President Dr. Frances L. White in collaboration with the Marin Education Fund (MEF), has opened doors this semester for eight students who might not have been able to afford college and paved the way for an expanded program next year.

"The New Marin Scholars is Dr. White's response to the educational inequities that exist in the county," said Kim Mazzuca, President, Marin Education Fund. "Marin Education Fund is proud to be partnering with the College of Marin to ensure that students with greatest need have an equal opportunity to get to college and achieve their educational dreams!"

The pilot scholarship project is aimed at students who are the first in their families to attend college. Funding for the project, provided by both MEF and the College of Marin Foundation (COMF), covers the cost of COM enrollment costs, fees and books; and provides mentorship, training and academic support to help each student succeed.

"Reaching out to the community to support equal access to education is a priority for the college," said COM Superintendent/President Dr. Frances L. White. "Marin Education Fund's collaboration allows the College to make this dream a reality for deserving students."

MEF works with local high schools to identify prospective students with financial need and invites them to the Marin Education Fund's Summer Application Institute and Mentor Program, a five-day program that guides students through the college application and testing process and links them with mentors. Once at COM, students receive additional support through COMF's New Marin Scholars program and must maintain a 2.0 grade point average to stay in the program.

Liliana Perez, 18, a graduate from Novato High School, started at COM this fall. She wants to be a teacher. "It's exciting," Perez said. "It's a really different environment than high school but I'm getting used to it."

"They are enthusiastic students," said COM Counselor Robert Flynn. "They're bright and there's an appreciation for the kind of interest that's been shown to them."

Herberth Corado, 18, a San Rafael High School graduate who started at COM this fall dreams of becoming a dentist. College, he says, is a little bit harder than he imagined, but he's already met with his mentor and after talking with Flynn, he is mapping out a plan of action. Next on his list: passing chemistry.

Corado wrote in his application to the Summer Application institute: "... I am motivated to go to college and become a dentist. This program will help me learn about college life and

options to pay for college. This is important to me because my mom is a single mom and is unable to pay for my school.”

The need to help low income students in the area gain access to education is tremendous. More than 3,000 students in Marin County qualify for federal financial aid Pell grants.

The COM Foundation Board has enthusiastically supported the project from the onset and dubbed the project the “New Marin Scholars” to reflect the opportunities that it will provide to previously underserved Marin populations. COMF is delighted with the immediate success of the program and is expected to announce plans for a major gift fundraising campaign to expand the program next year.

“The number of students with financial needs is growing and we are thrilled to be able to provide this assistance,” said Margaret Elliott, College of Marin Foundation Executive Director.

For more information about the New Marin Scholars Program call Margaret Elliot at 415. 485-9382.

#### **About Marin Education Fund**

Marin Education Fund ([www.marineducationfund.org](http://www.marineducationfund.org)) is a non-profit organization that believes everyone should have a chance at college. Marin Education Fund provides college access programs, scholarships and support to students in need of all ages. The low-income and traditionally underrepresented students who receive support from Marin Education Fund are frequently the first generation of their family to go to college. Marin Education Fund was founded in 1981.

#### **About College of Marin Foundation**

The College of Marin Foundation provides scholarships, book grants, and emergency loans/grants to hundreds of deserving students each year supporting their pursuit of higher education.

#### **About College of Marin**

College of Marin is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. COM has been providing educational opportunities for thousands of students of all ages since 1926. The College administration is located in Kentfield, CA. The College also operates the Indian Valley campus in Novato, CA.

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