



Re-Engagement Initiative

Rana Tarkenton, Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF)

Although 79 percent of Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF) Scholars are still enrolled or have completed a degree, 21 percent have left college without a credential. That equates to approximately 700 DSF Scholars since 2007, many of whom carry significant student loan debt but have no degree to show for it. In the spring of 2013, the Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF) partnered with the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) at the Community College of Denver, Auraria Campus, to reach out to those students and encourage them to complete their postsecondary education. This ongoing outreach campaign is intended to assist students on the path back to higher education.

“Although this initiative is relatively new, we are expecting to see gains in college enrollment for this group of former DSF Scholars when we measure enrollment in the fall of 2013. Assisting students with outstanding student loan debt is probably the greatest challenge for this program to overcome. The majority of students surveyed cited financial burdens as their reason for leaving college and the reason for not returning,” says Rana Tarkenton, Deputy Director for Programs, Denver Scholarship Foundation. The ongoing outreach campaign is intended to assist students on the path back to higher education. Personal advisors at the EOC assist students with everything from admissions to financial aid, while DSF provides financial support to those students still eligible for the scholarship. A partnership has been forged with Money Management International to provide consumer credit counseling to those students who face financial hurdles on their journey towards a degree.

“If students are not in good financial standing with their former institution, the institution will usually not allow the student to re-enroll or to have an official transcript to submit to another institution,” says Ms. Tarkenton. “We are looking for creative ways to partner with Colorado institutions to find a way around this challenge.”