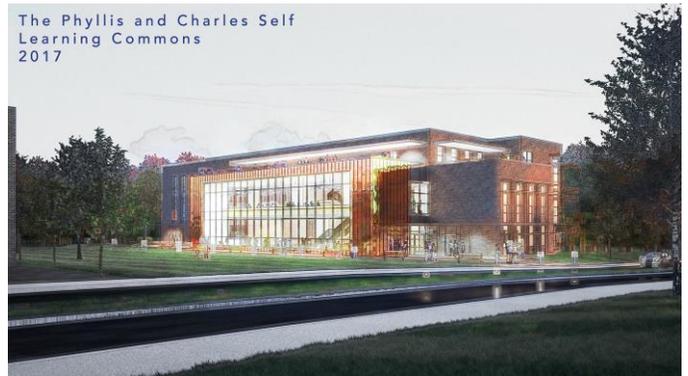


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 11, 2014

## WCC Names Learning Commons in Honor of Phyllis and Charles Self

*New building to open in 2017 as part of Whatcom Community College's Institutional Master Plan*

**Bellingham, Wash.** – Whatcom Community College (WCC) leaders have announced the campus' planned Learning Commons will be named in honor of long-time College advocates and community leaders Phyllis and Charles Self. The Learning Commons is a key element of the College's Institutional Master Plan (IMP), which will expand campus buildings to address increased enrollments and demand for new types of learning facilities. When it opens in 2017, the Learning Commons will house academic support services and resources such as the Library, math and writing centers, media and tutoring services, and quiet and shared study spaces. It will be Whatcom's first state-funded building since Kulshan Hall opened in 2004.



“Whatcom’s Board of Trustees enthusiastically and unanimously voted to name the building in honor of the Selfs,” WCC Board of Trustees Chair Sue Cole says. “They have elevated philanthropy in our community and at Whatcom. We are so fortunate that they share our dreams for Whatcom Community College.”

“Phyllis and Charlie believe strongly that Whatcom’s welcoming atmosphere and high-quality education can transform lives,” WCC President Kathi Hiyane-Brown adds. “They have demonstrated their commitment by making significant contributions to the College and the WCC Foundation over the past 14 years. I am extremely thankful for their support and honored to recognize their legacy with the naming of the Learning Commons.”

Phyllis Self was a member of WCC’s Board of Trustees from 1996 to 2006; she was chair in 2002 and 2006. She has also been a WCC Foundation Board Director since 1999, serving as board chair from 2003 to 2006 and leading several committees and initiatives, including the creation of a WCC Foundation endowed scholarship fund at each of the 10 local high schools. The Selfs also support the College through the Charles and Phyllis Self Endowed Scholarship Fund and a Legacy Gift Bequest.

The Learning Commons and the IMP as a whole will address space constraints that challenge Whatcom's ability to serve students. At issue are both the additional space needed for existing services and the type of space future students will require. Strategic planning has identified the Learning Commons as an effective response to the College's challenges in meeting increased student enrollment and access to services while maximizing existing campus infrastructure and supporting new learning.

Currently in the pre-design phase, the Learning Commons will be an approximately 65,000-square-foot building centrally located on Whatcom's campus. It will be adjacent to Kellogg Road and parallel to Kulshan Hall and built on a plot of currently vacant land owned by the College. The Learning Commons will integrate the full resources of the Library with academic support services such as writing and math centers. Students will also find instructional technology, collaborative workstations, and individual and group study spaces within the building, which will be filled with natural light thanks to its open floor plan and large windows. The Learning Commons will be a welcoming hub of learning activity on campus, bringing together in one central location the people, services, resources, and technologies that support and enrich the learning experience. The total project cost is estimated to be \$31.6 million. Due to state budget challenges, the Legislature has already trimmed \$305,000 from the original project estimate. College administrators are working with local lawmakers to prevent additional cuts that will negatively impact the student-focused project.

The College began work on its detailed Institutional Master Plan (IMP) in 2012. Principals with Schreiber Starling & Lane Architects of Seattle are leading the planning process. The IMP will be the primary guide for capital improvement to the campus buildings and infrastructure in the near and far-term and is intended to meet the functional needs of the College while complying with regulatory requirements of the City of Bellingham. The plan will also support the College's biannual funding request in the state capital budget process as well as efforts to secure capital and development funding via alternative funding, grants, and private-public partnerships.

Community members will be invited to attend informational meetings regarding the IMP. The plan also includes upgrades to Baker and Cascade halls as well as the student-funded expansion of the Pavilion building, which houses WCC's Recreation Center and offices.

**About Whatcom:** Whatcom Community College is an accredited, comprehensive two-year college with an accomplished faculty and staff who serve 11,000 students annually. On its campus in Bellingham, WA, and through online courses, Whatcom offers transfer degrees, professional and technical training programs, as well as basic education, job skills, and Community & Continuing Education classes. For more information, visit [www.whatcom.ctc.edu](http://www.whatcom.ctc.edu).

**Contact:** Mary Vermillion, Whatcom Community College PIO, (360) 383-3310, [pio@whatcom.ctc.edu](mailto:pio@whatcom.ctc.edu).

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