



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Stakeholders to Collaborate on Higher Education Funding Strategies and Solutions for 2015 Legislative Session**

Higher Education Stakeholders' Summit  
Saturday, October 25, at 9 AM  
Tacoma Community College Student Center  
6501 So. 19<sup>th</sup> St., Tacoma, WA

In an effort to address the state's declining investment in higher education, students, faculty, community organizations, and labor unions will meet on Saturday, Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>, in Tacoma to develop strategies and solutions to reverse this trend during the 2015 legislative session.

Washington State is ranked fourth in the country for decreased state funding per full-time equivalent (FTE) and ninth in the country for the largest tuition increases during 2008-2012.

Gov. Inslee recently asked university presidents and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to develop budgets that would include another 15 percent cut in state funding after years of disinvestment.

"Higher education will be in the line of fire as legislators look for \$3 Billion to fund basic K-12 education since the State Supreme Court last month found the Legislature in contempt of the McCleary decision," according to Karen Strickland, President of AFT Washington.

The Higher Education Stakeholders' Summit will feature speakers Rai Nauman Mumtaz, student representative on the Washington Student Achievement Council; Garrett Havens from the Washington Student Association; and Jason Collette, Alliance for a Just Society, among others.

The summit will feature a panel representing students, faculty, staff, business, and community organizations that will provide a close look at the impacts of declining funding on each of these groups. Break-out sessions will provide skills-based training to participants, such as Art As Advocacy with the Backbone Campaign, that they can use in their advocacy efforts.

"Our perspectives and experiences will inform our approach to influencing our state representatives to address the defunding of higher education," said Garrett Havens, Executive Director of the Washington Student Association. "We want to talk about ideas, strategies, and solutions, and I don't think anybody else is approaching this issue in this way," he said.

The summit is hosted by Alliance for a Just Society, AFT Washington, Equity in Education Coalition, Jobs With Justice, Tacoma Community College Federation of Teachers, Washington Student Association, and Washington Federation of State Employees.

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## Figure 4: Changes In Tuition & Per-Student Funding, 2008-2012

*Top 10 States, By Largest Tuition Increase*

