Pierce College has been named one of 10 finalists for the national 2021 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. We were selected in part for our success in closing equity gaps and dismantling barriers to student achievement. As a result of this work, 71% of our students continue their education after their time at Pierce, thanks in large part to Pierce College Puyallup’s popular Running Start program. The district’s combined graduation and transfer rates have increased from 56%, which was 20% over the national average, to 71%, since our previous recognition by Aspen in 2019.

Pierce Nursing Students Well Prepared to Fill Statewide Shortage of Registered Nurses

Pierce College Puyallup’s nursing program plays an important role in filling Washington’s statewide shortage of registered nurses. The program has been ranked as one of the top nursing programs in the state, ranked No. 1 by RNCareers.org, and No. 2 by RegisteredNursing.org. In 2020, the college launched a new part-time LPN to RN program, allowing working LPNs to earn their registered nursing credentials on a part-time basis over five quarters. Over the past four years, our nursing program has seen an average first-time licensure exam pass rate of 98%, allowing students to move into in-demand nursing careers quickly upon graduation.

Pierce College Partners with Bethel School District to Offer Innovative Access to Higher Education

Pierce College continues to increase access to higher education in south Pierce County through an innovative partnership with Bethel schools. Pierce offers college courses at Graham-Kapowsin and Spanaway Lake high schools and will soon offer courses at the new Bethel High School. The courses at Bethel High School will be provided in a specially designated wing, with construction set to begin in 2021. Courses at each of these sites are open to everyone, including Running Start and returning adult students.