

# Education News & Notes

## “Excellence Awards” Honor Community Colleges

(NAPSA)—Helping today’s low-income workers become tomorrow’s high achievers: that’s the goal of two colleges recently honored for their efforts by an innovative educational awards program.

The “MetLife Foundation Community College Excellence Awards,” which come with a \$30,000 check, honor community colleges that are promoting educational and economic advancement for underserved youth and adults. Administering the awards is Jobs for the Future (JFF), an innovator in strategies to accelerate educational and career advancement for both young people and adults.

This year’s winners include West Hills Community College of San Joaquin Valley, California. Among its success stories: Juanita Saucedo, a migrant farmworker who ran a cotton gin from sunset to sunrise. Working the nightshift, she was having a hard time caring for her teen-aged daughter. Desperate for a route to a better job, she turned to a training program run in partnership with the college, which is near her home. Saucedo enrolled and did so well she landed a job as a translator and advisor to other students at the college.

West Hills is changing the lives of many of its community’s low-income families. So is Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio, the other “Excellence Awards” winner. At both schools—one a small, rural college serving a largely migrant Hispanic population, the other a large, urban



**Community colleges can help change the lives for students from low-income families.**

college that is helping to rebuild a troubled regional economy—students earn credentials that can mean the difference between poverty and climbing the ladder into the middle class.

“These colleges understand that the obstacles facing those with the least education and skills are becoming more acute, while the expectations that community colleges will serve these youth and adults are rising,” says MetLife Foundation President and CEO Sibyl Jacobson. MetLife plans to make another round of excellence awards. “This valuable program recognizes innovative leaders,” comments JFF president Marlene B. Seltzer. “Just as important, it spurs other colleges to invest in helping people succeed in school and in careers.”

To learn more about what JFF is doing to help young people and adults achieve in today’s job market, write: Jobs for the Future, 88 Broad Street, Boston, MA 02110; or visit [www.jff.org](http://www.jff.org).