



# TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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## **Tacoma Public Schools and Tacoma Housing Authority Are State Leaders in College Bound Scholarship Sign Ups**

“I am very pleased to see Tacoma taking the lead in College Bound Scholarship sign ups. This scholarship is a wonderful chance for low-income students.”

- Michael Mirra  
Executive Director, Tacoma Housing Authority

In 2008, the Washington State Legislature created the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) program. The CBS program promises college scholarships to allow low-income Washington State students afford college. To qualify they must graduate from a high school with least a 2.0 GPA, demonstrate good citizenship and stay crime free. This promise is very valuable. The amount of the scholarship is based on the tuition (at public college rates) not covered by other financial aid, plus \$500 each year for books. The scholarship can be used at a Washington public community, technical, or four-year college; an approved, accredited independent college or university; or a private career school. To be eligible, however, students and their parents must also sign up for the program before the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year. Each year, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders can sign up. (For the 2008-2009 school only, the legislature also allowed 9<sup>th</sup> graders to sign up.)

The Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) has resolved to help enroll as many as possible of the eligible students who live in its housing programs. Doing so is an important part of THA's general efforts to help the children its houses succeed in school. Its enrollment efforts complemented a very effective city wide enrollment campaign. As a result of these efforts, a higher percentage of students signed up for the College Board Scholarship program in Tacoma than in any other Washington community. The percentage among students living in THA housing was even higher. The estimated numbers and percentages for the state, the city and THA are as follows:

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| <b>7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Graders Enrolled in the Washington State<br/>College Bound Scholarship Program<br/>2008-2009</b> |                        |                         |                |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
|   | <b>Number Eligible</b> | <b>Number Signed Up</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| <b>Washington State</b>   | 91,304                 | 41,994                  | 46%            |
| <b>Tacoma Public Schools</b>  | 2,298                  | 1,764                   | 77%            |
| <b>THA Residents</b>  | <b>804</b>             | <b>670</b>              | <b>83%</b>     |

The Tacoma Public Schools led the enrollment effort in the city. It began working with community partners including Tacoma Housing Authority, the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the College Success Foundation, to sign up as many eligible students as possible. For the 2008-2009 school year, the goal was to sign up all eligible students. In the spring of 2007 and 2008, TPS, the College Success Foundation, Metropolitan Development Council, and Tacoma Community College staged the *Tacoma is College Bound* event. Hundreds of eligible students and their families attended. The event gave them the opportunity to receive answers to their questions and to sign up on the spot. This event will be held again in March of 2010.

“This outstanding outcome is attributable to the incredible partnership among the many community agencies that came together to support these students,” said Steve Thorndill, Director of Scholarship Services for the College Success Foundation. Dr. Arthur Jarvis, Superintendent of Tacoma Public Schools commented that, “The partnership between Tacoma Public Schools and the Tacoma Housing Authority has been very powerful for our students. Assuring all students are ready for college and/or careers is one of our highest priorities, and working with THA builds the power of both agencies to achieve that goal.”

THA has issued a report assessing its enrollment efforts and how it can improve upon them next year. The report is entitled, *Enrolling Tacoma Housing Authority’s Students in Washington State’s College Board Scholarship Program: An Assessment of the First Year’s Effort 2008-2009* (THA November 10, 2009).. A copy of the report is available at [www.tacomahousing.org](http://www.tacomahousing.org).

The HEC Board web site has the most current information about the CBS Program:

[www.hecb.wa.gov/paying/waaidprgm/CollegeBoundScholarship.asp](http://www.hecb.wa.gov/paying/waaidprgm/CollegeBoundScholarship.asp)

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### **About Tacoma Housing Authority**

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority engages in a wide range of efforts to help its City meet the growing need for affordable housing. THA develops and manages real estate. It provides rental housing. In partnership with thousands of private landlords, it helps families pay the rent in the private rental market. It delivers supportive services to help families succeed as tenants, parents, students and wage earners who can live without assistance. It helps them purchase their first home. THA seeks to do its work in ways that help neighborhoods be attractive places to live, work, attend school, shop and play, and that help its City be prosperous, healthy and just. For more information about THA, go to [www.tacomahousing.org](http://www.tacomahousing.org).