



For Immediate Release

Kirkwood Foundation Scholarship Program Recognized as Second in Nation

Nearly 80 percent of money raised was used for financial aid in fiscal year 2016

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (February 9, 2017)-Kirkwood Community College is the number two college in the nation when it comes to percentage of charitable contributions spent on financial aid according to data released this week by the Council for Aid to Education (CAE), a group that gathers data on college donations and financial aid.

According to the data, which was taken from the annual CAE Voluntary Support of Education Survey, Kirkwood used 79.7 percent of all donations to the college in fiscal year 2016 on financial aid for students. The college uses the remaining 20.3 percent of donations for other purposes such as supporting academic programs, faculty development and other areas of the college as directed by donors. Kirkwood trails only Broome Community College (N.Y.), which used 86.1 percent of charitable contributions raised for financial aid during that same time frame. According to the CAE, the national average percentage of donations used for financial aid by colleges in FY16 was 16 percent.

Kirkwood President Mick Starcevich sees the ranking as a validation of the college's constant efforts to make college as affordable as possible under his leadership.

"Making a Kirkwood education affordable for everyone has been one of my points of emphasis since I became president of the college in 2005," said Starcevich. "When our donors give to the Kirkwood Foundation, they want to know that their dollars are making a difference. With almost 80 percent of that money going to financial aid for our students, I can guarantee it's having a substantial impact. When someone receives a Kirkwood scholarship, they are two and a half times more likely to graduate. That's making a huge difference."

During Starcevich's presidency, the total number of scholarship dollars available to students jumped from \$740,000 per year to more than \$3 million annually. Kirkwood gave nearly 1,500 separate awards to students over the 2015-2016 academic year.

"Our number one priority is students," said Starcevich. "It's our duty to do everything we can to eliminate barriers to getting an education. Scholarships help eliminate the financial ones, which are among the biggest barriers to an education that students face today. There's still work to be done, but I'm very proud of what we have accomplished so far."

With the most credit programs of any community college in Iowa, Kirkwood Community College boasts more than 22,000 annual college-credit students, while maintaining one of the lowest tuitions in the state. All students are eligible for federal

financial aid and the college offers more than \$3 million in scholarships each year to students from all walks of life. Kirkwood is a convenient, innovative and visionary educational leader that strives to remain affordable and accessible.



Photo caption: Mattie Jacobsen, who received one of nearly 1,500 scholarship awards from Kirkwood, speaks to fellow graduates at the 2016 Kirkwood Community College commencement ceremony.