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FOUR SPOKANE FALLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

The George Nethercutt Foundation has selected four Spokane Falls Community College students for its inaugural class of Nethercutt Fellows

Spokane, Wash. – Four students from Spokane Falls Community College have been selected for the inaugural 2008 Nethercutt Fellowship program. These future leaders will gain a greater understanding of the importance of civic education and involvement through a combination of academic learning and hands-on experience, including an all expense paid trip to Washington, DC.

The George Nethercutt Foundation Class of 2008 includes: Richard Cummins, Elizaveta Kovalenko, Scott Santos and Mark Sherwood.

These students, formally known as Nethercutt Fellows, are the first of many envisioned by former Congressman George Nethercutt.

“Our nation is great, and our government unique,” states Nethercutt who served ten years as Washington State’s 5th District Representative. “But most of the graduates coming out of colleges and universities around our country don’t understand how it works. If we are to have truly strong and committed future leaders, those leaders need to understand how the United States has developed, historically, economically and socially.”

Congressman Nethercutt is using The George Nethercutt Foundation to initiate a resurgence in civic understanding. The Foundation is a non-partisan, non-profit organization focused on providing an in-depth, hands-on approach to how our government evolved into what it is today.

Stressing the importance of the program, Nethercutt refers to recent studies by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's National Civics Literacy Board and the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

In 2005 and 2006, the National Civic Literacy Board tested over 14,000 college freshman and seniors at 50 U.S. colleges and universities on 60 multiple-choice civics questions (take the quiz at www.americancivilliteracy.org). The average 2005 score was 53.2 percent – a failing grade. In 2006, the college seniors again failed all civics subjects.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, an institution responsible for evaluating the condition of American education since 1969, released its latest "Nation's Report Card" last year.

"The report showed that at America's K-12 schools, students are failing in the area of civics education," said Nethercutt. "I find the results of both of these studies disturbing. Students who learn about the founding of America, the economic system governing and sustaining us, and the institutions that drive public policy are more likely to vote and engage in civic dialogue than those who don't."

The education provided by the Nethercutt Fellowship program includes lectures, selected readings, and discussions. Topics will include the fundamental principles of the American economic system; the basics of political theory and current political developments; and constitutional law and principals.

One of the highlights of the program will be an all-expense paid trip to Washington, DC. On this trip, students will visit the White House, tour the Senate and House of Representatives, meet with Members of Congress, tour selected federal agencies, and meet with ranking government officials. Fellows will also have the opportunity to visit the institutions and monuments which reflect the sacrifice and leadership that have made our country great, including: the Supreme Court, the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Washington Monument, the Holocaust Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, the Pentagon and many other historic sights.

As the final component of the Nethercutt Fellowship, each student will spend time as an intern with a business or nonprofit organization in the community. Nethercutt Fellows will gain career experience in their individual areas of interest, while serving as an asset to local business and nonprofit entities by contributing their skills and energy to their internship experience.

The Foundation will be expanding the Nethercutt Fellowship program to all Eastern Washington colleges and universities in the fall of this year. The application will be available on the Foundation website, www.nethercuttfoundation.org, in September.

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If you would like more information about The George Nethercutt Foundation, or to schedule an interview with George Nethercutt, Jr. or a Nethercutt Fellow, please contact Shelly O'Quinn at 509-742-9362 or e-mail Shelly at soquinn@nethercuttfoundation.org.

About The George Nethercutt Foundation

Mission

It is the purpose of The George Nethercutt Foundation to develop in young adults an understanding of government, business, public policy issues and civics, and to foster leadership qualities that will add value to their communities and create a new generation of principled leadership across America.

Program Overview

Each year, the Foundation identifies promising students in America to become Nethercutt Fellows. The program combines academic work in their college or university community; targeted on-site exposure to government, business and leadership in Washington, DC; and the opportunity to partner and intern with participating companies to provide substantive assistance and career preparation activities.

This unique opportunity offers Nethercutt Fellows national exposure, leadership training, high level mentoring and professional development not otherwise available to college students. All experiences from the program are designed to foster in young people an appreciation for the American system of government, the importance of a free society, and the obligations expected of citizens to perpetuate American ideals and principles of liberty.

Academics

The academic program involves lectures from outstanding professors who are experts in the fields of economics, political science, Constitutional history and leadership development. Courses will also be a forum for students to meet and interact with leaders in business, foreign affairs, government and politics in order to appreciate the benefits of living in a free country.

Course subjects will include:

- The fundamental principles of the American economic system
- The basics of political theory, political history and current political developments
- Constitutional law and principles

Forums

At least once per year, the Foundation, with the help and input from students, will sponsor a forum featuring leaders of national prominence covering a topic of national concern or interest. The forums will address the topic in-depth and with a variety of expert views and opinions, and will be designed to educate the audience, provide an opportunity for students to engage their organizational and intellectual skills, and offer a platform for workable ideas and solutions for submission to policy makers.

Fellowship

One of the highlights for the Foundation students will be an all-expense paid trip to Washington, DC. On this trip, students will visit the White House, the United States Capitol and tour the US Senate and US House of Representatives, meet with Members of Congress, tour selected federal agencies and meet with ranking government officials.

Fellows will also meet with major corporate leaders, trade association personnel and business representatives to get an inside look and receive information about the operations of the private sector's interaction with government. Those Fellows focused on foreign and international affairs will be given the opportunity to meet with representatives of foreign governments and embassy personnel, including international institutional representatives like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Through this exposure, Fellows will be able to return home to their communities armed with knowledge of the mechanics of an agency, an institution, or a business and valuable insight on the workings of government, thereby serving as an asset to business and educational interests in the Fellow's community.

In addition, time will be set aside during the visit to see the institutions and monuments which reflect the sacrifice and leadership that have made our country great since its founding; the US Supreme Court, the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Washington Monument, the Holocaust Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, the Pentagon and many other historic sights.

Internship

As the final component of the Nethercutt Fellowship, each student will spend time as an intern with a business or nonprofit organization in their community. Nethercutt Fellows will gain career experience in their individual areas of interest, while serving as an asset to local business and nonprofit entities by contributing their skills and energy to their internship experience.

About Congressman Nethercutt

George Nethercutt represented Washington's 5th Congressional District in the United States House of Representatives from 1995 to 2005, serving on the House Appropriations Committee and the House Science Committee. He is an attorney with Paine Hamblen LLP and heads a federal consulting firm in Washington, DC. Prior to his service in Congress, he practiced law for 18 years in the areas of Adoption, Estate Planning and Tax.

Nethercutt is active in a number of community service organizations, serving on the board of directors for Hecla Mining Company, ARCADIS NV, a Dutch multinational corporation, the Washington Policy Center and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International. He also co-founded the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery in Spokane, WA, a private, not-for-profit institution that helps prevent child abuse.

Born in Spokane, Washington, and a graduate of North Central High School, Nethercutt earned a B.A. in English from Washington State University and a law degree from Gonzaga University.