

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19, 2017



CONTACT

Sherry Lotze
Vice President of Marketing
(206) 628-5872

Sherry@inspirusCU.org

5200 Southcenter Blvd. • Seattle, WA 98188

**Discover marine-research ORCA program for
local high school students at showcase in Lynnwood**

Everett Community College students make a big splash in marine science ORCA Program.

LYNNWOOD, WASH. – Students at Everett Community College are getting a one-of-a-kind experience in STEM education through the college’s ORCA Program (Ocean Research College Academy).

This tuition-free early college academy takes the concept of Running Start for high school juniors and seniors and pairs it with an immersive program in which all core subjects – from English to math to humanities – are taught in a small learning community centered on marine research in the Puget Sound. On completion of the program, students not only graduate from high school but earn an Associate of Arts and Sciences degree from Everett Community College.

Inspirus Credit Union donated \$2,345 to support materials and supplies the ORCA program uses each year. “It’s our mission to give back to education, and ORCA exemplifies the kind of innovation that truly inspires the scientists, educators, and problem-solvers of tomorrow,” said Inspirus Vice President of Marketing Sherry Lotze. “We honored to shine a spotlight on this one-of-a-kind program that’s a model for the nation.”

Since its first graduating class in 2006, ORCA has been the springboard for students who’ve achieved international success in science careers, including 2009 graduate Tajanna Stinn, who recently earned a Master of Science in Immunology from King’s College London. Stinn praised ORCA saying, “I not only gained experience in science and writing to prepare me for medical school, but I also learned to appreciate the humanities, which helped me grow as a conceptual thinker and person.”

The ORCA Program is on display at Inspirus Credit Union in Lynnwood and welcomes visitors who are interested in learning more.

Inspirus Credit Union – 3405 188th ST. SW, #201, Lynnwood

About Inspirus Credit Union

Founded in 1936 by a Seattle math and journalism teacher, Inspirus serves 80,000 members across Washington who share a passion for education. With \$1.1 billion in assets, Inspirus operates branches in Seattle, Spokane, and Lynnwood. Its philanthropy model includes education-giveback programs that allow members to direct charitable contributions to schools in their communities. Inspirus team members donate upwards of 1,000 volunteer hours each year in support of education. Inspirus Credit Union is a 2017 winner of Puget Sound Business Journal's Corporate Champion Awards, honoring their contributions to education. For more information, visit inspirusCU.org.

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