



“Like every parent, I want my son to be excited about learning and challenged to do his best.”

—Sayuri Wijaya, Microsoft Program Manager

The Future Is in All of Our Hands

Washington has an opportunity to strengthen high-school graduation requirements—and help students along their unique pathways in life.

Sayuri Wijaya is a Microsoft program manager and mom whose son, David, is a first-grader in a Seattle public school. David wants to be a subway driver when he grows up. Mom thinks his aspirations may evolve.

Either way, Washington's future depends on having schools that will challenge students like David—and by challenging them, help them fulfill their dreams.

Educators, policymakers and business leaders are working together to ensure that Washington students gain the math, science and other skills needed for success in the global economy. They've developed a plan to strengthen and update the state's requirements for high-school graduation, while giving students the flexibility to align their coursework with their post-graduation plans—whether that's employment, an apprenticeship or college.

Math and science skills are critical to the future of our kids and our state's economy. We at Microsoft urge state lawmakers to support these and other changes to improve our schools.

We're committed to doing our part. Through programs like the Microsoft Math Partnership, we've provided \$8 million to improve K-12 math and science education in Washington.

We care about education in this state because this is our home. Because we want to hire even more qualified graduates of Washington schools. And because our 40,000 employees here include many parents like Sayuri who want the best for promising students like David.

A series of messages on matters of importance to our region. Learn more at microsoft.com/washingtonstate.

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“Seattle Jobs Initiative and the Microsoft Initiative are amazing. They're helping me learn the skills I need to start a new career.”
—Bria Rivers

Elevating America's Workforce

In Washington and the nation, economic renewal depends on strengthening workforce skills.

Seattle Jobs Initiative provides training to help adults qualify for long-range jobs that will support them and their families. Learning through hands-on training gives early and at-risk adults all day. Then on Saturdays, many return for technical training from software developers who helped create the technology that students are learning to use.

For years, Microsoft and its employee volunteers have been working with other business and community-based partners to expand job opportunities through information technology education and training.

Now, with joblessness on the rise, we're escalating our efforts. Microsoft's training with Gov. Chris Gregoire and with other state and local governments to launch Microsoft Create America, a new offering of free credit and low-cost resources designed to help 2 million people acquire the technology skills and qualifications needed in today's changing economy. We believe that Washington and the nation can and will return to prosperity and sustained global competitiveness—if we all work together.

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Microsoft volunteers: Pascual Fuentes (left) and Jack Pollock with Bria Rivers, Seattle Jobs Initiative student.

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“I asked the people in charge, and they were very responsive. Citizens can make a difference.”
—John Cohen, Microsoft Senior Technology Consulting Strategist

Moving Forward Together

Washington's economy has an urgent need for decisive action on transportation improvements.

When John Cohen suggested an idea for solving congestion on SR 520, he was looking for a like-minded state transportation official. But soon he found himself leading the highway, copying out potential HOV law improvements to Rep. Judy Callahan, chair of the House Transportation Committee, and bus managers from the state Department of Transportation.

John's involvement illustrates that everyone can help meet Washington's transportation challenges, which are critical to the health of our state economy.

At Microsoft, we're working hard to do our part. The company's car-pooling system, which serves more than 3,000 miles each day (including Lake), thousands from the Metro and Sound Transit using the Pass paid for by Microsoft. Other employees carpool, bicycle and walk to work.

To protect public safety as well as the state economy, to visit that the Washington Legislature has enacted and approved transportation projects, including replacement of the SR 520 Bridge and improvements to the SR corridor. Starting work on these projects, should be a top priority when lawmakers decide how to use any federal stimulus funds.

By continuing ideas, doing our part and working together, we all can keep Washington moving.

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“It's great working for a company that encourages and supports my volunteer work in the community.”
—Bria Rivers (left), Microsoft Systems Engineer

Working Together, Making a Difference

By volunteering and giving back to their community, Microsoft employees enhance Washington's quality of life.

The terrible news came to Bria Rivers a year ago: Her close friend was about a small plane that had disappeared near Mount Rainier. News washed, emotionally. When her work hours were finished, she knew what she had to do.

She went to the Blue Star Mountain King County Search and Rescue volunteers, and they have since donated hundreds of hours to helping people in danger.

Nate and Brian are just two of the thousands of Microsoft employees who volunteer in and contribute to their communities in Washington. Last year, employees volunteered 282,000 hours of service and donated \$2.1 million in cash and software to support nonprofit organizations in education, human services, the arts and the environment. Employees volunteer hours, as well as donations, are tracked by Microsoft, and its \$22,000 per year per employee.

At Microsoft, we're extremely proud of Bria, Brian and all of our people—40,000 strong here in Washington—who are making a difference in this place we all call home.

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