



## *News Release*

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Nick Lemmer

651-450-3546

[nlemmer@inverhills.edu](mailto:nlemmer@inverhills.edu)

## **Inver Hills Community College and Century College Receive \$100,000 Travelers Foundation grant**

The Travelers Foundation, funded by Travelers, recently awarded a grant of \$100,000 to Inver Hills Community College and Century College for a joint program focused on improving educational outcomes for St. Paul students. The grant will fund two summer enrichment programs and a fall semester program for students from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to those who have recently graduated.

A summer enrichment program for 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in St. Paul's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program will offer high school courses at Inver Hills, and focus on the importance of a college degree, college admissions requirements and academic expectations for college-bound students. A summer bridge program for recently graduated high school students will help them transition to college and prepare them for success in a first-year college learning community at either Century or Inver Hills. The summer bridge program involves taking a college course at no cost, and also learning about campus resources, financial literacy and college success strategies.

The funding will allow Inver Hills and Century to offer these proven college success programs to eighty students in year one. By year 4, the colleges will serve 160 students in the summer enrichment and bridge program and the first-year college learning community.

The Inver Hill/Century College initiative is part of Travelers multi-year effort to increase student academic performance, prepare students for the future workforce and improve college access and success. The colleges are also co-locations for the Access and Opportunity Center of Excellence, an initiative funded by the [Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system](#), to increase the number of underrepresented students attending college and persisting through to graduation.

Tadael Emiru is the director of the Access and Opportunity center on the Inver Hills campus. To him, this grant represents an enormous opportunity. “This generous funding will allow us to make a significant impact in altering students’ perception of higher education from unattainable dream to reality that’s within reach. It will make a positive impact in breaking down barriers and closing the achievement gap by not only expanding access to higher education but also by allowing us to focus on the success of those students who will be enrolled as first generation college students.”

Jason Cardinal, director the Access and Opportunity center at Century College, adds; “It is incumbent upon postsecondary institutions to reach out and build real opportunities with our K-12 partners. We are losing too many students, and we have a role to play. Our message to these students is that we need them, their community needs them, to strive and think big. This partnership and these opportunities are how we deliver on that message.”