

News: October 21, 2016–for Immediate Release
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Pictured: NIU President Dr. Doug Baker (left), NIU Trustee Robert Marshall (middle) and SSC President Don Manning (right)

NIU AND SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE CREATE NEW PATHWAY TO DEGREE

SOUTH HOLLAND, IL - A new agreement between South Suburban College (SSC) and Northern Illinois University (NIU) will make it easier for SSC students to earn college degrees that will set them on the path to career success.

In a ceremony today, the two institutions signed a new reverse transfer agreement that will allow NIU students who previously attended SSC to apply credits from the university toward the completion of their associate degree at the college.

“Students want a hassle-free transfer process and to receive credit for the work they do,” said NIU President Doug Baker. “This reverse transfer agreement does just that. It is a wonderful tool that allows students to demonstrate to future employers and graduate institutions their determination to excel, and it’s another example of how institutions of public higher education in Illinois can collaborate to deliver high-quality, affordable education.”

South Suburban College President Don Manning said that the agreement will have significant benefits for South Suburban College students that take advantage of it. “Every college credit counts,” Manning said. “This partnership gives students the

ability to easily transfer credits back to South Suburban to earn a terminal degree – in this case, an associate’s degree – and enhances their opportunity for career success.”

A 2014 NIU Center for Governmental Studies report to the Illinois Community College Board found that an Illinois community college education increases earnings for workers, adds skills to the state’s workforce and boosts the state’s competitiveness. An Illinois community college graduate can expect a total lifetime earnings gain of over \$570,000 – a 44 percent increase over the average total lifetime earnings of those not completing a community college program.

“Postsecondary education is a powerful force for career advancement, and a skilled workforce helps the region maintain its competitive advantage,” said NIU President Doug Baker. “Both NIU and South Suburban are committed to providing affordable access to high-quality educational opportunities, and we are delighted to partner with them on this initiative, which eliminates barriers and fosters innovative educational pathways between levels of higher education.”