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**1,000 Lives Changed, Now and Forever**

*NEWESD 101's Open Doors Program Celebrates its 1,000th student receiving their GED*

SPOKANE, WA – Since 2014, the Open Doors Program has provided Spokane County youth with opportunities to better their lives. Last month, the program celebrated its 1,000<sup>th</sup> student receiving their High School Equivalence (GED).

“At Open Doors, our mission has always been to partner with young adults as they find their path,” said Terrance Nixon, Program Director. “To see our 1,000<sup>th</sup> student receive their GED is a milestone that we always hoped would be possible. Through their dedication and commitment, as well as our community’s support, this dream has come true.”

The Open Doors program at the Next Generation Zone is a place that fosters hope for all young adults, and specifically Opportunity Youth. Since its inception in 2014, Open Doors has served the disconnected youth of Spokane County and the surrounding areas with the mission of “partnering with young adults on their pathway to a better tomorrow.”

Open Doors is a consortium of school districts (Central Valley, Cheney, Colville, Deer Park, East Valley, Freeman, Lumen, Mead, Medical Lake, Nine Mile Falls, Pullman, Riverside, Spokane, and West Valley), Spokane Falls Community College (Gateway to College), Spokane Community College (instruction), and Northeast Washington Educational Service District 101 (instruction and case management). The program has two pathways: (1) the high school diploma pathway where students simultaneously work on their diploma and take college classes to learn how to be college students, and (2) the HSE pathway where programs center on building college and work readiness skills as well as vocational exploration.

For eight years, faculty and staff within the Open Doors Program have focused on putting youth success first to build relationships founded in trust and continuous support.

Said Nixon, “Many students come to us having experienced significant challenges and barriers with little support to further their education. In many cases, without a GED students can’t attend college, join the military, or get hired or advance in their careers. Now, more than 1,000 students have realized their dream of receiving their GED, knowing they have a full team cheering them on.”

To learn more about Next Generation Zone and the NEWESD 101 Open Door Program visit <https://nextgenzone.org>.

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**About NorthEast Washington Educational Service District (NEWESD) 101**

NEWESD 101 promotes educational excellence by delivering essential, cooperative services to 59 public school

districts, 45 state-approved private schools and four charter schools across northeast Washington in Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens and Whitman counties.

To learn more, visit [www.esd101.net](http://www.esd101.net).

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