

Sharing knowledge, experiences, resources

TEACHERS OF COLOR PROJECT EARNS BANK SUPPORT

St. Cloud Wells Fargo President Mark Seehusen knows he's in business to make money, but he also believes strongly in the business of community building. One way to do that is to enhance the university's ability to graduate people of color who'll stay in the region, he said in announcing a \$30,000 gift from Wells Fargo for administrative support for the SCSU College of Education Office of Cultural Diversity.



"I don't think there's a more important thing a bank can do than to invest in its community," Seehusen said. In the past, the local Wells Fargo bank has supported a variety of projects that offer opportunity to SCSU students of color and efforts to make St. Cloud a more welcoming community. They include funding for books in Hmong, Cambodian and Laotian languages about local school district policies, and support for internships for SCSU students of color. Such internships fit into the bank's objective to build a more successfully diverse pool of employees.

"Mark is continuing the bank's support for diversity programs at SCSU that former President Dale Monson began a decade ago," said Les Green, director of the COE Office of Diversity. "Wells Fargo has been a strong advocate for the work we do in the College of Education. This is a business that truly makes a difference for our staff, students and faculty," said College of Education Dean Joane W. McKay.

"We do as many things for the community as we can," Seehusen said. "We do it not only with dollars but with our people's time. Our employees have over 4,000 hours of volunteer involvement in the community annually."

One of the bank-supported projects Seehusen is most proud of is scholarships for high school seniors who have "beaten the odds." They're all students who have overcome some adversity in their lives. "It's about creating opportunity," the bank president said.

Said Green: "This kind of support from the business community is vital to keeping our programs going and to continue creating opportunity for students of color who want to be teachers and role models for future generations." Other businesses and individuals have provided scholarship support for the program's students.