

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEGREES OF CHANGE NAMES NEW READY TO RISE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Tacoma, Wash. – July 11, 2019 –Degrees of Change announced Dominic Jay ‘DJ’ Leon Guerrero Crisostomo has been named as the new National Director of Ready to Rise, a cohort-based leadership development and college support program for underrepresented students attending 2- and 4- year public colleges.

Crisostomo brings experience in higher ed and college readiness as well as a passion for mentoring and supporting minoritized youth. In his previous role at University of Washington Tacoma he coordinated pre-college programming, providing leadership and administrative support as well as program and curriculum development with community partners. Cristostomo has received multiple awards and recognition in his career thus far, including the 2019 Student’s Choice Outstanding Staff Award at UWT and the TRIO Emerging Leader Award while working at Metropolitan Development Council. Cristostomo has worked in the high school-to-college field for over 20 years and was a co-founder of Tacoma’s cutting-edge nonprofit urban arts organization, Fab-5.

“Degrees of Change is thrilled to welcome DJ into this important leadership position. His years of front-line experience preparing students for college success, deeply rooted community perspective, and robust understanding of public higher education uniquely positions him to lead Ready to Rise forward as we continue to refine the model and build a sustainable program that will serve hundreds of students into the future,” said Tim Herron, CEO at Degrees of Change.

Cristotomo’s hiring comes as Ready to Rise begins its third year of the five-year grant program funded by College Spark Washington. With a goal of serving 1,000 students over five years, Ready to Rise was developed to provide a scalable model of cohort-based leadership development and college support, drawing on the successful Act Six model—a scholarship program serving underrepresented leaders attending private liberal arts colleges that has demonstrated exceptional graduation rates and leadership outcomes for participants.

“To the colleagues I will listen to and learn from, partners I plan to collaborate with, and students I will diligently serve, I thank you in advance. Simply put, I am honored and eager to get to work with Degrees of Change. The communities I come from and the family I proudly represent equally share my excitement with what is to come,” said Cristostomo.

About Ready to Rise

Ready to Rise works with students from three communities across Washington state (Clark County, Tacoma, and Yakima Valley) and with seven public sector partner colleges. Through pre-college training, on-campus workshops, near-peer coaching and career pathway guidance, Ready to Rise provides the community, resources and connections that help first-generation college students navigate challenges of college life so they can persist to attain their college degree or certificate.

About Degrees of Change

Degrees of Change (DoC) partners with community organizations, high schools, colleges and employers to provide cohort-based leadership training, college success support, career development and alumni programming to underrepresented students who desire to lead and serve their home communities. As both a national backbone organization and local, direct service provider in Tacoma-Seattle, DoC provides and utilizes research-based programming, cutting-edge evaluation and data tools, and innovative operational systems and technical assistance to support all aspects of our integrated programs.

Learn more about Ready to Rise online at www.readytorise.org.

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Contacts:

Tim Herron, CEO, Degrees of Change
(253) 444-0011 or tim.herron@degreesofchange.org