

Centralia College Interim President Inducted into NWAC Hall of Fame

By The Chronicle | Posted: Friday, June 3, 2016 3:30 pm

Centralia College interim president Jim Walton was inducted in the Northwest Athletic Conference Hall of Fame on Thursday in Bellevue.

Walton, the college's president for 12 years before retiring in 2014 and coming out of retirement for an interim role earlier this year, served as the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges president's liaison to the NWAC for three years, stated a press release.

He is being recognized for leading an effort to change the athletic scholarship and tuition waiver process in 2005-06, which allowed student athletes to earn up to 65 percent of their tuition from combined scholarships and tuition waivers. Prior to that, students could earn only \$200 per quarter for tuition.

"Over time, tuition had gone up and \$200 didn't pay for one book, let alone cover any of an athlete's tuition or living expenses," Walton said in the release. "I wanted to tie tuition waivers and scholarships to a percentage of full tuition so students could earn more as costs increased, and it was more equitable."

When Walton first pitched the idea, there wasn't much support from other college presidents. He said only six colleges supported the changes in athletic scholarships and waivers in the beginning, and added, "It took significant lobbying, compromise and arm-twisting to turn opinions around, but when you know you're doing the right thing, it makes a difference. I knew this change had to happen for our athletes."

In March 2006, the NWAC presidents recommended the maximum scholarship amount to be set at 40 percent of the official 15-credit tuition rate. They requested the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to give the authority to allow a 25 percent tuition waiver. The state board passed the resolution in June 2006.

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held at the Red Lion Hotel in Bellevue. Five individuals and two teams were honored.