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## Bob Craves, who helped thousands go to college, dies

Posted by [Claudia Rowe](#)

More than 3,800 people hold college degrees today, in part because Robert Craves decided to address the prohibitive costs of higher education.

Craves, a corporate leader who co-founded Costco and then the [College Success Foundation](#), died Wednesday at age 72.

In 2000, stunned that thousands of students never consider higher education because of its price tag, he helped start the then-small nonprofit in Issaquah, providing scholarships and mentoring to low-income and first-generation Washington students. That work soon spread across the country to the nation's capital. The foundation now estimates that 5,000 young people are currently enrolled in college with financial help from Craves' group.

He counted politicians and billionaires among acquaintances – former Washington Governor Gary Locke credits Craves with uplifting a generation – yet inspired equally powerful devotion from students whose names don't appear in boldface.

"There are a lot of forgotten Ward 7 and 8 kids in college because of Bob Craves," said Zuogwi Reeves, 23, referring to the foundation's work in some of the poorer precincts of Washington, D.C.

Reeves himself attended Winston-Salem State University in North Carolina with a scholarship from the foundation.

"People won't know the impact Craves had until 20 years from now, when this community is rebuilt by those students who graduated college because they received scholarships through him," Reeves said.

Craves retired as CEO of the foundation in September 2013 and remained a member of its Board of Directors.

"I remember shaking his hand in the DC office once," Reeves said. "He seemed like someone who was passionate about the future."

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Bob Craves

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