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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## BMCC celebrates Open Education Week with \$225,000 in student savings

PENDLETON, Ore. – Blue Mountain Community College, through the ongoing work of faculty and staff, has remained a leader in Open Education efforts in Oregon. March 7-11 is National Open Education Week, and BMCC is proud to celebrate with the announcement that the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) at the College has saved students nearly \$225,000 between spring 2015 and winter 2016. Nearly \$40,000 of that comes from tuition savings for students taking BMCC courses as dual credit while in high school.

Open Education is based on the idea that people want to learn, and access to education is a global need. Hundreds of institutions from around the globe, including BMCC, are involved in the Open Education Consortium and are committed to providing free and open resources that encourage a curious, thinking and learning society through the use of a vast pool of openly shared educational resources. OERs are, at their core, about utilizing learning materials and other resources that are freely available, either through educational networks, open textbooks, open web resources or leveraging resources that are available in a library's resource collection. It is an innovative model of sharing and creating resources and teaching materials among educators who share the common goal of providing student with a quality education at a lower cost and reinvigorating pedagogy.

BMCC is considered a leader in Oregon on the use of OERs, and last spring hosted an OER conference to teach others from institutions around the state how OERs can benefit students.

Much of the student savings from the use of OERs comes from textbooks. When faculty utilize openly shared resources through the Open Education Consortium, students don't have to purchase a full textbook, many of which can cost upwards of \$200 each. Classes at BMCC that utilize OERs range from anthropology, sciences and math to business and music.

Six BMCC faculty members – Stan Beach (math/computer science), Sascha McKeon (sciences), Michelle Miller (sciences), Kristen Oja (sciences), Gary Parker (math/computer science), and Greg Schulberg (math/computer science) – recently received grants from OpenOregon to support their ongoing work with OERs.

To learn more about OERs at BMCC, please visit <http://libguides.bluecc.edu/OER>.

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