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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BMCC receives grants to serve under-served, low income, first generation students

PENDLETON, Ore. – Blue Mountain Community College was recently awarded two major grants that will help the College better serve under-represented, low income and first generation students. BMCC received the Community College Student Success grant in the amount of \$98,889 and a grant from Oregon Campus Compact to fund an AmeriCorp Vista member at the College.

The Community College Student Success grant is funded through the Support for Oregon’s Community Colleges and Community College Foundation, and BMCC was selected as one of just nine community colleges for the competitive grant. BMCC’s project, “Enter Early to Learn, Earn, Succeed and Serve”, aims to support historically under-served, low-income, and first-generation students still in high school who are enrolled in early college credit through to college matriculation and first-year-experience programming.

The project’s goals include:

- Increasing the percentage of students completing 12 BMCC college credits through accelerated learning upon graduating from high school;
- Increasing the percentage of graduating high school seniors who matriculate to BMCC with earned accelerated learning credit;
- Accelerated learning matriculated students coming to BMCC having college credits that apply directly to their chosen certificate or degree pathway;
- Increasing the percentage of earned certificate and/or degrees awarded to matriculating accelerated learning high school students; and
- Successful completion of a cohort-based BMCC First Year Experience course sequence with service learning curriculum embedded.

BMCC plans to provide a support team for outreach to these students, assistance with course selection towards a certificate and/or degree, assistance with college funding options, assistance with matriculation to BMCC after graduating from high school, and ongoing support once fully matriculated. As part of this grant, the BMCC Foundation has generously contributed need-based scholarship funds to assist students with the cost of tuition, books, fees, and other educationally-related expenses. More information will be shared with BMCC’s K-12 partners in the coming weeks regarding some of the details of this support team and financial resources.

(more)

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The second grant from Oregon Campus Compact will fund a full-time AmeriCorps Vista member who will work on our site for 40hrs a week from Aug. 29, 2016 through Aug. 26, 2017. BMCC won't receive funds directly from Campus Compact; rather, Campus Compact provides \$11,676 directly to the AmeriCorp Vista member as a stipend for the project. Vista members receive training, support, and mentoring from Campus Compact. BMCC will provide the project, guidance and a site supervisor for the VISTA member. BMCC's goal is to recruit a Vista member from the local region.

The project is to create a service learning program for students, with the overall goal being to promote a campus culture of community engagement that encourages students from underserved, minority, and lower socioeconomic communities, to access opportunities for early field experiences through community partners in BMCC's six-county region in Northeast Oregon. These experiences will increase students' capital in the labor market to be successful throughout their lifetime. As a result of project activities, BMCC will have greater capacity to increase engagement for low-income students, support community partners, improve retention and degree completion, and develop skills to utilize post-graduation.

Applications to become the Vista member at BMCC are open now: <http://www.oregoncampuscompact.org/how-to-apply-to-vista.html>.

BMCC Vice President of Student Affairs Diane Drebin said the College is excited about the opportunities these two grants and associated projects will bring to BMCC and students.

"BMCC works hard to put students first, and these grant funds will allow us to better support traditionally underserved students and give them the resources they need to be successful," Drebin said.

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