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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BMCC receives \$50,000 in grants for college readiness programs

PENDLETON, Ore. – The Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) Outreach Office was recently awarded two GEAR UP grants totaling \$50,000 to support college readiness programs for potential new students. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs – is supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education that works with middle and high school students to create a college-going culture. This is the second consecutive year BMCC has been awarded GEAR UP grants to facilitate academic enrichment programs for local students.

BMCC's Outreach Office will facilitate two summer academic enrichment programs thanks to the two \$25,000 grants. The first, GEAR UP Academic Enrichment Program, will take place June 26-30 at BMCC's Hermiston center and intends to introduce 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders to college, leadership and community. The program, which is free and includes transportation for participants, consists of educational classroom experiences, fun activities and community experiences in both Pendleton and Hermiston. BMCC hosted the first GEAR UP program in June 2016 with 15 students in a three-day program, and will open the program up to 30 students for 2017 in a five-day program.

The second summer program is BMCC's first-ever GEAR UP Summer Bridge Program, which will take place July 10-Aug. 4, aims to increase college readiness, persistence, retention, and graduation rates of first-time, full-time, first generation students. The program gives 12<sup>th</sup> grade students a jump start to college and provides them with academic and motivational support during the first year of college. The program also enables students to earn college credit. Summer Bridge introduces scholars to the structure and rigor of college while providing them with opportunities to foster meaningful academic and social connections.

While more information regarding the Summer Bridge program at BMCC is coming soon, qualified 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders can register now for the June Academic Enrichment Program by visiting [www.bluecc.edu/enrollment-services/gear-up](http://www.bluecc.edu/enrollment-services/gear-up).

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