

News from Lane Community College
December 3, 2008

LCC RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

EUGENE, OR-- Pay attention, class. The governor's proposed budget for Oregon does not hold all of education harmless as indicated in Monday's speech.

In fact, the proposal includes a \$15 million reduction to the Community College Support Fund for Oregon's 17 two-year colleges, to \$485 million from the 2007 legislatively approved allocation of \$500 million, which in itself was insufficient to meet demand at the time and does not address recent enrollment increases.

The proposal creates a deficit of about \$2 million for Lane Community College to maintain its base budget without increasing services, increasing tuition, filling vacancies, or providing cost of living increases. The deficit could grow depending on how staff, the budget committee and the board address those issues.

The college anticipated a tough proposal from the governor's office due to the recession but did not anticipate the disparity in the education sector with the reduction to community colleges but increases to K-12 and universities.

"We expected fair and equitable treatment," said Mary Spilde, president of Lane Community College. "Reducing community college funding is inexplicable at a time when workers and students need job training and affordable access to college more than ever. The proposed budget does nothing to get people back to work or to help our economy recover, nor does it address our enrollment increase."

Full-time equivalent enrollment at Lane shot up 13.4 percent this quarter as hundreds of local workers lost their jobs and looked to Lane for job and career training, and students applied for the Oregon Opportunity Grant and other financial aid available at Lane.

Community college enrollments increased statewide this fall, far surpassing enrollment increases at universities or K-12, both of which receive funding increases under the governor's budget.

The governor's budget also recommends nearly \$1 billion for capital construction at the state's universities and colleges, but only a morsel of this - \$31.8 million - goes to projects at community colleges that would directly increase job training capacity. Just three community college projects are supported, not including Lane's Downtown Center renovation. "This makes no sense," said Spilde. "Lane already has the required match thanks to voter support of our bond measure last month. This project could really contribute to the revitalization of Eugene's downtown, create jobs and spur local economic recovery."

(more)

Lane is beginning to develop its own budget for 2009/10 and will base projections on the governor's budget. "The governor's budget is only a starting place and it is clear that we have a lot of work ahead of us in the legislative session," said Spilde.

Lane offers a variety of short-term training and one-year and two-year career programs in growth occupations. These include health careers such as nursing, emergency medical technician training, respiratory care, physical therapy assisting, and dental hygiene. Other growth industry training available at Lane includes energy management, renewable energy technology, water conservation technology, and manufacturing technology. For more information see the college catalog online at www.lanecc.edu/collegecatalog.

Lane is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

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