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Rogue Community College Establishes Itself As One Of The Top Colleges In Oregon

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EDUCATION



Rogue community college downtown Medford | Credit: David Cosand

MEDFORD, Ore — Rogue Community College (RCC) has become one of the top community colleges in Oregon after gaining a 19% increase in enrollment of full-time equivalent (FTE) students.

RCC is significantly ahead of the 5.7 percent – the state’s average enrollment increase – for the 2023-24 academic year.

RCC Increases Enrollment Figures by 914 Students

Thanks to efforts focused on recruitment, the RCC student population increased to 9,280 from 8,366 the previous academic year. College President Dr. Randy Weber said the recruitment effort was a partnership with the community and a commitment to a high level of education.

Weber said the new record student recruitment figures highlighted the importance of a collective effort – the community’s ‘unwavering support’ and the dedication of the faculty, the Board of Education, and college staff.

On-campus enrollment has surged by 50 percent in the past two years, with most of the growth focused on on-campus courses. The increased trend from remote to on-site learning indicates changing preferences among students.

Significantly, the choice of workforce programs offered by the RCC aligns with local labor market trends. Popular topics include Allied Health, Automotive Technology, Science, and Welding. Weber says the increased enrollment in workforce-based programs illustrates that students want a career offering a direct path to employment.

Students Numbers at RCC are Creeping Closer to Pre-Pandemic Levels

Weber says the trend is a post-pandemic comeback, with current enrollment figures creeping closer to pre-pandemic levels.

The RCC has forged a further bond between career-ready preparedness and secondary education with its commitment to high school students. The RCC offered the students 16 cohort-based training programs in the 2023-24 academic year.

Furthermore, RCC is making a significant economic impact on the local labor market. The college has contributed \$306.5 million annually to the regional economy, according to a labor market analysis.

According to a labor market analysis, the contribution to the economy by the RCC was achieved via earnings generated by college graduates in the workforce and college expenditure on construction, operations, and student expenses.

In the future, the RCC plans to continue contributing to the regional economy with its student enrollment expansion program and strengthening its ties with partners like Southern Oregon University.

Weber says post-secondary education significantly contributes to lifetime income, while students attaining an associate degree can demand higher wages. Weber believes that the RCC's achievements illustrate the important role it plays as an economic and educational cornerstone in Josephine and Jackson counties.



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