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Rogue Community College sees surge in enrollment

By: Carlos Murrieta
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RCC is seeing a surge in enrollment for the upcoming fall semester; as partnerships are credited to the increase.

JACKSON & JOSEPHINE COUNTIES, Ore. -- Rogue Community College has announced an increase on enrollment for the upcoming school year. The boost in enrollment is also boosting the local economy.

The college is seeing an 18.9% increase from Fall of 2023 to Fall of 2024, with more than 900 students -- and a lot of that success is being credited to local and regional partnerships.

“You know, community is our middle name, Rogue Community College,” said Randy Weber, the president of Rogue Community College. “Our partners in the community are the only reason we’re able to do the work we do, whether it’s their needs or their supports with programming.”

Southern Oregon University is one of those community partners. NewsWatch 12 spoke with the university earlier this summer and have expressed how much the partnership between the institutions mean to them. SOU has also seen a rise in enrollment this year.

RCC is also a partner with local school districts; like the Phoenix-Talent School District. They would go to classes and engage with students to promote opportunities at RCC -- but RCC is targeting adults who haven't been to school in a while.

“We put a lot of work into what we call kind of adult reconnect,” Weber said. “Efforts where we've tried to get adults who have not been in school, maybe either some college, no degree, or haven't been to college, to come and take courses, and so we've developed programs and strategies to work around that.”

RCC is trying to find new ways to do workforce developments for high demand jobs in Southern Oregon. One way RCC is doing that is providing educational opportunities for students with jobs in high demand. They want their students to come out of college with a good living wage salary, and contribute to the local economy by affording housing and shopping locally.

Moving forward, those partnerships are valuable to the college, and the school will continue to use them to grow not for themselves, but for other industries.

“Based on our recent success, with a lot of industry partners that their peers and colleagues are telling them, 'Oh, if you want a solution to this workforce strategy you really need to go talk to RCC,’” Weber said. “They're really open minded and can help you kind of process some forward-thinking ideas.”

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