Rogue Community College

NEWS RELEASE

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Two will give RCC Commencement address

Rogue Community College students Dawn Neal and Rosalina Peterson share a commitment to educational access and service.

The two will deliver the 2005 student speeches June 11 at RCC’s 34th commencement. The ceremony begins at 6 p.m. in the Marjorie Holzgang Concert Bowl on the Redwood Campus, Grants Pass.

Neal and Peterson each returned to college after having children and working at relatively low-paying jobs. At Rogue each has thrived, compiling outstanding academic records and being involved in college activities.

They both volunteer in the community and at their children’s schools, and both received news recently they will receive Ford Family Foundation scholarships. The scholarships pay 90 percent of students’ college expenses not covered by other sources and potentially help advance students’ college careers through graduate school.

Neal came to RCC after working as a service manager in an automobile repair shop.

“I wanted more for my children and also to provide a good example,” she said. At RCC she earned a 4.0 grade point average. She is a volunteer reading tutor and chaperon at her children’s schools and coaches soccer. Her family cleans up roadside areas in their neighborhood, and she finds time to volunteer in the RCC Office of Diversity and for the RCC literary magazine.

“I’ve greatly enjoyed learning and having access to information,” Neal said. “It’s made me realize what I’d missed. At graduation I am going to speak about the responsibility that people with education have to perpetuate opportunities for others.” Neal will transfer in September to Southern Oregon University to study psychology. Her goal is to become a counselor and teach at the community college level.

Peterson volunteers at her children’s school as a reading tutor. She has served as president of Club Latino on the RCC Riverside Campus, where she was instrumental in

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founding El Mundo de Oportunidades, an educational conference that informs Hispanic high school students about college opportunities. Peterson also has been involved with the Hispanic Leadership Institute, mentoring area high school students.

Her aim is to become a physician’s assistant. She has compiled a 3.6 GPA and will transfer to Oregon Health and Sciences University at SOU.

“In my speech I will recognize the students and how we have been through a struggle, working really hard to finish well, along with taking care of families and jobs. We are awesome!” she said. “And I will thank the staff and faculty. I am in love with RCC. They do such a great job helping us to realize our dreams.

“And I will tell students to not forget, but to give back after they graduate and are working,” she added. “It’s all like a miracle, and I feel so grateful and like everything is possible.”

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