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New Table Rock Campus will be a state-of-the-art facility

When Table Rock Campus opens its doors Sept. 26, Rogue Community College will become Oregon’s only community college with a facility dedicated to providing technical and professional education.

“We have created a fantastic situation where we now have the opportunity to place emphasis on technical training. And that not only benefits students but will also certainly help our region’s employers, businesses and the economy,” said Peter Angstadt, RCC president.

Excitement is mounting as construction work on the 105,000-square-foot White City facility continues on pace for the Oct. 14 grand opening, community celebration and open house.

“The contractor reports we’re moving forward on schedule and below budget,” Angstadt said. “I’ve been conducting tours for business leaders, students, and community members. When they look around, their response is always the same: ‘Wow!’ It’s definitely exciting and really gets your adrenaline buzzing to see it progress.”

RCC has contracted with Adroit Construction Co. Inc., to serve as contract manager/general contractor for the project. The Ashland-based company coordinated a competitive bid process covering different parts of the job ranging from landscaping to roofing. Successful bidders included a number of southern Oregon companies. Crews have been busily framing walls, installing miles of wiring for computer networks and state-of-the-art IP videoconferencing capability, and putting in new heating and air conditioning.

The campus, formerly a microprocessor plant, is located at 7800 Pacific Ave., just east of the intersection of Table Rock and East Antelope roads. It will serve as home for such RCC programs as manufacturing, electronics, fire science, construction, emergency medical technology, and diesel technology. The campus will also provide student support services such as registration, counseling and financial aid.

“For diesel, the campus means we can spread out and have room,” said Dennis Chapin, Diesel Technology Department head. “We will have four bays, and it will double the size of our shop. Students are going to be amazed at the difference from Crater Lake Center.”

“This will greatly improve student life. Our shop space will also double,” said Ralph Henderson, Construction Technology Department head. “And students will be able to register and buy books and take general education classes on site without having to rush across town.”
he added. “The new campus is the culmination of many years of hard work by a lot of people. It took vision and a leap of faith,” Henderson added.

A “flex lab” with changeable display formats will serve students, including the more than 220 enrolled in apprenticeship programs such as plumbing, heating and air conditioning, electrical, and sheet-metal fabricator.

“Table Rock has a great future for growth because some open space in the building has been reserved for expansion,” President Angstadt said. “One possible example would be manufacturing and engineering with Oregon Institute of Technology.” Because the college’s budget is tight, any future program additions will likely be done in partnerships with business and other public agencies, he explained.

The college purchased the new Table Rock Campus for $3 million in 2003. Located on seven acres in the industrial heart of Jackson County, the purchase included 10.1 undeveloped acres just west of the facility.

Project funding for the $6.5 million renovation comes from a $24 million bond measure approved Nov. 2 by Jackson County voters, a $1 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, and $750,000 from the Meyer Memorial Foundation.

The new campus will pay major returns on the community’s investment, said officials from the U.S. Economic Development Administration when presenting the $1 million grant.

“You’re going to leverage this grant into a $23 million return on investment,” said David A. Sampson, then-assistant secretary for Economic Development. A well-trained workforce helps draw private capital into an area, he explained. “Before relocating, all businesses look at availability of a highly-skilled workforce and for retraining resources so that workers can adapt to changing technologies,” Sampson said.

As a result of the $1 million EDA investment, $23 million of capital investment will be realized and more than 500 new higher wage, higher skill jobs will be created. Over the long term the wages realized at these jobs will help increase the per capita income levels for the city and county, he added.

Because construction will continue almost up to the start of classes, students interested in attending classes at the Table Rock Campus should register online at www.roguecc.edu, or in person at one of the following locations: RCC Workforce Training Center (at the VA Dom), 8597 Crater lake Highway, Building 240, White City; at the Riverside Campus, Building G, 117 S. Central, Medford, or at the Redwood Campus, 3345 Redwood Highway, Grants Pass. 

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