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**Sept. 23, 2009**

### **Business group honors RCC's John Lopez**

John Lopez has received the 2009 Business Champion of the Year Award for his longtime work in building the region's economy.

The annual award is presented by the Business Retention Expansion Committee to a recipient who has "gone above and beyond the call of duty to champion businesses," said Steve Dahl, economic development coordinator for the City of Grants Pass.

Lopez is an associate dean at Rogue Community College.

The award was presented Sept. 22 at the group's yearly business awards ceremony, held at the Bear Hotel in Grants Pass.

"John is a big advocate for entrepreneurs in our community and especially those without a lot of startup capital," Dahl noted. "He has really stepped up to grow the Business Development Center's support for entrepreneurs."

For example, Lopez was instrumental in arranging a \$100,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which provides access to business classes at discounted rates. The CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Lopez also worked with the city and other agencies to obtain free business research services from the Oregon Microenterprise Network. And he helped launch the Next-Level Program for the RCC Business Development Center.

"John Lopez and RCC play key roles in business development," Dahl said. "At the entrepreneurial level, they are the main game in town."

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