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**President Obama recognizes community colleges  
as key to economic recovery**

Rogue Community College President Peter Angstadt welcomes President Barrack Obama's \$12 billion proposal that would put the nation's two-year colleges at the center of revitalizing the U.S. economy.

"With high unemployment and the economy in transition, many people are turning to RCC to upgrade job skills or train for a new career," Angstadt said. "Over the past 15 months RCC enrollment has seen double-digit increases as community members turn to the college for help."

Obama's new initiative includes \$2.5 billion for construction and renovation of the nation's community colleges, \$500 million to develop new online courses, and \$9 billion for challenge grants aimed at spurring innovation and expansion in the two-year sector.

Unveiling his plan Tuesday, Obama cited rapid growth in enrollment at colleges nationwide and projections showing that jobs requiring at least an associate degree will grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience. In Oregon, colleges have seen first-hand the kind rapid growth the President cited. Across the state, enrollment at community colleges is up 12 percent over last year.

"They are also capable of working with businesses, industry and government to create tailored training programs to meet economic needs such as nursing, health information technology, advanced manufacturing, and green jobs, and of providing customized training at the worksite," Obama said of community colleges.

"RCC is truly an engine for economic growth," RCC President Angstadt added. "Our community needs skilled and trained workers to compete in this difficult economy. RCC can help people build a future."

Obama's proposal will next go to Congress where the Education and Labor Committee will begin working on legislation to enact the program.

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