State cuts to college financial aid impact RCC students

Steep reductions in Oregon Opportunity Grants (OOG) mean a decrease in financial aid available to students at Rogue Community this spring and even more drastic cuts ahead for next year. The Federal Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), and Federal Student Loans were not affected by these reductions.

RCC had been scheduled to deliver approximately $5-6 million in OOG funds during the current 2009-10 academic year, said Anna Manley, director of Financial Aid. However, after a series of cuts, and the establishment of an annual cap limiting grants to $2,600 per student, approximately 2,000 current students received nearly $3.5 million.

The forecast for next year grew even bleaker when the Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) announced in mid-March that due to state funding limitations for the 2010-11 OOG program, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) filing deadline of Jan. 21, 2010 has been implemented for community college students to have access to these grant funds.

As a result of the Jan. 21 application cutoff and a further reduced annual cap of $1,800, RCC estimates being able to deliver approximately $350,000 to fewer than 300 recipients during the 2010-11 academic year, said Manley.

“RCC wants our students to know that this is a state-wide issue. We deeply regret the impact this will have on so many students,” she said, adding that RCC will still process the FAFSA form no matter when students submitted it.

The college encourages students to contact OSAC, at 1-800-452-880, as well as their state legislative representative, at 1-800-332-2313, to obtain more information and describe the impact these reductions will have on their education.

RCC also urges impacted students to begin making alternate funding plans as soon as possible. Information about grants, scholarships and installment plans is available at the college’s Financial Aid website at http://www.roguecc.edu/financialaid/

Media: for more information contact Anna Manley, director of Financial Aid, 541-956-7104, or Kori Bieber, dean of Student Services, 541-956-7196.

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