April 28, 2010

Small Business Administration honors RCC’s John Lopez

John Lopez, who headed up the Rogue Community College Small Business Development Center for the past 10 years, will be honored for his work by the Small Business Administration.

Lopez will receive the SBDC Service Excellence and Innovation Center Award on June 2 at the Oregon Convention Center, Portland.

“You and your team have done a remarkable job supporting all of the businesses in your community,” wrote Harry DeWolf, SBA district director for Oregon and southwest Washington. “I admire the imagination, ideas and human relationships all of you bring to assist the growth of small business in Oregon.”

DeWolf, who sent the news to Lopez in a letter April 20, will present the award himself.

“I am proud to honor your team, true champions of small business, whose tireless efforts provide tangible and significant support to small businesses in your community,” DeWolf continued. “You and your staff provide the counseling, advice and encouragement that small business owners need and foster an environment in which the spirit of entrepreneurship can flourish.”

Lopez, who has worked at RCC for 21 years, recently retired as associate dean and director of the RCC Business Development Center but has continued to work part time at the center. He was awarded dean emeritus status by the RCC Board of Education on Dec. 15.

In 2009, Lopez won the Business Champion of the Year Award for his longtime work in building the region’s economy. The Grants Pass Business Retention Expansion Committee presented the award.

Lopez was instrumental in arranging a $100,000 Community Development Block Grant, which provides access to business classes at discounted rates. He also worked with the City of Grants Pass and other agencies to obtain free business research services from the Oregon Microenterprise Network and helped launch RCC’s Illinois Valley Business Entrepreneurial Center.

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