RCC will offer Master Recycler training in Josephine County

A new Rogue Community College course, set to begin March 1, will prepare Josephine County residents to provide recycling services in their community.

Master Recycler classes are scheduled Mondays from March 1 through April 26 at the RCC Redwood Campus, Grants Pass. Classes will meet from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in I Building, Room 4. The Community Education course also includes two Saturday field trips.

Tuition is $50, which covers the cost of printing a customized Josephine County recycling manual, class supplies, and refreshments. The course is part of a recently launched recycling program at Redwood Campus aimed at reducing waste. The goal is for RCC to serve as a “living laboratory” to promote recycling awareness, according to Britta Beckstead, an AmeriCorps volunteer serving as program coordinator.

The class includes 30 hours of lecture sessions by local experts relating to recycling and waste prevention. Topics include "greening" businesses, worms and organic waste, the culture of consumption, and where trash and recycling goes after it leaves the curb.

Speakers include representatives from the Department of Environmental Quality Waste Division, regional waste haulers, and area organizations such as Josephine County Food Bank and Goodwill Industries. Field trips will include Dry Creek Landfill, SPARC Enterprises, the Grants Pass Waste Water Treatment Plant and JO-GRO facility, and Cascade Metal Recycling.

Participants are required to complete a 30-hour service activity that reduces the waste stream or educates others about doing so. Service hours, which must be completed in Josephine County, can include assisting with recycling services, providing an informational table at events, giving presentations to schools and businesses, or other projects volunteers design themselves.

Although based on other Master Recycler programs around Oregon, the course is tailored specifically for Josephine County. The class is sponsored by the Solid Waste Agency and supported by local waste haulers. The Solid Waste Agency is comprised of government representatives from the City of Grants Pass, the City of Cave Junction, and Josephine County.

“The great thing about participating in this course, as is evident in the success of the Jackson County Master Recycler program, is that it allows participants to give back to their community while gaining knowledge and having fun,” Beckstead noted. “We will likely have participants of all ages and interests — retirees, business members, and students.”

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Depending on the number of applications, participants may be selected on the basis of enthusiasm and contributing skills. There will be a maximum of 40 class participants. Applications are due by Feb. 15; participants will be notified by Feb. 22 of their acceptance. Applications are available online at http://learn.roguecc.edu/recycle/masterrecycler.

For more information, contact Britta Beckstead, Master Recycler coordinator, 541-956-7185 or bbeckstead@roguecc.edu.

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