



## **Klamath Community College awarded \$3 million for Apprenticeship Center construction**

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KLAMATH FALLS — Klamath Community College is pleased to announce the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) has awarded KCC a \$3 million grant to fund construction of an Apprenticeship Center.

The center, according to KCC President Dr. Roberto Gutierrez, is a vision of the future and foundational step in creating a workforce pipeline that starts in high school and transitions students from the classroom into high-demand skilled trades careers.

“Individuals who gain specialized skills through education and training typically enter the workforce earning higher wages and have more opportunity for professional growth and development,” Gutierrez said. “The KCC Apprenticeship Center will provide programs that are highly specialized, in high-demand across the nation, and can support region and state economic development with a well-trained workforce.”

Initial design concepts for the center indicate the 35,000-square-foot center will span five acres, and include nearly 12,000 square feet of hands-on training space for students enrolled in industrial trades and apprenticeship programs such as electrical, plumbing, millwright, pipefitter, and machinist. The center will also include a fire training academy. Students enrolled in fire sciences and emergency medical operations programs will have a 3,200-square-foot fire training academy for wildland and structural fire instruction.

The center will provide space for hands-on training and pre-apprenticeship programs for transitioning high schoolers, increase career-technical program offerings, and offer specialized fire science training. Once complete, the project will help upskill the region’s workforce by providing a pipeline of skilled workers, which will bolster workforce development, create jobs, attract private investment, and strengthen the regional economy.

“This center could potentially double workforce development capacity for rural Klamath and Lake counties, as well as for Modoc and Siskiyou counties in Northern California,” Gutierrez said. “We look forward to connecting industry and businesses with our students to recruit for internships, on-the-job training, and entry into careers with our local state and federal agencies.”

The EDA funding will be used to match a \$3.9 million match grant that was awarded to KCC by the State of Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission in August 2018. The grant required KCC to raise \$3.9 million to receive \$3.9 million in grant funds for the capital project.

KCC Foundation Executive Director Charles “Chip” Massie said the funding from the two grants will pay to construct the Apprenticeship Center, but will not cover the costs of the equipment and technology that will fill the building.

“We thank the EDA for recognizing the significant role this project will have in developing the workforce in rural Oregon,” Massie said. “This award is a huge step in the right direction, but our fundraising must continue to fully outfit the center with the tools and technology that will help our students be successful in the workforce.”

Massie said KCC hopes to raise an additional \$2 million to ensure the center is student- and workforce-ready and to ensure the center will provide state-of-the-art programming well into the future. Massie said the college is in the process of re-invigorating the Apprenticeship Center capital campaign committee to determine how to accomplish the vision.