

Colleges fight for \$10 million

Distribution of money creates hot topic for local community colleges

Jadon Triplett
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Although tuition fees are going up \$3 per credit next term, tuition came extremely close to increasing up to \$8 per credit due to a proposal for the redistribution of millions in state funding that was ultimately rejected.

"There were very angry people on our side," said Clackamas Community College President Dr. Joe Johnson, regarding the possibility that Clackamas would not receive any of the \$10.7 million that was recently distributed by the state's Emergency Board.

According to Johnson, \$10.7 million of state funding was promised to Oregon's community colleges.

However, in order for the money to be received, the college presidents were required to get together and work out a solution as to how the money was to be distributed. The presidents did come

to an agreement on the formula of distribution, but on Jan. 15, the State Board of Education rejected the solution.

Oregon's community colleges get their money from three places: tuition, state income tax and property tax revenues. As one of the higher-generating districts when it comes to property taxes, Clackamas gets about \$2 million more in property tax dollars annually than the "average" property tax district, said Johnson.

The solution that the college presidents came up with was the same resolution that was agreed upon several years ago by the college presidents, which was to redistribute half of the revenues and keep the other half. This way, CCC keeps \$1 million and the other \$1 million is shared by other community colleges that need more money.

Over the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, Johnson said, the board reconvened and reversed their decision, accepting the presidents' plan.

While this is good news, because community colleges will receive the \$10.7 million (about \$700,000 of which goes to Clackamas) and the old funding formula stays intact, the issue is unfortunately nowhere near being resolved.

Although students won't have to pay an \$8 tuition increase, the issue of some community colleges getting more from their local property tax districts than other districts is still a hotly debated issue.

Community colleges located in areas that have lower property taxes (such as Portland Community and Mt. Hood Community) make less money off property tax revenues than wealthier communities (like Clackamas).

According to Johnson, the administrations of those community colleges generating less revenue believe they should be entitled to the property tax revenues of other counties that have higher property taxes.

In other words, schools such as

PCC and MHCC would have the money from their individual taxpayers' property taxes as well as a portion of the revenue from residents of Clackamas.

The board's original rejection represented a belief that Clackamas should have to redistribute about \$1.5 million and keep only about \$500,000 of its own county's tax revenues. This would have been the end result had not the presidents of Clackamas, Central Oregon, Rogue and Klamath Community Colleges responded so negatively to the decision.

"Since Clackamas taxpayers are paying more, my belief is that they should get more," said Johnson.

While Oregon's community colleges did get the \$10.7 million, this isn't the end of the conflict. It is more like a postponement of a highly emotional argument regarding property tax revenues that, according to Johnson, will likely resurface again as early as the next six months.

campus SAFETY logs

All reports are taken from CCC's campus safety incident logs. Summaries are edited for clarity, not content.

1-27-04

11:30 a.m.

Advised an officer of damaged light pole in Barlow parking lot.

1-27-04

2:05 p.m.

Staff member reported seeing a transient in Rook Hall. Unable to locate.

1-28-04

10:29 a.m.

Student reported a car rolled out of gear, blocking drive lane in Community Center parking lot.

1-30-04

8:01 a.m.

Retrieved Honeywell fire trouble message from Department of Public Safety cell phone, advised an officer.

1-30-04

9:40 a.m.

Staff member reported juveniles in Café, possibly Under the Influence of Intoxicants (UII).

Crucial time to apply for next year's FAFSA

Karlin Johnson
NEWS EDITOR

It is once again time for those seeking financial aid for the 2004-2005 school year to apply.

Students returning to Clackamas should have FAFSA applications turned in by the end of April, while students transferring to a four-year college or university should apply immediately.

According to student financial services, FAFSA applications will take six to eight weeks to process at Clackamas.

"They can process in six weeks at the best of times," said Mary Jo Jackson, director of student financial services. "There are a number of things to check and we have a fairly small staff."

With the time it takes for the applications to process, students should assure their place by apply-



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ing as early as possible. "It's a limited pot of money," said Jackson. "There's an urgency to apply [for financial aid] for next year. Students need to look at

applying now."

After submitting an application, students' financial aid will be issued to them when they need it, so it is easy to be prepared ahead of time.

"Even if you fill out an application, you don't have to take it right away, but it's good to have it processed," said Jackson.

A new FAFSA has been issued for the 2004-2005 school year. The new aid will not change significantly, but for some, more information will be needed when applying.

FAFSA can be as easy to apply for as a click of the mouse.

By going to www.fafsa.ed.gov, students can get information quickly, apply easily and get an immediate response.

Computers are available for student use in Rook Hall and in the Community Center, from which students can access CCC's website

to receive information on financial aid, get referrals and find a link to FAFSA.

Students who wish for the application process to go quickly can also obtain their own electronic pin number which can be used again and again each year for online applications and information.

Pin numbers will help students with federal websites, viewing loan information or documentation. To get an electronic pin number, visit www.pin.ed.gov.

"Application [for a pin number] is simple, and you will get an e-mail or mail response," said Jackson, who recommends the online application process.

Questions about FAFSA or other financial aid can be answered in Rook Hall, or contact Jackson at ext. 2702, or e-mail maryj@clackamas.cc.or.us.

Welding students use their skills to create utilities and art pieces

Shannon Armstead
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

With seasoned teachers and a new training facility, the Clackamas Welding Program offers its students fresh opportunities to perfect their art.

The welding center used to be located in Barlow Hall, but just shy of a year ago was relocated to an area behind Clairmont Hall, where the students were given more equipment and more room in a new building.

"Clackamas has a very appealing new building," said welding student Kevin Kauffman.

The original welding facility at Barlow was not built to accommodate more than 10 students, whereas the new facility can accommodate about 30. The college employed students in the department to build new welding booths, as well as some other equipment.

"Two students and one teaching assistant finished the booths in about two weeks," said welding student Rian Gilligan.

Gilligan began attending Clackamas a year and a half ago and took part in the process of creating the new welding center.

"I came in last summer and built some tables and custom dividers that some others and myself came up with," he said.

As well as hiring students to update the building, the college also hires students for equipment upkeep.

"I was hired to work on any

repairs that need to be made on the equipment," Gilligan said. "[I am training] to be someone who can maintain the whole shop. I really appreciate the ability to be able to work and go to school at the same time."

Gilligan decided to obtain a formal welding education after having been employed in the mining and paving industries.

"This program has created discipline in me," he said, "and it creates a gateway for those who are apart of it to receive real success in life."

Students in the welding department are at different levels and are learning various specialties.

Glenn Ellis discovered the benefits of welding skills in his search for employment.

"I went to the employment office and they told me they would figure out something for me to do," Ellis said. "I went home and told my wife I wanted to learn how to weld. When I went back to the office, the woman said she thought I told her I wanted to weld. I hadn't [told her that] but that is what I wanted to do."

According to the students, the teachers in the welding program strive to bring about the best aspects of their students, giving them real insights into their field with patience and encouragement.

"Teachers will stay with you after class hours, they know you and you know them, and they want to keep getting you where you are going," said student Stephen Tomlinson.



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Student Jesse Sellards practices a vertical weld during Gas Metal Arc Welding and Flux Core Arc class, better known as Wirefeed. Sellards is a first-year welding student.

"I feel like I know my instructors as individuals and they know me. I feel I should give them a positive image back, that what they are doing is making a difference," said Gilligan.

"When [my project] looks bad, [my teacher] does not criticize, she just tells me what went wrong and how to fix it," said Tomlinson.

Students in the welding program seem to enjoy the sense of camaraderie and support from fellow classmates.

"This place is awesome. I love the environment here, the teamwork. Everyone is friendly; there is no criticism going around. Everyone here is here because they love it," Tomlinson said. "When you start [welding], you start paying attention to everything metal. Do you know that Krispy Krème's chairs are welded?"

Welding isn't just a profession for many of the students; it's art.

"I'm taking welding to make

more money, but also because it is artwork. I plan on building something that someone will pay a million dollars for," said Ellis.

According to Tomlinson, it can also be a kind of meditation or stress-relief.

"I come here, go into my booth and as soon as I pull the [protective gear over my face], all my problems disappear," he said. "Sparks start flying and it's just me and the metal."