

# Editorial: Measure compounds debt

With May 17 fast approaching, Clackamas County voters could have received their ballots by now. On the ballot there is an item that if you vote "yes" will give Clackamas Community College \$130 million. We at *The Clackamas Print* feel that you should vote "no" on the bond measure.

The bond measure, if passed, would give the college money to spend on building renovations, infrastructure improvements, technologies, possibly building the Oregon Institute of Technology building and paying off the existing debt of the Harmony campus.

In March, the college presented a detailed look into the outstanding debt of both the 2000 bond measure and the certification of participation we took for building the Harmony campus. According to the college, at the end of this fiscal year in June, we will still have an outstanding debt of more than \$32 million on the 2000 bond measure and more than \$17 million for Harmony. That is a total of over \$50 million that the college is saddled with on these two items.

But with such a deep hole of debt, should we take out our shovels and dig deeper? This measure would take care of the debt for Harmony but would also saddle us for more than \$162.6 million worth of

bond debt.

A portion of the bond is intended to upgrade technology for the automotive, manufacturing and science departments so that students may learn and be ready for the in-demand jobs that require technology that CCC doesn't currently have. This is an investment opportunity that CCC should have been working on for a long time, since the surge in popularity of the hybrid car.

We should aggressively pursue more grants and donations of equipment before we put ourselves further in debt. And the same can be applied for the manufacturing department.

In the previous months, Robert Delgatto, manufacturing instructor and president of the full-time faculty association, has stated in the board of education meetings that both Boeing and Nike are interested in hiring or including CCC students in their summer internships instead of outsourcing.

Since they seem to be very interested in the programs at CCC and both companies have manufacturing jobs in the state, it would seem to be a "no-brainer" to attempt a corporate sponsorship. Both companies are financially stable, interested in our students and their jobs require skills on some of the latest manufacturing technology available.

A private company's sponsor-

ship at a public institution may seem blasphemous, but it would help all parties. Corporations would receive not only media attention but potentially very skilled workers for their plants. Students will get the skills and experience on current technologies they need along with a potential internship that could lead to a career in their field. The college would get the equipment it needs at minimal cost, with a potential of getting even more manufacturing students. Also, the county wouldn't have to foot

with mechanics in it that will allow you to move in and out of big technologies really quickly," said De Sitter.

Buying OIT will only increase the depth of the hole we are digging. The building that we would be buying is aging and will possibly require a reasonable amount of maintenance. The college deferred the maintenance of many of the buildings, elevators and other items the bond will pay for in favor of keeping programs alive and to delay laying off instructors.

If we deferred a lot of our maintenance costs, then what will the addition of two new buildings do? Both will be federally required to be accessible by the disabled. Roofing issues will be the same as any other building in Oregon and by the sound of the mechanisms inside this "Advanced Technology Learning Center," the possibilities for a technical malfunction would not only affect one class but every class that is taught in there until it is fixed.

Also, the idea of the tech learning center brings back the idea of the corporate sponsorships. The practice of ignoring the maintenance of the Oregon City campus in favor of programs and instructors is noble but questions whether or not the college will appropriately handle things in the future with two new buildings.

There are other things that the college can do to reduce congestion for classroom space. Marry the idea of live Web streaming with lectures. If there are high-demand classes that are based around lecture, such as political science, math and computer science, the school can set up a service that will allow students to view lectures via the internet.

Will it increase workload on the instructor? Yes. Will it increase the class's capacity for more students? Yes. Will it cost the college money? Yes and no.

By implementing this idea, the seats for classes can open up dramatically. Those that can access the class via a high speed internet connection can give their physical class seat to someone else who needs it. The college can also tack on a technology fee on the "virtual" class registration to help maintain and pay off the cost of the system.

The college also has three large areas that can house up to quadruple the amount of students that any regular class can: Gregory Forum, the Osterman Theatre and the theater in McLoughlin. These areas would be ideal for lecture classes that are in high-demand if the above webcast idea is inconceivable.

The college has not done everything to prepare for where we are today. As stated in this editorial, there are several alternatives to burdening this college

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the bill.

Buying OIT will potentially cost the college \$16 million, according to Louis De Sitter, a spokesman in favor of the bond. However, the state is willing to match CCC's \$8 million towards the building. The college is also planning to use the bond monies to build a new building that they are currently calling the "Advanced Technology Learning Center."

"It will be a large building with warehouse style classrooms

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