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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community colleges celebrate CTE Month

SALEM, Ore. – Oregon community colleges will raise awareness of and advocate for career and technical education (CTE) programs throughout the month of February in honor of National CTE Month. CTE programs at community colleges will play a critical role in the recovery of Oregon’s economy to help put Oregonians back to work after the devastation of wildfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community college CTE programs are customized to meet the unique needs of their surrounding communities. Because of this, community colleges are well-positioned to ensure the workforce receives the necessary skills and training essential for reinvigorating Oregon’s businesses and industries.

The Oregon Community College Association, in coordination with the state’s 17 community colleges, will celebrate National CTE Month with a variety of virtual activities to engage and inform legislators and communities about the relevancy and value of CTE programs.

Typically, OCCA hosts a CTE Day at the Capitol in Salem, where colleges bring hands-on examples of their CTE programs to the Capitol Rotunda and steps to demonstrate the hands-off benefits for legislators. Since the Capitol is currently closed to the public, the OCCA decided this year to host a virtual CTE month to expand upon the programs colleges highlight without the space restrictions at the Capitol.

Each Wednesday in February, OCCA will host a “Workforce Wednesday” virtual forum at noon on Zoom for legislators and their staff. Each week’s forum will feature four colleges and a career path theme:

- *Week 1:* Health/Biomedical Sciences (Central Oregon CC, Mt. Hood CC, Oregon Coast CC, Southwestern Oregon CC);
- *Week 2:* Business/Management/HR/Communication/Info/Arts (Columbia Gorge CC, Klamath CC, Lane CC, Umpqua CC);
- *Week 3:* Industrial Engineering/Transportation/Apprenticeship (Clackamas CC, Clatsop CC, Linn-Benton CC, Tillamook Bay CC); and
- *Week 4:* Agriculture/Food/Natural Resources (Blue Mountain CC, Chemeketa CC, Rogue CC, Treasure Valley CC)

Workforce Wednesdays will also include a CTE Month e-newsletter to legislators, social media messaging and other communication from each of the colleges to their legislators about their CTE programs.

OCCA encourages legislators to engage with colleges about their CTE programs, and to endorse House Bill (HB) 2907 to fully fund community colleges at \$702 million for the 2021-21 biennium.



“Fully funding HB 2907 will allow Oregon’s community colleges to continue to provide this essential career and technical education for our students and to the state’s workforce, while serving as economic engines for local economies,” said Dr. Cam Preus, executive director of the OCCA.

The community is encouraged to show their support of community college CTE programs by reaching out to legislators through the Take Action page of the OCCA website, www.occa17.com.

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