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Three Los Rios Colleges Receive Grant Funding to Build Makerspace Communities

American River College, Folsom Lake College and Sacramento City College will use grant awards to empower students for success in emerging STEM fields

Sacramento, CA (August 22, 2017) – The California Community College Chancellor’s Office has awarded three Los Rios Colleges – American River College (ARC), Folsom Lake College (FLC) and Sacramento City College (SCC) – with a total of \$800,000 for the first year to create an inclusive “makerspace” community, provide internships, and develop curriculum to prepare students with innovation and entrepreneurial skills to thrive in the regional economy. The colleges are eligible for an additional \$800,000 in grant funds next year.

A “makerspace” is a collaborative work space on campus that provides students an environment and resources to create, innovate and explore projects in the STEM/STEAM fields. California Community Colleges are building “makerspaces” so students, faculty and staff can interact with others who have shared interests, learn to use tools, make class projects and develop their knowledge through exploration and hands on experiences, explained Carol Pepper-Kittredge, CCC Maker Statewide Project Manager.

“Makerspace’ community members collaborate and teach each other, enabling students, faculty and business owners to interact in ways not possible in the classroom, enriching students’ education,” said Pepper-Kittredge. “Faculty members are discovering how making, entrepreneurship and projects for social good can be incorporated into their teaching. Students benefit from freely exploring their interests while learning to use laser cutters, art supplies, electronics labs, sewing machines, milling machines and many other creative tools.”

Twenty-four California colleges received this funding statewide. The funds will allow the colleges to further develop their “makerspaces” and participate in the CCC Maker initiative to collaborate with other institutions across the state, sharing best practices and developing a model for creating college “makerspace” communities.

“These ‘makerspaces’ will enhance the student experience at our colleges and help to connect students with the real world work experiences and hands-on skills that are critical in today’s economy,” said Jamey Nye, Vice Chancellor of Education and Technology for the Los Rios Community College District. “These CCC Maker Grants will help our colleges provide more opportunities for students to innovate, a hallmark of the educational experience at the Los Rios colleges.”

The vision of the statewide initiative is to drive innovation in education and prepare California Community College students for success in STEM/STEAM careers that demand 21st Century skills, explained Pepper-Kittredge. “Through the CCC Maker initiative, colleges engage with businesses in new ways, students are inspired by learning by doing, career skills are incorporated into education, students develop interests in emerging technologies and community colleges contribute to a thriving statewide economy,” said Pepper-Kittredge.

Learn more about CCC Maker at <http://cccmaker.com/>.

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