



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

September 26, 2011

Contact: Paige Marlatt Dorr

Office: 916.327.5356

Cell: 916.601.8005

Office E-mail: pdorr@cccco.edu

Mobile E-mail: pmarlatt@comcast.net

Central California community college consortium awarded a federal grant for nearly \$20 million to provide pathways to new careers for the unemployed

Eleven colleges will share grant money and partner with local businesses; implement plan over three-year period

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott today announced that a consortium of 11 central San Joaquin Valley community colleges and one college center have been awarded a \$19.9 million grant from the federal government to help those training for new careers meet specific industry needs.

The consortium is comprised of Fresno City, Porterville, Bakersfield, Taft, Reedley, Merced, Cerra Coso, San Joaquin Delta, College of the Sequoias, West Hills College Coalinga, West Hills College Lemoore and Reedley College's Madera Center. West Hills College Lemoore is the leader of the C6 Consortium, which stands for Central California Community Colleges Committed to Change.

"The White House and the U.S. Department of Labor recognize the enormous value and role of community colleges in getting the economy back on track and the unemployed back into the workforce quickly," said Chancellor Scott. "The C6 Consortium will provide hands-on instruction and workforce development to help dislocated workers in 16 counties quickly move from training to degree to work in areas that are in demand such as agriculture, manufacturing, health care and alternative energy."

United States Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis and Under Secretary of Education Martha Kanter announced nearly \$500 million in grants to community colleges around the country. The installment is the first in a \$2 billion, four-year investment designed to increase opportunities for the unemployed.

"This initiative is about providing access to training that leads to real jobs," said Secretary Solis. "These federal grants will enable community colleges, employers and other partners to prepare job candidates, through innovative programs, for new careers in high-wage, high-skills fields, including advanced manufacturing, transportation and health care occupations."

The C6 Consortium project will serve residents in an area of 27,282 square miles. California's San Joaquin

Valley is economically impoverished with an average unemployment rate of more than 19 percent. Some rural cities in central California have reported unemployment rates of more than 40 percent. The current level of skills and educational success in the San Joaquin region is low. Huron, for instance, is a city of nearly 7,000 northeast of Coalinga where no one older than 25 possesses a bachelor's degree.

A vast geographic area, coupled with issues confronting the poor such as transportation, presents challenges of delivering services to job trainees, and providing a large enough scope of employment opportunities. The first two years of the grant project will allow each consortium member to design and implement high-quality training for individuals and industry partners in their area to battle these issues. The third year will expand capacity and sustainability by duplicating the model programs at other community colleges in the state.

The grant awarded to the C6 Consortium is part of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training initiative, for which the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act included a total of \$2 billion over a four-year period.

The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.6 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

###