



November 10, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

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HECC Awards Grants Supporting Innovative College-Community Collaborations to Close Equity Gaps

Oregon's Talent, Innovation & Equity ("TIE") sub-grants promote partnerships that bolster success for underrepresented students of color

Salem, OR – Oregon HECC is pleased to announce that after a competitive process involving many strong applicants, three Talent, Innovation, and Equity ("TIE") sub-grants totaling \$220,000 have been awarded to support partnerships between Oregon higher education institutions and culturally-specific community-based nonprofit organizations to foster postsecondary education success for Oregon underrepresented students of color. The funding is intended to help close disparities in postsecondary success rates between Oregon's overall student population and Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander learners. The sub-grants are one component of a suite activities to close these equity gaps, an initiative supported by the Talent, Innovation, and Equity ("TIE") partnership national grant awarded to HECC in 2018 by Lumina Foundation. The grants were awarded to Portland Community College, Portland State University, and Treasure Valley Community College for innovative new collaborations with community-based organizations (CBOs) that have strong expertise serving diverse communities with culturally-specific programming.

- **Portland Community College (PCC) was awarded \$90,000 to collaborate with Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center and Rosemary Anderson High School (POIC + RAHS).** POIC + RAHS is a minority-led nonprofit organization in NE and SE Portland providing education, mentoring, family outreach, employment training, and job placement. The grant to PCC will support activities focused on key transition pathways from high school to college through a Scholars Program designed for students of color, as well as relationship building with students, staff, and faculty.
- **The Indigenous Nations Studies Department of Portland State University (PSU) was awarded \$75,000 to collaborate with the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health and the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA).** NAYA is a Portland-based nonprofit organization providing culturally-specific, inclusive programming for Native American community members. This cross-institutional and community-based collaboration will uplift Native students through frameworks centering Indigenous Traditional Ecological & Cultural Knowledge (ITECK). The grant will provide intentional support for re-

envisioning university work from an Indigenous center, focusing on resurgent intersections of Native culture and education to increase college exposure and enrollment of Native students while developing inclusive and equitable learning environments at PSU for all students.

- **Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) in Ontario, Oregon, was awarded \$55,000 to collaborate with Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization/Four Rivers Welcome Center (IRCO/FRWC).** IRCO is a nonprofit organization serving the holistic needs of Oregon's immigrants, refugees, and community members, and FRWC specifically assists refugees/immigrants in Malheur County to find the resources they need to build successful futures in our community. The grant to TVCC will support critical wrap-around services, relationship-building, and data-driven best practices to increase the completion of degrees and credentials and eliminate barriers for students of color.

Ben Cannon, executive director of the HECC, said, “We are thrilled to support these innovative partnerships between PCC, PSU, and TVCC and culturally-specific community organizations. The promising work they have proposed to foster college access and success for students of color will help us close the unacceptable equity gaps we see in Oregon today. Through this grant program, we hope to shine a light on the tremendous potential in forming creative partnerships between colleges and community-based organizations that have long offered trusted programming.”

The TIE partnership sub-grants are one component of HECC’s agenda to eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in postsecondary education. Oregon has one of the most ambitious state goals for improving educational attainment in the nation; however, the state has significant disparities between attainment of Oregonians who are from historically underrepresented populations of color and those who are white. In 2018, the percentage of adults age 25 and older with a postsecondary credential was 46.4 percent for Black/African Americans, 30.4 percent for Hispanic/Latinx people, 34.8 percent for Native American/Alaskan Native people, 39.9 percent for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and 54.4 percent for White people.*

The TIE sub-grants were awarded after a competitive review process prompted by a Request for Applications first issued in March 2020. Oregon HECC appreciates the 15 excellent applications and all the individuals who worked meticulously to apply with innovative strategies aimed at improving postsecondary experiences and outcomes for students of color. For further information regarding the suite of activities supported by the HECC TIE grant and sub-grants, contact Osvaldo F. Avila at Osvaldo.avila@state.or.us or see the [TIE Partnership page on the HECC website](#).

*Source: American Community Survey data, three-year rolling average of 1-year estimates. 2018 data, adults age 25 and older.

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The State of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) envisions a future in which all Oregonians—and especially those whom our systems have underserved and marginalized—benefit from the transformational power of high-quality postsecondary education and training. For more information, go to www.Oregon.gov/HigherEd