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## **PCC to implement weatherization programs through Dept. of Energy partnership grant**

**PUEBLO** – Pueblo Community College is one of two state community colleges that will offer a number of weatherization certificate programs through a nearly \$1 million U.S. Department of Energy grant that was announced recently by the Colorado Governor’s Energy Office (GEO). PCC expects to begin offering the programs to students in the spring 2011 semester.

The \$963,000 in federal stimulus funds will be combined with local funds to put the project cost at \$1.2 million. It will enable PCC and Red Rocks Community College to provide weatherization job-training certification programs and help the Governor’s Office establish a new training center in Denver. The fourth partner in the project consortium is Saturn Resources Management, Inc., an energy conservation firm that has developed and will provide the curriculum.

PCC will receive \$403,607 from the grant, with \$238,000 to be used for equipment acquisition and installation as well as to develop an HVAC laboratory. The funding will run through June 30, 2012. While the GEO is the grant’s fiscal agent, PCC’s grant manager will be Dr. David Cockrell, the college’s Dean of Business and Technology.

PCC will train instructors and identify and equip a laboratory site on its Pueblo campus this fall and then begin offering courses in the program in the spring semester that will begin in January 2011. Students will learn the skills needed to weatherize local homes, whose residents will earn rebates for making their homes more energy efficient. The ultimate aim is the standardized certification of all current and new employees in the weatherization industry.

The curriculum will include a combination of online, classroom and field experience. PCC expects to use some of the grant funding to offer scholarships to students who enroll in the program. Eventually, other Colorado Community College System schools will offer the program that PCC and Red Rocks are piloting.

“This training will provide a standard of skills for southern Colorado local agency staff, their subcontractors, and students who wish to begin a career in energy auditing and energy efficiency work,” noted Cockrell.

Persons interested in the program are encouraged to contact Cockrell at 719.549.3322 or via e-mail at david.cockrell@pueblocc.edu.

Colorado's proposal was one of 34 such grants awarded in 27 states through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to support weatherization and energy-efficiency training programs. With the grant funds, the GEO will create a certification requirement for weatherization workers, utilize a web-based performance tracking system, cultivate local trainers, and train approximately 460 Coloradans in various weatherization positions. It is part of a continuing effort by the GEO to ramp up work to assist low-income households by weatherizing homes and making them more energy efficient.

The \$29 million grant program is part of the U.S. Dept. of Energy's quest to help America build a foundation for long-term growth through energy efficiency. It will expand eight existing weatherization training centers and establish 26 new training centers. The local training center is the Pueblo County Department of Housing and Human Services. The intent is to enable the country's workforce to meet the increased demands for energy efficient services.

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*Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.*