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**NEWS RELEASE – Sept. 12, 2011**

**SCCC helps local businesses get \$58,255  
in employee training grant awards**

**DURANGO** – Southwest Colorado Community College, a division of Pueblo Community College, recently submitted Existing Industry grant applications that have resulted in a total of \$58,255 being awarded to two local businesses. Chinook Medical Gear and Mercury Payment Systems will use the funds to provide customized training for their existing employees.

Existing Industry grants are made from state funds that are available from the Office of Economic Development and International Trade to help Colorado businesses stay competitive. A total of \$2.7 million was made available statewide this year through a grant system administered through the Colorado Community College System with a requirement that all applications be submitted through a community college.

SCCC consulted with both companies to identify training needs before submitting applications to the state agency. The firms must contribute at least 40% of the total grant value through cash, training space, employee wages, and other management expenses.

“Fifty-eight thousand dollars is the largest allocation we’ve received in the southwest,” stated Teresa Malone, Operations Coordinator with Southwest Colorado Community College. “Last year, this region was allotted less than half that amount. These businesses will really benefit.”

In 2010, Ska Brewing Company was awarded \$24,000 for employee training used to streamline the production processes.

Existing Industry grants are typically made available at the beginning of the state’s fiscal year in July, with applications due in August and September. Smaller companies can cluster together in a joint application to make the training more affordable.



For more information on the Existing Industry grant opportunity or other customized training, contact Teresa Malone at Southwest Colorado Community College at (970) 247-2929.

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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 Colorado campuses.*

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**Photo:** Ska Brewing employees participating in a manufacturing process simulation at Ska Headquarters on Monday.