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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 6, 2010

## **Selection of Kane Foundation scholars strengthens PCC's university connections**

**PUEBLO** – Pueblo Community College's pathway program with four-year schools is receiving another huge boost today with the awarding of Kane Family Foundation scholarships to two outstanding students. The funds will allow Andrew Shahmohammadi and Michelle Gonzales to complete an associate degree at PCC and transfer to the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs to pursue a bachelor's degree.

The students were selected on the basis of their academic record, a formal application with essay, and an interview. The scholarships will cover up to five years of expenses for tuition, mandatory fees and books, and the potential value is close to \$30,000 per student.

Shahmohammadi is a 19-year-old 2009 Pueblo West High School graduate who is studying computer information systems at PCC and will pursue a CIS bachelor's degree at UCCS. Andrew has been employed at Kmart the past three years, volunteers at the Soup Kitchen, goes to Young Life each week and has helped coach a youth basketball team. His goal is to have a career in computer networking.

Michelle Gonzales, also 19, is a graduating Fowler High School student who has taken art classes at Otero Junior College, where she received the Best of Show at the arts festival. She plans to attend PCC in the fall and hopes to be accepted into the Dental Hygiene program. She will work to become the first in her family to receive a bachelor's degree.

Michelle's activities include being involved with the Future Business Leaders of America and the Academic Club, senior class president and a volunteer at the Fowler public library and in El Pomar Youth in Community Service. She is a candidate for the 2010 Fiesta queen.

In 2008, the Kane Family Foundation expanded its merit-based University Connections scholarship program at UCCS to include students at four southern Colorado community

colleges – PCC, Lamar Community College, Otero Junior College and Trinidad State Junior College. The scholarships are intended to reward students for both merit and hard work.

In 2006, The Kane Family Foundation established one of the largest merit-based scholarship programs in the State of Colorado. Wanden and Andy Kane were Fountain, Colorado ranchers who shared an appreciation for learning and believed in the independence that it could provide. Their vision was to help others, and their foundation allows their vision to continue by helping thousands of Colorado residents achieve the dream of a college education.

For more information about the scholarship, contact the PCC Foundation at 549-3314 or 549-3303.

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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.*