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Sleep out aims to create awareness of Pueblo's homeless population

PUEBLO – Once again this year, Pueblo Community College is taking an active role toward making an impact on the local community by helping the homeless population here.

This Friday evening, the college's P.S. CARE Club will conduct its seventh annual "Building Bridges" sleep out from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. in PCC's outdoor Wells Fargo Amphitheater. The purpose is to raise awareness of and funds for Pueblo's homeless population.

Unbeknownst to many, Pueblo does have a significant homeless population. In fact, it is estimated that more than 1,100 Pueblo children experienced homelessness during the past school year, and families with children make up over half of the city's homeless.

During the sleep out, a group of PCC students and staff, as well as members of the community, will sleep outdoors in cardboard boxes. The event-organizing P.S. CARE Club is comprised of students in the Psychology and Social Work program. The club is seeking donations for the cause, and all money raised will be given to local agencies that provide help to homeless individuals.

"In the past, our students and staff have found the sleep out to be somewhat of an emotional event that makes them empathize with what the homeless experience," noted Donna Fitzsimmons, who chairs PCC's Psychology and Social Work program.

Fitzsimmons urges all interested community members to participate. Anyone wishing to donate or attend can contact Fitzsimmons by phone at 549-3351 or via e-mail at donna.fitzsimmons@pueblocc.edu for more information.

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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 21st 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.