Nearly $1.2 Million in Economic Development Grants Coming to San Diego Community College District

The San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) has been awarded nearly $1.2 million in state grants to coordinate regional and statewide efforts that prepare students with in-demand skills needed by employers in growing industries.

Grants are distributed through the Doing What Matters for Jobs and the Economy program, which is run through the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, Division of Economic and Workforce Development. Doing What Matters for Jobs and the Economy focuses on 10 industries – or “sectors” – in San Diego and Imperial counties, and SDCCD secured grants in four of those areas.

“These grants will help us continue to fulfill that mission.”

Awards include:

- Two grant extensions totaling $575,000 for a San Diego Miramar College-led effort in the Life Sciences/Biotechnology sector. The effort involves governmental and economic development agencies, and it partners with biotechnology industry organizations. Life Sciences/Biotechnology has been targeted as a priority for the region.

- A renewed, $200,000 grant for a San Diego City College-led effort to develop training in the Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media sector. The state Chancellor’s Office describes the program as “a first ever-statewide community college organization of education workforce professionals that are focused on supplying in-demand skilled worker solutions for your business challenges.”
- A renewed Advanced Manufacturing grant of $200,000 for a San Diego City College-led effort to develop specialized training, technical consulting, and business development.

- A renewed $200,000-grant for a Miramar College-led effort in the field of Advanced Transportation and Renewables. This area includes an array of clean energy technologies that form a critical part of California’s strategy for reducing the impacts of climate change while growing a robust green economy. Advanced Transportation and Renewables has been targeted as a priority for the region.

Grants help fund a variety of specific endeavors. San Diego Miramar College Biotech Professor Sandra Slivka is a “Sector Navigator” for Life Sciences/Biotechnology whose duties include aligning community college and other workforce development resources across the state to keep up with the latest trends. “We are trying to better tie what we do at community colleges with what is happening in the industry,” Slivka said.

Slivka also oversees a Life Science Summer Institute in which up to 50 high school students intern each summer at the Scripps Research Institute and the Salk Institute for Biological Research.

“These grants will fund programs that will provide local business and industry with the highly skilled workforce necessary for the regional economy to continue to grow,” said Lorraine Collins, SDCCD’s Dean of Workforce Development. “The grants also will allow the San Diego Community College District the ability to continue supporting San Diego and Imperial County businesses with innovative programs to address their training needs. I am confident that the SDCCD can provide the workforce skills necessary for our region to remain globally competitive.”

“Innovation is necessary for a company to remain successful. However, innovation requires investing and change,” Collins added. “These grants will allow the San Diego Community College District the ability to continue supporting the San Diego and Imperial County regional businesses with innovative programs to address their training needs. I am confident that the SDCCD can provide the workforce skills necessary for our region to remain globally competitive.

As the second largest of California’s 72 community college districts, the San Diego Community College District serves approximately 130,000 students annually through three two-year colleges and seven Continuing Education campuses. The three colleges, San Diego City College, San Diego Mesa College, and San Diego Miramar College, offer associate degrees and certificates in occupational programs that prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and entry-level jobs. Continuing Education’s Educational Cultural Complex (ECC) also hosts credit and noncredit classes leading to associate degrees and certificates.

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