



PRESS RELEASE

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LTCC Receives Grant to Expand, Enhance Free College Program

South Lake Tahoe, CA—Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC) is one of only three community colleges in California to be recently selected to receive a grant that will allow the college to enhance and expand its free college program, called the Lake Tahoe College Promise. Currently, LTCC's Promise program provides a free year of tuition for first-time, full-time students. With this grant award, LTCC can further enhance the program, adding free services and extra support to improve Promise student success.

The Promise Scholars Program grant will deliver \$150,000 and an array of resources, trainings, and expertise to the college. LTCC is now positioned to plan, design, and replicate what is considered to be one of the top Promise programs in California: Skyline College's Promise Scholars Program.

Skyline's program was modeled after the City University of New York's (CUNY) highly successful Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) model. Students in CUNY's ASAP program have achieved a 28.1% two-year graduation rate, and a 53.2% three-year graduation rate since launching in 2007. As a comparison, the national two-year graduation rate in 2018 was 13% and the three-year rate was 22%, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

"First-time college students are some of our most motivated and committed students," said LTCC Superintendent/President Jeff DeFranco. "They want to be full time, and they come here intending to earn a degree. Still, they have a difficult time completing in a timely fashion. This grant and the program we're building at LTCC is not only about creating more access to college for more people, but is also about helping students graduate on time, and with little to no debt."

Currently, the Lake Tahoe College Promise program provides a tuition-free year of college to all eligible California residents and Dreamers, and to Nevada residents and Dreamers living within the Tahoe Basin (certain zip codes apply). The program is for first-time college students of any age. Current Promise students also have priority access to free class textbooks through LTCC's Lending Library.

Through the grant, LTCC will be able to duplicate some of the highlights of the Skyline and CUNY Promise models, including a specific focus on improving the three-year graduation rate, providing a dedicated Promise program counselor and coordinator, creating a peer mentoring program, providing ongoing incentives for Promise students to encourage continuation of their studies, and the creation of a cohort of Promise students who start college as a group, take certain classes together, attend specialized events together, and build relationships based on common interests. The cohort model has been shown to help students perform better academically.

As part of the grant award, LTCC will receive the blueprints and tools to create student and academic support models, technical and program management assistance, access to trainings at other colleges and on LTCC's campus, external evaluations to further improve LTCC's program, and an invitation to present at an innovation summit in 2021 where LTCC will share its best practices with other schools.

"Our Promise students will start benefiting from this grant award as soon as Fall 2019, and we'll continue to add services and support over the next two years," said DeFranco. "It's a great time to take advantage of our Promise, and get the peer mentoring, free textbooks, and the group Promise experience that will help you maximize your time and succeed at your studies."

For more information about the Lake Tahoe College Promise at LTCC and for updates on the progress of a two-year Promise in California, visit www.ltcc.edu/promise. To schedule an appointment to discuss the Lake Tahoe College Promise program, call LTCC's Enrollment Services at (530) 541-4660 x. 211.

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