

# Cabrillo receives \$4.3 million grant

Award will support science, technology, engineering and math programs

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**APTOS** — The Cabrillo College Governing Board accepted a \$4.3 million grant Monday that is earmarked for so-called STEM fields: science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The grant comes from the Department of Education and is specifically geared toward program development at Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and will fund new programs and construction at Cabrillo.

"I'm very excited about this grant," said Trustee Rebecca Garcia. "Although this grant emphasizes or targets Latino students, it's really a grant that will benefit all of our students."

The grant will fund several initiatives:

■ A STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Summer Bridge Program highlighting industries that hire students with degrees in math and the sciences, offering lab experience and working with students to develop a degree plan.

■ A new STEM Center offering increased academic support and proactive transfer and academic advising.

■ Expanded engineering and computer science laboratory spaces and resources to promote project-based learning for STEM students.

■ A transfer initiative involving Northern California institutions to better align Cabrillo's engineering and computer science curriculums with transfer requirements.

■ A comprehensive database of STEM students for

administrators, faculty and staff so they can track STEM students' success to assess the effectiveness of the programs.

The award is for a five-year grant, and the school will receive about \$868,500 in the first year.

The full award of the grant is contingent upon the college demonstrating that the project has made substantial progress in meeting approved goals and objectives. Congress also must continue to appropriate funds to the program each year.

"I'm really happy about this," said Renee Kilmer, vice president of instruction. "It's been a long time coming, in that we've been waiting for this grant to open up. We started work on it about two years ago, and the then once it did open up I was concerned with the budget sit-

uation in Washington that the money would be pulled."

The grant comes at a time when Cabrillo, like most California public institutions of education, is struggling with budget reductions due to state cutbacks.

The 2011-2012 general operating budget is \$54.7 million, down \$9.9 million since 2008.

Cabrillo is projecting a budget deficit for 2012-2013 of \$6 million.

The grant is part of the Higher Education Act's Title V, which was created in 1998 to expand educational opportunities for Latino students.

Hispanic-serving institutions are defined as those with low education and general expenditures, and 25 percent or more full-time undergraduate Latino students of whom 50 percent or more are low-income.