

For Immediate Release
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Communications Office
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Student Numbers Increase Again at the Connecticut Community Colleges *CCC programs are relevant to the needs of the state*

For the fourth consecutive year, Spring semester enrollments have increased at the Connecticut Community Colleges (CCCs). There are 46,993 students enrolled in the Spring 2008 semester, an increase of nearly four percent over Spring 2007. This follows five consecutive years of Fall semester enrollment increases at the CCCs, with a record 48,434 students enrolled in Fall 2007.

Overall, enrollments have grown by 23% in the last 10 years and more students are enrolling for more courses, with full-time enrollments growing by 88% in the last 10 years. Minority enrollments have increased over 33% in the last decade, with over two-thirds of Connecticut's African American and Hispanic undergraduates in public higher education enrolled at the CCCs.

"The Connecticut Community Colleges continue to enroll the majority of undergraduates in public higher education in the state," said Marc S. Herzog, Chancellor of the CCCs. "Because Connecticut attracts business investment by providing the competitive advantage of a talented workforce, we are striving to serve growing numbers of students seeking the opportunities offered by higher education," he said. "These students know that economic success and an improved quality of life for themselves and their families are the results of continuing education beyond high school."

"As the United States confronts the challenges of globalization, two-year institutions are indispensable to the American future," reports the National Commission on Community Colleges in its January 2008 report entitled *Winning the Skills Race and Strengthening America's Middle Class: An Action Agenda for Community Colleges*. Released by the College Board's Center for Innovative Thought, the report notes that nationally half of all baccalaureate degree recipients have attended community colleges prior to earning their degrees. "Community colleges are a prodigious engine of economic growth, helping produce an educated and skilled workforce that improves the quality of life in their communities and collectively across the United States," the report notes.

Many CCC programs are specifically developed for the state's businesses and industries, state agencies and community-based organizations--especially for the state's growth industries in health care, information technology and precision manufacturing. The CCCs were recently awarded a series of U.S. Department of Labor grants which focus on workforce development in the areas of allied health, nursing, financial services, and advanced manufacturing. These initiatives foster collaborative partnerships with related industries and Connecticut's workforce investment system.

For every full-time year a student attends a Connecticut Community College, they will earn an additional \$5,027 per year, according to a 2004 economic impact study by CCbenefits, Inc. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that associate degree graduate can expect to earn approximately \$400,000 more during a working life than a high school graduate.

"Both communities and individuals benefit from the higher education offered by the Connecticut Community Colleges," said Chancellor Herzog. "With our growing enrollments come greater economic and career choices for increasing numbers of students," he said.

The 12 Connecticut Community Colleges conveniently located throughout the state offer hundreds of credit and non-credit programs. Visit www.commnet.edu for more information.

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