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NEWS Release

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SFCC Receives \$1-million Grant from U.S. Department of Education

Santa Fe, NM, Aug. 24, 2010 — Santa Fe Community College will receive \$1 million from the federal government to help low-income and first-generation students and students with disabilities complete their education.

The college recently received notification of a \$238,496 installment of the award from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant, which will support the continued operation of SFCC's TRiO/Student Support Services program, will total \$1 million over the course of the next five years.

At the college, more than 160 local students participate in the TRiO program, receiving assistance in such areas as tutoring, counseling, advising, college success skills, financial literacy and mentoring.

"This funding enables Santa Fe Community College to continue providing support to the students who need it most," said SFCC President Sheila Ortego. "It is the mission of the college to provide a supportive learning environment for its diverse student body. This award ensures that students coming from different socio-economic, education or disability backgrounds have access to the resources they need to succeed."

The Department of Education notified Senator Jeff Bingaman of the New Mexico awardees earlier this month. SFCC was one of 905 programs out of 1,550 applicants nationwide to receive the competitive grant. "Since it began five years ago, SFCC's TRiO program has worked tirelessly to ensure that students graduate and transfer in impressive numbers," said Bingaman. "I strongly support TRiO because I have seen the difference it makes in the lives - and futures - of New Mexico students."

The community college's TRiO program was first funded in 2005 under a similar grant award from the U.S. Department of Education. This initial five-year grant expires Aug. 31, 2010. "With funding now established for the subsequent five years, SFCC can continue serving SFCC TRiO students in order to help them stay in school and graduate," said Lynn Atkison, TRiO director.

TRiO at SFCC is a successful program, with its participants showing higher graduation rates than non-TRiO students, added Atkison. “We tutor students so they can succeed in their classes, give workshops, provide counselors and loaner laptops; and require a financial literacy training so that they learn to manage their money. All of this helps them stay in school. This program works.”

About Santa Fe Community College

For more than 27 years, Santa Fe Community College has served as the gateway to success for individuals and our community. The College provides affordable, high-quality educational programs that serve the social, cultural, technological and economic needs of Santa Fe’s diverse community. More than 14,500 students are served each year in its credit, noncredit and adult basic education programs.

Offering more than 72 degrees and certificate programs, SFCC caters to the academic, career and personal-enrichment needs of local residents, businesses, government and public service organizations. More than 274 full-time and 587 part-time employees are employed by the college. For further information, visit www.sfccnm.edu or call (505) 428-1000.

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