# COCC Receives $10,000 Grant from U.S. Bank

*by Bend Weekly News Sources*

U.S. Bank, through the U.S. Bancorp Foundation, presented a $10,000 grant to Central Oregon Community Collegeâ€™s Business Development Center at a meeting of the collegeâ€™s Board of Directors on Wednesday, Dec. 13.

The grant will help support two classes geared to help new and start-up businesses. The courses, â€œLaunch Your Businessâ€• and â€œTake Charge of Your Business,â€• combine one-on-one business coaching, peer support and skill development to equip new business owners with the essential tools they need to be successful. The grant will fund half the cost of the classes, making each available for less than $100 per person.

â€œWe are excited about this opportunity provided to Central Oregon businesses through the U.S. Bancorp grant,â€• said Beth Wickham, program supervisor for Central Oregon Community Collegeâ€™s (COCC) Continuing Education department.

According to Wickham, research has indicated that businesses that receive Counseling from Small Business Development Centers grow more quickly â€• in terms of employees and sales â€• than businesses that do not receive counseling, and that incremental tax revenue more than pays for the program. Furthermore, studies show that SBDC-participating businesses last longer than the typical small business. Presently, the COCC Business Development Center serves more than 250 people each year.

â€œWe couldnâ€™t be more pleased with this partnership, and look forward to watching it grow and do great things for our community,â€• said Ryan Killgore, region president for U.S. Bank in Central and Eastern Oregon.

â€œU.S. Bank is always looking for opportunities to invest in local communities, and this opportunity is particularly gratifying because it will inspire new business owners to have the courage to make a leap and follow their dreams â€• or in some cases take the next step to make their businesses even stronger.â€•

U.S. Bank is the largest bank in Oregon as measured by deposits. It is also the leading lender of Small Business Administration (SBA) loans to small businesses as measured by the number of loans and loan volume, according to 2006 data released by the SBA Portland District. U.S. Bank is a subsidiary of U.S. Bancorp. The U.S. Bancorp Foundation contributes to the strength and vitality of local communities through partnerships that improve the educational and economic opportunities of low- and moderate-income individuals and families and enhance the cultural and artistic life of the communities in which U.S. Bancorp operates.

â€œLaunch Your Business,â€• taught by Maureen Quinn, runs Feb. 7 to March 21 on the Bend Campus and costs $74. â€œTake Charge of Your Business,â€• taught by Robin Mirrasoul, runs Jan. 25 to March 22 on the Bend Campus and costs $99. To register for the classes or to learn more about the COCC Business Development Center, call 383-7290 or visit www.cocc.edu.

*COCC Receives $10,000 Grant from U.S. Bank by Bend Weekly News Sources*