February 13, 2012

AACC Statement on President Obama’s FY2013 Budget

On behalf of its nearly 1,200 member institutions, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) applauds President Obama for recognizing the central role of community colleges in helping America develop a workforce that is second to none. President Obama’s FY 2013 budget includes an $8 billion “Community College to Career” fund that builds on the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant program to inject more resources into community college job training programs. It is designed to train 2 million workers with skills that lead directly to a job.

AACC President and CEO Dr. Walter G. Bumphus said, “The President’s proposal reflects the essential cooperation and linkages that must occur between business and higher education if our country is to thrive economically.” AACC Board Chair Dr. Myrtle Dorsey, Chancellor, St. Louis Community College System, noted, “Not only will the proposal help make our economy efficient, it will also provide access to quality training to many students who have not been able to receive needed services.”

The proposal includes bonus funds for especially effective programs, money for state and local governments to help them attract businesses and jobs to America, and money for entrepreneurship training programs. It gives incentives to institutions that are able to develop employment opportunities for individuals who are traditionally hard to serve.

The president’s budget also proposes to fund the Pell Grant program at a sufficient level to increase the maximum award to $5,635 in award year 2013–2014. Currently, 3.5 million community college students receive Pell Grants each year. Dr. Bumphus noted that “Community colleges are fundamentally about access and success, and so is the Pell Grant program. Our students are extremely appreciative that this program continues to receive strong political support.”