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ACCJC Highlights Workforce Partnerships

Driving Student Success and Regional Growth at Two-Year Institutions

SACRAMENTO, CA – The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has released a new paper, *Building a Future-Ready Workforce: Highlighting Best Practices in ACCJC Member Institutions,* that showcases how two-year institutions are meeting today's workforce challenges through strong partnerships with local industry. At a time when workforce demands are rapidly evolving, ACCJC aims to inform national conversations about the value of higher education by sharing innovative practices from its member institutions.

The paper brings together real-world examples from across ACCJC's membership, illustrating the critical role two-year institutions play in preparing students for high-demand fields such as clean energy, healthcare, public safety, biotechnology, and maritime operations.

"This paper celebrates what two-year institutions do best, responding to the needs of their communities and connecting students with meaningful education and career-building opportunities," said Dr. Mac Powell, President of ACCJC. "It's a testament to the agility, innovation, and impact of our member institutions."

The paper features the following programs:

- **Imperial Valley College** is preparing students for clean energy careers through a Department of Energy-backed lithium workforce initiative.
- **Carrington College** is providing hands-on clinical experience in dental and nursing programs through partnerships with Pacific Dental Services and Renown Health.

- **College of the Redwoods**, in partnership with CAL FIRE, is training the next generation of first responders to meet increasing demand for wildfire mitigation.
- **College of the Marshall Islands** is delivering sustainability-focused maritime education aligned with global shipping needs.
- **Merritt College** is connecting students to careers in biotechnology and healthcare through partnerships with Genentech and UCSF Health.

While the paper highlights five robust programs, it represents only a fraction of the partnerships taking place across the ACCJC region. For additional examples of workforce collaboration and program excellence, readers are encouraged to review the companion publication, *Partnership Snapshots: Workforce Collaborations Across ACCJC Member Institutions*.

In addition to showcasing innovative practices, the paper outlines common challenges faced by institutions and partners, such as limited infrastructure and the need for sustainable funding. It also offers policy recommendations aimed at expanding access to workforce education and supporting underserved populations.

"Workforce partnerships are not just about training, they're about opportunity, student success, and regional vitality," said Dr. Powell. "Two-year institutions are making a measurable difference in students' lives and in the communities they serve."

For more information about ACCJC and its current initiatives, visit www.accjc.org.

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The **Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)** is a federally recognized accrediting commission whose institutional accreditation is accepted as a reliable assurance of quality, allowing institutions of higher education access to federal financial aid. ACCJC is unique in its concentration on public and private two-year degree granting institutions, its geographic range, and its membership. Its current 138 public, non-profit, and for-profit member institutions span Arizona, California, Hawai'i, New York, and the western Pacific and include the largest public higher education system in the US, serving 2 million students, and one of the nation's smallest colleges, with 28 students.

ACCJC supports its member institutions to advance educational quality and student learning and achievement. This collaboration fosters institutional excellence and continuous improvement through innovation, self-analysis, peer review, and application of standards.