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Media Contacts:

Dana Haynes
Portland Community College
(503) 977-4421
dana.haynes@pcc.edu

Andrew Epstein
American Lung Association in Oregon
(503) 718-6147
andrew@lungoregon.org

**PCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPTS
TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS POLICY**

*Largest Post-Secondary Education Institution in Oregon Prohibits Tobacco Use
All Campuses by Fall 2009*

PORTLAND, Ore. – March 20, 2009 – At its meeting last night, the Portland Community College (PCC) board of directors gave its official stamp of approval on plans to make all PCC campuses tobacco-free effective Fall 2009.

PCC is the largest post-secondary education institution in Oregon, serving 86,000 students – more than the seven Oregon University System schools combined.

“This is the right thing to do for PCC’s students, staff, faculty and visitors,” said Denise Frisbee, who chairs the college’s board of directors. “We are the largest educational institution in Oregon to go tobacco-free and we hope that others will follow suit.”

Going tobacco-free is a natural step for a college “committed to providing a healthy environment for its employees, students and visitors,” as noted on the tobacco policy page of PCC’s Web site. Upon careful review of the problem and other colleges’ experiences, it became clear that only by going tobacco-free could PCC effectively eliminate the health and accessibility problems related to tobacco and secondhand smoke on campus.

“We applaud PCC’s decision to make their campuses 100 percent tobacco-free,” said Andrew Epstein, school policy manager at the American Lung Association in Oregon (ALAO), which serves as a resource to PCC and other colleges through the Oregon Tobacco-Free College Initiative. “All students and staff deserve learning and work environments free of secondhand smoke, regardless of where they happen to be enrolled or employed.”

PCC student leaders were instrumental in making the case for PCC to go tobacco-free and now are working to ensure that students and others are adequately prepared for the transition, including having access to resources to help quit smoking or manage nicotine cravings while on campus.

At the Sylvania Campus in Southwest Portland, wellness coordinator Carly Poe represents students on the transition committee. "In addition to representing and aiding students as we transition to a tobacco-free campus, I am also a parent. I feel that one of the most important things we can do is to assure a safe and healthy learning environment for future generations," she said. "We make this change not only to protect the lives and well-being of our community, but to educate and empower others to make healthy decisions about tobacco."

According to ALAO, more than 120 U.S. colleges and universities have adopted 100 percent tobacco-free policies, including the following Pacific Northwest schools: Oregon Health & Science University, Oregon Coast Community College and Clark College.

Portland Community College (PCC) is the largest post-secondary institution in Oregon, serving approximately 86,700 full- and part-time students. For more PCC news, please visit us on the Web at www.pcc.edu/news. PCC has three comprehensive campuses, five workforce training and education centers, and 200 community locations in the Portland metropolitan area. The PCC district encompasses a 1,500-square-mile area in northwest Oregon and offers two-year degrees, one-year certificate programs, short-term training, alternative education, pre-college courses and life-long learning.

The American Lung Association in Oregon (ALAO) is the oldest, nationwide, nonprofit, voluntary public health organization in Oregon. The mission of ALAO is to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. Programs focus on asthma, clean air, tobacco prevention and lung disease. For more information, visit www.lungoregon.org. The Oregon Tobacco-Free College Initiative works with community colleges throughout Oregon to reduce tobacco use and eliminate secondhand smoke exposure on campus. For more information on this initiative: www.tobaccofreecollege.org.

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