

April 10, 2019

Co-Chair Roblan, Co-Chair Smith Warner, Co-Vice Chair Knopp, Co-Vice Chair Smith and
Members of the Joint Committee on Student Success

Subject: Don't Leave College Students Behind in New Education Funding

Legislators have a once-in-decade opportunity to invest in Oregon students and reform Oregon's tax system, but the current plan laid out in House Bill 2019 leaves college students behind.

By 2020, 65 percent of new jobs are expected to require education and training beyond high school. To provide Oregonians the opportunity they need to thrive and for businesses to help grow the economy, we need to support students from cradle to career. Since Measure 5, Oregon students have seen tuition increases vastly outpace inflation while programs and services have been cut because state investment fell further behind. Student debt is higher than it's ever been.

Being able to a part of the PCC LSAMP (Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation) has changed me in many ways. Starting my first year of college, I was shy and had low self-esteem. I never thought I would participate in anything. Then I discovered the LSAMP program, which serves Black, Latino/a, Native American, Alaska Native and Pacific Islander students interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) degrees and careers. The program also helps you transition to PSU for your Bachelor's degree after you complete your Associates.

I applied for the program and attended one of the workshops offered by LSAMP, where I met other students pursuing a STEM career. Getting to know my fellow LSAMP alumni, I have learned that background doesn't matter, because at the end of the day we all have the same goal: to launch successful STEM careers. Being around students with the same goal has given me the ambition to become a civil engineer. I'm grateful to have been able to learn more about myself as part of this program and hope for it to continue. Student support like the LSAMP program is key to helping students succeed.

We urge you to support Governor Kate Brown's call for including post-secondary education in the spending proposal before this committee.

Jose Cenicerros