ACM CONTINUES PROGRESS WITH CAMPUS UPGRADES, REGIONAL IMPACT

CUMBERLAND, Md. – Allegany College of Maryland is planning major improvements to its campus that will further increase participation by the community and bolster the institution's considerable economic impact.

Existing facilities are being upgraded for improved service and greater operating efficiencies, and new facilities are planned to better accommodate current and future audiences.

Now under renovation is the Technologies Building, which houses information technology and telecommunications as well as technology-based academic programs, such as computer science, forestry and multimedia.

Constructed in 1975, the building is due a major overhaul. It will gain a striking two-story atrium, new first-floor lobby and renovated restrooms as well as an elevator to bring the building into Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.

The Tech Building will have a new heating and cooling system fueled by natural gas rather than heating oil. (HVAC systems throughout the campus are likewise being converted to use the more economical energy source.)

A new roof, windows and mechanical systems are all part of the county and state-funded project to renovate the Technologies Building.

The college will soon see construction of two new buildings: one a welcome center that will be the initial point of contact for campus visitors; the other, a training facility for employees of the two nearby state prisons.

The welcome center, funded by a bequest from the late Danny and Dottie Thomas, will greet campus visitors in a structure to be built next to the college library.

The Western Maryland Regional Correctional Training Academy will be housed in a building next to ACM's Center for Continuing Education.

To be erected with a combination of college and county funds and finished with college labor, it will provide a new campus home for corrections personnel and free their former Tech Building space for college credit program and conference use.

Athletics and recreation will also benefit with improvements around the Physical Education Building.

A new softball field will be added and existing tennis courts will be renovated with support from two state grants. High school and city-league teams will benefit from the improvements in addition to the college and larger community.

The new softball field and longstanding baseball field will both gain electronic scoreboards thanks to private-donor support. Outdoor basketball courts also will be resurfaced with donor funding.

ACM further underscores its status as a regional institution of higher education with reduced tuition for eligible students in nearby Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

A new state law allows ACM and other Maryland community colleges to offer discounted tuition to out-of-state students in contiguous counties.

ACM will reduce by 10 percent the cost for residents of six counties enrolled in courses on the Cumberland campus and online starting in July.

The college provides enormous economic value to Allegany County and the surrounding area, contributing nearly $24 million in employee earnings and benefits each year and generating nearly $98 million in total economic impact.

ACM's economic value, showing substantial return on state and local taxpayer dollars invested, was among findings in a recent statewide report commissioned by the Maryland Association of Community Colleges.

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Allegany College of Maryland's Technologies Building will gain a striking new two-story atrium and lobby as part of a major renovation now under way. Replacement windows, renewed interiors, upgraded mechanical systems and heating and cooling equipment powered by natural gas are all part of the project. Americans With Disabilities Act compliance features for the T-shaped structure include an elevator and handicapped-accessible restrooms. The college has engaged the Baltimore architectural firm of Murphy and Dittenhafer to assist it in the renovation.