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President Announces \$12 Billion for Community Colleges: What does this mean for Utah?

Salt Lake Community College officials are prepared to discuss the national and local impact of the new \$12 billion initiative proposed by President Obama designed to reach the goal of graduating 5 million more Americans from community colleges by 2020.

Obama's plan includes \$2.5 billion for construction and renovation at the nation's community colleges, \$500 million to develop new online courses and \$9 billion for "challenge grants" aimed at spurring innovation at the colleges. It is argued that this investment in the United States' community colleges will both drive expansions and spur reforms necessary ensuring people actually get access to education and training in this uncertain economy. SLCC officials can put these developments in perspective and speak to what they mean here in Utah.

According to Obama aides, the \$12 billion for community colleges will be included in the budget bills that Congress considers during the next several months and, if approved, would begin in early 2010.

Not counting those enrolled in certificate programs, there are currently about 6 million students enrolled in community college associate-degree programs.