

# **\$37.9 MILLION INVESTED IN MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE AS PART OF 2013 CAPITAL PLAN**

2013 Capital Plan includes \$298M for community colleges over five years; reflects Administration's commitment to expanding economic opportunity by building world-class public higher education system

GARDNER – Wednesday, October 3, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today announced \$37.9 million in capital funds for Mount Wachusett Community College, furthering the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to building an affordable, world-class system of public higher education in Massachusetts. The college will use the funds for modernization to the Haley Academic Center and the addition of a wet lab.

"Mount Wachusett Community College is full of talent and promise and potential," said Governor Patrick. "These funds will help the students and faculty seize the opportunities before them."

"Our Administration is committed to maintaining Massachusetts' reputation for world-class educational facilities," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "By investing in Mount Wachusett Community College and our institutions of public higher education, we are ensuring the Commonwealth remains at the forefront in educating our students to meet the demands of a changing and competitive job market."

Community colleges across the state are receiving a total of \$298 million over five years through the Patrick-Murray Administration's Capital Plan. Last week, the Governor awarded Mount Wachusett Community College a \$272,000 grant to increase college readiness and ultimate attendance rates, improvement of student success at the College and a new commitment to civic engagement activity. Part of a \$4 million round of awards, that funding will support increased skill training and workforce alignment, improved student learning outcomes and efficiency measures at community colleges across the Commonwealth. These grants, along with the capital investments in community college campuses and programs, deliver on the goals of the Governor's community college initiative to put more people in Massachusetts back to work and to strengthen the connections between community colleges, employers and the workforce.

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has made investing in public higher education a priority," said Secretary of Administration and Finance Jay Gonzalez. "This fiscally responsible investment creates construction jobs today and prepares our students to be the skilled, knowledge-based workforce we need to fill the jobs of tomorrow."

"This investment will not only allow Mount Wachusett Community College to better equip its students with the skills they need to succeed in the classroom and in the workforce, but will also benefit entire communities in its region," said Secretary of Education Paul Reville.

"This investment will provide an exciting opportunity for Mount Wachusett Community College to enhance their educational opportunities and provide new and innovative opportunities for students. By improving the infrastructure at our higher education institutions, we are investing in our future," said Senator Stephen M. Brewer, Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

"I am very happy that the Mount will be receiving funds to modernize the science facilities and the Haley building. Certainly under the leadership of President Dan Asquino, the Mount remains a leader in innovation; however, it is vital that our students have access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities so as they enter the workforce they are competing on a level playing field," said Senator Jennifer L. Flanagan.

In addition to the capital funds being announced for Mount Wachusett Community College today, the 2013 Capital Plan includes funding to start four other community college projects. This underscores the Administration's continued commitment to investing in a community college system that provides relevant, affordable educational and career-focused training programs to prepare students of all ages for both the local job market and further academic study.

The four additional community college projects include:

- \$22.1 for MassBay Community College to construct a new Allied Health academic building and to explore opportunities for a permanent Framingham campus. This project includes Commonwealth bond cap funds, as well as contributions from the community college.
- \$6.8 million for Springfield Technical Community College for major envelope repairs and other renovations needed at the main classroom and student activity building.
- \$21.1 million for Berkshire Community College to renovate the Hawthorne & Melville Halls, including their exterior masonry repairs.
- \$20.7 million for Roxbury Community College to provide needed renovations to the Academic and Media Arts building and plan for new infrastructure related to life science and allied health programing.

In 2008, Governor Patrick proposed and the Legislature approved a \$2.2 billion higher education bond bill. In FY13, the Commonwealth's capital investment in higher education will be more than three times the total amount invested in FY07, when Governor Patrick took office. The full plan will be released in its entirety next week.