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# Maricopa County community colleges receive STEM funding

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By **Mark Remillard**

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PHOENIX - Some of Maricopa County's community colleges will soon receive a welcomed boost in funding for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM programs.

On the heels of Maricopa County passing a \$2.2 billion budget, the Maricopa County Community College District has been awarded an additional \$1.4 million for STEM programs.

"This is the first funding we've gotten in this line since 2009," said Dawn Wallace, director of government relations for MCCCDC.

The \$1.4 million endowment will be broken down into a few areas, with three colleges directly receiving money.

"We're allocating \$400,000 to Chandler-Gilbert (College) for the updating of labs and equipment associated with their aviation and composite manufacturing programs," Wallace said.

Wallace said \$400,000 will also be going to Estrella Mountain College for expansion of the school's energy program, and \$400,000 will go to Mesa Community College for 3-D printing and manufacturing programs.

Funding will also be supplied toward recruiting new students into STEM programs, Wallace said.

Continuing to fund STEM education is important, Wallace said, because educating students in these fields is important for the future growth of not just the students, but Arizona.

"It's critical, it's absolutely critical," she said. "Not only are we an academic resource to the state but we're also part of the economic pipeline."

The district will receive the money at the start of the 2015 fiscal year, which begins on Tuesday.

**Mark Remillard**,

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