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By CCWEEK STAFF (BY-AUTHOR-28-1.HTML) / 2015 December 29 - 10:01 pm

News Briefs, Dec. 21

A summary listing of higher-ed-related news from around the nation

UConn To Offer Scholarships to Transfers

STORRS, Conn. (AP) – The University of Connecticut plans to offer scholarships to help community college students who transfer to the flagship university complete their bachelor's degree.

UConn announced that it will begin awarding qualified community college transfers \$8,000 over two years beginning next fall.

The President to President Scholarship Program will be open to those who earn associate degrees from any of Connecticut's 12 community colleges, obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and are recommended by an academic adviser and the president of their community college.

The scholarships will become part of the program between the community college system and UConn, which guarantees admission to those students who complete necessary courses and meet academic milestones at the community colleges to transfer into UConn as juniors.

S. Dakota College To Close Doors in May

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) – Kilian Community College says it will close its doors after 38 years following its May spring commencement.

The independent, non-profit, educational institution' Board of Trustees voted to cease operations at its annual meeting.

President Mark Millage says it was a difficult decision, but the reality is that the business of higher education is changing at a very rapid pace. Millage says new, local initiatives along with the external competitive landscape put the school's future in doubt.

Classes will be offered as scheduled and scholarships will be awarded for the winter 2015 and spring 2016 semesters. All new students enrolled for the winter term can request a full refund if they choose not to attend.

W. Va. Transfer Pact Focuses on Visual Arts

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. (AP) – Marshall University is partnering with Mountwest Community and Technical College to help students who earn an associate degree in graphic design to obtain a four-year degree in visual arts.

Officials also say Mountwest students who complete two-year degrees in animation and game development can earn bachelor's degrees in computer and information technology at Marshall.

Huntington-based Mountwest has about 2,500 students and offers more than 60 associate degree options and 15-one-year certificates.

For-Profit Court Settlement Will Aid Students

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) – Attorney General Marty Jackley says more than 120 South Dakota residents will get a share of a national settlement against a company that operates for-profit colleges.

Jackley says South Dakota joined with 38 other states in the settlement with Education Management Corporation. The former students from South Dakota will get a combined \$107,502 in loan forgiveness from the company.

The Pittsburgh-based company runs 110 schools in 32 states and Canada for chefs, artists and others, including Argosy University, The Art Institutes, Brown Mackie College and South University.

The company was accused of misrepresenting job placement and graduation rates, using high pressure sales tactics, and misleading prospective students about costs.

The company denied wrongdoing, but said it is working to bring more transparency to its recruitment practices.

La. Colleges Ink Credit Transfer Agreement

BOSSIER CITY, La. (AP) — Some students at Bossier Parish Community College will soon be able to turn their associate degrees into a bachelor's degree through Northwestern State University.

Leaders of both schools signed an agreement that enables students to transfer college credit to the university after obtaining their associate degrees at the community college. The agreements were created for business administration programs, engineering technology and computer information systems.

BPCC Chancellor Rick Bateman Jr. says the agreement will help to ensure that students can earn a four-year degree without having to unnecessarily take duplicate classes.

Northwestern State President Jim Henderson said in a news release that the faculty at both schools worked together so that students will be prepared for the university's baccalaureate programs.

Enrollment Plummets at Ohio College

PERRYSBURG, Ohio (AP) — Enrollment at a community college in northwestern Ohio has fallen to less than half what it was in 2009.

Owens Community College, located about 10 miles south of Toledo, had nearly 24,000 students in that year. The Blade of Toledo reports (<http://bit.ly/1XgS0FC>) the Wood County college said enrollment is now less than 12,000.

The state Department of Higher Education placed Owens on fiscal watch in April.

Owens officials say this semester's decline was expected and shouldn't impede its financial recovery plan, which was passed by college trustees over the summer.

Officials with the College Credit Plus program, which helps students earn college and high school credits, say the enrollment drop is due in part to the strengthening economy, which has sent more people into the workforce.

Ariz. College Mulls Closing Satellite Campus

PHOENIX (AP) — The continued decline in enrollment at Mesa Community College could force the downsizing or even closure of its Red Mountain campus.

The Arizona Republic reports that full-time enrollment at MCC has dropped by nearly a quarter since the 2010-11 school year and by more than a third at the Red Mountain campus specifically.

The 100-acre Red Mountain campus opened less than 15 years ago.

MCC officials have outlined a possible plan involving the conversion of Red Mountain from a campus to an instructional site.

Under that proposal, administrative and enrollment services would be consolidated at the MCC campus.

Wyo. Grad Rate Lags Behind National Average

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) — New data shows that Wyoming's high school graduation rate remains below that of the national average.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports (<http://bit.ly/1T0Qoiw>) the Department of Education announced Tuesday that the national graduation rate hit an all-time high at 82 percent, while a recent state report says Wyoming's graduation rate is 79 percent.

According to the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division report, about 75 percent of high schoolers graduate in Natrona County.

The county school district is experimenting with ways to reach its goal graduation rate of 85 percent by offering alternatives to the traditional classroom experience, such as the Pathways high school.

The school will open in Casper next year and offer vocational classes to help students get college credits along with their high school diploma.

Va. Governor Aims To Expand College Access

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Gov. Terry McAuliffe's upcoming budget proposal will include tens of millions of dollars as part of his higher education plan.

The governor announced that his budget will include \$50 million to increase the number of in-state students receiving degrees and roughly \$48.2 million for in-state financial aid.

McAuliffe also proposed a \$100,000 grant to start planning a regional center to investigate sexual violence on campus.

The governor says his plan includes \$24.6 million for work certification and credentialing programs at community colleges for in-demand industries. An additional \$8.1 million would go toward an online degree completion initiative aimed at adults and nontraditional students.

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