



800 N. Third Street, Suite 405, Harrisburg, PA 17102  
717-232-7584 • [www.pacommunitycolleges.org](http://www.pacommunitycolleges.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Matthew Kemeny, Director of Public Affairs

Cell: (717) 433-8740

[mkemeny@pacommunitycolleges.org](mailto:mkemeny@pacommunitycolleges.org)

## Community colleges optimistic on Gov. Wolf's 2018-19 budget proposal on workforce education and training

**HARRISBURG (February 7, 2018)**– The state's network of 14 community colleges expressed optimism on Gov. Tom Wolf's 2018-19 budget proposal and look forward to collaborating with policymakers to refine the plan to ensure more Pennsylvanians have access to high-quality education and workforce training.

"The governor's proposal will build on the successes of our community colleges, which provide outstanding education and workforce training to more than 317,000 students across the commonwealth," said Commission Chair Dr. Stephanie Shanblatt, president of Bucks County Community College. "We're encouraged by elements of the governor's PAsmart plan and are confident that by collaborating with lawmakers, we can make the plan stronger."

As proposed, the governor's \$50 million PAsmart initiative pledges \$25 million to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, as well as \$10 million to Career and Technical Education and STEM career pathways. It provides for a \$7 million increase in apprenticeships, \$5 million to encourage employers to partner with colleges and universities for job placement, and \$3 million for industry partnerships for job training.

The state's community colleges are the largest provider of education and workforce training in the commonwealth.

While the colleges are grateful for the financial support they receive from the state as well as the support they receive from local sponsors, the colleges and the Commission urge lawmakers to increase the colleges' operating appropriation by \$10.6 million for fiscal year 2018-19 to ensure community colleges remain an affordable option in Pennsylvania.

"An investment in community colleges is an investment in Pennsylvania's future," Commission President and CEO Elizabeth Bolden said. "Continued state support is vital to ensure community college remains an affordable option for students to receive high-quality education and acquire valuable workforce skills."

*The Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges is a voluntary membership association for Pennsylvania's community colleges. Its members include the college presidents, members of the colleges' boards of trustees and key college administrators. The Commission represents the interests of and advocates for the collective needs of the community colleges to federal and state policymakers. For more information, visit [www.pacommunitycolleges.org](http://www.pacommunitycolleges.org).*

##