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News Release

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ROCK SPRINGS – Western Wyoming Community College is one of the best community colleges in the nation according to a recent study conducted by Washington Monthly.

WWCC was ranked 15th among the best community colleges from around the nation. WWCC President, Dr. Karla Leach said, “It is such an honor to be recognized as one of the top community colleges in the nation. Our main focus is meeting the needs of our students and local communities, these results verify that we are indeed on the right track.”

According to the Washington Monthly article, “While all the schools on the list are inexpensive, have open admissions, and are largely unknown outside their local communities, they stand out in teaching and helping students earn degrees. When it comes to quality of instruction they outperform not only their two-year peers, but many elite four-year research universities as well.”

The article’s author, Kevin Carey, wrote, “Community colleges receive far less funding per student than do four-year institutions. This is despite the fact that they are more likely than four-year institutions to enroll students who delay entry to college, have jobs and families, receive a substandard high school education, and struggle economically. In a just world, they would be funded more generously, not less, than four-year schools to compensate for the more difficult job they do.”

Active & Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Support for Learning, Student-faculty Interaction and Four-year Graduation Rate were the identifying factors that determined which community colleges were most accurately meeting the needs of their students.

This information came from two sources: the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and graduation rates published by the U.S. Department of Education.

The CCSSE survey is managed by a nonprofit organization of the same name housed at the University of Texas at Austin. The survey is given to a representative sample of students at community colleges that voluntarily choose to participate. Since 2003, CCSSE has been administered to 68 percent of all community colleges in America. All CCSSE results are published on the organization's Web site, www.ccsse.org.

In 2007, Washington Monthly combined CCSSE results with graduation rates published by the U.S. Department of Education to create the first-ever list of America's best community colleges. This year, the list was updated with all-new CCSSE data ranking more than 650 community colleges nationwide in order to identify the fifty best community colleges of 2010.

Dr. Leach added, "It is because of our dedicated faculty and staff, as well as, the support of our local communities that Western has grown into such an outstanding institution."