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## **New program to bolster California's fight for better air quality**

### ***Foundation for California Community Colleges announces launch of Vehicle Repair, Retirement and Replacement for Motorists program***

**SACRAMENTO, Calif. – February 16, 2010** - The Foundation for California Community Colleges announced it has received up to \$20 million in grant funding to launch a statewide program that will aim to improve California's air quality. The program—called the Vehicle Repair, Retirement and Replacement for Motorists program or "VRRRM"—will bring clean air and fuel efficiency benefits to California consumers by repairing, retiring or replacing 17,000 polluting cars in California and removing more than 850 tons of pollutants from California's airways over the next three years.

"This is a significant step forward for California's air quality," said Paul Lanning, Ed.D., President and CEO of the Foundation for California Community Colleges. "This program represents a collaboration of multiple agencies involved in California's air quality management. It will infuse much-needed funds back into the state's economy while tapping into the educational and training resources of the California Community Colleges, the largest system of higher education in the world."

Through 2013, VRRRM (pronounced "vroom") will provide monetary incentives for motorists to repair, retire or replace their high-emitting vehicles, thereby removing them from California roadways and reducing overall vehicle emissions. VRRRM will supplement already-existing programs in an effort to add momentum to the fight for clean air while increasing the number of California motorists who will be eligible for such benefits. Additionally, it will tap into the workforce training provided by California Community Colleges by involving student assistants at more than 30 different college sites. College students will also aid with outreach to local communities through weekend events held on campuses.

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While there are other repair, retirement and replacement programs already in place throughout California that are making progress toward improving California's air quality, VRRRM is intended to help close the gaps and make vehicle emission reduction benefits open to all motorists, particularly those disqualified from existing programs. The Foundation collaborated with several agencies in developing the VRRRM program including the California Bureau of Automotive Repair, California Air Resources Board, South Coast Air Quality Management District and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

Although motorists throughout the state will benefit from this program, VRRRM will place special emphasis in the Los Angeles and surrounding areas, known as the South Coast Basin, and portions of Central California, known as the San Joaquin Basin. Air quality measurements reveal that these air basins are plagued by the most severe air quality attainment issues in the state and nation. They are the only two air districts in California that have failed to attain federal air quality standards. What's more, nearly half of all California vehicles are registered and operate within these two basins.

Approximately 10 percent of the light-and medium- duty vehicles are responsible for close to 50 percent of the vehicle emissions according to remote sensing studies conducted in the South Coast Air Basin and in other urbanized areas of the country, and it has been found that providing monetary incentives can provide a necessary and cost-effective enticement for retiring many older, higher-emitting vehicles.

The VRRRM program is made possible by a grant from the Reformulated Gasoline Settlement Fund. Created as a result of an antitrust class action, the purpose of the fund is to achieve a clean air or fuel efficiency benefit for California consumers.

The Foundation for California Community Colleges was selected to administer the program due to the organization's statewide reach, and for its involvement in existing air quality programs. Currently, the Foundation works closely with the California Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Automotive Repair to provide air quality testing and support through its statewide network of BAR Smog Check Referee Stations. Through this program, 33 Smog Check Referee Centers located at California Community Colleges located throughout the state perform a variety of smog check services, and are staffed by Foundation Smog Check Referees and community college student technicians.

The program will be fully launched in the late spring, with additional details to be made available at [www.foundationccc.org](http://www.foundationccc.org).

The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official nonprofit foundation to the California Community Colleges' Board of Governors and Chancellor's Office. The Foundation's mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community College system, the largest higher education system in the nation. Incorporated in 1998, the Foundation works with Community Colleges and partner organizations to manage donations, grants, programs, and services that drive excellence in education while saving millions of dollars for colleges each year. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit corporation and receives no direct state or public support. *For more information, visit [www.foundationccc.org](http://www.foundationccc.org).*