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THURSDAY DECEMBER 6, 2007 Last modified: Wednesday, September 12, 2007 10:49 AM CDT

Tech students on rise

By Brennan David

Enrollment at Louisiana Technical College in the region has reached a record 2,392 students, increasing by 24 percent over last year.

The Sullivan campus in Bogalusa is the main campus for the region, which also includes campuses in Hammond, Greensburg and Ascension Parish.

William Wainwright, regional director and Sullivan campus dean, said the current campus enrollments are as follows:

€Hammond, 339 students, an increase of 25 percent,

€Florida Parishes campus in Greensburg, 619 students, a 31 percent increase.

€Ascension campus, 337 students, an increase of 21 percent;

€Sullivan campus, 1,097 students, an increase of 20 percent.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System reports that 51,634 students have enrolled in the system's colleges across the state, representing an increase of 12.4 percent over last year's enrollment.

“The demand for a quality education has never been higher, and Region 9 is fortunate to have the room to grow to enable us to meet this demand,” Wainwright said. “Our goal is to manage growth in a way that enables us to continually improve our educational programs - and the quality of life for students and the community.”

The increase in enrollment comes shortly after Gov. Kathleen Blanco and the Legislature made the largest single-year funding investment for public higher education in more than 25 years.

The budget increase brings Louisiana's public colleges and universities up to a funding level that at least matches the average of peer institutions across the South.

The increase also includes faculty raises and the state's first-ever significant need-based financial aid programs for moderate and low-income students.

“With the increased enrollment at our colleges, the state's share of funding for higher education is both critical and timely as we work hand-in-hand to attract new businesses to our state and to train and build the skilled workforce that Louisiana needs for long-term economic growth,” President Joe D. May said.

The Public Affairs Research Council reported earlier this year that approximately two-thirds of all new jobs in the next few decades will require more training than high school, but less than a four-year college degree.

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