

News Release

THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* KANSAS CITY

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THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO THE TENTH DISTRICT ECONOMY

Enrollment at community colleges across the country has swelled during the recent recession and recovery as unemployed workers seek retraining opportunities and students look for less-expensive alternatives to four-year colleges. The importance of community colleges is likely to continue to grow over the next decade as labor market projections suggest more jobs will be filled by those with two-year degrees or some college.

In the article, “The Importance of Community Colleges to the Tenth District Economy,” economist Alison Felix and research associate Adam Pope of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City explore the role of community colleges in the District—an area that includes Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, Oklahoma, western Missouri and northern New Mexico. The article is available in the third quarter edition of the Bank’s *Economic Review*.

Felix and Pope describe trends in community college enrollment and how these trends contribute to the District’s economic development. The authors also explore the public funding challenges community colleges face during economic downturns as enrollment rises amid declining tax revenue. Felix and Pope also discuss the implications of long-term job projections for community college graduates and whether the District’s states are prepared to educate this growing student population.

The article is available on the Bank’s website at www.KansasCityFed.org.

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