

BTC, WCC Funds Help to Educate

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BELLINGHAM — As the new college school year gets under way, Bellingham Technical College and Whatcom Community College are spending.

Most of the funding listed below is from the state and is approved by the Legislature and governor. Some of the programs are for all community and technical colleges in the state and some are competitive grants applied for by individual schools.

BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Workforce Development (\$73,000): This is the second year of a two-year fund allocation to develop and implement a new dental hygiene program, which is slated to start in fall 2008.

Job Skills Program (\$60,000): Funding by Alcoa Intalco Works and the state to provide Electro Mechanical Technology courses as part of an apprenticeship program to current employees.

Center of Excellence (\$120,000): This is funding to support the college's Center of Excellence, which has been designated by the state as a leader in specialized workforce education and training for industries that increase and strengthen the state's economy.

Best Practice Innovation (\$10,000): Used by the college to enhance technology for marketing, recruitment and advising so that students can access more information on the Internet.

City of Bellingham Grant (\$9,000): Funding from the city to provide dental services for low-income citizens through the college's dental clinic.

WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Work Study Community Service Project Grant (\$35,000): This funding, allocated by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, will be used to recruit and train college students to participate in cooperative sustainable practices. WCC plans to recruit interns interested in science, business or community education fieldwork and link them with local agencies, including RE Sources, Sustainable Connections and Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association.

BOTH COLLEGES

Workforce High Demand: This funding is intended to expand the number of enrollments available in programs that prepare students for careers in fields experiencing labor shortages. At BTC, about \$756,000 has been allocated for expanded enrollment

in process and control technology courses and commercial and industrial construction courses. WCC received about \$210,000 and will use much of it to enhance and expand the online physical therapy assistant program.

Transfer High Demand: Colleges receive this funding to expand math and science courses so that more students transferring to a four-year university will be interested in pursuing degrees in math, science, engineering, engineering technology and computer science. BTC received about \$44,000 and WCC received about \$52,500.

Integrated Basic Skills Education and Training: This is funding to increase the number of students enrolled in I-BEST, a program designed to help students increase their English skills and other basic skills so that they can then enroll in a career program. Both colleges received \$68,250 each.

Early Childhood Education, Math and Science: Funding to increase enrollment in early childhood, math and science courses so that students becoming educators can help build strong math and science skills in young children. BTC received about \$11,000 and WCC received about \$44,000.

Opportunity Grant: This statewide grant allows the college to offer financial support to low-income students while they prepare for a high-demand occupation. Both BTC and WCC were part of the pilot program last year. In addition to funding that remains from the pilot, the schools have about \$344,000 and \$250,000 respectively for this school year.

Department of Labor Pathways to Healthcare: Bellingham Technical College and Whatcom Community College received a \$2.4 million federal grant to be used over three years to increase access to health-care programs, especially for underserved and under-represented student populations.