



Bellingham Technical College  
Press Release

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## **BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE RECEIVES \$119,615 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR GRANT AS PART OF THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT.**

Bellingham Washington – February 21, 2012 – Bellingham Technical College (BTC), in conjunction with Skagit Valley College, the Northwest Workforce Council, and employer partners representing long-term care and acute care, was awarded \$119,615 to carry out the *Health Occupations Pathways to Employment* project. This project will use a regional approach to improve the promotion of incumbent long-term care and hospital employees as well as increasing the employability of dislocated workers from long-term care facilities, hospitals, and clinics. Specifically, the project will fund the training of 30 incumbent and/or dislocated Licensed Practical Nurses to become Registered Nurses, and 20 incumbent and/or dislocated Home Health Aides to become Certified Nursing Assistants.

In November 2011, BTC became a member of the WA Healthcare Worker Training Coalition: Health Care Career Pathways from Long-Term to Acute Care program. In 2009 the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) was awarded \$5 million from the Department of Labor as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to train 550 low-wage Washington Health care workers, enabling them to obtain higher-wage, in-demand health care positions. The WA Healthcare Worker Training Coalition focuses on advancing entry-level workers along the nursing career pathway, providing career transitions from long-term healthcare positions to acute healthcare positions, and expanding the state's healthcare educational capacity.

“This funding provides another crucial piece of funding for creating and maintaining a regional and coordinated approach to implementing career pathways for students interested in beginning and advancing a career in healthcare”, said Gabriel Mast, BTC Health Grants Project Director.

This new grant augments BTC's existing Hospital Employee Education & Training (HEET) and Healthcare Education-to-Career Opportunities (HECO) grants. Primarily this new Health Occupations Pathways to Employment project will expand the funding and support of healthcare training to incumbent and/or dislocated long-term healthcare and home health aide workers.

The WA Healthcare Worker Training Coalition: Health Care Career Pathways from Long-Term to Acute Care Grant Program is jointly administered by the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Training and Education Fund, the SEIU Healthcare NW Training Partnership, and the Health Work Force Institute. Additional partners include seven Washington community and technical colleges, eleven health industry employers, and two workforce development councils. The grant was recently expanded to include Bellingham Technical College and Skagit Valley College along with long-term care and hospital employer partners, the Eastern WA Workforce Development Council, and the Tacoma-Pierce Workforce Development Council.

### **About Bellingham Technical College**

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers 35 associate degree and 64 certificate options providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information, go to [www.btc.ctc.edu](http://www.btc.ctc.edu)

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