



Bellingham Technical College  
Press Release  
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## **Bellingham Technical College receives a FIPSE grant of \$350,000 To Redesign Adult Basic Education Program.**

Bellingham Washington, November 5, 2009 - Bellingham Technical College has been awarded \$350,000 by Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). An additional award of \$150,000 can be earned for progress towards grant goals.

This three-year project will radically redesign BTC's traditional basic skills program, which serves one of the college's fastest growing student populations. The Adult Technical Education Pathway (ATEP) project helps working adults, displaced workers and the under-employed pursue degrees or credentials at Bellingham Technical College. Providing pathways to high-demand, higher wage careers for those needing to develop skills and education to ensure they can get a job or stay working is a key focus.

National, state, and college data show that current educational efforts are falling far short of the goal of moving basic skills students successfully through an educational pathway that leads to a college-level certificate or degree.

"The College's plan to convert its entire adult basic education program to the I-BEST model is ground breaking. No other college in our state system, or elsewhere, has attempted such a dramatic change in adult basic education program delivery," said Jan Yoshiwara, Deputy Executive Director Education Services Division Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

ATEP will integrate innovative practices to systematically revamp BTC's adult basic education program. The project will focus on four areas, including: professional development for faculty; intensive student support; restructure of the teaching and learning environment; and tracking of student progress along a continuum of momentum points towards the "tipping point" (one year of college coursework and a workforce credential). This work will result in a replicable, sustainable model that can be shared and implemented by other colleges.

"Receiving this FIPSE grant gives us essential resources to help support the goals of our basic skills area: to move students out of poverty and get the college-level certificates and degrees they need to enter high-demand, family-wage careers." said Susan Parker, Associate Dean & Interim Tech Prep Director, Bellingham Technical College

This grant process was highly competitive and Bellingham Technical College is one of two organizations in Washington State to receive this award and one of only 29 federally funded FIPSE projects. This FIPSE special focus competition, *Innovative Strategies in Community Colleges for Working Adults and Displaced Workers Program*, <http://www.ed.gov/programs/fipsecc/index.html> supports two-year colleges that propose innovative plans to benefit working adults and displaced workers pursuing degrees and credentials.

**About Bellingham Technical College**

Bellingham Technical College is part of the Washington State Community and Technical College system and offers 34 associate degree and 57 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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