



Bellingham Technical College

Press Release

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BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE RECEIVES \$1.1 MILLION TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES GRANT, IS ONLY FIRST-TIME RECIPIENT IN WASHINGTON STATE

Bellingham Washington – July 21, 2015 – Bellingham Technical College (BTC) is proud to announce that the college has been awarded a TRIO-Student Support Services (SSS) grant from the United States Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education in the amount of \$1.1 million dollars over the next five years. The college is the only first-time recipient of a TRIO SSS award in the state.

The goal of these SSS grants is to keep at-risk students in college and help ensure that they graduate.

“This grant will be a transformative opportunity for the college, allowing us to enhance services to our most vulnerable students in multiple positive ways. We are deeply grateful to the Department of Education for this chance to provide additional support to students that need it the most,” said Dr. Kimberly Perry, President of Bellingham Technical College.

BTC received one of twenty-seven SSS awards granted in Washington State this year. Aside from BTC, all other awards were to colleges that are current or former awardees. SSS funds are awarded – through a highly competitive grant competition – to institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, to assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education.

“We are so proud to have received this grant. We thank the United States Department of Education for recognizing the importance of supporting the students in need. This grant will help keep our students in college and forever change their lives,” said Linda Fossen, Vice President of Student Services at BTC.

At community colleges and technical colleges throughout the state, keeping students in school and helping them finish their degrees is a top priority, particularly since family-wage jobs are increasingly requiring advanced degrees. Many students at Bellingham Technical College are attending school while working and taking care of families, and many are unprepared for the rigors of college classes, increasing their risk of dropping out before they get a degree. This grant will help BTC identify and proactively support these students throughout their college careers.

BTC will establish an SSS program that will serve 140 students per year and provide much needed and effective resources and services to students who are at risk of dropping out, with a focus on low-income, first generation and students with disabilities.

Services the college will provide to SSS project participants include a summer bridge/orientation program, which will incorporate early assessment of student skill and ability levels and individualized success plan development. Students will benefit from intensive coaching and peer mentoring services; specialized, accelerated precollege math support; dedicated academic support and college success coursework; leadership development activities; cultural and educational opportunities; and an online social networking program. The grant will allow the college to hire several staff members, including a project director, student success coach, tutors and peer mentors, to work with students and support them throughout their studies. The college is fully committed to this grant program and will provide substantial support to help ensure its success.

What is TRIO?

The Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) are Federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to postbaccalaureate programs. TRIO also includes a training program for directors and staff of TRIO projects.

Below is a listing of Washington State TRIO SSS grant recipients:

Bellevue College
Bellingham Technical College
Big Bend Community College
Central Washington University
Centralia College
Columbia Basin College
Edmonds Community College
Evergreen State College
Grays Harbor College
Grays Harbor College-STEM
Green River Community College
Heritage University
Highline College
Lake Washington Institute of Technology
Lake Washington Institute of Technology-Disabled
Lower Columbia College
Northwest Indian College
Pierce College/Lakewood
Seattle Central College
Skagit Valley College
South Seattle College
University of Washington
University of Washington-STEM
Walla Walla Community College
Washington State University/Pullman
Washington State University/Tri Cities
Yakima Valley Community College

For detailed information and interviews regarding individual college plans for their SSS projects, please contact the college directly.

About Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers 35 associate degree and 45 certificate options providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information, go to www.btc.edu. For more news, events, and photos from the college follow us on www.facebook.com/bellinghamtech, www.twitter.com/bhamtechcollege and www.instagram.com/bellinghamtechcollege.

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