



Bellingham Technical College
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For Immediate Release

BTC WINS \$150,000 GRANT FROM COLLEGE SPARK WASHINGTON TO HELP STUDENTS SUCCEED IN MATH

BELLINGHAM — Bellingham Technical College (BTC) is pleased to announce a \$150,000 grant award from College Spark Washington. BTC is one of four two-year colleges in the state to receive a Community Grants award.

This award will help BTC redesign its math programming, assisting students to progress successfully through their required math coursework and complete certificates and degrees. BTC plans to use grant funds to create a competency-based, flipped-classroom mathematics learning model and provide strong student support. In the new model, students will review online modules outside of the classroom: this initial learning and practice will be reinforced in the classroom. The model is intended to effectively redress specific weaknesses in student math knowledge, along with substantially reducing course costs for students.

“Math is considered one of the main barriers to student success in college, so gaining mastery and comprehension of math early on is integral to the long-term success of a student. I am pleased that BTC received this grant to address these issues and look forward to the positive outcomes for our students,” said BTC President Kimberly Perry.

College Spark awarded 10 Community Grants totaling \$1.3 million for two-year colleges, school districts and other education organizations, with projects ranging from strengthening Advanced Placement (AP) programs so they better support low-income students, to using data to better identify and support the needs of middle school students.

“Addressing the struggles students have in pre-college math has been one of BTC’s main priorities as we work to help our students succeed and progress through their education. College Spark has provided us the means to radically redesign our pre-college math classes in a meaningful way that will greatly benefit our students,” said BTC Associate Dean Rod Taylor.

The annual competitive statewide Community Grants Program focuses on building the effectiveness of grantees working with low-income students in middle school, high

school and college by funding new and promising practices that help students become college-ready and transition successfully to college.

“Education is not only about equal access, it is about equity,” said Christine McCabe, Executive Director at College Spark. “These programs were selected because they have the potential to improve persistence and completion rates for low-income students, addressing barriers that poor, first-generation, and minority students face in school.”

This year’s ten grantees will measure results using at least one of the following indicators of future college success:

- **Middle School Math:** Improve math achievement in middle school, one measure of which is the rate of students earning a 3 or higher on the Smarter Balanced Assessment.
- **Early Warning Indicators:** Decreasing the number of middle school students who trigger two of three early warning indicators: five or more absences per semester, course failure, or suspension or expulsion.
- **Remedial Education:** Decreasing the percentage of students who are required to enroll in remedial, noncredit-bearing courses in college.
- **College Math and English:** Increasing the percentage of students who earn their first college-level credits in English or Math.

Since 2005, College Spark’s Community Grants Program has awarded more than 100 Community Grants totaling more than \$17 million.

For a full list of descriptions of grantees, visit the 2017 Community Grants webpage.

[College Spark Washington](#) funds programs across Washington state that help low-income students become college-ready and earn their degrees. Grantees include community-based organizations, K-12 schools and districts, community and technical colleges, four-year colleges and universities, educational nonprofits, and public agencies. College Spark began supporting access to higher education in 1978 and, since 2005, has awarded more than \$50 million to college readiness and degree completion programs throughout the state.

About Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers seven direct transfer degrees such as pre-engineering, pre-nursing, electronics, technology and business, and two Bachelor of Applied Science degrees. BTC offers 38 associate degree and 51 certificate options providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information, go to www.btc.edu.

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