



Press Release
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BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE RECEIVE \$3.25 MILLION TITLE III COOPERATIVE GRANT

Bellingham Washington – October 8, 2015– Bellingham Technical College (BTC) and Whatcom Community College (WCC) are proud to announce the colleges have been awarded a Title III Cooperative Arrangement Development (CAD) grant from the Department of Education in the amount of \$3.25 million over the next five years. The application process for this grant was highly competitive: The BTC/WCC project was one of only three awards in Washington State.

This grant will help the colleges work together to promote success among disadvantaged students, including students from low-income households, first-generation college students, students who have a disability, students of color, and students who are placed into developmental education courses. These individuals may come to the colleges unprepared for the rigors of academic and technical college programs and often do not feel a strong sense of belonging in the higher education environment. BTC and WCC's cooperative project is specifically focused on increasing student retention, completion and transfer rates at both institutions.

"BTC is absolutely committed to helping each of its students achieve their educational goals—including those students who may be struggling financially, who are the first in their family to go to college, or who have a disability. To help our disadvantaged students develop the skills they need to stay in college and complete their programs, we need to provide them with intensive support both inside and outside of the classroom. This Title III grant award will give us the resources we need to build effective student support systems and provide this kind of service for every student who needs it. We are deeply grateful to the Department of Education for this incredible opportunity," said Dr. Kimberly Perry, President, Bellingham Technical College.

The two colleges developed common goals for this project, and will use the funds to develop student coaching programs on each campus, provide professional development for faculty, build their capacity for early identification of student needs and barriers, and provide students with strong academic and social support.

“Whatcom and BTC recognized the need for this type of academic support within our community. As two-year, open-access institutions, we are uniquely positioned and skilled to serve students who may not have the support they need to persist and succeed at college. Working together and with the generous resources of this grant, we will make a significant difference in our community by supporting students who are hoping to transform their lives through higher education,” said Dr. Kathi Hiyane-Brown, President, Whatcom Community College.

About Title III

The program helps eligible institutions of higher education to become self-sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen their academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability.

Below is a listing of Washington State Title III grant recipients:

Bellingham Technical College/Whatcom Community College
Skagit Valley College
Spokane Community College

About Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers nine direct transfer degrees such as pre-engineering, pre-nursing, electronics, mechanical engineering and business. Completion of these degrees prepares BTC students to transfer with a junior status to participating colleges and universities in Washington State. BTC offers 37 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. 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.

About Whatcom Community College

Whatcom Community College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and has been named among the top community colleges in the nation. Whatcom serves 11,000 students annually; 79 percent of graduates will earn transfer degrees to continue their educations at four-year colleges or universities. The remaining 21 percent of graduates will earn professional-technical degrees in high-demand fields such as health care, computer information systems/cybersecurity and business. On its campus in Bellingham, Wash., and through online courses, Whatcom also offers basic education, job skills, and Community & Continuing Education classes. For more information, visit whatcom.edu.

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