

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

TRAINING RESOURCES AND INTERNSHIP NETWORKS (TRAIN)

GRANT PROGRAM

INTERIM REPORT



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Overview:

The TRAIN program authorized the Department of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, to issue grants to not fewer than two community colleges for the purpose of implementing training programs and providing employer sponsored internships for the long-term unemployed.

Legislation states that not less than \$1,000,000 shall be expended as grants to community colleges, working in collaboration with regional one-stop career centers through community college navigators, to identify and engage eligible candidates who will (1) participate in workforce readiness and skills training programs, (2) be placed in employer sponsored internships (at no cost to the student nor the employer), and (3) receive monthly stipends to assist with associated living and travel expenses. The legislation further requires that the program shall be available to “individuals that have been unemployed for longer than 1 year”. It is anticipated that this populace will require a comprehensive suite of support services given their extended unemployment status.

The Department of Higher Education released a request for proposals on March 4, 2016, under the Training Resources and Internship Networks (TRAIN) Grant Program, to award up to \$1,000,000 in grants to eligible community college applicants. The DHE received five proposals totaling \$1,184,709 in grant requests. The review team recommended funding all five proposals at a program total of \$1,028,000. All five proposals offered programs in the allied health sector and each proposal showed sufficient merit to warrant funding.

Due to unforeseen circumstances in the Legislature, release of funds for the TRAIN grant was held up for the summer and was not authorized for release until October 2016. Regardless of the expedited timeline, all colleges were able to get their programs up and running on or near proposed schedules. All grant funds will need to be used up by June 30th, 2017.

Overall, execution of the TRAIN program has been successful. This report will examine each college's program and list performance, challenges and successes so far.

Program Models and Performance

BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Focused Training: Certified Nursing Assistants

Summary Description of Project: The proposed partnership will recruit, assess, and support long-term unemployed/underemployed residents through training of 135 hours of instruction, which includes, work readiness and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training. The training focus will be on literacy and English-language development (as needed) and career readiness coupled with occupational training in healthcare. Adult student learning needs will be addressed through initial screening, classroom training, required clinical internships, and hands-on experiential learning. The CNA program teaches nurse assistant skills through classroom lecture, skills practiced in a fully equipped nursing lab and clinical placement in a long-term care facility. The program structure ranges from five times a week, four times a week, or twice a week and includes the required hours needed to be employed as a Home Health Aide (Certificate of Completion) Healthcare Provider CPR Certification, Hand in Hand Dementia training (Certificate of Completion) and 32-hours of Clinical.

Projected Number of Long-Term Unemployed/Under-employed Served: Enroll 30 students, a minimum of 25 complete successfully, and a minimum of 20 students placed.

Revised Project Timeline and Planned Outcomes: 11/1/16 – 6/30/17: 25 students completing and 20 placements. Employer and campus proposed matching funds: \$54,300 to provide HiSet training, ESOL and a 50% wage match by employer partners. The candidates have been screened for HiSet and language support needs. Additionally,

information received from employer partners indicated that due to a complication with Medicare reimbursements, some are unable to take in funding from the grant; therefore, some employers will be funding student placements at 100% instead of the 50% outlined.

Recommended grant award: \$219,393

CERTIFICATIONS RECEIVED:

- Home Health Aide Certification
- Hand in Hand Dementia Training Certification (8 Hours)
- CPR for Healthcare Professionals Certification
- Nurse Assistant Certification (pending Red Cross exam outcomes)
- 32 hours clinical instruction

ENROLLMENT BREAKDOWN:

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>STUDENTS ENROLLED</u>	<u>STUDENTS COMPLETED</u>
January 9th Cohort	9	9
January 18th Cohort	3	Pending
February 7th Cohort	10	Pending
March 9th Cohort	8 (pending enrollment)	Class Has Not Started

Although off to a slow start in recruiting, BCC now has a steady flow of students coming in to fill out applications due to changes in eligibility guidelines. They currently have 22 students enrolled in active classes, with an additional 8 students registered for the final cohort beginning on March 9th, and 6 potential students on a waiting list. Of those 22 students enrolled, 9 will be taking their Red Cross credentialing exam on Monday, February 27th.

In addition to occupational training, a 12-hour career readiness class has been included for students. In this course, students have the opportunity to build their resume, practice preparing for an interview and discuss skills needed to be successful within a working community.

CHALLENGES

As part of this initiative, the planned stipends to assist with living and travel expenses for 12 weeks has been challenging. After examining a number of different possibilities, BCC decided to set the participants up as vendors in their accounting system, however the process of students becoming approved as vendors at the State level has not allowed this benefit to be paid to participants in a timely fashion. With the first class almost completed, students are yet to receive any of the support stipends to date, but the campus is working on addressing this issue.

PARTNER INVOLVEMENT

To help students and employers in the process, a job fair was conducted for the students graduating from the first cohort. While attending the job fair, students took advantage of the opportunity to apply for employment and learn more about each facility. Our employer partners found the format to be a meaningful way to communicate and reach students.

BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Focused Training: Pharmacy or Emergency Medical Technician or Certified Nursing Assistant

Summary Description of Project: BHCC's TRAIN program is designed to serve the long-term unemployed through two training components:

1). A 14-hour workplace readiness course, during summer 2016, focused on interpersonal skill sets those entry-level workers will need in order to succeed in their positions. This non-credit course will prepare participants for their workplace internship experience during occupational training, as well as for successful transition to employment

2). Three options for occupational skills training and certification during the fall 2016 semester (September-December) which align with the Department of Higher Education's industry sector workforce plans in allied health:

1. Pharmacy Technician: Prescription preparation; inventory control; record keeping; packaging of drugs, and customer service.
2. Emergency Medical Technician (EMT): Provide emergency care to victims of accidents and other illnesses before victims are transported to a hospital assessment.
3. Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA): support nursing staff by providing basic care for patients.

All three programs are credit-bearing, offer industry-recognized credentials, connect graduates with job opportunities in growth occupations, and prepare graduates to pursue continued education toward more advanced degrees and certificates. All three programs also include internships to provide students with hands-on experience in actual work settings. Participants also will receive advising and case management from BHCC's Allied Health Coordinator. BHCC will leverage time for key staff and administrators as a matching contribution.

Employer and campus proposed matching funds: None

Recommended grant award: \$181,006.

- Project Number of Long-Term Unemployed Served: 36
- Revised Project Timeline and Planned Outcomes:
 - The original start date for the DHE TRAIN program was to begin May 2, 2016 and complete May 1, 2017. Due to a delay in the release of funding the start of the program began January 9-12, 2017 providing a Workplace Readiness Training module to the grantees.
 - The 16 week, specialized course training began spring semester (January 17, 2017) and the scheduled date for completion is summer semester May 1, 2017.
- Updated Outcomes:
 - Initial Enrollment: 30
- Current Enrollment
 - 13 Emergency Medical Technicians; 4 hours of practical skills are included
 - 8 Nursing Assistants (2 withdrawals); Will complete acute clinical hours March 18, 19 & 25
 - 6 Pharmacy Technicians (1 withdrawal); Clinical will begin April 10, 2017
- The training programs expect 85% of students to be placed in and complete internships, and at least 80% completing occupational training and 80% of completers obtaining full-time employment within six months of completion.

An Employer's Workshop is scheduled for April 27th from 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., there will be several employers on hand, the list is being finalized and an update will be provided. Students have expressed sincere thanks for the opportunity to receive the training. Each student feels fully prepared and ready to commit to full time employment in his or her training area.

HOLYOKE AND SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES:

Focused Training: Home Health Aides/Personal Care Attendants

Summary Description of Project: Holyoke Community College (HCC) and partner institution, Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) are proposing to offer a TRAIN project of workforce readiness, technical skills training, internships, wrap-around services and job coaching within the healthcare industry for the long-term unemployed residents of the Pioneer Valley.

The project will offer two phases of training to participants – Workforce Readiness and Technical Skills – that will prepare them for internships and job placements as Home Health Aides (HHA) or Personal Care Attendants (PCA). All participants will also receive OSHA-10 Certifications, National Career Readiness Certificate preparation and testing, First Aid and CPR certification, and career pathway advising about the health care industry – especially how an entry-level position such as HHA/PCA can lead to job and wage advancement.

Project Number of Long-Term Unemployed Served: 64

Revised Project Timeline and Planned Outcomes: November 2016 – June 2017. The project will offer training sessions to four cohorts of participants. The project will use the first two weeks for start-up activities, and then for each cohort – three weeks for recruitment, assessment, and enrollment of participants, followed by six weeks of training, four weeks of internship, and four weeks of job coaching and placement. Though for a project with a short timeframe, recruitment, assessment and enrollment will take place nearly continuously to ensure each cohort has full participation.

Employer and campus proposed matching funds: None

Recommended grant award: \$228,529.

CLASSES:

1st cohort: Nov 1 – Dec 12 2016

2nd cohort: Jan 9-Feb 22

3rd cohort: March 1 – April 28

4th cohort: May 1 – June 6

EACH CLASS COHORT FOLLOWED BY UP TO 30 DAYS WORK EXPERIENCE COMPONENT

Proposed adjusted outcomes below:

Blue = actual Red = change

Revised Outcome Measure	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	TOTAL	
Attend Awareness Session	76	35	35	35	176	
Complete Assessment	22	22	22	22	88	
Enrolled in Training Program	12	15	15	15	57	% of Enrolled
Benefit Screening – Thrive Centers	12	15	15	15	57	100%
National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)	10	11	11	11	43	75%
OSHA-10 Certificate	10	11	11	11	43	75%
Home Health Aide (HHA) Workforce Readiness Certificate	10	11	11	11	43	75%
CPR Certificate	10	11	11	11	43	75%
Alzheimer Certificate	10	11	11	11	43	75%
Program Completion	10	11	11	11	43	75%
Internship Completed	9	9	9	9	9	63%
Employed for 30 days after program	8	9	9	9	35	62%

Plan for the next half of the grant period: Complete Placement of 1st cohort, Work Experience; Complete 2nd cohort Feb 22, begin placement and Work Experience; Recruit, train, case manage and place Cohorts 3 and 4 in accordance with above Timeline.

Currently enrolled to date: 27

Completed to date: 10 (13 additional expected to complete Feb 23 for total of 23)

Gained employment to date (8 out of first 10. We are still engaged with other 2, who face transportation challenges, and expect to place them),

MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Focused Training: Certified Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aides

Summary Description of Project: The project addresses a need in north central Massachusetts to fill Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) and Home Health Aide (HHA) position vacancies. The training program will provide stackable credentials to participants, beginning with First Aid and CPR certifications, then CNA certification by the American Red Cross. Beyond these three certifications, training will then consist of three (3) post-CNA training tracks in: Acute Care Training, Home Health Aide Training, and Care of the Client with Complex Needs. These tracks directly address developing the skills expressly sought by employers in acute care, home health care, and long-term care settings, respectively.

Participants who are long-term unemployed or underemployed will be prepared for workforce re-entry in a career pathway expected to grow for some years to come in the region. While participants will be employment-ready upon completion of the CNA credential, they will be encouraged to remain enrolled to complete the post-CNA specialty trainings to better assure their marketability in the sector.

Project Number of Long-Term Unemployed Served: 20

Projected Timeline and Planned Outcomes: Project training will occur from August 2016 through December 2016. At least 14 program completers are expected to enter employment within six months after completion.

Employer and campus proposed matching funds: \$20,228

Recommended grant award: \$199,072.

Modifications needed to original plan:

- The stipends will be issued as scholarships as they hit their objectives, they will no longer be outsourced through payroll.
- We will be adding a training prep course to prepare the participants for the MA Nurse Aide State Testing.

Updated timeline:

- Two tracks, The Client with Complex Needs and Acute Care, have been delayed due to clinical requirements.
- Training most likely will conclude by July 15th; however, all funds will be encumbered by June 30, 2017.

Plan for the next half of the grant period:

- Participants in groups 1 & 2 will continue with their Career Readiness and Workplace Success training; as well as starting their The Client with Complex Needs, Acute Care and Home Health Aide training.
- Recruitment efforts will continue for the start of groups 3 & 4.
- Group 3 will start tentatively on March 6, 2017; Group 4 will start tentatively on April 3, 2017.
- State Testing Exam will be assigned directly by the Red Cross for Groups 1 & 2 at same time.

Currently enrolled to date = 8

Completed to date = 5 (completed the CNA training with Red Cross)

- Group 1 = 2; Group 2 = 7 (1 removed due to absentees, 1 withdrawn, 2 transferred to start in March); Group 3 = 3 (Red Cross training started on February 6, 2017)

Gained employment to date = 3 with Life Care

QUINSIGAMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Focused Training: Certified Nursing Assistant

Summary Description of Project: This project will focus on the multi-faceted workforce development needs of long-term (1 year+) unemployed individuals in the Central Massachusetts community. The project's vision is to help long-term unemployed, low-income individuals build their economic self-sufficiency through an innovative healthcare service delivery program that includes workforce readiness training, certified nurse aid skills training, education, paid clinical/internship experiences, monthly stipends, job placement, and comprehensive wrap

around support services, that is aligned with DHE's sector workforce plan, centered at QCC's downtown campus and connected through a WDC "campus" network. Student centered wraparound support services will be provided through WDC partner organizations and agencies and will include transportation, child care, nutrition, financial literacy comprehensive case management, coaching, individualized service plans, skills training and employment related services.

Project goals are to enroll 30 long-term unemployed individuals in the CNA program, all 30 will participate in a paid clinical/internship experience at either Knollwood at Briarwood or Beaumont Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing (contact information included on letters of support). In addition, 27 students will complete their program of study and 25 will obtain employment.

Employer and campus proposed matching funds: \$26,359

Amount of grant request: \$200,000.

Project Number of Long-Term Unemployed Served: 30

Revised Project Timeline and Planned Outcomes:

6/23/16: ran 1st information session for students. Recruited 10 students

12/5/16 - 12/9/16 – 10 (cohort 1 students) completed the BOUNCE work readiness program

1/18/17 - 2/24/17 - currently in Nurse Assistant/Home Health Aide Training

2/7/17 – Financial Literacy workshop

TBD – Red Cross Exam

2nd COHORT:

12/13/2016 information session for students. Recruited 10 students

3/6/17 - 3/10/17 BOUNCE work readiness program scheduled

3/21/17 – 5/2/17 Cohort 2 Nurse Assistant/Home Health Aide Training scheduled to run

TBD - Financial Literacy workshop

TBD – Red Cross Exam

3rd COHORT

2/7/17 information session for students.

5/1/17 – 5/5/17 BOUNCE program scheduled

5/8/17 – 6/16/17 Cohort 3 in Nurse Assistant/Home Health Aide Training

TBD - Financial Literacy workshop

TBD – Red Cross Exam

Note: Due to budget restructuring QCC eliminated the ACT Work Keys work readiness testing and credentialing.

Summary - Project Modifications

Determining eligibility:

TRAIN was originally intended to assist long-term unemployed (LTU) individuals and 'long-term' was defined in the grant as longer than 1 year. Given the shortened time-period of the grant, and the difficulty in finding these individuals due to their disconnectedness from the system, refining the length of time "long-term" meant by extending the definition for eligible participants to low-wage/underemployed workers was determined to be needed.

The spirit of the grant is to give those who are often at lower rungs of the socioeconomic ladder an opportunity to gain college-based training that leads to a credential, and hopefully a job with benefits. Keeping that in mind, the definition of LTU was modified to include those who are at 30 weeks or more of unemployment. Career centers

have been using the measure of 30 weeks as a starting point to define LTU as well. Since this is also about the length unemployment insurance lasts for, this would make sense for the purposes of this grant. Furthermore, this is also in line with how the USDOL Bureau of Labor Statistics defines it. BLS definition:

http://www.bls.gov/bls/cps_fact_sheets/ltu_mock.htm

“Long-term unemployed refers to individuals who have been looking for work for 27 weeks or more.”

In terms of defining underemployed or low-wage workers, WIOA regulations would certainly meet the required standards. <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf> (page 11, #36):

(36) *LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.*—

(A) *IN GENERAL*—The term “low-income individual” means an individual who—

(i) receives, or in the past 6 months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past 6 months has received, assistance through the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families program under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), or the supplemental security income program established under title XVI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.), or State or local income-based public assistance;

(ii) is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of—

(I) the poverty line; or

(II) 70 percent of the lower living standard income level;

(iii) is a homeless individual (as defined in section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e–2(6))), or a homeless child or youth (as defined under section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)));

(iv) receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

(v) is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or

(vi) is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirement of clause (ii), but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement.

Partners began using these modified definitions and have been successful in filling programs with participants who would benefit most from the training and support services. There was some pressure from the career center system to expand the definition to include those who were coming to the end of their benefits, but it was determined that doing this would stray too far from the spirit of the grants intent.

Data collection:

At one point early on in the activity, the group asked about use of a common application. After some discussion, it was decided to not use one given the time constraints and significant investment in developing one that would work for all programs and partners. Therefore DHE produced some basic data points that will be collected by all college partners, then aggregate the data and use that as a measure for the project. Coupled with this activity, BCC and HCC will be participating in a formal evaluation process which will be shared with all partners.

Stipends:

Colleges have implemented the stipend portion in a variety of creative ways, each coming up with unique ways to get the money into the hands of participants. These methods have met with varying levels of successes. One major challenge colleges grappled with was how to actually get the money into the hands of the participants since not all colleges had had familiarity with doing this.

Complicating matters, it became apparent that these stipends could (or were perceived to) effect the public benefits most participants received. BCC experienced that some of the participants have turned down stipends due to the effect any extra income would have on their public assistance. For example, after beginning to look into this, BCC found out that while it would have a marginal effect on transitional assistance benefits, the effect was less clear for other benefits. Regardless, many of the participants in BCC’s program refused to bring the issue up to their DTA counselor (most likely a “don’t rock the boat” reaction) to get a clearer answer on any impact on an individual basis. DHE felt like this was a good opportunity for partners to connect with other CBO’s that might have a better handle on these ‘cliff effects’ and provide some guidance to participants on this issue. For those that did turn down the benefit, BCC decided that they would convert the cash stipends into supplies for graduates including scrubs, stethoscopes, comfortable work shoes, etc. This was agreeable because the benefit still went to the student, even if it wasn’t in cash. The partners will continue to deal with this issue as the project goes on.

Other examples of how colleges got creative with 'paying' their participants include QCC which opted to let their partnering CBO pay the students weekly based on 'timesheets' the college submitted to the CBO detailing the number of hours each student was in class for. BHCC pays their student stipends out of a scholarship fund from their Financial Aid Office. This way the students don't have to report these earnings as income.

In summary, it is clear that the stipend issue needs more study if it is to become a more prominent part of a methodology for assisting the long-term unemployed complete training programs. A more complete evaluation of these methodologies will appear in the final TRAIN report at the end of the project.

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