

**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FY02-05

1. Governor’s Discretionary Funds – Department of Labor and Industry (June 2003-Sept. 2004)

The Workforce Development Unit (OCHE) has entered into an agreement with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry—Statewide Workforce Programs Bureau to transfer \$80,000 to the Workforce Development Unit to build an infrastructure that leads to reducing the healthcare worker shortage. This project will develop a statewide education program focused on a critical health care field such as radiology technology, medical coding, medical technician or pharmacy. A consortium model for statewide delivery will partner two-year institutions with medical facilities. The first pilot program will be operational by spring ‘04 and will serve as the model for future statewide delivery of high demand programs.

2. Governor’s Discretionary Funds – Montana Department of Commerce (May 2003-ongoing)

The Department of Commerce’s Workforce Training Grant makes available a total of \$800,000 to Montana businesses for incumbent worker job training for existing and new employees. The Workforce Development Unit (OCHE) assisted the St. Vincent Hospital Foundation (Billings) to apply for funds to retrain a pool of incumbent healthcare workers into high skill, high demand healthcare areas. The application was submitted by the St. Vincent Foundation on behalf of St. Vincent Hospital in Billings and St. James in Butte. The Workforce Development Unit in coordination with two-year institutions provided the training plan for the designated programs. The grant award was \$150,000 (5,000 per position) to retrain 30 individuals.

Saint James		Saint Vincent	
5	LPN to RN	13	CNA to LPN; LPN to ASRN; ASRN to RN
1	Surgical Tech to RN	3	Pharmacists
1	Housekeeper or Radiology Aide to Radiology Tech	2	Radiology Tech
1	Housekeeper to Radiology Tech	2	Respiratory Care
		2	Surgical Tech

3. Workforce Investment Act Section 503 Incentive Grants (July 2003 – June 2005)

Montana was one of 16 states to meet or exceed the performance levels for Perkins, Title I of WIA (MJTP), and Title II Adult Education and qualifying to submit an application for an Incentive Grant. The grant will provide \$750,000 for workforce education and training in Montana.

As partners, WIA Title I, Adult Education Title II and Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education, have agreed to adopt a career pathways approach to workforce development focusing on the healthcare cluster. Each partner will receive 33.3% of the funds with the Department of Labor, Workforce Services Bureau, as the administrative entity. Initial commitments include:

- Perkins: coordinate health care career pathways in two-year institutions; identify gaps in training needs; and design statewide delivery of programs.
- Adult Education: identify and train the unprepared adult; and provide career counseling.
- Montana Job Training Partnership: provide Soft Skills training; identify potential students; and provide transitional services.

4. Career Clusters Initiative (September 2002-ongoing)

Under the direction of the Workforce Development Unit (OCHE), career and technical educators from across the state have received professional development to assist them in developing a Career Clusters approach to education and training. This initiative will be aligned with the workforce development recommendations of the Cluster-Based Economic Development Model being implemented in Montana through Regional Technology Strategies (RTI).

5. Industry Clusters (May 2003-ongoing)

In partnership with Dr. Stuart Rosenfeld, president of RTI, the Workforce Development Unit (OCHE) is working with Montana State University Great Falls to establish a Design Center based on the Creative Enterprise Cluster. This cluster was identified through the recent Regional Industry Cluster Study completed by RTI. Support of creative arts as an engine of a regional economy (particularly in rural areas) is a viable workforce development issue.

Potential activities to advance the efforts of the college, the opportunities for their students, and the competitiveness of craft-based clusters may include:

- Developing design and art-based career paths beginning in high school;
- Offering crafts concentrations in business and manufacturing programs;
- Introducing art and design into commercial and manufacturing programs of study;
- Building crafts incubators;
- Finding appropriate technologies for small scale production, including more effective use of IT for both marketing and design;
- Organizing skill alliances;
- Apprenticeships in crafts businesses; and,
- Improving small business management skills (Entrepreneurship).

6. National Governors' Association: NGA Policy Academy – Workforce Development—the Next Generation (March 2003 – June 2005)

Montana was one of six states chosen to participate in the NGA academy. The states are: Idaho, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Ohio, and Virginia. Montana's major goals are:

- organizing workforce development around industry clusters by organizing cluster associations and establishing cluster skill centers; and
- increasing the use of two-year education institutions for workforce training and supporting innovative delivery systems that provide for continuous learning.

The team members represent state agencies, education, local government and business. The academy team will work with the NGA for a two-year period to design and implement strategies to accomplish the above goals.

6. Passport Project (July 2000-June 2002)

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services entered into an agreement with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education – Workforce Development Unit to utilize federal TANF funds for providing high skill, high wage job training to the target population of caretaker relatives residing in households with minor children, with incomes less than 150% of the federal poverty level. This project funded high skill, high wage job training through a statewide request for proposal process.

A total of \$1,309,636 was given to 14 projects that fell into three major categories:

- Tuition assistance at a post-secondary institution;
- Specific skills training and job placement; and,
- Remedial training to allow participants to attend a post-secondary institution or receive job-specific training.

Although funding for the program was reduced due to an increase in welfare caseloads, all of those involved deemed the Passport Program a success. As of December 31, 2001 there were 168 participants in the fourteen projects with an average cost per participant of \$800.00. This partnership is considered a model for state agency collaboration.

6. Carl D. Perkins Funds for Career and Technical Education (ongoing)

The Carl D. Perkins Basic Grant is distributed to schools and colleges to support career and technical education.

- 12 postsecondary institutions (including tribal colleges) serve 5,610 students;
- 144 secondary schools serve 11,394 students; and,
- 10% of the funds are reserved for providing programs for individuals living in rural areas.

State Leadership Funds

- Nontraditional grants to support individuals entering and completing a program of study considered nontraditional by gender;
- Career Pathways based on Industry Clusters; and,
- ACT Center for assessment of student aptitude, certification of skills, online skill acquisition, and profiling of jobs for industry

Tech Prep

Tech Prep articulates courses at the secondary level with postsecondary technical courses.

- Five Tech Prep consortia
- 176 secondary schools in Tech Prep consortia.
- 160 articulation agreements with 11 postsecondary schools.
- Three out of state postsecondary institutions (Northwest College, Powell, Wyoming; Northwest Wyoming Community College in Sheridan, and the Art Institute of Seattle) have signed articulation agreements with Montana schools
- 306 postsecondary courses articulate to 2,211 secondary courses