

The President's Community-Based Job Training Grants

Overview

In his FY 2005 Budget, President Bush proposed \$250 million for Community-Based Job Training Grants to strengthen the role of community colleges in promoting the U.S. workforce's full potential. This employer-focused competitive grant program seeks to invest in and offer training in community and technical colleges. It builds on the High Growth Job Training Initiative, an effort in which community colleges take part as grantees and key partners. For his FY 2006 Budget, the President requests an additional \$250 million for Community-Based Job Training Grants.

Technology and innovation, globalization, and the aging of America's workforce are continuously changing the nature of work as well as needs in the workplace. Businesses in high growth, high demand industries face increasing difficulties in finding workers with the skills they need. As a result, community colleges will be increasingly critical providers for workers wanting to develop, retool, refine, and broaden their skills. Because of their close connection to local labor markets, community colleges are well positioned to prepare workers for high demand occupations.

Grant Process

To implement this initiative, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration will conduct a competitive Solicitation for Grant Applications. The \$248 million appropriated in FY 2005 for Community-Based Job Training Grants will begin to be available July 1, 2005. To be eligible for funds, community colleges (as defined by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act Amendments of 1998, Public Law 105-332) will be required to demonstrate they are engaged in a strategic partnership that includes business and industry and the workforce investment system. Proposals must be designed to identify workforce challenges and implement workforce solutions for the locally identified high growth, high demand industry.

The funds must be used for both of the following activities:

- 1) Increasing the capabilities of community colleges to provide training in a local high growth, high demand industry through activities such as the development of training curricula with local industry, hiring qualified faculty, arranging on-the-job experiences with industry, and using up-to-date equipment; and
- 2) Training new and experienced workers in identified high growth, high demand industries, with the aim of employing and/or increasing the retention and earnings gains of trained workers while meeting the skill needs of the businesses within the industry.

