

# President's Community-Based Job Training Grants

## Northwest Iowa Community College

**AWARD AMOUNT:** \$1,740,322

**AREA SERVED:** Sioux, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola and Cherokee Counties, Iowa

**INDUSTRY:** Biotechnology

**KEY PARTNERS AND LEVERAGED RESOURCES:** \$694,394 in leveraged resources from six employer partners, two workforce partners, four education partners

**CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS:** As the biotechnology industry continues to grow and mature, there will be an increasing demand for well-trained technicians in both research and production. This emerging industry offers high wage jobs and new employment opportunities for Iowa's dislocated workers. Yet, the college lacks the startup funds needed to purchase up-to-date equipment and to develop a Lab Technician program for training workers according to industry needs.

**ACTIVITIES:** The project is multi-faceted and includes: 1) A pre-training program that enhances science course offerings delivered at the high school level; 2) The development of a 2-year Associate Degree Lab Technician Program for biotechnology careers; and 3) A business industry training component for incumbent workers to receive skill enhancements. The program will include many lab-based courses and work to develop specific skills such as written and oral communications, critical thinking, problem-solving, computer skills and small group collaboration. Students will participate in internships in cooperation with potential employers. High school students will be offered dual enrollment at the campus or via the Iowa Communications Network.

### PROJECTED OUTCOMES:

- Approximately 280 participants will be trained under the grant;
- Curriculum and marketing materials for bioscience/biotechnology careers will be developed;
- 20-40 science instructors will be trained through professional development workshops;
- 75-90 students will be enrolled in the Associate Degree in a Lab Technician Program;
- 80% of 2<sup>nd</sup> year students will either transfer to a 4 year institution or be employed in the biotechnology industry within 6 months of graduation;
- 80% of participants starting the enhanced training will receive a certificate of completion;
- Employment retention among the participants will be at 80%;
- 20% of incumbent workers trained will receive advancement;
- 150 high school students will increase literacy and numerical skills; and
- 120 middle and high school students will participate in additional science activities annually.

