Grantee: Whatcom Community College

Industry Focus: Healthcare

Key Partners: Northwest Workforce Development Council; Center of Excellence for Allied Health; Northwest Alliance for Healthcare Skills; St. Joseph Hospital; Lynden Christian Health Care Center; Whatcom County Tech Prep Consortium; and University of Washington – Bothell.

Grant Amount: $1,848,707

Leveraged Amount: $1,945,840

Location of Grant Activities: Bellingham, Washington

Challenge: By 2012, the demand for registered nurses (RN) in Northwest Washington is expected to increase by 27.5 percent and nursing assistants (NA) by 18.7 percent. Washington has many key challenges to addressing this need, such as a chronic healthcare workforce shortage, limited clinical capacity for program expansions and professional development, and a lack of available training. Unfortunately, due to the lack of qualified faculty and limited clinical sites, Whatcom Community College (WCC) does not have the ability to expand its RN and NA programs.

Addressing the Challenge: The Transitions to RN Online project is designed to increase the training capacity of WCC's RN and NA programs through expanded access to adults, incumbent workers, and retired nurses by utilizing online learning to reach rural and working residents in Whatcom County and the Northwest region. An hybrid of the Associates Degree of Nursing (ADN) program as well as the Nursing Assistant Course will be taught online with labs held on-campus and clinicals held at employer sites. This multifaceted strategy will provide training opportunities to meet the needs of those adults whose schedule or geographic location does not allow them to attend traditional campus-based nursing education.

Projected Outcomes:
- 10,000 participants will be served.
- 770 participants will enroll in education and training activities.
- 520 participants will complete education and training activities.
- 400 participants will enter employment.
- 270 participants will receive a certificate or degree.