

Community-Based Job Training Grants

Northwest-Shoals Community College



Grantee: Northwest-Shoals Community College

Industry Focus: Healthcare

Key Partners: Sheffield One-Stop Career Center; Alabama Office of Workforce Development; Muscle Shoals High School; University of North Alabama; Eliza Coffee Memorial Hospital; North Mississippi Health Services; Helen Keller Hospital; Mitchell-Hollingsworth Nursing and Rehabilitation Center; Russellville Hospital; SunBridge Center; Shoals Economic Development Authority; Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments; and Alabama State Nurses Association

Grant Amount: \$1,929,716

Leveraged Amount: \$2,430,458

Location of Grant Activities: Northwest Alabama, south central Tennessee and northeast Mississippi

Challenge: Healthcare is a high growth industry in this region , which is home to 10 nationally identified “nursing shortage counties.” Northwest Shoals Community College faces significant barriers to increasing program capacity including: a lack of resources needed to start up and expand programs and to equip classrooms and labs; difficulty in recruiting nurses to become faculty; an increasing demand for training; and low student retention due to a lack of academic preparedness for program rigor. Three out of four potential nursing students are turned away because of limited program capacity or their own limited academic preparation.

Addressing the Challenge: The Shoals Nursing Transitions Program will be established to meet the workforce needs of the local healthcare industry. The program will expand capacity to train Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Registered Nurses (RNs) by offering new LPN progression options, upgrading classroom and laboratory facilities, delivering instruction through distance education, adding faculty resources, and adapting curriculum and delivery options. An innovative dual enrollment nursing program will be developed in cooperation with partner high schools. It will include a career ladder component allowing high school students to participate in a pilot program where they will receive academic support, advising, counseling and mentoring.

Projected Outcomes:

- Enroll 90 high school students in pilot CNA programs and 60 students in LPN programs over three years
- Increase the number of students enrolled in nursing programs to 76 LPNs (from 31 currently), 214 RNs (from 154) and 60 CNAs (from 15)
- Increase average earnings for CNAs, LPNs and RNs after six months of employment by 20 percent
- Increase total number of high school students admitted to nursing programs by bringing in 90 students from pilot programs over three years