

Community-Based Job Training Grants

Mountain Empire Community College

Grantee: Mountain Empire Community College (MECC)

Industry Focus: Healthcare

Key Partners: Mountain Empire Community College, Southwest Virginia Community College (SwVCC), Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC), Wytheville Community College (WCC), King College, Old Dominion University, Scott County Schools, The University of Virginia's College at Wise, Washington County Skill Center, Wythe County Technology Center, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board, Southwest Virginia Workforce Investment Board, Clinch Valley Medical Center, Johnston Memorial Hospital, Lonesome Pine Hospital, Norton Community College, Smyth County Community Hospital, Tazewell Community College, and Twin County Regional Hospital

Grant Amount: \$1,999,266

Leveraged Amount: \$6,308,149

Location of Grant Activities: Virginia

Challenge: Twelve of the 13 counties served by the Southwest Virginia Healthcare Workforce Development Consortium are designated, in whole or in part, as Health Care Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA), as defined by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). All 13 counties also have been designated as Medically Underserved Areas (MUA) by HRSA. These federal designations indicate a combination of high poverty levels (16.8%) and a shortage of trained healthcare providers. Further, the Appalachian Regional Commission has designated six of the counties in the Consortium service region as "at-risk" and one county as "distressed," meaning that their per capita income, unemployment, and poverty rates are much worse than the national average.

Addressing the Challenge: The Consortium's four community colleges -- MECC, SwVCC, VHCC, and WCC -- proposes an initiative to build capacity and enhance training opportunities within the organization's allied health and nursing programs. The partners are providing cash and in-kind support, annually, to the initiative, including preceptorships, clinical facilities, scholarships, and laboratory equipment. Community colleges with existing programs will translate curricula into distance learning formats for distribution across the four-college Consortium, increasing capacity and addressing healthcare workforce shortages.

Proposed Outcomes:

- Between 252 and 304 people will participate in the expanded healthcare training programs. At least another 170 will enroll each subsequent year
- It is projected that 109 to 132 students will graduate by the end of the grant period
- This initiative will increase the total allied health enrollment capacity across southwest Virginia by more than 125%, and will increase the region's associate degree nursing enrollment capacity by 20 students each year

