December, 2010

Passaic County Community College Shares $70 Million Federal Grant to Train Workers in Health Information Technology.

Projected Demand for Qualified Workers is High

PATERSON, NJ - Passaic County Community College (PCCC) is one of eight New Jersey colleges that will offer new grant-funded training programs in Health Information Technology. Targeting unemployed and underemployed workers, the program is called the *Community College Consortia to Educate Health Information Technology Professionals Program.* It was established at 80 community colleges across the U.S. through a $70 million federal grant provided by the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC).

This training program is expected to satisfy a projected demand for qualified workers in assisting hospitals, doctors' offices, and other health care facilities in transitioning to Electronic Health Records. Official sources predict a potential shortage of more than 50,000 health IT workers over the next five years. To fill the jobs, the new training program aims to produce more than 10,000 trained workers each year until 2012.

"PCCC is now accepting applications for Spring 2011 and space is limited" said Lisa DeLiberto, chair of Health Information Technology programs at the College. "This will have a positive impact on health care and on employment opportunities in New Jersey," she added. The non-degree credit-based programs at PCCC will train workers for health IT jobs in four roles. The Workflow Redesign and the Implementation, Technical and Software Support Certificates will begin in January 2011. A third certificate for a Trainer of Electronic Health Record Systems will be added in September 2011. Students will be awarded Certificates of Achievement upon successful completion.

The intensive training is a six-month program. Part-time study is also an option, but the program must be completed within the two-year grant period. Scholarships are available on a first-come, first-served basis. To be eligible for the program, applicants must demonstrate college-level English and reading skills as well as math skills at least at the pre-college algebra level. Healthcare or IT experience is required. Students must also fulfill a pre-requisite basic course in computer information science.

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