



Governor’s Best Practices in Workforce & Economic Development Award Nomination Application

.....

Nominated Project Title: WorkForce Central (WFC) Career Coaching Program (CCP)

Project Lead Name: Jawana Cain **Phone number** 253-594-7305 **E-mail** jcain@workforce-central.org

Summary of nominated project (No more than two sentences.): The WFC CCP is a private and public partnership between local healthcare employers and WFC, to address skilled healthcare personnel shortages in Pierce County. The program provides on-site specialized career development services to assist incumbent healthcare employees gain the skills and education they need to move into high-skilled/high-wage, in-demand healthcare occupations.

Region and/or communities benefitting from project: Pierce County and South King County Communities

When (month and year) did nominated project launch: July 2001

Has the project/activity operated continuously since then: Yes
If not, explain: n/a

Start-up costs \$50,000 **Most recent annual budget:** \$215,000

List your major funding sources, including tax credits or incentives, grants, and other private sector support: The program is sustained with private sector funding and support from MultiCare Health System, Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community, Franciscan Health System and the VA Puget Sound Health Care System, along with WIA funding. In 2010, the program also received 5809 Incentive Funding Grant and the Governor's 10% Reserve Local Demand Funding. Over the years, funding has included: H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant, Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) Grant, 503 Incentive Funds Grant, Industries of the Future Skills Training (IFST) Grant , Local Demand Side Training (LDST) Grant , and Department of Labor and Industries (DOL) Grant.

Describe the purpose (need) and the unique approach taken by the nominated project to satisfy the stated need (450 words or less) In 2000, Pierce County’s healthcare personnel shortages were salient. However, Pierce County healthcare employers could not find the high-skilled personnel they needed to fill their positions. The high-skilled nature of many healthcare occupations, many requiring at least an Associate’s Degree, coupled with lower degree attainment rates by Pierce County residents (in 2000, 28.7% of Pierce County residents had attained an Associate’s Degree or Higher, compared with 35.7% for Washington State and 30.7% for the US) resulted in rampant healthcare personnel shortages. During this same time, Pierce County had a higher unemployment rate, with a higher percentage of families living below the poverty level, compared to Washington State. Pierce County residents need the family-wage, stable occupations offered by the healthcare sector.

The Career Coaching Program (CCP) began in 2001, when WorkForce Central embarked on a unique public and private partnership to strengthen our workforce and ensure the skills Pierce County employers need are available in Pierce County. The CCP provides comprehensive services to assist incumbent healthcare employees in gaining the education and skills needed to fill high-skilled, high-wage jobs that are in-demand by their employers. Career Coaches are co-located at six different healthcare hospitals/clinics throughout Pierce and South King

County, providing career coaching and planning, interest and aptitude assessment, financial aid, and training information to incumbent healthcare employees with a desire to obtain additional training required for advancement in high demand healthcare careers.

Healthcare training programs have limited class sizes. As such, attrition rates must remain low to ensure enough students complete programs to meet demands of employers. However, healthcare training programs are also extremely rigorous and demanding, so many students have challenges completing their programs. The CCP provides tuition assistance, supportive services and case management to help incumbents overcome the barriers that prevent them from enrolling in training and prevail through challenges that might otherwise prevent their successful training completion. In 2002, the CCP contributed to the success of Tacoma Community College's Nursing Program Retention Project, helping decrease attrition rates from 55% to 5% in the first year.

Since 2001, over 5,000 healthcare incumbents have received services which include information on healthcare careers/training programs, resume/cover letter assistance, educational/planning. Of these, 454 incumbents have received funding for training, including those currently receiving training funds and program assistance. Thus far, 317 incumbents have completed training—an average of 32 per year. To date, Industry Partners have leveraged over \$1.1 million in support of the CCP. Even during this economic downturn, when employers are experiencing budget cuts and layoffs, our partners still continue to support the CCP, recognizing both the need to invest in their current employees and the vital role the CCP has played, to help them meet their workforce needs.

Describe how the nominated project incorporates both workforce and economic development practices and provides a benefit to workers and employers. (See cover page) (250 words or less) The CCP is a tool for both workforce and economic development, providing focused attention on business' needs while comprehensively supporting incumbents. The benefits are twofold. The CCP contributes to the economic security of program participants, helping low wage incumbents obtain skills needed to fill in-demand healthcare occupations and a family-wage. Concurrently, CCP helps employers ensure that their employees advance into their workforce needs. Jody Smith, Director of Human Resources at MultiCare Health System, says "This program has supported and helped empower our employees as they pursue their education and gain the skills needed for advancing in the healthcare field. I have seen the impact that this program has made, not just on our individual employees, but also on addressing the critical staffing shortages faced by us and other healthcare employers in Pierce County." Karrie McKechnie, MultiCare employee and CCP participant, says "The CCP has given me the tools I needed to finish school and maintain a life without public assistance. My children were on Medicaid and my husband had been laid off. At that point, I was ready to quit school. The [Career Coaches] listened to me, provided support and assistance. They truly wanted me to succeed. I graduated and am working full time as a Polysomnographer. I am receiving NO public assistance. This program is key to the economy, providing people with the tools it take to make it on their own." With a proven track record, CCP benefits not just incumbents and employers, but our community at large.

Will the nominated project continue into the future? Yes

If yes, how will it be funded and sustained. (200 words) The WFC Career Coaching Program was developed to meet the economic and workforce development needs of the community. For over 10 years the program has been sustained through a partnership with public and private funds. Healthcare partners contribute funding toward Career Coaches wages. In addition, they contribute tuition reimbursement dollars that are paid into a pool of funds that can be used to sustain the program and used towards future training of healthcare workers as public dollars continue to diminish. The sustainability of the program has already been proven very effective, demonstrated by the continuous participation of healthcare organizations and the Tacoma-Pierce County WorkForce Development Council's budget allocations. In addition, WFC staff has been successful in actively seeking grants and other funding for incumbent worker training, in order to maximize resources and the number of incumbents served. At this time, it is assured that this program will continue into the future.

In an attachment, demonstrate how this project/activity has made a quantifiable difference to the economic health of working people and employers. (Tables and graphs based on verifiable numbers. Words should be used only to support the data and should be kept to a minimum)

Check when done. ☒

A short concluding statement on why you believe this project/activity is noteworthy or unique and should serve as a best practice model. (100 words or less) CCP is beneficial in numerous ways: it provides valuable resources to community job seekers exploring in-demand healthcare career pathways, helps low wage incumbents gain skills to obtain family wage jobs and addresses employer workforce development needs. Healthcare partners believe the program has been an effective “grow your own” strategy to develop their workforce, and their employees continue to find value in services offered. This program model should serve as a best practice because it benefits the community job seeker, the incumbent worker, the employer, and the service model can be readily replicated to meet the needs of other in-demand industries.

Program or Project’s website or webpage:

<http://www.exploringhealthcareers.com/careers.php#>

List the leading individual(s) or organization(s) that should receive special recognition for their role in the project or activity. Please provide name, title, role, address and phone number.

Workforce Development Leads:

Linda Nguyen, CEO

WorkForce Central

3650 South Cedar Street, Tacoma, WA 98409

253-591-5810

Jawana Cain, Director, Career Development Services

1305 Tacoma Ave S, Suite 201

Tacoma, WA 98405

253-593-7305

HealthCare Partners Leads:

Jody Smith, Director, Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations

MultiCare Health System

603 South J St

Tacoma, WA 98405

253-403-1372

Darci Gibson, Director, Human Potential Partner Services

Multicare Good Samaritan

401 15th Ave SE

Puyallup, WA 98372

253-697-1521

Pete Donor, Human Resources Director

Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community

1301 N Highlands Pkwy

Tacoma, WA 98406

253-752-7112

Shirley Aikin, Nursing Services Special Projects

VA Puget Sound Health Care System

1660 South Columbian Way

Seattle, WA 98108

206-277-5129

David Lawson, Senior Vice President, Human Resources

Franciscan Health System

1717 S. J Street

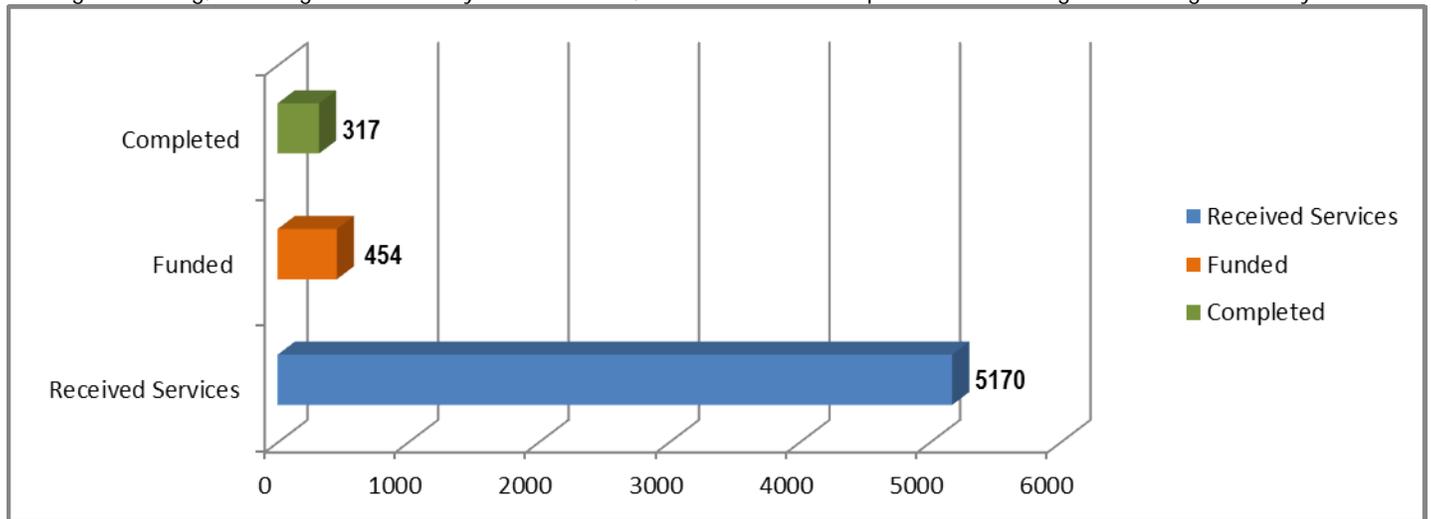
**Tacoma, WA 98405
253-426-6622**

**Name and contact information of person completing this nomination form:
Jawana Cain, Director, Career Development Services
WorkForce Central
253-593-7305**

WorkForce Central Career Coaching Program: Impacts

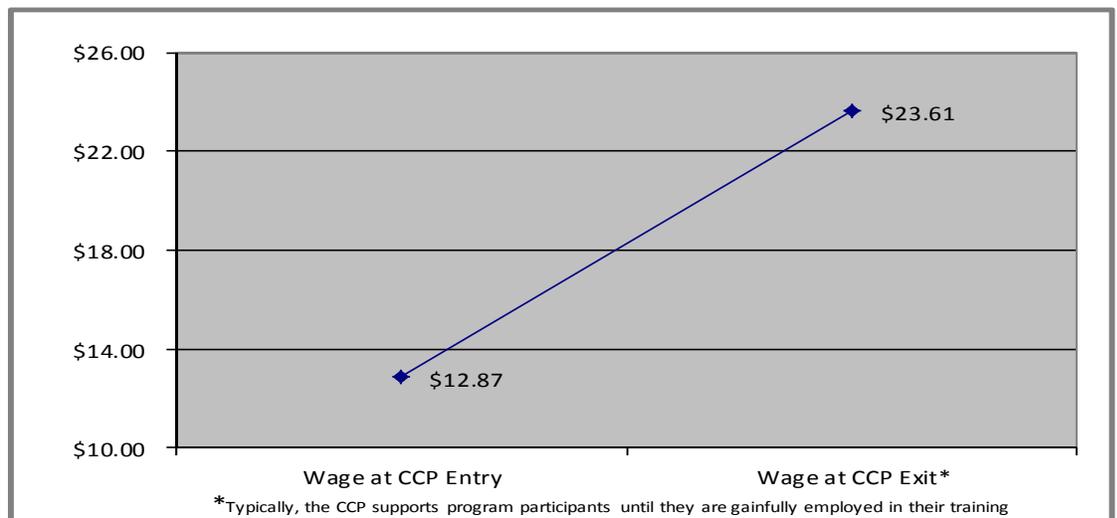
Incumbents Served

Well over 5000 incumbents and community job seekers have been served by the program. Of these, 454 incumbents have received funding for training, including those currently funded. So far, 317 incumbents completed their training—an average of 32 a year!



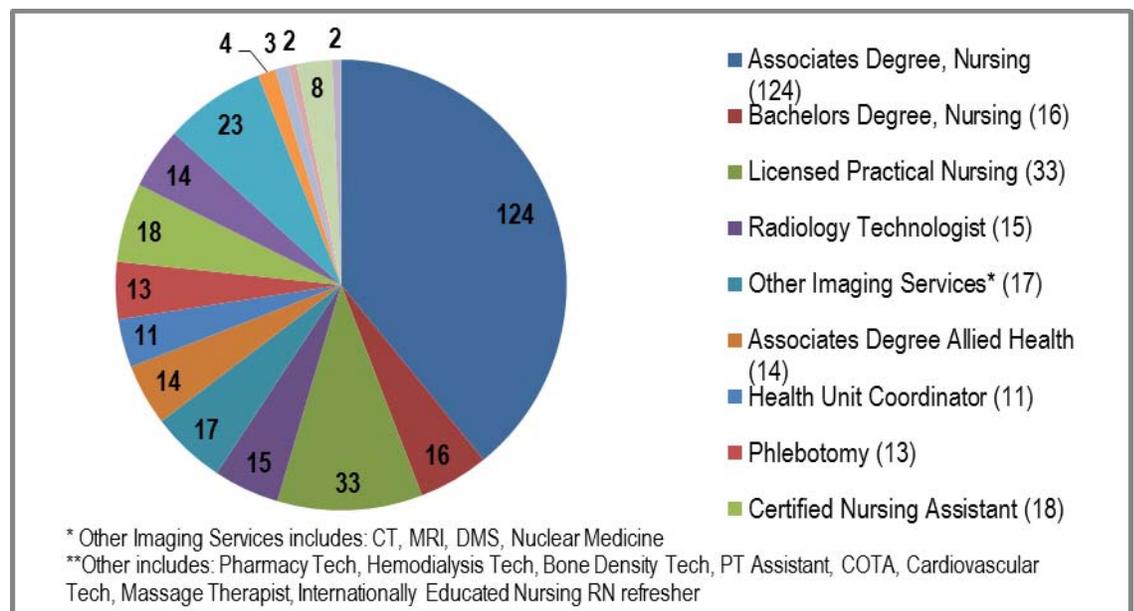
Family Wage Careers

The CCP contributes to the economic security of program participants. Graduates gain the skills for high-wage, in-demand occupations. On average, program graduates earn nearly \$11 more an hour over average program entry wages.



Graduates Per Training Program

To date, 317 incumbents have completed their training. Nearly 60% of graduates are in nursing (ADN, BSN, LPN, and IEN programs).



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

A Decade of Success



Overview

2011 marks the tenth anniversary of the WorkForce Central Career Coaching Program. The Pierce County Health Career Councils, a service of WorkForce Central, was established in 2001 to address the healthcare workforce development challenges in Pierce County.

The Career Coaching Program is an extension of the Council's efforts, developed in 2001 through a partnership between local healthcare employers and WorkForce Central, in response to skilled healthcare personnel shortages in Pierce County. The program provides a variety of services to help increase the number and retention of skilled healthcare workers.

On-site Career Coaches provide specialized career development services for incumbent healthcare employees. To date, well over 5000 incumbents and community job seekers have benefitted by this program, with services ranging from career guidance, funding for training, workshops, and providing other resources.

The program helps incumbent healthcare employees receive the information, resources, and training required for advancement into high-demand healthcare careers. Services are tailored to meet the needs of each employee and include the following:

Healthcare Career Resources and Vocational Guidance

- *Extensive information on healthcare careers and training programs*
- *Career assessment resources and educational planning support*
- *Career development, resume and cover letter assistance*

Financial Aid Resources and Tuition Assistance Services

- *Financial aid resources and application assistance*
- *Assistance with educational budgeting and cost planning*
- *Financial assistance/scholarships for those who qualify*

Program Achievements

Program Partners include:

- MultiCare Health System
- MultiCare Good Samaritan
- Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community
- VA Puget Sound Healthcare
- Franciscan Health System

Grant Funding Awarded Over the Years:

H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant

Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) Grant

503 Incentive Funds Grant

Industries of the Future Skills Training (IFST) Grant

Local Demand Side Training (LDST) Grant

Department of Labor and Industries (DOL) Grant

5809 Incentive Funds Grant

Governor's 10% Reserve Local Demand Funding

Past Program Projects:

- Career Coaches contributed to the success of TCC's Nursing Program Retention Project in 2002, helping to decrease attrition rates from 55% to 5%.
- The CCP assisted with the successful implementation of the first Health Unit Coordinator apprenticeship program at MultiCare Health System in 2003, providing training funding and other supportive services for students.
- Career Coaches participated in the planning, development, and delivery of MultiCare's Nurse Camp in 2004, and have continued to participate annually.
- For over three years, the CCP provided services on-site for employees of Rainier Vista Care Center and Group Health Cooperative.
- From 2005 to 2008, in partnership with MultiCare's Covington Health Clinic, Career Coaches provided health careers resources and presented workshops on bridging from high school to a healthcare career for Kent School District's Health Careers Students.
- Over the years, the CCP provided K-12 outreach, presenting the Health Occupations Workshops and other healthcare career awareness workshops at local schools and youth targeted events.
- Since the program's inception, Career coaches have participated in the New Employee Orientations and Benefits Fairs of our partners.
- The CCP was instrumental in the successful development of the annual Health Career Day, a service of the Pierce County Health Careers Council.

Current Program Projects

Quick Start

In addition to providing services and support for incumbent healthcare employees, the Workforce Central Career Coaching program continues its efforts to build community knowledge and support of healthcare careers. In 2009, in response to the changed economic situation and the larger volume of applicants, MultiCare Health System HR and the Career Coaching Program collaborated to develop Quick Start.

Quick Start is an information session offered bi-weekly at MultiCare's Tacoma General and Good Samaritan Hospitals. A MultiCare Human Resources representative and a Workforce Central Career Coach discuss the following topics:

- Tips for improving your resume and cover letter
- Information on healthcare training and education programs
- Volunteer and job shadow options
- Overview of MultiCare career opportunities
- Overview of MultiCare application/selection process

"Thank you for a wonderful and very informative class! I have learned a lot from you... The tips you gave me about my resume, in particular, are extremely valuable... I really appreciate all your time and effort... This way was much better than just "writing" my resume for me... you are helping me for lifetime!"

*Maher Naber,
Quick Start Participant*

Internationally Educated Nurses (IEN) Program

Internationally Educated Nurses are an important part of the nursing workforce in the United States. They bring a breadth of knowledge, skills, experience and diversity to their nursing roles here. However, transitioning to a Registered Nurse in the United States is a challenge that many IENs find insurmountable. The transition challenges are largely socio-cultural differences, and include language subtleties (such as the use of acronyms and abbreviations), the structure of the healthcare systems, transferring paperwork and documents into English, among others. Transition programs serve to bridge the practice gaps between IENs' previous and new experiences¹. However, very few transition programs exist.

In the summer of 2010, the WorkForce Central Career Coaching Program began collaboration with TCC to help pioneer the Internationally Educated Nurses Program in Pierce County and identify the pilot cohort. The TCC IEN program provides qualified immigrant or refugee nurses with additional training on U.S. nurse practices so they can pass the National Council License Examination (NCLEX) and obtain the Registered Nurse (RN) licensure in Washington.

Career Coaches maintained a weekly on-site schedule at TCC weekly to work closely with the IEN students, providing them with resources and support to ensure their successful completion of the program. In June 2011, 15 students successfully completed the year-long program. One has passed the NCLEX and obtained her WA State license as an RN, and the rest are currently in the process of preparing to take their NCLEX.

Other Projects

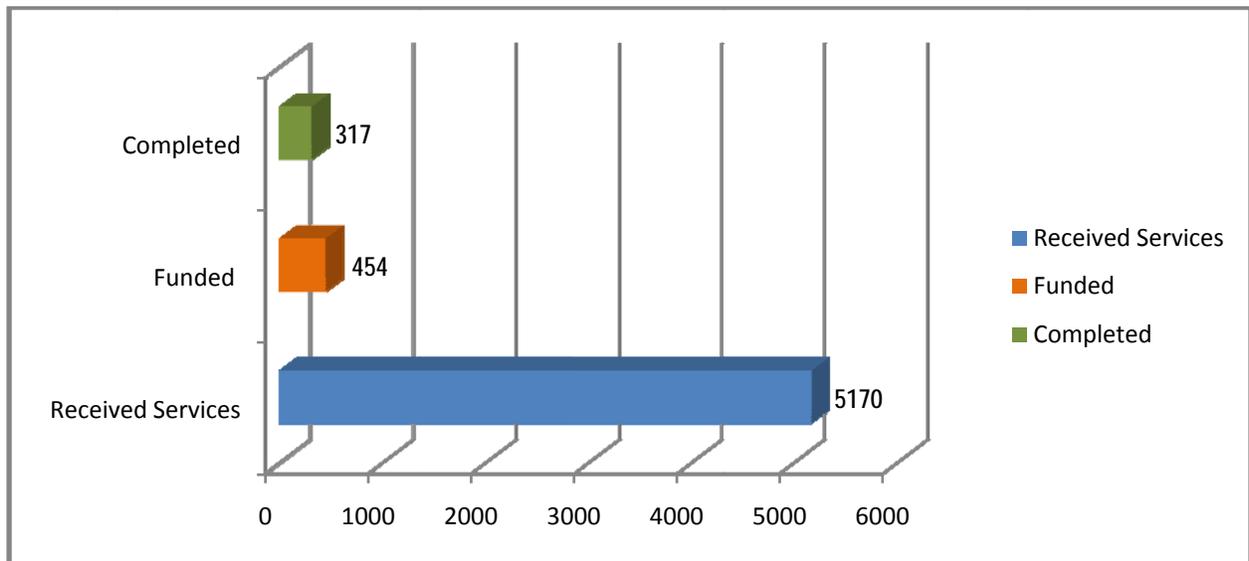
In collaboration with TCC, the Career Coaching Program now has a web-based informational presentation: <http://www.tacomacc.edu/upload/files/distancelearning/video/CareerCoachVisit.html>

¹ Adeniran, et al. (2008)

Program Outcomes

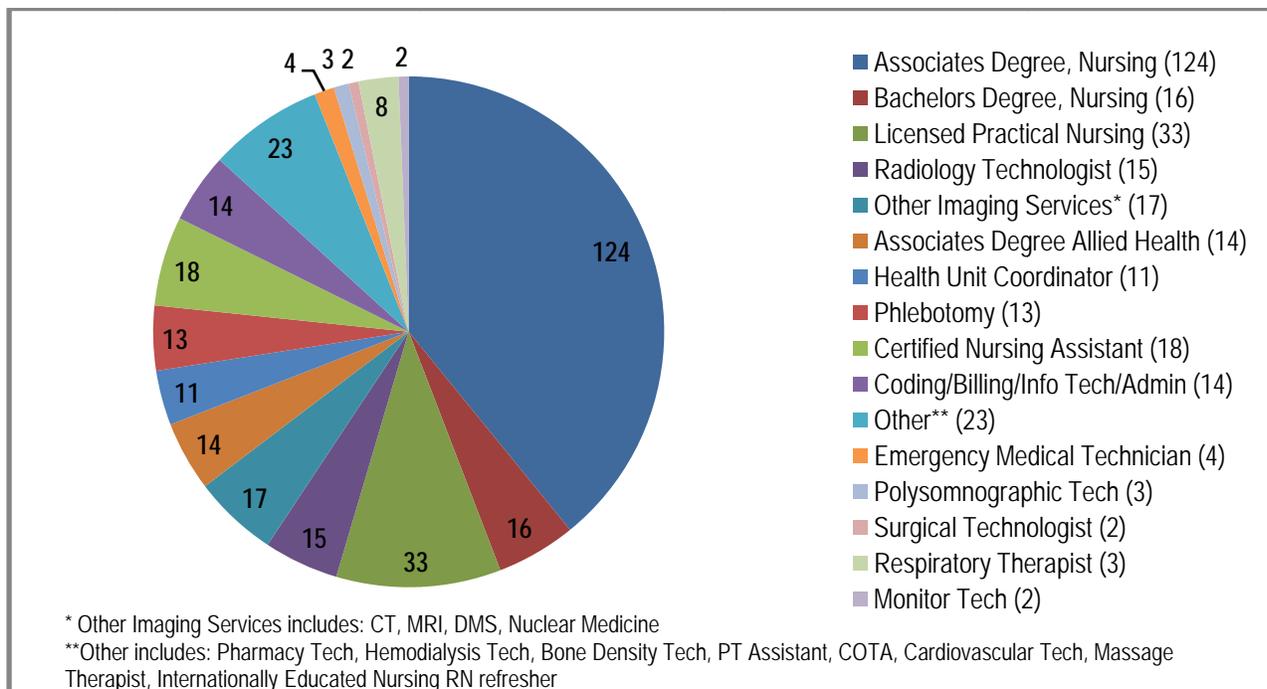
Incumbents Served

To date, well over 5000 incumbents have been served by the program. Of these, 454 incumbents have received funding for training, including those currently receiving training funds. So far, 317 incumbents have completed their training—an average of 32 a year!



Graduates per Training Program

To date, 317 incumbents have completed their training. Nearly 60% of these graduates are in nursing (including ADN, BSN, LPN, and IEN)!



Program Impacts

The above outlined data on selected program outcomes does not show the true impact that the Career Coaching Program has on incumbents and our community. To help illustrate, here are a few words from some of our program participants.

Cathie Rohleder, Franciscan Health System Employee, Registered Nurse

I first became acquainted with the CCP through my employer, St. Francis Hospital. I had a few ideas of what area of work I wanted to go into, but wasn't sure where to begin. I was very nervous about entering college in my mid 30's, I didn't know how it works, where to begin, or if it was something I was even capable of. Meeting with the Career Coach was one of the first steps in the right direction. She had binders full of information on different medical careers such as nursing, respiratory care, and cardiovascular tech among others. She had guidelines on what education was required for each career, what the potential outlook was, and potential salaries that could be earned.

I didn't know how to figure out which classes to take first, but she did. She had the expertise and knowledge to show me that most of the medical careers started with the same group of basic prerequisites, and how to make out a schedule in which to organize the required classes. I met with my Career Coach on a regular basis while taking my prerequisites. She encouraged me every step of the way. I had a meeting with my Career Coach to review my progress, and she started pointing out how my community college credits were transferrable to a university, and what types of degrees I could work towards at the university. She took the time to show me on the university websites how you look up credit equivalency. I thought she might be crazy. I never thought I could be successful with community college classes, but to be able to go to a university someday?!?! There was no way, it was beyond my dreams or expectations of myself, but my Career Coach seemed to think it was something to consider.

With the classes taken so far, I decided on a career in nursing. There was a nursing information session at Pacific Lutheran University. With my Career Coach's previous encouragement to consider a bachelor's degree, I went to the session. I remember driving home that evening praying and thinking how amazing it would be to go to a school like PLU. A bachelor's degree was more than I ever dreamed possible for myself. I was afraid to even dream of it.

During this time, my dad became sick with cancer and I frequently drove over the mountains to Wenatchee Valley Medical Center to attend his oncology appointments with him and my mom. My dad was a high school drop-out, and I recall as a teenager, asking my dad about attending college, and him telling me that families like ours don't really go to college. Yet, at every oncology appointment, my dad would introduce me to all of the staff, "This is my daughter, Cathie. She is going to college and she is going to be a nurse." He couldn't have been more proud of what I was accomplishing.

My dad passed away a few months later. Shortly afterwards I received a big fat envelope in the mail from PLU, when I opened it, and saw a letter starting out with "Congratulations on your acceptance" This was more than I ever hoped for and more than I ever dreamed of. I wished my dad was still here to see it.

When someone with little confidence in their strengths and abilities begins a journey towards attaining an education, it is really easy to let roadblocks get in the way of continuing. There have been many times I have wondered "What on earth was I thinking, how did I possibly think I could do this?" With the generous financial help from Workforce, my limited family budget was not one of the roadblocks when it would have been the biggest one. I couldn't have begun to pay for the books without the help I received from Workforce. With my lack of college know how, my Career Coach's great expertise and available materials encouraged me along and helped me come up with a plan to manage all the necessary classes.

Friends and family have seen a great change in my confidence level and I feel a great change. When I started, I truly thought I may not be capable of completing these classes, I might not be smart enough, or I might not have what it takes to be successful with college classes. Now, I know I will be successful.

I am grateful beyond words for the support, both financial and with knowledge and experience that I have received from Workforce Central CCP. [The program] has been a support professionally and personally, and has helped me believe I am capable and worthy of this success. This experience has not only broadened my perspectives, but has set a great example for my children. When my children graduate from high school, we will be the kind of family who goes on to college, and for that, I have tremendous gratitude for the people at Workforce Central.

Stacey Ashburn (Allore), Franciscan Employee, Registered Nurse

The Career Coaching Program, along with FHS, have supported and empowered me to change my life as I pursue a degree in nursing...This program and organization are supporting me to improve my life as I find greater opportunity and continue to work in a place that I'm proud to be a part of...I have seen the impact that [this program] has made on addressing the critical staff shortages faced not only by Franciscan, but all healthcare providers in Pierce County. While it is my dream to pursue a career as a nurse, without your help in this program, I'm not sure how I'd be able to reach my goal. I'm very grateful for the guidance and assistance that you have given me.

Veronica Ebio, MultiCare Employee, Registered Nurse

The Career Coaching Program, helped me achieve my ultimate goal of successfully completing the RN program. Without their generous [assistance], I would have not been able to dedicate more time to my studies, preceptorships, or tests. Because of their help, I am able to be a proud medical professional as a Registered Nurse and pay it forward by assisting others in their time of need.

Ester Christy, MultiCare Good Samaritan Employee, Registered Nurse

I cannot thank you enough for providing the funds to pay for my education, books and supplies. Without this it would have been many more years before I would have been able to fulfill my dreams and provide service to this community. This community is growing quickly and there is a dire need for more nurses. This program not only allows people like me to fulfill their dreams but also fills the need of providing more nurses to this community.