

Murray Announces \$5M to Train WA Workers for Health Care Jobs

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(Washington, D.C.) - Today, U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) announced that the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board in Olympia, WA will be receiving \$5,000,000 to train Washington state workers to fill jobs in the health care industry. These awards are among \$226 million in Health Care Sector and Other High Growth and Emerging Industries grant awards authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and awarded nationwide today by the Department of Labor.

Workers can contact the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board for more information on training programs.

"As Washington state workers continue to struggle in these tough economic times, it is more important than ever that they get the skills and training they need to fill open positions in growing industries like health care," said Senator Patty Murray. "This grant is good for workers, and it is also good for doctors, hospitals, and patients who will benefit from trained workers filling key positions like nurses, medical assistants, and home care aides."

"We have large current and projected shortages of health care personnel in Washington state," said Jaime Garcia, Executive Director of the Health Work Force Institute (affiliate of the Washington State Hospital Association). "This grant makes it possible for us to tailor our education programs in ways that better serve working adults and help them move into high demand positions."

"Through creating new kinds of educational delivery at the workplace, this grant creates a practical and scalable career ladder for working adults seeking greater job security and better incomes," said Diane Sosne, President of SEIU Healthcare 1199NW. "It is exciting to be building on our state's innovative and successful Hospital Employee Education and Training program."

As chairman of the Employment and Workplace Safety subcommittee and a senior member of the committee overseeing funding for job training, Senator Murray fought to include funding for worker training in the Recovery Act. More information on recent Washington state workforce training awards can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

The Health Care and High Growth grants total \$226 million of the \$750 million in jobs training grant funding made available by the Recovery Act.

The project receiving funding will certify or award degrees to 550 participants, of which 350 participants will be placed into employment. Capacity building efforts will also expand the state healthcare educational capacity by building on the innovations of workplace learning, improving online healthcare training, and by recruiting masters prepared nurses for training as clinical instructors.

There will be three areas of emphasis:

- 1) Advancing entry-level workers along the nursing pathway, beginning with Certified Nursing Assistants and Medical Assistants through Licensed Practical Nurses and, ultimately, reaching Registered Nurses. The grant promises to move hundreds of workers up this high-demand career ladder by recruiting, supporting and training them in a health care setting.

2) Providing jobs in long-term care and creating career transitions to acute care by recruiting and training job seekers in the advanced home care aide apprenticeship, and providing a seamless pathway to acute, hospital health care.

3) Expanding the state's healthcare educational capacity through workplace learning opportunities, online classes and recruiting more clinical instructors.

This grant, which will be administered by the state's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board in conjunction with SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Fund, SEIU Healthcare NW Training Partnership, and the Health Work Force Institute, breaks new ground in pioneering career tracks that move low-wage health care workers into better paying, higher-demand professions. The labor/management education partnership overseeing the grant money is called the Washington Health Care Worker Training Coalition.

The training will be delivered through a combination of online and workplace learning. The state's community and technical colleges will be able to expand the capacity of their health care programs to reach these new, first-rung workers.

The grant targets two groups of workers: low-wage hospital workers who have an interest in health care and long-term care workers who previously have had no pathway to enter higher level health care and hospital work.

Other beneficiaries are workers who have yet to be hired, but will fill slots as current workers are trained and reach higher levels in the health care career ladder. The promise of continuing education and career paths that lead to living-wage jobs will help attract and keep these critical frontline workers.