



WISCONSIN
INDIANHEAD
TECHNICAL
COLLEGE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Grant aimed at helping more Wisconsin adults get job skills
Technical Colleges receive \$200,000 from Accelerating Opportunity**

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College is one of the 16 Wisconsin Technical Colleges that has been awarded a \$200,000 grant from several national foundations seeking to transform the way underprepared individuals get access to adult education. The grant is part of the Accelerating Opportunity, a Breaking Through Initiative project to redesign adult basic education and postsecondary programs to integrate basic skills with practical, occupational training required in today's job market.

Managed by Boston-based Jobs for the Future (JFF), Accelerating Opportunity is working with 10 other states that have been selected to develop plans for this initiative. In November, five of the states will be selected to receive additional grants of \$1.6 million each to implement their plans over a three-year period. The end goal is enhancing education delivery for adult learners so more individuals can achieve their career aspirations.

“Building from our previous work with Breaking Through, states will get the opportunity to identify the barriers to success for their residents and design a plan that will address the unique needs of their workforce and communities,” said Maria Flynn, JFF vice-president.

While the nation's unemployment rate remains high, employers who want to hire say they can't find workers with the skills they need. In Wisconsin, 700,000 adults are considered “low skilled.” Many do not have high school diplomas or lack other requirements for postsecondary education. Experts predict that by 2018, 70-percent of all jobs in the U.S. will require workers with some form of postsecondary credentials.

“This grant opportunity will allow the colleges and their workforce development partners to expand innovative career pathway instruction,” said Dan Clancy, president of the Wisconsin Technical College System. “Career pathways create a more reliable pipeline of skilled workers for Wisconsin employers and give more workers a realistic way to obtain higher-skill, higher-wage jobs.”

Accelerating Opportunity seeks to change the way adult basic education is delivered by putting adult students on track to earn postsecondary credentials so they can seize opportunities to earn family-sustaining wages and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. This initiative is funded by a collaboration of diverse philanthropies including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Open Society Foundation. More on the program can be found at www.AcceleratingOpportunity.org.

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College serves the educational and career needs of more than 25,000 residents of Northwestern Wisconsin each year. With multiple campuses, WITC offers career-focused associate degree programs, technical diplomas, short-term certificates, customized training, and a wide array of courses for personal or career enrichment. WITC is a member of Wisconsin Technical College System. For more information, call 800.243.WITC or visit witic.edu.

The Wisconsin Technical College System has 16 technical college districts throughout the state, which offer more than 300 programs awarding two-year associate degrees, one- and two-year technical diplomas and short-term technical diplomas. In addition, the System is the major provider of customized training and technical assistance to Wisconsin's business and industry community. More than half of all adults in Wisconsin have accessed the technical colleges for education and training. Find more about educational programs at www.witechcolleges.org.