

LBCC Awarded Grant to Further Help Linked Learning Academy High School Students

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Long Beach City College was awarded a \$75,000 Career Ladders Project (CLP) grant as they began participation in the California Community College Linked Learning Initiative (CCLLI), which aims to ease the transition for high school graduates in healthcare-related Linked Learning Academies into college curriculums.

LBCC will be collaborating with five local high schools (California Academy of Math and Sciences, Long Beach Polytechnic High School, Jordan High School, Lakewood High School and Cabrillo High School) to help bridge the gaps in teaching and eliminate overlaps in material to help expedite the achievement process for participating students.

Marty Alvarado, the Director of Workforce Development at LBCC says that although the grant is small in terms of budget, any kind of funding for programs like this will prove irreplaceable.

"They are absolutely critical and vital at any funding level," Alvarado said. "This type of money provides not only seed money that helps promote enhanced academics and opportunities for access but also provides students with the ability to make more informed choices when they pick which pathway will they be on. How will they spend their time and dollars on their education?"

Faculty members at both the high school level and from LBCC are scheduled to meet and discuss their lesson materials to help better determine what needs to be improved, added or subtracted to make the jump from high school-based healthcare programs to the ones at LBCC.

Items that could be addressed are the lack of technology at high schools that would hinder someone entering a more advanced college setting to repeated courses between the two institutions. The improvements could help students to accelerate through their chosen career field faster as things become more streamlined, allowing for students to test out of college-level classes in some instances.

In a press release, LBCC Superintendent and President Eloy Oakley said the grant will help better prepare graduating high school students make the next step into college life. Oakley also recognized that the grant reflects the spirit of The Long Beach College Promise which helps Long Beach Unified School District students prepare for college by providing a free semester of tuition at LBCC and even

guaranteeing admission to California State University Long Beach through outreach and support programs.

“We are delighted to receive this grant that will support the efforts of The Long Beach College Promise, an educational institutional partnership that provides seamless transition for local students to be college-ready, to complete rigorous college-level courses and to achieve fulfilling careers, including in the health care field,” Oakley said. “We look forward to supporting more students achieve success in higher education, every step of the way from high school to college and on to health care pathways.”

The James Irvine Foundation, which is funding this new enterprise, has been helping low-income Californians pursue advanced education since it was founded in 1937. Together, with CLP, they hope to help LBCC and the participating high schools “build dual enrollment opportunities, alternative assessment strategies, and contextualized, articulated coursework and student services support” according to the CLP website. Alvarado says that through these measures, students will gain a more practical education that will propel them in their professional lives.

“How is this applied in the real day to day life and how are you going to be applying this knowledge when you get out in industry?” Alvarado said of issues the program looks to address. “When things are contextualized and applied it’s shown that students are not only more likely to retain the material but also be more engaged in the learning.”