



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT

Karen Ogden
Communications Director
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
406-788-4375 (c)

Marissa Perry
Communications Director
Governor's Office
(406) 444-4514

\$2.2 million awarded to Montana workforce development and remote training programs
Governor and Commissioner of Higher Education announce funds for 2-year and community colleges

Governor Steve Bullock and Commissioner of Higher Education Clayton Christian today announced just over \$2.2 million in funding to be distributed to [19 projects](#) supporting workforce development and remote education delivery for Montanans.

Examples of projects include an education initiative to address teacher shortages across Montana, a remote information technology program and a pilot respiratory therapy program. All projects funded by the initiative will be based at one or more two-year institutions across the state of Montana.

“Quality, accessible education is vital to our communities and by enabling more Montanans to pursue college and technical education training, we can ensure that even small towns across our state never lack opportunities,” said Governor Bullock. “I look forward to this partnership in recruiting the new, innovative learners who will help us strengthen Montana.”

The grants were awarded through a competitive application process, with leaders from Montana's two-year campuses, representatives of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, and the Office of Public Instruction involved in the review process. The 19 successful projects were selected from a pool of 27 proposals. Project awards range from \$15,000 to \$320,000.

"Monday was dedicated to celebrating workers, and it's hardworking Montanans who will benefit from this funding," said Commissioner Christian. "These awards will support programs for Montanans who want to better their futures – be it a rural high school graduate launching a career in healthcare or a middle-aged worker looking to retool or advance their career while raising a family. We're grateful to Governor Bullock for investing in our future economy through these programs that give working Montanans a leg up."

The funding comes from Montana's portion of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEERF), for which Congress set aside approximately \$3 billion of the \$30.75 billion allotted to the Education Stabilization Fund through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

In collaboration with Governor Bullock, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education allocated \$2.2 million of the funding to a remote education delivery and workforce training initiative in collaboration with Montana's 2-year and community colleges, resulting in the grants announced today. The competitive award process prioritized proposals that included multi-campus collaboration; new or enhanced credentials for students and adults working on updating their skills; and aligning remote or workforce training access with the needs of traditionally underserved students.

Additional examples include:

- A multi-campus collaboration to pilot a shared respiratory therapy program with Gallatin College, City College and Great Falls College: \$180,000
- An information technology remote education initiative led by Missoula College in collaboration with Bitterroot College, Helena College and Highlands College: \$191,000
- A paramedicine program partnership between Flathead Valley Community College and Miles Community College: \$67,500
- An accelerated apprenticeship education initiative in plumbing and electrical programs led by MSU Northern and in partnership with Gallatin College, Great Falls College and the Billings MSU Career Center: \$250,000

A complete project listing is available at <https://mus.edu/geer/>

"We appreciate the dedication and hard work of the Governor, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, the Office of Public Instruction, and all of our campus partners who have made the support of these programs possible," said Commissioner Christian. "We look forward

to seeing the results, as students complete their programs and bring newly minted skills to the workforce to help lead our economic recovery.”

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