

NEWS

For more information contact:
Susie Williams (916) 568-3041
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOS RIOS TAKES LEAD IN \$5.4 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT

Sacramento—The Los Rios Community College District was recently notified by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) that it has been named the lead institution in a \$5.4 million grant involving a consortium of 14 colleges in California, Hawaii, Arizona and Nevada. If extended into a second year as expected, the grant would provide an additional \$5.35 million for a total allocation of \$10.75 million.

The grant is designed to get people trained quickly in the kind of computerized health information systems that are being installed by hospitals and medical offices across the western states. The electronic systems will replace inefficient paper records and allow health providers to quickly review and update a patient's medical history. Patients who have had to move, change doctors or required emergency medical attention know the importance of getting medical records transferred quickly and how difficult that is to accomplish in a paper-based system.

“The colleges involved in this grant will work together to implement curriculum designed to cross-train folks with computer or health care backgrounds and prepare them to work in hospitals and doctors' offices throughout the Western region,” said Los Rios chancellor Brice Harris. “This is critically important work that will act to improve health care outcomes and reduce costs and we are thrilled that our district will be taking the lead.”

The colleges that will share in the training grant include the Los Rios District's Cosumnes River College, Butte College, College of Southern Nevada, Cypress College, East Los Angeles College, Fresno City College, Honolulu Community College, Mission College, Orange Coast College, Phoenix College, Pima College, Santa Barbara City College, San Diego Mesa College, and Santa Monica College.

Los Rios' economic and workforce development unit will manage the network of 14 colleges to: 1) Implement newly established national curriculum in health

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informatics; 2) recruit and enroll 2,100 students per year in the new curriculum; 3) schedule each program of study to be completed in six months or less; 4) design flexible programs of study that allow each student to enroll in just those courses he or she needs; 5) begin training by September 30, 2010; and 6) link program completers to job opportunities.

The consortium will have a strong working relationship with the health informatics program at UC Davis and will also take advantage of the university's expertise as a primary healthcare provider.

“It is clear from the number of federal grants we are receiving that our colleges are being seen by state and federal funding sources as educational institutions that can get the job done and get people back to work,” said Los Rios board president Kay Albiani.

The Los Rios Community College District serves more than 90,000 students at its four colleges—American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City.

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