



New Hampshire Department of Corrections

For Immediate Release

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Second Chance Pell grant for incarcerated students

Two NH Community Colleges Approved for “Second Chance Pell” eligibility to train incarcerated population

Five programs identified for experimental initiative

NHTI-Concord’s Community College (NHTI) and White Mountains Community College (WMCC) have been awarded experimental site status allowing the use of Pell grants to support the education of incarcerated individuals. The colleges, in partnership with the NH Department of Corrections, applied for eligibility in order to help the state address challenges of recidivism, support the civic re-engagement and economic stability of individuals transitioning out of prison, and to bolster New Hampshire’s workforce at a time when employment opportunities abound for those with appropriate training and preparation. Providing education in prison has been shown to reduce recidivism rates and increase employment rates for formerly incarcerated individuals, with a host of attendant benefits to society and public safety.

“Creating opportunities for people to develop their talents and abilities and to contribute to their communities and this state is central to the work that we do at NHTI and WMCC and across the Community College System of New Hampshire,” said Mark Rubinstein, Chancellor of the Community College System of New Hampshire, and interim President of NHTI. “I believe that through these educational opportunities, we can help individuals coming out of incarceration to fulfill their purposes in life. This is an essential part of fulfilling our own mission to our communities and to our students on behalf of the State of New Hampshire.”

“Reducing recidivism is a significant part of our mission at the Department of Corrections,” said Helen Hanks, Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Corrections. “Providing quality education, with partners like NHTI and WMCC, is essential to the successful reentry of residents under our supervision and in turn reduces recidivism. I look forward to the continued partnership with the Community College System of New Hampshire and on behalf of the staff and residents of

the NH Department of Corrections extend my thanks to them for always helping us advance our mission.”

The Department of Corrections is excited to partner with NHTI and WMCC who have pursued and received the Second Chance Pell grant while participating in a new institutionally based initiative under the Experimental Sites Initiative (ESI), which tests the effectiveness of statutory and regulatory flexibility for institutions of higher education that disburse Federal student aid.

As part of the experimental status, NHTI was granted approval to offer programs in advanced manufacturing, medical coding and hospitality and tourism, while WMCC will offer programs in business administration and liberal arts. These programs were selected for their alignment with high-demand employment sectors and identified skills for career-entry, and leverage the colleges’ existing infrastructure and training capacity, according to community college system officials.

“This is an exciting opportunity that will provide increased educational and training opportunities to ensure individuals incarcerated have the knowledge, skills and abilities to obtain employment in fields that are in high demand,” said Nick Duffy, Division Director of Community Corrections of the New Hampshire Department of Corrections.

Experimental status awards were announced April 26 by the US Department of Education as part of “Second Chance Month.” Across the country, 73 institutions of higher education were selected for the current round of the initiative, bringing the total number of schools able to participate to 200.

“I am looking forward to this opportunity and to provide career pathways to underrepresented students,” said Kristen Miller, Vice President of Academic Affairs at WMCC. “This program allows for those who potentially wouldn’t have had an option to seek a college degree to do so which will continue to support a successful re-entry and decrease chances of recidivism.”

NHTI and WMCC plan to begin the programs this fall, working with incarcerated men and women at the NH State Prison for Men in Concord, the New Hampshire Correctional Facility for Women in Concord, and the Northern New Hampshire Correctional Facility in Berlin to provide educational opportunities and training pathways to employment. Questions about this program may be directed to Dr. Andrew Fisher (afisher@ccnh.edu) or Dr. Kristen Miller (kmiller@ccsnh.edu) .

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