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**Contact:**

**Jennifer Couch**

(208) 562-3508

[jennifercouch@cwidaho.cc](mailto:jennifercouch@cwidaho.cc)

**CWI RECEIVES NATIONAL GRANT FOR MULTICULTURAL HEALTHCARE PROGRAM**

*A \$25,000 grant from Bank of America will support critical healthcare workforce training*



[CWI Multicultural Nursing Assistant class completing skills training]

**Nampa, ID** – College of Western Idaho today announced it has received a \$25,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation to support the Multicultural Healthcare Program offered through CWI’s Business Partnerships/ Workforce Development Education.

The **Multicultural Healthcare** Program is a two-tiered career ladder training program designed to facilitate viable career pathways in healthcare professions that will lead to employment for local people whose primary language is not English. The first tier is the **Multicultural Nursing Assistant** training, followed by the second tier **Multicultural Phlebotomy** training.

A unique feature of this healthcare program is that ESL (English as Second Language) teachers participate in the classroom training offering English fluency tutoring to those with limited English to ensure their completion of the

program with optimum success. Students learn marketable skills in the healthcare industry that lead to employment while developing greater English literacy.

The grant will support scholarships, class materials costs, state exams fees, bus passes for refugee students, program equipment, and ESL teacher fees. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics healthcare support jobs that require higher skilled applicants are expected to increase 18% over the next ten years.

“As we move toward economic recovery, Idaho needs to be prepared with a skilled workforce if we want to attract and retain higher-wage jobs to our state,” said Kurt Walsdorf, Idaho and Eastern Washington market president for Bank of America. “Bank of America has a long history of supporting programs that are creating employment opportunities for individuals with significant barriers to employment. We are investing in CWI because of our shared commitment to strengthen local economies through workforce development, which leads to financial independence and personal growth that ultimately benefits the economic health of our state.”

CWI and the Idaho Office for Refugees partnered last summer to offer an initial multicultural class with support of a tutor. The first multicultural class, comprised of 13 refugees, has completed the Certified Nursing Assistant classroom training and externships. Nearly half of these students have already passed the exams to become certified, and the remaining students are currently completing the exams for certification. “We are extremely pleased with the results we are seeing with this first class and these additional funds provided by Bank of America are unlocking opportunities for residents in our state, by making the continuation of the program possible,” noted Kathleen Pollard, Healthcare Program Manager for CWI Workforce Development. “Often the students who enroll in this program have previous medical experience in their home countries, but struggle with the language barriers and English conversion. Upon completion of the program they are able to work as much needed caregivers in our area.”

CWI will use the Bank of America grant to launch the next Multicultural Healthcare class scheduled to begin early next spring. Students who wish to enroll in the class are encouraged to speak with their Refugee Resettlement Agencies, Department of Labor, or call CWI Workforce Development at 562-2075.

For more information about CWI’s ESL and Multicultural Healthcare programs please visit us on the Web at [www.cwidaho.cc](http://www.cwidaho.cc).

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The College of Western Idaho is a public, open-access, and comprehensive community college committed to providing affordable access to quality teaching and learning opportunities to the residents of its service area in western Idaho. CWI has seven campus locations throughout Southwest Idaho providing higher education and 21st Century technical skills acquisition. The college is dedicated to improving the community’s economic well-being by responding with highly-educated and productive graduates. The foundation for the area’s only community college was created by a supermajority of voters in Ada and Canyon counties on May 22, 2007. For more information about the college, visit [www.cwidaho.cc](http://www.cwidaho.cc) or call (208) 562-3000.

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