



# **Nine-Community College Consortium Representing Institutions Along the Mississippi River Receives \$23.8 Million Department of Labor Grant Consortium Le**

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The Department of Labor announced today that the Mississippi River Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Consortium (MRTDL), led by Lewis and Clark, will receive \$23.8 million in grant funds for the nine community colleges located in eight states along the Mississippi River Region. As the lead of the grant, Lewis and Clark will receive \$4.9 million.

The MRTDL consortium member colleges are committed to advancing economic development in the Mississippi River region, from the headwaters to the Gulf, and are dedicated to the placement of dislocated and other workers in high-wage, high-skill occupations in the vital transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL) and related industry sectors. Members of the consortium include Delgado Community College (New Orleans, LA); Hinds Community College (Raymond, MS); John Wood Community College (Quincy, IL); Mid-South Community College (West Memphis, AR); Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical (Winona, MN); St. Louis Community College (St. Louis, MO); Southwest Tennessee Community College (Memphis, TN); and West Kentucky Community and Technical College (Paducah, KY).

The grant comes through the Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Community College and Career Training grant program, a multi-year nearly \$2 billion initiative to expand targeted training programs for unemployed workers, especially those impacted by foreign trade.

The MRTDL consortium partners seek to establish transportation, distribution and logistics sector partnerships in communities along the river; recalibrate programs to align with employer needs; build stacked and latticed credentials and integrate evidence-based strategies to serve TAA-eligible workers (those who have suffered job loss or whose jobs are threatened due to foreign trade); and solidify the consortium for long-term collaboration.

All along the 2,300 mile stretch of the Mississippi River, businesses in TDL-related industries are poised to hire, train or retrain individuals for existing and future high-wage, high-skill occupations. At the same time, many TAA-eligible workers, unemployed veterans and other unemployed, underserved or low-income groups lack the training and skills they need to fill these positions.

“Our consortium members aim to match worker training and education programs to high opportunity occupations within the TDL industry sectors and to do so in a way that capitalizes on both the unique competencies of the individual colleges and the collective expertise and resources of the consortium,” Lewis and Clark Community College President Dale Chapman said. “For this project each of the nine member institutions is focusing its resources on occupations that meet the requirements of local and regional employers and on the training and support needs of the local workforce.”

Lewis and Clark will utilize its funding to expand workforce training programs including: Welding, Auto Tech (Hybrid-Electric); Process Operations Technology; Logistics Technician, Auto Tech (Conventional), Diesel Mechanics, Truck/Tractor Trailer Drivers and Production Technician.

Over the next three years Lewis and Clark will seek to train 300 students and program participants from throughout the community college district. Overall, 4,276 students will be served by this consortium’s initiatives and trained for the estimated 4,342 annual job openings over the next 5-10 years.

Chapman added that while the funding for this grant is a key component to Lewis and Clark and the eight other colleges’ initiatives, a key strength of the consortium resides in the effective partnership of multiple stakeholders, including the colleges, employers, state and local workforce agencies, non-governmental and community based organizations.

“Our industry and employer partners are critically important because they bring a knowledge and understanding of the skills and competencies that are needed, additional resources in the form of work-based instructional opportunities, access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, the ability to assist with curriculum design and program

evaluation, and most importantly hiring and job advancement opportunities for our program participants,” Chapman said.

Lewis and Clark’s industry partners include Phillips66, Olin-Winchester, Cassens Transport Co., and many others.

“This collective effort brings the expertise and resources of industry, education, government and local communities to close the gap between business’ need for highly skilled workers and workers’ need for high wage, high skilled and sustainable jobs,” said Jay Churchill, Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery Manager. “This grant funding and possible expansion of Lewis and Clark’s Process Operations Technology Program allows our long-standing partnership to add equipment and will supply our industry with the best and brightest candidates for employment from our region. It’s great to see local people get these jobs of the future.”

“The results of this grant will in turn continue to drive the economic advancement of the Mississippi River region and the country as a whole. We are so pleased that this funding has come through for each of our member institutions who have put so much work into developing their plans to help bolster the economic development of regions from the Headwaters to the Gulf,” Chapman said.

For more information about the Department of Labor’s TAACCCT grant program view the latest release here: <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20130737.htm>.

Following is the funding request submitted by each of the nine institutions:

Lewis and Clark Community College  
Godfrey, IL  
\$4,958,481.00

Hinds Community College  
Raymond, MS  
\$2,249,734.60

John Wood Community College  
Quincy, IL  
\$2,100,000.00

Mid-South Community College  
West Memphis, AR  
\$2,065,596.00

Minnesota State college—Southeast Technical  
Winona, MN  
\$1,766,408.00

St. Louis Community College  
Bridgeton, MO  
\$2,986,981.00

Southwest Tennessee Community College  
Memphis, TN  
\$2,854,601.00

West Kentucky Community and Technical College  
Paducah, KY  
\$2,754,866.00

Delgado Community College  
New Orleans, LA  
\$2,132,704.13