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BY [MATTHEW DEMBICKI](#) | SEPTEMBER 28, 2020 | [PRINT](#)

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### Indiana offers free training for high-demand fields

**Ivy Tech Community College** is partnering with two state agencies in Indiana to offer free job training for high-demand fields to state residents economically affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education are redirecting the state's allotment of federal COVID-19 recovery funds to Indiana's **Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant**, which residents can use for certain training and education programs at Ivy Tech.

The five high-demand fields for which students can receive training are: IT and business services, advanced manufacturing, logistics and transportation, health and life sciences, and building and construction.

Ivy Tech also will provide these students with career coaching services, tutoring, advising and other support services. This is especially important for adults who are entering college for the first time or re-entering after many years in the workforce, the college system said.

### Partnering to expand nursing opportunities

**Central Oregon Community College** (COCC) and St. Charles Health System recently signed a memorandum of understanding for a two-year pilot project to offer non-credit education to hospital caregivers and community members seeking a new role in healthcare.

The program will combine college-level lectures and labs — both online and in-person — taught by COCC faculty at the hospital, as well as clinical instruction provided by St. Charles staff, according to the college. It will be offered at no cost to St. Charles caregivers.

“There’s a dire need for certified nursing assistants (CNAs) all across the country,” said Julie Downing, instructional dean at COCC, who oversees the college’s health careers programming. “This will help our area address that workforce gap. For St. Charles caregivers and community members who are currently in other roles, it promises a new job in healthcare at the end.”

St. Charles reports that it currently has 29 open positions for CNAs.

### An accessible biology lab for blind students

An adjunct biology professor at an Arizona community college has developed a biology lab to better serve visually impaired students.

Amid COVID-19 and virtual learning, Brad Jacobson of **Mesa Community College** (MCC) noticed the need for more effective options to help students who are blind or have poor eyesight. With assistance from other instructors, he created tactile models and activities to give those students a better lab experience. (See video, below.)

The course, Bio100: Biology Concepts, is now fully equipped to serve any and all students regardless of ability, and advisors are able to direct students needing a lab science credit to this course.

As a result of his work, Jacobson earned one of MCC’s Outstanding Adjunct of the Year awards.



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