Assemblymember Salas Champions $1 Million for Bakersfield College Workforce Development

The Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance approved $1 million in grant funding for Bakersfield College to expand workforce development programs. The funding would allow for expansion of HVAC, industrial automation, and welding programs, and improve distance education.

“I am pleased that the Assembly has approved funding for expanded workforce development programs at Bakersfield College that will prepare students for quality, high-paying jobs and help develop a high-skilled, competitive workforce in our communities to contribute to our local economy,” said Assembly member Rudy Salas (D-Bakersfield). “Bakersfield College continues to be a leader in preparing students to enter the workforce and I will continue to fight for this critical funding until the Governor signs the final state budget by June 15th.”

“Bakersfield College is proud to be recognized as a regional and statewide leader with the strategic goal of expanding access to workforce development by increasing outreach, support, and class availability in rural Kern communities such as Delano, Shafter, Wasco, McFarland, Lamont, and Arvin,” said Sonya Christian, President of Bakersfield College.

Assembly member Rudy Salas has been a champion of education as the vehicle to economic improvement of communities, particularly those in the rural parts of our region,” Christian added. “On behalf of all staff and faculty, and especially the students, I express thanks and gratitude for including $1 million dollars to invest in targeted career pathways for the rural communities surrounding the Bakersfield College area.”

Last year, the 2017 Budget Act included $8 million one-time Prop. 98 funding to provide grants to community college districts for workforce development programs in regions with higher unemployment or regions with lower relative job growth to accelerate workforce development. Following discussions among legislators, the Chancellor’s Office and colleges, these funds are now being appropriated to community college districts in distressed economic areas to support workforce development projects throughout the state, including the $1 million for Bakersfield College.

The Assembly Budget Committee proposal now moves to the Budget Conference Committee held between the Senate and Assembly houses.

*Bakersfield College provides opportunities for students from diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds to attain Associate and Baccalaureate degrees and certificates, workplace skills, and preparation for transfer. Our rigorous and supportive learning environment fosters students’ abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world.*

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