



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

**NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**3-YEAR GRANT HELPS AREA HEALTH CARE FACILITIES  
SOLVE WORKER SHORTAGE**

**FALL RIVER, MA (March 10, 2010)** — While only 1 in 10 people who struggle with drug and alcohol addiction in America are receiving the treatment they need to recover, a community college and an addiction treatment center in Fall River have teamed up to train their frontline staff to provide this underserved population with better care.

Fifty-three behavioral health care workers in the Fall River area are receiving free training from Bristol Community College (BCC) and SSTAR, a leading provider of addiction, mental health, and primary healthcare services. The training program, SSTARreach, was launched through a grant from *Jobs to Careers*, a national initiative that helps frontline health care workers access the skills and credential opportunities they need to advance their careers.

SSTAR, BCC, and the Trundy Institute of Addiction Counseling collaborated on the *SSTARreach* project for three years.

“A gift has been presented to me,” says Laura Hubbard, a frontline worker who recently received her Certification in Addictions Counseling (CAC). “Most of us have children, families, and work. The fact that I could come to work, go across the parking lot and go to class—and get some time off for it—that made it attainable.”

Hubbard is one of 19 out of 53 enrollees who have obtained their CAC and/or a Certification in Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counseling (CADAC). Their average salaries have risen 11 percent since they started the program. Also, largely because of their newly acquired credentials, three of the workers were able to be reassigned to new jobs when their jobs were eliminated through funding cuts.

“We’ve gained new students, new tuition dollars, and the ability to offer new courses,” says Frederick Rocco, BCC dean of Behavioral and Social Services. “But more importantly, we’ve gained a group of students who didn’t think they were college material, and really lacked the self-confidence.”

“There are 5 million frontline health care workers in the U.S., many of whom earn less than \$40,000 a year,” says Maria Flynn, director of *Jobs to Careers*. “When we invest in their training, they strengthen our workforce, contribute more to local and state tax bases rather than drawing from them, and provide much needed care to our addicted and aging populations.”

In addition to workers and their employers, colleges benefit as well from participating in *Jobs to Careers*.

“I feel empowered,” says Hubbard. “I’m nothing like I used to be. And the quality of care we can give back to our patients is so much greater.”

While SSTARreach’s *Jobs to Careers* grant expired this past fall, nine participants are still working toward their CAC and CADAC certifications.

### **About Jobs to Careers**

*Jobs to Careers* helps frontline health care workers access the skills and credentials they need to advance their careers through work-based learning—at little to no cost to the workers. This \$15.8 million initiative operates in 17 communities nationwide. It is sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with The Hitachi Foundation and the U.S. Department of Labor. The initiative is managed by Jobs for the Future, a national nonprofit seeking to strengthen America’s workforce through postsecondary education.

[www.jobs2careers.org](http://www.jobs2careers.org)

[www.jff.org](http://www.jff.org)

### **About SSTAR**

Stanley Street Treatment and Resources (SSTAR) is a nonprofit health care and social service agency that has provided a wide range of mental health and substance abuse treatment services to people throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island since 1977.

<http://www.sstar.org>

### **About Bristol Community College**

BCC is a two-year, comprehensive community college offering career and transfer programs of study that lead to associate degrees or certificates in more than 120 programs of study. Roughly 8,700 credit-earning students were enrolled as of the 2009 fall semester with thousands more taking non-credit courses in leisure, business, adult literacy, and more.

<http://www.bristol.mass.edu>