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## LWTC grant to bolster 'second-chance' programs

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Lake Washington Technical College (LWTC) received a \$310,000 start-up grant to implement Gateway to College, a nationally-recognized dropout recovery program originally developed by Portland Community College in Oregon.



Program executive director Laurel Dukehart presented a check for the grant money Oct. 6 to LWTC president Dr. Sharon McGavick at the college.

Gateway to College is designed for young adults ages 16 to 20 who have dropped out of high school or are at very high risk of dropping out. The program enables them to complete their high school diploma requirements while simultaneously earning college credit toward an associate degree or certificate.

“The affiliation with Gateway to College National Network will benefit our entire college community,” McGavick said. “It allows us to receive training in classroom curriculum and strategies to work with local youth who are facing barriers returning to an educational setting.”

Also attending the meeting was state Senator Rosemary McAuliffe (D-Bothell), who serves as chair of the state Senate K-12 Education Committee. She spoke of her own grandson attending LWTC and appreciating the hands-on learning experience offered there.

“(The program) speaks to their learning style,” she said. “Helping people re-enter college and then re-enter the workforce of today. That’s what they do best.”

The grant will provide support staff and services for students from area school districts who left high school without a diploma. This program is an option for students who need additional support, both academically and socially, to succeed at the college level. The program will launch in September 2009 and will serve up to 310 students during its first three years of operation.

The Gateway to College program at LWTC will be administered through Lake Washington Technical Academy ([www.lwtc.edu/academy](http://www.lwtc.edu/academy)), one of only three accredited high schools in Washington state that is located on a college campus. Students enrolled at Lake Washington Technical Academy and in the Gateway to College program receive free tuition. The Lake Washington Technical Academy, founded in 1988, enrolls more than 400 students annually from 32 different school districts throughout the Puget Sound region.

“There’s just a lot of students out there who need a second chance,” Dukehart said, adding that the partnership with LWTC is the first in the state.

Since 2003, the Gateway to College program has been replicated at 17 community colleges across the country. Six additional colleges, including LWTC, will join the Gateway to College network during the upcoming year.

For more information, visit [www.gatewaytocollege.org](http://www.gatewaytocollege.org).

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