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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Great Basin College + Project SANDI open doors to rewarding STEM careers

Initiative spearheaded by Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation supports dislocated, underemployed, and job-seeking Nevadans as they train, reskill, and upskill for rewarding careers

ELKO/CARSON CITY, NV (Sept. 7, 2022) — Great Basin College and the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWINN) has partnered to provide Project SANDI grant funding toward tuition and programming supporting short-term training and certification in high-demand careers in science, manufacturing, mathematics, and technology to Nevadans in rural communities adversely affected by the pandemic.

In just the last year, GOWINN has invested in 188 students at Great Basin College (GBC) through Project SANDI, totaling close to \$270,000 — an average of \$1,473 per student with certificates in millwright, python developer, certified nursing assistant (CNA), and emergency medical services (EMS). These GBC students represented eight Nevada counties:

- 77 Nye County students
- 56 Elko County students
- 24 Humboldt County students
- 18 Clark County students
- 9 Lander County students
- 2 Washoe County students
- 1 Pershing County student
- 1 White Pine County student

"By investing in the people of Nevada, we are investing in Nevada's future through diversifying Nevada's workforce," said Kristen Dwyer, Grants and Programs Manager of the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation. "An investment of just \$1,500 per non-traditional student has a huge return both for job-seekers and employers. Project SANDI at GBC is transforming Nevadans' lives and strengthening Nevada's workforce through an initiative that is nimble and responsive to the needs of employers across the State."

Selena Lopez is one of the 188 students at GBC to receive a scholarship from Project SANDI.

Lopez was interested in a rewarding career in healthcare. As a new mom living on a remote Nevada farm an hour away from the nearest college campus, she was determined to get the skills she needed to succeed and support her family's future. A resident of the Orvada community, Lopez recently completed her first classes in the CNA program at Great Basin

College's Winnemucca campus. Project SANDI has restored her confidence to pursue her career in nursing.

Another recipient, Juan Gomez of Las Vegas, said after he lost his job due to the pandemic, he began applying for new positions while also coming across NCLab's Data Analyst Training Program at GBC. After receiving a scholarship that SANDI funded, Gomez completed the certification, was matched with an employer, and increased his earning potential. A hiring manager quickly called him to offer him a position much higher than the one Gomez initially applied for.

"I didn't realize that the skills I was learning in the training program were the exact skills I needed for the Junior Systems Administrator position," said Gomez. "Because of SANDI, I have a much higher salary than I expected and am able to apply the skills I have learned and am continuing to learn on a daily basis."

GBC offers several short-term trainings and certifications that are SANDI eligible for students in some of the most in-demand occupations. These trainings and courses include Certified Nursing Assistant Program, Emergency Medical Technician Program, and Commercial Drivers License Program. To learn more about the SANDI at GBC, visit https://www.gbcnv.edu/cte/sandi_grant.html.

Nevada was one of only eight states awarded workforce preparation funding from the U.S. Department of Education for SANDI's multiagency collaborative effort, in partnership with President and CEO Miles Dickson of the Nevada GrantLab, who helped to bring the \$13.8 million in federal grants to the state of Nevada.

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About Project "SANDI"

In 2020, the U.S. Department of Education's Education Stabilization Fund-Reimagining Workforce Preparation (ESF-RWP) Discretionary Grants Program called for new ways to create or expand short-term education and training opportunities and/or career pathways programs with educational providers and institutions to become entrepreneurial in finding new ways to more quickly meet the needs of students, employers, and their local community. As one out of only eight states Nevada was awarded for the Supporting and Advancing Nevada's Dislocated Individuals (SANDI) project.

Across the state, Project SANDI has provided assistance to more than 500 persons statewide. They have taken courses through Great Basin College, College of Southern Nevada, Truckee Meadows Community College and Western Nevada College. Participants learned skills for jobs in Nevada's priority sectors, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, logistics, information technology (IT) and skilled trades.

Outside training providers who provide apprenticeship programs to these job seekers include Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee of Southern Nevada, Goodwill of Southern Nevada, High Sierra Area Health Education Center, NCLab, New Horizons Computer Learning Center, and Professional Institute of Technology, Inc.

Along with colleges, employers and community organizations, GOWINN collaborates on Project SANDI with the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Nevada Department of Education, the Nevada System of Higher Education, Nevada's Library Systems and the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation.

The training provided through Project SANDI is designed to be "stackable," allowing students to earn certification in one field, then use that certification as a stepping stone for further training. Project SANDI is expected to assist 1,700 Nevadans by next fall. To learn more about Project SANDI, find out how your organization can become a partner, or to see if you are eligible to apply for a scholarship to begin your future in STEM, visit <https://nevadajobconnect.com/Superhero>.

About Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation

GOWINN helps drive a skilled, diverse, and aligned workforce in the State of Nevada by promoting cooperation and collaboration among all entities focused on workforce development. Its chief objectives are to prepare all K-12 students for college and career success, increase the number of Nevadans with postsecondary credentials and increase labor force participation.
