

EMT training program begins in Sept. 12

HOLYOKE – Anyone interested in being certified as an Emergency Medical Technician should apply now for the fall semester program at Holyoke Community College.

The next HCC EMT Training Program begins Sept. 12 and runs through Dec. 7. The program consists of 170 plus hours of in-class lectures and additional online study, training, field trips and workshops designed to prepare students for the state certification exam. The majority of the training takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6-10 p.m. at HCC's new, state-of-the-art Center for Health Education, home to the college's nursing and radiologic technology programs.

Last year, HCC received a \$127,741 state Workforce Skills Capital Grant to purchase new equipment to enhance its EMT training program. The fall program will be the second time the grant-enhanced version is offered.

"We use the exact same equipment you will find in well-equipped modern ambulances today," said Ken White, dean of Community Services, "so our students already have experience using the same equipment they'll be using in the field."

According to White, all 11 students who completed the spring course passed their state certification exams.

"The program went extremely well,"

he said. "The instruction was exceptional. The students were very very happy, and the state was very pleased with the facility as well as the equipment and the results of the exams."

Some of the grant money was used to purchase "Mr. Santiago," a patient simulator specifically designed for EMT and paramedic training. "He hemorrhages, and you can apply pressure to stop bleeding or use a tourniquet, and he has a computer that records how much pressure is being applied," said Michelle Sherlin, coordinator of HCC's simulation laboratories, who orchestrates emergency simulation exercises for the EMT program.

Not only that, but trainees can use a real defibrillator to shock him, and he has a built-in CPR monitor that shows the effectiveness of compressions and ventilations.

"This is actually the highest level of equipment that I've seen or taught with," said instructor Mike Marafuga, an EMT with the Southwick Fire Department. "I've never used simulation with an EMT program, so this is actually one of the first classes that I know of in the state that does this."

For more information or to register, contact Ken White at (413) 552-2324 / kwhite@hcc.edu or go online at www.hcc.edu/workforce



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bonnie and Justin Cook from Hardwick perform CPR on "Mr. Santiago," a patient simulator, during an EMT emergency training exercise at Holyoke Community College. They were members of the first class of HCC's new enhanced EMT training program last spring.