

## ► In The News

# HCC Jump Start program earns national recognition

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College has been named a finalist for a national Bellwether Award in recognition of Jump Start, the college's job training and placement program for people who receive public assistance.

HCC was one of 10 U.S. colleges selected as a finalist by the Bellwether College Consortium in its Workforce Development category, which identifies strategic alliances that promote community and economic development. Bellwether finalists represent leading community colleges whose programs and practices are considered outstanding and innovative.

The Bellwether Awards are widely regarded as one of the nation's most competitive and prestigious recognitions for community colleges.

HCC was the only community college in Massachusetts selected as a 2022 Bellwether finalist. This is the second year in a row HCC has been named a Bellwether finalist. HCC's "Together HCC" fundraising and social media campaign was selected as a finalist for 2021.



"It's very impressive that HCC has received this kind of recognition two years in a row," said President Christina Royal. "We're honored to be in such elite company."

For more than 20 years, HCC's Jump Start program has been creating sustainable career pathways for individuals who were previously unem-

ployed or had limited education and work experience.

"Jump Start's success is based on the program's ability to connect individuals on public assistance with real-world workforce training resources," said Jeffrey Hayden, HCC vice president of Business and Community Services. "We believe that everyone

has unique skills and talents that can help them get a job, and, with the help of Jump Start, they do."

Jump Start offers workforce training for jobs as culinary workers, nursing assistants, pharmacy technicians, customer service representatives, preschool workers, production technicians, and bus and truck drivers.

"The Bellwether College Consortium prides itself on identifying and celebrating replicable, scalable and results-based programs and models and disseminating these highly lauded examples of institutional success to peer institutions," said Rose Martinez, director of the San Antonio-based Bellwether College Consortium.

Finalists for Bellwether Awards are invited to join the consortium and take part in consortium workshops, events and other activities. Award finalists will undergo a rigorous second and final round of review before the winners are announced in January at the 2022 Community College Futures Assembly in San Antonio, Texas.