

## HOLYOKE

## Skills Capital Grant aids HCC vet tech program

Holyoke Community College has received a \$240,743 state grant to expand and improve the outdoor instructional kennel used for its veterinary technician program.

The allocation came from the Massachusetts Skills Capital Grant Program and was awarded last month by Gov. Charlie Baker's Workforce Skills Cabinet.

The competitive grants are awarded to educational institutions that demonstrate partnerships with local businesses, as well as align curriculum and credentials with industry demand to maximize hiring opportunities in each region of the state.

"Skills Capital Grants help preserve the commonwealth's talent pipeline by funding expanded enrollment and equipment upgrades at educational institutions to provide more students with in-demand skills sought by employers," Baker said in announcing the

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Holyoke Community College veterinary technician instructor Jennifer York examines Bandit during a wellness check with help from student Briana Diaz, of Westfield. A \$240,743 state grant to the college will help expand and improve the outdoor instructional kennel used for its veterinary technician program. (HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PHOTO)

The college also will add a one-year veterinary assistant certificate program for the fall 2020 semester to go along with its two-year associate degree vet tech program.

Holyoke's veterinary technician program is the

only one in Western Massachusetts accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

The governor's Workforce Skills Cabinet was created in 2015 to bring together the secretariats of education, labor and workforce devel-

opment, and housing and economic development to align education, economic development and workforce policies in order to strategize around how to meet employers' demand for skilled workers in every region of the commonwealth.