Starting in January 2021, students in Yakima Valley College’s (YVC) Allied Health programs will benefit from new laboratory and learning spaces in West Campus. The new space, designed to support current teaching methods and program requirements, will better meet the needs of both YVC students and the community for qualified medical professionals. Among the Allied Health programs using the facility are Care Navigation, Medical Assisting, Medical Billing and Coding, Medical Interpreter, Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomy and Surgical Technology. Later in 2021, the facility also will open a new tasting room operated by YVC’s Vineyard and Winery Technology Program and a new, expanded display space for the Larson Gallery.

YVC is helping local school districts address a critical shortage of teachers — particularly in schools serving diverse and low-income communities — with the launch of its Bachelor of Applied Science in Teacher Education. Since welcoming in 2018 a first cohort of paraprofessionals, school support staff and other community members to become teachers in Yakima Valley schools, 36 candidates have completed residency experiences in seven partner districts. Of those placement sites, 93% are designated as Title I schools serving high numbers of economically disadvantaged children. Students of color comprise 37% of YVC’s candidates and 100% are preparing to teach in shortage areas, including endorsements in English Language Learner and Early Childhood Education.

YVC has served the largest percentage of historically underserved students of color in Washington’s community and technical college system. YVC’s enrollment of this demographic currently stands at 67%, and over the past five years, the college has seen considerable success in closing gaps in completion rates. The completion rate of YVC’s Latino students has increased 18 percentage points during this period, eliminating the equity gap between Latino and white students and putting the college significantly above the community and technical college system average in retention and completion.