



# INTEGRATED BASIC EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING (I-BEST)

JUNE 2018

*"The I-BEST support was exactly what I needed as a returning student. Several days after clinicals I received an immediate interview and was hired at Morton General Hospital. Best decision this woman ever made."*

Laura White, I-BEST Graduate, Centralia College Annual Report, June 2017

▶ Watch our I-BEST video <https://bit.ly/2k0xaCV>

## Building Skills, Prosperity

By 2025, nearly 70 percent of all projected job openings in our state will require education beyond high school, yet an estimated 685,000 Washingtonians lack the basic skills needed to meet those workforce needs.<sup>1</sup>

I-BEST equips students with the needed skills to move ahead in college and land high-demand, living wage jobs that help grow our economy.

Pioneered by Washington's community and technical colleges, I-BEST uses a team teaching approach. Students work with two teachers in the classroom: one provides job training and the other teaches basic skills in reading, math, or English language. Students get the help they need while studying in the career field of their choice; they learn by doing.

The I-BEST team-teaching model is also used in transfer pathways so students can brush up their skills as they prepare to transfer to a four-year degree.

I-BEST was named a Bright Idea by Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2011 and has been designated by the U.S. Department of Education as one of the most significant national innovations.<sup>2</sup>

## Enrollments and Wages Grow

More and more students are turning to I-BEST to increase their skills and wages. I-BEST enrollments grew from 3,861 in 2013-14 to 4,887 in 2016-17 — a 27 percent increase.<sup>3</sup>

Forty-three percent of students enrolled in I-BEST are students of color.<sup>4</sup>

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges requires I-BEST programs to lead to jobs with a minimum starting wage of \$13 per hour (\$15 per hour in King County). Overall, I-BEST students who complete certificates and degrees earn more than these benchmarks.<sup>5</sup>

Students enroll in a wide range of high-demand I-BEST pathways, including healthcare, aeronautics, advanced manufacturing, and IT.

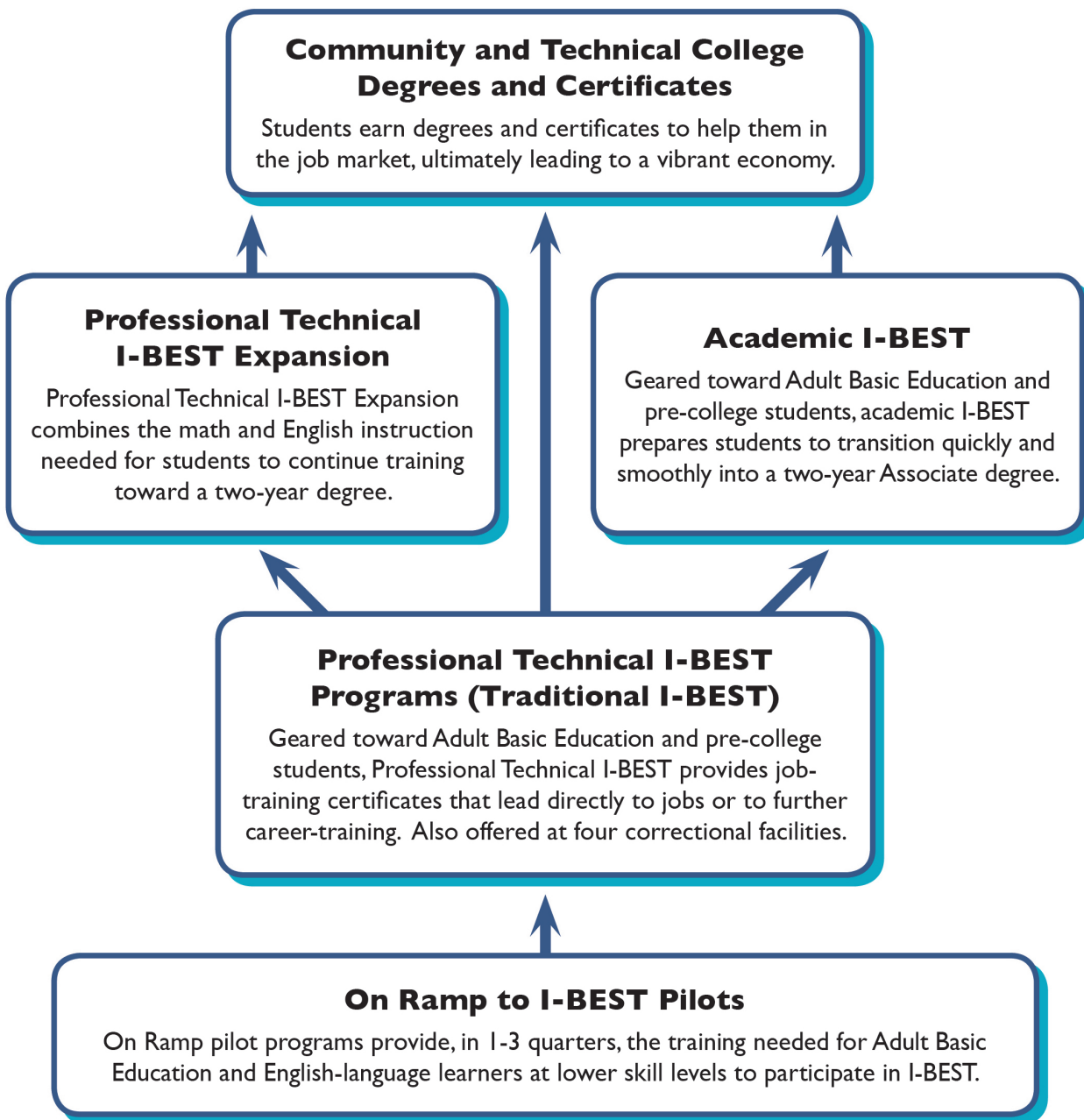
## I-BEST and Opportunity Grants

Students can use Opportunity Grants when they enroll in I-BEST professional technical pathways. The grant covers up to 45 credits of tuition (a year's worth) and up to \$1,000 a year for books and supplies. Students also receive tutoring, career advising, emergency child care, emergency transportation and college success classes.

Opportunity Grants serve as a financial lifeline for I-BEST students who do not have high school diplomas. Under federal financial aid rules, students without diplomas have to prove their "ability to benefit" from financial aid before they can qualify — typically by completing six college credits on their own. The Opportunity Grant helps these students pay for college as they finish their first six credits.

In proof of the program's success, I-BEST is being replicated across the country.

## Comprehensive I-BEST Pathway



### Sources:

1. 70% – a Skilled and Educated Workforce 2017 update by the Washington Student Achievement Council, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and Workforce Training and Coordinating Board. 685,000 – SBCTC research division calculation from 2010-14 five-year American Community Survey Estimates.
2. Martha J. Kanter, then U.S. Undersecretary of Education, opinion editorial, “American Higher Education: ‘First in the World’” featured in May-June 2011 Change magazine.
- 3-4. SBCTC Academic Year Report Dashboard.
5. Opportunity Grant and I-BEST Programs: Enrollment and Outcomes by Darby Kaikkonen, SBCTC Policy Research Director, March 2018.