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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market  
Development

### **B.C. INVESTS \$5.2M TO INCREASE SKILLS TRAINING ACCESS**

VICTORIA– The Province is investing \$5.2 million for a second year of training programs, to help almost 1,000 unemployed and low-skilled British Columbians acquire the skills they need to transition back to the labour force, get a better job, or further their education, announced Moira Stilwell, Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.

“B.C.’s knowledge economy needs skilled workers. The Employment Skills Access Program will help workers already employed improve their skills and it will assist unemployed workers transition to new jobs,” said Stilwell. “Programs like this one are important as they allow British Columbians to access the tools they need for their future success.”

In its second year, the program has now expanded to include low-skilled, employed individuals as well as individuals who are unemployed but not Employment Insurance (EI) clients.

The Province is providing \$1.5 million to five institutions to fund additional training programs for more than 250 students. British Columbia Institute of Technology, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Royal Roads University, Simon Fraser University and the University of Northern British Columbia will offer eight different programs that will provide participants with general employment skills or job-specific skills, such as front-line supervisory skills, advanced English for the workplace and software systems development.

Another \$3.7 million has been provided to the labour market consortium, made up of 15 colleges and universities to fund training for approximately 700 students across the province. The consortium model, established in 2009, features a “hub” providing centralized co-ordination and support among the 15 member institutions that will deliver training in response to client and labour demands in their respective regions.

The B.C. government, working with post-secondary institutions, industry and other partners, is enabling British Columbians to gain the skills needed to successfully participate in our provincial labour market, and respond positively to changing workplace demands.

“Through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement, our government is taking action to provide British Columbians with the training and skills development opportunities they need to find and keep good jobs,” said Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development. “These programs will go a long way towards making this happen.”

Under the Labour Market Agreement (LMA), the Government of Canada is providing the Province with approximately \$66 million annually until 2013-14. Through a variety of programs, these funds will increase training for individuals who are low-skilled and require essential skills, or who require recognized credentials to reach their full potential in the current marketplace. They will also help increase access to training for unemployed individuals who are not currently EI clients, including, but not limited to those who are under-represented in the labour market.

For more information on the LMA, visit [www.WorkBC.ca](http://www.WorkBC.ca).

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