

# LMC launches health care program

Institute to tie together non-credit offerings

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**BENTON TOWNSHIP** — Lake Michigan College has established a health care institute to unify non-credit programs in the field.

The Healthcare Education Institute should be in place by month's end at M-TEC in Benton Harbor after the LMC Board of Trustees approved the measure last week. Creating the HEI was among priorities identified in LMC's 2013-14 budget.

"What we're trying to do is create some (career) leads for people to go into

health care," President Bob Harrison said. "We see health care as a growth area — not only here, but across the country."

Examples include the certified medical assistant, certified nursing assistant, coding/electronic records, patient registrar, pharmacy technology and phlebotomy programs, Harrison said.

"This will give them a career path to start out on the non-credit (side), and then, maybe transition to the registered nurse program or the medical imaging program," he said.

As Harrison noted in a memo to the board, creating the institute will offer "life-changing opportunities to students who may not have otherwise have the

economic stability and confidence to pursue higher education beyond a short-term training program."

In other matters, the board last week awarded general liability insurance bids for \$150,000 to MASB-SEG, which is an arm of the Michigan Association of School Boards, according to Kelli Hahn, vice president of financial services.

The deal is good through July, and renewable on an annual basis, Hahn said. The board authorized her to seek bids last June, and present them for final approval after collecting the information.

Although MASB-SEG was the low bidder, "we looked at deductibles and retained loss," Hahn said.

"This is the first time in several years that we have competitively bid our insurance."

Asked to explain the rationale for bidding out the service now, Hahn responded: "Use college resources efficiently."

In other business, Clint Gabbard, vice president of student services, touched on results of LMC's new two-credit college summer readiness class, which featured 30 students from the Benton Harbor Promise Zone program.

"That was a feat, in and of itself, to have 30 of these kids volunteer five weeks of their summer," Gabbard said.

Graduating seniors can get two fully funded years

of tuition and fees through the Promise Zone program, which started in 2011, and is one of 10 others like it across the state.

The program's central aim is to create a college-bound culture, which its proponents say will improve the participants' skills and improve Michigan's economy through the creation of a more educated workforce.

Twenty-nine of the 30 students completed the LMC program, Gabbard said. Attendance was about 86 percent, versus 80 percent for the college overall, he said.

"More than anything else, our instructors absolutely are convinced that it's (the summer program) going to make a difference," Gabbard

said. "The skills that these folks develop in such a short time will make an impact on their early learning, once they hit their classrooms in the fall. So we're very excited about that."

A review of intervention efforts for last year's Promise Zone group has shown equally encouraging results, Gabbard said.

About 62 percent are returning to LMC this fall, versus 35 percent for the 2011 Promise Zone group, he said.

"Again, we're just trying to move the needle, and learn from every little piece of success and failure that we have," Gabbard told the board "Thanks for your interest in that group, and we'll keep at it."