

LMC lands \$1.69M grant

BENTON TOWNSHIP — A program that helps Lake Michigan College students from disadvantaged backgrounds realize a dream of higher education has been funded for another five years, LMC announced Friday.

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Lake Michigan College \$1.69 million to maintain its Educational Opportunity Center through 2021. LMC is among 143 colleges and organizations to receive the grants.

“Creating a 21st Century work force requires more than just high-quality academic instruction, and the EOC gives students the tools and resources to become successful in and out of the classroom,” LMC President Bob Harrison stated in a news release. “It is an essential resource in (the region), where about 65 percent of jobs will require training and education beyond high school. Our region’s potential resides in our people, and we can’t afford to leave anyone behind.”

LMC opened its EOC in 1994 with a goal of helping more people further their education beyond high school. The center has served more than 25,000 adults throughout Southwest Michigan and northern Indiana.

The EOC is a free community service and an information hub for adults seeking training and education and career advancement. The EOC specializes in understanding the

needs of those traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, including students with disabilities, limited English proficiency, are first-generation college students or are homeless or exiting foster care.

For those who may not have finished high school, help is offered for secondary school re-entry or high school equivalency exam programs.

Participants are connected with resources to help them be college-ready regardless of which college they choose to attend.

Staff are available as tutors, mentors and counselors to guide students through the college admissions, course selection, transfer and testing process. Students gain access to computers and technology, and receive training in financial literacy and planning.

EOC services are available to people age 19 and older who live in the Michigan counties of Berrien, Cass, Van Buren and Allegan, and the Indiana counties of La Porte and St. Joseph.

Such centers are among eight national programs collectively known as the Federal TRIO Programs. TRIO helps people succeed through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs.

Learn more on LMC’s EOC website or call 927-8965 to meet with someone in person.