

LCC Awarded Nearly \$3 Million Federal Grant to Build Career-Ready Programs Lamar, Colorado. September 28, 2026.

Lamar Community College (LCC) has been awarded a \$2.997 million, five-year Title III grant from the U.S. Department of Education to launch LCC ReadyPath: Workforce Readiness and Opportunity System, a comprehensive initiative designed to strengthen the connection between students' education, career preparation, and opportunities beyond College.

The grant represents a significant investment in LCC and southeastern Colorado. It will provide resources to build institutional capacity, strengthen workforce-aligned pathways, expand work-based learning opportunities, and create a more intentional system for preparing students for employment, transfer, and additional credentials.

"This award is a tremendous investment in our students and in the future of southeastern Colorado," said Dr. Rosana Reyes, President of Lamar Community College. "LCC ReadyPath will help us take the work we are already doing to prepare students for careers to the next level. We want every student to understand where their education can take them from enrollment to employment and how LCC can help them make that connection." By helping students develop career-ready skills and connect with employers, LCC can contribute to a stronger regional talent pipeline while giving students more reasons to build their futures in the communities they call home.

Through LCC ReadyPath and other institutional priority efforts, the College will develop a structured approach to workforce readiness that brings together academic programs, faculty, employers, alums, workforce partners, and student support services.

The five-year initiative will focus on three core areas:

- Building workforce infrastructure through labor-market and pathway intelligence, strengthening technology resources, and expanding employer, alum, and community partner networks.
- Preparing students for their next step through Pathway Profiles. Each student will have a Readiness Plan guided by milestones that may include work-based learning opportunities and a career transition plan that clarifies their goals, identifies preparation needs, and outlines their plan for employment or transfer.
- Expanding career-connected opportunities by developing pathway-based opportunity networks that connect prepared students with internships, externships, apprenticeships, mentorships, job shadowing, employer-informed projects, and other work-integrated learning experiences.

LCC will initially develop these Ready Pathways in Software and IT Services, Critical and Emerging Technology, and Industrial Manufacturing and Automation, with future priority areas confirmed through workforce analysis, employer input, and economic mobility pathways to meaningful career connections.

The ReadyPath grant is one of several ways LCC continues to pursue innovative approaches to higher education while bringing significant external resources into southeastern Colorado to accomplish this work. As a rural institution, LCC recognizes that preparing students for the workforce requires more than offering programs. It requires creating meaningful connections among what students learn, the skills employers need, and the opportunities available within and beyond the region. This federal investment will also support LCC's broader efforts to strengthen economic opportunities throughout southeastern Colorado.

According to Vice President Emick, "Our rural setting challenges us to be more creative, more intentional, and more responsive. At LCC, we are committed to finding new ways to expand opportunity for our students while helping our region address its workforce needs."

The ReadyPath award builds on LCC's growing record of securing competitive grants and partnerships that advance the College's mission. From workforce and Career & Technical Education expansion to student success initiatives such as the ASAP program, and new academic programs such as Plumbing and Heavy Equipment, LCC continues to seek innovative solutions and resources to the challenges facing rural higher education. "These investments demonstrate what is possible when a rural college is willing to innovate, build strong partnerships, and effectively compete nationally and in our state for resources on behalf of its students and community," President Reyes said. "We are not simply responding to the future of rural higher education; we are intentionally helping to shape it."

LCC will begin implementing the five-year ReadyPath initiative in the coming months, with the first year focused on building the systems, partnerships, infrastructure, and readiness processes needed for long-term success. **The \$2,997,000 federal award** will provide LCC with the resources to build a sustainable workforce-readiness system designed specifically for the needs of a rural college and the students and communities it serves. If you are interested in being a workforce partner with LCC, please get in touch with us at Amelia.Foster@Lamarcc.edu or call us at (719)336-1511.

About Lamar Community College

Lamar Community College, founded in 1937, is a comprehensive rural community college serving southeastern Colorado and beyond. Committed to student success, workforce development, innovation, and community partnership, LCC provides academic, career and technical, transfer, and workforce education designed to enrich lives through learning.