



# News from the Office of **ADAM J. BELLO** **MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Monroe County Executive Adam Bello Announces Funding for new Healthcare Training Program at Monroe Community College**

*MPower Healthcare will provide training for people seeking jobs in  
essential healthcare positions*

**ROCHESTER, NY** -- Today, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello announced that Monroe County has committed \$550,000 in CARES Act funding for Monroe Community College (MCC) to develop, implement, and manage a workforce development partnership, MPower Healthcare. This innovative program will provide free training to Monroe County residents looking for work in essential health and medical positions.

“Healthcare professionals were already a critical need for our region, the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated that problem. Thanks to the advocacy of Congressman Morelle and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, Monroe County is able to utilize a portion of our CARES Act funding to expand our partnership with MCC’s first class workforce development,” said Bello. “MPower Healthcare will not only provide great training for anyone looking to get into the medical care field, it will also put them on a successful career path by linking them to prospective employers throughout Monroe County. This truly is a win-win for our entire community.”

MPower Healthcare will fund training and education for a minimum of 329 MCC students per year who are enrolled in programs in healthcare, including Certified Nurse Assistant Training and Development, and Home Health Aide programs, and pathways to Licensed Practical Nursing. The program will provide students with the qualifications and tools to become certified in NYS, while also focusing on their professional skill development and career plans. Comprehensive support provided includes more than training. Mpower Healthcare supports case management, career development advising, curriculum development, training and educational space, equipment, instructors, and student tuition, fees, books, and tools.

“We are grateful for Monroe County’s partnership in creating brighter futures for job seekers. MCC’s mission is to transform students’ lives by connecting them to meaningful careers through higher education. With Monroe County’s support and our collaborations with employers, we’re opening doors of opportunity for individuals seeking careers in the health care field and effectively responding to employers’ workforce demands at this crucial time,” said MCC Interim President Katherine Douglas, Ed.D.

Healthcare workers – especially CNAs, LPNs, and HHAs – were already in dire need in Monroe County before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in 2020. Now, the need for these skilled professionals is even



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more essential to our workforce. In addition, the economic ramifications of COVID-19 resulted in an unemployment crisis that left thousands of people in our community out of work.

“These entry-level health care programs are designed to meet the strong need for clinical support workers in our local economy,” said Dr. Todd Oldham, Vice President, Economic Development, Workforce and Career Technical Education at MCC, “the goal of this program is to on-ramp participants onto a career pathway with a process for continued skill development beyond entry-level occupations, with options to progress to LPN for those who wish to pursue it.””

“As a single mom of two, I felt stuck in so many ways,” said Tameka Lester, who completed the CNA program in 2019. “This program has given hope to me and my family. I can pursue my dreams and support my family at the same time. The fact that I can do both and not have to make a choice between them means everything to me.”

MPOWER Healthcare can be a resource for individuals looking for sustainable career paths in healthcare in the wake of COVID-19 and beyond. It is clear public health issues will remain at the forefront of our concerns on a global scale for the foreseeable future. Beginning with the CNA program, students can realize their pathway to more sustainable wages and provide a stable foundation for themselves and their families.

“The need to have well-trained and dedicated Certified Nursing Assistants to serve the needs of the vulnerable elders who reside in our community’s nursing homes is more apparent now than ever before. Continued funding and support of MCC’s C.N.A. training program helps address this vital community need,” said Michael Perrotta, Vice President and Administrator at the Friendly Home.

Monroe County will help address two major concerns by utilizing \$550,000 in CARES Act funding to create MPOWER Healthcare: increasing the numbers of talented healthcare workers serving our hospitals, nursing homes, ambulatory centers, and at-home patients; and bringing residents back to work by offering them the training they need to enter careers in an increasingly essential industry. Employer partners include: Friendly Home, St. Ann’s, Highlands Living Center, Highlands at Brighton, Monroe Community Hospital, ComForCare, Trusted Home Care and Embrace Home Care.

U.S. Senator Charles Schumer said, “When the pandemic slammed New York, I was proud to secure funding in the CARES Act to help Monroe County and our essential workers during difficult times. I am pleased that the county will put these funds to good use, creating a win-win for our community by establishing a pipeline to get our unemployed back to work while also bolstering our healthcare system.”

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand said, “During these challenging times, New York’s health care and medical professionals have been working on the frontlines to combat the COVID-19 health crisis. Now more than ever, it’s critical that we invest in training workers with in-demand skills and build the strong and diverse



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workforce needed to recover. This critical investment in Monroe Community College will help bolster the health care workforce in Monroe County by establishing important clinical education programs to train the professionals needed to combat the growing health care challenges of this pandemic and beyond. I am proud to have fought for this CARES Act funding and will continue working in the Senate to bring home the funding needed to protect our communities and put thousands of New Yorkers back to work.”

“COVID-19 has put an unprecedented strain on our healthcare system, our economy, and our community’s working families,” said Congressman Joe Morelle. “We need bold investments in workforce development to help recover from this pandemic and move forward, which is why I’m proud to have helped secure critical funding through the CARES Act to make this program a reality. I’m grateful to County Executive Bello for his leadership throughout this crisis and his commitment to ensuring the future of Monroe County remains bright.”

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