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**El Camino College | Public Relations & Marketing Department**  
**16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506**  
**Telephone: (310) 660-3406 | FAX: (310) 660-3946 | Contact: Ann M. Garten**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **El Camino College BTC Awarded \$1.54 Million in Grants**

The El Camino College Business Training Center (BTC) was recently awarded \$1.54 million in grants by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Two grants were awarded under the Industry-Driven Regional Collaborative (IDRC) program, and two under the Job Development Incentive Fund (JDIF) program.

Industry-Driven Regional Collaborative (IDRC) program grants fund flexible, short-term, "design-it-yourself" local projects that meet regional business needs in high-growth, emerging technologies. The BTC's funded projects are the Beverage Equipment Service Technician (BEST) Certification Program, and the Export Training & Enabler Program (ETEP).

The BEST Program will address the specific training and certification needs of the Specialty Coffee Industry through on-line training and certification provided to existing technicians and individuals interested in a career as a coffee service technician. The BEST program will use the \$278,964 IDRC grant over a two-year period for developing a Level II certificate program, and a Troubleshooting for Retailers module.

The ETEP Program is designed to increase exports and jobs of Southern California aerospace manufacturers and will be funded for \$398,905 over two years. The BTC will collaborate with three key partners on this project -- the U.S. Commercial Service, California Manufacturing Technology Consulting, and the California Space Authority. The primary targets are small and medium-sized aerospace manufacturers that are not yet exporting or are not exporting to their full potential. The seven-step ETEP will take each participant from their start point (no-or low export sales) to the point where they are effectively represented in their most promising markets, are making new and increasing export sales, and will need to expand their production and work force to fill the new export orders.

The Job Development Incentive Fund (JDIF) supports projects that lead to the upgrading of highly skilled and technical workers, while attempting to develop upgrade opportunities for those who are employed at a wage too low to attain self-sufficiency, and/or the creation of job opportunities for new entrants into the workforce. The BTC's two projects funded under the Job Development Incentive Fund (JDIF) program are the WorkReady Certificate Program, and the Mariner Skill Training Program.

The Work Ready Certificate program responds to requests of the aerospace/manufacturing industry in the South Bay of Los Angeles, and will provide clear, concise, and objective data to aerospace manufacturing employers, individuals, educators, trainers, and job service providers on the readiness of individuals to successfully enter or re-enter the workforce. The employability certificate represents a standardized and reliable indicator of workplace skill levels that can be used in businesses throughout the region. It will provide a “bridge” between job applicants, incumbent workers, educators, training organizations, and the wide range of area businesses. The project will be funded for \$459,779 over a two-year period.

The Mariner Skill Training Program will complete activities and expand a successful project begun with JDIF program funds in 2004 that trained 409 incumbent and entry level mariners.

With additional funding the curriculum will be completed and additional training needs identified in the initial project will be addressed. These include a greater integration of basic skills instruction in the Basic Safety and Tankerman curriculum as both incumbent trainees and entry-level workers demonstrated a consistent need for remediation in basic math, reading and communication skills. Funding will also be used to address identified needs by the maritime industry for a Basic Industrial Maintenance curriculum, Confined Space Training, and a course for first responders at hazardous materials spills.

The maritime industry will participate by paying tuition for employees to attend the training (up to \$900 per incumbent worker), and also pay the incumbent worker’s full salary for the duration of the training. The project is funded for \$405,355 over a two-year period.

BTC grant awards for 2006 now total \$2,238,521. This amount includes the four new grants and \$698,521 in grants received this summer to motivate middle school and high school students to explore careers in the manufacturing field, and to strengthen career technical education programs in high schools located in regions heavily dependent on international trade.

The El Camino College Business Training Center provides businesses of all sizes assistance with on-site manufacturing technology, business development, international trade and workforce training. For more information, visit [www.businessassist.org](http://www.businessassist.org) or call 310-973-3178.

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