



Community Workforce Response Grant Covers Full Tuition for CNC Dental Assisting Students

Prince George

The College of New Caledonia (CNC) is pleased to announce that eight students enrolled in the Dental Assistant Certificate Program will have their full tuition and supplies covered for the 10-month program, thanks to funding through the Community Workforce Response Grant (CWRG).

The grant—provided by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia—was secured by the BC Dental Association, which selected CNC as a partner institution. Several colleges across the province were eligible to receive the funding, making this an especially meaningful opportunity for CNC students.

“We’re incredibly proud to be chosen for this partnership,” said Cindy Heitman, President of CNC. “This funding removes significant financial barriers and allows students to focus on their training, their goals, and their futures. We’re grateful to the BC Dental Association and the provincial and federal governments for supporting our learners in such a profound way.”

The Community Workforce Response Grant provides flexible, rapid-response funding to address urgent labour market needs in B.C. communities. By supporting cohort-based skills training for unemployed and underemployed individuals, CWRG helps participants gain the skills and certifications they need to enter high-demand fields—strengthening local economies and meeting workforce needs.

“BCDA is pleased to partner with the College of New Caledonia as part of our ongoing commitment to address dental staff shortages and create opportunities for those who need them most,” said Dr. Jilliam Belbin, President, BC Dental Association. “This initiative focuses on supporting vulnerable and underrepresented students, particularly in rural and remote communities to pursue dental education and join a healthcare workforce in critical demand.”

“Through this grant, we’ve been able to remove barriers and open doors for students who might otherwise be left behind. We are deeply grateful to our school partners, local dental societies, and community dentists for helping us make this vision a reality.”

This year, CNC's Dental Assistant Certificate Program students describe the funding as "life-changing."

Cyndi Lewis, Dental Assisting Faculty & Coordinator, Dental Studies

"There were several colleges that could have received this funding, so being selected is an amazing opportunity for our students. I can't imagine the feelings they have knowing their tuition is covered. Everyone carries their own stresses and life circumstances, and removing the financial burden is absolutely life-changing. It allows them to focus on their studies, aim for their best grades, and still have the space to live their post-secondary lives—to spend time with family, be present, and breathe."

Katrina Schwab, Student

"Receiving this grant has eased a significant financial burden and has had a real impact on my life by reducing financial stress and allowing me to focus more fully on my studies. Knowing that I have this support has brought a sense of relief and has increased my motivation as I continue in the dental assisting program and prepare for my future career in the field."

Avery Cassidy, Student

"I graduated in 2024 and have always had support from my parents. The best part of this grant is taking that financial pressure off them. I used to commute from Quesnel every weekend at 6 a.m. while working, and I knew that juggling school and work again would be tough. This funding gives me the chance to further my education without that burden."

About CNC

Since 1969, the College of New Caledonia has been serving the post-secondary and adult education needs of communities across Northern B.C. With a focus on student success, hands-on learning, and community engagement, CNC offers a wide range of academic, trades, and technical programs.

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