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Thursday, March 4, 2010

## State announces jobs initiative at Largo school

### Post-high school training touted as key to getting hired

by Liz Skalski | Staff Writer

Maryland's governor and a state board are encouraging residents statewide and in Prince George's County to graduate from high school — and then keep going.

At Prince George's Community College in Largo on Tuesday, Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) and the Governor's Workforce Investment Board announced an initiative to increase the number of Marylanders with at least one year of education or training after high school.

The initiative, Skills2Compete Maryland, aims to increase the skills and competitiveness of Maryland's workforce by encouraging residents with only a high school diploma to pursue some form of continued education in the classroom — as little as a single class or as much as two years at a community college — to get the necessary education and skills training to fill "middle-skills" jobs.

State officials, including Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown (D), who is leading the initiative, stressed that these jobs make up a growing majority of employment opportunities.

Daniel Mosser, Prince George's Community College's vice president for workforce development and continuing education, said the five areas in Prince George's County — and typically also for the state — that require some post-high school training or education are in the fields of construction, computer and information technology, education and health care.

Forty two percent of jobs available in the state from 2006 to 2016 are middle-skills jobs, Mosser said.

The initiative is being launched at all 16 of Maryland's community colleges, said H. Clay Whitlow, executive director of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges. More than 12 other states also have launched Skills2Compete.

"Just having a high school diploma isn't enough. People need to go beyond high school," Whitlow said. "We want to help put people to work."

O'Malley said the goal is to give Marylanders the skills they need for the jobs that are available.

"There are jobs available in Maryland that aren't all Ph.D.," he said. "Our citizens need jobs; businesses need skilled employees. This is a tremendous opportunity in the history of our country."

E-mail Liz Skalski at [eskalski@gazette.net](mailto:eskalski@gazette.net).