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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CAP Services expands funding for the Skills Enhancement Program

In August 2021, CAP Services’ Board of Directors approved an increase in funding to CAP’s Skills Enhancement Program. The Skills Enhancement Program is a locally designed workforce development program that assists working, low-income individuals obtain the skills needed to compete for living wage jobs. The program assists with tuition, books, and training-related transportation and child care costs that participants could not otherwise afford.

Reimbursement rates have not kept pace with actual costs which is why CAP leaders have approved the increased funding. The goal of the Skills Enhancement Program is to support low-wage workers in accessing education that leads to employment with higher wages, employer-sponsored benefits, and opportunities for advancement. So by providing financial assistance for the direct and indirect costs of education that would otherwise pose barriers for participants, we can better serve our current and future Skills participants.

The design of the assistance provided by the Skills Enhancement Program has always been to support individuals who are pursuing training/education on a part-time basis. Using 6 credits as the maximum, childcare allowances were established to support a participant’s time in class, as well as the time associated with travel to and from classes. For those students who need to travel to a campus further than 10 miles from their home, this mileage reimbursement is now more reflective of the actual fuel cost. The funding increase also helps the financial assistance provided to keep pace with the rising costs of tuition and books in recent years.

With the increased funding to the Skills Enhancement Program, we expect to see benefits for program recruitment and retention. Current participants will have increased capacity to move toward their goals without the disruption of past due balances or tuition amounts that were unaffordable even after CAP’s funding was applied for the semester.

Visit our website, capservices.org/skills to learn more about the program and to fill out the screening form to see if you qualify.

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