



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 26, 2016

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**Tacoma Community House receives grant from Boeing to help students earn their Nursing Assistant Certification**

*Boeing, a longtime partner of Tacoma Community House, also provided initial start-up funds for Project Nightingale.*

TACOMA, WA—This past November, aircraft manufacturer Boeing granted \$86,000 to Tacoma Community House’s **Project Nightingale**, an initiative of the agency’s Employment Department to help adults earn their Nursing Assistant Certification. It is the second time Boeing donated to the project, having provided the initial start-up funds two years ago.

Tacoma Community House (TCH) is a multiservice center on the Hilltop that provides immigrants, refugees, and low-income South Sound residents with services aimed at fostering self-sufficiency. Employment at a living wage is a key part of that journey.

Project Nightingale began in August of 2014 when the agency recognized a higher-than-average demand for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs).<sup>1</sup>

“The business community needed care workers and our clients needed jobs,” says Jason Scales, Client Services Director at TCH. “We thought [Project Nightingale] would be successful but didn’t have the funding. Boeing set a precedent by giving us the funds to start a pilot program.”

The next step was finding candidates who would be successful in such a reading- and study-intensive program. Most individuals who come to TCH seeking job assistance have little training, and many have never finished high school. “A majority [of Project Nightingale’s participants] are first generation college students, and nearly all are on public assistance,” says LaTasha Ware, TCH WorkFirst Case Manager.

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<sup>1</sup> Experts project a 14% increase or 600,000 new CNA jobs between 2014 and 2024.

(Cont.)

TCH recognized that it needed a strong partner with the proper teachers, curriculum, and equipment to prepare students for the Nursing Assistant Certification exam. They found that partner in Bates Technical College, located less than a mile from TCH's South L Street facility.

### **Project Nightingale Today**

TCH has screened over 60 candidates and enrolled 27 into the Nightingale project. The program includes a weeklong work/college readiness course at TCH, a five-week class at Bates, and personalized case management throughout. TCH also uses Boeing's funding to pay for participants' class supplies, scrubs, and certificates—saving each student over \$2,000.

Beyond the obvious positive outcomes, Ware says the program has a way of motivating students who did not initially find success in TCH's GED® preparation courses.

“The road to a GED® can seem long and daunting, especially for an adult who has not stepped foot inside of a classroom for years,” she says.

With Project Nightingale, students know with certainty that they'll be leaving a five-week class with a certificate *and* a career. The experience of “meeting the finish line” has given several students newfound confidence to go back and finish their GED®.

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### **About Tacoma Community House**

As one of the longest, continuously operating social service agencies in Washington State, TCH has improved the lives of generations of immigrants, refugees, and other (predominantly low-income) community members through the four cornerstones of *Education, Employment, Immigration* and *Advocacy*.

Founded by Methodist women in 1910 in the small room of a private home in Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood, TCH originally served a couple dozen neighborhood children. Today, TCH is a nationally respected, community-based multiservice center providing 3,700 program services to 2,700 adults and youth from the U.S. and over 90 other countries.

TCH's service area of Pierce, South King, Kitsap, Thurston, and Mason counties represents a growing population of 1.6 million individuals, 10% of whom are immigrants. TCH is the only organization that provides a full range of services to immigrants and refugees between Portland and Seattle.

Learn more at [www.TacomaCommunityHouse.org](http://www.TacomaCommunityHouse.org)

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“Tacoma Community House creates opportunities for immigrants and other community members in the Puget Sound region through comprehensive services focused on self-sufficiency, inclusion and advocacy.”