

## NEWS RELEASE

Aug. 25, 2011

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### PTC earns grant to support young students and their families

PINE CITY, Minn. – Pine Technical College was selected by the Minnesota Department of Health for a grant that will support young parenting students. PTC will receive up to \$278,827, awarded in increments going on now through Aug. 31, 2013. The funding will be used to expand current services the college provides to young parenting students, as well as to start a new Young Student Parent Support Initiative.

“Our students are going to benefit from this grant in tremendous ways,” says Joan Bloemendaal-Gruett, PTC’s Dean of Academic Affairs. “Many of our students are young parents, and it can be quite overwhelming to take it all on – working, raising and managing a family, plus taking college classes and finding time to study. This grant will be used for services that will support young parents toward achieving their college goals,” Bloemendaal-Gruett explains.

Staff and faculty members representing a diverse mix of college departments, along with many of the college’s regional partners including Early Childhood Family Education and HeadStart, now are working together to identify and grow resources to develop and implement programs that will assist young adults with families and pregnant and parenting teens in college. The committee has identified target populations the program will serve, including: Pine Technical College young student parents; area high school student parents; and, parents participating in PTC’s Employment and Training Center programs. Additionally, outreach efforts will ensure the college and its partners reaches fathers, single parents, and parents from diverse backgrounds within the target groups.

“We are pleased to be able to bring a program like this to fruition – not only for our students, but also for the larger Pine Area,” says Nancy Mach, Dean of Student Affairs. “We couldn’t have secured this grant without our strong partners, nor would we be able to bring such rich early childhood family education sessions to campus. And, it’s such a comprehensive program with the Young Student Parent Support Initiative – that is a critical piece that will bring such value to our campus community,” Mach adds.

The purpose of the Young Student Parent Support Initiative is to build the capacity of institutions of higher education to address the health and educational needs of pregnant and parenting young people and their children. Beginning in Oct. 2011, the Minnesota Department of Health will distribute two-year grant awards for approximately \$2.7 million to ten institutions of higher education (including PTC) to

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establish, maintain or operate services for young pregnant or parenting students and their children.

Funded by the Pregnancy Assistance Fund, the Young Student Parent Support Initiative was authorized by Sections 10211-10214 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148) to develop and implement programs to assist pregnant and parenting teens and women. The Minnesota Department of Health applied for and received the funds from the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Other colleges and/or universities that received like grants include: The University of Minnesota – Twin Cities; The University of St. Catherine; Century College, Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College; Leech Lake Tribal College; Metropolitan State University; Riverland Community College; St. Cloud State University; and, Winona State University.

Pine Technical College, established in 1965 and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, serves more than 1,200 students and awards certificates, diplomas and associate degrees. PTC's notable programs include accounting, American Sign Language, automotive technology, business administration, business technology, computer programming, computer science, early childhood development, gunsmithing technology, network administration, practical nursing, precision manufacturing/machining (CNC), public welfare financial worker, and many more.

PTC is a proud member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which is comprised of 32 state universities and community and technical colleges serving the higher education needs of Minnesota. The system serves about 277,000 students per year in credit-based courses and an additional 157,000 students in noncredit courses. PTC is accepting applications for new students in all programs; spring courses will start Jan. 9. For more information, call 320-629-5100.

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