

HOLYOKE

HCC gets share of \$3.4M for climate workforce training

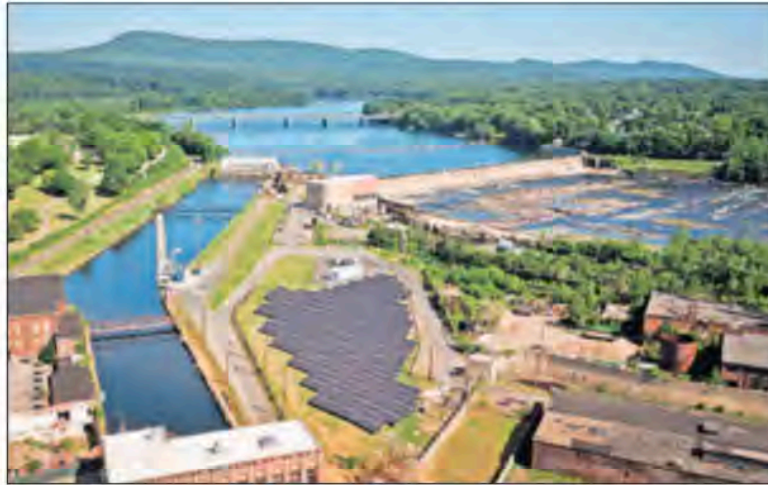
By COLIN A. YOUNG

State House News Service

An estimated 400 students at three minority-serving higher education institutions will get targeted job training and hands-on work experience thanks to a \$3.4 million outlay of state money.

Gov. Maura Healey announced at a Vatican climate conference last month that Massachusetts would partner with social impact investing nonprofit Social Finance to launch a climate technology workforce training fund, shooting for an initial \$10 million it can loan out.

Her office announced Thursday that the Massachusetts Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology (\$1.3 million), Roxbury Community College (\$1.3 million) and Holyoke Community College (\$832,000) are recipients of funds that represent “part of the state match that the governor pledged when creating the Climate Careers Fund.” People



An aerial view of the Holyoke Gas and Electric's Hadley Falls Facility, on the Holyoke side of the Holyoke Dam. In the foreground is a solar power array. (COURTESY OF HOLYOKE G&E, FILE)

who go through the training would be eligible for the loans from the Climate Careers Fund.

The \$832,000 award for Holyoke Community College “will support the enrollment of 150 students in Green Industry training programs” and will support an effort “to develop inclusive growth in

green energy and construction employment opportunities in Western Massachusetts,” the administration said.

The Climate Careers Fund will provide resources to participants in state-funded training programs and will function as a private match to investments the state already makes in climate career pathways.

“Massachusetts is home to the greatest institutions of higher education in the world. We are proud to be awarding three of them with \$3.4 million to accelerate our work building an equitable clean energy workforce,” Healey said in a statement. “Climate change is here, and it is impacting all of our communities. We are going to need tens of thousands of well-trained and well-paid workers to address this head on. This grant will support our continued efforts to adapt our education and training systems to meet this moment now and into the future.”

With ambitious mid-century emission reduction targets on the books, Massachusetts wants to electrify heating and cooling, personal vehicle travel and more, but the state will need more than 30,000 new workers who can install heat pumps, prepare residential homes to charge electric vehicles, build offshore wind farms, and more to get there.