

Biz West 9/3/18

## **Holyoke Community College Readies New Biotech Center**

*HOLYOKE* — Holyoke Community College (HCC) will open its new Center for Life Sciences on Sept. 4, for the start of the fall 2018 semester. The 13,000-square-foot facility, on the first floor of HCC's Marieb Building, features a suite of new biotechnology classrooms

and labs and what is believed to be the only ISO-certified instructional cleanroom at any Massachusetts community college and one of very few at any college or university in Western Mass. The cost of the \$4.55 million project, including new equipment, was covered by a \$3.8 million grant from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, supplemented by \$750,000 from the HCC Foundation's Building Healthy Communities Campaign, which also paid for the construction of the college's Center for Health Education on Jarvis Avenue. Once it's fully operational, the cleanroom will have a certification rating of ISO 8, which means air quality of no more than 100,000 particles per cubic foot. Inside the cleanroom will be a hooded biosafety cabinet where the sterility will increase to ISO 7, or no more than 10,000 particles per cubic foot. Grant funds and donations also paid for new equipment, including a high-end, research-grade, fluorescent microscope, like those used in the pharmaceutical industry; a micro volume spectrophotometer, used to measure small amounts of genetic material; and an electroporator for genetic engineering.