

U.S. Rep. Kind: Announces nearly \$88,000 grant to Chippewa Valley Technical College to improve educators' understanding of Hmong history and culture

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Grant will bring educators together from CVTC, Northcentral Technical College, Western Technical College, and the Eau Claire, Wausau, La Crosse, Cornell, and Elk Mound School Districts to participate in a study travel experience and create culturally sensitive curriculum for students across Wisconsin

Eau Claire – Today, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind announced an \$87,615 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program for Chippewa Valley Technical College.

The grant will fund a study-abroad experience for program participants that includes a 4-week visit to Hmong villages and schools in Thailand, so educators can gain a firsthand understanding of cultural norms, practices, and living conditions of Hmong students and families who have relocated from Asia to the Midwest. Following the trip, instructors will integrate resources gathered during the seminar into coursework back in the U.S., in an effort to enhance students' understanding of the Hmong population and its role as Wisconsin's fastest growing ethnic minority group.

“Decades after courageously fighting for the U.S. and seeking refuge in Wisconsin, our Hmong population are still forced to fight for cultural understanding here in our state,” said Rep. Ron Kind. “I look forward to seeing how this project helps bridge the gap between our Hmong students and their peers, and am confident it will give all of our students and teachers the opportunity to take pride in the unique cultures and stories that make Wisconsin a great place to live.”

“This exciting project will help foster collaboration and understanding between Wisconsin’s teachers and the Hmong population in the region,” said Dr. Ka Vang, CVTC’s Project Director for the grant. “I look forward to working with educators across the state to lead the immersion experience and support curriculum that provides better background into the lives and culture of Wisconsin’s Hmong families.”

“This grant will help CVTC to foster a better understanding of the substantial Hmong population in the Chippewa Valley,” said CVTC President Bruce Barker. “Valuing diversity is one of CVTC’s core abilities that is woven into all programs and student activities. We appreciate the efforts of Rep. Kind and the Department of Education in helping us broaden these efforts.”

Twelve educators will have the opportunity to participate in the project. Six instructors will be selected from CVTC, Northcentral Technical College, Western Technical College, and 6 will be selected from K-12 schools within the Eau Claire, Wausau, La Crosse, Cornell, and Elk Mound School Districts.