Nearly $7 million in funding awards for the State University of New York (SUNY) high-needs program will support workforce development in fields that are projected to “substantially grow” across the New York.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced the awards in a news release his office distributed on Tuesday.

This year’s awards fund programs at 37 different colleges and universities, focusing on the fields of engineering, renewable clean energy, health care, public health, biomedical-biotechnical, information technology and business and finance, according to the release.

SUNY campuses will use the awards to “create and sustain” workforce-development programs in high-needs fields, which the New York State Department of Labor and Empire State Development determine and take into account New York’s regional needs.

Occupations are considered “high need” if they are projected to have a large number of total openings, a high growth rate, or a combination of both in the coming years, Cuomo’s office said in the release.

By developing a workforce in these particular fields, New York is positioning the economy for “significant growth” and helping people “thrive in vibrant evolving industries” across the state, Cuomo contended in
“The job training programs we are funding today provide students with the skills they need to succeed in some of the most rapidly expanding parts of the private sector — which also helps New York businesses find the talent they need to grow,” Cuomo said.

The state awarded funding to Central New York campuses, including Binghamton University, SUNY Oswego, Empire State College, Mohawk Valley Community College, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Broome Community College, SUNY Cortland, Onondaga Community College, Upstate Medical University, and the SUNY Institute of Technology, according to SUNY.

Every SUNY campus was eligible for funding as part of the high-needs program, Cuomo’s office said.

The state based the number and amount of awards provided on the “quantity, quality and scope” of applications that the campuses submitted. The awards this year ranged from $36,800 to $100,000.

With this year’s launch of Open SUNY, the state gave priority to programs where students can take the majority of courses online.

New York will need about 2,340 engineers and engineering technologists; 18,550 new health-care practitioners and health technicians; 9,000 business and finance professionals; and 6,500 community and social-service professionals over the next decade.

Data from the state Labor Department provides the basis for those figures, Cuomo’s office said.

The top five occupations identified as “high need” in renewable clean energy include civil engineers; environmental engineers; mechanical engineers; and heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers, the office added.

New York also has a “growing need” for biological technicians, chemical technicians, and medical and clinical-laboratory technicians, along with experts in information technology who specialize in cloud computing, smartphones, tablets, and easily accessible software applications.

New York’s need for those occupations is “similar” to a nationwide trend, according to Cuomo’s office.

A complete listing of this year’s campus-program awards is available here.

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