AGELESS LEARNING

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What's New

Are You Ready? Another Grant Application Round is Coming!
AACC will conduct another round of grant funding to help new programs serving students age 50 and over at community colleges nationwide. Proposals will be accepted between September 10 and October 26, 2012, and between January 2 and February 15, 2013. Community colleges applying for the grant should be committed to starting, enhancing, or expanding their existing workforce training programs for students 50 years of age and over. Participating colleges will ensure that these students obtain the degrees, certificates, and not-for-credit credentials sought by employers in the high-demand fields of education, social service, and healthcare. Selected colleges will receive grant funding, support from the Plus 50 Champion Colleges, and access to a wealth of resources and materials. Sign up with Mary Sue Vickers to be notified when the request for proposals is available.

Mark Your Calendars: #Plus50 Twitter Chat Scheduled for September 12
Join us from the comfort of your office desktop computer, your smartphone, or wherever you happen to tweet from, for the #Plus50 Twitter chat on Tuesday, September 12 at 1:00 p.m. (ET). We will be tweeting on hashtag #Plus50 and taking your questions and comments about supporting students who are age 50 and over on campus at community colleges. As part of our hour long chat, we’ll also be offering tips for those who want to apply for the next round of grant funding. You will need a Twitter account to participate. An easy Web application to use to help you follow the chat on hashtag #Plus50 is TweetChat or you can add the hashtag as a stream in Hootsuite software. Join us September 12 for a great hour of conversation and sharing.

Tips and Tools

Student Debt Rising Among Students Over Age 50: What to Know
A new July 2012 study by Barclays Capital examining U.S. student loan debt found that 15.5% of the outstanding student loan balance in the United States is held by borrowers age 50 and older, and 4.2% is held by those 60 and older. The average student debt burden for borrowers over 60 is $18,250. Thankfully, many community college students never have to take out a student loan and are able to cover the cost of their tuition with grants because community college is affordable. When assisting students over age 50 in making a financial plan for college, it’s important to talk about how they plan to pay for college and make sure they know that grants and scholarships are available. This article in TIME magazine offers some great tips. Also, see our list of financial aid resources for students age 50 and over.

Web Seminar: Helping Seniors with Finances on October 17
The American Society on Aging will offer a free webinar October 17, 2012, at 1:00 p.m. (ET) to provide tools and resources for caregivers assisting older adults with their finances. The webinar
may be of particular interest to those offering Home Health Caregiver Training. The webinar will provide tips and ideas to assist an older adult in financial organization. Creating a professional services team, options for financing care, and day-to-day ways to help seniors manage their money and help prevent them from becoming a victim of fraud will also be covered. Register online.

**New Adult Student Checklist Encourages Linkages Between Education & Careers**

The Federal Student Aid website recently launched the Adult Student Aid Checklist. The list is designed to help adults considering college think through their options and the steps needed to complete a certificate or degree. Importantly, the list encourages adults to look at the Occupational Outlook Handbook or the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) career search feature to consider the skills and training needed for new careers. A link to a scholarship research engine offered by DOL also is provided. While the search engine does not allow for you to filter the hundreds of scholarships listed by criteria for age, it does include several scholarships open to nontraditional and older students.

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Revises System for Education or Training**

DOL’s Bureau of Labor Statistics revised its system for determining the education or training that individuals typically need to qualify for employment in an occupation. This information is used in conjunction with employment projections to estimate skill demands for future employment. The new system provides individual assignments to each occupation for three dimensions: education, work experience in a related occupation, and on-the-job training. The objective of the new system is to present a more complete picture of the education and training needed for entry into a given occupation and to become competent at performing the occupation. A webinar explaining the new system was held on June 19, 2012. The presentation recording of the webinar is available online with other helpful materials.

**Staff Voices: Working with Plus 50 Students as They Complete Their Degrees**

Helping students age 50 and over finish their educational degrees or credentials at community colleges is important as many go back to school to retrain for new careers in today’s struggling economy. In this video, Sharon Freeman with Clover Park Technical College offers tips and advice for other colleges on how to support plus 50 adults to achieve their education goals.

**Student Story**

**Back to School After 30 Years Away**

Baton Rouge Community College recently posted a video profile of Patricia, a student over age 50. She recently came to campus after spending more than 30 years out of school raising her family. In the brief video, Patricia discusses her plans to work in human resources and restart her life.

**Resources to Support your Plus 50 Program**

**COMPLETION**

**Spotlight Session: “The Completion Agenda: What Has Been Accomplished, and Further Strategies for Progress?”**

This session (look for free sessions) from AACC’s convention focuses on trends in degree and certificate attainment among community colleges students and what they portend for the completion agenda. The discussion extended beyond attainment to include a discussion of earnings associated with various levels of attainment. It concluded with institutional leaders sharing the strategies they use to maintain a focus on completion. You may need to create an account under “My Account” to log in.

**LEARNING**

**Older Adults and Internet Use**

Researchers with the Pew Internet and American Life Project reported that in April 2012, 53% of American adults age 65 and older use the Internet or e-mail. Though these adults are still less likely than all other age groups to use the Internet, the latest data represent the first time that half of seniors are going online. After several years of very little growth among this group, these gains are
significant. As of February 2012, one third (34%) of Internet users age 65 and older use social networking sites such as Facebook, and 18% do so on a typical day. By comparison, e-mail use continues to be the bedrock of online communications for seniors. As of August 2011, 86% of Internet users age 65 and older use e-mail, with 48% doing so on a typical day. Looking at gadget ownership, they found that a growing share of seniors own a cell phone. Some 69% of adults ages 65 and older report that they have a mobile phone, up from 57% in May 2010. Even among those currently age 76 and older, 56% report owning a cell phone of some kind, up from 47% of this generation in 2010.

**TRAINING & RE-TRAINING**

*Integrating Industry-Driven Competencies in Education and Training Through Employer Engagement*

This brief from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Vocational and Adult Education describes the partnerships community colleges and employers are building to provide better workforce development. It highlights employer engagement in curriculum development and models to promote curricular change and innovation within both colleges and businesses.

**VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE**

*The Aging Network’s Volunteer Collaborative*

This searchable resource center shares the latest and best from the field of volunteering by older adults. This interactive website highlights emerging principles, practices and standards for effective volunteer development and management, including non-traditional volunteer roles. It also serves as the central place for the coordination, integration and sharing of effective practices and tools across the Aging Services Network. Upcoming trainings, case studies, blogs, and program measurement models are included.

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation’s community colleges. The association represents nearly 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 13 million students. AACC promotes community colleges through five strategic action areas: recognition and advocacy for community colleges; student access, learning, and success; community college leadership development; economic and workforce development; and global and intercultural education. Information about AACC and community colleges may be found at www.aacc.nche.edu.