Plus 50 in the News

- "Waubonsee Receives Grant to Help Experienced Workers Find New Careers," Waubonsee Community College (press release), September 4, 2012
- "How to Launch an Encore Career," Fox Business, August 28, 2012
- "Owens Joins National Program to Train Older Workers," The Press, August 23, 2012
- "Owens Community College Joins National Program to Train 10,000 Older Workers for New Job Opportunities," Owens Outlook, August 21, 2012

AACC Plus 50 Encore Completion Grant Program is Now Open!
AACC is offering grants to member community colleges to start a Plus 50 Encore Completion program on their campus. Beginning today, AACC is accepting applications for participation in the program. The goal of the program is to help 10,000 students age 50 and over earn certificates or degrees in the high-demand fields of healthcare, education, and social services enabling them to increase their employment competitiveness while improving their communities. This competitive grant program will enable more colleges to provide supports for students over 50 to succeed. Apply by October 26, 2012, or wait for our next application window and apply by February 15, 2013.

Brief Plus 50 College News Updates
Pasco-Hernando Community College held an information and orientation session on August 21 for students age 50 and over. The sessions provided an overview of the college’s Encore Academy and the Plus 50 Completion Initiative.

Shoreline Community College is hosting a new job club for job hunters age 50 and over. The club provides a safe, supportive, and friendly environment to discuss needs and challenges. The club is free and meeting weekly throughout September.

Spoon River College’s plus 50 program and courses for adults age 50 and over were featured on the front page of the college’s community outreach newsletter for September 2012. They used the program graphics and branding to enhance the article.

St. Louis Community College has expanded its programs for students age 50 and over to four campuses and has a "plus 50 concierge" at each location to assist students with enrollment and support. Because the campuses are far apart, a coordinator is working to keep each campus informed of new developments and a monthly newsletter is being published.
SBA and AARP Host National Encore Entrepreneur Mentor Day October 2
The U.S. Small Business Administration and AARP will team up October 2, 2012, to host the first National Encore Entrepreneur Mentor Day. The event is targeted at entrepreneurs over the age of 50 to match these “encore entrepreneurs” with successful business owners and community leaders for advice and assistance.

Advertising Age Offers Tips on Marketing to Baby Boomers, Based on Brain Research
A recent article by Advertising Age examines how marketers can reach baby boomers, using brain research. For colleges working to help these older adults get back to college, there’s helpful advice. Researchers found that some neural decline with age is inevitable among baby boomers, and this age group will find it harder to handle visual or verbal complexity, so keeping messaging simple is important when structuring marketing for baby boomers. But there’s hope for improvement, not decline, with baby boomer brains. One recent study found “immediate structural brain changes in the over-55 brain through a very short series of video games designed to improve focus. Research is finding that changes in the brain aren’t just about age, but how it’s used and the media that feed it.

Thinking About Applying for a Senior Corps RSVP Grant? Get Advice to Help Your Application
If your college is considering applying for a Senior Corps RSVP grant, the Aging Network’s Volunteer Collaborative has a few tips to help. They offered a free webinar on September 6, 2012, that is available online for viewing. The federal grant application is due October 11, 2012. Applicants were required to submit a notice of intent to apply on September 10, 2012.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

COMPLETION

Reverse Transfer: A National View of Student Mobility From 4-Year to 2-Year Institutions
A National Student Clearinghouse Research Center report examines the prevalence of reverse transfer students nationwide, with information on summer session course-taking behavior, broken out by initial enrollment intensity, control of institution of origin, and timing of first enrollment in the 2-year sector. It also examines enrollment outcomes following reverse transfer by students’ length of enrollment in the 2-year sector, enrollment intensity during the first term at a 2-year institution, and student pathways and completion. The data in the study can give community college leaders a more informed perspective on college completion—as large numbers of students counted as dropouts do actually earn credentials—and, ultimately, develop better completion strategies. You will need to provide your name and e-mail address to access the full report. A video summarizing the findings is also offered.

LEARNING

Moderate Exercise Improves Memory in Older People
Just one year of moderate physical exercise in late adulthood can reverse shrinkage of the brain’s hippocampus and improve spatial memory. This 2011 study, conducted by a group of universities with funding from the National Institute on Aging, offers hope to those worried about memory lapses as they age. The researchers concluded that “aerobic exercise training is effective at reversing hippocampal volume loss in late adulthood, which is accompanied by improved memory function.”

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

Workforce Training in a Recovering Economy: Perceptions of State Community College Leaders
This September 2012 report from the University of Alabama Education Policy Center provides an important state-level viewpoint on policies and practices related to the community college role in developing the workforce. Findings reveal that state community college leaders believe high unemployment has strained the available workforce training capacity at community colleges in many states, as budget woes limit the development and maintenance of programs to prepare individuals for high-skill, high-wage jobs. At the same time, the majority of states are working within those constraints in the areas of credit-based certificates and stackable and industry recognized credentials, all while attempting to maintain the comprehensive community college mission in a time of great fiscal stress in the governments of the states.
VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE

*Holding the Fort: Nonprofit Employment During a Decade of Turmoil*

This report by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies presents previously unavailable data on year-to-year changes in employment in private, nonprofit establishments in the United States from January 2000 through June 2010, with a special focus on how nonprofit employment fared during the 2007–2009 recession. From 2000–2010, the nonprofit sector grew steadily, achieving an average annual job growth rate of 2.1%. By contrast, the for-profit sector lost jobs over the same time period at an average annual rate of minus 0.6%. This nonprofit resilience is due to the fact that nonprofits are active in a variety of service fields that tend to be shielded from the normal pressures of the business cycle—such as education, social assistance, and health services. This shielding arises from two significant factors: first, the significant presence of government funding for such services; and second, a variety of demographic trends—such as the aging of the population and female participation in the labor force—that are boosting overall demand for these services.

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.