AGELESS LEARNING

In the News

Plus 50 in the News


AACC Plus 50 Encore Completion Grant Program Closed, Next Round Jan. 2-Feb. 15
AACC closed its second round of grant applications for the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program two weeks ago. 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. Our proposal evaluators are working to review all of the submissions from colleges and make decisions. Our next round of grant applications will be accepted January 2 through February 15, 2013.

2012 Adult Learner of the Year Nominations Accepted Through December 7, 2012
Do you know someone who has overcome great odds to pursue a degree? Nominate him or her to become the American Council on Education’s (ACE) 2012 Adult Learner of the Year. ACE will honor the winner at its 95th Annual Meeting, “Leading Change,” to be held in Washington, DC, March 2–5, 2013. The winner will receive a $500 scholarship. Nomination deadline: December 7, 2012.

Share Your Student Stories: Grantee Colleges Can Check Out the AACC Camera
One of the most effective ways to recruit and encourage plus 50 students to return to college and complete a degree or credential is through sharing
the stories of existing students who are baby boomers. By seeing others overcome challenges while going back to school, many are inspired to try it for themselves. AACC makes it easy for grantee colleges to collect student stories by providing a helpful guide with questions and a digital camera with a stand. We also like to collect the stories of college staff, finding that colleges frequently benefit from hearing the practical and field-tested advice they have to offer about how to successfully implement programs for plus 50 adults. To participate, college staff interviews the students or staff selected, and then sends back the camera for downloading. They can opt to keep a copy of the footage for themselves. Completed footage is processed and edited, and then uploaded to the AACC Plus 50 YouTube channel, where a collection of student and college staff stories are featured. If you would like to check out the camera, please contact Mary Sue Vickers.

From Contact to Completion: Supporting Returning Adult Students in Obtaining a College Credential
A recently released policy brief by HigherEd Insight examines adult college completion projects funded by the Lumina Foundation. As evaluators of the foundation’s overall strategy supporting adult completion, the authors discuss some of their early findings about the types of programs and services that are necessary for adults to return to postsecondary education and complete a degree or certificate. The focus of the brief is on early lessons learned about the services and supports adults with some college credit need if they are to return to college and successfully complete a degree or credential. While Lumina grantees have identified a number of important supports and services that can benefit returning adult students, a key finding from the evaluation is that addressing the complex circumstances and barriers these students face requires attention to the entire pipeline, from making contact with prospective students to overcoming barriers to re-enrollment and ultimately to supporting them in completing a college credential. Tackling only one part of the pipeline is unlikely to result in increased degree completion for adult students. AACC’s Plus 50 Completion Strategy is one of Lumina Foundation’s adult college completion projects.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

COMPLETION

“Colleges Track Down Students Who Earned Degree, But Didn’t Know It”
In this Orlando Sentinel article, the author highlights efforts underway at several community colleges across the Sunshine State to scour their records for students who fulfilled degree or certificate requirements but may not have realized it or forgotten to file their paperwork to graduate. Seminole State College, Valencia College, Hillsborough Community College, Indian River College, and Brevard Community College are mentioned. Colleges have awarded 4,427 degrees through the project.
LEARNING

Encore Colleges: Creating Pathways for Older Learners Seeking Encore Careers
This webinar offers tips for community college administrators interested in offering courses for plus 50 students seeking encore careers, using lessons learned by Encore College Initiative grantees. Presented by Civic Ventures and AACC’s Plus 50 Initiative, the webinar also addresses the workforce needs of social-purpose and public sector employers. A video and transcript are available.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

Career Pathways and Career Counseling for the 50+ Workforce
This 2011 report by the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning summarizes a project working with seven community colleges to address some of the challenges facing mature workers. They worked to identify priority industries, examine the job and career opportunities in those industries, and highlight the opportunities that are most appropriate for mature workers. Employers representing each regionally prioritized industry were identified and consulted to focus the research on the realities of the local area. Group training sessions were conducted in each region to provide career advisors and workforce development professionals with region-specific information and resources for more effectively working with mature workers.

VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE

Recruiting and Engaging Baby Boomer Volunteers
Baby Boomers are different from other generations of volunteers, according to an article in the Journal of Extension. Boomers have a different view of both retirement and volunteering than previous generations, and Cooperative Extension Service programs will need to change how they recruit and manage baby boomers to successfully engage them. The article offers ideas that will contribute to a larger volunteer Boomer corps.

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.