AGELESS LEARNING

In the News

Plus 50 In the News

- “Wallace Community College Hosts 50+ Career Fair,” WTVY, October 7, 2013
- “Community Colleges Helping Adults Age 50 and Older,” The Cleveland Plain Dealer, October 1, 2013
- “SC Classes Set for Those 50 and Older,” Sheridan Press, October 1, 2013
- “Program Helps Baby Boomers Complete Degrees,” Inside Higher Ed, September 27, 2013
- Plus 50 Career Fair to Help Improve Job Searching Skills,” WLNS, September 26, 2013

Plus 50 Initiative Reaches Its Completion Goal Early

There’s nothing like reaching a goal earlier than expected. In only 3 years, the 18 community colleges participating in a national program led by AACC to help baby boomers improve their employability and finish degrees or certificates has served 16,507 students age 50 and older. Even better, 7,192 of those students—about 44%—who have participated in the Plus 50 Completion Strategy have completed a degree or credential. At least 715 of these students have new jobs as a result of those credentials, according to a new evaluation of the initiative. The goal of the Lumina Foundation-funded initiative was to serve 9,000 adult students who were at least 50 over 4 years, with 3,600 (40%) completing a degree, certificate, or non-for-credit certificate. Many of the baby boomers involved in the project have completed coursework in health care and nursing, business administration, criminal justice, early childhood education, human services, culinary arts, electrics, journalism, and computer support. Read more in the Community College Times.
Student Stories: A Pharmacy Technician Speaks About Opportunities
Curt Bielski, pharmacy technician student at Ivy Tech Community College, discusses his coursework in this video recently posted on the AACC Plus 50 Initiative YouTube channel. “I felt going into this, being a baby boomer in this present economy, I was looking for something viable, short-term, to be able to get back into the job market and have a gainful employed job,” said Bielski. He said his course was stressful at times, but that he found a lot of support through the other students at the college. His advice to future students is to invest in educational opportunities and to spend the time to be successful. He expresses his gratitude for being able to take the course and finish. He is looking forward to a new career as a pharmacy technician. Student stories are effective marketing tools. Plus 50 colleges—if you would like to borrow AACC’s video camera and record a few student stories to share, please contact Mary Sue Vickers.

Adult Learner of the Year Award Nominations: Accepted Through December 6, 2013
The American Council on Education (ACE) is accepting nominations for the Adult Learner of the Year Award. Nominations should be submitted by December 6, 2013. The award is presented annually to an individual who has benefitted academically or professionally from the use of ACE credit recommendations for workforce or military training. This year’s Adult Learner of the Year will receive a $500 scholarship from ACE to continue his or her education. Recipients must demonstrate outstanding achievements in their community or workplace while successfully balancing the demands of family, career, and education. The award honors those who pursue lifelong learning and achievement.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

COMPLETION

Getting to the Finish Line: State and Metro Area Strategies to Increase College Completion by Returning Adults
This new policy brief by HigherEd Insight examines some of the promising strategies that states and metropolitan areas are employing to increase credential completion by adults with prior college credit but no degree. Data mining and personalized mailings to former students to encourage them to return to school, as well as marketing campaigns, are mentioned. Centralized Web portals have been successful at providing information to prospective returning adult students about completing a degree. Providing support services for adult students is essential to ensuring these students remain enrolled and on track to meet their educational goals. Creating statewide networks to share information about adult college completion efforts is also mentioned as a useful strategy, as well as providing outreach and training to faculty and staff so they are better able to meet adult learner needs. Read about more strategies in the brief.
LEARNING

“A Multitasking Video Game Makes Old Brains Act Younger”
This article describes the results of studies done by the University of California, San Francisco and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Preliminary results have shown that by playing multitasking video games, the older adult’s brain is stimulated in a way that is similar to that of a younger adult. This result was observed to last outside of the game itself. While the researchers caution that they are in the “primitive age of brain training,” the potential for success has many people excited.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

“Portable Skills and Credential Training”
There are two major factors contributing to the strong demand for workforce training programs: the need for a portable skill set and the need for certifications that are transferable. In a competitive job economy, certifications help individuals stand out to employers and give them a marketable advantage. Credential training also provides third-party validation of the worker’s competency and knowledge in a particular area. This need for defined, transferable skills has helped shift job training from traditional apprentice-style learning to certification-based credential training that community college workforce programs offer, says this article in Community College Times.

PLUS 50 TRENDS

“The Ten Fittest Cities for Baby Boomers Revealed”
This Huffington Post article explores which cities are the fittest for baby boomers. Results were compiled in cooperation with the American Physical Therapy Association. Cities were ranked based on life expectancy, percentage of baby boomers with health insurance, and the number of hospitals and fitness centers. San Jose, California, was ranked first, followed by Minneapolis and San Francisco.