In the News

Plus 50 In the News

- “Making Changes to Better Serve Plus-50 Students Seeking Workforce Training,” Evolllution, August 20, 2014
- “Three Keys to Keeping Your Boomers in Class with the Grades to Pass,” Evolllution, August 20, 2014

Lessons from the Field: Colleges Offer Tips on Providing Accessible and Accommodating Materials & Environments

Community colleges in the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program submitted their progress reports to AACC. A tradition of the Plus 50 program is sharing tips and great ideas among colleagues. Below are some comments and approaches from community colleges in the program for providing accessible and accommodating materials and environments, one of the Standards of Excellence for plus 50 programs. We will feature more tips in our next newsletter.

- The age to take advantage of continuing education courses, known as “community special interest classes,” at Grays Harbor College (Washington) was reduced to 50 years of age, down from age 55. This age reduction enables displaced workers and long-term unemployed workers between the ages of 50 and 54 to gain necessary skills at a reduced cost.

- El Camino College’s free computer basics boot camp is for adults age 50 and over who have enrolled in the two health care programs that are part of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program: pharmacy technician and medical coding and billing.
- Milwaukee Area Technical College is reaching out to local churches with Wi-Fi to host basic computer skills seminars at their sites with the curriculum and instructor provided by the college.

- According to Kaye Moon Winters, plus 50 encore completion coordinator at San Jacinto Community College District (Texas), the plus 50 computer skill-building classes are immensely popular and successful because:
  1. The Never2Late Center is open, the coffee is made, and the Plus 50 coordinator is available.
  2. They are in a “safe” environment among peers.
  3. Materials are provided.
  4. Precise instructions are given.
  5. Proven routines are established.
  6. Adequate time allowances are provided.
  7. Continuous computer tutoring and support are available.
  8. The content is relevant.
  9. A certificate is earned and “graduation” is “celebrated.”

**Online Learning for Community College Programs Serving Plus 50 Adults**

Where can you go to learn and grow professionally about how to improve services and programs for plus 50 adults attending community college? Here are a few resources to turn to:

- **AACC Plus 50 Website Webinars**—recordings and handouts from webinars organized by the Plus 50 Initiative at AACC.

- **AACC Plus 50 Website Resources**—offers a host of resources and materials with the college staff member or instructor in mind.

- **Adult College Completion Network Webinars**—recordings and slides are offered from the webinars organized by the network to help colleges working to improve completion rates for adults pursuing degrees or certificates.

**Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program**

**COMPLETION**

**Effective Collaboration and Coordination: Lessons from Research and Practice**

Developing collaborative networks of key stakeholders focused on improving postsecondary access and success for low-income adult students is an emerging strategy that College Access Challenge Grant programs are using to help sustain their activities and improve services offered to students. This research brief focuses on research into the successful characteristics of collaborative efforts and highlights three examples that will be of interest to those working with this population.
LEARNING

*High Challenge, High Support Classrooms for Underprepared Students: Toward a Vision of Accelerated Curriculum and Pedagogy*

The report from two California community college teachers offers a set of core instructional principles and practices for redesigning remediation in English and math. It also illustrates how faculty can support students with widely varying backgrounds and skill levels to be successful in an accelerated environment. Community college teachers Katie Hern and Myra Snell advocate a significant break from traditional models of remediation, where students often work on decontextualized sub-skills, such as completing grammar exercises or reviewing a long list of arithmetic and algebra procedures from their prior schooling. The instructional principles come from Hern’s and Snell’s work with 42 community colleges that have participated in the California Acceleration Project.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

*Encore Careers: The Persistence of Purpose*

A new survey from Encore.org shows that more than 25 million Americans 50 to 70 years old are eager to share their skills, passions, and expertise in encore careers that address social needs, typically in education, health care, human services, and the environment. Interest in encore careers rose by 17% from 2011 to 2014, when 28% of respondents in the 50–70 age group said they were highly interested in encore careers. Read the report.

PLUS 50 TRENDS

*Older Women and Work*

This U.S. Department of Labor fact sheet examines data and research on older women in the workplace. While the labor force participation rate of men ages 55 and older will continue to exceed that of women during the current decade, most of the increases in the labor force participation of the population ages 55 and older will come from women. Among 55- to 64-year-olds, women’s rate of labor force participation increased from 41.3% in 1980 to 59.4% in 2012, and is expected to reach 66.6% by 2020.