Plus 50 Initiative News

The Third Annual Plus 50 Initiative Conference is Just Days Away!
The third annual conference for the Plus 50 Initiative will be held in Washington, DC, July 8–9, 2010. Grantee colleges: Please remember to bring some material and examples of your programs to share. Our agenda includes a networking mixer, opportunities to learn about new resources for plus 50 programs, college-to-college sharing and much more. One of the highlights of the event is a presentation by Richard Johnson, the senior fellow and director of the Retirement Policy Program at the Urban Institute. We are looking forward to seeing everyone!

What's New

Student Story: A High School Dropout Goes to College at Age 50+
Bill Browne never really saw a need for higher education. "My family just wasn't into the whole higher education thing and I didn't have any examples go before me," said Browne. A high school dropout by age 18, Browne dabbled in cosmetology and then tried to take classes for a short stint at a local community college before dropping out. For 10 years he found employment in the garment district in Manhattan. Then he moved on to Radio Shack and eventually went into business for himself. "I was ready for a change in my life," said Browne. "I decided to move to Pennsylvania and shop around for a house where I could spend the second half of my life." He chose an area in Pennsylvania located near several colleges and universities. "I decided it was time for me to go to school," said Browne. "It was time for me to get an education." Browne, who finished his GED in the early days of his career, applied to a nearby university but was startled by high tuition costs. "Twenty-four thousand dollars a year for general education was a little out of my range," said Browne. It didn't take too long for him to decide that Luzerne County Community College in neighboring Nanticoke, Pennsylvania was the place for him. Read more of Bill's story.
AACC Awarded $6.6 Million Grant for Healthcare Virtual Career Platform
While Many plus 50 colleges are helping students train for new careers in health care, and now they'll have a new resource to assist them, thanks to a $6.6 million grant being award to AACC. The grant will fund development of Healthcare Virtual Career Platform (HVCP): Healthcare Career Central, an open-source delivery platform that will manage people's entry into any of more than 200 health-care careers—from career exploration to skills assessment, training, and job placement. In addition to helping address the nation's unemployment rate, the initiative is designed to overcome growing shortages of health-care professionals. According to a recent study (see “Training & Re-Training” later in this newsletter), health-care professional and technical occupations rank as the fifth-largest cluster and will provide the seventh-largest share of job openings over the next decade, health-care occupations will provide an estimated 2.8 million job openings over the next eight years. Read the news release online.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

LEARNING
ETS: Advancing Learning for Our Diverse Adult Population
To preserve its economic competitiveness and ensure good lives for its citizens, the United States needs to focus on an urgent new mission: reorienting institutions of government, business, and higher education around the task of providing education and training to a new kind of student: the adult worker. This 12-page policy brief builds on discussions that occurred in March 2010 in a symposium co-convened by AACC and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning. Plus 50 Initiative Director Mary Sue Vickers and AACC President and CEO George Boggs are quoted in the policy brief and spoke at the conference. The brief includes discussion of new instructional techniques for adult students and adjustments to academic advising that would help adult students be more successful.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING
Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018
A new, highly detailed forecast shows that as the economy struggles to recover and jobs slowly return, there will be a growing disconnect between the types of jobs employers need to fill and numbers of people who have the education and training to fill those jobs. The report, published by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the
Workforce, forecasts that by 2018, 63% of all jobs will require at least some postsecondary education. Employers will need 22 million new workers with postsecondary degrees and, without a dramatic change in course, we will fall short by three million workers. “America needs more workers with college degrees, certificates and industry certifications,” said Anthony P. Carnevale, the center’s director and co-author of the report. “If we don’t address this need now, millions of jobs could go offshore.” Community colleges and their partners will find the state-by-state analysis particularly helpful.

VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE

Never Too Old for the Peace Corps

Many older adults are finding their calling in the Peace Corps, which is actively recruiting plus 50 adult volunteers for assignments overseas. Life experience is a plus for Peace Corps recruiters. “If we had a young person and somebody with more experiences, and they each qualified for that country, absolutely, we would choose the person that had more experience to go over the younger person,” said Rosie Mauk, associate director for volunteer recruitment for the Peace Corps. Listen to the radio story for a dose of inspiration and visit the Peace Corps Web site for older adults.

The American Association of Community Colleges is a national association representing close to 1,200 community, junior and technical colleges nationwide. Community colleges are the largest and fastest-growing sector of higher education, serving close to 12 million students each year. AACC is headquartered in Washington, D.C. See www.aacc.nche.edu.

The Atlantic Philanthropies are dedicated to bringing about lasting changes in the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people. Atlantic focuses on four critical social problems: aging, disadvantaged children and youth, population health, and reconciliation and human rights. Programs funded by Atlantic operate in Australia, Bermuda, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, the United States and Viet Nam. To learn more, please visit www.atlanticphilanthropies.org.