Plus 50 Initiative News

Third Annual Plus 50 Initiative Conference: A Time for Inspiration and Connection
The Third Annual Conference for the Plus 50 Initiative is being held in Washington, DC, right now! Our grantees are all contributing to the AACC Plus 50 Initiative Standards of Excellence, a resource we’ll be making available later this year to help colleges better serve plus 50 adults. Look for conference photos and more news about conference happenings in our next newsletter.

News From the Colleges

Richland College Hosts Plus 50 Initiative Conference

Attendees of the Texas Expansion Conference

Richland College hosted a day-long Plus 50 Initiative Texas Expansion Conference for 11 community colleges, including Dallas County Community College District sister colleges, on June 24. This professional development conference, supported by the American Association of Community
Colleges (AACC) and The Atlantic Philanthropies, provided information addressing areas such as collaboration between departments, marketing and promotion, obtaining college support, stakeholders, appropriate teaching styles, programs that work, and program challenges.

The overall goal of AACC’s expansion of the Plus 50 Initiative is to promote community colleges as the primary place where Plus 50 adults can learn, train, and find ways to contribute to society. From 2009 to 2014, the Plus 50 population in Richland’s service area is projected to grow by more than 102%, from approximately 89,000 to 180,000. The Plus 50 population currently constitutes 14% of the total population in Richland’s service area, and is projected to grow to 28% of the total service area population by 2014.

AACC Plus 50 Initiative Director Mary Sue Vickers presented a general program overview, and Richland’s Emeritus Program Director Mitzi Werther and Associate Director Teresa Love discussed “How to Get Started” (obtaining institutional support and stakeholders and assessing current administrative procedures). This segment included a panel of key, participating instructional department heads and a panel of Richland Plus 50 students and instructors. Panel topics included “What Works: Great Instructional Practices, Expectations, and Tips for Sustainability.” The afternoon concluded with Richland presentations “Profiles in Excellence: Popular Class Topics”; “Volunteer Programs”; “Boomer News”; “Volunteer Connection Fair”; and “What’s Next?” Visit the Richland College Web site for more information.

What’s New
Plus 50 Initiative in the News

- "Schools Out...Now What? Don't Let Your Brain Get Bored," Carolina Woman, June 2010
- "A Community for Boomers," Philly.com, June 29, 2010

Student Story: With Layoffs Looming, Mill Worker Opt for Career in Plumbing
For 57-year-old Robert Gagnon, the last three years have been quite a journey. The soft-spoken and unassuming grandfather and former mill worker, who accepted an early buyout from Fraser Papers when its facility downsized in 2007, graduated from Northern Maine Community College (NMCC) on May 15, fulfilling a lifelong dream. Gagnon not only earned his associate of applied science degree in plumbing and heating, but also a 4.0 GPA and was named...
NMCC’s 2010 Student of the Year. For Gagnon, attending college and earning a degree is a dream he not so long ago thought was derailed. Read more of his story in Community College Times.

“Long-Term Unemployment Experience of the Jobless”
According to this article published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, by the end of 2009, the jobless rate stood at 10% and the number of unemployed at 15.3 million. Among the unemployed, 4 in 10 (6.1 million) had been jobless for 27 weeks or more, by far the highest proportion of long-term unemployment on record, with data back to 1948. Utilizing labor force flows, the author examines forces that affect workers and contribute to overall declines and increases. Unemployed prime-age workers and older workers became substantially less inclined to drop out of the labor force between 2007 and 2009. This put upward pressure on both their overall unemployment rates and long-term unemployment rates.

Health-Care Workforce Development Grants Available: Are You Applying?
Until July 19, 2010, 5:00 p.m. ET, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is accepting applications for planning and implementation grants as part of a new State Health Care Workforce Development Grant program. These application planning (maximum $150,000) and implementation (maximum $1,500,000) grants are to enable state partnerships (1) to complete comprehensive health-care workforce development planning and (2) to implement those plans or carry out activities to address current and projected workforce demands within the state. These grants are available to State Workforce Investment Boards that include, or modify membership to include, an array of partners including at least one higher education institution. HRSA is providing advisors for these grants; contact Aisha Fields by e-mail or phone (301-443-3656). AACC Contact: Roxanne Fulcher.

Senior Community Service Employment Program Receives $596 Million in Funds
The U.S. Department of Labor released $596,525,000 in funds to continue support for 74 state, territory, and national grantees of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). These funds will enable income and training support for 61,900 people ages 55 and older, who have low incomes or are unemployed. At least 75% of SCSEP funds will go to provide participants with part-time, paid community service-based job training opportunities.
As quoted in a June 23 press release, "'Older workers are an essential part of our nation's present and an increasingly greater part of its future, but it can be difficult for this dynamic sector of our population to access good jobs,' said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. 'At the U.S. Department of Labor, we are committed to ensuring older workers have access to the training and other professional services they both need and deserve. The SCSEP program assists participants in enhancing their marketability and allows them the opportunity to further contribute to their communities.'"

Many plus 50 programs at community colleges partner with SCSEP programs, and there is more room for collaboration and partnership-building. Grant awards are being made to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as to 18 national nonprofit organizations. SCSEP services are available in every county in the United States. Learn more about the SCSEP program on the DOL Web site.

A Patient's Bill of Rights: Important for All Americans
The new Patient’s Bill of Rights that is part of the Affordable Care Act will provide the American people with the peace of mind that their insurance will be there when they need it most. President Obama announced this historic regulation that will ban rescission of coverage, discriminating against children with preexisting conditions, and lifetime limits, as well as place restrictions on annual limits. Visit the White House Blog for details. Click here to view the fact sheet on the Patient’s Bill of Rights, and watch a video of Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius the White House Web site.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

LEARNING
"Tips to Improve Interactions Among the Generations"
If you've ever looked at a classroom full of students of varying ages and learning and communication styles and wondered how everyone will survive a group project, this brief article will be informative. It offers tips on how to help the generations get along and understand their different value systems, which, in turn can help us understand differences that arise in the learning environment.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING
Bridging the Skills Gap: Why Mature Workers Matter
The mature workforce is well positioned to be an asset for
employers facing talent and skill shortages, according to this 2009 report from the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning and the Council on Competitiveness. Mature workers are the largest and fastest-growing portion of the U.S. population. While the workforce is projected to grow by 8.5% from 2006 to 2016, the number of workers 55 and older is expected to grow by 36.5%. In 2007, they had achieved higher levels of education, from high school through postsecondary education, compared with their 1997 counterparts. Most importantly, they are choosing to stay in the workforce past traditional retirement ages. In surveys asking employers to compare older to younger workers, employers overwhelmingly gave favorable reviews of older employees. They responded that older workers tended to have a stronger work ethic, were more reliable and loyal, had lower turnover rates, had higher levels of skills than their younger counterparts, and were “as attractive” or “more attractive” than a younger employee or prospect.

**VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE**  
**Boomer Volunteers a Valuable Resource**  
Writing in Philanthropy Journal, Tom Endres with the National Council on Aging makes the case that nonprofits can reap rewards by looking to baby boomer adults for volunteer help. The Bureau of Labor Statistics noted a 4.5% increase in the number of older adult volunteers in 2009, and demographics suggest that the trend is escalating. Over the last three years, the National Council on Aging worked with over 40 nonprofits throughout the United States to engage baby boomer volunteers and determine the true cost of training, recruiting, and managing them. Their findings show a tangible benefit: On average, nonprofits can enjoy a return of $8,000 for every $1,000 spent on older adult volunteers. Endres notes, “It’s not about changing the volunteer; nonprofits seeking to leverage this talent pool may need to slightly change themselves.” The article contains tips on how to transform your nonprofit into baby boomer–friendly turf.

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](http://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.