What's New

Grants to Community Colleges to Help Plus 50 Adults Complete College
AACC, with funding from Lumina Foundation for Education, is announcing a national competition for community colleges to participate in the AACC Plus 50 Completion Strategy. Eleven additional community colleges will be selected to help plus 50 students—particularly those with some prior college credit—complete workforce training and retraining credentials (degrees, certificates, or not-for-credit credentials) in high-demand, high-growth fields to enhance their employment opportunities and meet local labor market needs. The Plus 50 Completion Strategy RFP and instructions for applying online. The application deadline is March 4, 2011.

Impact Report and Comprehensive Implementation Results Online
Two new publications released in November 2010 are now available on the Plus 50 Initiative website. Plus 50: Impact Report discusses program implementation within the pilot colleges and documents the sustainability of Plus 50 programs at pilot and affiliate community colleges. Resources and tools developed through the initiative are summarized. Plus 50: Comprehensive Implementation Results provides graphs and charts detailing the change in enrollments, courses, and support services at the pilot community colleges during the 3-year Plus 50 Initiative. The report also discusses the Plus 50 elements that are embedded in the participating colleges and will be sustained beyond the 3-year initiative.

Save the Date! Free Webinar From the Urban Institute in January 2011
The Urban Institute will offer a free webinar on January 25, 2011, titled,
“Young and Older Workers: (Not) Entering and Exiting the Labor Market.” This webinar is part of a series of three solution-focused policy forums that will examine strategies for job creation, labor market roadblocks for young workers and retirement barriers for older workers, and revamping the safety net so that it works during high, persistent unemployment. Registration information is not yet online. To get registration information when it is available, visit the Urban Institute event page.

Congress Passes Legislation, Extends Benefits That May Help Plus 50 Students
When Congress passed tax legislation in the closing days of 2010, two important tax benefits that may help plus 50 students were kept intact. First, the legislation extends for 2 years the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC), which was created in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. AOTC builds on the previous Hope Scholarship Tax Credit but is much more beneficial to community college students. Some of its very positive features include a credit of $2,500 (compared to $1,800 under the Hope tax credit), with benefits geared to students attending low-cost institutions; the inclusion of course materials when calculating the credit, which were not allowable under Hope; and 40% refundability, which helps direct benefits to the neediest students. In addition, the tax legislation extends for 2 years Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code, which allows individuals to receive up to $5,250 of tax-free, employer-provided educational assistance.

News from the Plus 50 Colleges

Plus 50 Voices: Developing Home Health Caregiver Curriculum at STLCC
In this YouTube video, Christine Krieger talks about developing a curriculum for a home health caregiver training course for students participating in the Plus 50 Initiative at St. Louis Community College. The first class using the curriculum was a success, and many students tried to apply what they learned to their current jobs or to pursue jobs. She said that many students found the curriculum gave them an opportunity to reinvent themselves. Krieger herself is a master of reinvention: She has worked as a nurse, been to law school, and started a health-care advocacy company. She notes that it can be challenging to make a change from what you are currently doing, but she says that education is never a waste. "You
might learn the littlest things that might improve your current situation, or help you take the next leap to something you really want to do or are passionate about, but have been afraid to." She said she has learned a lot as a teacher and is grateful for the plus 50 program because it helps students stay involved.

**In the News**

**Plus 50 In the News**

- “Wiser and Older: The Movement to Enroll Community College Students Over the Age of 50,” Community College Review, December 30, 2010
- “Job Camp Held at LCCC,” The Wilkes-Barre Times Leader, December 19, 2010

**New Resource**

**Competency Model Updates: Commercial and Industrial Construction**

In December 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Education and Training Administration announced a new competency model for the commercial and industrial construction industry. Competency models promote an understanding of the skill sets and competencies that are essential to educate and train a globally competitive workforce. Along with changing skill requirements, the model reflects the latest industry skill set needs related to sustainability and green building practices that can help prepare workers for jobs with companies that are now following those practices. Access the competency models through the [CareerOneStop website](#).

**Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program**

**LEARNING**

**Certificates Count: State Programs Vary Dramatically**

A new report released in December 2010 by Complete College America describes the need for more emphasis and investment to be placed on sub-baccalaureate certificate programs, as a means to help the United States improve its postsecondary education performance and stimulate economic and job growth. [Certificates Count: An Analysis of Sub-Baccalaureate](#)
Certificates calls for a bold national effort to double the number of long-term certificates produced within the next 5 years, and then double that number again over the subsequent 5 years. Academic culture and state policy are more significant determinants of certificate production than workforce demand, says the report. However, certificates of one year or more are consistently linked to increased earnings.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

ETA Competitive Grants: A Web-Based Toolkit for Prospective Applicants
The U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration awards millions of dollars in funding to community-based and education organizations through competitive grants that support job training and career education. You’ll want to get up to speed on how to apply before new funding opportunities are announced. This hands-on toolkit offers how-to guidance on crafting responsive and competitive grant applications.

VOLUNTEERING and SERVICE

Video: Boomers Leading Change
This YouTube video explores the Boomers Leading Change initiative by the Rose Community Foundation. The voices of baby boomers in this video show vital plus 50 adults who want to be involved in their communities and give back. Rather than grow old, these baby boomers want to make the world better.

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.