What’s New

Department of Labor Announces Community College Grant Solicitation
U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan are announcing today a solicitation for grant applications for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program. The $2 billion program created through the 2010 health-care legislation is geared toward community colleges. It complements President Barack Obama’s goal of having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020 by helping to increase the number of workers who attain degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials, according to federal officials. Visit the DOL website for more information about the program.

Increasing College Attainment Should Be Everyone’s Business, Says Lumina CEO
Jamie Merisotis, the president and CEO of Lumina Foundation, recently asked business leaders at the Economic Club of Indiana to become active partners and advocates for increasing the number of Americans with high-quality credentials beyond high school. His address focused on how higher education and workforce development can lead to economic recovery. He cited the critical connection between college success and economic prosperity, insisting that business leaders have an important role to play in ensuring that citizens get the education they need to improve their own lives and help the economy grow. Text and video are available online on the Lumina Foundation website.

Plus 50 Adult Becomes Counselor for At-Risk Youth
Sylvia Abrego-Araiza spends her days involved in some intense conversations: She hears about gang violence, drug addiction, assault charges, and probation violations—all involving teens. Abrego-Araiza, 52, is a drug and alcohol youth counselor in McAllen, Texas. Her story was recently featured on NBC’s Today show as part of the AARP “Your Life Calling” series. Abrego-Araiza grew up in a family of Mexican-American migrant farm workers and married young. She raised a family and moved to Texas for a fresh start later in life. She went back to school at South Texas College, where she earned an AAS in social work. The course work was intense—as were the emotions her studies stirred up. "It was like therapy for me . . . I was starting to unravel some things in my life that I had kept inside for so long, and there was a big part of me that needed to heal." Abrego-Araiza now works as a counselor at SCAN (Serving Children and Adolescents in Need), a nonprofit organization that provides social services for at-risk
youth in southwest Texas. Watch her story on the AARP website.

**Census Bureau Offers a Peek Into Lives of Older Adults**
The U.S. Census Bureau recently released *Older Population in the United States: 2009*. These data include information on a wide range of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of adults age 55 and older. Tables 16–20 include data on employment and earnings. Tables 24 and 25 provide regional data. This national data is a precursor to the state and local data that will become available later.

**Social Security Reform: GAO Report Discusses Impact of Raising Retirement Age**
A new GAO report, *Social Security Reform: Raising the Retirement Ages Would Have Implications for Older Workers and SSA Disability Rolls*, looks at raising the retirement age and what the health, occupational, and demographic characteristics of those near retirement age indicate about the potential for these people to continue working at older ages. The report indicates that even healthy older workers may have trouble staying in the labor force longer, because they are less likely to get rehired if they lose their jobs.

**Guide to State and Local Workforce Data for Informed Decision Making**
The U.S. Department of Labor publishes a guide explaining the wide range of workforce data available from state and local resources. These data can help colleges plan workforce training programs and or write grant applications.

**In the News**

**Plus 50 Initiative in the News**
- “Charting Career Course with Adults,” *Cape Cod Times*, January 9, 2011
- “Grants for Mid-Life Retraining,” *eHow*, January 8, 2011
- **AACC Requests Proposals for Plus 50 Completion Strategy Grants**, AACC website, January 4, 2011

**News from the Plus 50 Colleges**

**Spring Course Roundup: What’s Going on at Plus 50 Colleges?**
A lot of great classes tailored for plus 50 adults are being offered this spring at plus 50 colleges. Check out this sample from Richland College and Wake Technical Community College for a few fresh ideas:

**Richland College**
- “Rewire Your Attire” is designed to help plus 50 adults look hip and fashionable, without breaking their budgets.
- “Internet Toolkit for Business Owners.” Feel overwhelmed about promoting your business on the Internet? This class will help you learn how to create an Internet presence by taking advantage of free and low-cost tools. Topics include creating and optimizing your website, social media marketing, search engine optimization, and blogging for business.
• “Changing or Starting Your Career Later in Life” will help baby boomers change career directions. Building confidence, assessing skills, setting goals, and planning strategically for career advancement are stressed.

Wake Technical Community College
• “BoomerPreneurs” is designed to address the unique factors affecting entrepreneurs starting a business after 50. It guides students through the process of identifying business opportunities, evaluating them for feasibility, conducting research, and identifying next steps.
• “Find Your Ideal Career.” With a background in career coaching and psychology, instructor Tim Barnes guides students through the steps to finding a career that fits. This class helps students discover hidden job markets and prepares them for finding the right job. It also helps them learn what to do when they feel stuck in their job hunt and how to maximize their strengths.
• “Virtual Assistant Introduction.” Students will learn about the basics of being a Virtual Assistant, including the skills that are necessary to succeed, how to find and work with clients, and how to run their new entrepreneurial ventures efficiently.

Plus 50 Voices: Student Advisor Discusses How to Help Out-of-Work Adults
In this YouTube video, Sue Errek talks about the Plus 50 Initiative program at Joliet Junior College and its efforts to help unemployed workers get re-trained for new careers and back on the job. As a student advisor, she helps students identify what they would like to study and what their ultimate education goals are. The college offers classes and workshops designed for plus 50 students in computers, resume writing, and interviewing. There are many resources available at Joliet Junior College to help plus 50 students, including a writing lab and academic skills lab, which can help students get their skills up to speed. She also discusses financial aid options for plus 50 students. She sees "great opportunity" for any college campus that wants to work with plus 50 students.

Reminder: Urban Institute January 25 Webinar
The Urban Institute webinar, “Young and Older Workers: (Not) Entering and Exiting the Labor Market,” will be held January 25, 2011, 9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m. ET. Panelists include Roberta Gassman, former secretary, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; Harry Holzer, institute fellow at the Urban Institute and professor at Georgetown Public Policy Institute; Richard Johnson, senior fellow and director of the Program on Retirement Policy at the Urban Institute; and Margaret Simms, institute fellow at the Urban Institute. Watch the live video webcast or hear a recording online. No registration is necessary.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

LEARNING

Lumina Foundation Supports Bringing Adults Back to College
A new report from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education highlights
how states and institutions can help adults returning to higher education navigate the process through the use of “ready adult” or “re-entry” concierges on college campuses. Part of the Non-Traditional No More project funded by Lumina Foundation for Education, *Bringing Adults Back to College: Designing and Implementing a Statewide Concierge Model* describes the barriers facing ready adults, including financial concerns, the complexity of the enrollment process, and transcript issues. The publication describes how a concierge model developed and implemented by the Nevada System of Higher Education addresses these barriers and serves as a blueprint. Recommendations include conducting “secret shopper” activities at institutions to determine what kind of support is available for returning adults, developing internal communication efforts to ensure that everyone at an institution knows about the concierge, tracking and analyzing data that monitors the progress of ready adults, and convening meetings for concierges and key decision makers at each institution in the state.

**TRAINING & RE-TRAINING**

**Free Online Course Prepares Students to Enter the Workplace**
A new, free, online course to help college students and recent graduates prepare for entry into the workplace is now available. *JobSTART 101: Smart Tips and Real-World Training* is a first-of-its-kind course developed by the Business Roundtable and the Human Resources Policy Association, with support from Accenture. Topics range from how to communicate and solve problems on the job, to how to develop a successful business persona. Students may complete the course in 90 minutes or tackle six topical modules individually. Interactive videos and workbooks with pop-up quizzes keep students engaged in the content.

**VOLUNTEERING and SERVICE**

**Boomer Volunteer Engagement Webinars Available to Help Nonprofit Organizations**
VolunteerMatch will offer a series of three free webinars in 2011 to help nonprofit organizations recruit and involve baby boomer volunteers. “Boomer Volunteers Building Capacity: The Foundations for Success” will be held January 26, 2011, 12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m. PT. Join Jill Friedman Fixler, author of the Boomer Volunteer Engagement series, and co-author/editor Beth Steinhorn for this introduction to the tools and strategies that can help you engage boomer volunteers as leaders to help build organizational capacity. This webinar will feature case studies, needs assessment, timelines, and recruitment tools. See the full [VolunteerMatch webinar schedule](#) and register online.

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.