What’s New

Fourth Annual Plus 50 Initiative Conference: A Time for Inspiration and Connection
The Fourth Annual Conference for the Plus 50 Initiative is being held in Washington, DC, July 14–15, 2011. This year’s conference includes 45 representatives from 28 community colleges working to support plus 50 learners. Attendees will be able to share experiences, challenges, and successes. The conference agenda is structured around the standards of excellence. For each of the eight standards, attendees will share short descriptions of successful practices, opening up the discussion to additional ideas and sharing. Building on these tips, conference attendees will discuss the new challenges the completion strategy will bring. Brainstorming sessions and presentations will give attendees a new array of ideas and tools to support plus 50 students when they return to campus.

In the News

Plus 50 In the News

"National Program Encourages Baby Boomers to Return to School," West Newsmagazine, June 2011, page 41

- "Video: Why Will the Great Recession Affect Retirement Incomes?" The Urban Institute, June 30, 2011
- "Imagine What You Can Do...At Any Age!" Baton Rouge Community College, June 27, 2011
- "Baby Boomers Make the Most of Their Second Act," USA Today, June 21, 2011

Student Story

Training for a New Career as a Pharmacy Technician
In this YouTube video, Laurie Thomas talks about her experiences in the pharmacy technician program at Clover Park Technical College. She had to make a career change because of her health. She chose the pharmacy technician program because she does not want to go to school for four additional years and wants to start earning money quickly. Thomas adjusted quickly to her classes and found a supportive environment. Even her speech class, which she found challenging, has been a learning experience that she’s benefited from. She’s glad she decided to go to community college. “People want to hire
people that graduate from Clover Park,” said Thomas. “It doesn’t matter how old you are….Education is never wasted.”

**Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program**

**LEARNING**

*Complete to Compete: Improving Postsecondary Education Attainment Among Adults*

This [guide](#) from the National Governors Association is designed to help states increase the proportion of adults with postsecondary credentials. It offers ideas that can be carried out without increasing costs, such as making sure that adult students have access to financial aid and providing programs and services that fit with their lifestyles. To improve postsecondary credential attainment rates for adults, state institutions will need to provide flexible and integrated learning environments, offer comprehensive support services, use cross-institutional data to track performance, and create financing structures to incentivize improved performance.

**TRAINING & RE-TRAINING**

*“Smart Strategies for Older Job Seekers”*

This [*U.S. News Money article*](#) offers tips to help plus 50 adults who are seeking a new job. It includes recommendations from 10 demonstration sites with the Tapping Mature Talent initiative with the U.S. Department of Labor. Getting credit for experience, marketing yourself as a brand, participating in reverse job fairs, and getting computer training are among the strategies highlighted.

**VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE**

*“Peace Corps for Retirees? It's a Second Chance to Serve”*

In [this op-ed](#) in *The Christian Science Monitor*, Civic Ventures CEO Mark Freedman argues for baby boomers to be increasingly embraced as vital volunteers who can help solve society's challenges. Today we’re in a position to reap the benefits of baby boomer experience thousands of times over, says Freedman. Every day, some 8,000 boomers turn 60. It’s one of the most important phenomena of the new century. Never before have so many people had so much experience and the time and the capacity with which to do something significant. Freedman argues more should be done to capitalize on their experience and desire to give back.

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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:
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