Plus 50 Story

Completion Strategy Tips: Joliet Junior College
Helping plus 50 adults finish their educational degrees or credentials at community colleges is important as many go back to school to retrain for new careers in today's struggling economy. In this YouTube video, Kelly Lapetino with Joliet Junior College offers tips and advice for other colleges on how to support plus 50 adults to achieve their education goals.

Tips & Tools

Resources from the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL)

Moving the Starting Line Through Prior Learning Assessment
This August 2011 research brief found that adult students who receive credit for prior learning are two-and-a-half times more likely to persist to graduation —and complete their degrees— than students who do not receive credit for prior learning. Researchers estimate that as many as one quarter of adult students could receive credit for prior learning, which would aid completion efforts.

Enrollment Decisions and Persistence of On-Line Learners in NACTEL and EPCE
The purpose of this study was to learn more about working adult learners, their enrollment decisions, and their persistence toward an associate’s degree in two online degree programs. One of these programs has been offered by Pace University since 1999 and is sponsored by the National Coalition of Telecommunications Education and Learning (NACTEL). The other has been offered by Bismarck State College since 2001 and is sponsored by the Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE). The study began in the spring of 2006 and was completed 12 months later. You may need to log-in to the CAEL website (it's free) to download the report.

Building Blocks for Building Skills: An Inventory of Adult Learning Models and Innovations
This publication presents descriptions and examples of the key components for adult learning and skills training programs. Need-focused planning and analysis, progress and success focused program design, adult-centered implementation, and strategic
partnerships. This publication was prepared by CAEL in 2006 for the U.S. Department of Labor WIRED Initiative.

Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program

LEARNING

The College Completion Agenda: 2010
This College Board report recommends a 10-part action agenda that will raise the percentage of students completing degrees or postsecondary education credentials. The report notes that progress is being made in simplifying the college application and admission process, strengthening the alignment of K–12 expectations to college admission standards, and improving teacher quality. Other indicators, such as those showing progress in universal preschool and middle and high school counseling, are lagging. A part of the challenge in reaching the goal of 55% of young Americans with an associate’s degree or higher lies in erasing disparities in educational attainment for low-income and underrepresented minority students. By eliminating the severity of disparities between underrepresented minorities and white Americans, it is estimated that more than half the degrees needed to meet the 55% goal would be produced. While this report focuses on younger students, many of the suggestions would also be helpful to plus 50 learners.

TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

Can Unemployed Older Workers Find Work?
Job loss during the Great Recession is upending retirement savings plans for many older workers, says this 2011 Urban Institute report. Fewer than a quarter of workers age 50 and older who lost their jobs between mid-2008 and the end of 2009 found work within 12 months, much lower than the reemployment rate for younger workers. Older displaced workers who find jobs must often accept deep pay cuts. These challenges highlight the need for more training and employment services for those 50 and older.

VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE

The Boomers’ Guide to Good Work
This colorful website by Civic Ventures and the MetLife Foundation advises baby boomers to be civically engaged and offers advice. The value of experience can be priceless, and plus 50 adults are encouraged to put their skills work for the common good.. A 16-page print-ready booklet is also available on the site.

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 12.4 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.