In the News

- “AACC Receives $3 Million Grant to Expand Plus 50 Initiative,” Community College Times, January 18, 2012
- “Community Colleges to Train Baby Boomers for Jobs That Make a Difference,” American Association of Community Colleges, January 18, 2012
- “Baby Boomers Heading Back to Community College,” Community College Review, January 5, 2012
- “Community College Offers New Direction for Post 50s,” The Huffington Post, January 5, 2012

News Impacting Plus 50 Programs

“Meeting the Demand for Workers with Social Media Skills”
This Community College Times article profiles colleges putting in place social media training programs. Madison Area Technical College in Wisconsin designed a social media certificate program because businesses began asking for employees with training in social media management. Sandhills Community College in North Carolina has a social media manager course. Cincinnati State Technical and Community College in Ohio offers a social media institute and the college’s workforce development center has an advisory council comprised of area business leaders to guide its social media offerings. Durham Technical Community College in North Carolina utilized a learning partner to launch a social media initiative.

More Americans Age 55+ Are Employed Now Than Before the Recession, Reports Washington Post
The Washington Post recently published an article discussing a Bureau of Labor Statistics report showing that more workers age 55 and up are staying in the workplace. In interviews, many older workers indicated the lack of a pension or fuller savings account was leading them to stay in the labor force longer. The number of people older than 55 who are working has actually risen by 3.1 million, or 12%, since the beginning of the recession. More people age 75 and up are working today than before the recession, too. And, at the same time,
due in part to the surge of older workers, the unemployment rate for people older than 55 has roughly doubled since the start of the recession, from 3.2% in December 2007 to 6.2% in December 2011.

“Boomers Who Start Businesses: The Next Great Generation of Entrepreneurs!”
This Huffington Post article discusses research by academic Vivek Wadhwa showing that in 2008 the highest rate of entrepreneurial activity had shifted to boomers in the 55–64 age group, not younger 20-something entrepreneurs. That trend continued through 2009, according to a Kaufmann Foundation study released last year, and Wadhwa says he expects the boom in boomer entrepreneurship to continue through 2012. "We suspect the age of entrepreneurs is actually increasing," Wadhwa says. "When we did the study, it created a lot of controversy, because it went against the stereotypes in Silicon Valley. The perception here is that only the young can innovate and that any kid out of school can build a Facebook. People here believe it's all about youth, but we found that isn't the case."

“Demand for Allied Health Professionals Creating Shortages”
KCRG-TV in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, recently reported that demands for allied health professionals are so significant that there is a shortage of workers qualified for these positions. Pharmacy technicians, respiratory therapists, medical assistants and other health workers are in short supply. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts more than 6.1 million health care workers will be needed nationally between 2008 and 2018 to fill new jobs and replace workers who leave their jobs or retire. Of the 30 fastest-growing occupations in the labor market, more than half are in the allied health care field. A career in an allied health profession can make a wonderful encore career, especially when training at a community college.

Award Program

Best Intergenerational Communities, Due Jan. 31
Think your community stands out because it works hard to acknowledge and serve all ages? Then Generations United and MetLife Foundation want to hear from you as they launch the first-ever Best Intergenerational Communities Awards. Judges will select five communities based on criteria that take into account a community's own demographics, services, programs and organizational structure. They will recognize winning communities for their specific intergenerational successes, not as compared to other applicants. Applications are due January 31, 2012.

Grant Opportunities

The Workforce Innovation Fund, Due March 22, 2012
The Workforce Innovation Fund is one of several new Federal grant programs in which grantor agencies support projects that seek to use evidence to design program strategies. The U.S. Department of Labor is seeking strategies that (1) deliver services more efficiently and achieve better outcomes, particularly for vulnerable populations (e.g. low-wage and less-skilled workers) and dislocated workers, especially those who have been unemployed
for many months; (2) support both system reforms and innovations that facilitate cooperation across programs and funding streams in the delivery of client-centered services to jobseekers, youth, and employers; (3) ensure that education, employment, and training services are developed in partnership with specific employers or industry sectors and reflect current and future skill needs; and (4) emphasize building knowledge about effective practices through rigorous evaluation and translating “lessons learned” into improved labor market outcomes—the ability to bring such practices to scale in other geographic locations and increased cost efficiency in the broader workforce system. The grants will be administered by the Department of Labor, working closely with the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. Although eligibility is limited to states, local workforce areas, and WIA-eligible entities serving Native American and Indian populations, those entities are often community college partners. This program may provide an opportunity for community colleges to form new partnerships. You can watch a webinar for prospective applicants online. Responses are due March 22, 2012.

**Plus 50 Story**

**AACC Completion Strategy: Best Advice**
Get the top tips and suggestions from college staff working to help plus 50 students return to campus and finish their degrees or certificates, from this [YouTube video](#). Many of the adults age 50 and up are struggling to get back into the workforce after a job loss or layoff, and want to update their skills quickly and earn a high-value degree or credential. Get great tips on how to make the transition smoother from Plus 50 program staff from Atlantic Cape Community College, Clover Park Technical College, Joliet Junior College, and St. Louis Community College.

**Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program**

**LEARNING**

**“It’s Never Too Late to Learn: New Pathways for Non-Traditional Students”**
In order to meet the workforce demands for better educated employees, colleges and universities will have to teach more adults. This [podcast audio recording](#) of a panel at the 2011 Education Writers Association conference examines the evolving options for non-traditional students to further their educations. Panel members include Travis Reindl with the National Governors Association, Nate Anderson with Jobs for the Future, and Andrew S. Rosen of Kaplan, Inc. The panel is moderated by Stephen Smith with American RadioWorks/American Public Media.

**TRAINING & RE-TRAINING**

**America’s Job Crisis: Low-Income Seniors Hit Hardest**
Low-income older workers are far more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than high-income older workers, says this [policy brief](#) by the National Academy on an Aging Society. Their high rates of unemployment are particularly devastating, given their limited resources. What is more, the economic challenges, retirement insecurity, and employment difficulties that confront low-income older workers are compounded for those who are poorly educated and minorities. They face triple jeopardy in the labor market: limited education and
job skills, greater likelihood of unemployment, and more difficulty in finding work when unemployed. This brief outlines the characteristics and challenges of older low-income workers, and pinpoints opportunities for policy to provide targeted assistance.

VOLUNTEERING & SERVICE

Jobs That Make a Difference: Idealist Career Center
For baby boomers seeking work that makes a difference, the Idealist Career Center offers a wealth of job opportunities at nonprofits throughout the United States and even around the world. The site also provides helpful advice about typical nonprofit job titles, types of nonprofits, and advice on how to structure a nonprofit career search.

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.