

# **Plus 50 Encore Completion Program: 2013 Process and Outcome Data Results**

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LFA Group enhances the impact and sustainability of social sector organizations through highly customized research, strategy development, and evaluation services

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# Table of Contents

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Overview	1
Summary of Key Findings	2
Progress in Implementing a Plus 50 Program	2
Workforce Programs	3
Course Offerings	5
Support Services	8
Completion and Employment Outcomes	9

# Plus 50 Encore Completion Program: 2013 Process and Outcome Data Results

## Overview

Deerbrook Charitable Trust is the generous funder of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program offered through the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) that is dedicated to providing increased career prospects for adult learners in high-demand fields that contribute to the greater social good. The Plus 50 Encore Completion Program is part of the Plus 50 Initiative, which supports community colleges throughout the U.S. in offering training and career development for students age 50 and over, in order to help them re-enter the workforce, pursue new careers, or advance their current careers. Through Plus 50 Encore, students earn certificates and degrees that will help them continue in or re-enter helping professions in the fields of health, education, and social services. Thus, this program plays a pivotal role in workforce development, while providing a way for plus 50 students to augment their skills, put their passions to work, and give back to their communities.

The goal of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program is to support colleges in the implementation of their programs, increase the number of colleges with programs ready and able to effectively serve students over the age of 50, as well as increase the number of plus 50 student completions. As colleges implement Plus 50 Encore Completion Programs, they create social impact by supporting plus 50 students to leverage their skills and life experience to enter helping professions.

To ensure effective program implementation, each college funded through the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program is paired with a “Champion” college with a robust Plus 50 program to help guide them through the program implementation and data collection process.

This report covers the period from July 2012-June 2013,<sup>1</sup> and provides a data summary showing:

- The progress that colleges are making in implementing the program,
- The number of students participating in different components of the program at each colleges,
- The number of students achieving program outcomes (credit for prior learning, completion of certificates and degrees, and employment).

<sup>1</sup> Not all of the colleges joined the program at the same time. The first cohort joined in August 2012, the second joined in December 2012, and the third joined in March 2013. This means that the schools that joined later did not have as many months of data as those that joined earlier.

Highlights:	
50	Colleges in the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program have students enrolled in workforce programs
1,074	Students have participated in workforce programs
765	Program participants have completed a degree or certificate

## Summary of Key Findings

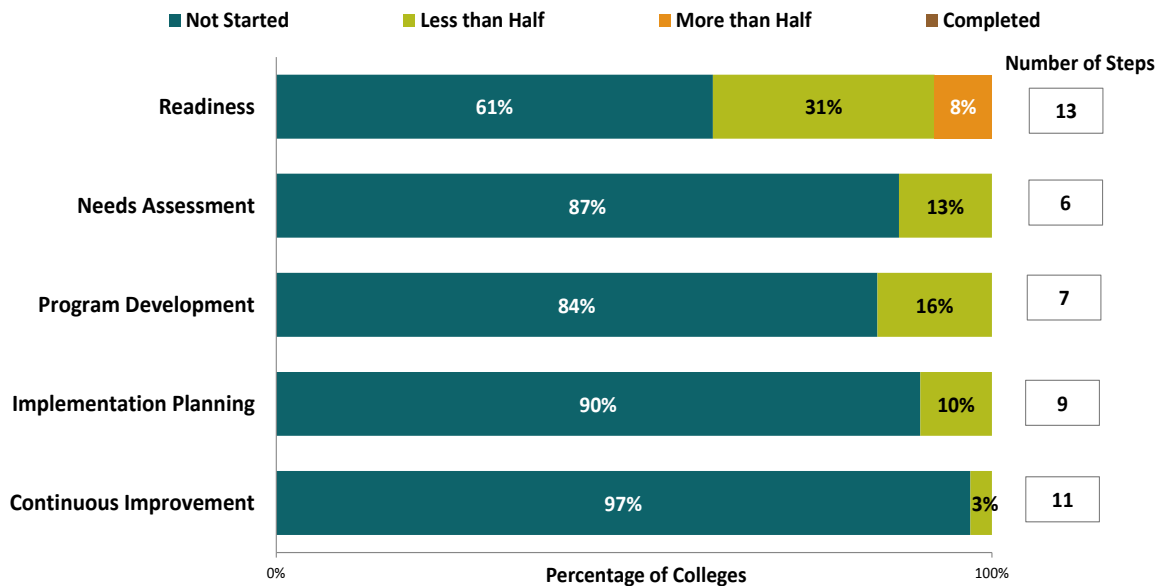
The primary goals of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program include increasing the number of degrees and certificates that plus 50 students complete, as well as supporting plus 50 students to become employed. During 2012-2013:

- 1,074 students participated in 615 workforce programs at 50 colleges.
- 765 students completed degrees (138), credit certificates (157), or non-credit certificates (470).
- 175 plus 50 students from Encore Completion colleges secured employment this past year.<sup>2</sup>

## Progress in Implementing a Plus 50 Program

In order to implement a Plus 50 Encore Completion program, a college must pass through five phases: Readiness, Needs Assessment, Program Development, Implementation Planning, and Continuous Improvement. The passing of each phase requires the Champion colleges to provide critical oversight to Encore colleges on the completion of key steps in each phase. While these phases are named and presented in a linear way, implementing a Plus 50 program will unfold in an iterative manner, and many of the key tasks will be pursued concurrently rather than sequentially. As part of their support process, Champion colleges review and provide feedback on materials relating to the key steps that Encore colleges submit. The Champion college determines when an Encore college has satisfactorily completed a particular step. Exhibit 1 demonstrates how colleges are progressing toward completion for each phase.

**Exhibit 1: Colleges' Progress through the Five Phases of Implementation**



<sup>2</sup> The number of colleges able to report employment outcomes is limited. In 2012-2013, only nine colleges were able to report on employment outcomes.

- During 2012-2013, Encore colleges have made **most progress on the Readiness phase**. Eight percent of colleges completed more than half and 31% completed less than half of the key steps necessary to complete this phase.
- To date, none of the 62 colleges have completed all key steps in any of the five implementation phases.

## Workforce Programs

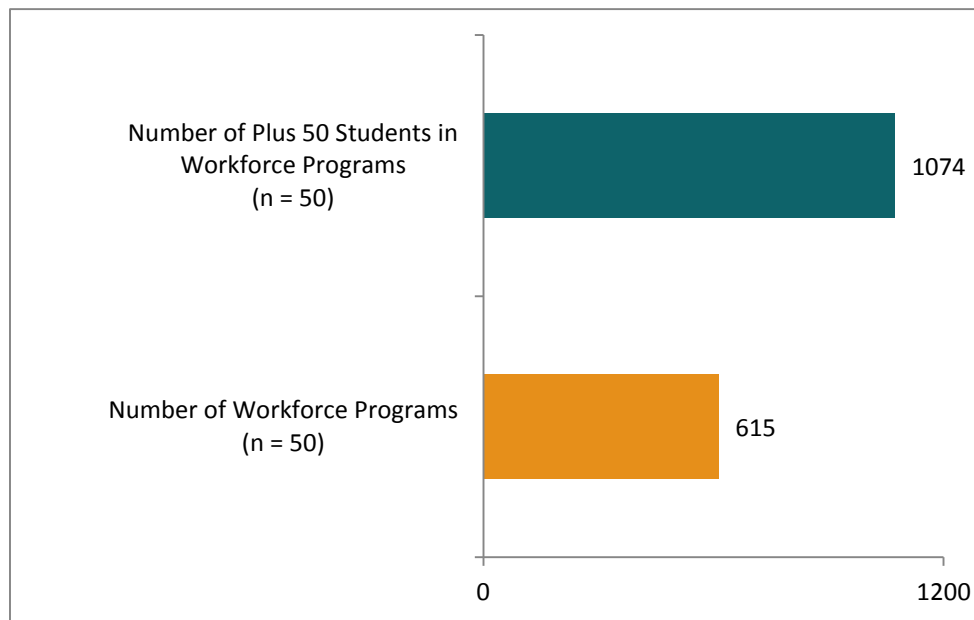
### Workforce Program Offerings

By offering workforce programs, participating colleges are able to provide their students over the age of 50 with training and knowledge that is essential for them to effectively re-enter the workforce or advance their current career. During 2012-2013, Encore colleges offered a wealth of workforce programs, totaling 615 programs for 1,074 students across 50 colleges (see Exhibit 2).

### How Many Colleges?

This report includes data from the 62 colleges participating in the Encore Completion Program in August 2013. Because it is still early in the program, and most colleges were participating for less than the full year, some colleges were not yet at the stage of offering workforce programs as part of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program: 50 out of 62 colleges were offering workforce programs. Therefore, the sections on process and outcome data report the data for 50 of the Encore colleges.

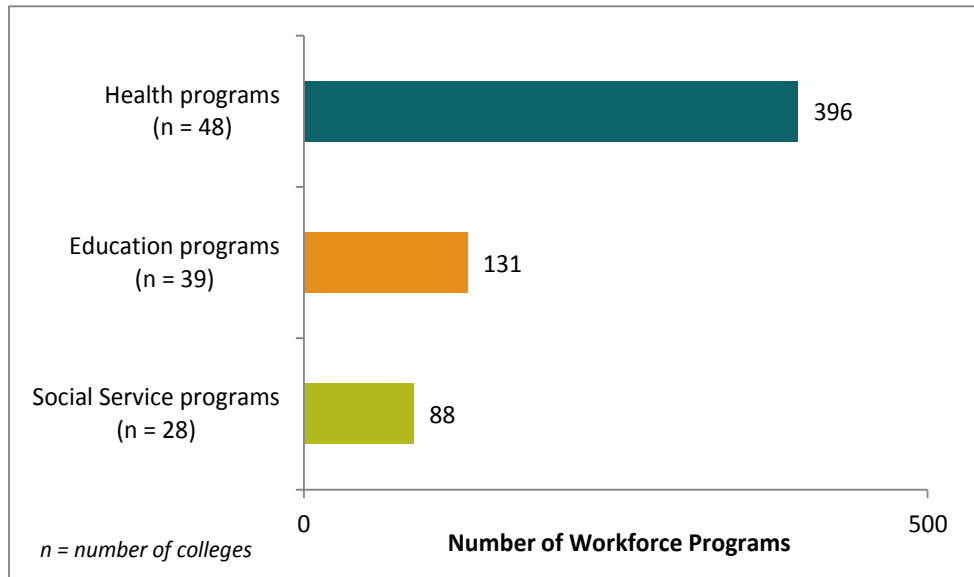
**Exhibit 2: Workforce Programs**



## Workforce Program by Field

These 615 workforce programs focused in the three Encore Completion fields: Health Care, Education, and Social Services; and participating colleges offered multiple programs within each of these fields. Exhibit 3 shows the number of workforce programs offered in each of the three fields.

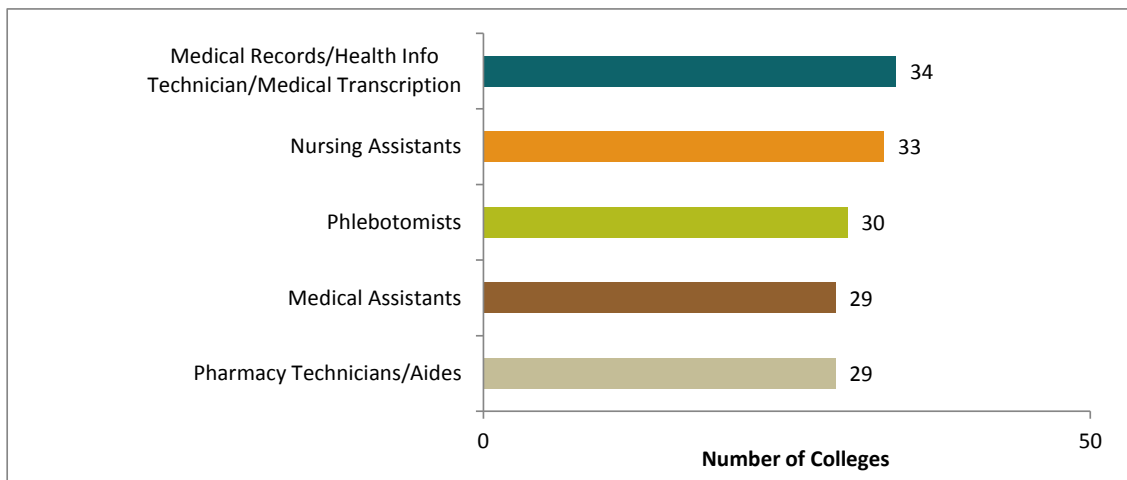
**Exhibit 3: Workforce Programs by Field**



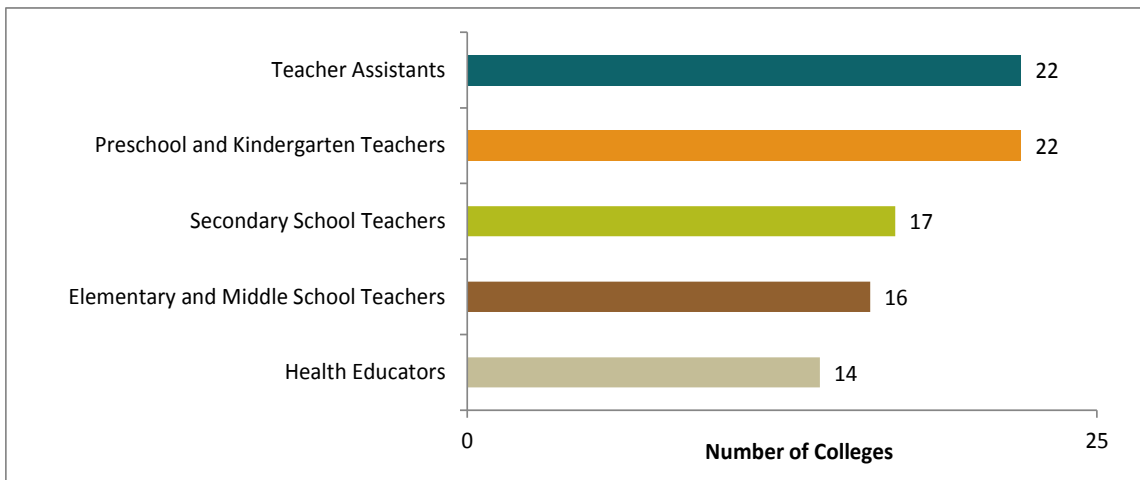
- Colleges were more likely to offer workforce programs in the field of Health Care, followed by Education and Social Services.
- Nearly all (96%; 48 of 50) colleges offered at least one workforce program in the field of Health Care.
- The average number of workforce programs per college is 12.

Exhibits 4 through 6 show the five most commonly offered programs in each field.

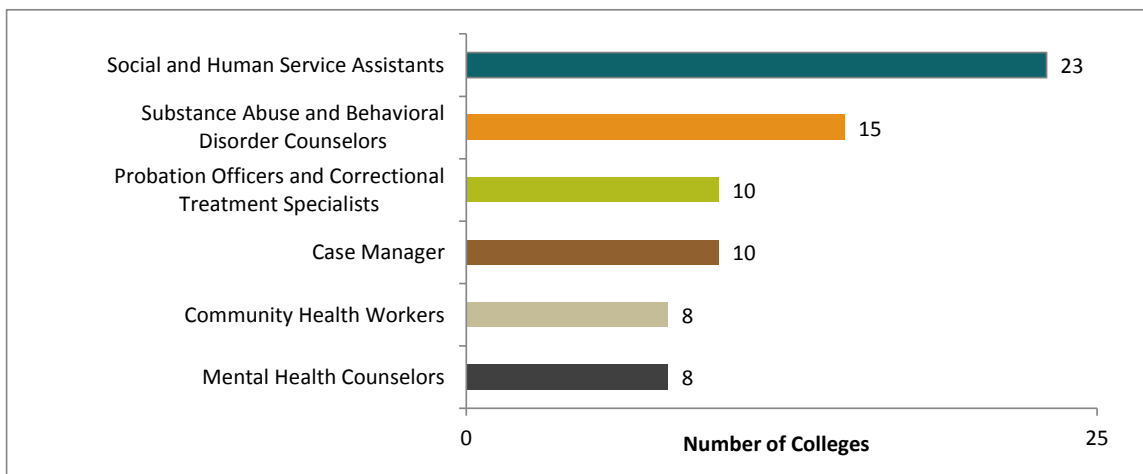
**Exhibit 4: Top Health Workforce Programs**



### Exhibit 5: Top Education Workforce Programs



### Exhibit 6: Top Social Service Workforce Programs



- Across all fields, the most **commonly offered workforce program was Medical Records/Health Information Technician/Medical Transcription** (offered at 34 colleges).
- Nursing Assistants (offered at 33 colleges), Teaching Assistants and Preschool/Kindergarten teachers (offered at 22 colleges), and Social and Human Service Assistants (offered at 23 colleges) were other top programs in the Health, Education, and Social Services fields.

See the Appendix for a list of all colleges and the workforce program fields they offered during the 2012-2013 school year.

## Course Offerings

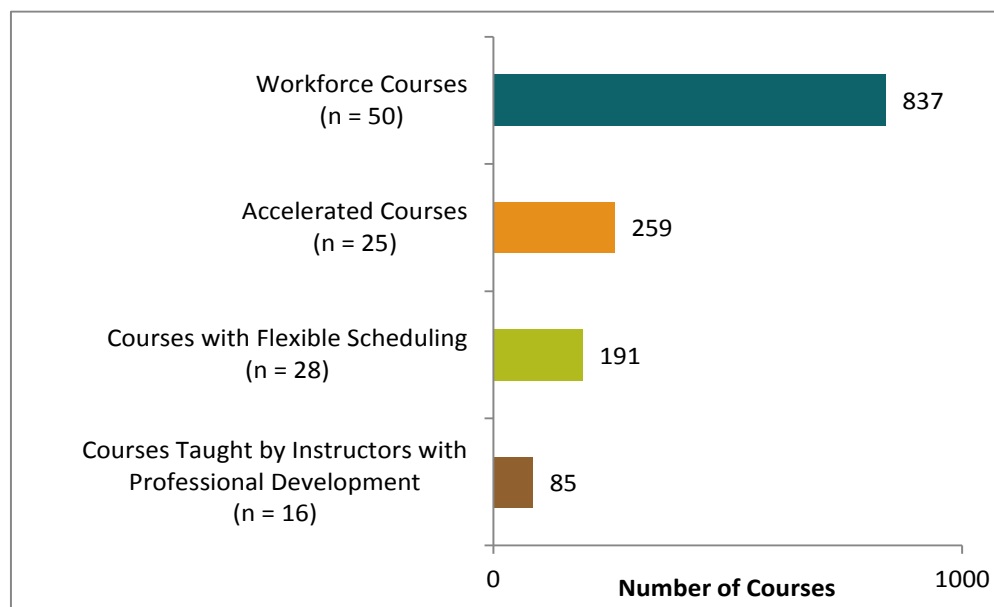
As part of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program, colleges offered workforce courses, allowing for the development of specific skills in key workforce programs, as well as refresher courses in English, Math and Computer tailored for adult learners.



## Workforce Courses

Exhibit 7 highlights the total number of workforce course offerings, and also the total number of workforce courses offered in different *formats*: accelerated courses; courses taught with flexible scheduling; and courses taught by instructors who have participated in professional development for working with plus 50 students. Slightly less than half of colleges (22) provided professional development opportunities designed to build the capacity of 310 instructors to effectively teach older learners.

**Exhibit 7: Workforce Course Offerings**

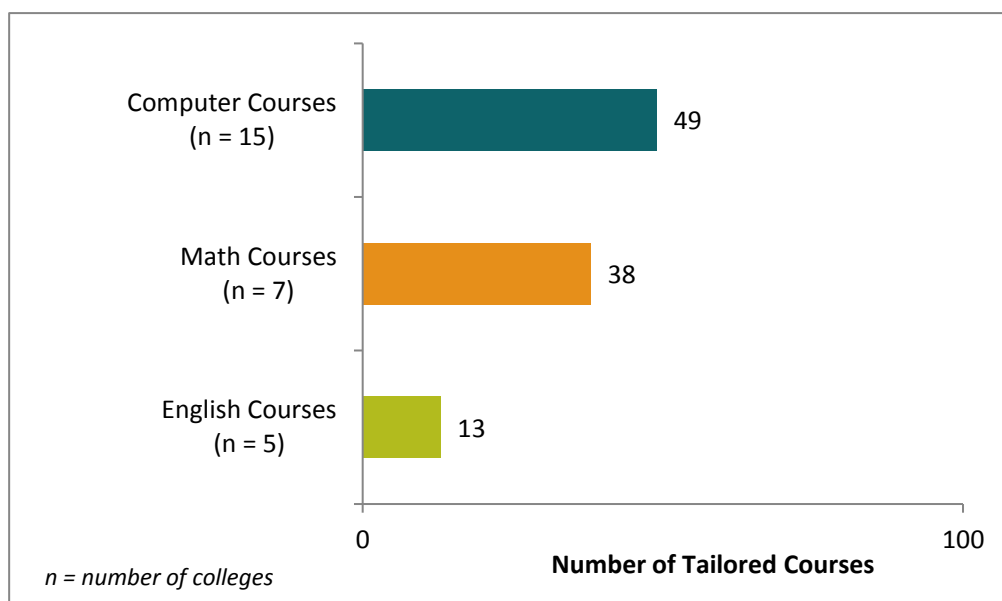


- In 2012-2013, fifty colleges offered a total of **837 workforce courses** to plus 50 students.
- Half of colleges offered **259 accelerated courses**; thus, just under one-third (31%) of these courses could be completed in a shorter amount of time than the standard term.
- More than half of colleges (n=28) offered **191 courses with flexible scheduling**. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of workforce courses were offered at times that allow people other options, when they cannot attend during the traditional 9-5, Monday through Friday timeframe.
- **Eighty-five (10%) workforce courses at 16 colleges were offered by an instructor who participated in professional development**, specifically to augment their ability to teach 50 plus learners.

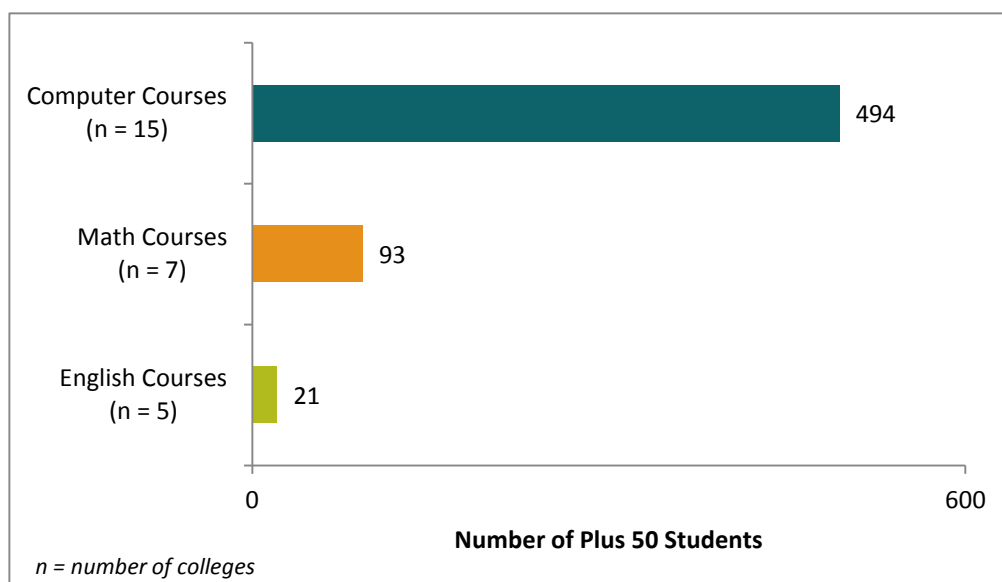
## Tailored English, Math, and Computer Course Offerings

Because some Plus 50 students need to take English, math, and computer courses to refresh their skills in order to enroll and succeed in their workforce programs as well as the workplace, Encore colleges offer English, math, and computer courses that are specifically tailored to the needs of plus 50 learners. See Exhibits 8 and 9 for the number of tailored courses and the number of students enrolled in tailored courses.

**Exhibit 8: Number of Tailored English, Math, and Computer Courses**



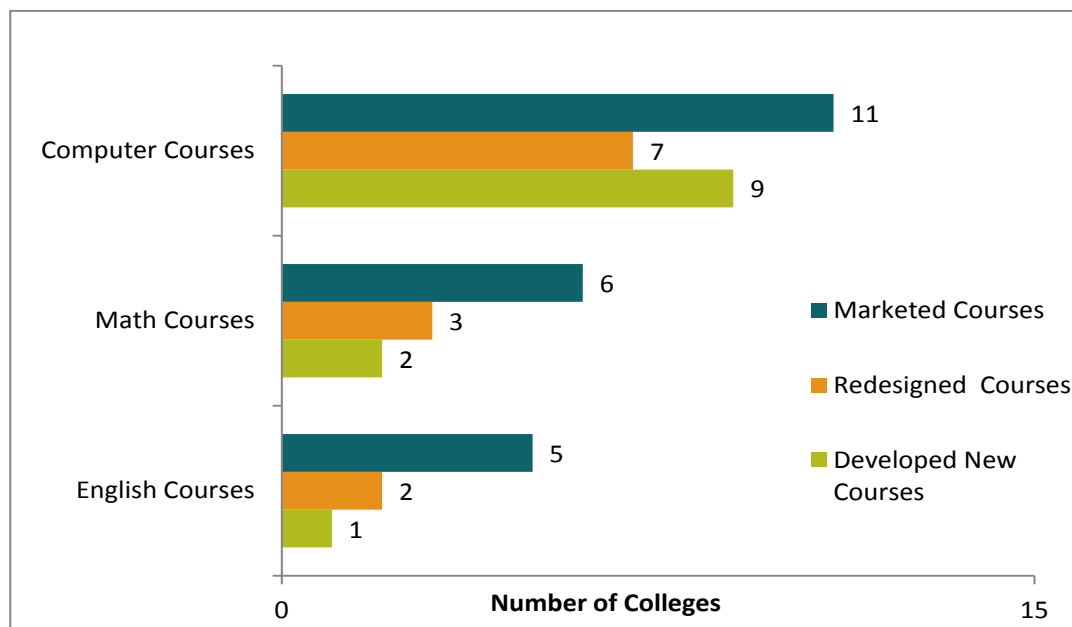
**Exhibit 9: Number of Plus 50 Students in Tailored English, Math, and Computer Courses**



- An overwhelming majority (494) of plus 50 students at 15 colleges took advantage of **49 tailored computer courses**.
- Seven colleges offered **38 tailored math courses** to 93 students, and five colleges offered **15 tailored English courses** to 21 students.

In order to tailor their English, math, and computer courses to plus 50 students, there are three approaches that colleges generally take: they market the courses specifically to plus 50 students; they redesign the courses with plus 50 students in mind; and/or they develop new courses specifically for plus 50 learners. Exhibit 10 shows the number of colleges that took each tailoring approach within each subject area.

**Exhibit 10: Number of Colleges Offering Tailored English, Math, and Computer Courses**

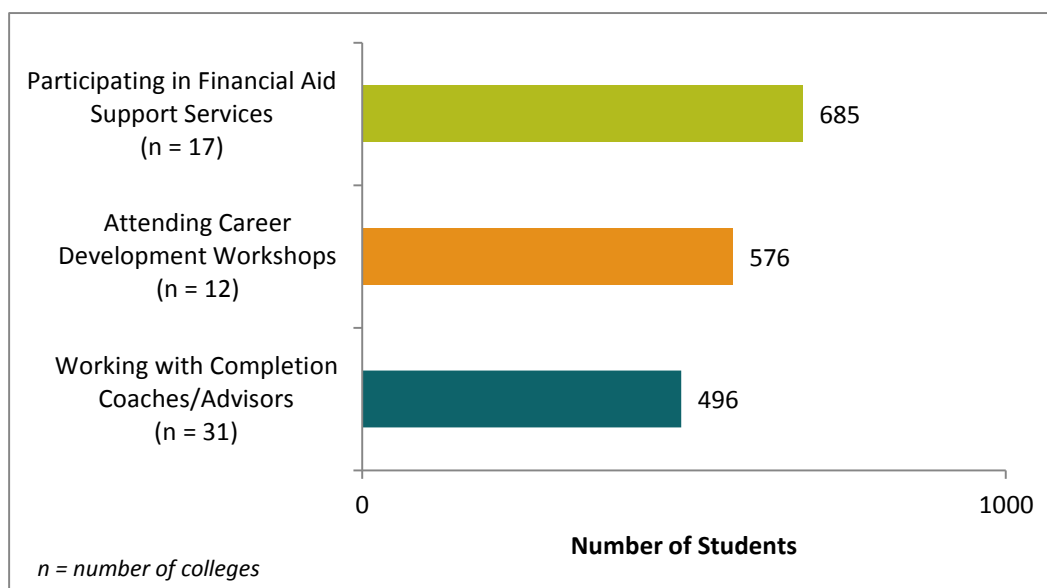


- **Marketing courses to plus 50 learners was the most common tailoring approach** undertaken by Encore colleges this year.
- Of the 15 colleges offering tailored computer courses, 11 colleges (73%) marketed their computer courses toward plus 50 students, 9 colleges (60%) developed new computer courses, and 7 colleges (47%) redesigned their computer courses.
- Of the seven colleges that offered tailored math courses, six colleges (86%) marketed these courses, while three colleges redesigned (43%) and two colleges developed new math courses (29%).
- Of the five colleges that tailored their English courses, all five (100%) marketed their English courses, three colleges (60%) redesigned existing English courses, and one college (20%) developed new English courses with the plus 50 learner in mind.

## Support Services

Effective plus 50 colleges provide tailored resources and support to meet the needs of students 50 and older. By taking advantage of support services, these students are better prepared to locate, apply for, and secure resources to pay for college, complete their coursework and credentials, and ultimately secure employment. Exhibit 11 shows the number of students who took advantage of these support services.

## Exhibit 11: Number of Students Receiving Support Services



- At seventeen colleges, **685 plus 50 students participated in financial aid support services** geared toward the plus 50 learner. These services include information sessions on plus 50 students' financial aid options and the application process, as well as the provision of technical assistance in applying for financial aid.
- At twelve colleges, **576 students attended career development workshops** tailored for helping plus 50 students choose a career and develop professionally for re-entry into the workforce.
- At thirty-one colleges, **496 students worked with completion coaches and advisors** who have been trained to understand the needs of plus 50 students. These coaches or advisors assist students in ensuring their courses would fulfill requirements and result in a completed degree or certificate, and also provide general advice in navigating the college experience as an older student.

## Completion and Employment Outcomes

The final section of the report highlights key completion and employment outcomes for Encore colleges in 2012-2013. These outcomes include the attainment of credit for prior learning, degree and certificate completion, and employment in the workforce.

### Credit for Prior Learning

Reducing time to completion is a beneficial motivator for plus 50 students and one way in which colleges support this is through allowing their students to earn credit for prior learning. Earning credit for prior learning is an essential part of helping plus 50 students successfully complete their programs.

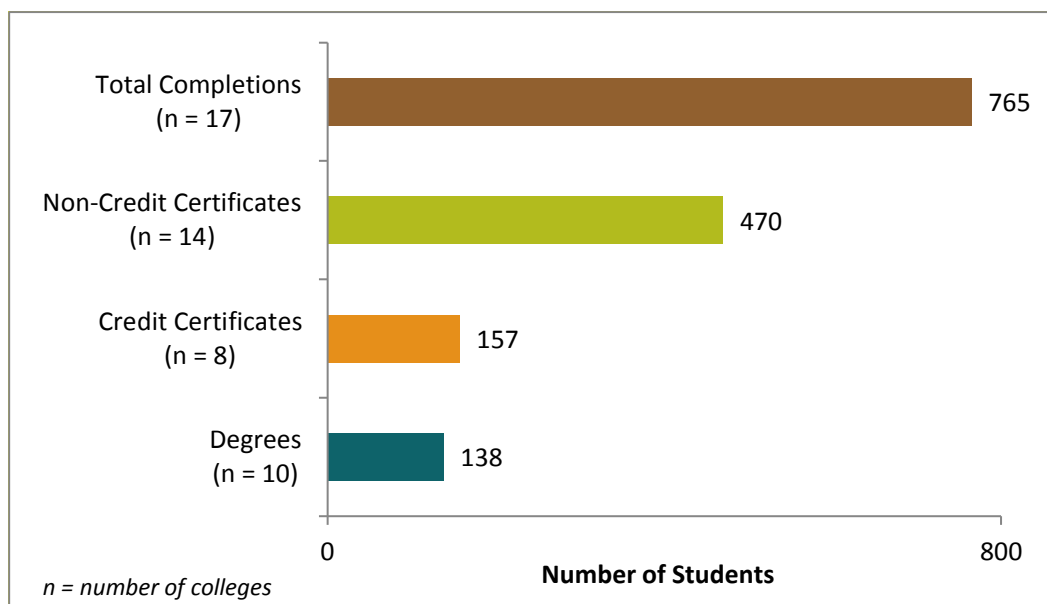
- In 2012-2013, 212 students at eight colleges received credits for prior learning.

## Completion Outcomes

A central goal of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program is supporting plus 50 students to complete a community college credential in a workforce program. Credentials can come in one of three forms: degrees, credit certificates, and non-credit certificates. While the completion of a degree usually requires a multi-year process, and credit certificates often require multiple credits, courses, and even semesters to become fully credentialed, the length of time it can take to obtain a non-credit certificate can vary and they are typically shorter term. Furthermore, some certificates and degrees are building block for further credentialing or the necessary preparation for a state licensing examination.

Across all fifty colleges with workforces programs, **765 students attained degrees, credit certificates, and non-credit certificates**. Exhibit 12 shows the completion outcomes across all Encore colleges.

**Exhibit 12: Number of Students Completing Degrees and Certificates**



- At fourteen colleges, 470 students completed non-credit certificates. Two colleges account for 336 of the non-credit certificates awarded to plus 50 students in 2012-2013.
- At eight colleges, 157 students completed credit certificates.
- At ten colleges, 138 students completed degrees.

## Student Employment

For the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program, the ultimate goal is to support students to obtain credentials with labor market value: credentials that lead to employment or support career advancement.

- Nine colleges collected data on participant employment and reported that **175 students were able to successfully secure employment in the workforce**. This is an average of 19 students employed per college.

# Appendix

Plus 50 Encore Colleges with Workforce Programs				
College	Programs			Total
	Education	Health	Social Services	
Arapahoe Community College	1	1		2
Atlanta Technical College	2	10		12
Belmont College	2	5		7
Black River Tech College				0
Blue Ridge Community and Tech	4	13	1	18
Blue Ridge Community College	1	8	9	18
Bristol Community College	1	1	1	3
Broome Community College	1	7	1	9
College of Southern MD				0
Community College of Baltimore City				0
Elgin Community College	3	17	4	24
Gloucester County College		7		7
Guam Community College				0
Halifax Community College		1		1
Hinds Community College		8		8
Indian Hills Community College	9	18	9	36
Indian River State College		1		1
Ivy Tech Community College of IN	1	1	1	3
John Wood Community College		6		6
Jones County Junior College	8	10		18
Lake Region State College	2	9		11
Lansing Community College	7	14	2	23
Lenoir Community College	5	15	3	23
Lone Star College System	2			2

### Plus 50 Encore Colleges with Workforce Programs

College	Programs			Total
	Education	Health	Social Services	
Miami Dade College	4	4	3	11
Middlesex Community College		2		2
Middlesex County College	1	3		4
Mohawk Valley Community College	2	12	1	15
Montgomery County Community College	5	9	4	18
MS Gulf Coast Community College	8	11	9	28
Naugatuck Valley				0
NE Alabama Community College	1	9		10
Northern Oklahoma College		13		13
Northern WY Community College		2		2
Norwalk Community College	1	12	1	14
Owens State Community College	4	12	1	17
Patrick Henry Community College	2	10	1	13
Pima Community College	7	17	4	28
Pitt Community College			3	3
Raritan Valley Community College	2	8		10
Rhodes State College	1	12	1	14
Richland Community College	5	8	2	15
Salt Lake Community College	2	3		5
San Jacinto Community College District	6	5	4	15
Schenectady County	2	3	2	7
Seminole State College FL		7		7
Southside VA Community College	1	8		9
St Petersburg College		1		1
Tarrant County College District	5	17	7	29

**Plus 50 Encore Colleges with Workforce Programs**

College	Programs			Total
	Education	Health	Social Services	
Terra State Community College	6	10	6	22
Vance Granville	2	10	4	16
Virginia Western				0
Wallace Community College				0
Waubonsee Community College	7	13	2	22
West Shore Community College	4	7	1	12
WV University Parkersburg	3	9		12
Zane State College	1	7	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>615</b>