

NEWS



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NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGES SELECTED TO EXPAND PLUS 50 INITIATIVE *More Plus 50 Adults Turn to Community Colleges for Job Training and Career Jumpstarts*

WASHINGTON – Community colleges around the nation are turning to the Plus 50 Initiative at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) for help in designing programs for baby boomers, who are increasingly returning to campus for job training and to makeover careers waylaid by the economic recession.

“With President Obama calling on our nation’s community colleges to help unemployed and laid off Americans get back to work, we are seeing increased demand from college leaders for support in structuring effective programs for plus 50 adults,” said George R. Boggs, AACC President and CEO. “This expansion effort will share best practices with more colleges and help them more efficiently work with baby boomers.”

Thirty-two additional colleges will join the initiative, which started with 15 grantee colleges in 2008 and expanded its work to include 12 additional community colleges in 2009. The expansion pairs existing and more experienced Plus 50 colleges with additional community colleges that will become “affiliates” of the Plus 50 Initiative.

Four colleges designated as learning partners will serve as guides to help six community colleges implement plus 50 programs that help baby boomers returning to campus for job training and to improve their skills.

Century College in White Bear Lake, Minn. will be the Learning Partner for Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay, Wis.

Community Colleges of Spokane will serve as a Learning Partner for Shoreline Community College in Shoreline, Wash.

Central Florida Community College in Ocala, Fla. will serve as Learning Partner for Pasco-Hernando Community College in New Port Richey, Fla. as they expand their focus beyond lifelong learning programming to include workforce training and retraining opportunities for plus 50 students.

Clover Park Technical College in Lakewood, Wash. will serve as a Learning Partner for the other community colleges in Pierce County, Wash. Clover Park will work with Bates Technical College, Tacoma Community College, Pierce College District 11 which includes Pierce College-Fort Steilacoom and Pierce College-Puyallup.

Four additional community colleges will serve as Plus 50 Initiative Peer-to-Peer Ambassadors or regional conference host working to expand the network of plus 50 colleges by reaching out to additional community colleges. They will share information about how to start and sustain a quality educational program for plus 50

students. They will also invite the new colleges to participate in national discussions on effective programming for plus 50 students.

St. Louis Community College will serve as a Plus 50 Initiative Peer-to-Peer Ambassador with fellow member institutions in the Missouri Community College Association, including Crowder College; East Central College; Jefferson College; Mineral Area College; Moberly Area Community College; Ozarks Technical Community College; North Central Missouri College; State Fair Community College; St. Charles Community College and Three Rivers Community College.

Clark College in Vancouver, Wash. will serve as a Plus 50 Initiative Peer-to-Peer Ambassador for Centralia College, Lower Columbia College, Olympic College and South Puget Sound Community College in Washington state and Clackamas Community College, Mt. Hood Community College and Umpqua Community College in Oregon.

Joliet Junior College will serve as a Plus 50 Peer-to-Peer Ambassador for three other Illinois community colleges including Kishwaukee College in Malta, Parkland College in Champaign and Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville.

Richland College in Dallas, Texas, will host a Plus 50 Initiative Conference for the six other community colleges in the Dallas County Community College District, including the Bill J. Priest Campus of El Centro College, Brookhaven College, Cedar Valley College, Eastfield College, Mountain View College, and North Lake College.

The Plus 50 Initiative began its efforts to help community colleges faced with an expanding baby boomer student population by focusing on learning, training and career development, and volunteering. The three-year project is sponsored by the AACC with a \$3.2 million grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies.

For 90 years, the AACC has been the leading advocate for the nation's community colleges, which currently number more than 1,173 and serve close to 12 million students annually. Its membership comprises 90% of all public two-year colleges – the largest, most accessible, most diverse sector of U.S. higher education. As institutions committed to access, community service and lifelong learning, community colleges have long-focused on the needs of adults who are already in the workforce, many of whom are seeking new skills and knowledge for changes in their lives and careers.

To learn more about the Plus 50 Initiative, visit <http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu>. To learn more about the AACC and The Atlantic Philanthropies, visit www.aacc.nche.edu and www.atlanticphilanthropies.org.

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