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What's New

Community College Programming Opportunity: Free AARP Webinar on Navigating Job Loss

Community colleges working with laid-off plus-50 workers may want to sign up for the free AARP webinar, "Navigating Your Way Through Job Loss." The webinar will be offered 2-3pm EST on May 20, 2009, and June 11, 2009. It will help job seekers create an effective job-search strategy, manage their job hunt, connect with others to get support, and cope with the emotional ups and downs of unemployment. Webinar participants will receive a downloadable action plan with step-by-step tips and resources to help them succeed with their work search in today's tough job market. The action plan also outlines steps to manage their finances and to maintain their health during this time of transition. Community colleges may want to consider signing up for the webinar and inviting laid-off plus-50 workers to campus to participate. You could offer the webinar as a special program for existing plus-50 students or as an outreach to help displaced workers in the community. You do not need to be an AARP member to sign up for this event. AARP is a member of the AACC Plus 50 Initiative Advisory Committee. [To learn more and sign up, visit AARP's Web site.](#)

News from the Plus 50 Movement: Community Colleges Respond to Economic Crisis

- In Minnesota, Nancy Hammer wants to be a graphic designer, while Jim Grupa aspires to a new career in Web site design. After enduring layoffs that ended their decades-long careers at TRW Automotive, both are now students at Minnesota State College–Southeast Technical. Southeast Tech has designed customized courses, shortened the time it takes to complete a program and is also offering scholarships. [Read more online.](#)

- Scholarships for laid-off workers are available at several community colleges around the country. While many of the grants are limited to career-focused programs and may not cover all of the expenses of going back to school, many laid-off workers say the free tuition is a godsend. [See a list compiled by U.S. News & World Report.](#)

- In Washington, DC, U.S. Senator Bob Casey proposed the "Assistance for Workforce Recovery Program Act." Currently under consideration in committee, Senate Bill 809 will provide tuition assistance to unemployed workers. [Read the bill online.](#) If passed, community colleges nationwide would be encouraged to offer tuition-free instruction to laid-off workers and the Labor Department would be authorized to reimburse the colleges for tuition. The money would come from existing funds for the Labor Department's Community-Based Job Training program. [In talking with the press about the legislation,](#) the Senator's staff cited data from the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges. The data shows that 10 community colleges in Pennsylvania enrolled 1,062 unemployed workers in free tuition programs in spring 2009. The schools awarded 8,481 credits at a cost to the schools of \$741,788.

Plus 50 Initiative in the News

[Boomers Turn to Community Colleges to Launch New Careers](#)

Dallas Morning News, April 28, 2009

[Laid-off Boomers Flock to 2-Year Colleges](#)

United Press International, April 28, 2009

[Instead of Retiring, Seniors are RE-WIRING](#)

Spokane Business Journal (password required to view the full story), April 24,

2009

Serve America Act: Plus 55 Volunteering Gets New Attention and Resources

On April 21, 2009, President Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, ushering in new national service legislation. It offers new incentives for individuals over age 55 wanting to give back and for organizations that want to use their experience. Areas of interest for those 55 and older are as follows:

Encore Fellowships. The legislation calls for the provision of 10 Encore fellows in each state in one-year leadership and management positions with nonprofit organizations that help individuals over age 55 transition to nonprofit or public sector careers in areas of "national need," such as education, health care, energy, the environment, and poverty. Stipends are paid jointly by the federal government and the nonprofit, and will be supplemented by encore career services that help the fellow go on to a career in public service. Encore fellows will receive a minimum stipend of about \$23,000, with federal funding at least matched by the recipient organization.

Silver Scholarships extend the historic tie between service and educational opportunity by providing a \$1,000 education award or scholarship for people age 55+ who volunteer for more than 250 hours a year. The legislation makes the scholarship, along with the existing AmeriCorps education award, transferable to family members and possibly to others as well.

Expansion of AmeriCorps. Serve America will more than triple the number of AmeriCorps positions available to people of all ages, raising the number of positions to 250,000 per year from the current 75,000. A Clean Energy Service Corps will work on conserving resources and an Education Corps will tutor, teach, and mentor low-income students. The "Volunteers for Prosperity" program will be strengthened to coordinate short-term international service opportunities for skilled professionals to serve in developing nations.

Senior Corps was successful in having the age eligibility for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions program participants reduced to age 55 and the income eligibility increased to 200% of the poverty level.

Learn more about the Act [from the House Committee on Education and Labor](#).

News from the Colleges

Cape Cod Community College: Boomers at the Crossroads

Today's baby boomers face what may be their most difficult question: what to do next. They are healthier, more highly educated, and more mobile than all previous generations. For many, "rocking chair retirement" will never be an option. Designed for anyone in the second half of life, the "Boomers at the Crossroads" series at Cape Cod Community College offered information and self-assessment tools to help boomers actively think and plan their futures. Baby boomers paid \$100 to attend the three evening sessions. They were led by Charlene L. Martin, Ed.D., an adult learning specialist and founder of Pathfinders Retirement Innovations. Jacquie Scarbrough, Plus 50 Advisor at Cape Cod, was available to answer questions for those seeking to return to school, changing careers, or re-training after a layoff. For more information about Cape Cod Community College's Plus 50 programs, [visit its Web site](#).

Student Stories: A Construction Worker Turns to Clover Park Technical College

After spending two decades in construction work, John Ruiz realized that he needed to transition to a career that was not as physically demanding. He's fond of saying that he didn't choose to go to college. "I didn't decide! My body decided for me! I was in construction for 20 years and started to realize that I had to find something else," said Ruiz. "I went to the VA for an MRI one day and found out that I qualified for vocational rehabilitation. It came with 48 months of tuition support, an income supplement, and money for supplies." Because the vocational rehabilitation program required attendance at a two-year school, Ruiz found Clover Park Technical College's accelerated one-year human services program to be the perfect fit. He was especially drawn to the program's strong internship component, because he wanted on-the-job training alongside his education. [Read more student stories on our Web site](#). Got a great student story to recommend? E-mail mvickers@acc.nche.edu or ami@steppingstonellc.com with your

suggestions.

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Welcomes Mentor Central Florida Community College and AACC

Mentor Central Florida Community College conducted a successful site visit to their Demonstration College, Northern Virginia Community College. The two days on the campus were packed with meetings and discussions which led to powerful information exchange and robust resource sharing. The two colleges discussed how to set up sustainable programs and services to better serve the plus-50 population as well as ways to create revenue streams. They met with the college President, Dr. Templin and the Provost, Dr. Gueverra, who shared their vision of the Plus 50 Initiative and provided insights on the future direction for NOVA's Plus 50 programming. The Mentor College and the AACC staff participated in the NOVA Plus 50 Advisory Meeting, as well as the Alexandria campus leadership team networking lunch. Attendees also enjoyed meeting the Plus 50 instructor who developed and delivered the curriculum for the "Retirement Encore Jobs – Searching, Securing, and Surviving" class. For more information about NOVA Plus 50 programming, including their Plus 50 Ageless Learning Resource Symposium, [visit NOVA's brand new Plus 50 Initiative Web site](#).



Front row: JoAnn Credle (NOVA), Alice Hedley (NOVA), Diane Reukauf (NOVA), Jeannine Purdy (NOVA), Jerone Gamble (Central Florida Community College), Al Greene (NOVA), and Yolanda Barbier (NOVA). Back row: Frances Villagran-Glover (NOVA), Katya Nekrasova (AACC), Keith Wynn (NOVA), Anne Kuhla (NOVA), and Mary Sue Vickers (AACC).

[Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program](#)

LEARNING

[UCLA Technology & Aging Conference, October 30, 2009](#)

UCLA Center on Aging, 2009

This conference will bring together 400 leading thinkers on aging and technology around the theme of "Living Longer and Better Through Technology." The Los Angeles conference will offer hands-on exhibits, keynote speakers, and tracks focused on healthy aging and aging in place. [You can get more information and sign up for an e-mail list to be notified about conference activities on the Web site.](#)

TRAINING and RE-TRAINING

[How Long Do Boomers Plan to Work?](#)

The Urban Institute, 2007

New research shows that as the boomers approach retirement they intend to work longer than people born a dozen years earlier, promoting economic growth and partly offsetting the economic pressures created by an aging population. The solvency of the U.S. retirement system partially hinges on how long baby boomers stay in the workforce. If they retire as early as the previous generation, the

number of workers per retiree will soon plummet, reducing the tax base and squeezing budgets for Social Security and other government programs.

VOLUNTEERING and SERVICE

[More Older Americans Signing On to Volunteer Abroad](#)

CNN, 2009

With the economy keeping many plus 50 adults on the job, some are turning to careers that help them give back to the world. "The economic crisis is giving them an opportunity to take a break," said Vanessa Noel, an associate director with Alliance Abroad Group, who talked with CNN. Noel coordinates volunteer trips abroad that typically last between 2 and 12 weeks. Inquiries from eager adults over 50 have flooded her office in recent months—so much so that she is creating new programs this summer to Costa Rica and Ecuador tailored to older volunteers. [Peace Corps applications from adults over 50](#) increased 44% in 2008 compared to 2007, driven largely by the weak economy and a campaign launched in 2007 to lure mature volunteers.

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.

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.

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