plus 50
Community Colleges

Plus 50 Programs in Practice

How AACC's Plus 50 Initiative is Helping Community Colleges
Transform Programs and Services for Adults Age 50 and Over

TAKE YOUR KNOWLEDGE TO THE NEXT DEGREE

plus 50
Community Colleges

A Demographic Challenge – and the Plus 50 Solution

Seventy-eight million Americans are in the baby boom generation, born between 1946 and 1964. In 2011 the first of the baby boomers turned 65, and they can expect to live — on average — to 83.[1] At an age when we are usually expected to retire, typical baby boomers have more than one quarter of their lives left. This remarkable longevity means great opportunities, but it also means serious challenges, for each of us individually and for society as a whole. Can we afford to leave work at age 65? Do we *want* to?

And can our *economy* afford for us to leave the workforce at "typical" retirement age? If baby boomers continue to retire at current rates, the United States could see a labor shortage by 2018.[2] The health of our economy depends partly on the ability of older workers to keep their skills current and to stay in the labor force.

As a society, we must collectively respond to these challenges—and one institution on the vanguard is our system of community colleges. A 2008 study of programs serving students age 50 and over, commissioned by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), demonstrated that community colleges were indeed responding to this challenge. Colleges perceived demand for programming for older students, and 86% of surveyed institutions had begun offering programs to those age 50 and over.[3]

However, the same study also revealed a programming gap: Most of the offerings focused on enrichment and lifelong learning, and almost half of the colleges reported that they did not offer workforce development programs geared to students in this age cohort. Of the colleges that did offer these programs, "offering programs" usually meant that they simply marketed their standard programs to this age group; they did not develop programs addressing the particular needs and challenges that plus 50 students face.

> " If you are thinking about changing your career direction, this is a great opportunity to do that. I think this is probably one of the best things I have done for myself in a long, long time, and would encourage anyone and everyone that is considering it to step up to the plate and accept the challenge. It's actually a lot more fun than you might expect. "
>
> *Thomas Trego, plus 50 student in nursing at Cape Cod Community College in Massachusetts*

One national initiative helping to fill this programming gap is AACC's Plus 50 Initiative. The initiative launched in 2008 with an initial focus on lifelong learning and enrichment, volunteering and civic engagement, and workforce training. It has since evolved, and its program model concentrates on workforce training. The initiative is designed to support colleges as they create or expand campus programs engaging students age 50 and over, supporting them to complete college credentials and advance their careers. Since 2008, Plus 50 has made grants to 138 colleges, which collectively have enrolled 37,494 plus 50 students in workforce development programs.
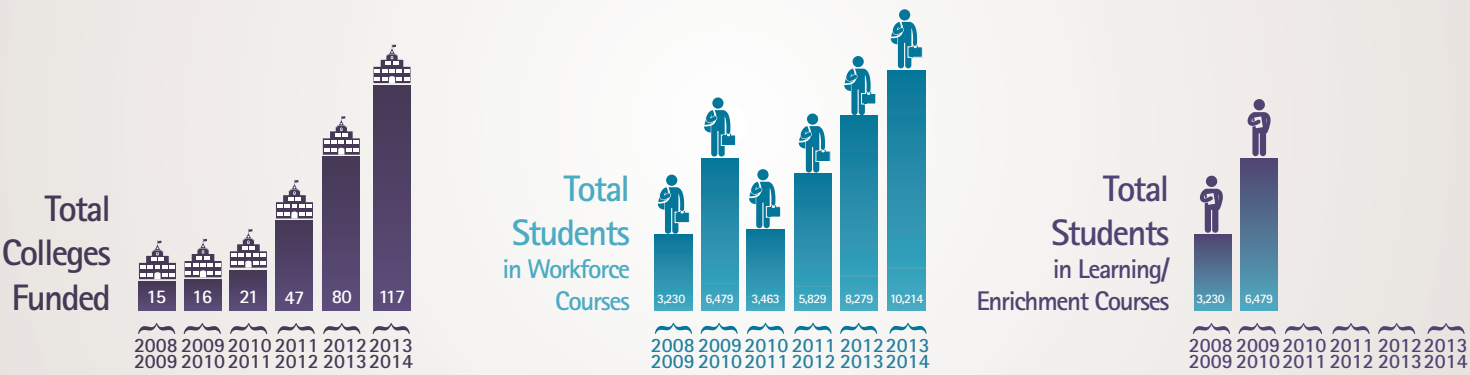
This brief tells the story of Plus 50, from 2008 through 2014.

- How has Plus 50 evolved?
- How has Plus 50 changed the way colleges serve students age 50 and over?
- How has participating in Plus 50 programs changed the lives of these students?
- How has the initiative sought to refine and replicate the model, building program quality and taking the model to scale?

1 Center for Health Communications, Harvard School of Public Health. (2004). *Reinventing Aging: Baby Boomers and Civic Engagement. Boston, MA: Harvard School of Public Health.*

2 Bluestone, B. & Melnik, M. (2010). *After the recovery: Help needed: The coming labor shortage and how people in Encore careers can help solve it.* Boston, MA: Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy, Northeastern University.

3 LFA Group. 2009. *Educating Plus 50 Learners: Opportunities for Community Colleges: State of Community College Plus 50 Programs Nationwide.* Washington, DC: The American Association of Community Colleges.

Total Colleges Funded

2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014
15	16	21	47	80	117

Total Students in Workforce Courses

2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014
3,230	6,479	3,463	5,829	8,279	10,214

Total Students in Learning/ Enrichment Courses

2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014
3,230	6,479				

The Launch and Evolution of Plus 50: Three Generations

Plus 50 launched in 2008 and since then has undergone significant shifts as colleges learned from their experimentation with various approaches, and as the Plus 50 national office at AACC incorporated those learnings into program refinements. Plus 50 began with funding from The Atlantic Philanthropies and has continually attracted interest from new funders. With each funder has come a new generation of Plus 50 — with each generation building on the experience of the one before.

> "You shouldn't let your age determine what you're going to do with your life. I had a few people tell me they thought I was too old to go to school, but the reality is you're never too old. I'm the first generation to do something like this and now I have family saying: "if Uncle Billy can do it, I can do it."
>
> *Bill Browne, plus 50 student in human services, Luzerne County Community College in Pennsylvania*

GENERATION 1:
The Plus 50 Initiative (2008–2011), Funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies

The project began with 15 grantee colleges and a focus on lifelong learning and enrichment, volunteering and civic engagement, and workforce training. Plus 50 made grants to five "mentor" colleges (that were experienced in serving plus 50 students) and 10 "mentee" colleges (those just getting their programs off the ground). Each mentor college worked with two mentee colleges.

The Great Recession hit soon after the program launched and put baby boomers out of work for lengthy periods of time. People age 50 and over wanted to come back to college and retrain for new careers so they could improve their job skills and get back to work. Responding to this demand, in 2009 colleges quickly retooled their programs, zeroing in on workforce development offerings and on helping their plus 50 students to upgrade their skills for the purpose of re-entering the workforce or advancing their careers.

GENERATION 2:
The Plus 50 Completion Strategy (2010–2014), Funded by Lumina Foundation

The second generation of Plus 50, the Plus 50 Completion Strategy, launched with 20 colleges. This generation retained the first generation's focus on workforce training programs and added an explicit focus on completion. In particular, it focused on degree and certificate completion for plus 50 students, especially those with prior college credit. Because of the centrality of workforce development, colleges made sure the degree and certificate programs included as part of the Plus 50 programs would provide participants with a marketable credential.

> "Going to school is a sharp turn, but learning is for life…. Do not be intimidated by the word "college." Look at it as another opportunity to improve yourself.
>
> *Juanita Blackshear, plus 50 student at St. Louis Community College in Missouri*

GENERATION 3:
The Plus 50 Encore Completion Program (2012–2015), Funded by Deerbrook Charitable Trust

Plus 50 again expanded in 2012 with its Plus 50 Encore Completion Program. Like the Plus 50 Completion Strategy, the third generation of Plus 50 retained the focus on workforce training and completion. This time it narrowed the set of workforce programs to include, as part of the Plus 50 programs, asking colleges to concentrate on Encore Career fields that "give back": education, health care, and social services. The participating colleges offer workforce training programs that prepare older adults for careers such as early childhood educators, certified nursing assistants, community health counselors, adult basic education instructors, social and human service assistants, and positions in other in-demand fields.

Another explicit goal of this third generation is to scale the Plus 50 program model. With this goal in mind, the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program includes 100 Encore colleges. To support scaling, the program includes an online, interactive program development platform called C-PAD (College Progress Assessment Database). C-PAD guides colleges through the five phases of program development.

On C-PAD, the steps to complete each phase are articulated, and tools and resources for completing each step are provided. C-PAD does not, however, function simply as a self-guided tour through an online map. In fact, C-PAD couples its high-tech platform with a high-touch coaching model. Plus 50 central office staff assign Plus 50 Champion Colleges to the Encore Colleges. The replication colleges can work with their Plus 50 Champions through the map, by submitting deliverables associated with each phase, and getting feedback. C-PAD allows the Plus 50 Champion Colleges to, essentially, provide high-touch support at scale. Each Plus 50 Champion works with about nine Encore Colleges.

For more on the evolution of Plus 50, see the discussion of program model refinement, scaling, and Plus 50's influence on the field (beginning on page 20).

How Have Plus 50 Programs Changed the Way Colleges Attract Older Students to Campus?

Many people age 50 and over in the community may not think that college is for them; they may see college as something for people just out of high school or in their 20s or 30s. And while community colleges certainly have offerings for those beyond this age group, colleges have tended to see the "older learner" segment as one that is looking for enrichment and enjoyment—not one that may have a need or desire for workforce training.

Bringing plus 50 students back to college for a degree or certificate has been a new "niche" for colleges, requiring a new approach to outreach and recruitment. Colleges will surely continue to offer enrichment courses like painting and photography, but for colleges with a Plus 50 program there is a new emphasis on gaining a degree or certificate that will help learners find a job or start a new career.

> " The [Plus 50] coordinator continues to receive numerous phone calls and e-mails inquiring about the program. There are several participants that have expressed a desire to return to school but were hesitant due to age.... However, after attending the [informational session targeted to the plus 50 population] and hearing what the college has to offer, their mindset has shifted and [they are] more enthusiastic about the opportunity to return to school with others their age. "
>
> *LaHura Larkin, Albany Technical College in Georgia*

How Have Plus 50 Programs Changed the Way Colleges Offer Courses?

AACC conducted a survey of community colleges in 2008 to understand the landscape of offerings for students in the plus 50 age cohort. At that time, colleges emphasized enrichment courses over workforce training. Of the colleges that reported that they had offerings targeted to plus 50 students, 86% said they offered enrichment courses, while 58% said they offered workforce development programs. Schools also tended not to tailor the courses for the plus 50 group; most colleges simply marketed existing courses to plus 50 students, rather than designing new courses or redesigning them with the interests of plus 50 students in mind.

Placing workforce training front and center as part of this initiative has led to a shift in how community colleges offer courses to plus 50 students. Not only do these colleges now concentrate much more strongly on workforce training, but they also are more intentional about ensuring that as these courses and programs are designed, they take into account the needs and interests of plus 50 students.

## WORKFORCE TRAINING AS A CENTERPIECE OF THE PLUS 50 PROGRAM

As the Plus 50 Initiative shifted direction to respond to profound economic and demographic trends, college programs began to concentrate on building out their workforce components—helping their plus 50 students to upgrade their skills for the purposes of re-entering the workforce or advancing their careers. As a result, there was a dramatic rise in the number of workforce courses offered to plus 50 students. In the year before the initiative began, all of the participating colleges together had offered only 54 workforce courses to plus 50 students. By the end of the initiative's first year, colleges were offering 910 courses.

Ever since that shift in focus, workforce programming has been at the heart of Plus 50 programs. The workforce programs must be designed to lead to a credential (either credit or noncredit) that has workforce value: credentials that can function as on ramps to jobs with local employers or in growth industries.

ATTRACTING PLUS 50 STUDENTS TO THE CAMPUS

95% { have messaging that highlights the fact that the community college is a place for students of all ages

90% { partner with organizations in the community that refer students to their Plus 50 program

90% { work with other college departments so that they will refer plus 50 students (already at the college) to their Plus 50 program

90% { work with the news media to get the word out about their Plus 50 programs

67% { hold special orientations to attract plus 50 students to their programs

60% { have free workshops allowing plus 50 students to "get their feet wet" in Plus 50 programming without having to fully commit

PLUS 50 STUDENTS ATTENDING WORKFORCE TRAINGING COURSES AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Total Number

Plus 50 Students: 3,230 / 10,214
Workforce Training Courses: 910 / 5,121
Community Colleges: 13 / 88

■ 2008–09   ■ 2013–14
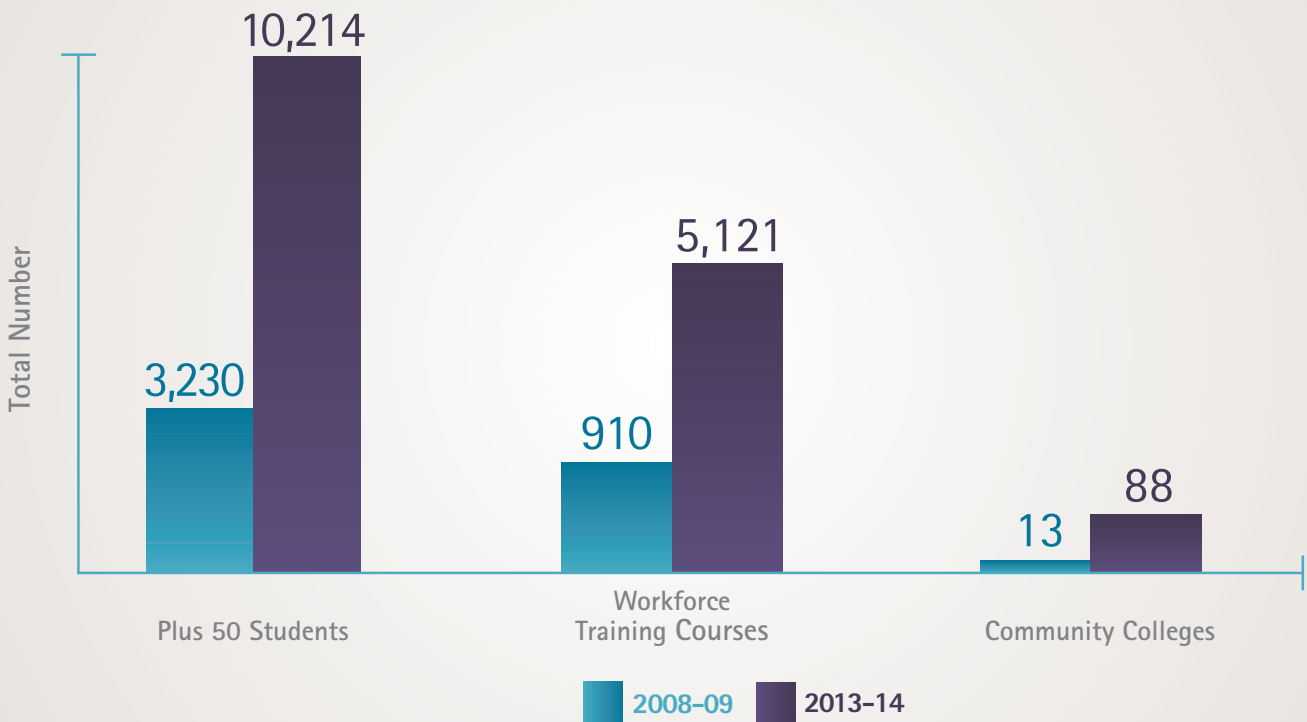
OFFERING WORKFORCE COURSES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF PLUS 50 STUDENTS

Each college identifies specific workforce programs that will fit well with the needs and interests of their plus 50 students. While Plus 50 program planners certainly take into account the workforce programs that will offer students robust opportunities in the workforce, program planners also think about the fact that plus 50 students are very different "consumers" of education than are younger adult learners. To implement Plus 50 programming well, colleges need to take this fact into account.

Colleges often work with academic and workforce departments and divisions on how to engage plus 50 students in the classroom and to develop curriculum to meet the specific needs of plus 50 learners. At 67% of the experienced Plus 50 colleges, Plus 50 program staff partner with those developing workforce courses and programs so that the workforce offerings will effectively meet the needs of plus 50 students.

While every college is unique, there tend to be three main ways that colleges work to ensure that workforce courses and programs effectively meet the needs of plus 50 students. The first two pertain to course format: As program staff identify appropriate programs, staff often

look for **accelerated programs** and programs that offer **courses with flexible schedules**. A third method that has become common among colleges with Plus 50 programs is to provide instructional delivery that works for this age cohort by **offering professional development to instructors** in an effort to ensure that pedagogy meets the learning needs of this age cohort.

Accelerated Programs

Plus 50 students usually have a utilitarian interest in gaining specific work-related skills as efficiently as possible.[4] For plus 50 students who need to upgrade their skills to enter or re-enter the job market, time is usually a major consideration. These students do not want to enter a program that could take them several years to complete; instead, they are interested in learning or brushing up on skills quickly, or in obtaining certification on an accelerated schedule.

Plus 50 programs often concentrate on meeting the demand for short-term programs that lead rapidly to a credential, which colleges recognized early in the Plus 50 Initiative. Among experienced colleges, we find that programs seek to work with students to help them find accelerated programs.

With the expansion of the Plus 50 Initiative, the number of colleges offering programs with accelerated courses to plus 50 students has grown from seven in 2010–2011 to 57 in 2013–2014; and the number of accelerated courses has grown from 196 to 1,092.

Flexible Schedule

Having courses offered with flexible schedules is also very important to the students. Older students are likely to
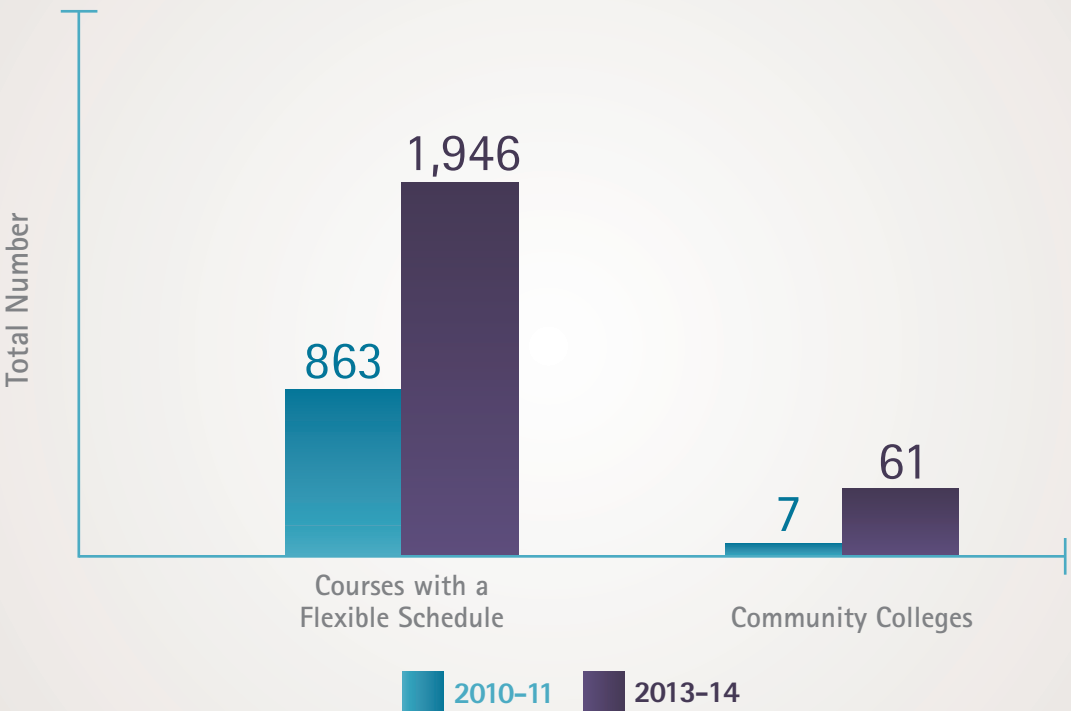
> prize flexible schedules because their school/life balance is likely to be quite complicated. They may have a range of family obligations (to children and parents), and they may also have part-time work. Colleges learned early from student feedback that flexible schedules were important to them, and colleges in the Plus 50 Initiative have looked for ways to offer programming at nontraditional times (such as evenings or weekends), and also sometimes offer distance learning as another way to make courses more convenient.

Professional Development for Instructors

Teaching to older students is not the same as teaching to standard adult learners in their 20s, and 30s.[5] Unless instructors have been trained in pedagogy for older learners, they are not likely to offer courses in a way that is appropriate to the learning styles of this age group—which does not make for an enjoyable, effective, or rewarding experience for these students. Colleges therefore need to invest in professional development for faculty so that they can tailor their teaching to this group.

> ### Program Spotlight
>
> The Plus 50 program team at Hinds Community College in Mississippi worked with the education department, the academic dean, and the counseling department to develop a 33-hour classroom aide certificate program. This certificate articulates to 31 additional hours for a Teaching Assistant Associate degree program.

5 Chao, E.L., DeRocco, E.S., Flynn, M.K. (2007). Adult learners in higher education barriers to success and strategies to improve results. *Employment and Training Administration occasional paper, 2007-03.*

> At 95% of the experienced Plus 50 colleges, Plus 50 program staff help students identify an accelerated program or short-term certificate so that students can complete as quickly as possible.

> ❝ I felt going into this—being a baby boomer in this present economy—I was looking for something viable, short-term to be able to get back into the job market…. It was a challenge, but at the same time, it was short-term and I said, "I can do this. ❞
>
> *Curt Bielski, plus 50 student in pharmacy technology at Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana*

4 American Council on Education. (2007). Framing new terrain: Older adults & higher education. Chao, E.L., DeRocco, E.S., Flynn, M.K. (2007). Adult learners in higher education barriers to success and strategies to improve results. *Employment and Training Administration occasional paper, 2007-03.*

PLUS 50 STUDENTS TAKING COURSES WITH FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Bar chart — Total Number:
- Courses with a Flexible Schedule: 2010–11 = 863; 2013–14 = 1,946
- Community Colleges: 2010–11 = 7; 2013–14 = 61

Legend: ■ 2010–11 ■ 2013–14

It is especially important that Plus 50 programs offer professional development to instructors because courses rarely are offered only to plus 50 students. Most of the time, the students in a given course span the generations, so instructors should be able to meet the learning needs of a range of age groups. At 57% of the experienced Plus 50 colleges, the Plus 50 program offers professional development to college instructors to support them in working effectively with plus 50 students.

To ensure that instructors can meet the needs of plus 50 learners, many Plus 50 colleges have developed professional development offerings for instructors. These workshops or other professional development opportunities are designed to build faculty skills and knowledge about the appropriate pedagogical strategies to address the needs, interests, and learning styles of plus 50 learners. Professional development opportunities are also meant to help instructors capitalize on the skills and capacities that plus 50 students bring into a classroom—in particular, how their work and life experience provide them with perspectives that can be shared with other students to enrich the learning experience for all. Feedback from students has shown that certain qualities of the learning environment are especially appreciated: instructors welcoming many questions, a lot of student/teacher interaction, the ability to proceed at one's own pace, and the recognition that plus 50 students may expect *more* from the courses than younger students do.

"I must say that the classes were taught in a manner that took into consideration that Plus 50 [students] had skill levels different from younger [students]. Excellent teaching techniques."

Plus 50 participant

The focus on instructor capacity to match their pedagogy to plus 50 learning needs and styles has had a deep influence on community colleges. In the year before the Plus 50 Initiative began, the colleges participating in the initiative's first generation did not offer any plus 50-focused professional development. With the growth of the Plus 50 Initiative, the number of instructors participating in professional development focused on plus 50 students grew from 77 at three colleges in 2010–2011 to 1,284 instructors at 53 in 2013–2014.

Supporting Academic and Practical Skill Building

Colleges in the first generation of Plus 50 quickly learned that if students were to succeed in workforce courses, they needed additional supports in basic academic skills and technology. To excel in college programs, *all* students need math and English proficiency, but plus 50 students may need special support because they typically have not studied these subjects for many years.

"Our program focuses on helping students who are age 50 and up come back to college to earn credentials and skills for careers that … are hiring in [our] area. Plus 50 students do not fit the traditional student model. They may need to refresh study skills, brush up on math or English skills, or learn the latest technology."

Heather Ellison, St. Louis Community College in Missouri

Computer and other technology skills are also vital. These skills help students to do well in their courses, and are often necessary for the occupations that plus 50 students seek to enter. Again, plus 50 students may need extra supports here, because they are less likely than younger students to have been steeped in the more recent technology developments.

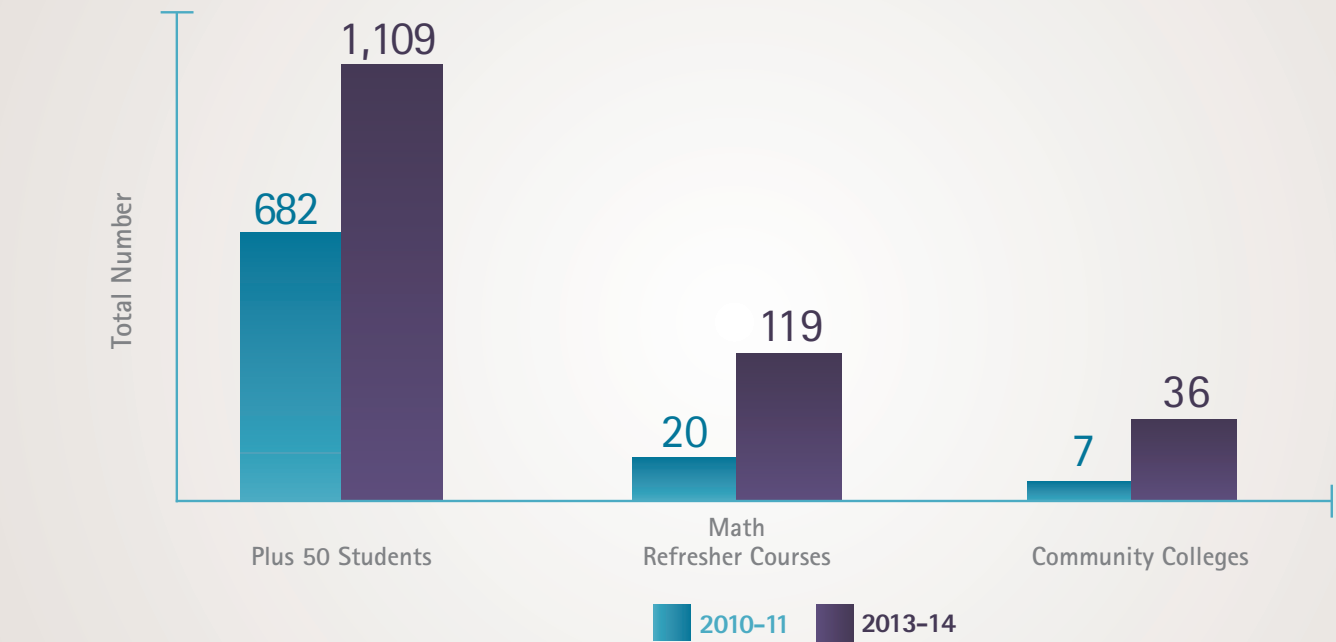### English and Math: Making the Basics Fresh Again

For many students, a program's math and English requirements become a barrier to completion. Students unprepared for college-level math and English are routed to remedial courses—and, for students of all ages, research shows that remedial education is associated both with taking longer to complete and *lack* of completion.[6] Plus 50 colleges discovered this early in the program's first generation, when they found that these subjects often became stumbling blocks for their participants. By the second generation of Plus 50, math and English refresher courses had become a basic program component. Most Plus 50 colleges offer "refresher" courses or other supports that can help students refamiliarize themselves with topics they may not have studied for many years. Examples of tailored math or English refresher courses include short courses or workshops that help students to place out

of the developmental or remedial courses, and courses or tutoring designed for plus 50 students that they can complete concurrently with a developmental or remedial course to make sure they don't get stuck at this level. Among experienced Plus 50 colleges, 80% offer programs or services that help students pass remedial courses in English and math. Similarly, 67% of these colleges offer programs or services that help students avoid the need for remedial education in English and math.

Program Spotlight

Middlesex Community College in Connecticut provides intensive 2-week workshops in math and English. At the beginning of the workshops, students take a basic skills assessment test. At the end of the workshop, students retake the assessment test. These workshops allow students to place directly into college-level classes without having to first enroll in developmental courses.

6 Rath, B., Rock, K., & Laferriere, A. (2013). *Pathways through college: Strategies for improving community college student success. Hartford, CT: Our Piece of the Pie, Inc.*

PLUS 50 STUDENTS TAKING MATH REFRESHER COURSES AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Category	2010–11	2013–14
Plus 50 Students	682	1,109
Math Refresher Courses	20	119
Community Colleges	7	36

Total Number

■ 2010–11   ■ 2013–14

Chart 1: Plus 50 Students Taking English Refresher Courses at Community Colleges

Y-axis: Total Number

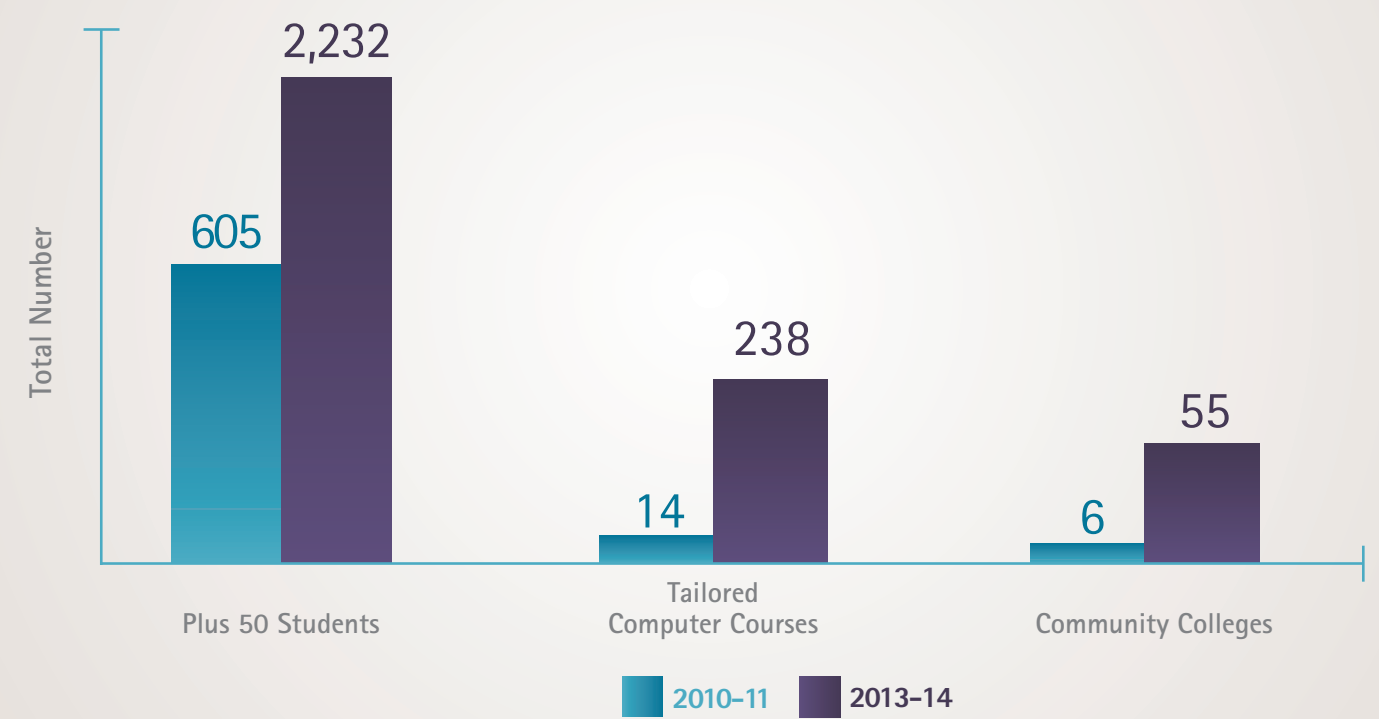| Category	2010–11	2013–14
Plus 50 Students	392	519
English Refresher Courses	14	75
Community Colleges	6	28

Legend: 2010–11, 2013–14
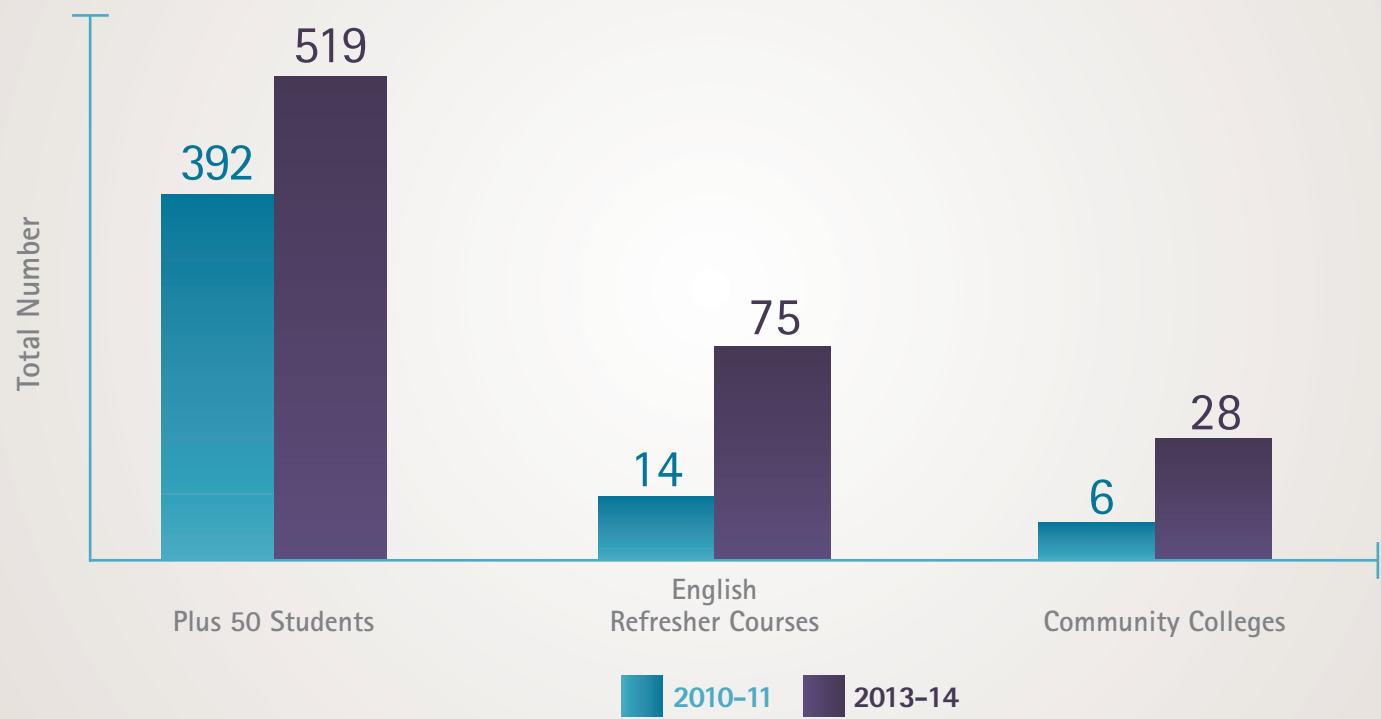
Chart 2: Plus 50 Students Taking Tailored Computer Courses at Community Colleges

Y-axis: Total Number

Category	2010–11	2013–14
Plus 50 Students	605	2,232
Tailored Computer Courses	14	238
Community Colleges	6	55

Legend: 2010–11, 2013–14

Computer Courses: Making Technology Accessible

Being comfortable with information technology is absolutely indispensable in today's labor market, as well as for today's college student. The lack of comfort with computers may be, in fact, "the biggest educational barrier to postsecondary education" for plus 50 adults.[7] While there are many plus 50 students who are as comfortable as anyone with technology, this is not true of all students in this age cohort. They may have had jobs that did not require working with programs such as Excel or PowerPoint, and they need to learn these (and other) applications to advance in their careers or switch fields.

Offering a computer course specifically for plus 50 students is a popular approach among the Plus 50 grantee colleges. Eighty-one percent of experienced Plus 50 colleges offer basic and intermediate computer classes targeted to plus 50 students. Similarly, 86% of experienced Plus 50 colleges steer plus 50 students to introductory and refresher courses designed for students of all ages who have little or no familiarity with computers. They also offer computer tutoring or other individualized help. Ninety percent of experienced colleges have been particularly creative in developing computer courses and workshops for plus 50 students.

Program Spotlight

The College of Central Florida has an intergenerational keyboarding and basic computer operations class designed for plus 50 adults who have little or no experience using a computer. The class is taught by high school students who are recruited and trained to teach plus 50 learners how computers work, how they are used, and the difference between hardware and software.

These computer courses geared to the needs and learning styles of plus 50 students aim to provide basic instruction in a supportive environment that makes the students feel much more comfortable and confident about using computers. They can then use these skills in a work context and add specific technology skills to their resumes. Students who have taken such courses appreciated all of these aspects of the course, specifically calling out the fact that their comfort level with technology increased greatly.

Students also very much appreciated the ways in which the technology classes helped to make them more competitive in the job market. They were able to learn the skills that are commonly required in the workplace and include those skills on a resume. What students learned in the computer classes also simply bolstered their confidence—and confidence is critical during a job search.

How Have Plus 50 Programs Changed the Way Colleges Offer Support Services?

Support services are critical for almost every student attending college. They are especially important for students who are at risk for lower completion rates—a group that includes older students returning to college after many years. At the same time, there is no "one size fits all" for support services. These services tend to be high-touch, with personal relationships key to their success. If staff providing services do not have the necessary background and training that enable them to "meet students where they're at," then students engaging with them are likely to feel poorly understood or even alienated. And if staff do not understand what students need and the challenges they face, then they are unlikely to offer good guidance or connect students with the most helpful resources.

7 American Council on Education. (2007). *Reinvesting in the third age: Older adults and higher education.*

The Plus 50 Initiative has recognized that students age 50 and over are a unique group, and that it is not enough only to connect them with mainstream services. They need customized supports tailored to the context in which older students learn. This context can include:

- Feelings of nervousness about returning to school after many years.
- Less experience and comfort with computers and other technology than younger students have.
- Financial challenges that come with their particular demographic: victims of the financial crash of 2008 who faced the loss of retirement savings coupled with less time to make up the loss, parents with children in college or in the midst of saving for their children's college education, and adults taking care of much older parents.
- Job loss stemming from the financial crash along with age discrimination as they seek to re-enter the labor market.
- A sense of trepidation at the prospect of reinventing their careers at age 50 or over.

Plus 50 students, then, need comprehensive support services that take into account the particular context of their age cohort. Such tailored support services have tended to be rare; for example, the Plus 50 program's 2008 national survey of community colleges found that only 13% of colleges offered advising or counseling tailored specifically for plus 50 students.

With the clear understanding of the necessity of support services tailored to plus 50 students, the Plus 50 program model has highlighted learner support services as one of its core program components, defined as: "a bundle of services offered to the plus 50 learner to provide support and guidance throughout a college career."

8 Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance. (2012). *Pathways to success: Integrating learning with life and work to increase national college completion: A report to the U.S. Congress and the secretary of education.* Washington, DC: Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance.

Plus 50 Coaching and Advising: Someone in Your Corner

Every student benefits from working with someone who offers guidance and encouragement, and who can help navigate the college landscape. When students have not been in a school environment recently—sometimes for decades—they need individualized and supportive attention from someone who can help them find their initial footing and decide what classes to take, where to find resources, and what goals to set. Recognizing this need, the Plus 50 program model put Plus 50 Advisors at the top of the list of support services offered. The Plus 50 Advisor can be a single point of contact, a system navigator, a gateway to additional services, and a cheerleader.
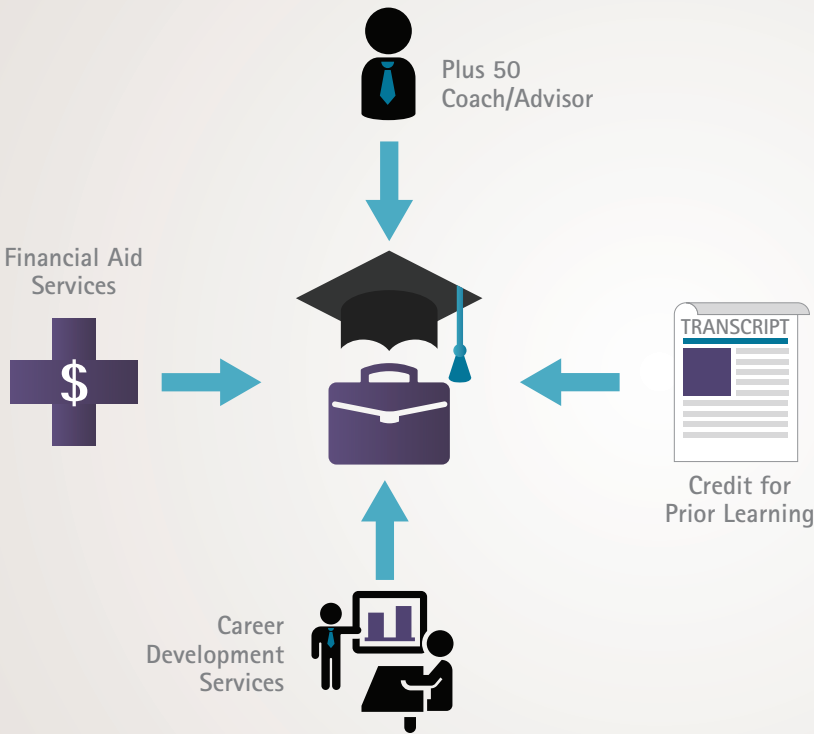
Early in the program's evolution, colleges usually sent their participants to standard advising and counseling services. Colleges learned quickly that plus 50 learners thrived when the advisors they worked with had specialized skills for working with older students. Plus 50 students need advisors that understand their specific constraints, challenges, and assets.

Colleges take different approaches to providing coaching and advising supports. We can see from what experienced colleges report that programs do still leverage mainstream advising services. But typically these colleges make sure that when plus 50 students access traditional services, the advisors there are able to give them what they need. This is because Plus 50 programs ensure that there are advisors on staff who have been trained specifically to work with the plus 50 age cohort. This way, even when plus 50 students go to mainstream advising services, they can work with someone who has the appropriate training, knowledge, and resources needed to provide advice to those age 50 and over. In addition, more than half of the experienced colleges have an advisor whose job is dedicated solely to working with plus 50 students.

SUPPORT SERVICES ADVANCING COMPLETION AND EMPLOYMENT

Plus 50 Coach/Advisor

Financial Aid Services

$

TRANSCRIPT

Credit for Prior Learning

Career Development Services

According to a 2012 report to the U.S. Congress and Secretary of Education on increasing college completion rates:

"Unless there is a highly functioning student services infrastructure geared to the older, returning adult student ... more often than not the older students become disproportionately affected. Specialized—and deeply committed—support personnel working lockstep with students, administrators, and faculty are essential to mitigate this very real risk factor."8

PLUS 50 STUDENTS WHO MET WITH ADVISORS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Total Number

3,852

359

84

5

Students Who Met with Advisors

Community Colleges

■ 2010–11   ■ 2013–14
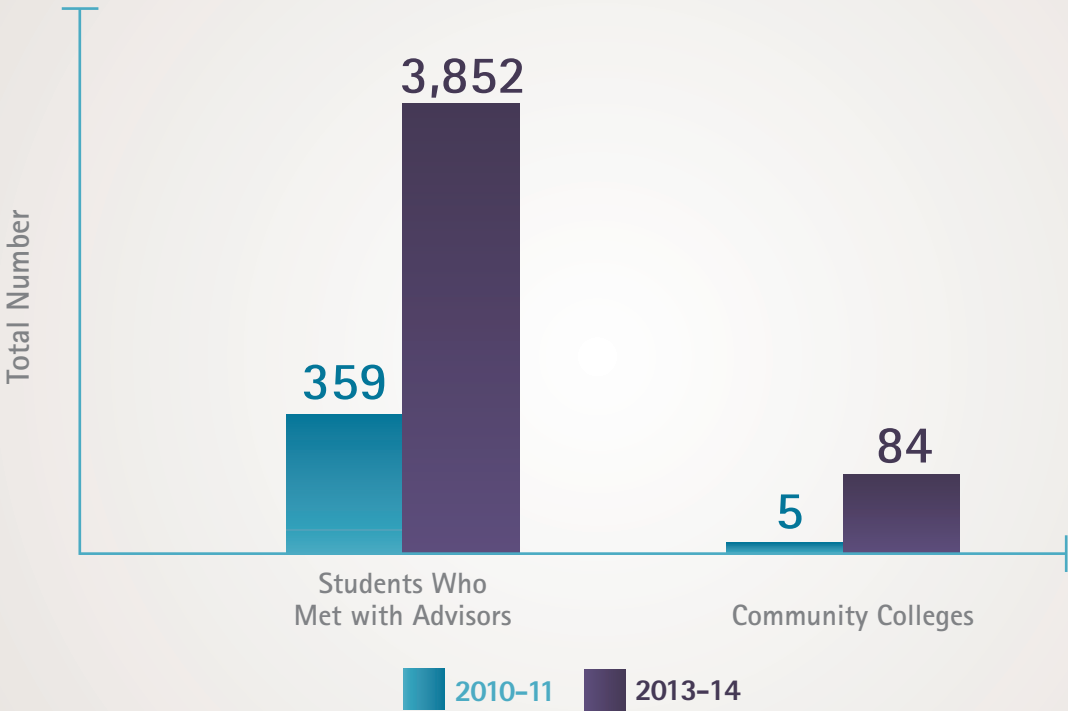
In a survey of experienced Plus 50 colleges, 86% said they refer plus 50 students to mainstream advising services, and 81% enlist the services of an advisor who works with students of all ages but has been trained to work with plus 50 students. Fifty-seven percent of experienced colleges have an advisor who works either exclusively or mainly with plus 50 students and helps them initially navigate the college programs and services. Among the dedicated plus 50 advisors at these colleges, 93% maintain ongoing contact with the students and 80% hold group sessions or workshops for them.

Making Community College More Affordable

Even before the difficulties that beset the economy in 2008, the lack of funding to pursue higher education had been identified as a significant barrier to those in the plus 50 age cohort.[9] And with the job loss and loss of retirement savings that came with the Great Recession, the cost of college courses became an even greater challenge. One of the ways that Plus 50 programs support students' ability to enroll is through access to financial aid.

Financial aid is, of course, something that is available to all students, but the sources of financial aid often tend to be more limited for plus 50 students. In addition, sources of financial aid that can be particularly helpful to this age group tend to be less well known than other funding sources.

To address this barrier, Plus 50 colleges have taken a number of approaches. Among experienced colleges, by far the most common approach is to direct students to mainstream services. However, staff may also counsel students on financial options specific to their situations and eligibility, and sometimes host workshops for plus 50 students.

The work that Plus 50 grantee colleges have done to provide financial and scholarship information and to connect students with financial aid has made it possible for many more plus 50 students to access community colleges courses. In 2013–2014, 55 Plus 50 colleges provided financial aid services of some kind, and almost 3,000 plus 50 students used these services to get connected to potential sources of financial assistance. This growth was a significant change from 2010–2011, when only six Plus 50 colleges provided financial aid services, and fewer than 60 students engaged with these services.

A Jump-Start Toward Completion: Getting Credits for Prior Learning

In addition to accelerated programs, another way to help plus 50 students complete their programs quickly is to help them get credit for prior learning. This tends to be a particularly fruitful strategy with plus 50 students, because they are likely to have work or life experience that they can translate into college credits.

Methods that Plus 50 programs use for awarding credits for prior learning include reviewing transcripts from other schools to identify transferable credits, using standardized testing for skills, and evaluating past work using published guides (such as the American Council on Education's guide for industrial and corporate training programs). Among experienced Plus 50 colleges, 81% assess transcripts from other schools to identify those that can be transferred, and 57% help students capture credits for prior learning, including life experience, using methods such as exams and portfolio assessments.

With the growth of the Plus 50 Initiative, more programs are offering these services to plus 50 students. In 2010–2011, seven colleges helped 24 students capture credits for prior learning. In 2013–2014, those numbers increased to 24 colleges helping 355 students obtain such credits.

Tailored Services for Accelerating Progress on a Career Trajectory

While the central Plus 50 program goal is the completion of a credential, the credential is also meant to support another "downstream" goal: landing a job or advancing in a career. For this reason, career development services are another important component of Plus 50 programs. Career services include workshops or individual career counseling that help students to identify career interests, identify job possibilities, learn networking approaches, develop their resumes, and beef up interviewing skills.

Colleges take several approaches to supporting plus 50 students to find work and advance in their careers. Often these approaches include capitalizing on career services already offered at the college. In fact, 95% of experienced Plus 50 colleges said they direct plus 50 students to mainstream career workshops we believe will be useful to them, and 90% of them direct plus 50 students to mainstream individual career counseling we believe will be useful to them.

Plus 50 programs are adept at leveraging existing resources at the college, and at the same time many colleges develop services specifically tailored for plus 50 students, with about half hosting customized career workshops, and 43% offering customized career counseling. And about one quarter of the experienced colleges even have a physical space dedicated to the career needs of plus 50 students.

With the Plus 50 Initiative, in 2013–2014, 68 colleges across the country provided tailored career services to 2,727 plus 50 students which is a significant increase from three colleges in 2010-2011 offering tailored career services to 407 students.

9 Portland Community College Taskforce on Aging. (2007). *Boomers go to college.*

138
Plus 50 Grants Awarded
since 2008

12,192
students completed a degree or certificate
since 2010–2011

PLUS 50
ENCORE COMPLETION FOCUS AREAS:

Education
Health Care
Social Services

2,897

Total Number

320

6 55

■ 2008-09
■ 2013-14

Students who recieved Financial Aid | Community Colleges

I'm grateful that the Plus 50 staff could point me to financial aid sources. A little financial help will make it easier for me to get the certificate I'm going for.*

I had abundant support from staff who exhibited a sincere desire to help me succeed ... and I did.*

Credit for life experience makes it possible for me to work toward a license or degree.*

37,494
total students enrolled in workforce development programs
since 2008

1,889
total students employed[10]
since 2010–2011

2,727

Total Number

407

3 68

■ 2010-11
■ 2013-14

Students who recieved Career Development Services | Community Colleges

The classes made me more aware of where I wanted to be going in my career at this time in my life. Also reviewing my skills and abilities, personality traits, and strengths, I was able to direct my energy toward solid decisions.*

As home hospice and health care nurses cared for my father, I watched them work and felt like I should be doing that. I thought, why don't I have a career in this field?*

How Have Plus 50 Programs Changed the Lives of Plus 50 Students?

Colleges across the country are changing the way that they work with plus 50 students. What has this meant for the students themselves? Students have benefited from support services and courses, completed credentials, and found jobs.

What This Initiative Means for the Field: Scaling, Model Development, and Knowledge-Building

The ultimate goal of the Plus 50 Initiative extends beyond supporting individual colleges in implementing programming for plus 50 students; its ultimate goal is system-level change. As part of the Plus 50 vision, high-quality programming tailored to the needs of plus 50 students will eventually be institutionalized in community colleges nationwide. Plus 50's efforts to reach this goal include

• Supporting scaling of the model through direct grant making and peer learning.
• Initiative-wide learning about what works for the purpose of continuous model development and refinement.
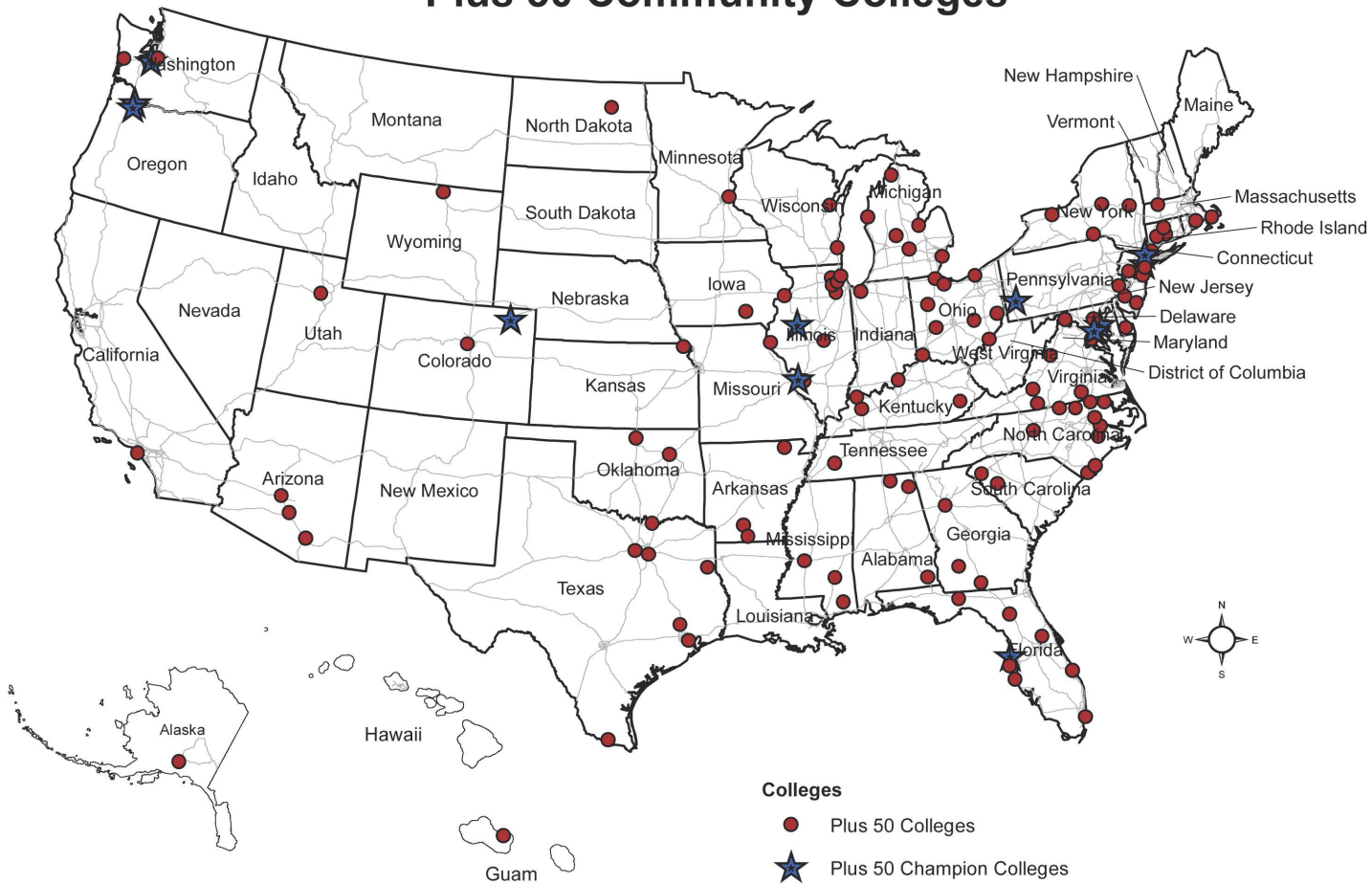
• Building and curating a knowledge base of tools and resources, and sharing them with the field.

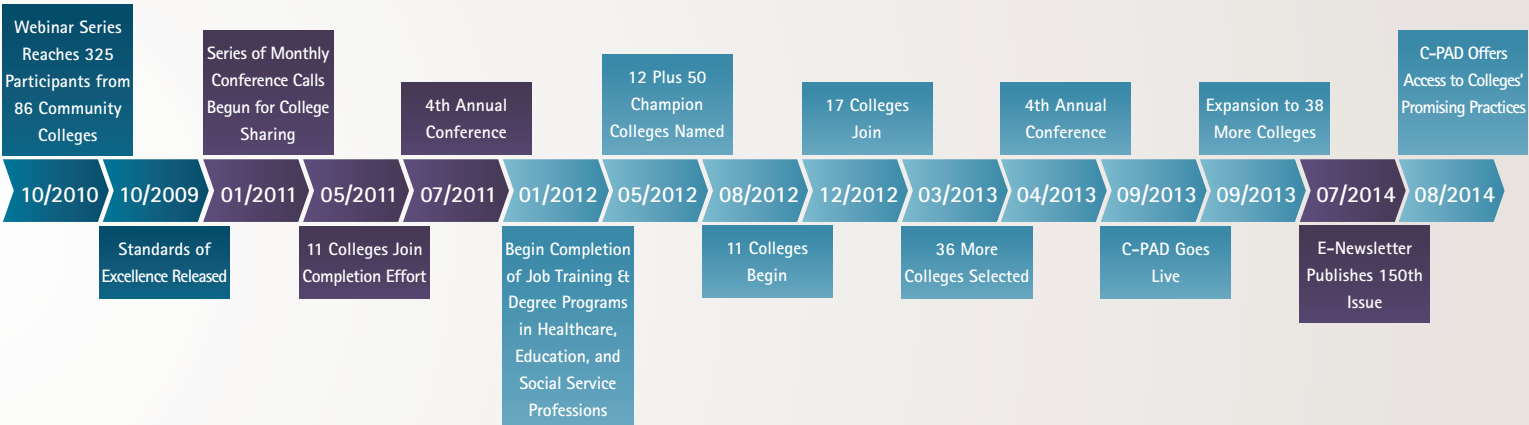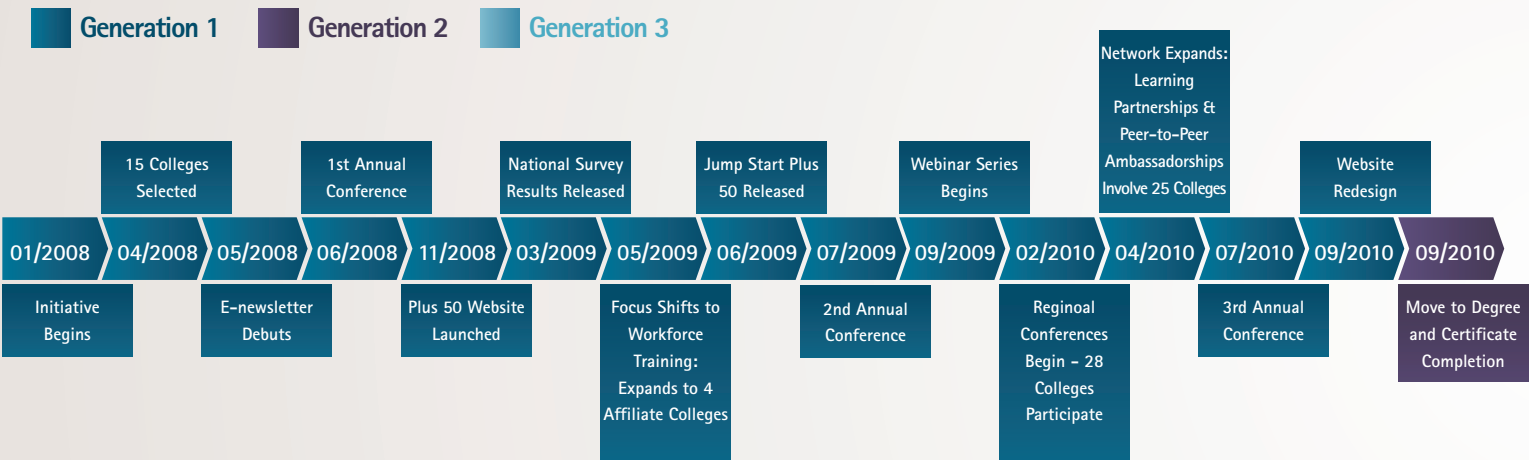## Scaling the Model Through Grant Making and Peer Learning

From the beginning, Plus 50 has sought to bring the model to as many colleges as possible. Some of that has been done through sharing knowledge with the field (discussed below), but Plus 50 has also supported replication through directly funding colleges to implement the program. For the first two generations of Plus 50, AACC funded the program at multiple colleges, and scaling was an explicit goal of the third generation of Plus 50, as AACC leveraged funding from Deerbrook Charitable Trust to roll out the model at 100 additional colleges.

In addition, Plus 50 found other ways to expand the model through peer learning. In 2009, Plus 50 responded to the economic crisis by moving beyond the core set of grantees to set up a "Learning Partner" structure, in which grantee colleges work as Learning Partners with additional colleges in their regions and beyond. Then Plus 50 expanded again in 2010, bringing in 32 more community colleges as "Affiliates" of the Plus 50 Initiative.

Plus 50 Community Colleges

Colleges
● Plus 50 Colleges
★ Plus 50 Champion Colleges

PLUS 50 INITIATIVE TIMELINE

Generation 1   Generation 2   Generation 3

Date	Event (above)	Event (below)
01/2008		Initiative Begins
04/2008	15 Colleges Selected	E-newsletter Debuts
05/2008	1st Annual Conference	
06/2008		Plus 50 Website Launched
11/2008	National Survey Results Released	
03/2009		Focus Shifts to Workforce Training: Expands to 4 Affiliate Colleges
05/2009	Jump Start Plus 50 Released	
06/2009		2nd Annual Conference
07/2009	Webinar Series Begins	
09/2009		
02/2010		Reginoal Conferences Begin – 28 Colleges Participate
04/2010	Network Expands: Learning Partnerships & Peer-to-Peer Ambassadorships Involve 25 Colleges	
07/2010		3rd Annual Conference
09/2010	Website Redesign	
09/2010		Move to Degree and Certificate Completion
10/2010	Webinar Series Reaches 325 Participants from 86 Community Colleges	
10/2009		Standards of Excellence Released
01/2011	Series of Monthly Conference Calls Begun for College Sharing	
05/2011		11 Colleges Join Completion Effort
07/2011	4th Annual Conference	
01/2012		Begin Completion of Job Training & Degree Programs in Healthcare, Education, and Social Service Professions
05/2012	12 Plus 50 Champion Colleges Named	
08/2012		11 Colleges Begin
12/2012	17 Colleges Join	
03/2013		36 More Colleges Selected
04/2013	4th Annual Conference	
09/2013		C-PAD Goes Live
09/2013	Expansion to 38 More Colleges	
07/2014		E-Newsletter Publishes 150th Issue
08/2014	C-PAD Offers Access to Colleges' Promising Practices	

Model Development and Refinement

Plus 50 has, from the beginning, put a premium on experimentation and learning. The Plus 50 National Office understands well that colleges themselves are testing approaches and can share their learnings about "what works" with one another and with the field. As colleges experimented and honed their approaches, the National Office supported the codification of the Plus 50 model.

The key components of the model (pictured below), reflect the years of work that colleges have done to try out approaches. Although the program model leaves significant room for local adaptations, colleges have identified these program components as those that are important for keeping students engaged and on the road to success.

In addition to identifying core program components, colleges and National Office staff have created two fundamental documents that colleges can use as

touchstones as they develop and improve their programs. One is a set of quality standards for Plus 50 programs; the other is a roadmap for launching and implementing a program.

Quality Standards. At an annual convening of the first generation of Plus 50 participants, colleges funded through the first grant came together with the colleges funded through the second one and developed the Plus 50 Standards of Excellence. These standards lay out the core components of the Plus 50 program model, as well as additional components important to high-quality program development and implementation.

Roadmap to Program Implementation. The Plus 50 National Office developed this five-phase guide to program implementation, contained in C-PAD, with support from the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University's School of Business.

PLUS 50 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

READINESS	NEEDS ASSESSMENT	PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING	CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
Identify Resources and Mobilize Support	Data Collection and Diagnosis	Design Plus 50 Programming	Develop Detailed Action Plan	Assess and Improve Program
• Convene the Plus 50 Team and Begin Planning • Secure Internal Support • Establish Advisory Committee • Identify Internal Resources • Identify External Resources	• Prepare for Needs Assessment • Conduct Needs Assessment • Share Results with Key Stakeholders	• Prepare for Program Development • Establish Plus 50 Program Vision and Mission • Establish Plus 50 Program Goals • Design Plus 50 Program	• Develop Marketing Strategy • Develop or Update Action Plan • Develop the Plus 50 Program Budget • Establish Mechanisms for Continuous Improvement	• Collect Process and Outcome Data • Gather Feedback from Program Participants and Partners • Share Results with Key Stakeholders • Plan for Program Improvement

Standards of Excellence

• Conduct Needs Assessments and Ongoing Evaluation

• Secure Broad-Based Organizational and Institutional Support

• Develop Community Partnerships

• Offer Learner-Centered Programming

• Provide Learner Support Services

• Provide Accessible and Accommodating Materials and Environments

• Offer Professional Development for Faculty

• Publicize Through Integrated and Targeted Marketing

Building and Disseminating Knowledge

Plus 50 has been rigorously building up a knowledge base since 2008. The National Office has accumulated relevant information through continually researching topics relevant to the program, and also by learning from the continuous experimentation and lesson-harvesting that the initiative has encouraged among grantee colleges.

National Plus 50 staff aggregate and curate collective knowledge, systematically sharing it through its public website. The website includes resources and tools on how to start a Plus 50 program, as well as practical tips and a library of more than 700 resources. It also includes all of Plus 50's biweekly newsletters published since 2008. Every newsletter shares how Plus 50 has been featured in the news, as well as resources in key program implementation areas, such as supporting completion or marketing a Plus 50 program. The newsletter currently has more than 1,000 subscribers.

Plus 50 has also shared knowledge through webinars and by presenting at conferences, often with grantee colleges. Presentations and webinar recordings are available on the website as well.

For more information on the knowledge base that the Plus 50 National Office has systematically built, see the Appendix, which describes some of Plus 50's key publications. These include the *Plus 50 Standards of Excellence*, the *Plus 50 Business Community Outreach Toolkit*, and the *Plus 50 Needs Assessment Toolkit*.

Conclusion

In only six years, the American Association of Community Colleges' Plus 50 Initiative has expanded from 15 to 111 community colleges, and made huge strides in helping these colleges better support students age 50 and over.

The Plus 50 Initiative began with a focus on learning, training and retraining, and civic engagement, with the first generation of grantee colleges tailoring their programming to address the needs of students age 50 and over.

The program evolved as the Great Recession led thousands to seek job training at community colleges. AACC responded with a host of resources, webinars, and informational materials to help community colleges understand how to better serve the workforce development needs of older learners.

As degree and certificate completion became an imperative for community colleges nationwide, the Plus 50 Initiative grew to meet the demand. In 2012, the initiative expanded to 100 community colleges so that 10,000 baby boomers could complete degrees or certificates that would lead to high-demand jobs in health care, social services, and education.

On multiple fronts, the Plus 50 Initiative has succeeded: Through the initiative community colleges have enrolled more than 37,000 students in workforce development programs, and helped more than 12,000 plus 50 students earn a degree or certificate. Ultimately, in defining how community colleges can serve the needs of baby boomers, the Plus 50 Initiative has led the way in harnessing the great contributions and energy of this powerful generation.

Plus 50 Program Components Definitions

Outreach. This involves marketing of the Plus 50 program and outreach to potential participants in the community or already at the college.

Workforce Training Courses. The Plus 50 Encore Completion Program offerings must include workforce training courses in one or more of these three fields: health care, education, or social services. These courses comprise programs (either credit or noncredit) that lead to a credential that has workforce value. This training should be in occupations that are in demand and/or growing in a college's local labor market. At the end of these programs, students are awarded a degree (AA, AS, or AAS), a certificate, or a noncredit certificate. It is important to distinguish between workforce training courses and general education courses. General education courses (e.g., a writing course or an introduction to biology course) are often required to complete a workforce training program, but they do not "count" as a Plus 50 program component. The courses that "count" as a program element are only those that teach the particular skills and knowledge required to complete the program (e.g., a course on medical coding for health care occupations or a course on counseling troubled youth for social services occupations).

Math and English Refresher Courses. These include courses tailored to the needs of plus 50 students that help them avoid remedial English and math courses, and thus accelerate their progress toward completion. Students take placement tests when they enroll, and plus 50 learners often place into remedial courses, which delays enrollment into the courses that will count toward a certificate or degree. These review courses allow students to brush up on their skills and prepare for the placement tests. Examples

of tailored math or English refresher courses include a short course or workshop that helps them to place out of the developmental or remedial courses, a for-credit math or English course in which one section is taught specifically for plus 50 students, or tutoring designed for plus 50 students that they can take concurrently with a developmental or remedial course to make sure they don't get "stuck" at this level.

Computer Courses. These include basic and intermediate computer courses tailored to plus 50 students. Sometimes these courses are designed for students who have little or no familiarity with computers.

Plus 50 Professional Development for Instructors. These are workshops or other professional development opportunities designed to build faculty skills for working with plus 50 students. As part of these professional development opportunities, instructors should learn about appropriate pedagogical strategies to address the needs, interests, and learning styles of plus 50 learners.

Plus 50 Coaches or Advisors. Plus 50 Advisors help plus 50 students to build on their life experiences and focus on supporting students in completing a degree or certificate that will help them reach their goals. The Plus 50 Advisor has the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to provide advice and support to plus 50 students. They are the primary point of contact for plus 50 students as they navigate through the college. Advisors are available for individual and group sessions with plus 50 adults to provide detailed information on educational opportunities at the college and often provide links to career counseling. They serve as gateways into the college for the plus 50 population. Advising services may be provided by one or more Plus 50 program staff members, but they may also be provided by staff in partner departments, such as registration and enrollment, student services, or advising and counseling. If the services are provided by staff in a partner department, advisors need to have received training or technical assistance that prepares them to provide these services to the plus 50 learner.

Financial Aid Supports for Plus 50 Learners. These services can include a range of financial aid supports. Plus 50 Advisors may counsel students on financial options specific to their situations and eligibility, or a program may have staff who dedicate part of their time to providing financial aid advice to plus 50 students. These services can also include Plus 50 financial aid workshops or handouts to assist plus 50 learners in accessing financial aid. As with Plus 50 advising, these services can be provided by either Plus 50 program staff or staff in partner departments (usually the financial aid office). If staff members in a partner department are offering the service, they must be knowledgeable about sources of financial aid that plus 50 learners are eligible to receive.

Plus 50 Career Development Services. These are services that support plus 50 students in finding work and advancing their careers. They can include individual services, such as career counseling, and group workshops for career development and/or job readiness that are tailored specifically to the needs and interests of the plus 50 students looking to advance their careers. Examples of workshop topics include career assessment and planning, job search, resume writing, interviewing skills, and networking.

Credit for Prior Learning. Colleges offer a range of services that help students capture credits either for prior learning that students had gained through work or life experience, or from earlier educational experiences. Students can accelerate their progress toward completion by capturing these credits. Methods of awarding credits for prior learning include standardized testing (e.g., the College Level Examination Program), institutional (or "challenge") exams, evaluation of past work using published guides (such as the American Council on Education's guide for industrial and corporate training programs), and portfolio assessment.

plus 50
Community Colleges

Appendix

PUBLICATIONS

• *The Plus 50 Initiative Evaluation: Initiative Impact* (January 2012): This report summarizes the growth of AACC's Plus 50 Initiative from 2008 to 2011.

• *The Plus 50 Initiative: Standards of Excellence* (October 2010): These are guidelines for community colleges on the core program elements that must be in place for a Plus 50 program to succeed.

• *Plus 50 Business Community Outreach Toolkit* (November 17, 2009): This toolkit helps community colleges build partnerships with the business community. It includes a series of fact sheets for employers that discuss the value of hiring plus 50 workers.

• *Plus 50 Needs Assessment Toolkit* (October 2, 2009): This toolkit was created to help community colleges conduct a needs assessment to assist in developing workforce training and career development programming for their local plus 50 population.

• *Educating Plus 50 Learners: Opportunities for Community Colleges – March 2009: State of Community College Plus 50 Programs Nationwide:* This survey examines the state of community college Plus 50 programs nationwide and plans for their expansion.

• *Educating Plus 50 Learners: Opportunities for Community Colleges – Executive Summary: State of Community College Plus 50 Programs Nationwide* (March 2009): This publication highlights findings from the "State of Community College Plus 50 Programs Nationwide" survey.

• *Plus 50 Students: Tapping Into a Growing Market* (March 2009): This publication describes factors that draw plus 50 students to community colleges and provides tips on effectively serving them.

WEBINARS

• *A New Look at Learning After 50* (March 31, 2014)

• *Plus 50 Reporting: How C-PAD Makes Your Job Easy* (September 13, 2013)

• *Where Is That Plus 50 Completion DVD?* (February 25, 2013)

• *Data Collection: Reducing the Challenges and Benefiting from the Work* (January 23, 2013)

• *Plus 50 Standards of Excellence* (October 28, 2010)

• *Jump Start Plus 50* (October 14, 2010)

• *Creating and Sustaining Your Program for Adult Learners* (December 3, 2009)

• *Understanding the Particular Needs of the Adult Learner* (November 19, 2009)

• *If You Build It: Promoting Your Program for Adult Learners* (November 5, 2009)

• *The Importance of Stakeholders* (October 22, 2009)

• *Tools to Assess the Needs of Your Plus 50 Population* (October 8, 2009)

• *The Plus 50 Initiative: What's In It for You?* (September 10, 2009)

EVALUATION REPORTS

• *Plus 50 Encore Completion Program: 2014 Process and Outcome Data Results* (November 2014): This report examines key evaluation findings, progress made in implementing Plus 50 programs at the college level, what workforce programs at the colleges are like, what types of courses are offered, the support services available to plus 50 students, and completion and employment outcomes.

• *Plus 50 Completion Strategy: Year Four Evaluation Results* (September 2014): This report discusses the strategies used by colleges that participate in the Plus 50 program, their outreach efforts, targeted course offerings, and prior learning assessments.

• *Plus 50 Encore Completion Program: 2013 Process and Outcome Data Results* (November 2013): This report examines the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program and how community colleges across the country are helping adults age 50 and over train for new careers in education, health care, and social services while completing degrees or certificates.

• *Plus 50 Completion Strategy: Year Three Evaluation Results* (August 2013): This report examines the AACC Plus 50 Completion Strategy from 2012 to 2013; it includes data on outreach strategies, course and plus 50 student enrollment, additional program components supporting completion or employment, and completion and employment outcomes.

• *Plus 50 Completion Strategy: Year Two Evaluation Results* (August 2012): This report examines the success of AACC's Plus 50 Completion Strategy from 2011 to 2012; the information is useful for colleges that are seeking to improve and coordinate their programs serving older adult learners.

• *Plus 50 Completion Strategy: Year One Evaluation Results* (August 2011): This report details the work of eight community colleges in the first year of the AACC Plus 50 Completion Strategy; it includes data on outreach strategies, workforce development courses, refresher workshops, support services, and student outcomes.

• *Plus 50: Impact Report* (November 2010): This report provides a summary of the resources and tools developed through the Plus 50 Initiative that are available for all community colleges to use to build or expand their Plus 50 programs.

• *Plus 50: Comprehensive Implementation Results* (November 2010): This report provides information on the changes in enrollment, courses, and support services at the pilot community colleges during AACC Plus 50's first three-year initiative.

• *Plus 50: Year One Evaluation Report* (November 2009): This report provides an in-depth look at the results and changes that occurred within the early phase of the Plus 50 Initiative.

• *The Plus 50 Initiative: Executive Summary of the Year One Evaluation Report* (October 2009): This executive summary highlights accomplishments from the initiative's first year. It also includes a program overview and factors that contributed to the program's successes.

COLLEGE PROGRESS ASSESSMENT DATABASE (C-PAD)

C-PAD, College Progress Assessment Database, is the Web-based five-step model that community colleges use to implement Plus 50 programming on their campuses. The system links to resources that help with each step of the implementation process. It is also a shared workspace for new colleges and their experienced Champion Colleges — as well as the colleges' reporting system.

Learn more by viewing the webinar "Plus 50 Reporting: How C-PAD Makes Your Job Easy" on the AACC Plus 50 website: http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu/colleges/webinars/Pages/default.aspx

JUMP START PLUS 50

Jump Start Plus 50 is a community college self-assessment tool that aims to help community colleges plan, implement, or expand their Plus 50 program. Check it out here: http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu/_layouts/qsap/default.aspx

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

• AACC Plus 50 website: http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu

• Ageless Learning, AACC Plus 50's e-newsletter

• "Obtaining Financial Support for Plus 50 Programming" describes the ground to cover before submitting grant applications, provides questions to consider when developing application content, and offers background information on the AACC Plus 50 Initiative to support your case for funding. Download it here: http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu/colleges/tips_college/Pages/obtainingfinancialsupport.aspx

• Watch videos about the Plus 50 program and its students on the Plus 50 Initiative YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/AACCPlus50Initiative

For more information about the Plus 50 program, please visit:

Plus 50 Initiative Website
http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu

Plus 50 Initiative YouTube Channel
www.youtube.com/user/AACCPlus50Initiative

PLUS 50 PROGRAMS IN PRACTICE PUBLICATION DATA SOURCES

DATA TYPE	DATA SOURCE
Number of colleges with specific program components (e.g., workforce training courses, Plus 50 Advisor, etc.)	Grantee reporting to AACC by all three generations of Plus 50 grantees
Percentages of experienced Plus 50 colleges implementing a program component	A survey administered to 21 experienced Plus 50 colleges (this group was composed mostly of colleges from the second generation)
Quotations from Plus 50 college staff and students	• Interviews with Plus 50 college program staff in the first generation • Student surveys from colleges in the first generation • Interviews with students at colleges in the third generation

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