Collaborations in Grant Acquisition, Research, Financial Aid and IT Operations

TAACCCT Grant
You’ve likely heard about the success of your community colleges in the competition for a Department of Labor, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Community College and Career (TAACCCT) Grant. In this final round, Round 4, the Nevada Community College Consortium of CSN, TMCC, GBC and WNC came together with a $9.9 million grant application that focused on a few objectives, including:

• Our joint effort to build a system of credit for prior learning across the Nevada System of Higher Education, with various trainings across institutions and including Nevada workforce partners, in order to not only honor and leverage the experience of active duty military, veterans, and older students re-entering higher education, but to help make dramatic improvement in their ability to earn higher wages.

• Align training needs and increase capacity across five focus areas, including Health Care, Business Administration, Information Technology, Diesel Technology and Machining; to meet employer-driven demand in each unique and diverse region of the state.

• Create content to leverage existing technology enabled learning and innovative learning.

• Build on and leverage the processes and procedures in place as a result of the first three rounds of TAACCCT grants.
One of the important sustaining assets we will invest in as a result of this grant will be the purchase of the cutting-edge Burning Glass data system, which will provide numerous advancements in our ability to determine the skill set demands of today’s employment opportunities, regionally and nationally, and match our curriculum development to maintain the accuracy of our student instruction, and serve our students better. There are also other unique features that will aid our students, including job market demand in key Nevada communities and nationwide for occupations, skills, degrees, or employers, along with tools for identifying typical skill profiles, qualifications, and career pathways needed for placement.

You’ll also see the expansion of our Veterans Resource Centers on the campuses and our increasing use of ACT WorkKeys testing to provide National Career Readiness Certificates to successful completers.

Our successful application yielded approval of the full $9.9 million grant from a maximum of $10 million. To give perspective to the TAACCCT Grant investments in our community colleges over the last few years:

• TAACCCT 1 – TMCC was lead institution for the consortium that included CSN, GBC and WNC, and a grant award that totaled $2.7 million that funded the launch of home health care aide training at CSN; and enhanced the technical math program at GBC; invested in the certificate training programs in machining, graphic arts and diesel technology at TMCC; and the machining training program at WNC, aka Right Skills Now.

• TAACCCT 2 – CSN received a grant of $2.5 million that funded the development of the facilities management technician program for the hospitality industry.

• TAACCCT 3 – GBC was lead institution for the consortium that included TMCC and WNC, and a grant award that totaled $8.8 million that funded capacity building for each college’s program in diesel, machining, and advanced manufacturing technologies.

That’s a total investment of $23.9 million in our community colleges through the TAACCCT grant(s). We want to continue our search for other grant and public/private sector investments in our colleges, and sustain the growth of programs that yield career opportunities for our students.

Financial Aid Collaboration

When WNC’s financial aid director resigned in July, the college was not in a position to recruit and hire a replacement prior to the start of a new academic year. WNC internally promoted a promising individual to the position of interim associate financial aid director and signed an MOU with TMCC to support the college’s financial aid operations.

TMCC has an efficient and knowledgeable financial aid operation and their assistance has proven to be invaluable in ensuring all financial aid applications were processed to meet required timeframes for students to enroll in the fall semester as well as supporting the kickoff of the WNC Jumpstart program.

Moving forward, TMCC will continue to provide ongoing assistance to make certain that all financial aid operations are in compliance with all federal rules and regulations.

Looking at the longer term outlook for financial aid, CSN is evaluating using a third party to do the verification of FAFSA applications for students applying for financial aid. If a third party is selected, it is envisioned that there may be an opportunity for the members of the Nevada College Collaborative to also utilize the service.

IT Operations Review

Pete Zipkin, CEO of Symmetry Corporation, visited all members of the Nevada College Collaborative in September to review each institution’s IT operations. Zipkin is a noted expert in looking for IT efficiencies and in merging IT departments in the corporate sector.

Having his expertise to review the current IT operations at WNC, TMCC and GBC will provide a foundation to determine if there are any efficiencies and cost savings to be gained in merging any parts of the IT operations at the three institutions in a shared environment.

Zipkin will work with System Computing Services, GBC, TMCC and WNC to review and validate his findings. If any changes are recommended that would save resources or increasing efficiencies in current operations, all parties will work in concert to develop an implementation plan. The goal of the review is to improve existing services if possible without disrupting IT services.

Please send any specific questions you to nvcc@nshe.nevada.edu and we’ll be happy to respond.