

Transferable Skills for Healthcare Project

TC-23860-12-60-A-28

Executive Summary

I. TAACCCT Program/Intervention Description and Activities

In 2012, Hinds Community College received and implemented the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career training (TAACCCT) Grant. The Transferable Skills for Healthcare Project (THSP) was designed to leverage transferable skill sets to enter healthcare professions where high skill career ladders and wage increases exist and where certifications count toward credentials and Associate Degrees. The focus of the project included establishment of a new health related program, Health Care Assistant (HCA), a one-semester career program that prepares students for entry into the healthcare system as a nursing assistant, phlebotomist, and/or home care aide. A navigator was also employed to assist with the HCA, contextualized GED, and EMT students. A simulation center was implemented for innovative technology-enabled learning through interactive simulations.

II. Evaluation Design Summary

The goals of the evaluation were to identify the success in meeting the established outcomes of the THSP. A data management plan was established with grant personnel and third party evaluator. While a comparison cohort was included

in the research design, the contracted agency had not provided data from the comparison group at the time of this report.

A logic model depicting the TSHP program and evaluation components is included below:

Transferable Skills for Healthcare Project Logic Model				
Need	Inputs	Activities	Intermediate Outcomes	End Outcomes/Impacts
<p>Healthcare support occupations are expected to grow by more than 23% between 2008 and 2018.</p> <p>Barriers to success include (1) financial support, (2) inability to balance family and school, and (3) concurrent work and school scheduling.</p>	<p>Leverage transferable skill sets to enter healthcare professions.</p> <p>Identify TAA-eligible recipients for recruitment into transferable healthcare professions.</p>	<p>Implement contextualized GED course.</p> <p>Implement Healthcare Assistant Program.</p> <p>Provide support through a Student Navigator.</p> <p>Provide enhanced instruction through the use of on-line technology and simulation.</p>	<p>Perception of Program Effectiveness - Student Satisfaction</p> <p>Perception of Program Effectiveness - Faculty, Staff and Employer Satisfaction</p>	<p>Program entry, retention and completion</p> <p>Credentials</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Continued Education</p> <p>Wage Increase</p> <p>Perception of Program Effectiveness</p>

III. Implementation Findings

Institutional Capacity:

- The College has increased enrollment by approximately 20 FTEs in credit programs.
- The HCA program has been sustained, with plans to include the program on another campus in the future and/or begin a part-time program.
- The College now has a state of the art simulation center.

Program Development:

- The HCA program curriculum was enhanced to include phlebotomy instructional and clinical.
- Ongoing curriculum review and revision have been systematic.

Partnerships:

- Existing and new clinical partnerships were utilized to implement the clinical components of the programs; partners are included in advisory groups.

Operational Strengths and Weakness

- Obtaining employment and wage data has been extremely difficult.
- The data for the selected comparison cohort was not provided at the time of this report.
- The programs have been seamlessly integrated into the College structure. The HCA program is now a part of the Division of Nursing. The contextualized GED program is a part of the College GED/ABE program. The simulation center is recognized as a department under the Dean, Nursing and Allied Health.

IV. Participant Impacts & Outcomes

- 500 unique participants enrolled in the program with 243 of the students earning and attaining a certificate.
- 34 students progressed into successful completion of one of the other grant offered programs to receive multiple certificates

7	Total Number Pursuing Further Education After Program of Study Completion	0	0	11	12	28	24	30	24	69	60	-9
8	Total Number Employed After Program of Study Completion	0		35	20	90	27	96	3	221	50	-171
9	Total Number Retained in Employment After Program of Study Completion	0		0	15	31	22	81	NA	112	37	-75
10	Total Number of Those Participants Employed at Enrollment Who Receive a Wage Increase Post-Enrollment	0		31	50	81	51	86	76	198	177	-21

Focus group sessions for HCA students were held at the completion of each semester, conducted by the third party evaluator. Overall each session the students reported being satisfied and felt the program provided skills that would be relevant to getting a new job and to a new career.

V. Conclusions

Key Lessons:

- While programs to recruit front-line health care professionals is needed and necessary, they are also rigorous and require commitment of time.
- Small cohorts have proven to be the most successful.
- Entry programs are great sources for recruitment to other healthcare programs.

Future Implications:

- Continue to work with students who have limited academic skills to provide a program of study for entry-level health care.

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Final Evaluation Plan

Overview

In 2012, Hinds Community College received and implemented the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career training (TAACCCT) Grant. The Transferable Skills for Healthcare Project (THSP) was designed to leverage transferable skill sets to enter healthcare professions where high skill career ladders and wage increases exist and where certifications count toward credentials and Associate Degrees. The Initial implementation and resources focused on program design, development and staffing structure. The focus of the project included establishment of a new health related program, Health Care Assistant, a one-semester career program that prepares students for entry into the healthcare system as a nursing assistant, phlebotomist, and/or home care aide.

A simulation center was also implemented for innovative technology-enabled learning through interactive simulations. New students and those already in the healthcare pathway will use the Simulation Center as part of an enhanced curriculum. Faculty will also benefit from Simulation Center use as a professional development and training facility.

Program design kept in mind the characteristic and perceived barriers of the target population including: distance, work schedules, life obligations, finances, prior educational levels and technology proficiency. For this reason, programs were created that were of short duration, and would provide a mechanism to advance in a

career ladder approach to additional health care professions. In addition, programs were chosen that meet the needs of the employers in the industry of the surrounding area.

The contextualized GED program was the initial program launched and provided flexibility to meet both the student and GED instructor's needs. This program was followed by the development of the Health Care Assistant (HCA) programs. The Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) program was also impacted by including the student navigator and curriculum review. The characteristic of the programs varied depending on the requirements of the program, but all were face-to-face delivery with successful completion leading to a certificate of completion. To enhance the programs, a clinical simulation center was created where staff were instrumental in providing clinical experiences for the HCA and EMT programs, as well as all health related programs at the College. The SIM center enhanced learning and improved competencies, preparing these students for the work environment.

Designing and developing the programs took place in phases which included identifying and upgrading curricula, identifying and hiring staff and instructors, followed by determining the population and creating strategies to recruit students into the programs.

Active targeted recruiting for students for the contextualized GED was first, followed by the HCA and EMT programs. Recruited individuals for each group had to meet certain requirements (i.e., GED, some computer skills, etc.). The conceptualized GED was the initial program of interest if a student did not have a GED but a desire to participate in either the HCA or EMT programs. Simultaneously,

1	Total Unique Participants Served	80	80	210	187	240	153		80	530	500	-30
2	Total Number Who Have Completed a Grant-Funded Program of Study	56	0	142	91	154	89		63	352	243	-109
2a	Total Number of Grant-Funded Completers who are Incumbent Workers		0		53		47		50		150	
3	Total Number Still Retained in Their Programs of Study (or Other Grant-Funded Programs)	70	58	77	63	98	105		80	245	306	61
4	Total Number Retained in Other Educational Programs				7		1		9		17	
5	Total Number of Credit Hours Completed (aggregate across all enrollees)				838		942		634		2414	
5a	Total Number of Students Completing Credit Hours	42	0	122	91	87	84		63	251	238	-13
6	Total Number of Students Earning Credentials	39	0	100	91	107	89		78	246	258	12
6a	Certificates less than one year				91		89		63		243	
6b	Certificates more than one year											
6c	Degrees											
7	Total Number Pursuing Further Education After Program of Study Completion	0	0	11	12	28	24	30	24	69	60	-9
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At the conclusion of the grant period 500 unique participants enrolled in the program with 243 of the students earning and attaining a certificate. Thirty-four students progressed into successful completion of one of the other grant offered programs to receive multiple certificates; a total of 60 students chose to further their education by enrolling in other programs of study such as schools of nursing.

There were 150 students identified as incumbent workers. Of these students, at the time of the report, 50 were employed after the program of study completion and 37 were retained in employment. For all participants, 177 received a wage increase post-enrollment.

A total of 2414 credit hours were completed with 238 students earning credit hours and 259 students earning a credential. At the end of the six month extension, 80 students were still remained in a program of study.

Health Care Assistant Outcomes

Fifty-three students were enrolled in the Health Care Assistant program. Of the 53 students, 50 (94%) completed at least one portion of the program. These students earned 48 certifications, including CNA and/or phlebotomy. All graduates who have taken phlebotomy certification have passed. Thirty-one students were employed in the healthcare field; 23 students reported plans to enter another healthcare program.

Additional HCA Evaluation. Another component of the TSHP evaluation included Health Care Assistant student focus group sessions conducted at the completion of each cohort and on-line faculty surveys.

Focus Groups. Focus group sessions were held at the completion of each semester. Theme analysis was performed to identify areas of improvement and satisfaction related to the overall experience, barriers to success, faculty instruction, student navigator, and curriculum. Findings from each of these focus group sessions were used to make adjustments to the program each semester. Overall each session

the students reported being satisfied and felt the program provided skills that would be relevant to getting a new job and to a new career.

On-line Faculty Surveys. The faculty was surveyed via anonymous, on-line surveys at the completion of each semester. This survey focused on areas such as workload appropriateness, barriers to success in the program and respect from the students. Faculty strongly agreed that there was an appropriate workload, reporting feeling valued and respected by the students, having adequate resources to provide to students with barriers and overall sense of satisfaction with the TSHP program outcomes.

Curriculum Design and Revision. The program of study primarily followed the curriculum of the Mississippi Community College Board. However, the TSHP curriculum incorporated phlebotomy instruction and clinical in addition to all other curriculum components. Curriculum review was ongoing throughout the program and curriculum changes were made based on evaluation information. This included changing the structure of the program of study, adding additional clinical sites, and incorporating additional skills. The College chose to employ a second full-time faculty member. The program has been sustained after the grant funding period and both full-time faculty positions have been maintained.

Contextualized GED Success

Another aspect of the evaluation was recognizing the success of the students through information shared by the students. Below are stories from successful students who participated in the contextualized GED course.

- One of the first contextualized GED completers was a student who was a single mother of 4 children. She had many barriers to overcome to be successful in this course, but she continued without fail to get to class faithfully (having to get rides, child care, etc.). Not only was she successful in the GED course, but went on to complete nursing school. All the while, her children were not aware she did not even have a high school education. She serves as a great example to her children and others in this similar situation.
- The GED group of students bonded and formed a support system as they progressed through the program. Most students came to class after working their 2nd jobs, exhausted and tired. The instructor, who also taught as part of a 2nd job, reported working hard to help identify the barriers of every day life experienced by this group of students. She saw the students bonding with one another around these issues, becoming supportive of each other, and helping each other cope. Many of the students were single mothers, with a second job, who reported baby sitting issues, but all remained focused and received strength from one another to continue on to success.
- One student graduate was a gentleman who had worked as a mechanic for most of his life. He successfully completed the GED course and left with a goal to work in a healthcare facility as a mechanic. His career path was broadened by the experience and

realization that his life's work could be used in the healthcare setting working on machines and vehicles with a healthcare system.

- GED students bonded over their issues and began to make the class a friendly competition, encouraging each other with each section. The instructor, who was also a nurse, used her expertise to try to relate each question, (including math), to examples within the healthcare setting. For instance, a math problem regarding angles could be related to degrees the head or foot of the bed is raised based on a physicians order. Conceptualizing degrees of angles instead of calculating. This gave the students more of a real world approach to the GED questions and gave them more a health care interest.

The contextualized GED program has been maintained after the grant funding period.

Simulation Center Success and Outcomes

The George Ball Simulation Center is an outstanding outcome of the TACT grant funding. Through braided funding, primarily from the grant and the College, renovations were completed to a physical clinic that was donated to the College. Grant funding also provided equipment and two professional staff members, a simulation center coordinator and simulation technology specialist. The following are outcomes, best practices, and success stories of the simulation center.

Outcomes.

- Has served approximately 2100 students who were involved in approximately 200 simulation scenarios.

- Hosted numerous regional simulation conferences and trainings.
- Hosted community training session between care providers and Healthcare Assistant Students.
- Hosted local hospital residency graduates for orientation simulation scenarios.

Best Practices.

- Developed approved CE faculty training course.
- Developed a faculty mentoring program. Faculty are also recognized for the simulation level of knowledge with a jeweled pin.
- Participated in an Assessment and Recommendation Review for Simulation throughout programs.

Success Stories

- Was recognized as a Center of Excellence by one of the large SIM vendors.
- Simulation Coordinator was selected as a National League for Nursing 2015 Simulation Leader. She was also invited to be an Editorial Advisory Board Member for the Center for Innovation in Simulation & Technology and to be a Society of Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Accreditation Site Review and Certified Healthcare in Simulation Educator (CHSE) Exam Writer. Over the last 3 years she has presented across the country in numerous simulation conferences.

- Received grant from Institutes of General Medical Sciences, MS INBRE
IdeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence
- One of the faculty members gained simulation education and experiences and has now become the Associate Degree Nursing Learning Lab Manager.

Challenges

Students who participated in these programs faced many challenges including:

- Childcare issues
- A lack of free time to study
- Transportation issues
- Financial stress

The programs were not able to recruit TAA-eligible students.

Clinical site negotiation was difficult at the beginning of the Health Care Assistant Program due to competition in the area, including within the College Division of Nursing. The program chairperson were able to establish contracts with agencies sufficient to meet the student learning needs.

Conclusions

Overall the programs were very successful in providing students with certifications to begin new careers or advance in their current positions.

- Students in the contextualized GED program were successful in transitioning into the healthcare and other academic studies. These students made an active decision to participate in each class session and

often overcame significant barriers in order to attend classes. Having the material contextualized allowed students to understand why they were being asked to learn the material.

- Student success was driven by a desire for a higher income, obtaining a promotion and being a good role model for their children
- Students were successful in completing and receiving certification in multiple offered programs
- Student and faculty satisfaction remained high
- Program was successful in improving access to training
- Special accomplishments of the programs included:
 - one student who passed the phlebotomy certification works as a health examiner now and makes \$25/hour
 - All graduates who have taken the phlebotomy certification exam were successful
 - One student continued their career to successfully graduate from the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program and passed licensure certification
 - Several students are currently enrolled in additional healthcare programs of study.
- The Health Care Assistant Program, Contextualized GED program, and Simulation Center have been sustained by the College.