



Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant

Consortium Completes Successful First Year

ONLINE/HYBRID PROGRAMS OF STUDY CREATED

- ◆ Agriculture at LATI
- ◆ Industrial Controls at MTI
- ◆ Mechatronics at STI
- ◆ Computer Aided Drafting at WDT

South Dakota's four technical institutes, in partnership with the SD Department of Labor and Regulation, SD Department of Education, and statewide business/industry members formed a consortium to provide career pathways for at risk workers in SD to enter into high-demand, high-skill occupations in Green Energy Production. Final approval of the 2.7 million dollar US DOL

TAA CCCT grant was given at the end of March. **The mission** of the TAA grants is to expand and enhance each technical institute's ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less and help prepare students for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations. In a short amount of time instructors at LATI, MTI, and STI were able to revamp existing curric-

ulum to offer online/hybrid learning courses to 23 students. This is a major accomplishment. Not only did instructors prepare for on-campus students, but they created courses that could be offered online to students who are not able to come to campus because they work full time, have families, or live too far away.

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Agriculture Program at Lake Area Tech

Lake Area Tech is the lead partner and home to the grants management staff. Ag instructors are working to create online/hybrid courses for the targeted population in Agri-Business, Commodity Merchandising, and Ranch Management. Online students reported overall being satisfied with the activities in the class that encouraged interaction with the other students. The majority of students indicated it was very likely they would register for another online course. Another mile-

stone the Ag instructors achieved included developing a partnership with Vision Video Interactive (VVI) from Sioux Falls. VVI is charged with developing new and innovative technologies in the areas of mobile apps, augmented reality, and gaming. These "new" technologies will be used by all the technical institutes to enhance the educational experience of all students. VVI has developed a weed identification app for the Agriculture program and is in the production stage of a corn dissection model.

"ONLINE EDUCATION IS BECOMING AN IMPORTANT LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR MANY POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS."

Industrial Controls—Mitchell Technical Institute

For **Mitchell Technical Institute** this opportunity has been invaluable. MTT's Strategic Plan outlines the development of online technical education despite the challenge of the hands-on, application-based nature of the programs. These grant funds have allowed MTT to "test the waters" toward the development of other online programs. There have been significant benefits to the division, Engineering Technologies, of which this program is a part. Collaboration and communication have been improved in order facilitate the course and in-

struction in order to meet department standards. To do so, the department has had to solidify its planning and strategic outlook.

Industry, too, benefits from the development of these programs. From involvement in the development of the program to hiring of the completers, industry gains employees that are trained toward their needs and located in regions that may not have been accessed by traditional students.

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<https://sites.google.com/site/sdgep4/>

Student Success Toolkit —Southeast Technical

Southeast Technical Institute researched strategies aimed at retaining students. The strategies proven most successful were included in the Student Success Toolkit. These strategies include: JumpStart Days, Attendance Challenge, At-Risk Student Identification, Internal Communication, Attendance and Grade Monitoring, Online Tutoring Services, and Co-Requisite Pre-Academic Courses.

STI piloted these strategies and developed a training module during the 2012 Fall semester. The other technical institutes were trained in the strategies in January and will be piloting them throughout the 2013 Spring semester. Once all the technical institutes have the opportunity to pilot strategies a meeting will be held to analyze the strategies and finalize the toolkit. **Jump Start Day**, one of the best practice strate-

gies identified for the Student Success Toolkit, was featured on the local news in August. KELOLAND television reported that Jump Start Day is a way to help students be successful when classes start by getting some of the little things taken care of before the first day of classes. Southeast Tech stated Jump Start Day was initiated after instructors said they needed more time with students.

Computer Aided Drafting—Western Dakota Tech

Western Dakota Tech is creating an online Computer Aided Design (CAD) program of study. While attending an advisory board meeting, Caterpillar identified three key needs: 1) They need more graduates, 2) They need graduates two times per year and, 3) The diversity of graduates needs to be increased. In a brainstorming session, a few of the ideas that arose were: get young people interested in STEM early, high school dual enrollment, recruit new GED recipients from the Career

Learning Center, and partner with Oglala Lakota College. It was noted that the online diploma being developed for the TAACCCT grant may assist with some of these needs by making the program accessible to a greater variety of potential students. Caterpillar is not interested in hiring diploma-only graduates. Their employees need a minimum of an AAS degree or past industry experience. The diploma would be useful for students with previous experience or degrees but who need additional CAD

experience. It would also allow students to start their AAS degree in an online format and then finish in a hands-on learning environment. Caterpillar indicated that they would like to see a certificate that is designed not only to meet their need, but it should be as flexible as possible to meet the whole spectrum of CAD industry needs. This was accomplished by switching the courses students take at the end of the program with ones at the beginning. This satisfied Caterpillar's needs while keeping the curriculum as flexible as possible.