

WEST VIRGINIA

BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM

TAACCCT ROUND 3

YEAR 2, QUARTER 3 SUMMARY



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## BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES

### CONSORTIUM TRENDS

- Ñ BTG colleges are making advances in technical program development and implementation. Many colleges are beginning to see increases in student enrollment and student interest generated for the technical programs at their institutions.
- Ñ Many BTG colleges are at a point where improvements to technical programs and other grant components are being made based on student feedback. BTG colleges are taking measures to ensure that the BTG-funded grant components are meeting student expectations and needs.
- Ñ Many BTG colleges are beginning to focus their efforts on increasing student enrollment numbers through improved outreach strategies; developing and expanding partnerships with local industry representatives; and modifying and improving developmental education strategies. Budget modifications have allowed colleges to reallocate grant funds to these areas that require modifications and/or improvements.
- Ñ BTG colleges are beginning to see the benefits of BTG grant components at their institutions in regards to student satisfaction and improved student outcomes (i.e., graduation and retention rates).
- Ñ Resource meetings with partners have been taking place at many of the BTG colleges. These meetings determine what resources the partners of the colleges can bring to the potential employers.

### CONSORTIUM BEST PRACTICES

The following excerpts highlight notable “best practices” from each college in the *Bridging the Gap* consortium.

#### BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Ñ *Get creative with hybridization of BTG courses.* Blue Ridge is creating demonstration videos for the Lineman program that will focus on climbing poles. These videos will allow students to access course content that was previously only taught in the classroom. Making course content more accessible for students has been a driving factor for modifications resulting in a number of videos (demonstration and instruction focused) that will be integrated into BTG programs. Blue Ridge has been focusing on hybridizing BTG courses and has found a creative way to transform hands-on classroom material into online formats.

#### BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Ñ *Be aware of the needs of underserved populations.* BridgeValley has continued to find ways to accommodate veteran students at their institution. Because of the large presence of veterans in the state of West Virginia, understanding their needs and benefits has helped the college target veterans in their outreach strategies. More recently, BridgeValley has begun restructuring course scheduling to ensure that veteran students can receive their benefits. Modularized formats that have become popular in the BTG colleges appear to have fewer credit hours than normal (three credit hour) courses to the financial aid office, making it difficult for veterans to receive their benefits – as they are required to take a specific number of credit hours per semester. Understanding this obstacle, BridgeValley has restructured courses to appear as more credit

hours for financial aid. This approach will allow veteran students to receive their benefits while expediting their education, a selling point for the college.

### **EASTERN COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

- Ñ *Regularly find ways to improve and modify grant components to better fit student needs.* Eastern implemented developmental education bootcamps and found that although students were passing the courses, they were not satisfied with the scheduling and course content. To address this, Eastern is seeking additional, more detailed feedback from students to find ways to modify and improve the bootcamps. Eastern grant staff reported that course outcomes may look sufficient, but student satisfaction is of greater concern for the college. Gathering student feedback and reevaluating grant components can help ensure the colleges are meeting student needs more than just monitoring student outcomes (i.e., completion and passage rates).

### **MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

- Ñ *Consider a different approach to peer coaches.* Rather than assigning peer coaches to specific students, Mountwest has assigned peer coaches to specific BTG programs. Therefore, the peer coaches can become more familiar with the BTG programs – the obstacles students may be facing or content they may be learning at a specific point – and can tailor support for students based on their enrollment in a BTG program. Colleges that are not already assigning peer coaches to specific BTG programs could consider this approach as a way to further address and accommodate student needs.

### **NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

- Ñ *Encourage BTG-associated staff and faculty to participate in training.* Partners, peer coaches, WIB-representatives, and other BTG-associated grant staff and faculty have participated in training that highlight the BTG programs. This training helps confirm that staff, faculty, and partners associated with the BTG project have a better understanding of the technical programs and opportunities the college offers for students in these grant-funded programs. New River has reported that having individuals at the WIB participate in the training has helped build a stronger relationship between the college and WIB as well as help the WIB refer students that will likely succeed/stay interested in the BTG program, for example.

### **PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

- Ñ *Find new and unique ways to support and recruit BTG students.* Pierpont hosted an event for dislocated miners and subsequently enrolled eight students into BTG and non-BTG programs. A scholarship of \$1,000 was also awarded to an individual enrolled in a BTG program. Although the college as a whole was providing this opportunity, BTG staff utilized the event as a way to recruit BTG students. Awareness of the events occurring at the college, or finding ways to host events such as this one, could be reliable ways to continually recruit students for BTG programs.

### **SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

- Ñ *Monitor student outcomes for BTG grant components.* To ensure that BTG programs and other grant components remain effective, Southern WV regularly monitors student outcomes and shares these findings with all BTG grant staff. Following course/semester completion, the college conducts comparative studies to examine the differences in BTG vs. non-BTG grant services. The

college also reports student outcomes to determine if modifications should be made to BTG courses, including GPA and retention rates. Regularly monitoring student outcomes helps Southern WV ensure that BTG grant programs and components are yielding the results they anticipated (i.e., students receiving BEACON services exhibited increased retention rates and GPA).

#### **WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

- Ñ *Develop standards for internal communication.* WV Northern has implemented monthly internal meetings with grant staff to ensure that everyone is aware of grant updates and how to move forward. Because there are so many moving parts when implementing a grant at an institution, streamlined communication is necessary for progress and success. These meetings also afford grant staff with the opportunity for training (e.g., training on the new data analytics software) and professional development as a team.

#### **WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG**

- Ñ *Consider new approaches to engaging employers.* BTG grant staff at WVUP have restructured the way they engage employers by encouraging relationships among employers rather than focusing solely on the relationship with the college. Providing the employers with a greater purpose for convening (i.e., networking with fellow employers) allows relationships and partnerships with the college to evolve organically. The college views this approach as remaining neutral and employers reportedly responded positively to this strategy.

## **BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

The college is implementing changes to align the program with Siemens certifications this fall. Employers (i.e., Volvo Mack) helped modify the program to better align to these industry-recognized certifications. Blue Ridge was also approved for a learn-and-earn apprenticeship program with Quad Graphics – a printing company in the area.

#### **CONSTRUCTION**

Blue Ridge plans to implement workshops for the Construction program. However, this is still in the initial planning stages.

#### **ENERGY**

The college is developing climbing demonstration videos for the Lineman program that will allow students to virtually access content that is typically taught in a traditional classroom setting. These videos are being developed to increase the opportunities for hybridized coursework for students in the Energy program.

The CDL pilot course has also been completed with four students enrolled. Blue Ridge will examine the program this fall for any potential revisions and/or modifications and will launch the revised course in Spring 2016.

Blue Ridge also added an Electric Utility program that has 17 students currently enrolled. These students will be required to attend an orientation that specifically targets the program so the students have the opportunity to become familiarized with the new program.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

IT faculty have developed practicum courses for all of the IT programs, which were revised to improve the industry certification exam passage rate. These practicum courses have been mapped to specific industry certifications.

New content was developed for the Linux course that will map to the LPI Linux Essentials industry certification. This change will be reviewed by the curriculum and instruction committee for final approval in the coming weeks. An advanced Linux course is also being developed and will map to the LPI1 industry certification.

Faculty members have been taking advantage of professional development opportunities including attending the PMP conference that focuses on project management certifications. The information gathered from the conference will help IT faculty integrate elements of project management into practicum courses. Faculty will test for this project management certification in the next month.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

IT and Mechatronics hybrid and online courses are being developed by the course designer that will integrate assessments and open lab models. For example, faculty teaching the MECH250 course are working to develop videos for the open lab model of instruction. Therefore, students will be able to access the labs for more hands-on experience outside of the classroom time. The college is also creating videos for the EDET (Energy) program that will focus on safety.

Hybrid and online components are also being integrated into developmental education courses (i.e., technical math and math bootcamps). These course will incorporate videos for hybridized instruction time.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The job posting to hire BEACON peer mentors has been created. Blue Ridge anticipates hiring three part-time students for each sector – Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, and IT. A full-time BEACON counselor is also on board and has been working with students under each sector. The counselor also attended a workshop/training hosted by Mountwest.

## DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Bridge courses for technical writing and algebra are in the final stages of revision, including embedding skills needed in the industry into the courses.

The developmental math skills bootcamp has been completed. The bootcamp was held for one week, three hours per day and at the end of the bootcamp, students were tested again to determine if they were eligible for college-level math.

Blue Ridge has also completed the English bootcamp, which was four-day prep for re-testing. Out of the three students enrolled, all continued into moderate proficiency range – meaning they were eligible for the co-requisite model rather than being required to enroll in a separate developmental education course.

This fall, the English for Energy students will roll out including course content on developmental education English, digital literacy – basic computer skills, and will focus on safety writing.

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Blue Ridge has hosted a number of recruiting events that target BTG programs. These events are outlined below:

1. Open House (main campus: 5/7/15) –EDET demonstrations
2. Open House (Morgan County campus: 6/20/15) – IT and Mechatronics demonstrations
3. Open House (at Adams Electric Co-Op: 6/27/15) – employer partner for lineman program
4. Open House (tech center: 7/9/15) – focused on all three BTG sectors
5. Open House (main campus: 7/25/15) – sectors were featured

The college also hosting three free workshops that introduced the BTG programs and served as recruiting and outreach events.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

The college has established and/or strengthened a number of relationships with employers and local organizations. For instance, relationships have been established with First Energy for apprenticeship programs, Quad Graphics for learn-and-earn programs, and Chamber Workforce to determine the needs of the current workforce.



## SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with Blue Ridge, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < Blue Ridge hosted a number of campus events that targeted recruitment and outreach for BTG students.
- < Many BTG program courses are undergoing modifications to incorporate hybrid and online formats. Blue Ridge grant leadership reported that the faculty are enthusiastic about these changes.
- < Blue Ridge is establishing partnerships and relationships with local employers for apprenticeship and learn-and-earn programs.

## **BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

A Mechatronics certificate program in collaboration with a local employer – Gestamp – will begin this fall. BridgeValley is also developing an accelerated Chemical Operator certificate program for this fall.

Other courses and programs are well into implementation and are being reexamined for improvements and modifications. For instance, the Machine Tool program is on its 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort, with a lab that is being finalized and will require additional support staff; the Advanced Manufacturing Technology program is on its 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort, with increased online and hybrid course content being developed; the Robotics and Fluid Power courses are being developed with flexible scheduling through local employers; and the Welding program has utilized HLC guidance to create a competency-based model.

#### **CONSTRUCTION**

The program has been changed from Building Design to Construction Management and will offer courses in the fall. An Advisory Committee will meet to discuss certification exams that can be used in the program as the current certification exam does not certify students with the skills that the employers need.

#### **ENERGY**

The Energy program is developing instrumentation courses for this program that will be piloted by students this fall. The process instrumentation courses will begin this fall but because of limited opportunities for outreach, the college has been relying on industry connections to recruit students.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The IT program is working to implement learn-and-earn programs as well as internship and apprenticeship opportunities with employers. IT faculty are meeting with industry sector companies to determine what kinds of courses may be needed in the future.

The IT program is also looking into remote instruction and plans to invest in equipment that will help facilitate this type of instruction (i.e., CISCO products, cameras, microphones, and TV screens).

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

As mentioned above, the college is developing remote instruction and hybrid courses for multiple technical programs. For IT specifically, the college is working with TestOut to develop a capstone course that can be used across the consortium. The testing center that will be used for IT certification testing is currently on hold.

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

A crisis response plan has been finalized at the college, which will include a plan for any crisis event that occurs at the college. In addition, BridgeValley has hired a peer coach that has been supporting students during orientation and registration. A *Miners Path to Success* program has been developed that allows peer coaches to set goals with students and work with them several times per semester.

## DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

BTG grant staff have had professional development opportunities (i.e., conferences) to consider other developmental education approaches.

In addition, the technical programs have been assessing the developmental education needs of the students in their programs. For instance, the Machine Tool program has integrated developmental education content into their programs. The students have reportedly responded well to this change and the college anticipates implementing this model college-wide.

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

An Outreach and Retention Coordinator was hired to recruit for the BTG programs. The Coordinator has been attending campus and community events, working with the WIB, and working with UMWA and laid-off coal miners to recruit students.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

BridgeValley continues to meet with industry sector companies to establish learn-and-earn, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities for students as well as gauge projected industry growth. Three industry sector meetings have been held in the past few months targeting Advanced Manufacturing, Chemical and Energy, and Resources – to create a resource map so students can determine their options for training funds. These meetings are being held on a quarterly basis. The college will also hold meetings for the IT program in the coming months.

## SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with BridgeValley, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < BridgeValley is restructuring modularized courses in the Machine Tool and Diesel programs to appear as though they consist of more credits so veteran students can receive their benefits. This has been a selling point for the college in regards to outreach.
- < The college has participated in data analytics training with WVUP and reported that it was beneficial.
- < The college has established learn-and-earn programs with seven companies totaling 25 opportunities for students.
- > The testing center for the IT program has been put on hold so students starting this semester will not be able to complete their certification testing at the college.

## **EASTERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

Currently, Eastern is working to align the program to PMMI and NCCER certifications. In addition, another instructor for the MSSC's CPT certification will need to be trained.

The Partnerships for Possibilities program is in final preparation before launch. There were obstacles getting this program launched due to location issues but another location has been finalized at a local library. In addition, the individual that was planning to teach a soft skills module is unable to do so. The BTG ITL at Eastern will be filling this position. The college anticipates that this program will be launched at the beginning of September.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

A goal of improving capstone courses in this program has been discussed. However, one of the IT faculty members will be leaving their position. Until a replacement is found, Eastern anticipates capstone course modifications will be placed on hold for this program.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

*No updates for this grant component are currently available.*

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

BTG staff also learned several new strategies for supporting students from the Noel Levitz conference. A debrief discussion is being scheduled at Eastern to discuss findings and takeaways. There were also two vendors at the conference that BTG staff believe align and support BTG outcomes – Tutor.com<sup>1</sup> and Student Bridge<sup>2</sup>. Eastern will explore these options for potential contacts.

BTG staff also presented at a Student Success Summit in Morgantown regarding retention strategies on a budget. There are plans to present this topic at other support services conferences.

Students are also continuing to be matched with their Eastern Advocates.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

Summer bootcamps were recently hosted at Eastern. Despite four out of the six students passing the English portion, many students were reportedly displeased with the bootcamp format. More specifically, many students found the courses to be too difficult and the timeline was too accelerated for their comfort levels. In addition, students did not respond well to both English and math sections being offered at the same time as many students were enrolled in both courses – the English course was three weeks accelerated model and the math courses were ran as traditional courses but both overlapped. With this feedback in mind, Eastern will begin to reevaluate bootcamp course content and scheduling moving forward.

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<sup>1</sup> Tutor.com provides 24/7 tutoring (Eastern hopes to use BTG funds to purchase this service)

<sup>2</sup> Student Bridge is a company that comes to the campus and produces commercial videos (Eastern may use some BTG funds for this service so they can begin to tailor their marketing strategies to BTG programs)

In addition, the Developmental Education Coordinator has accepted a position at another college. Eastern anticipates finding a replacement for this position.

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Eastern held interest meetings to recruit and enroll students into the Partnerships for Possibilities program.

Eastern also held a Veteran Collaboration session that included presentations from the National Guard. Following this session, BTG staff developed a veteran action plan outlining recruitment strategies such as attending National Guard events at the armory. Eastern anticipates that this plan will formalize how they recruit veterans moving forward.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Eastern held a District Consortium Economic Development (DCED) meeting in early June with a presenter from the Department of Tourism at the state level. Each participant was asked to identify a discussion point for the meeting outlining their needs and concerns. Feedback is currently being collected and Eastern will prioritize the items for future action planning agendas.

Additionally, Eastern implemented several of the Chancellor's survey questions and will be reviewing the data and disseminating the results at the next DCED meeting.

## SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with Eastern, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < Eastern is aligning certifications to the Advanced Manufacturing program.
- < The Partnerships for Possibilities program is progressing and Eastern anticipates that this program will launch the beginning of September.
- < Eastern is taking advantage of professional development opportunities to improve and modify grant components at the college.
- > The summer bootcamps in math and English did not generate as much positive student feedback as anticipated. To address this, Eastern will be reevaluating the class timeline and content for future bootcamps.
- > Eastern BTG staff turnover may slow processes moving forward (i.e., IT faculty and Developmental Education Coordinator).

## **MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

Mountwest will implement block scheduling for the Mechatronics program. The college anticipates that this program will be up and running soon.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The pilot for the IT program is continuing to enroll students. All faculty necessary for this program have been hired.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The Pearson Vue testing center is set up and the testing material is being reviewed by the college. Two staff members already employed at Mountwest will be the certified testing administrators for the center. Some of the testing center space will be utilized for PLA and CLEP testing and soon, other college programs will have access to the testing center.

The Mondopads are being used by instructors at Mountwest but little remote instruction is occurring.

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Mountwest plans to hire an additional peer coach that will target Mechatronics students. Peer coaches are already in place for the other BTG programs.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

The college has completed summer bootcamps that were led by a current professor at Mountwest. These fast-track bootcamps bring students to college-level courses at an accelerated rate.

### **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

The recruiter at Mountwest has been tasked with talking to businesses and employers about BTG programs and the quality students the college can offer employers.

### **INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**

The relationship with the WIB continues to strengthen as the grant moves forward. The WIB has referred a few students to Mountwest for the upcoming semester. The students that the WIB refers fit into the target population for the BTG grant.

## SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with Mountwest, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < The Pearson Vue testing center will be up and running by the fall semester. This center will provide students with the opportunity to take their Pearson Vue certification tests on-site.
- < Many of Mountwest's grant components are in the "maintenance stage." Many of the programs have been implemented and revised according to student needs, developmental education bootcamps have been modified to increase student success and passage rates, and the college continues to strengthen their relationship with local employers.
- < The relationship with the WIB resulted in a number of student referrals for the upcoming semester.

## **NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

New River is modifying an Industrial Technology program with BTG grant funds and will be adding an instructor for this program in the fall. BTG staff anticipate adding an accelerated format to the program with modules and block scheduling.

In working with CTCS, New River discovered that they can count the employers and their employees that are served by the AWS testing facility as participants. Because New River houses the only AWS testing facility in the state of West Virginia, many local employers and their employees come to the facility to receive their certification. Because these individuals are served by a facility that has utilized BTG grant funds, New River can count these individuals as BTG participants. BTG staff anticipate this will improve New River's outcomes numbers.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

New River has been working to embed A+ certifications into the IT program and become a certified Pearson Vue testing site. However, there have been obstacles in getting Pearson Vue representatives to agree to the terms of the state-required contract.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The Advanced Manufacturing Coordinator is working with WVUP to develop a hybrid blueprint reading course that will allow modules to be shared throughout the consortium. In addition, New River will also integrate hybrid courses into the Welding and new Industrial Technology program.

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

A veteran peer coach has been identified at New River and has received training regarding veteran's benefits and needs. Career counselors have also been targeting veteran students through development of a career services guide for veterans.

New River also hired two additional peer coaches for a total of six peer coaches at the New River campuses.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

New River has been continuously improving their developmental education model. Currently, the college is working on developing math pathways with tracks for students that want to transfer to four-year institutions and students in technical and allied health programs. The technical courses will be contextualized to prepare students for the math that will be required in the industry.

The college is also determining what English and math courses work under the co-requisite model and what courses may require modifications. Developmental education course data will be continuously collected to determine if the courses continue to meet student needs.

### **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

The college has been focusing on marketing and recruiting this summer as student enrollment is typically low during the summer semester. New River has released radio ads, newspaper ads, and has finished



marketing materials for the technical programs – industrial technology, computer science, line service, and welding. The next step for student recruitment includes modifying the New River website to better advertise the BTG programs and make the information more accessible for students.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

New River continues to strengthen the relationship with the WIB, who has sent a total of 22 student referrals to the college. However, the BTG individual housed at the WIB will soon be accepting a new position. New River grant staff anticipate slowed processes moving forward.

The college also hosted a Sector Strategies meeting with resource partners to determine the resources that New River can offer interested partners. This meeting surfaced from a survey that was sent to local partners asking for strengths, weaknesses, and how these partners interact with other businesses. It was found that partners were interested in understanding the role and responsibilities of other partners. The meeting was developed to cross-train partners – make them aware of the roles and responsibilities of the other partners. A resource matrix will be created from this meeting and will be provided to employers interested in partnering with New River.

## SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with New River, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < New River can now count anyone (i.e., employers and their employees) that becomes certified through the AWS testing facility as participants. BTG grant staff anticipate this will improve their participant numbers.
- < The college has hired additional peer coaches – one specifically for veterans – that will increase recruitment and support capacities at the New River campuses.
- > New River has been finding it difficult to sign an agreement with Pearson Vue to move forward with developing a certified testing facility.
- > The BTG-representative at the WIB will be leaving that position for a faculty position at New River. Grant staff anticipate slowed processes as the replacement becomes familiar with the position.

## **PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND ENERGY**

Development of a new class, Print Reading and Energy Systems, has been completed as of June 2015. This course has been revised to include mid-stream oil and gas processes and systems basics. The Advanced Manufacturing instructor is also scheduled to complete modifications to a Mechatronics course in early August 2015.

Pierpont is monitoring student enrollment and projected industry growth for the Applied Process Technology program, which currently has a total of 42 students enrolled. Student enrollment in this program was typically around 15 students in previous semesters. Enrollment is also continuing to increase in the Petroleum Technology program with nearly 30 students currently enrolled.

A Technology Coordinator has been hired to support the Electrical Utility Technology program (Lineman substation) in the Energy program. Final selection of students for this program will occur at the end of July 2015. Currently, total enrollment for year 1 and year 2 of this program is 56 students.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

*Updates for this component are addressed in the Industry Sector Partnerships section.*

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

A Career Services staff member has been hired to provide assistance in this area. The college is currently exploring the concept of assigning counselors to students based off of the college and program they are enrolled in rather than the current assignment method, which is not based on a student's course of study. Currently, Career Services is examining how the workforce system is interacting with students and how Pierpont can continue to encourage a positive relationship with the workforce system at their institution.

Pierpont anticipates hiring more professional and peer tutors for the upcoming fall semester.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

The Office of Advising and Assessment is collaborating with the Office of Instructional Technology and the e-Learn Specialist to develop a centralized list of course test-outs. Currently, individual departments develop course test-outs on an "as-needed" basis but these offerings were never adequately advertised. The proposed plan involves encouraging all departments to develop at least one test-out per program, refer that test to the Office of Instructional Technology to create a Blackboard presence, and market the test-outs to prospective and current students.

Pierpont is also developing a more consistent and comprehensive way to deliver the test-out for one course in particular – Computer Concepts and Applications. The course is required of all Pierpont students particularly in Energy programs. Pierpont anticipates a point-person for the course that will develop a consistent course structure and schedule. This will allow students to plan ahead when looking to schedule courses for upcoming semesters. Ideally, this structure will be implemented across all Pierpont courses.

The COMPASS testing used to place students in their English and math courses continues to be offered on a walk-in basis on the Fairmont campus in addition to the MTEC location in the summer. A new site

director allows Pierpont to offer this testing throughout the year rather than just the spring and fall semesters.

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

An evolving partnership with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) – an organization working with 16 states to improve public education from pre-K through PhD<sup>3</sup> – is becoming reportedly valuable to Pierpont in aligning Power and Energy curriculum among different Pierpont campuses. A meeting is scheduled in early August between Power and Energy instructors at the different Pierpont locations to discuss curriculum. In addition, a Power and Energy Day will be hosted in fall 2015 that will bring together local industry, WIB, CTCS administration, and other departments at Pierpont.

A new recruiter was hired at Pierpont and has been reaching out to students. Currently, the recruiter is working to become a liaison between faculty, Deans, and students at Pierpont as well as attempt to better understand and accommodate veteran needs at the campus.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

There were two meetings held in Charleston at the Advanced Technical Center to consider industry requests for a gas measurement program – a subset of Instrumentation and Controls. Industry representatives, sector leads, and CTCS Energy Coordinators were represented at the meetings to review curriculum being used at other colleges. The curriculum in review incorporated both classroom and online components into the course content. Pierpont anticipates that this program will be implemented at four BTG colleges including Pierpont, WV Northern, WVUP, and Southern WV. Although this is not finalized, the curriculum the colleges would use provides pre-developed labs, online, and instructor content.

## SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with Pierpont, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < Grant staff attended a dislocated miner event on campus and enrolled eight students into programs at the college. The college handed out a \$1,000 scholarship that subsequently went to a student that enrolled in a BTG grant program.
- < Grant staff attended a conference on Acceleration in Developmental Education. More details on conference takeaways will be provided.
- < Pierpont is partnering with the NC CTC CTE consortium to host a Power and Energy Industry Tour on October 1<sup>st</sup>. This event will include a power plant tour, WIB presentations on projected employment, and faculty presentations on programs of study. CTE Instructors, Directors, and guidance counselors have been invited to the event.
- > One of the counselors has resigned from their position in Career Services to pursue an educational opportunity. Pierpont is looking to replace this position as soon as possible.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.sreb.org/page/1068/about\\_SREB.html](http://www.sreb.org/page/1068/about_SREB.html)

## **SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

Advanced Manufacturing faculty attended a two-day manufacturing sector meeting in Charleston. The purpose of the meeting was to go over the curriculum used at the colleges and discuss how to align the curriculum further. The curriculum used at Southern WV was similar to the curriculum used throughout the consortium.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Tracks were set up within the IT curriculum to integrate components such as security (cybersecurity, system security, etc.).

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

*No updates for this grant component are currently available.*

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Southern WV is looking to hire a replacement for a full-time counselor on the Williamson campus. In addition, the college conducted a comparative study on students that received BEACON services and students that did not. The study found that students who received services exhibited increased GPA and retention rates (43% vs. 20.5%).

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

Southern WV plans to hire a Developmental Education Coordinator in the coming weeks. The job opening will be closed at the end of July and the team will begin to review applications for potential candidates. In addition, the math readiness bootcamps recently finished. Students met twice per week for three-hour sessions and 12 of the 15 students enrolled completed the camp while the other three students met their goals and dropped out of the camp early. The students enrolled into the technical math college-level course that also offers supplemental assistance.

Under the co-curricular model, Southern WV saw a 45.2% passage rate in courses that offer supplemental assistance alongside college-level courses, compared to 63.6% for those students that did not require the extra help. However, under the previous co-requisite model, Southern WV only saw a 10% passage rate for students in courses with supplemental assistance. The co-curricular model for English will rollout this fall.

The college met as a state to work through the recent PLA changes and with CAEL to refine process mapping for assessing experiential learning and analyzing institutional gaps. Currently, Southern WV is refining their processes and policies for PLAs, which has shifted the college's attention to understanding PLAs and the options/opportunities for students.

### **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

A budget modification was submitted to reallocate funds to BTG marketing and student recruitment. The college also ordered brochures to advertise the BTG programs and reach out to students that did not enroll or finalize their financial aid in an effort to connect with additional students.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

A resource partners meeting was held in late May to determine resources that Southern WV could provide to employers and employees. Over 40 partners attended this meeting that resulted in Southern WV creating a resource map for future potential partnerships.

Southern WV is also hosting a Manufacturing Advisory Meeting to provide employers with the opportunity to examine the current curriculum and suggest modifications/additions. In addition, the college is meeting with a long-term partner – Mohawk Unilin – to discuss registered apprenticeship opportunities. The college is also strengthening their partnership with the Region 2 WIB.

## SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with Southern WV, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < The shift to the co-curricular model for developmental education has shown significant increases in student passage rates.
- < Southern WV hosted a resource partners meeting and had over 40 partners in attendance.
- < Comparative studies have yielded significant results. Students receiving BEACON services from the college showed increased GPA and retention rates.
- < Southern WV is improving and expanding current partnerships and relationships with employers and the Region 2 WIB.
- > Southern WV is finding it difficult to hire for open positions (i.e., counselors) but anticipates reallocating funds to other grant components.

## **WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

### **TECHNICAL PROGRAMS**

#### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING/MECHATRONICS**

WV Northern recently hired a Mechatronics instructor that will teach for the fall semester. This instructor will be involved specifically with BTG, will help coordinate curriculum between campuses, and may modify courses based on previous industry experience. The Mechatronics instructor will soon be completing OSCHA training so students can be certified in the upcoming semester.

In addition, WV Northern is looking into incorporating PMMI and NCCER certifications into the program in the future.

#### **ENERGY**

Many instructors in the program have undergone training on new machinery and different program focuses (i.e., process technology). WV Northern faculty are also working to combine courses in the program that overlap in regards to content taking six credit hours down to three for the spring semester. In addition, an industry representative will be teaching a mid-stream course in the fall – a recently added course to the Energy program.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Instructors have undergone training through the attendance of conferences in the IT program. One instructor will be attending a high-tech conference with other WV Northern representatives to find ways to utilize technology in the classroom.

WV Northern is also implementing an ITV lab for the IT program that will allow students to learn material virtually.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

A curriculum designer is currently working with faculty from the Petroleum, Mechatronics, and HVAC programs to modify and/or implement online and hybrid formats into courses. This discussion will also include ways to utilize hybrid formats in classrooms specifically with Blackboard – the new data analytics software implemented consortium-wide.

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

WV Northern anticipates hiring additional peer coaches that can work with students participating in the ITV lab. This is expected to occur before the semester start date in under a month.

In addition, the TEAL facility is nearly complete and will be furnished with IT equipment by the start of the fall semester. Prior to the start of the semester, BTG grant staff anticipate hosting a tour with all relevant WV Northern faculty so they are aware of the facility's capabilities and capacity.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

WV Northern held a meeting regarding PLAs involving many departments at the college to find ways to implement prior learning credits at the institution.

Additionally, WV Northern is looking into restructuring a math developmental education course. This course would be combined with a technology math course and serve as a type of co-requisite developmental education course. This is still in the initial stages of discussion.

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

An information session outlining BTG opportunities, enrollment, as well as registration and financial aid was provided to recently laid-off coal miners in early June. This event was developed in collaboration with the workforce system and resulted in over 20 attendees.

WV Northern is working to finalize advertising materials at their institution including commercials and billboards. The college is also pulling together a job description for a recruiter that specifically targets BTG programs.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

A billboard was posted to raise awareness for the programs offered at WV Northern as well as advertise the qualified graduates that the college produces. Interest from local employers has reportedly increased with plans for future partnerships being discussed.

In addition, WV Northern recently hired a President of Economic and Workforce Development that will help build relationships with employers in the region.

## SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with WV Northern, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < WV Northern grant staff and faculty plan to attend a high tech conference that will allow the representatives to explore ways to incorporate technology into the classroom.
- < Work has been done to recode BTG participants with the Office of Institutional Research.
- < Monthly internal meetings with grant staff have reportedly proven valuable. The meetings serve as a way to provide updates and next steps.
- > WV Northern has been confronted with challenges in hiring new grant staff. With the submitted budget modification, the college anticipates hiring multiple grant staff to assist with capacity.

## WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

### TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

#### ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

WVUP continues work to develop a distillation tower for the Welding program. As part of the Welding program, there are three focus areas that WVUP is working to/has implemented including:

1. Downhill welding implemented as a fast-track program;
2. Confined space welding implemented in Spring 2015; and
3. Elevated (distillation tower) welding that is being developed

#### CONSTRUCTION

The Construction Management certificate is still being developed at WVU and will be piloted at WVUP upon completion.

#### ENERGY

Two ethane cracker plants are in the planning stages and will be located over an hour from WVUP's campus. BTG grant staff are considering these employer additions to the region as they develop and modify their BTG programs.

#### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

BTG grant staff are working to improve the IT program and are presenting and discussing ideas amongst the BTG grant staff and faculty.

### LEARNING STRATEGIES

Incorporating online and hybrid formats into courses at WVUP is becoming a focus. The course designer at WVUP is working with the Center for Online Learning to develop hybrid formats that can be integrated into BTG courses, being cognizant of those with hands-on components.

### STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Several openings for peer coaches have developed so WVUP is looking to fill those positions as soon as possible.

### DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

BTG grant staff have been working to realign programs within the technical areas with bridge and gateway courses. The college is creating a gateway certificate in electricity and instrumentation where skills in this credential are integrated into other programs of study. For example, if a student obtained a chemical and polymer associate's degree, other skills such as electricity and instrumentation would be included in that degree. Once the student receives the certificate, there are multiple pathways that can be built from there, including associate's degree or Bachelors of Applied Science pathways.

Currently, there are a total of eight certificate programs that will articulate to credit towards degrees. Many of these modifications will be completed by Fall 2015 with all completed by Spring 2016.

The AIM mentoring program has been implemented college-wide, rather than just for BTG students. The program has been found to building connectivity to and with the college as well as help students explore and subsequently declare a major.



## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

WVUP has launched commercials in the region for the BTG programs. However, grant leadership reports that there is still disconnect between the visions of the institution and the grant. Unfortunately, hiring a staff member to spearhead marketing for the BTG program was not approved by college administration. BTG grant staff continue to examine ways to improve student enrollment numbers and outreach strategies.

## INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

The Sector Coordinator has been working to create and expand partnerships with industry in the region. Sector meetings have been held to discuss curriculum and partnerships; the college has increased involvement with the WIB; and the college is facilitating a work team that will focus on workforce prep, entrepreneurship, and business engagement with local employers.

## SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Based on our discussions with WVUP, the following successes and challenges have been identified to date.

- < A new VP of Academic Affairs and President at WVUP have shifted college focus to needs assessments. For instance, surveys may be distributed to students in online classes to gauge their satisfaction and comfort with the courses. This information will then be relayed to the faculty, who will refer students to student support services if needed.
- < WVUP has begun training for the new data analytics solution: Blackboard. BTG colleges are reportedly responding well to the training.
- < BTG grant staff have restructured the way they engage employers by encouraging relationships amongst the employers rather than focusing solely on the relationship with the college. Rather than discussing the college, the Sector Coordinator prefers to let partnerships and relationships evolve organically. This creates a greater purpose for convening employers (i.e., employers come to network with each other as well as the college).
- > WVUP staff turnover has slowed grant processes (i.e., Director of AIM mentoring program, President, VP of Academic Affairs) but it is anticipated that this will improve once the new grant staff and administration become familiar with the college's policies and procedures. BTG grant staff report that educating the new college staff and administration on the BTG program may also help the grant move forward.