

WEST VIRGINIA

BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM

TAACCCT ROUND 3

YEAR 2, QUARTER 4 SUMMARY



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BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES

CONSORTIUM TRENDS

- Program maintenance: BTG colleges continue to oversee many programs that have been established under the grant and report improved participant enrollment numbers. While some programs are still being created, specifically the Advanced Manufacturing programs targeting recently laid off coal miners, in most cases staff are continuing to transition from program development to program maintenance.
- Increased focus on targeted student recruitment: Having established many of the programs they sought to create under the grant, BTG college staff are increasing their focus on recruitment efforts to help bring more students into these programs. More specifically, colleges are beginning to tailor recruitment efforts to specific populations of students (i.e., veterans and dislocated workers). Recruitment efforts at colleges range from bringing on staff to recruit specifically for the BTG programs, increasing video or Internet marketing efforts for these programs, and utilizing peer coaches to follow up with prospective students.
- Increased focus on veteran students: Staff at BTG colleges are increasing their focus on marketing and recruiting veteran students and ensuring that their programs and colleges are friendly and accessible to the specific needs of veterans. This includes efforts to clarify financial aid for veterans, educating the college on the needs of these students (i.e., financial and mental needs), hosting recruiting events in partnership with local veterans associations, and working to align with best practices such as the “Five Star Challenge.”
- Increased collaboration between colleges: BTG colleges have recently found specific areas in which to collaborate including the development of Advanced Manufacturing programs targeting recently laid off coal miners and the creation of Pearson VUE testing centers once contractual barriers were addressed. These efforts may provide additional opportunities for the colleges to work together to offer students new opportunities.

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 *N/A for this quarter*

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Ñ *Rollout of student success plans.* BridgeValley has recently completed its rollout of student success plans, or individualized plans with short- and long-term goals for students to target. Staff see these as a way to get students thinking about their potential career path and what they will need to do to achieve these goals early in program enrollment. Personalizing student goals and success can be a key way for each college to bring about better student outcomes.

EASTERN COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Ñ *Explore unique recruitment opportunities.* Country Music Television (CMT) and regional jails may seem unlikely partners for student recruitment, yet staff at Eastern are working with these groups as well as others to promote their programs. The college was selected by CMT to host a

country music recruiting event in conjunction with the American Association of Community Colleges. Eastern will host this at a building used by the National Guard, increasing connections and broadening the scope of those who will have the opportunity to hear about their programs. Staff are also continuing the initiative to bring prisoners and parolees into grant programs to offer this population educational opportunities they may not have otherwise.

MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Ñ *Going to target populations rather than waiting for them to come to the school.* A recruiter for Mountwest goes once a week to the local Workforce West Virginia office in order to reach out to displaced workers. In addition to enrolling students from this population, these efforts can also build rapport with employees at these organizations and increase the likelihood of referrals. Meeting with veterans associations and prison officials are other examples from the consortium of this type of outreach in which staff directly seek out hard-to-reach populations in order to improve recruiting outcomes.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Ñ *Analyze developmental education offerings.* New River has done its due diligence in implementing new co-requisite developmental education offerings while ensuring that these offerings are in the best interest of students. All math courses have been transformed to the developmental education model and 97 percent of English courses have been converted as well, with the only remaining non co-requisite course currently being researched to see if other delivery methods actually improve student outcomes. The college is also supplementing these efforts by bringing on tutors to focus on specific areas of student need.

PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Ñ *Seek opportunities to distinguish your school regarding underserved populations.* Pierpont and other schools in the consortium are committing staff time and resources to complete the Five-Star Challenge, an initiative by the West Virginia Office of Veterans Education and Training to help meet five key areas of support for veterans: Commitment from institutional leadership, access and affordability, academic support, cultural and social support, and community collaboration. Staff see this as an opportunity to improve opportunities for veterans while also demonstrating commitment to veteran's success to outside partners.

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Ñ *Implement testing solutions such as TestOut.* Staff at Southern WV report positive student responses to the TestOut program to the extent that the college is considering dropping their use of textbooks in Information Technology programs. Innovative solutions such as TestOut can be parlayed into positive outcomes for students and administrators alike, offering improved outcomes for students and cost savings for colleges and students.

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Ñ *Utilize Mondopads for interactive student learning.* WV Northern has found success using the Mondopad as a central fixture in their Technology Enabled Active Learning (TEAL) Lab. While staff were initially curious as to how the lab would be utilized, professors have stepped up by running labs and simulations. One Welding faculty member found the lab useful for running a simulation

with students, and staff are currently exploring software that will allow faculty in the Mechatronics and Energy programs to use the lab to interact with students. Grant staff plan to hire peer coaches to train students on using the technology available in the lab to increase utilization of these tools.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

- Ñ *Innovative Sector Strategy efforts fueled by research.* In conducting the most recent sector strategies outreach, staff at WVUP researched national leaders such as Colorado and Kentucky in order to discover and apply what has been working in these areas. One lesson taken was to approach each of the partners before the initial stakeholder meeting, share a vision for the meeting, and discern what the partner hoped to gain from the meeting. This type of work ahead of time can provide a stronger base upon which to launch sector partnerships and is one example of the myriad of lessons that can be learned from leaders that have already forged ahead in these areas.

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

No update call was conducted during this quarter with Blue Ridge.

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Staff reported a major victory in the creation of the Pearson VUE testing center on campus. The college is working to make students aware of the opportunities through the center (i.e., on site certification testing, assessments, etc.). The creation of the testing center is the culmination of months of the consortium working with Pearson to rectify contract differences between the two organizations.

Staff also reported working towards competency-based programs for their technical offerings. A number of staff at the college have been going to conferences and trainings on this topic and are seeking to administer these types of programs as soon as possible. However, these staff are waiting for approval from the college's accrediting body to move forward and ensure students will get credit for these programs.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Faculty reported plans to implement a new accelerated Electro-Mechanical Instrumentation (EMI) program starting in mid-October 2015. The program will consist of four, eight-week sessions, at the end of which students will receive an associate's degree. BridgeValley will roll this program out alongside other colleges in the BTG consortium including Southern WV and New River. Faculty also reported efforts around creating an online module for blueprint reading. Progress has been limited as compared to where faculty would like this online module to be, but faculty reported that it is still a priority moving forward.

CONSTRUCTION

Faculty reported that the college is implementing a Construction program this semester with curriculum that was revamped under the grant. Faculty reported positively on the number of students who have joined the program considering that advertising for the program was limited. Faculty are also proud to report that two of the three students who graduated in the spring under a slightly modified Construction curriculum are now working in the field.

ENERGY

Faculty at BridgeValley reported rolling out a new Instrumentation program including a new class they created. The college enrolled two new students for the program this semester and faculty anticipate this program growing in upcoming semesters. Faculty are also offering a repeat version of an instrumentation course offered during the last semester, but are offering the course in the evening to attract new students. Faculty also reported that, while not grant funded, there are many positive activities occurring in relation to the Energy program, such as a new process control unit, that will be used for recruiting and should increase student interest in the program. Finally, faculty reported launching a new compressed 30-hour Energy program that will allow students to complete their courses and graduate more quickly.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Staff reported that the Information Technology (IT) program is under way this semester, enrolling approximately 20 new students. Since moving to South Charleston, the Cybersecurity program has reportedly quadrupled in size. Faculty within the IT program are also working to implement TestOut and other services that will allow students to obtain certifications through online testing.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Staff reported the creation and rollout of student success plans, an innovation by the college under the grant in which staff work one-on-one with students to develop short- and long-term goals. Staff see these as an opportunity to work with students on mapping future career goals and helping them understand what steps they need to take to accomplish their goals.

BridgeValley staff reported a number of ongoing initiatives at the college in addition to the student success plans such as disability services and career services. Grant staff will also accompany admissions counselors in an effort to recruit additional students, attend a conference on student services to improve these for students, and join in-state efforts related to service students. The other major student services initiative currently happening at the college focuses on veterans. Staff have hosted workshops with veterans to ensure they registered for classes and are receiving financial aid. Two additional upcoming workshops will focus on any changes to their benefits or relevant updates that have arisen, with staff also working to have events ready for Veteran's Day in November.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Developmental education staff at the college reported a much smoother process for getting students into their correct classes this year as compared to last year. Staff are working with students now to schedule courses for the spring semester, and report having success so far in this process. Staff are implementing an accelerated developmental education English course within the new accelerated EMI program. There were also considerations of implementing a bridge course for this program, but this has not been carried out to date.

Staff reported continuing a number of initiatives around developmental education including updating MOUs with adult education providers, creating bootcamps for students to take between semesters in order to remain current on developmental education material, continuing professional development for instructors teaching co-requisite models, and collaborating on assessment processes. Finally, staff are working on Blackboard trainings to help students understand the different demands of taking a course online and another training to help faculty best approach online courses. After rolling out an initial version of this course for students, BridgeValley has reported a three percent increase in retention for online students.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Staff held a BTG recruitment strategies meeting in order to focus on their recruitment efforts for technical programs. College staff reported multiple efforts to bring students to the college's technical programs such as participating in ten orientations for new students, visiting multiple career and technical education centers, and promoting Manufacturing Day at local schools to raise interest in these programs. Staff are also recruiting students in conjunction with other organizations, such as going to a job fair for veterans hosted by Goodwill.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Staff at BridgeValley reported partnering with the local WIB on a job fair. Another job fair with the WIB has also been scheduled with plans to have another two scheduled before the end of the year. Staff also partnered with a local WIB for a CTE job fair, which over 300 people attended. In addition, staff met with their area's TAA executive, only to discover that only one person in the region is qualified for TAA, and this student is already enrolled at BridgeValley. Staff continue to work with local businesses to create programs specifically tailored to businesses' needs, such as a compressed program with Dow employees to work around their schedules.

An increased focus on Learn and Earn models was reported by BridgeValley staff. Currently, the college has apprenticeship partnerships set up with Gestalt, Dow, and Toyota, and are creating a new partnership with a small local employer. Staff are seeking to increase the number of partnerships with local employers as they are reportedly helpful for students gaining hands-on learning.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < New grant-funded programs are rolling out as intended and plans for new programs are also being formulated.
- < The creation of the Pearson VUE testing center is the end result of months of work to develop a testing solution for students.
- > BridgeValley is waiting for guidance before moving forward on efforts around competency-based education.

EASTERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Technical programs at Eastern are experiencing turnover with the sole full-time IT faculty member leaving the college, the Academic Dean retiring, and the Dean of Technical Studies retiring in the near future. The college is restructuring their administration and the program ITL will be promoted to the position of Academic Dean.

Grant staff report approximately 16 students in the two grant programs.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Staff at Eastern have decided not to pursue the RFP for accelerating a technical program due to a lack of need from local employers and a lack of student enrollment required to support this type of program.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Grant staff are exploring a partnership with Tutor.com, a service that offers online tutoring services to students at all times. The college is currently in the pilot stage of the program and staff will decide if the program is worth the investment.

Staff at the college are focusing on providing student services that meet the specific needs of veterans. Staff held a veteran collaboration meeting with veteran services in the area, which led to the realization that the college does not have many veterans students. As this is a population staff seek to serve, the college is exploring user-friendly materials and engagement strategies that will help veterans understand the benefits of their program.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Eastern has completed implementation of the co-requisite model for their English and math courses. The college has recently hired a new coordinator for developmental education who will oversee the college's efforts in this realm.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Staff are partnering with the National Guard in order to recruit students into their programs, and reportedly attended two Saturday recruiting events thus far. Staff will also attend college fairs across the six county region near Eastern. Additionally, Eastern is preparing to host their Veterans Bootcamp as a way to reach out to veterans in the community that may be interested in attending college.

Eastern is investing BTG funds towards StudentBridge, a video marketing service that will make videos for the college, provide support to put these online, and create student testimonials in support of the BTG technical programs. Staff see this as a great opportunity to promote the services and programs of Eastern.

Staff from Eastern attended a marketing summit and will meet with staff to see if there are any recruitment opportunities they are not currently utilizing.

Finally, Eastern was selected by Country Music Television, in association with the American Association of Community Colleges, to host a country music recruiting event. Eastern will be hosting this concert in

conjunction with the National Guard facility in the area and can show recruitment videos during the concert.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Eastern is hosting its third DCED meeting under the new engagement model. A guest speaker from Pegasus will speak at the conference to discuss conducting a gap analysis in the region. The college is exploring conducting this analysis through college funds, not grant funds.

For the grant's prison population efforts, Eastern has registered three correctional facilities for their College 101 course: Salem, Prunytown and Lakin. The course seeks to introduce individuals in these facilities to college and the types of opportunities they can seek in the near future. Staff seek to schedule more in the near future as well as more courses specific will offer more specific courses moving forward (i.e., IT). Staff are also broadening their definition for the parolee program to look at adults who are still technically in the juvenile system as a way to boost possible enrollment. These changes surfaced because of obstacles garnering interest once the program was finalized.

Staff are meeting next week with the local judge to explore options for enrolling current prisons in higher education programs. Staff also continue to advertise the program to local employers to build a larger base of possible jobs.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < Staff at Eastern continue to engage in innovative marketing and outreach strategies as a way to engage more potential students.
- > Faculty and staff turnover have presented difficulties to program implementation, but also provides opportunities for reevaluating and enhancing programs.

MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Randy Jones has recently retired and Veella Grooms has taken over the ITL position at Mountwest. Veella had previously overseen the Beacon program and is now transitioning to overseeing all grant efforts at Mountwest. Primary efforts for her since taking over administration of the grant include finalizing the budget modifications, ensuring reporting is completed in a timely manner, and identifying recruitment efforts for the next cohort of students.

The college is implementing a Pearson VUE testing center on site, which has taken the efforts of multiple staff members to complete due to differences between Pearson's contract and the requirements for institutions in West Virginia. Staff are seeking to have the center up and running for students to use as soon as December 2015.

Additionally, staff are exploring the possibility of offering stackable credentials and accelerating student degree attainment by responding to the BTG Project Director's RFP, but are first exploring whether or not this type of program would be a good fit for the college.

ENERGY

Staff reported exploring methods to increase enrollment in the college's Engineering Design Technology program by building out the program and embedding stackable credentials.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Cohort students in the accelerated IT fast-track program are now in the second phase of the fall semester. The program may add students as there are early entry points for students who have previous industry-related experience.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Staff reported efforts around hybrid courses including sharing strategies with New River's ITL about the best way to implement these types of courses. The main difficulty for Mountwest is that the college relies heavily on the cohort model and this model relies on in-person classes. At this point, the ITL is working with faculty to explore the best ways to implement these offerings. Staff are also seeking to develop training modules that will allow students to build relationships with employees at local and national businesses. Staff reported that this will help students better understand the demands of industry.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Staff at Mountwest reported meeting with staff from every BTG college regarding implementing a Beacon program, with the exception of Northern. In terms of the Beacon program at Mountwest, staff reported working to increase communication between student success counselors and students to help reduce stress that students experience in their programs, namely around exams. Staff are also coordinating efforts between peer coaches and student navigators to make sure information transfers regarding student tutoring needs.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Staff are continuing efforts around tutoring and bootcamps for students. Staff reported that most students entering technical programs participate in bootcamps in order to test out of developmental

education. Students who participate in these bootcamps but do not successfully test out have direct access to tutoring, the computer lab, and other services to help them succeed and move into college-level courses.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Mountwest continues to employ a recruiter specifically focusing on BTG programs. The recruiter focuses primarily on adult learners due to the requirements of the grant as compared to the college recruiter who reaches out primarily to high school students. The BTG recruiter utilized peer coaches for recruitment as well. As the college receives applications, staff will enter student information into a database, which peer coaches follow up on. Peer coaches will contact students who have interest in technical programs or are undecided to recruit students into these programs. Additionally, the BTG recruiter goes to the Workforce West Virginia office once a week for the entire day in order to engage dislocated workers. One recent effort has been to focus more on veterans; staff are working with Renata to identify specific places the recruiter can go to recruit veterans.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Staff continue to work with the local WIB and program advisory committees. Staff reported that efforts will begin to focus more on the Engineering Design Technology program, with the specific goal of implementing stackable credentials. Staff seek to host a sector meeting for this area soon as there are many individuals in this group.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < Implementation of Pearson VUE testing center onsite is a major accomplishment for the college.
- < Hiring Veella Grooms from within the college for the ITL position helps reduce the transition period for this position.
- < Beacon staff at Mountwest have met to train staff on the student services model from all but one college in the consortium.
- > Staff perceive some difficulties in utilizing the hybrid model as technical classes rely so heavily on the cohort model and students sharing time in class together.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Grant staff reported that technical programs are performing well in the first year and that all programs are running at the same time.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Staff reported grant efforts for Advanced Manufacturing have recently focused on developing programs for recently laid off miners. The Advanced Manufacturing Coordinator has been working with WIOA staff and other workforce partners to assess and address these needs and has created three short-term training programs that lead to AWS certifications. These programs were also vetted by the rapid response team that meets once a month. Additionally, each of these three programs targets workers who are supported by different funding sources: one is for individuals in UMWA, another for those coming through WIA, and one for individuals who are capable of paying out of pocket.

Additionally, staff reported that the two Welding instructors recently hired under the grant are filling their roles well.

ENERGY

Staff reported 32 students are currently in the Electrical Distribution program, the most students that the college has had to date for this program. Additionally, retention has been strong as well, with only two of the original 34 students not continuing with the program. Faculty reported local employers already reaching out to enquire about hiring these students.

New River is implementing the accelerated Electro-Mechanical Instrumentation (EMI) degree targeting former mine workers that will allow students to take four, eight-week blocks of courses and graduate with an associate's degree. This will allow students to enter the program in October and graduate in June. In its former, non-accelerated iteration, the program is called Industrial Technology.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Staff and faculty in the IT department are looking to increase student flexibility with the program by working on articulation agreements and accelerated programming. Faculty focus on articulation agreements has had the purpose of finding colleges that will partner to offer students the opportunity to transition directly into a four year degree, having completed their two year degree at New River. Faculty are exploring the possibility of implementing an accelerated program and are considering modeling this program after the IT fast-track program at Mountwest. Staff have been in communication with the BTG Project Director on this topic. Staff expressed hesitancy toward rolling out the program as it is generally difficult to have faculty support for an accelerated program, although staff believe that new administration will play a positive role in creating the model and building support.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Grant staff reported efforts around advertising for an instructional designer to help faculty in technical programs create online, hybrid, and modular offerings for their courses. Additionally, faculty and staff are exploring the opportunity of offering the Line Service program as a series of modules.

Staff purchased a welding simulator that will be used in class and also as a recruiting tool to show interested students what they could do as a welder. Faculty trainings on this tool will occur in the near future.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

New River has recently hired two additional peer coaches and has identified one coach to be a veteran-specific peer coach. New River's peer coaches are reaching out to new students in order to touch base, determine if their programs are starting off well, and see if students have any questions. These coaches have also attended introductory classes to familiarize themselves and build rapport with students.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

All developmental math courses within each learning pathway are now being offered in a co-requisite model. Additionally, New River has hired a tutor to work specifically with students on the math components of the Line Service program. Instructors in the program are working with the tutor and are also requiring students to spend an hour per week with the tutor.

For English, 97 percent of these courses are co-requisite with the remaining developmental education English course retained due to the specific population that it serves – students who test just beyond the minimum adult basic education level but whose score indicates that they would not be ready for the co-requisite model. Staff at New River, however, are in discussion with staff at colleges that have transferred 100 percent of English courses to the co-requisite model to understand if New River should pursue this strategy.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

New River currently has one recruiter who is serving the entire college. Two student success coaches – one with a specific focus on veterans – attend all events that the recruiter attends to help attract students to BTG programs. Grant staff also reported focusing on the National Guard and Veterans Associations to recruit veterans into their programs. Other grant-specific recruiting efforts include developing web pages for technical programs that provide more information on what potential students could do with their degrees. Staff are also working with a production company, Cucumber and Company, to develop two-minute videos that will help students better understand the college's technical programs, which can be cut down to serve as 30-second advertisements.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Staff are preparing for a Business Resources and Industry Meeting, which are serving as the college's sector strategy meetings. At this meeting, staff will review the quick references resources guide that the college worked with industry partners to create outlining resources in the community and at the college that can be utilized. Additionally, the college is convening its first IT advisory board meeting.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < Collaboration with outside partners for new Advanced Manufacturing programs allows New River to ensure students who express interest in the program have the proper funding to participate in the program.
- < Staff report increased retention rates for Energy programs.
- > Accelerated models are viewed warily by staff, a point faculty are trying to combat by building consensus around these types of programs.
- > New River still only has one recruiter serving the entire college, although grant staff are working to find other ways to advertise to students including online video advertisements.

PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Staff reported strong numbers in each of the technical programs for the fall – 36 new students in the Applied Process Technology program and 20 new students in the Petroleum program. Additionally, a new blueprint reading course has been created and faculty are in the process of adding a new instrumentation course as well.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Staff are still encouraging faculty to explore hybrid offerings but reported that student buy-in is difficult for these courses as students prefer the hands-on components of the programs. Staff are exploring contracting with a curriculum specialist to help address these issues.

Staff are considering purchasing a gas simulator for the Midstream Oil and Gas courses that would give students hands-on field experience.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Pierpont has recently hired a new Career Services Coordinator. The coordinator has already scheduled numerous workshops to help students in areas such as résumé writing and utilizing social media.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Staff at Pierpont are continuing to improve developmental education at the college by hosting bootcamps over the summer to help students score better on their math and English assessments. The college is also continuing work around the PLA website that will help students better understand the credit they can receive for previous work experience.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Staff continue to focus on student recruitment efforts, with specific attention recently being paid to veteran students. The college is working to become a five-star school for veterans, and a staff member is attending a conference to learn how to better work with veteran students.

Staff have developed a webpage and social media campaign solely for the grant programs, increasing the reach of these programs and ensuring that they are able to advertise these programs to potential students. Additionally, staff have joined other recruitment efforts at the college, such as attending high school football games, to make students aware of the new technical program opportunities at Pierpont.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Staff are working to increase the number of employer partner visits that students have in the area. Guidance counselors will be taking students to employers in the coming weeks to give a student a better understanding of the types of work of different companies in the region. Pierpont is hosting a joint industry sector meeting for the Petroleum Technology program with Northern. The college also has a session planned with the Power Systems Institute to help create opportunities for students. Internships will be a continued focus for grant staff, especially with the increased number of students that have joined the college's program.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < Staff report enrollment growth in each of the technical programs.
- < The recently hired Career Services Coordinator has already created numerous opportunities for students including hosting résumé workshops and helping students understand how to use social media in their job search.

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Prerequisites for the Welding program are being changed to allow students to go through only the courses that will be relevant to their concentration. This decreases the number of courses that a student must take before being able to focus on the specific field of welding they are interested in pursuing.

In addition, one of Southern WV's Mechatronics instructors is attending an Advanced Mechatronics Systems training held by Leadbolt to determine if additional components can be added to the Mechatronics program at their institution.

Curriculum for the new accelerated Electro-Mechanical Instrumentation (EMI) program has also been developed and is currently being reviewed by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee at the institution for approval. The program targets recently laid off coal workers and is being created in conjunction with other schools in the consortium. The program is scheduled to begin enrolling students in mid-October 2015.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The IT program at Southern WV has created five career tracks that students can choose from when entering the college: IT Security, Graphic Design, Networking, Web Design, and Programming. Faculty within the IT program plan to add additional pathways, including one focused specifically on Microsoft Office.

Faculty are also looking to offer an accelerated version of the IT program at the institution. The goal of the accelerated program will be to shorten the time it takes students to complete the program by a semester. The college is still in the early stages of this and has recently met with the BTG Project Director to focus efforts.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Southern WV is utilizing the TestOut program and reports that the program is coming along very well. Student response has been so positive that the college reportedly plans to stop using textbooks for these classes, following the lead of other colleges in the consortium.

Administration at Southern WV are working to meet the recently created state requirements to develop a policy and procedure for providing Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs). Grant staff perceive relative ease for creating the policy but anticipate more difficulty rolling out a procedure for PLAs. The college will send two faculty members to the PLA training hosted by the state. Staff also seek to increase the visibility of PLAs, particularly for prospective students.

College staff see opportunities as well for partnering with the Earn a Degree Graduate Early (EDGE) strategy at Career and Technical Centers in the area. While these centers focus on high school students, adult learners also participate in these, offering an opportunity for Southern WV to recruit additional students to technical programs.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Southern WV currently has two peer coach vacancies they are seeking to fill. The college has received nine applications, including two from current part-time peer coaches seeking to become full-time coaches. Southern WV is promoting these services by creating videos that will be featured on the college's website, with help for these videos provided by the student navigators. The coordinator for the videos is also promoting the services specifically to students in the technical programs.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Southern WV has completed the integration of developmental education courses into a co-curricular model for all of its technical programs. Coordinating the college's efforts around the co-curricular model are full-time and part-time Developmental Education Coordinators. A full-time Developmental Education Coordinator is stationed at the main campus and oversees efforts at all of the campuses, while two additional part-time coordinators oversee developmental education at the remote campuses.

Faculty are currently writing the final exam for the general education math course and the technical education math course, an important process as all of the classes utilizing the co-curricular models will use this exam.

Southern WV has recently purchased graphing calculators that students can use in the developmental education courses. These calculators will save students in these technical programs a significant amount of money and will ensure that they have the proper tools to succeed in their classes.

A student from Southern WV who has been through the co-curricular developmental education courses will be attending a convening for Complete College America to speak on the experience and success in the program.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Student navigators have recently completed a call campaign to recruit students at Southern WV. The campaign focused on prospective students who had begun the financial aid process but did not complete it or did not finish their application to the college. In addition to the call campaign, grant staff are working to increase the media presence of their technical programs. This will involve creating videos with student navigators to advertise the technical programs.

Grant staff attended a convening hosted by BridgeValley at which staff met prospective students. Staff plan to follow up with these students to enroll them in the college. Grant staff also connected with representatives from industry and will follow up in search of partnership opportunities.

Southern WV is reaching out to veterans and has signed an agreement to participate in the Five Star Challenge. The initiative focuses on five steps that colleges can take to make the college more accommodating to the needs of veteran students. The five areas of focus are: commitment from institutional leadership, access and affordability, academic support, cultural and social support, and community collaboration.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

The college continues to host resource partner meetings and is going through the final version of a comprehensive resource partner guide to distribute to this body. Upon confirmation from the group, the college will distribute the final version to the resource partners, post it online for students, and distribute to the general public to use.

Southern recently completed a calling campaign with their industry partners, gauging what kinds of needs companies have and the ways in which the college could meet those needs. One result from this process has been a tentative agreement with IBEX Global, who will send a representative to the college to provide classes on customer support and perform mock interviews. Another company – Gestamp – discussed hiring opportunities with the college for students in their technical programs.

Following on progress made during a July meeting with manufacturing partners, Southern WV is creating a strategy for coordinating business outreach at the college. The college is creating a shareable document that will allow every member of the college to track who has reached out to an employer and when this last contact was made. Employers often emphasize the need for colleges to coordinate efforts to avoid inundation from Southern WV, and the college is taking a step to make this effort.

Grant staff are working with the local workforce board to help board partners in the region better understand the changes happening under WIOA and to strengthen the relationship between the board and the college. The ITL met with the WIB Director to discuss a communication plan between the two entities and how they can best meet the needs of the local workforce. The WIB Director has invited grant staff to come onsite to the Career Center where staff can meet with dislocated workers and other individuals who may be interested in training and academic programs.

Southern WV has signed an MOU with the WVU, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and West Virginia's Department of Energy to work together to meet the needs of business. The MOU focuses on streamlining processes that the institutions perform for meeting business and workforce needs.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < A student plans to attend the Complete College America event to share their experiences in developmental education at Southern WV, which is a positive sign for the program.
- < Staff initiative in support of accelerated program offerings is a positive sign for the outcomes of these programs.

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

The college's recently hired Mechatronics instructor has started and is serving as both a faculty member and program director. Faculty are currently examining similar courses between the Mechatronics and Petroleum programs and combining these courses where possible. Staff also reported working on combining OSHA classes to streamline these offerings.

Northern has recently developed an accelerated, non-credit, non-degree program for Welding that provides students with basic welding skills and runs from May until August. Students will be able to obtain ASME and AWS certifications through the program and will also be able to utilize PLAs to receive credit for these courses if they would like to pursue a degree at a later date.

ENERGY

Staff at Northern are adding an Instrumentation Process Control Technician degree within the Oil and Gas program. The program must first go through the curriculum committee but the goal is to roll the program out next fall. Additionally, the college has designed an accelerated associate's degree for the Petroleum program in which students could ideally start this coming winter and complete a degree by next fall. Staff worked with the local RISA (Climate Program Office) to create this program and generate interest. Input from the RISA has been essential and the college will run a math bootcamp to help referred students with technical math.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Faculty in the IT program continue to meet to revamp curriculum and get these changes through the curriculum committee in November. Faculty and staff at the department continue to lead the push for putting courses online that meet Quality Matters standards and utilizing services such as TestOut.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

The recently hired instructional designer is continuing to work on efforts to push to get additional courses taught in online and hybrid formats.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Northern has peer coaches who serve as supplemental instructors in Mechatronics, Petroleum, and CIT courses. These coaches attend classes with students and help where needs arise. One of the Vice Presidents at Northern is interested in pursuing the Beacon model and having this on every campus at the college.

The Technology Enabled Active Learning (TEAL) Lab is up and running. Northern reports efforts to hire peer coaches who will work with students to train them on using the technology. Instructors are utilizing the space with students, with a welding instructor recently using it for a lab. Staff are exploring simulation programs to use for the Energy and Mechatronics programs.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Staff have integrated co-requisite developmental education courses into the newly created Accelerated Petroleum Program to help students finish technical math more quickly.

Northern sent two staff members to a training recently on PLAs to help the college develop a standard process for PLAs.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Staff reported that commercials focusing on the college's grant-related technical programs are airing during football games to help attract potential students to the program. The college may also hire a part-time staff member for recruiting to focus specifically on the grant-affected programs.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Staff have been meeting with a number of local partners including the local RISA, adult education providers, high schools, and businesses. Recently, the college held a joint petroleum sector meeting with Pierpont. Staff have also met with companies individually, specifically in the manufacturing sector, to try to increase the number of internships and jobs available to students. Staff reported focused efforts on revamping curriculum to meet the needs of industry and on ensuring that industry partners are able to review all curriculum and have their feedback heard.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < Faculty and staff have had success at kicking off new programs and bringing on an instructor to support the programs, including an accelerated, non-credit program for Welding; an Instrumentation Process Control Technician program for the oil and gas industry; and an accelerated Petroleum program.
- < The TEAL Lab has provided a new space for instructors to work with students, providing students more interactive learning options and a space to collaborate.
- È Interest is growing at the college around the Beacon program but the college is still weighing their best path forward.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Numerous administrative changes and turnover have led to all technical programs being switched from one department to another. This shift places the previous department chair over all of the noncredit aspects of the BTG programs while a new department chair is overseeing the credit programs. Grant staff will continue to work with department chairs and college administration to push for a career pathway framework for technical programs. In addition, college President turnover – three different Presidents in the past 14 months – has slowed grant progress in that approval processes are delayed. The administrative changes and turnover had led grant staff to feel the BTG grant is being viewed as separate from the college. However, despite these challenges WVUP is continuing to roll out their modified programs and utilize their new learning management program for their Electricity program.

ENERGY

Staff and faculty at WVUP are rolling out a new noncredit Electrical bootcamp module to introduce students to electricity course components. Grant staff anticipate that this bootcamp will help students who are concerned about working around electrical components become comfortable with this environment.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

WVUP has hired an instructional designer who has been working to create a learning management system and helping faculty utilize this system. The goal of the system is to bring together the disparate efforts faculty have made to offer courses in online and hybrid formats. By bringing these together on Pearson Learning Studio, the instructional designer seeks to bring uniformity to online course material for students. The instructional designer is also working with faculty to help them upload their material to the new system. The instructional designer started these efforts with a set of for-credit courses for electricity and showed the faculty how to use and adapt their courses to the method. Hand-in-hand with efforts, staff are encouraging faculty to employ a hybrid model in as many classes as possible.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The college is continuing efforts around student support services. Peer coaches are tracking all of the contacts they are making with students, which is proving very helpful to other components of the student support team as efforts can be more coordinated moving forward.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

WVUP continues to update their developmental education courses to a co-requisite model and is seeking to have students go through solely co-requisite courses by Spring 2016. Grant staff reported that data is showing positive results for students who go through this model.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

The college plans to hire a recruiter to focus solely on technical programs. This has been a lower priority for the college but staff are now actively looking to bring on a new employee in this position.

SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Grant staff reported continued work on sector partnership strategies, with the college's sector partner coordinator taking the lead on this initiative. WVUP staff continue to work closely with the WIBs as well.

WVUP will host a launch meeting for the manufacturing sector targeting plastics and polymers companies. This meeting has been preceded by individual meetings with each company to help establish the true definition of a sector strategy. Much of this work is based off of research on sector strategies in Colorado and Kentucky. Staff are also seeking to duplicate this type of meeting for the IT sector.

Staff at the college continue to meet around development, business engagement, job training, and workforce training with the purpose of helping businesses connect with unemployed individuals. Staff reported successful interactions with the workforce side and are seeking to increase business engagement through these sector partnerships.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- < Progress has been made in streamlining online learning experiences for students through the hire of instructional designer.
- < Sector partnerships efforts reflect much time, planning, and coordination with external partners.
- > Numerous changes in administration have proven difficult for systemic changes in approach to career pathways.