

WEST VIRGINIA

BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM

TAACCCT ROUND 3

YEAR 3, QUARTER 1 SUMMARY



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THOMAS P. MILLER AND ASSOCIATES, 2016



THOMAS P. MILLER & ASSOCIATES

1630 North Meridian Street, Suite 430
Indianapolis, Indiana 46202
317.894.5508

With:



The
Policy & Research
Group

8434 Oak Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118
504.865.1545

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BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES

CONSORTIUM TRENDS

- **Finalizing programmatic components.** BTG colleges have begun to finalize programmatic components including modifying course content and/or subject area to better accommodate student interests and address low enrollment numbers, finalizing hiring of personnel such as instructional designers and recruiters specifically for BTG programs, and implementing accelerated programs (i.e., Electro-Mechanical Instrumentation) per the RFP distributed by CTCS. As the BTG colleges move into the final year of grant operations, grant leadership are beginning to finalize programmatic components to improve grant outcomes (i.e., participant numbers, employment outcomes, etc.).
- **Expanding partnerships through sector strategies.** The recent movement toward sector strategies has reportedly yielded additional partnerships for colleges. Many colleges have reported hosting resource meetings to determine the resources the college and employers can offer each other. In addition, BTG colleges have reported increased visibility at local organizations (i.e., setting up booths to recruit students) and have expanded Advisory Board meetings to additional employers in the region. These partnerships will be valuable for sustainability of BTG-funded programs and will allow the colleges to offer students hands-on, interactive content.
- **Certifying college faculty for PLAs.** BTG colleges are beginning to send their faculty to statewide training for the recently implemented PLA policy. The training, administered by CAEL, requires at least two representatives from each BTG college to become a PLA specialist. The faculty will be certified to award prior learning credit at their institution per the statewide PLA policy.
- **Increased focus on sustainability.** BTG colleges are beginning to consider future sustainability in programmatic decisions. For instance, colleges reported modifying course content and/or subject areas to better accommodate regional employer needs and student interests (i.e., modifying curriculum based on further employer discussions or course content based on low student enrollment numbers). In addition, grant leadership have been working to improve marketing and recruitment approaches to ensure sustainability of BTG-funded programs through increased student enrollment. However, colleges are unsure how to navigate future sustainability of grant-funded personnel (i.e., student support services staff, faculty, and other staff such as instructional designers and recruiters for BTG programs).

CONSORTIUM GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The following excerpts highlight notable goals from each college in the *Bridging the Gap* consortium moving into 2016.

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Industry sector partnerships are a priority for Blue Ridge staff going into 2016. Potential large-scale partnerships with major employers in the area offer the possibility of hundreds of jobs for Blue Ridge students. Staff are also seeking to continue efforts at a broader level, uniting partners to address needs that go beyond the need of any one business. Staff will continue to meet with the RESA in the area, attend Sector Strategy meetings, work with employers, and coordinate with Mark Julian to foster sector strategy creation.

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- BridgeValley grant staff reported a need to develop better delivery systems and improve technical programs as the grant moves into 2016. Finalizing and improving programmatic components (i.e., hybridization of BTG courses, PLA webpage for adult learners, and continuing to expand and improve marketing and recruitment strategies) will be a priority in the coming year.

EASTERN COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Moving into 2016, grant staff seek to maintain and advance grant goals while transitioning into the new organizational structure of the college and hiring staff to replace recent vacancies. By maintaining this vision through this transition, Eastern will have a strong foundation to build on as new faculty come on board and deans become acquainted with their new roles.

MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Moving into 2016, Mountwest grant staff indicated an increased focus on the sustainability of BTG programs. With this in mind, recruitment for these programs will become a more significant priority to ensure that these programs can be sustained beyond the grant, especially with the statewide budget cuts.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Grant staff indicated a number of goals as the grant moves into 2016 including: launching a modularized Welding course in the spring semester, training and implementation for the statewide PLA policy, and revamping marketing and recruitment efforts (i.e., webpage updates, social media and commercials for programs, and peer coach targeting veteran recruitment).

PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Pierpont will be applying to create an accelerated program around Gas Flow Management and Corrosion Control. Pending approval, staff will use the early part of 2016 to get the program up and running and available as a for-credit opportunity, if possible.

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Southern WV will be focusing on course modification (i.e., incorporation of new equipment and student interests into programs such as 3-D printing and drones), faculty and staff professional development, and employer engagement (i.e., streamlining internal communication around employers and expanding employer contacts for internships and hiring commitments). Southern

WV grant staff anticipate that these focused efforts may increase student enrollment, subsequently sustaining BTG programs beyond the grant.

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Northern has a number of opportunities regarding new technical programs that staff are pursuing going into 2016. Staff are focusing on combining Mechatronics and Petroleum course offerings to allow students to learn basics their first year before specializing in the second. Faculty and staff are also working on a major overhaul to add two new degree programs in Instrumentation and Chemical Plant Operators. Finally, staff are exploring the possibility of offering an accelerated version of their Petroleum program.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

- WVUP grant staff indicated 2016 goals including: aligning for-credit and non-credit programs to meet workforce demand, utilizing the recently hired course designer to assist technical faculty with delivery methods, revising the “College 101” course for incoming freshmen to improve retention by embedding mentoring, launch the IT advisory committee, and use sector strategies to drive institutional change.

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Staff report that courses are going well this semester, with 45 students currently enrolled in the Mechatronics program. Advanced Manufacturing staff are preparing to respond to the RFP for innovative programming offered by the BTG Project Director. The goal is to use the funds to provide an Open-Entry/Open Exit format for students with courses and simulations available online and students signing up for lab times at their convenience.

ENERGY

The energy sector has an upcoming meeting to review the curriculum for Electrical Distribution and Mechatronics courses and explore the possibility of merging these programs into a new degree program.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology is expanding the use of NetLabs, virtual labs for IT programs. As the Sector Lead, Blue Ridge is convening a meeting for the consortium to identify ways to spend contractual and professional development funds available to the consortium. Staff at Blue Ridge are also prioritizing Quality Matters (QM) review of courses across the consortium, with a technical writing course at Blue Ridge undergoing assessment through the QM rubric.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Staff are working to make hybrid, gateway, and bridge offerings more available to students. Staff have completed approximately 85 percent of the IT 111 course, which will be used as the template for CAS 111, a course that will have a few weeks and modules of less technical material. Staff are also working on a hybrid math course (MATH 102) and are updating the Skills 101 math bootcamp hybrid. Staff are incorporating technology into the programs as well, including videos for the EDET courses showing students how to properly check their tools prior and wear Personal Protective Equipment. Math Bootcamp modules have also been recorded and have been uploaded to Blackboard for students to access.

Much of the work around hybrid offering availability as well as the addition of online options has been aided through a course designer. This position will be funded through March 2016, but the college is looking into bringing on additional course designers to continue these efforts. Staff seek to complete development of online and hybrid offerings in 2016.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Peer mentors are working to build relationships with students and are seeking to contact all 325 BTG students via phone and email to provide assistance. Currently 15 students are signed up for the BEACON program, which is served by three BEACON peer mentors. Mentors make themselves available to students by sitting at the tech center and reaching out via email and phone. Additionally, staff are meeting one-on-one with students who are on probation to see what can be done to help these students. Staff have had to work to keep the BEACON program separate from a similar program on campus that serves students, although staff reported that it was difficult to locate students for mentor positions. Staff

reported that the primary goal is to bring as many individuals as possible into the BEACON program moving forward.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

An English bootcamp (Skills 101) was implemented over the summer and other developmental English offerings have been modified as needed. For example, Technical Writing (110) was changed to become more closely aligned with industry needs, providing students with the types of materials and reading they will encounter upon graduation. The developmental education math courses had supplemental components added for the fall semester as well as minor edits. Staff are waiting for assessment data from the first round of these developmental math and English courses and plan to make changes to the courses depending on what the data indicates. Staff seek to complete an online model for the bootcamps in 2016 to accommodate student need.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Faculty and staff continue outreach for technical programs, with specific outreach including holding information sessions on the new mechatronics partnership being developed with Proctor and Gamble and creating a video to help inform students on Blue Ridge's EDET program. At this point, Blue Ridge has spent all of the funds available under the BTG grant for advertising and is seeking to allocate additional funds toward advertising through the budget modification process. Advertisements have included newspaper and journal advertisements, television commercials, banners, videos, and more.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Blue Ridge staff are preparing for a large-scale partnerships with Proctor and Gamble that is still in the developmental stages but could add more than 200 jobs for Blue Ridge graduates over the next five years. The partnership would involve mechatronics and may include Proctor and Gamble making a customized program at the college. Staff are advertising to students and will hold informational sessions that Proctor and Gamble representatives will attend. Staff see developing this partnership as a major priority going into the 2016.

Blue Ridge is continuing its partnership with First Energy and had 21 students attend the PSI program orientation meeting. Staff are also meeting with Altec to secure a partnership around a training program for the technician side of utilities.

Staff are also engaging in efforts to expand regional partnerships, participating in the RESA 8 meeting, the Sector Strategy visit to Ecolab, and the sector strategy meetings with Mark Julian. One example of this was a recent meeting with the HR Advisory Council Meeting of 15 employer partners addressing soft skill needs in the local economy.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + Staff continue to build on successes in offering hybrid and online versions of courses, with recent videos and the incorporation of Quality Matters standards as recent landmarks.
- + Staff were reportedly optimistic about the potential partnership with Proctor and Gamble.
- Staff have faced challenges recruiting mentors for the BEACON program due to a similar mentorship program at the college.

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

IT grant staff reported that three companies attended the IT Sector meeting. One of the companies in attendance indicated a need for 100 students now and nearly 400 in the future. This need could directly impact the IT program as hiring commitments and partnerships with this company could be established. Other partnerships are proving valuable to the IT program as well. For instance, another company with an established learn-and-earn program is looking to hire two BridgeValley students.

During the IT quarterly meeting, BridgeValley grant staff met with someone that is developing a test to determine whether students are qualified for the IT program at their institution. BridgeValley anticipates implementing a similar test in the future to determine eligibility.

IT grant staff are also working to determine what courses can be accelerated and hybridized to increase the passage rate on exams. Staff will continue to work to develop better delivery systems for the IT program.

Grant staff are also considering block scheduling for the Cybersecurity and IT program.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND ENERGY

Grant staff are working to develop a 3-D modeling course that will incorporate drafting and mechanical design components. In addition, staff will work to modify the software being used in the program as it is out of date, according to industry employers. BridgeValley will teach instructors how to use the new software that is up to industry standard.

Staff are also working with WVCTCS to develop a contract with the Manufacturing Institute to develop career pathways with embedded certifications. BridgeValley is also working with other institutions in the consortium to embed these certifications in Advanced Manufacturing programs.

In addition, the Machine Tool program is moving forward with new cohorts in the accelerated model. The program initially started in late September and will finish in April 2016. Staff are in the process of obtaining a NIMS accreditation for this program that will incorporate online material. An Instrumentation program will also begin in the spring that will have an open entry, open exit structure.

CONSTRUCTION

BridgeValley grant staff reported increased support for the Construction program at the institution.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Grant staff have been working to attend veteran-related workshops – four in total with 25 veterans and 15 faculty and staff in attendance. In addition, the college attended a Veteran's Day event with over 90 individuals in attendance and will be working to have a veteran-specific registration day at the college. With these efforts, BridgeValley was featured as a military-friendly college in a magazine and are pursuing the Five-Star Challenge.

The peer coaches contacted over 200 students in October to assist and support students. The peer coaches are also hosting events at the college including a Red Flag Campaign to address issues of domestic violence, stress relief workshops (nearly 40 have attended to date), and a positive event with

over 100 students in attendance. Peer coaches are now working to assist with student registration in January and have nearly 30 students enrolled for Pathways to Success, which focuses on student's personal goals. Software was also purchased to allow peer coaches to offer online orientation as well as face-to-face orientation for students moving forward.

In regards to PLAs, a workshop was held in September with CAEL and had two representatives from each BTG institution participating in the workshop to become PLA certified. BridgeValley grant staff also developed a webpage for prior learning credit that is being piloted for adult learning. The webpage takes adults through the planning process, defines it, and lets students know whether they will be awarded prior learning credit. Students complete a Life Experience Inventory to identify professional skills and certifications as well as other subject matter expertise and are then matched with college majors from different institutions.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

BridgeValley grant staff received feedback from faculty and staff that students are going into college-level courses alongside developmental education courses and are underprepared in regards to effective behaviors. Faculty have change prerequisites to courses to reflect this feedback.

Grant staff also reported working on the process of referrals and helping students in ABE math and English courses. Staff are revising learning outcomes and examining exit messages for areas of improvement. Staff are also working to establish concrete bootcamp dates, where students come in and register for ABE courses.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

BridgeValley grant staff have attended nearly a dozen college tours for students and have attended job fairs to reach out to students. One of the job fairs – Logan County Job and Training Fair – targeted laid off coal miners and resulted in a number of student applicants (i.e., 18 interested in Machine Tool Technology and three of the IT program). In addition, a representative from BridgeValley travels to the local WIB offices to recruit and market to students.

BridgeValley grant staff are working to improve current marketing materials by developing a website and materials specifically for BTG programs.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

A number of partnerships have proved valuable for BridgeValley grant staff. For instance, staff have partnered with Toyota to promote Advanced Manufacturing programs and will be working with them to see how the college can rebrand to reach out to other manufacturing companies in the state.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + BridgeValley grant staff are working to modify curriculum to meet industry standards and incorporate hybridized formats to expedite student time in the programs.
- + Grant staff are continuing efforts to support and assist veteran students from admissions and registration to VA benefits and coursework. This focus has reportedly increased the number of veteran students in BTG programs (i.e., four veteran students out of seven in the Process Technology program).
- Concerns with developmental education course structures (i.e., students struggle with taking both college-level and developmental education courses at the same time) are prompting revisiting and revising. BridgeValley grant staff are working to modify this structure to better fit the needs of the students.

EASTERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Turnover and restructuring continue to be major themes for Eastern's technical programs. The departure of both the head faculty member for IT and the dean overseeing the Wind Energy program have presented challenges to their respective programs. Staff report that the turnover has slowed progress on implementing these programs, noting that the IT program may be unable to continue offering the Microsoft MTA assessments implemented under the previous staff member.

Administratively, Eastern has merged the technical studies programs with the workforce program, with one dean overseeing all Teaching and Learning components. Staff anticipate a transition time as there is a steep learning curve to understanding both academic and workforce programming, but the combination also may allow for better collaboration between the two. Staff are also working to finalize the budget modification.

Staff are considering making certification tests required for students as part of their courses due to fears that they may not take these tests if they are not required and miss out on their benefit, making them less marketable to employers who require these credentials.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

After internal discussions, Eastern does not plan to implement an accelerated EMI program because it would not reflect the needs of local businesses and student schedules. Eastern could not justify developing and implementing an accelerated EMI program because local industry did not voice a need for this skillset and, in the past, students have not responded well to this type of schedule.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

In order to increase support to students, Eastern is signing an agreement with tutor.com, a site that provides 24 hour online tutoring help in math, science, and English. The service will be in place for students by the spring semester, and staff believe the site will be useful to students because of the accessibility and personalization components to the site.

In addition, the Eastern Advocates program is continuing to serve students.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Eastern continues to implement the co-requisite model and grant staff reported receiving midterm evaluation data, which will analyze the effect of the change to the co-requisite model in developmental education. Staff are interested in analyzing the results to see if the co-requisite model has been successful and to understand the next steps the college should take regarding developmental education.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Due to changes in staff, Eastern does not have a single person leading recruitment efforts, requiring all staff to engage in the process to some extent. Staff continue to be engaged in recruitment efforts such as holding recruiting events alongside the National Guard as well as attending multiple college fairs. Staff have also recently contracted with a video company to create commercials for programs, which have been recorded and should be finished shortly. Finally, the college is preparing for the concert and recruiting event with Country Music Television happening in conjunction with the National Guard. Staff

see this as a significant opportunity for Eastern, as the college and its programs will have a major presence during the show.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Businesses in the surrounding area have recently completed a gaps analysis, with preliminary findings and a final report to be distributed in January. Alongside the transitions in leadership, the workforce team will now coordinate sector meetings, taking this responsibility from technical studies.

The college has held College 101 courses in six correctional facilities – five prisons and one regional jail – and staff are very pleased with the rollout. However, the Partnerships for Possibilities program for ex-offenders is at a standstill as staff cannot recruit enough ex-offenders to participate in the program. Staff have exhausted multiple channels to connect with these individuals and is currently working with Mountwest to determine if a partnership to offer the program in the Huntington area could be established.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + The college has improved its partnership with the National Guard, which staff report as very promising to connect with veterans
- Turnover in personnel has presented difficulties in program implementation (i.e., faculty certification needed in Microsoft to continue offering assessments)
- Staff are concerned about the roll out of Data Analytics, particularly on how the tool will be utilized by colleges during and after the grant, especially in very rural areas. While staff see the tool as a great opportunity, the ability to execute this may be limited due to time constraints for getting it up and running.

MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The fast track program is moving along and is beginning to register the next cohort for courses in the summer. Applications will be examined the week after Thanksgiving. Because the cohort model only allows for specific program start semesters, Mountwest grant staff are exploring ways to keep interested students enrolled at the college until they can begin taking program-related courses. More specifically, students interested in the IT program will likely take general education courses until the program-related courses can begin (i.e., next program-related courses will be offer in Summer 2016).

ENGINEERING DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

Students are currently registering for Spring 2016 courses. As per the RFP requirements distributed by WVCTCS, Mountwest grant staff will be redesigning the Engineering Design Technology program to incorporate stackable credentials. To date, Mountwest grant staff reported challenges in students dropping out of the program to accept jobs. Integrating stackable credentials will allow students to obtain a certificate at different points in the program – ideally before they drop out to accept jobs – allowing the college to count those students as program completers.

The structure of the program would blend hybrid learning with open lab time for hands-on components and podcasts recording lectures. The lab will be open in the evening to accommodate working adult learners and will be staffed by an adjunct faculty member and two peer tutors.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Beacon peer coaches are continuing to monitor and support students. Mountwest grant staff reported that needs and concerns are being addressed as they arise at this point. In addition, the new peer coaches that were hired are completing training. With the addition of the RFP Engineering Design program, Mountwest anticipates hiring two additional peer coaches to assist students in that program.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Mountwest has continued with the co-requisite model for developmental education and grant staff report that the courses are going well. Moving forward, grant staff report that Blackboard Analytics will help to better track students moving through this model. The initial focus once this system is implemented will be on retention and registration. In addition, data will be used to determine why students drop out and ways to target specific populations of students (i.e., veterans and dislocated workers) in retention efforts.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Mountwest will be utilizing a number of resources to enhance recruitment strategies such as presenting at the local WIB, setting up at the local WIB every Monday, working with the military representative and Renata for veteran recruiting, and visiting local Career and Technical Education centers. Mountwest will also update marketing materials to be more program-specific and will work to ensure that these materials are up-to-date.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Mountwest recently established an advisory committee for the new Engineering Design accelerated program. The committee will meet in the coming weeks to discuss stackable credentials for this program.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + Restructuring the Engineering Design Technology as part of RFP requirements will allow students to obtain certificates throughout the program – increasing the ability to count students as completers (i.e., students would be obtaining a certificate so they would be counted as completers toward DOL outcome goals).
- + The Pearson VUE testing center was approved and the first tester went through the center and passed their certification exam.
- + Mountwest partnered with St. Mary’s – a local hospital – to digitally design a prosthetic hand for a nine-year old using the 3-D printer in the Engineering Design program. Discussions around 3-d printing pharmaceutical prescriptions are also occurring.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

WELDING

The short-term welding programs are anticipated to launch upon approval for use of WIOA funds. Students enrolled in these short-term welding programs will receive academic credit.

A welding simulator was also purchased to assist with recruitment efforts but will also be utilized in the classroom. The simulator has already been utilized at a career fair in attempts to recruit students.

ELECTRO-MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTATION

The Electro-Mechanical Instrumentation (EMI) program was launched with five students currently enrolled. The program is structured as an open entry, open exit model with the opportunity for additional students to begin enrolling in Spring 2016.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The IT program has established an advisory board with representatives from all nine counties in New River's service area. Eleven employers attended the meeting to discuss IT curriculum. New River is currently adapting the curriculum to fit the needs of employers based on the advisory board meeting.

LINE SERVICE AND EDET

New River is still looking to hire an instructional designer. This individual will be tasked with modularizing coursework in the Line Service and EDET programs to incorporate online components and decrease student time in the classroom.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

New River has appointed a peer coach to target veterans with the responsibility of developing a relationship with the local veteran organization. In addition, the veteran peer coach has attended veteran-specific events with the college recruiter.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

New River grant staff report that the implementation of the co-requisite model is going over well at the college. The college is also working to expedite time in developmental education courses by adding tutors for the Line Service program. Lower-level students are required to utilize the tutors multiple times per week to ensure that their math capabilities are at a college level. In addition, the English department is working to develop a gateway course to ensure students in industry-focused programs are getting basic English skills they need.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

The college has lost their recruiter so instructors are working to promote BTG-funded programs. New River grant staff anticipate the recruiter position being filled in the next academic year but will continue to utilize instructors for recruiting until then.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

New River hosted a sector strategies meeting in September to focus on the employment and training needs of regional employers. Potential partnerships were also discussed at this meeting and around five companies were 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.

- + The IT advisory board meeting revealed that IT curriculum at New River may be outdated. New River can now revise curriculum to reflect the needs of employers based on this meeting.
- + New River is exploring new ways to generate interest in BTG-funded programs (i.e., welding simulator purchase).
- New River grant staff are concerned that hybrid coursework will not be up and running by Spring 2016. However, staff are working to implement these on schedule.

PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Technical programs are continuing to be implemented, with positive indicators regarding enrollment for next spring and fall. Staff expect numbers to continue increasing in the technical programs and anticipate that staff will soon need to expand capacity in these technical programs to accommodate enrollment numbers. A total of 55 students are enrolled in the Petroleum program, 130 students attended the initial lineman training/screening process, and approximately one third of these students will be accepted into and will persist through the program.

Staff at Pierpont have decided to pursue the micro-grant opportunity presented by the BTG Project Director in order to create an accelerated Gas Flow Management and Corrosion Control degree pathway. The goal is to offer the program for-credit, but staff are concerned that the nine to 12 month timeline typical of the curriculum review committee will prevent the program from operating as a credit-bearing program during the duration of the grant.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Staff have made progress in a number of areas under learning strategies including: hiring a contractor to help work on courses in the Instrumentation track including one leadership course and a course that will combine AC/DC fundamentals into a single course to run in the spring; working to take a Process Technology course through the licensing and skills commons repository upload process; working on a student orientation program for students taking online courses to help acclimate them to online courses and ultimately improve retention and outcomes for students, specifically for non-traditional students; and planning to attend the upcoming Blackboard Analytics training so the college can participate when they have their own Banner system.

Staff are also continuing efforts around PLAs, offering examinations in math, AC/DC, and other courses to gauge student competency in various areas. Pierpont's examination will combine a practical portion to determine that students have an encompassing competency of the subject. The new PLA interface is live statewide and Pierpont is in the process of loading skillsets to create crosswalks for students to understand how their skills may count for credit toward a degree.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Staff continue to work with students, with particular attention being paid to the Advanced Process Technology students, including working to improve resume and communication skills, visiting classrooms a few times a month, offering workshops, and hosting a career fair. Moving forward, staff will focus on individual students' skills by scheduling one-on-one appointments to focus on preparing students to enter the workforce when they graduate.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

In Summer 2014, the college held a developmental math bootcamp. Pierpont staff anticipate offering another developmental math bootcamp next summer if enough students are interested.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Staff have engaged in a number of recruiting efforts this fall. Staff have distributed marketing materials to armories, visited the Upshur County Adult Learning Center, and visited career and technical education

centers. Other specific accomplishments include recent work with the Worldview and Pearson to ensure that students can take tests and get credit for their learning. Staff are bolstering this by pursuing partnerships with businesses and organizations that target non-traditional students, a model staff seek to expand college-wide.

Going forward, staff anticipate expanding current recruitment efforts to visiting halfway houses allowing Pierpont to target individuals who will be returning to the workforce and may be seeking training. Staff also plan to engage in a retention campaign starting in the spring.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Staff are partnering with Mylan Pharmaceuticals – the largest distributor in the world – to develop a program that will combine Mylan courses and Pierpont basic courses. Another organization, Resolute Products, is interested in partnering with the college for incumbent worker training and possibly hiring graduates. The college has also placed graduates with a local power station and would like to make a more formal arrangement with the company around internships.

In January or February of next year, the college will conduct meetings with utility companies in the area to gauge needs of the industry. Additionally, the college is purchasing equipment for gas flow measurement through partnerships with local employers.

Staff are working with Mark Julian to develop interactions with DHHR and are working with WorkforceWV in Marion, Harrison, and Lawn County Adult Education Learning Centers to offer College 101 sessions. Staff are also meeting with WV Women’s Work – Pierpont wrote curriculum for them and invited them to the ITL meeting on with staff from all BTG colleges.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + Pierpont is building momentum around industry partnerships, with a number of partnerships taking shape in the last few months.
- + Recruitment efforts are growing as staff seek different ways to connect with potential students.

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ELECTRO-MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTATION

Southern WV has hired an instructor to take over the Electro-Mechanical Instrumentation (EMI) accelerated program that was part of an RFP distributed by WVCTCS. The semester started with one student enrolled but Southern grant staff anticipate increased enrollment for Spring 2016. Equipment for the EMI program was also delivered.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING/WELDING

The Advanced Manufacturing program has four students enrolled while the Welding program is finding ways to increase capacity to accommodate the number of students interested in the program. Southern will be looking to add additional instructors to this program to accommodate the students enrolled in the program.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The IT program has undergone a number of changes and growth. IT grant staff reported that the Adobe curriculum has been revamped and a ten-year plan for courses has been developed to not only address sustainability concerns, but to increase efficiency in course delivery (i.e., limiting courses by semester). Despite these changes, Southern will work to accommodate students interested in the IT program by offering independent study options. The long-term plan incorporates five career tracks to alternate every other semester:

1. Security
2. Graphics
3. Networking
4. Web-Design
5. Programming

The IT program continues to utilize TestOut resources with the first students completing their certification testing in the coming weeks. IT courses are also being submitted for Quality Matters review. In addition, the accelerated IT program will be launched in Summer 2016. Students enrolled in this program can graduate in 15 months.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Southern anticipates hiring a peer coach once the budget modification is approved. In addition, Southern grant staff reported over 30 students enrolled in support services at the college. The Student Coordinator has been working to increase this number through development of marketing materials.

The veteran coach attended an official training discussing how to submit courses to the VA to ensure students receive their benefits. The college also signed up for the Five-Star Challenge.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

The English co-curricular model has been completed and implemented. Although there is no data on the new model, Southern grant staff report that students are responding positively to the new model.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Southern recently purchased a poster-printer to develop marketing materials college-wide. IT grant staff reported utilizing the printer to develop career pathways and tracks posters. To further recruitment efforts, Southern staff have reserved lobby space in a local building that houses other Southern partners (i.e., DHHR). Southern grant staff also attended a job fair with nearly 1,000 attendees.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Southern grant staff attended a job fair hosted by BridgeValley to establish partnerships with local employers (i.e., IBEX Global, Workforce WV). The IT program anticipates incorporating these employers into the advisory committee. In addition, one of the employers that attended the job fair – IBEX Global – is discussing a partnership with Southern where a five-week IT training will be offered over the college's Christmas break allowing students to work part-time at IBEX Global in Spring 2016. The company is looking to hire nearly 100 people so the partnership should prove valuable for Southern.

Southern also attended the Tristate Shale Summit in Morgantown, which addressed the training needs in the Marcellus Shale and gas production industries. The summit stressed the need for skilled individuals in manufacturing and Southern is recognizing these future opportunities as potential program expansion opportunities.

Southern grant staff also reported that they have entered into an agreement with West Virginia University and the West Virginia Division of Energy to place an Industrial Specialist position on the Logan campus. This person will meet with manufacturers in the area to develop partnerships.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + The IT program is exploring unique equipment (i.e., drones and 3-D printers) to generate interest in programs and expand course offerings moving forward.
- + Two staff have been PLA certified as part of a new statewide PLA policy.
- + Southern anticipates a partnership with the Asher Agency to determine how to better target and market programs to potential students. The Agency will offer recommendations through a packet of information that can be used to redefine marketing approaches.
- The EMI accelerated program had low enrollment – one student – but staff anticipate finding ways to increase this number in the future.

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

MECHATRONICS AND PETROLEUM

Faculty at Northern are looking to make major changes to the Petroleum and Mechatronics programs going forward, combining many of the courses to streamline offerings as these programs share courses in electricity, safety, hydraulics, and pneumatics. Combining course offerings would decrease the instruction load on faculty and allow students to take general courses in their first year before specializing during their second year. Faculty are currently working with the administration to find commonalities across courses with help from the curriculum designer.

In addition to these changes, staff are working to add two new two-year degrees in Instrumentation and Chemical Plant Operating and are also seeking to offer an accelerated version of the Petroleum program to cut instruction down from two years to one. However, staff reported having a hard time configuring the Petroleum program budget from the grant to make this program work. There has been a lot of back and forth as to when this should start, and staff are concerned that the program will not be running in time to be funded by the grant.

WELDING

Northern has six full-time students in the Welding program and kicked off an accelerated non-credit Welding program in Summer 2015. The program is aligned with SMAW, MIG, TIG, and Flux Core welding certificates and credit can be applied toward an associate's degree in welding. Staff face challenges regarding capacity as there are only eight welding booths. Staff are also working with Workforce West Virginia to determine funding sources for the program as it is not eligible for financial aid and Pell grants.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The IT program continues to enroll students, with faculty working to create a 2+2 program for Cybersecurity with the University of Charleston.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Staff continue to explore what courses could be done online with the help of the curriculum designer. Staff are also purchasing a simulator from another grant's funding for the Petroleum program that will allow students to simulate emergency situations at plants.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Northern's peer coaches program is continuing to provide assistance to students that are struggling in their courses. The Technology Enabled Active Learning (TEAL) Lab continues to popular amongst faculty and will be opening for students in December with peer coaches to help on equipment when classes are not scheduled. The lab will be staffed from 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 A.M. 5:00 P.M. on Fridays.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Northern continues to advance opportunities around prior learning assessments, with two staff members recently becoming certified PLA Specialists. Additionally, the college has created a PLA form for students to fill out to help streamline the process of awarding prior learning credit.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Commercials are continuing to advertise the BTG programs at Northern. Staff are still working to bring on a part-time navigator, recruiter, or career services staff member, which could help alleviate some of the burden for recruiting for student services.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Staff are continuing partnerships with businesses and are seeking to expand regional collaboration efforts. Staff are also seeking to host a meeting to implement a sector strategy, including representatives from economic development and workforce development. Additionally, grant staff are working with workforce training staff at a local company about hosting a petroleum class but these conversations are still in the early stages.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + Staff have a number of opportunities to pursue in creating technical programs including merging programs to reduce faculty course load and develop and implement additional two-year programs.
- Northern has not been able to hire additional staff to help support grant efforts but anticipates filling these positions as soon as possible. Filling these positions will alleviate the burden of recruiting for student services.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING

WVUP grant staff are still reviewing curriculum for the Energy and Manufacturing programs. Staff anticipate eliminating certificates in IM and E&I because enrollment numbers were low. Accelerated programs in E&I, safety, and electricity are being offered in the non-credit Workforce division instead. A certificate in Multicraft will replace the two certificates by merging the curriculum of both IM and E&I. Currently, only a Multicraft associate degree is available so the certificate will create a clearer pathway.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

IT courses have been modified to include more hands-on experience. WVUP does not plan to offer a certificate in IT because WVUP grant staff believe that teaching to industry-recognized credentials takes longer than one year. In addition, WVUP grant staff have modified the Capstone course to include more hands-on experience rather than simulated experience.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

The pilot for this program concluded after 33 weeks and all 15 students were retained throughout the duration of the program. These students will complete their Certified Project Management (CPM) exam in the next couple of months. In addition, WVUP grant staff and WVU are working to create a bachelor's degree pathway with online components that will focus on project management and supervision.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Peer coaches continue to work with students as well as Workforce WV to focus assistance on TAA and veteran students. The Vice President of Student Services has requested adding Student Ambassadors to the campus but WVUP grant staff are concerned that this may compromise the purpose of the peer coaches (i.e., ambassadors are work-study students that do not attend events and do not have weekly hours requirements. These individuals are also not available to students like peer coaches are due to schedule constraints and role of the Ambassadors).

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

WVUP grant staff have decided to eliminate developmental education courses beginning in Spring 2016 and will move to a co-requisite model for math and English. Additionally, low-testing students will be required to take a beginner Math 100 course prior to the for-credit Math 101 course. However, Math 100 will not count toward the student's program of study so there are concerns about retention in these courses moving forward.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

WVUP grant staff reported that there are plans to hire a technical program recruiter. Although there is only a short amount of time (i.e., 15 months) that the recruiter would be able to impact technical program recruitment efforts, WVUP grant staff are hopeful that the college will see the addition of this position as beneficial.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

The partnership between WVUP and WDB continues to strengthen. In addition, the Manufacturing Sector Partnership is currently targeting three issues: communication, promotion, and workforce demand. The next meeting will be on December 9, 2015 to discuss these issues.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

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

- + WVUP grant staff are continuing to modify curriculum to fit the needs of students and employers in the region (i.e., addition of Multicraft certificate).
- + The addition of a recruiter that will focus on the BTG technical programs will be reportedly valuable and beneficial to increasing enrollment numbers in these programs.
- WVUP grant staff are concerned with the addition of Student Ambassadors as they believe it compromises the purpose and value of peer coaches at the institution moving forward.
- WVUP grant staff are concerned that the math and English co-requisite requirements will impact retention as low-testing students would be required to take a basic course that does not count toward their program of study. However, staff are exploring ways to ensure that students who fall through with the new model are able to get help (i.e., bootcamps).