

WEST VIRGINIA

BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM

TAACCCT ROUND 3

YEAR 4, QUARTER 2 SUMMARY



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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

In 2013, Bridgemont Community and Technical College (now BridgeValley Community and Technical College (CTC) – lead institution for the BTG consortium) received a grant of \$25,000,000 through the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program to fund the West Virginia Community and Technical College System (WVCTCS) Bridging the Gap (BTG) consortium. The BTG project unites nine community colleges with the goal of creating career pathways for four in-demand industries: energy, manufacturing, information technology (IT), and building construction.¹ The project also seeks to enhance academic instruction and bridge student support gaps throughout the community college system, while creating a culture of continuous improvement that will expand into the CTC system’s second decade.

Per grant requirements, Bridgemont procured an independent contractor, Thomas P. Miller and Associates, LLC (TPMA)², to conduct an objective evaluation of the Bridging the Gap program. This evaluation will provide WVCTCS, its partners, its funders, and other stakeholders with critical information regarding the effectiveness of implemented programs. The evaluation will track program implementation through September 2016 with a final year for evaluation through September 2017.

This Quarterly Report examines bimonthly college updates in the following areas: technical programs, learning strategies, support services, developmental education, student recruitment, and industry sector partnership strategies. The report also integrates notable highlights from each BTG college as identified in bimonthly calls.

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

This report focuses on the qualitative implementation of the BTG project from September 2016 through March 2017 of grant-funded operations. To understand implementation, this report relies on qualitative data drawn from the following:

1. Bimonthly calls with BTG college leadership, faculty, and staff;
2. Call notes and summaries from bimonthly calls; and
3. Program artifacts sent from BTG colleges.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

BRIDGING THE GAP CONSORTIUM SPOTLIGHTS

The following excerpts highlight notable best practices and distinctive grant activities from each college in the *Bridging the Gap* consortium.

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- To help ensure that students are choosing the career path that aligns with their skills and interests, the WOWi assessment is being used at the college within all programs. This career assessment measures interests, skills, and workstyles and enables students to explore different pathways. The assessment can reinforce program interests for students or encourage students to explore different options. College staff anticipate that this assessment could decrease turnover within programs.
- The IT Sector Lead anticipates utilizing Professional Development funds to provide Blackboard Analytics and Quality Matters application training to BTG college instructors and faculty. This training will provide instructors and faculty with a better understanding of how to incorporate hybrid and online offerings into their courses. The college anticipates that this training will aid in sustainability of Blackboard Analytics as instructors and faculty will be empowered to use the system as it is relevant to them. In addition, the use of online and hybrid formatting will enable the BTG colleges to meet the needs of the grant's target population by increasing accessibility to college courses. The college is optimistic in facilitating the use of Blackboard Analytics and application of Quality Matters – both statewide initiatives – within the consortium prior to the end of the grant.
- The college has integrated math and English bootcamps into an online format to increase accessibility. With this, the college has established a partnership with a local military recruiter to offer the online bootcamps to potential recruits. This unique partnership will likely result in expansion of developmental education at the college beyond the grant, providing access to a population that may need remedial coursework.
- Staff worked to utilize remaining grant funds for supplemental video development. These videos highlighted technical program module content that students in the programs typically struggled with (so they can reference the material later) and content that could be used as a marketing tool (so potential students could see how the classes are structured). Prior to the end of the grant, these videos were uploaded to the college's YouTube channel and website, and staff anticipated that these videos will be very valuable for future marketing.

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- The Miners Path to Success program at BridgeValley continues to be successful with over 300 enrolled/taking advantage of this opportunity. Staff have reported that this program enables students to be successful in their programs, increases retention, and has resulted in a number of partnerships with local businesses.
- To facilitate collaboration within the consortium under Advanced Manufacturing, the Sector Lead has hosted a webinar with the Manufacturing Institute to develop a crosswalk for curriculum that can be shared among the colleges. The first webinar was reported a success so the Sector Lead will likely host another webinar in the coming months to maintain momentum on this component.
- The college's focus on veteran students has recently paid off as the college was awarded a 100 percent rating and had zero discrepancies in their recent veteran's compliance audit. The

frequency of veteran-specific events, presence of an active Veteran’s Club, and support from the veteran support staff helped the college secure this rating. Grant staff reported that this rating helps show veterans/potential students that the college is a place that will support them throughout their entire educational experience.

- Grant staff were recently certified to instruct Red Hat Academy¹ courses within IT. This certification enables the college to expand program offerings and provides IT students with experience and certifications that are recognized by industry.

EASTERN COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- In an attempt to develop more targeted and strategic recruitment moving forward, Eastern has partnered with Noel Levitz to conduct a needs assessment. This relationship surfaced out of a conference hosted by Noel Levitz, an organization that provides guidance to colleges to better target markets and refine recruitment strategies to increase enrollment. Eastern anticipates that this relationship will be beneficial when considering recruitment strategies beyond the grant.
- The college has started a partnership with WorkAmerica² – a system that enables employers to search for candidates exclusively in trade professions to empower students to find the best job for them in the field. College staff anticipate that this free system will encourage non-traditional students to utilize career services, a challenge that Eastern staff have identified in the past, through online accessibility.
- To facilitate future partnerships, Eastern staff encouraged an IT student to present on their experience within the IT pathway and importance of simulated learning during an employer meeting. The employers found the testimonial to be very valuable, and the student indicated that talking through the IT pathway and their experience was useful as the student begins job searching (i.e., practice for interviews). This unique approach could result in additional partnerships as employers could see firsthand the quality of students that Eastern produces prior to establishing a formal partnership.
- The college continues to work toward full implementation of Blackboard Analytics at their institution. Eastern’s contract with Blackboard has proven to be valuable as staff reported feeling more comfortable with the system and anticipate embedding use of the system into everyday operations. Because of the success Eastern has experienced with the model, the college was invited to present in Charleston at a consortium event discussing how Blackboard is utilized at the institution. Eastern staff reported requests from multiple BTG institutions for one-on-one training and discussions around their use of the system.

MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Through the end of the grant, Mountwest will be reevaluating all components of the grant to pull best practices and lessons learned as decisions regarding sustainability are being made college-wide. While many components are planned to be sustained beyond the grant, this evaluation affords the college the opportunity to learn from the grant and determine how best to modify programs and services to better meet the needs of students going forward.
- In an effort to finalize sustainability plans for BTG components, the college has put together two teams with representatives from grant components on one team and administrators on the other. BTG representatives will work to develop a sustainability plan for their areas, outlining costs and benefits to the college. The administrators will review these plans in the coming months to make

¹ <https://www.redhat.com/en/about/company>

² Retrieved from: <https://www.workamerica.co/index.html>

a final decision regarding sustainability at the institution. Grant leadership indicated that this approach helps facilitate sustainability plan development and decisions at the college.

- The college will be focusing on accessibility of information for students through the end of the grant and beyond. PLA website dashboards and handouts for students completing placement testing will be used to ensure students are aware of their opportunities and course enrollment is streamlined. Grant staff anticipate that these efforts, among others that are still in development, will help expedite and streamline a students' educational experience at the college.
- Through the end of the grant, Mountwest staff have focused their efforts on establishing internship opportunities for students in BTG-funded programs (IT and EDT). These opportunities, totaling nine internships, have been established in the past few months from sector partnership meetings. Staff anticipate continuing to reach out to employers for these types of partnerships, and others, moving forward.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Due to the transition of the ITL out of the college, New River was unavailable for a call prior to the site visit that took place.
- The college has set up OSHA 10 training in partnership with employers in the region to facilitate future sustainability. This opportunity is anticipated to expand with other employers beyond the grant.
- As New River begins to locate additional developmental education faculty, staff are utilizing the co-requisite English curriculum to vet potential candidates. Questions are asked that align with the model to ensure the new faculty are familiar with the model, limiting the need for training.

PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- The establishment of the Advanced Technology Center has enabled Pierpont to expand their capacity and program/course offerings as well as enhance the equipment used in technical programs due to the extra space. The Center has encouraged a number of partnerships with local employers resulting in internships and other opportunities because of the technology-enabled facility that Pierpont provides to their students. The Center was established because of the funds received by the BTG grant.
- Grant staff continue to explore avenues for recruitment including ways to contact students that have been cut from specific BTG programs due to assessment scores. The college wants to contact these individuals to offer information on similar programs. Staff anticipate that this approach will increase enrollment in other BTG programs as there is a pool of potential students that the college plans to target.
- Through the efforts of the BTG grant, Pierpont staff reported a 900 percent increase in the number of graduate from the 2010-2011 and 2015-2016 academic years within the School of Workforce Education. This is compared to the second largest increase within the School of Human Services at 42.9 percent within the same period. Staff attribute this to the strategic efforts (e.g., targeted recruiting, industry partnership strategies, intrusive advising, new developmental education model, and revamped technical programs) facilitated by the BTG funding and anticipate these trends to continue beyond the grant.
- The college is utilizing SkillsUSA to recruit students for technical programs. Recently, an event was hosted at the college that resulted in over 900 attendees. These types of events will likely continue as the college prefers scheduling courses and recruiting students in groups as that is easier to determine if courses will be filled and is more efficient for recruitment staff.

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

- Instructors at Southern have recently shifted focus to a UAV course within the IT program. Because the jobs available in the area do not include large IT hubs, instructors have found creative ways to get students interested in and employed with IT companies in the area. The UAV course will incorporate drone piloting and other technology areas that have been increasing in popularity in the area.
- The college has seen a significant influx of student interest in new drone courses. Recognizing this as a need in the community and an area of interest for students, grant staff have worked to purchase additional equipment and expedite curriculum approval processes to offer a UAV Basic Flight course in the spring. Soon after the course was integrated into the college's catalog, staff reported that it filled up quickly. Instructors and grant staff are optimistic about the potential partnerships and increase in enrollment that this new focus area will bring the college.
- In an effort to facilitate student retention and enrollment, the IT lab was outfitted with new equipment. Grant staff reported that this new equipment directly impacted students in the courses as it enhanced their educational experience, which could impact student retention in the future. In addition, the lab has been utilized for campus tours to generate potential student interest in the IT program, which could subsequently increase student enrollment.
- Welding and Mechatronics students will be competing in the SkillsUSA competition for the second year in a row. Last year, Welding students competed and placed first in the competition. SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry with the goal of ensuring a skilled workforce.³ The competitions enable students to test their skills in the Welding and Mechatronics content areas, providing opportunities for real application of these skillsets.

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Grant staff have developed a soft skills course that will be required in all BTG programs outlining topics such as resume building and interview tips. These soft skills were identified as a need from employers so Northern is working to launch this course in 2017 to meet that need.
- In an effort to sustain BTG programs, Northern is exploring ways to revise accelerated program structures to ensure tuition is collected for the length of the program. The accelerated Chemical Operator is held over 40 weeks but to comply with West Virginia billing, only three semesters have been charged to date. This led to a revenue loss for the college. To counteract this, the college is exploring a revised structure that spans 12-months, enabling the college to charge tuition for the full four semesters.
- The college is currently focusing on advising through presentations to faculty and instructors (both internally and externally), dedication of professional development funds to advising training, and utilizing student services to target alignment between student and advisor (i.e., ensuring that the students has the appropriate advisor).
- The college has shifted focus to program revisions in the last months of the grant. Moving forward, the accelerated Chemical Operator program will shift to a more traditional structure. While still accelerated, the program will be drawn out over more months to ensure students can successfully complete the coursework with optimal retention. These types of program revisions are aimed at increasing student enrollment, ideally leading to ongoing sustainability of these programs.

³ <http://www.skillsusa.org/>

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

- In an effort to increase online offerings at the college, WVUP has developed a shell for online courses to enable faculty to integrate content online faster. This will allow faculty to focus more on hands-on material while in the classroom and afford students the opportunity to access content remotely, increasing accessibility to the programs offered at the college.
- Due to the significant turnover experienced at the college, it became critical to finalize a formal sustainability plan for grant components and personnel. Staff have worked to determine the areas and personnel that will be sustained and others that will be absorbed by the college. To alleviate the burden from the college of sustaining components and personnel at once, grant staff have worked to slowly move funding to the institution. This approach helps ensure that the college can support the additional personnel.
- The college has fully implemented Guided Pathways to Success and has already seen promising data within the freshmen class. Grant leadership reported a higher full-time equivalent (FTE) than in the past. Staff emphasized that this outcome is indicative of the intrusive advising model's success.
- The online Bachelors of Science in Supervisor Management will be launched in the fall. This program will enable all BTG consortium institutions to offer a pathway from 2-year to 4-year degrees.

The following section outlines programmatic updates for each of the nine BTG colleges from September through March 2017.

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

GENERAL

February

While enrollment trends are headed downward since the Fall 2016 semester, Blue Ridge staff indicated that this tends to be the trend for the college. Despite this, grant staff anticipate expanding program offerings beyond the grant to include heavy equipment and engineering focuses.

In the past couple of months, grant staff worked to identify modules and topics for all sectors with lecture portions that could be professionally recorded and embedded on Blackboard. The lectures that were targeted tended to be areas where students struggled and found challenging to ensure that students in the program could access this information at any point in the program. In addition, these recordings will serve as outreach materials as they were placed on the college's YouTube channel.

April

Through the end of the grant, grant staff have prioritized sustainability. This has included ensuring that all components will continue beyond the grant and shifting grant-funded staff into other funding streams.

Grant staff also worked to finalize six supplemental videos that were uploaded to the college's YouTube channel and website. These videos highlighted pieces of technical program modules to use as a marketing tool and highlight areas that students typically struggled with so they can reference the material later.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

October

A recent partnership with Proctor and Gamble has afforded Blue Ridge the opportunity to develop customized training. Mechanical Systems training was offered to 21 P&G employees in early September for three weeks. The success of this training and partnership has resulted in a need to hire additional faculty. With another cohort of P&G employees starting soon, the college will be interviewing for additional faculty and adjunct.

The Mechatronics program has experienced the highest enrollment this semester with 52 students enrolled, compared to 28-30 students last semester. A PLC course will also be embedded online within the Mechatronics program.

December

Advanced Manufacturing staff have been working to obtain a partner for the Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaboration (AMTEC) so the college can use the online training offerings within Fluid Power and other courses that are available.

February

Over the holidays, Blue Ridge experienced turnover as the Advanced Manufacturing Program Coordinator left the college. Grant leadership indicated discussions internally on how to move forward in this program through the rest of the grant and beyond.

April

In late 2016, Blue Ridge experienced turnover as the Advanced Manufacturing Program Coordinator left the college. However, grant leadership have recently hired a new Associate Dean to lead the Advanced Manufacturing program moving forward.

ENERGY**October**

The Energy program also met all program enrollment goals with 40 students in the program this fall. The program is being offered in a block schedule with no more than five students per instructor to ensure safety, especially for the linemen. EDET 100 was offered in a one-week format highlighting protective equipment and other basics. Students attended class for eight hours per day, Monday through Friday, which enables instructors to weed out students as they climb a pole by the end of the week.

The Electric Utility Technology program started another cohort with 19 students, totaling 36 in the program. This program, developed in collaboration with First Energy, currently has a 96 percent retention rate with the first cohort completing the program in May 2017. To further enhance this program, the curriculum is being remapped, including the integration of an Applied Technical Writing class to the first semester of the program; a contextualized, four credit hour course.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**October**

The success of the IT program has resulted in the program meeting all enrollment goals as identified by the grant. Additionally, IT clubs have surfaced at the college for the students enrolled in IT-related programs.

Through the end of the grant, Blue Ridge will work to use all professional development and contractual funds within the consortium. With this, grant staff will be meeting with the college's Chief Financial Officer to determine how best to spend the rest of the grant funds.

Netlab was also purchased by the college, which will be utilized within the consortium to provide virtual lab environments for students enrolled in IT programs. This will enable the colleges to offer more online coursework, which was a goal identified in the BTG project.

December

The Sector Lead anticipates using Professional Development funds to provide advanced training to other BTG colleges both in the use of Blackboard Analytics and application of Quality Matters. Instructors and faculty will be trained on enhanced skills that will enable them to offer curriculum in all delivery formats, notably hybrid and online. Blue Ridge anticipates that this training will aid in sustainability as instructors and faculty will be empowered to utilize Blackboard Analytics and apply Quality Matters in their classes. Additionally, Blue Ridge grant staff anticipate that this training will improve the colleges' abilities to meet the needs of the BTG target population given the constraints they face (e.g., commuting, and families and jobs that prevent students from taking regular courses).

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

A number of activities will be taking place this semester within student support services. These activities include:

- Academic advising began at the end of October and will incorporate guided pathways charts
- Career in Energy Week occurred in early October
- Mock interviews will be occurring later in the fall semester
- Branding workshops with BTG students will occur as well to ensure students are more eligible for employment
- WOWi assessments will be administered to both Advanced Manufacturing and IT students to measure whether these students are in the correct field
- The Careers in Engineering event will occur in February with planning already taking place

December

Peer coaches and counselors have accomplished a number of activities since the evaluation site visit in October. These updates include:

- Coaches and counselors met with students to advise on various topics such as study skills, time management, and scheduling courses;
- Coaches and counselors continued to meet with students on academic probation as well as those identified by the college's academic alert system;
- Coaches and counselors attended a Women in Higher Education conference in Charleston, West Virginia to find ways to increase the number of women at the college as well as women graduates;
- Midterm study tips were handed out to students and available on both campuses;
- Study Skills Workshops were held on both campuses; and
- Peer mentors visited the Technology Center daily and held appointment and walk-in times for students.

February

The Beacon peer coaches continue to host events and assist students in the spring semester. For BTG students, a bubble popping activity was hosted as a stress reducing activity for National Bubble Popping Day.

April

Guided Pathways to Success was implemented at the college prior to the end of the grant period. Staff will continue to make modifications to milestones and critical path courses as these degree maps are rolled out. Because this initiative is an institutional objective, training has been provided to advisors every month to ensure appropriate implementation and utilization of these degree maps.

Support service staff are currently planning for the Energy Employer Day BBQ that will occur in May. This event will enable second-semester students in Energy programs to showcase their talents, as they would have received their one-year certification and could be eligible for employment. A Career Fair will also occur in April, which will target BTG specifically.

Beacon personnel and other support service staff that were brought on by the grant will be maintained beyond the grant through the use of other funding streams.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

The online math boot camps have been developed and will be launched soon. Within English, a number of courses are being offered online. The curriculum within these courses will likely need modifications including determination of whether a cutoff score will need to be utilized. Technical English and writing courses will be implemented in a full co-requisite model in the fall.

December

The college continues to maintain the co-requisite model, a statewide initiative to expedite a student's time in remedial courses and increase the number of students moving into college-level courses.

February

Math and English bootcamps were recorded and embedded online so students could access these videos at any time. With this, staff met with the eLearning Division at the college to discuss additional opportunity for sharing these videos. More specifically, the college was approached by a military recruiter that was interested in using these videos for potential recruits that need help with math and English prior to testing. Discussions around delivery format to be sure that the courses are delivered in a controlled environment have occurred because these students are not degree-seeking and cannot use Blackboard (requires a student ID number). These conversations will likely continue as the college is optimistic about unique opportunities within developmental education.

April

The Foundational English course has been placed online to accommodate more students and will launch in the fall.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

Grant staff are creating daily social media blasts for the Energy program to gear up for potential recruitment opportunities. An IT panel event will occur in November to increase networking opportunities with employers in the industry. Billboards are also being ran in all BTG programs, rotating every three months for the different sectors.

December

The college anticipates hiring a videographer to record important curriculum topics within the Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, and Energy sectors. The topics will focus on core areas in the curriculum and areas that students tend to find challenging. The videos will be shared via the college's YouTube channel for recruitment purposes and also to provide free access to those seeking academic resources. These videos will also be uploaded to Blackboard Analytics so students can access key lecture information.

The college attended company facility tours on several occasions within Advanced Manufacturing. Blue Ridge also hosted two Technician Career Information Workshops with one open to the public and one hosted exclusively with P&G.

Within Energy, an information session was hosted with First Energy. A total of 48 interested candidates in the EUT degree program attended this session. Considering this is a new offering, and the program can only accept cohorts of 25-30 students, the college is optimistic of the outcomes of this program.

February

While there are limited funds for recruitment at this point in the grant, the college has worked to recruit additional students for BTG-funded programs.

April

An information session for potential students in partnership with First Energy was hosted by the college. The session had 70 attendees and the college anticipates another full cohort in the First Energy program to come from that session. The college is also graduating the first cohort in the First Energy program in May. Currently that program has shown a 96% retention rate.

The college partnered with Proctor and Gamble (P&G) to host a Women in Manufacturing event. Grant leadership reported so much interest in this event, that a waiting list had to be developed. (Approximately 125 individuals registered while only 80 could be accommodated.) Through this event, tours at P&G facilities were conducted and presentations on being a woman in the manufacturing industry were made.

The college will continue recruiting for all BTG programs beyond the grant and has developed a recruitment video in collaboration with the local Workforce Development Board.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES**October**

Through the partnership with P&G, interviews, testing, and training will be provided as well as information sessions. P&G leadership have also determined that obtaining offices at the college will be an efficient way to maintain communication. A Delegate luncheon also occurred with P&G leadership to discuss the Advanced Manufacturing sector and impact of P&G in the area.

December

Within Advanced Manufacturing, the college has partnered with Kraft Foods of Winchester to provide PLA training for 30 of their technicians. While this is contracted training, the college anticipates similar opportunities moving forward.

A contract with the Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative was finalized outlining a date that representatives from the company (e.g., Supervisors and Human Resources staff) would visit the college's Technology Center. This opportunity was available due to a previous graduate that was successful at the company. Company leadership were impressed by the student's knowledge and skillset within high-voltage work and wanted to learn more about the college that produced that student.

February

The Job Placement Coordinator has met with Sullivan Films in Winchester twice to discuss Advanced Manufacturing graduates as well as opportunities for their employees to take PLC courses. The Coordinator also discussed Blue Ridge's course offerings resulting in five employees sent to Blue Ridge for additional coursework.

An information session has been scheduled with First Energy to recruit students for the EDET program. Currently, the college is working with P&G to train employees in Mechanical Systems within Advanced Manufacturing. Regular meetings are held to discuss the training schedule and the college anticipates that this partnership will continue well beyond the grant.

April

The college continues to host weekly meetings with P&G staff regarding partnership opportunities. Additionally, the college met with Altec (a company that builds bucket trucks for utility companies) to develop a degree program in Heavy Equipment. In collaboration with Altec, Blue Ridge is currently developing curriculum for this program that will launch in Spring 2018.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with Blue Ridge, the following updates have been identified.

- A lab assistant was hired for the open lab model used within Advanced Manufacturing.
- Within the IT program, courses are being submitted for Quality Matters review.
- Student support service staff attended the Blackboard Analytics training to learn how to run the software and pull data for analysis, especially for BTG students. Service staff reported that the use of Blackboard Analytics increased the responses to the BTG intake form as instructors were able to post the SurveyMonkey link to their dashboards.
- Moving forward, the college will develop a strategic plan for enrollment to increase these outcomes beyond the grant. Much of the grant's activities will focus on sustainability at this point in the grant.
- As the grant closed, staff have worked to upload grant materials into Creative Commons.

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

September

Computer Information Technology has enrolled nearly 35 students, with two BTG graduates that were recently hired full-time at Advanced Technical Solutions. Instructors have been continually examining the curriculum to make modifications to better align with pre-requisites. Instructors have also met with companies to discuss math requirements to make changes to the curriculum and math requirements within this program.

December

Program instructors are continuing to recruit and maintain the program's course offerings, equipment, and industry partnerships. Instructors anticipate gathering information and reporting for the final months of the grant to facilitate project close-out.

February

Through the Linux operating system, BridgeValley will be offering System Administration courses and Red Hat Academy certifications. Blended courses will be integrated into this program upon faculty training completion. Faculty anticipate offering this program in Fall 2017.

April

BridgeValley was certified as a Red Hat Academy enabling the college to launch a System Administration skillset program with plans to launch a System Engineer program once all faculty are certified.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND ENERGY

September

Instructors have been working to pull companies together for sector meetings. CPT training will also be used as a tool to evaluate employees.

December

The Sector Lead hosted a webinar with the Manufacturing Institute to facilitate development of a crosswalk for curriculum within the consortium. The Sector Lead anticipates hosting another webinar in the coming months.

February

In partnership with the Manufacturing Institute, a webinar was offered to all BTG colleges regarding strategies for incorporating certifications into programs. The Manufacturing Institute will be working to contact each BTG institution individually to set up separate webinars.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

September

Instructors have met with faculty from West Virginia University to discuss the program and will likely share curriculum with BridgeValley to use in January 2017. The college is working to market for this program and, locally, the program started in the fall with 10-14 students enrolled.

Employer interest has reportedly increased in this program with the recent revisions to the focus of the program from design to management. A CPT program is currently being offered with seven students enrolled, four of which will likely be hired by the company that has a relationship with the college.

January

Grant faculty are working on refining the courses they are offering including revamping lab exercise and course content. New courses have been offered this semester but the program is mainly focusing on fine-tuning the program through the remainder of the grant.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

September

Career Services

PLA website branding was recently completed with a toolkit meeting occurring in October to troubleshoot issues with email verification. The College Central Network currently has 199 students and 137 employers, 37 of which are BTG, registered in the network. Additionally, career fairs, information sessions, and resume workshops have been offered to students at the college. Staff will also be attending a conference in October hosted by the Council for Experimental Learning.

Counseling and Peer Coach Services

The peer coaches have been working with students within the Miners Path to Success program with over 300 students currently utilizing this opportunity. Peer coaches will continue meeting with students in the coming weeks.

A Suicide Prevention and Awareness workshop was held in early September with over 100 students from both campuses in attendance. Domestic Violence Awareness month will be occurring soon so staff are beginning preparations for events during this month as well.

December

The student support services continue to provide veteran, career, and beacon services to students and will be assisting students through finals week and the end of the semester.

January

Career Services

The success of the College Central Network continues with 213 students registered and 45 active users. Additionally, 155 employers are registered in the system with 39 classified as BTG-related employers.

Career-related events will continue beyond the grant with two career fairs anticipated in April. The last career fair, occurring in Fall 2016, was the most successful to date with 50 employers in attendance.

A series of lunch-and-learn workshops will be offered in March and April to students targeting the following topics:

- Resume building
- Interview and professional dress
- Company expectations with Human Resource company representatives

Peer Coaching Services

Coaches have been working to contact students to check on their first few weeks of the spring semester. Once this was complete, the coaches worked on the Miners Path to Success activities. The coaches also held their regular meet-and-greet during the first couple of weeks into the spring semester.

Veteran Services

A number of activities have taken place/will take place within the veteran services component of the grant, including:

- Care packages sent to deployed military personnel in December
- VA Work Study checking in on the students in January
- Certifying new students and registering them in the VA system in January
- “Green Light a Vet” event to support veterans transitioning into civilian life in January
- Valentines for Veterans event (sending valentines to deployed personnel) in February
- Recruiting event at Goodwill Industries in February
- Habitat for Humanity event with the Veteran’s Club in March
- Veteran’s priority registration and workshops in April
- Military Appreciation Month in April
- Commencement month, includes selling flowers in May

A veteran’s audit took place in January and grant staff reported that they passed with zero discrepancies and received a 100 percent rating. This compliance is critical for the college as it shows veterans that they will be taken care of properly and that their benefits would be provided in a timely manner.

April*Peer Coaching Services*

Grant staff reported an influx of students meeting with peer coaches and counselors one-on-one. Peer coaches and counselors will also be holding a number of events including a health and wellness fair, Safe Spring Break event, alcohol awareness workshop, and other workshops. The peer coaches also participated in events and reported the third meeting with students under Miners Path to Success.

Veteran Services

During the final month of the grant, staff reported attending recruiting events and have placed staff at armory base for recruitment opportunities. Staff will continue to reach out to veterans and veteran-focused organizations/companies for recruitment purposes beyond the grant. Since the last evaluation discussion the Veterans Club also finished the Habitat for Humanity project with 13 attendees.

In the following months, a number of events are expected to take place and include: veteran workshop to discuss VA benefits, priority registration for veteran students, Military Appreciation month, and Veterans Club commencement annual flower sale.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**September**

In the first steps to GPS implementation, general education block scheduling has been implemented in technical program courses. Additionally, staff are continuing to work to modify Professions class for technical programs, which would serve as an alternative to English course. Generally, courses are being modified to better meet the needs of students and help streamline developmental education

at BridgeValley. Faculty are attending conferences and planning regional development sessions to discuss and enhance learning techniques.

December

Staff are meeting to discuss Liberal Arts Math – Math Reasoning – within IT to add detailed course objectives that meet the needs of IT students. Developmental education staff are working on the paperwork to finalize this change. The college will also continue meeting regarding changes to other courses including Applied Technical Math and English Technical Writing.

January

Grant staff indicated that a number of students have been placed in the wrong classes this semester so the math and English departments and faculty worked to correct this early in the semester. To alleviate this problem in the future, staff suggested a mandatory advising training.

In addition, the Professions class for technical students was put in the course catalog but programs that wanted their students to complete this course had to wait for students to drop courses so they could add the Professions course to their schedules. However, when this did not happen, the course ended up with no enrolled students. This course will be modified to generate student interest and ensure that it is a viable option for them in the coming semester.

April

The college is continuing with the co-requisite model and anticipates sustaining this model well beyond the grant.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

September

Grant staff continue to send faculty to professional development opportunities, training them on recruitment strategies. BridgeValley also continues to recruit students through other strategies such as commercials and billboards.

December

Grant staff attended events through partnerships with local companies. A Safety Fair was hosted by Alcon and another fair was hosted by the college's partner NGK.

February

Staff continue to reach out to local organizations and partners, and host events to recruit potential students. An Engineering Day was hosted at the ATC and staff continue to visit the VA Centers, drug courts, shelters, and the Second Step Program.

April

Recruitment for all programs will continue beyond the grant including veteran-specific and targeted recruitment strategies.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

September

BridgeValley continues to enhance sector strategies at the college with an IT Advisory Committee meeting and sector strategies meeting occurring this semester.

December

College staff have participated in partner tours and continue to host sector meetings. The next sector meeting will be hosted by the IT sector in the first quarter of 2017.

February

While an IT sector meeting has not been hosted, the Advisory Committee continues to meet. For other sector meetings, employers will be recruited for mock interviews with students in April.

New partnerships with IT companies have been established for learn-and-earn opportunities.

April

Within IT, the Advisory Committee will incorporate Red Hat Academy representatives. Within Manufacturing, both the chemical energy and manufacturing sector meetings will take place soon and continue beyond the grant. Staff will work to increase membership in these sector meetings as well.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with BridgeValley, the following updates have been identified.

- USDOL attended BridgeValley for the monitoring visit in early September.
- The college is developing a sustainability plan for all components of the grant. A template provided by Jobs for the Future is being utilized.
- Grant leadership are working on grant close-out for the remaining month of the grant.
- The PLA website, now that branding and marketing are complete, is set to launch in February.
- Through the grant process, staff reported a number of successes including the co-requisite model and prior learning assessments.
- Staff also indicated challenges around understanding grant requirements and impact on the college (i.e., the grant encompassed so many areas of the college that it was difficult to complete everything).

EASTERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

GENERAL

October

Eastern is preparing to offer credential assessments this semester with credentials embedded into courses. Additionally, the Tech Center will be outfitted with Learning Lab computers so students do not have to travel to campus to access the technology.

December

With the semester coming to an end, BTG programs have been working to administer certifications. Data will be collected on the pass rates of these certifications at the close of the semester.

WIND/MANUFACTURING

February

Through the remainder of the grant, faculty will work to refine and restructure both the Electromechanical and Wind Energy certificate programs, including the degree in Wind Energy Technology. Through these programs, the PMMI certification was piloted in December 2016. However, only one student out of the six passed the certification exam. Eastern staff attributed this to the fact that the certification test was not embedded in the course's grade. With the loss of an instructor in these programs, PMMI sections needed to be rescheduled for 2017. Now that PMMI certifications are embedded into the courses, instructors anticipate more successful results this semester.

April

Only one student out of six passed the PMMI certification within Advanced Manufacturing. The test will be offered again in the coming weeks and staff are exploring ways to increase the passing rate. The lack of a full-time staff person in this sector has made it difficult to move forward as there is no one to lead these efforts.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

February

To encourage degree completion, Eastern instructors met with faculty from other educational institutions to discuss articulation agreements. IT courses from other institutions were also evaluated to determine whether these courses aligned. Course and program equivalencies were provided to these colleges to develop pathways in Programming and Software Development, Interactive Media, and Network Systems.

April

Recently, five students completed their final certification exam.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

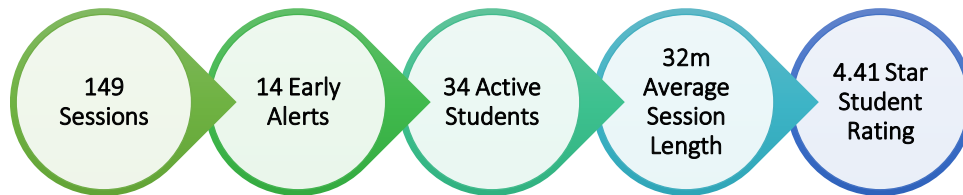
The Eastern Advocates are continuing to provide services to students through the end of the grant. Tutor.com is also continuing to provide services to students with the most frequent use of the system showing for this semester.

December

Staff continue to implement support services including the use of Eastern Advocates and tutor.com. Eastern has also started a WorkAmerica campaign this month to encourage student participation and utilization of career services. WorkAmerica⁴ is a company that seeks out local business partners in skills trades and colleges to create a bridge between students and local companies. This database holds student and employer profiles to enable students to find employment and employers to seek out qualified employees. Initial correspondence regarding this partnership and system has been sent out to students to encourage profile creation. Eastern anticipates that this system will be more accessible to students, encouraging students to utilize career services.

February

Through the end of the grant, staff reported continuing services as usual. The tutor.com resource continues to experience positive results including the following from October through December 2016:



The college’s first Resource Fair was held in November 2016 for veterans. Participants from 10 vendors attended as well as approximately 140 people (including both family members and veterans).

April

Students continue to use tutor.com and provide positive feedback to Eastern staff. This resource will continue beyond the grant.

A number of activities will be taking place in the coming months within student support services, including:

- Mock interviews with wind farm companies
- Veteran Resource Fair
- Quarterly Veteran Collaboration meetings

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

Eastern continues to offer the co-requisite model at the college and will analyze data from this model in the coming semesters to determine whether modifications and expansions are needed moving forward.

December

Eastern continues to offer developmental education with plans to shift to the co-requisite model by Spring 2017. The college will be compiling data from the fall semester to compare model success.

⁴ Retrieved from: <https://www.workamerica.co/>

February

A number of outcomes from October to December 2016 were reported including:

- Pass rates in developmental English remain high, with completing students recording between 88 and 100 percent pass rates for the previous five semesters. Grant staff indicate that consistent staffing promoted stability and regular course improvements.
- Developmental math pass rates continue on an upward trend. Pass rates for completers were the highest (nearly 86 percent) in math courses with consistent instructors. For courses with new instructors, pass rates for completers tended to decrease (from 100 percent to 50 percent in the following semester).

April

Eastern is working toward a full co-requisite model and are seeing progress in English toward this model. Math developmental education is struggling to make the change but will attempt to incorporate the co-requisite model into their department moving forward.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

The college is in the process of restructuring recruitment strategies to determine the best avenues moving forward. Despite the loss of the PR Director, the college is preparing for a site visit from Noel Levitz to conduct a needs assessment, determining best practices for better and more strategic recruitment. Blackboard Analytics data is also being used to target the best avenues for recruiting students.

The college is working to implement the Full Measured Education Application, an application that attempts to close the communication gap, encouraging student enrollment and applications to the college.

December

The college recently hosted a Media-thon to bring together staff and local media for a Ted Talk-type event, as well as a Media Showcase to allow local media vendors to show the college the services that they can provide. From these events, the college decided that media interaction and college marketing must be strategic. Through the assistance from a marketing consultant, a plan will be developed to finalize effective and efficient marketing strategies.

The college also created a Hampshire County Think Tank to encourage a pipeline of high school students from Hampshire County to Eastern. The college will work to promote programs in an effort to increase college enrollment.

February

Eastern staff continue to recruit for Fall 2017 programs applying the same strategies utilized throughout the grant (e.g., employer and community relationships, social media, etc.).

April

Recruitment strategies continue as planned.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

October

The Veterans Coordinator is working to establish a quarterly meeting with employers, a Resource Fair will be held in November, and a state representative met with the college regarding the Five-Star Challenge. The college also attended the Rural Community College Alliance conference to discuss sector strategies and partnership growth.

December

The college continues to host regular DCED meetings with the next meeting scheduled for December 16th. Grant staff are also working to integrate a Professional Development segment into these meetings that focuses on simulated workforce as it relates to the IT industry.

February

The quarterly DCED meeting was held in December. An IT student presented during this meeting to discuss experienced within the IT pathway at Eastern. Staff anticipate incorporating the student testimonials into the DCED meetings moving forward.

April

The college will continue to offer District Consortium meetings, which were reported as growing in attendance. Online curriculum based off of Amatrol's eLearning curriculum will be used to enhance the Advanced Manufacturing program moving forward.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with Eastern, the following updates have been identified.

- Eastern continues to work on getting BTG courses Quality Matters-certified.
- The Technology Learning Lab has recently been outfitted with computers to provide students with a space to work. The Learning Lab also enables students to have easier access to tutor.com services.
- To facilitate more effective outreach, the college is looking to hire a Marketing Strategist to help the college research and create a media/outreach plan.
- Through Eastern's contract with BBDA, a representative will return in March for one-on-one assistance with the dashboards as staff have found them difficult to navigate.
- Faculty turnover was an ongoing challenge for Eastern throughout the grant. The recent loss of the full-time Advanced Manufacturing faculty forced Eastern to recruit adjuncts for the remainder of the grant period.
- Eastern presented in Charleston on the utilization of Blackboard Analytics and will be offering one-on-one assistance to colleges. Staff at Eastern feel confident utilization

MOUNTWEST COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

GENERAL

December

The college is working to finalize a sustainability plan outlining how the college will absorb BTG components moving forward. Two teams have been developed to establish and finalize sustainability plans in their areas. These teams and their responsibilities are outlined below:

BTG faculty and student services, Testing Center, PLA, and BBDA representatives	Develop plans to sustain their areas
Administrators	Read through plans, costs, and benefits of these components to the institution to make the ultimate decision of sustainability

January

The focus for the remainder of the grant is sustainability of grant-funded components. The technical programs currently functioning under the BTG grant are being maintained through the rest of the grant and beyond (depending on the sustainability outcome).

The sustainability task force continues to meet informally but will need a formal meeting to finalize the sustainability plan and submit to the college’s administrators.

April

The final BTG cohort is on track to graduate in Summer 2017. Students are currently completing spring semester course and have registered for summer courses, which will be completed in July 2017.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

October

The final cohort that will fall within the grant is currently moving through the program. However, faculty will be meeting in the coming months to discuss sustainability and best practices to determine next steps.

April

The fast-track program continues and faculty have recently completed the sustainability plan.

ENGINEERING DESIGN TECHNOLOGY AND EDET

October

The USDOL monitoring visit found that the OEOE model EDT program cannot move forward. With this, the colleges were asked to fund this program themselves. The college has decided to maintain the program through the end of the spring semester but has ceased all marketing and recruitment efforts. To date, no students have enrolled in the program.

April

Students are progressing through this program. Due to work schedules and other external barriers, no students participated in the enhanced EDT program that utilized Open Labs.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

Mountwest continues to maintain the student support services that are in place through the end of the grant. Grant staff are continuing conversations about sustainability to ensure that counselors and peer coaches continue beyond the grant.

December

The fast-track IT and EDT counselors have accepted jobs within the college and will no longer be offering their services to the BTG programs. Another counselor has been assigned to the programs, however, and the college is working to finalize the paperwork.

Peer coaches and support service staff are working to complete student registration for Spring 2017.

January

A new counselor has been brought on through March. This individual will be taken into BTG classrooms to meet with students. Grant leadership are unsure whether this position will be sustained beyond the grant.

April

The Student Success Counselor continues to monitor students in both the IT fast-track and EDT programs. A total of 36 meetings with EDT students and 19 meetings with IT fast-track students were reported.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

Grant staff reported that developmental education will proceed with 'business as usual' through the end of the grant. Developments in this area will continue beyond the grant.

December

The co-requisite model is being maintained at the college and staff will continue to monitor success of this model, making modifications as necessary.

January

Grant staff are examining placement test scores within math, reading, and English. These faculty have worked together to ensure these test scores are aligned to where students are being placed. A handout will be created for students completing placement testing to ensure they know where they are going, helping students understand their results and how they are used within the institution.

April

The current developmental education model – co-requisite – is continuing.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

Recruitment in BTG-funded programs has ceased until the end of the grant. The cohorts in the IT and EDT programs will continue through the end of the grant while Mountwest determines the best routes moving forward for both of these programs.

December

Staff are still recruiting for the open entry, open exit EDT program that is no longer being funded by CTCS.

January

The college will no longer be recruiting under BTG until after the grant ends.

April

The BTG recruiter's position, funded through the grant, ended as of March 31. Through March, the recruiter continued with outreach at the local workforce development board office, among other locations, targeting adult learners.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

October

Sector meetings for IT and Manufacturing are being planned for the semester.

December

No additional partnerships have been developed since the Evaluation Team's site visit in November 2016.

January

Grant leadership anticipate hosting one more sector meeting for EDT in mid-February. The sector meetings will be built into the sustainability plan so these meetings will continue beyond the grant. These meetings are critical to ensuring that the college is meeting the industry's needs.

April

The college hosted a Manufacturing Sector meeting in February, which was attended by 13 business partners and 12 faculty. The college also established three new partnerships for internships, which will result in two internship opportunities for students. These companies included: nCompass Network, Syntech Creative, and The Woodlands Retirement Community.

An additional six internships were established with the following companies:

- Huntington Steel (manufacturing sector)
- Richwood Industries (IT sector)

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with Mountwest, the following updates have been identified.

- College-wide discussions around sustainability are continuing while the college determines the best avenue moving forward.
- College staff have been participating in webinars hosted by CTCS regarding retention and sustainability to further refine their plan moving beyond the grant.
- The PLA website is being set up so it is easier for students to access the information they need. Grant leadership met with the college's Marketing department to develop the webpage.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

February

A number of enrollment and graduate updates were provided, including:

- Three EMI degree graduates within accelerated program, which started in October 2016;
- Six workforce Welding students are currently enrolled; and
- 29 EDET students in learn-and-earn opportunities.

In addition, OSHA 10 training for employers is being offered at the ATC and a part-time Instructional Specialist has completed hybrid components of the EDET program. The Instructional Specialist will work on hybridizing the EMI program as well.

April

Students in the Welding program completed their OSHA 10 courses in February, receiving a certification. A total of 15 students in the EDET program received OSHA training and certifications as well. EDET program faculty are working to develop an assessment to gauge ongoing student interest in the program in an effort to increase engagement and retention. Additionally, the college's part-time Instructional Designer is working to embed the EDET program on Blackboard.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

February

The program was awarded an Advance grant, which will contribute to sustainability of the IT program beyond the grant.

Two IT students received their A+ certificates from the on-site testing center.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

February

From October to December 2016, over 400 student contacts were made by peer coaches. Currently, staff are working with peer coaches on BBDA through workshops that offer one-on-one assistance.

April

Peer coaches are continuing to help students one-on-one and have focused their efforts on Blackboard Analytics assistance. Peer coaches have also assisted in the planning of the Technology Expo – an event that will bring together the community and employers to discuss technical programs and curriculum. Through the end of the semester, peer coaches will continue to assist students through resume writing workshops for the EDET program and other programs located at the Advanced Technology Center. The college is currently hosting Advisement Days to help staff prepare for summer and fall advising sessions.

The peer coaches will be maintained through the end of the semester and, depending on the state budget, will be prioritized in funding decisions moving forward. The college's administration recognizes the value of peer coaches and the impact these individuals have on student success, and will prioritize these positions moving forward.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

February

There are no significant updates to provide within developmental education. This component will be maintained as it is for the remainder of the grant.

April

The co-requisite model will continue beyond the grant. As the college begins recruiting for English faculty positions within this model, the curriculum is being used to vet potential candidates to ensure they are familiar with the co-requisite model. Additionally, math faculty will be sent for additional training on this model over the summer.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

February

A new college-wide recruiter was hired in December 2016 and has been working on community outreach. Peer coaches and Welding faculty have assisted with outreach as well. The faculty have been active in the high schools and have taken the virtual welder to act as an outreach tool. A total of six presentations across the region were conducted.

April

Recruiting events (including career fairs) with the Institute of Technology are currently underway for the INDT program. Instructors for this program also visited two CTE schools to recruit as well. Instructors in the Welding program are recruiting as well (at four local high schools). Finally, recruitment is underway for the summer EDET program.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS STRATEGIES

February

Staff met with employers (e.g., Pepsi, UTC, Pike, River City, etc.) for EDET program recruitment and learn-and-earn opportunities in November. The college is also working with employers for the Tech Expo that will occur in May 2017.

April

Learn-and-Earn opportunities have been set up in a number of programs at New River including INDT (one opportunity) and EDET (23 students in Learn-and-Earn opportunities and three internships at River City).

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with New River, the following updates have been identified.

- The college requested a final budget modification but are unsure whether this will be approved before the end of the grant period.
- The consortium has been working on a Welding pathway that will allow CTE students to earn up to 16 credits.
- The college is working to integrate BBDA into everyday operations in an effort to make more data-informed decisions moving forward.

PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

GENERAL

April

Grant leadership reported utilizing the Advanced Technology Center even more in the past few months with plans to continue expanding the program offerings within that facility moving forward.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING/ENERGY

October

Pierpont has been working to finalize the setup for the ATC with equipment and labs installed and ready for the semester. For the Energy program, the schedule includes courses from Monday through Friday with 57 students currently enrolled.

November

Program instructors recently received Simtronics simulators to embed into Advanced Manufacturing courses. Instructors are in the process of ensuring that the use of these simulators is documented in Blackboard Analytics. Currently, there are 63 students in the program. However, grant staff anticipate losing a few students over the course of the program.

February

The courses within the Applied Process Technology program are all full for Spring 2017.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

October

Instructors within the IT program have been working to contact companies in the area to establish an Advisory Council. Cybersecurity has been an area identified as a target for the college in establishing relationships with companies as well as finalizing a program. Seven courses have been launched this fall within the Cybersecurity program.

February

The focus of the remainder of the grant is to launch the Cybersecurity program within Information Technology. A faculty member has been hired to lead this program, which will start in Fall 2017.

April

Faculty will continue to work toward online and distance learning opportunities within this program beyond the grant.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

Grant staff have been meeting with Ellucian to map out processes and strategies in the student services area as well as areas for improvement. Consultants will be hired to assist with streamlining staff size, capacity, and processes moving forward.

Staff also attended a conference for non-traditional students and visited a few armories to recruit students. Mainly, staff have worked to manually call individuals to recruit them as they may not utilize technology.

November

The college is meeting to discuss budgeting within support services due to the need for additional funding in personnel. Grant leadership anticipates utilizing these funds for student employment (i.e., peer coaches and counselors).

February

Pierpont anticipates hiring five peer coaches through the end of March. Peer coaches were not initially hired because the previous President did not support this model. However, the new President fully supports the peer coaching model and committed to hiring five through the end of the grant.

April

Support service staff are focusing on recruitment and are out in the community generating relationships and conducting outreach.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

Within the Energy program, the first year curriculum was designed without formal math in the first semester, focusing, rather, on basics. Adjunct instructors teach math formulas for volumetric calculations in the first semester, and diagnostic testing is occurring to understand math strengths and weaknesses regarding online course options so students can use that time to prepare for second semester math.

November

The college continues to maintain the co-requisite model, a statewide initiative to expedite a student's time in remedial courses and increase the number of students moving into college-level courses. The college is examining the co-requisite modeling and scheduling to determine its alignment with pathway maps.

February

Pierpont is continuing with the current approach to developmental education (e.g., testing, stretch classes, etc.) through the end of the grant.

Pierpont's President met with the Governor of West Virginia to discuss developmental education. These discussions focused on preparing community college students for the demands of four-year institutions as well as establishing a pathway from high school through community college and four-year institutions to increase degree completion. These conversations will likely continue beyond the grant as Pierpont and the Governor work to establish a plan that could be written into legislation.

April

This model is being maintained and will continue beyond the grant.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

A number of activities and events have taken place, including:

- Family Weekend with Fairmont College
- Initiative with local WV station to host high school tailgates with interview segments to advertise the opportunities at Pierpont

- Fall Open House in October with tours, pride guides, and interactive sessions within academic interest area to help refine interests
- Trip to Pennsylvania for recruiting

November

An event with over 200 interested students in the Lineman program was hosted by the college. While the number that subsequently enrolled in the program went down to 28 due to assessment scores, college staff anticipate exploring avenues for contacting students after they have been cut to offer other programs such as the Applied Process and Petroleum Technology programs.

February

Grant staff have been discussing targeted recruitment strategies within BTG with Pierpont departments in an effort to replicate these efforts across the institution as a whole. These discussions will be ongoing as best practices and unique methods are presented to the college.

A traveling exhibit highlighting the history of the state has been utilized to recruit potential students to the ATC. Generally, Pierpont is attempting to shift the focus in the state to utilizing community colleges as a starting point and developmental education before moving to a four-year institution.

April

The college is utilizing SkillsUSA to recruit students for technical programs. Recently, an event was hosted at the college that resulted in over 900 attendees. These types of events will likely continue as the college prefers scheduling courses and recruiting students in groups as that is easier to determine if courses will be filled and is more efficient for recruitment staff.

The college is working on a commercial for the institution with inclusion of technical programs.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

October

The college is collaborating with the WVU Industrial Extension Group to identify courses that are Energy-related for incumbent worker populations. The program is also continuing contact with supporters (e.g., First Energy and Longview Power) to establish internships and other opportunities.

The college is working with the WDB to assist employees laid off from companies in Randolph County. A part-time staff member was hired to assist with financial aid and enrollment into the institution for these individuals, among others.

November

Five different companies have contacted the college to obtain graduates from BTG programs within Manufacturing and Maintenance occupations. The college anticipates utilizing these companies as Advisory Board members.

February

Grant staff are planning a Lunch-and-Learn event and will invite over 60 companies from the area.

April

Relationship building strategies will continue beyond the grant.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with Pierpont, the following updates have been identified.

- The ATC’s official launch will occur in late October but students are already taking classes at the center.
- The lead recruiter for BTG programs has recently left the college to accept a position at Fairmont State.
- The college continues to discuss the potential for Blackboard Analytics. Ellucian representatives will be brought in to discuss data analytics and the viability of using Blackboard at the institution.
- Through internal analysis, grant staff found positive outcomes tied to technical/workforce program enrollment. Grant staff examined graduation rates between two academic years: 2010-2011 and 2015-2016 in the four schools at Pierpont. It is important to note that most BTG students were in the School of Workforce Education.

School of Human Services	Number of graduates dropped 42.9%
School of Business	Number of graduates dropped 11.1%
School of Healthcare	Number of graduates increased 23.4%
School of Workforce Education	Number of graduates increased 900% (from 6 to 60 students)

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING – WELDING, MECHATRONICS, AND EDT

October

Many of the programs are reporting successful enrollment numbers this semester with graduation rates expected to increase once students complete the program. The EDT program in particular had to add sections to the program to accommodate the increasing number of interested students in the program. Additionally, instructors in the Welding program will be attending training to become a certified welding instructor in November. This will enable the college to administer certification exams at the college, increasing accessibility to students. The Welding program also anticipates purchasing two additional welding trainings to increase capacity (i.e., more students can be enrolled in the program at one time).

November

Program instructors worked with the University Transfer Department to identify math skills needed in the program to develop a new technical math course. The curriculum is currently moving through the internal approval processes.

January

Since the November 2016, Southern's Welding instructor completed certification training.

March

Welding and Mechatronics students will be participating in SkillsUSA for the second year. Last year, Welding students placed first in this competition.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

October

The IT program is working to integrate courses within the program online to increase accessibility to the program. Instructors are also working to expand course offerings including a UAV course, through Perkins funds, which will be a three credit-hour course. With this course, instructors worked to become a certified drone pilot.

Enrollment in the program has significantly increased with over 30 students currently enrolled in the program. Because of this, the IT program has experienced challenges in offering additional course sections due to the need for additional instructors. Despite these challenges, Southern WV is still actively recruiting for this program including visits to local high schools to showcase the new drone course offerings.

November

Program instructors indicated that all spring courses within IT are full with every instructor teaching over 20 credit hours. Instructors are also working to schedule a UAV Basic Flight course, which will be open to ten students in the spring. This course also filled up quickly and will be used as an elective course for IT students.

Instructors are also working to obtain their FAA commercial flying certification for the drone to teach the course. The instructors will be receiving this certification in December.

Using other funds, the program was able to purchase additional drones due to the significant student interest and five more simulators. BTG grant funds were also used to purchase televisions to update IT classrooms equipped with touch screens, and a color laser printer.

Students are working to complete their final certification exams during finals week. The program maintains a 99 percent passage rate with only one person failing the certification exam that attempted it.

January

The lab at the Logan campus has been outfitted with a projection system and monitors. Staff reported that these upgrades drastically improved the classroom environment. High school students have also toured this new lab as a marketing tool.

March

Staff purchased additional supplies for the lab, which was reported by grant staff as having an immediate positive impact on students.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

Southern is continuing to offer support services to students with plans to hire an additional peer coach in the coming months. Additionally, the counselor on the Logan campus has accepted another position but the college anticipates filling this position before the end of the grant.

November

Because of the recent loss of the BTG counselor, the support service staff have been working to allocate work amongst the staff.

The college is working to get technical studies involved in national student organizations (e.g., National Technical Honor Society and Skills USA) to increase recognition of these programs in the community and provide different opportunities to students (e.g., competing in Skills USA Welding competition).

January

Since the loss of the Developmental Education Coordinator, the college has been challenged with finding a replacement because this person would only serve through March. If this position is not filled, other Southern staff will cover the responsibilities through the end of the grant.

March

As the college moves into sustainability of grant components, the college is working to locate other funding streams to sustain support service staff. Until June, additional funding was located to support the tutoring services. The college is committed to sustaining all grant components but requires additional funding to make that possible. Through the next few months, sustaining these components will be a focus.

Through June, the college secured a part-time tutor to serve the Lincoln and Boone campuses. In addition, the peer coaches have conducted the final SAT workshop for the semester with 25 participants in total.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

Instructors and grant staff have been examining Welding and EDT programs to determine changes that could be made to English and math courses. More specifically, a math course will be added – Industrial Occupation – to the Welding curriculum based on need identified by employers. In the EDT program, courses are being examined to identify competencies and cross-over between programs.

Two part-time Developmental Education Coordinators have been brought on and will serve all of the campuses. These individuals will assist with tutoring students moving forward. ACT workshops have also been offered to help students prep for the ACT. Grant staff anticipate that these workshops will supplement information gained from the boot camps provided at the college.

November

Tutors have been busy assisting and preparing students for finals week. With that, the college will also be hosted a range of workshops including ACT preparation. In addition, the full-time Developmental Education Coordinator worked to produce a commercial highlighting testimonials from students currently in BTG programs to recruit and market these programs in the community.

January

ATC bootcamps were held at different campuses in math and developmental education math.

March

Staff are working to revise goals within the technical math course and have finalized the course schedule for the fall semester.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

A database has been implemented at the college that will provide data and information on recruiting at the college. This system will also enable the college to 'tag' BTG students to streamline tracking.

November

A number of recruitment activities have taken place in the last month. These events include:

- Job fair at Logan Convention Center
- Setting up table at WorkforceWV
- Open house within Allied Health, with opportunities to recruit for IT through drone equipment
- Visits to middle schools to discuss IT program
- Visits from middle schools to tour IT facility
- Taking IT drone equipment to Marshall University for Agriculture Showcase

January

Recruitment strategies have continued since November 2016 with a slight slowdown of these efforts reported by grant leadership due to the holidays.

March

Recruitment activities will continue beyond the grant including school visits and other activities. A new staff member was hired within the Marketing department to assist with media presence.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

October

A number of activities have taken place within this area, including utilizing the new Manufacturing Extension Partnership staff member to better connect with manufacturing companies in the area and hosting sector partnership meetings within this sector.

November

The college is working with local middle schools to establish partnerships and opportunities for marketing.

January

A Manufacturing Extension Partnership meeting was held with West Virginia University, which included workshops for manufacturers. A number of companies have been contacted within Energy and Information Technology programs for potential partnerships as well.

March

Sector partnership strategies will continue beyond the grant and staff will continue efforts to expand these partnerships. Within the Welding program, an employer approached the college to train their employees. With this, faculty are working to finalize curriculum for this opportunity.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with Southern WV, the following updates have been identified.

- Grant staff will attend a Kael conference in November to work toward finalization of a PLA policy.
- A consultant from Blackboard Analytics was brought in to assist the college with report development. A report was generated that will enable the college to track how many semesters, on average, it takes students to graduate and other information.
- Sustainability will remain a focus through the end of the grant and beyond.
- The college is working on advanced pathways (beyond Guided Pathways to Success) to create pathways from high school to beyond the college.
- Staff indicated Blackboard Analytics, finding credentialed and qualified faculty and staff, and getting everyone on the same page as the most significant challenges throughout the grant period.
- The co-curricular model (namely tutoring services), revised curriculum, and new program offerings were reported as successes from the grant.

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING/ENERGY

October

Since the start of the semester, instructors have worked to modify curriculum, combining courses across different curricula within programs (e.g., instead of teaching Electricity across multiple programs, the college will teach one course). While enrollment numbers are low in this program, which could be due to the lack of recruitment in the beginning and less plant closures in the area, the programs remain successful. Enrollment is low in the Petroleum and Welding programs but the accelerated Chemical Operator program is going well and has 10 students enrolled. The non-credit Welding program started in May and four sessions have been completed.

December

The Chemical Operator program started its third section with 10 students enrolled. In preparation for the 4th session of this program, additional equipment and trainers have been purchased. Faculty have also discussed a new structure to the program to ensure sustainability. Because the accelerated program occurs over the course of 40 weeks, to comply with how the state bills for tuition, the college can only charge students for three semesters. This structure loses the college money so to counteract this, the college anticipates shifting the structure to a 12-month program so ensure it spans four semesters. Grant staff hope to begin marketing this revised structure in Summer 2017.

With the close of the semester, the Welding program has begun issuing certifications to students that pass their exams.

February

The fourth session of the Chemical Operator program has been started with ten students registered in the program. This session will include site visits to local plants to expose students to the workforce. The accelerated Chemical Operator program will start in June and complete the following June.

Grant staff are working to develop Petroleum and Advanced Manufacturing curriculum for a new accelerated certificate that will likely be offered in December. For the current Petroleum program, it is being offered in block scheduling to make it easier for instructors teaching on different campuses. In addition, the Welding program is currently certifying students.

April

Students in the Petroleum program have earned their online certification and will earn another industry certification in the coming month. These students have also recently obtained their OSHA certification through this program.

The Welding program continues with two cohorts due to the influx of interest in this program. Because all of the students could not be accommodated, Welding faculty had to offer morning and evening classes.

The piloted, accelerated Chemical Operator program that started July 2016 will see eight out of ten students graduate (the other two need to finish classes) on April 15th. Another cohort will start in June under a modified program that will last 12.5 months versus 14 weeks to ensure the students can

successfully complete the coursework. In addition, program staff purchased supplies in the final months of the grant to support the program moving forward.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

October

The Cybersecurity program has been successful with 8-12 students currently enrolled. The instructors are currently working on establishing the schedules for the spring semester.

December

Faculty and staff continue discussions around a 2+2 Cybersecurity program and anticipate bringing the curriculum to the college's committee for approval in January.

February

At least ten people are enrolled in the Cybersecurity program.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

The two peer coaches within IT currently serve all campuses, to assist students learning from remote instructors. Within other programs, the peer coaches assist instructors in labs and with classroom work (e.g., research and work with the students). The Beacon coaches are working on retention activities including contacting students that were registered but did not sign up for classes, ensuring students are aware of campus resources, updating student information in their files, and finalizing all file folders for students that are classified as BTG.

December

Two individuals from a Florida college visited Northern to discuss intrusive advising and how it is used at their institution. These individuals were at the college for two days and talked with staff and faculty about this approach in an effort to further refine services at Northern. A debrief meeting will be scheduled internally to further discuss how to move forward.

February

The department is currently examining students who did not return to the college after the fall semester. The department is also working with students to ensure they are placed with the right advisor. These efforts will continue beyond the grant but the peer coach position will likely end in March.

April

The peer coaches will continue through the end of the semester and have been working to prep students for graduation. The Chemical Operator advisor will continue through December to make sure the students have achieved the requirements for graduation.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

The accelerated Chemical Operator program has started to offer a co-requisite math course and will be discussing the success of this model with the instructors at the end of the semester. A co-requisite English course was piloted this fall as well. The modifications to this English course were prompted by a conference that grant staff attended in June.

December

The college anticipates that all math and English courses will be co-requisite by Fall 2017 after a successful pilot in Summer 2016.

February

In Fall 2017, all courses will be co-requisite including technical math course. This will be the model for the entire college.

April

The English developmental education courses will be offered in a co-requisite model in the fall. The college is starting to move away from developmental math as well but there have been challenges in finding ways to move these courses to the co-requisite model. The college anticipates launching co-requisite in the fall.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

A cubicle is set up at the local WDB where a college representative sets up a couple of times per week to encourage student enrollment. While the college reported that there has not been an increase in students because of this partnership due to the lack of traffic at the WDB, the college will continue to go to the WDB to strengthen that relationship.

Additionally, the college runs billboards and commercials that are BTG-specific to recruit students.

December

Faculty have been working to establish partnerships with local high schools in an effort to recruit students for BTG programs. Faculty have been meeting with teachers and presenting in classrooms to generate interest in these programs.

February

The college-wide recruiter recently resigned leaving BTG staff and faculty conducting outreach on their own. Grant staff are examining how other colleges recruited for specific programs.

April

The college continues to recruit for technical programs, utilizing targeted recruitment strategies.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

October

Northern is aware of companies in the area that may be shutting down soon so staff are working with the local WDB to discuss the opportunities at Northern with those companies. Grant staff have also set up sector partnership meetings resulting in a number of internship and learn-and-earn opportunities. Northern will also work to host a Manufacturing sector partnership meeting in November.

December

WorkforceWV has met with college representatives (e.g., Financial Aid and counselors) to discuss different types of funding that the Workforce Development Board (WDB) can provide. This meeting was to further facilitate open lines of communication between the WDB and college.

On December 16th, the college will host an Advanced Manufacturing sector meeting.

February

A sector meeting within Advanced Manufacturing occurred in December. Partnerships within the CIT and Chemical Operator programs are developing, which will result in learn-and-earn opportunities and company tours.

April

Companies related to the Chemical Operator program have been reviewing and discussing resumes with the college's students. In addition, companies have come to Petroleum program courses to discuss training opportunities.

Moving forward, the college anticipates bringing companies in to discuss internship opportunities at the job fair that will be hosted in the coming month. The college will target oil, gas, and manufacturing companies in this effort.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with WV Northern, the following updates have been identified.

- A soft skills course has been developed and will launch in the spring in all programs as a hybrid course. This course covers resume writing, mock interviews, and other skills relevant to employers in the area.
- Northern will be working with other institutions to receive guidance on Guided Pathways and advising approaches.
- Guided pathways have been finalized since October and will be implemented in 2017.
- A presentation on intrusive advising took place at the college to generate interest and awareness of this approach.
- Professional development funds were used to train faculty and instructors on intrusive advising methods.
- Grant staff are working to document all curricula and strategies/approaches used throughout the grant so they can be referenced by others moving forward.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG

TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

GENERAL

October

The college is in the process of reviewing curriculum to discuss any opportunities for improvements and ensure that this information is uploaded to Skills Commons. Currently, the college is offering four Advanced E&I, two Industrial Maintenance, four Engineering Technology, and two Welding courses through BTG.

Additionally, the online BAS degree that will be offered consortium-wide has been approved by the curriculum committee and will be implemented in Spring 2017.

December

Because many of the programs existed prior to the grant, although grant funds facilitated modifications to programs, instructors and faculty are working to maintain programs through the end of the grant. The programs do not require significant modifications.

March

The programs are continuing as planned and will be regularly revisited (e.g., examining student enrollment and program success) for ongoing sustainability beyond the grant.

CONSTRUCTION

October

Discussions around next steps for the Construction Management program have occurred but curriculum for this program has yet to be finalized.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

January

The college is attempting to boost enrollment in Engineering Technology through a number of avenues:

- Targeted recruitment
- Emphasizing careers rather than programs in print and online information as well as with recruiters
- Discussing path to Engineering degree with prospective students

Drafting and Engineering Technology programs, however, have very low enrollment. Unless these strategies increase student numbers, these programs will likely be removed from the catalog.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

January

Grant leadership reported that the CIT learn-and-earn was going well. While there are no large IT companies reported in the area, three learn-and-earn students are placed at two companies. Other companies are being contacted and four out of those six contacted companies indicated interest in a partnership.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October

Sustainability discussions are occurring at the college, especially in regards to the peer coaches that are on staff. The counselors will likely be sustained moving forward as only part of their salary was BTG-funded.

December

Three peer coaches will be moved to the Center for Student Services and plan has been identified to sustain these coaches beyond the grant. Grant leadership anticipate sustaining four coaches in total beyond the grant. The Veterans Advocate will be sustained through institutional money as well as the other veteran staff. Counseling services staff will also be sustained beyond the grant.

January

Peer coaches are being transitioned to the Vice President of Student Services to ensure their sustainability beyond the grant. The Veteran Counselor will also continue and be shifted to the Director of Counseling. The Director of Counseling will also report to the Vice President of Student Services. These shifts are to ensure sustainability as these positions will be embedded into the associated department's funding (i.e., Student Services).

March

Peer coaches will be sustained beyond the grant and a plan has been put in place for the Center of Student Services to retain four peer coaches moving forward.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

October

Developmental education has officially been eliminated at the college, with full co-requisite implementation expected in the spring. Placement tests have also been eliminated and will not be used to place students in any co-requisite courses moving forward. A math boot camp will be implemented as well six weeks prior to the fall semester. This boot camp will be offered for four credit hours.

December

Since full implementation of the co-requisite model, grant staff anticipate receiving data outlining the success of the model at the end of the Fall 2016 semester. If needed, small modifications will be made to courses to increase student success.

January

There are no additional updates to provide within developmental education. The college will continue maintaining the current model through the end of the grant and beyond.

March

The co-requisite model is being maintained and will continue beyond the grant.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

October

The college continues to work closely with the CTE and workforce partners to ensure student recruitment moving forward.

December

The Marketing Coordinator, that was hired and funded completely through the grant, will be sustained and will continue to expand recruitment efforts in the community. The college is also continuing the relationship with WorkforceWV to assist with student recruitment.

January

The college is continuing their outreach to CTE (for high school students) and Workforce WV (for dislocated adults).

March

Staff are currently focusing on recruiting for the online bachelor's degree in Supervisor Management. All BTG consortium institutions hosted a four-year transfer fair to promote this program to students. The courses in the first year of the program are in the catalog as they fall within the Business major so the costs incurred for program development only included time for curriculum development and researching certifications.

INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

October

A number of activities within sector strategies have taken place, including:

- Manufacturing and Energy sector meetings were combined because the companies within these sectors are similar
- Counselors from career and technical programs have visited local companies (eight in total)
- A site visit was planned to a local business where over 30 education and training representatives were in attendance

December

The college reported continuing sector strategies meetings.

January

Grant staff are working on a transition plan to share facilitation with the Workforce Development Board.

March

The college is continuing to enhance current partnerships and work with the Workforce Development Board (WDB). The college has partnered with the WDB to lead maintenance of three sector partnerships (IT, Manufacturing, and Healthcare)

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Based on our discussions with WVUP, the following updates have been identified.

- A shell was developed for any faculty that are interested in integrating course content online. This shell will enable staff to expedite time to online course implementation and increase course capacity.
- The college has started the process of implementing Blackboard Analytics at the institution.
- Grant leadership emphasized that the sustainability plan has been set for components beyond the grant.
- Training is being provided to faculty regarding strategies for 'flipping' their classrooms.

- The college has fully implemented Guided Pathways to Success. Freshmen data was analyzed and found that there is a higher FTE rate than in the past. Grant leadership indicated that this result suggests that the intrusive advising model is encouraging students along their path.
- The most significant success of the grant, as reported by grant leadership, included the sector partnerships, Guided Pathways to Success initiative, and strategies used in the grant that were implemented institution-wide (e.g., curriculum development process).
- Capacity was reported as the most significant challenge due to the shrinking staff population due to the decreased student population.