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Final Evaluation Report
Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant-Round 4

Nevada Community College Consortium

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Executive Summary

The Nevada Community College Consortium (NCCC) received a $9.9 million, four-year Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Round 4 grant from the Department of Labor (DOL) in October 2014 to fund programs within the consortium at Great Basin College (GBC), Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), and Western Nevada College (WNC).

In February 2015, Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) was hired to work with NCCC to design and conduct the third-party evaluation of the courses and programs. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with DOL requirements to have an outside agency examine each TAACCCT grant using a series of formative and summative evaluation questions. The goals of the evaluation were two-fold: 1) to answer DOL formative evaluation questions regarding program implementation, and 2) to assess DOL summative outcomes. PRE designed and executed a comprehensive plan for the implementation and outcome evaluation components required by DOL, and collected additional data to inform continuous program improvement throughout the life of the grant.

The NCCC project created or modified courses and programs in four industry sectors: healthcare, transportation, advanced manufacturing, and HVAC. This included integrating accelerated coursework, hands-on learning opportunities through equipment purchased with grant funding, and additional work-based experiences through internships and clinicals. Programs addressed local industry demand and the majority of the students reported positive experiences. Noteworthy student feedback about the new or modified programs included comments about opportunities to gain hands-on experience and as well as the helpfulness of instructors.

Aside from the instructional development and enhancements made as part of the NCCC program, an important component of the TAACCCT grants is the student support services offered to advise students academically and to provide career guidance. Overall, PRE's evaluation showed that the NCCC program provided excellent career guidance to students, often times provided informally by instructors. These support services and career guidance was also provided to veterans utilizing Veterans Resource Centers (VCR). This component of the grant was also successful with several students noting that they appreciated the comradery they experienced while visiting these centers.

Leveraging partnerships with local industry partners is an area in which the NCCC excelled over the course of the grant. The NCCC engaged industry partners early in the grant process and consulted with them in developing curriculum to ensure students developed skills they would need in the workforce. Partners also played an integral role in providing financial assistance and donated supplies, recruiting students, and offering job and internship placement.

Student academic outcomes supported the success of the grant with 593 participants completing a NCCC program and a total of 1,067 skills certificates or degrees earned. Noteworthy results from the impact analysis showed that 86.4% of treatment group students from GBC completed their program compared to 66.4% of their historical comparison cohort. Further, WNC grant participants had higher rates of retained employment as compared to their historical comparison cohort.

Evaluation Insights

Although TAACCCT grant funding for the NCCC will conclude in September 2018, PRE would like to offer the following insights regarding the project. These insights are based solely on the data collected through the evaluation activities referenced in this report.

1. The NCCC successfully maintained strong relationships with industry partners over the course of this grant. This evaluation showed that the NCCC programs benefited from help with curriculum design, financial support and donated material, recruitment of students, work-based learning opportunities for students, and job placement. Overall, it would be beneficial for GBC, TMCC, and WNC to continue to collaborate with industry partners in the creation and modification of new programs and courses moving forward. The clinicals and internships in the community should also continue as the benefit both students and partners.

2. The VRCs were another area of success for the NCCC. Partners played an important role in providing resources for the VRCs. With the VRCs being sustained but potentially with fewer staff members, these partnerships will be even more important.

3. The software services purchased through the grant, specifically Burning Glass, was not suitable for programs and support services, according to some project team members. Partners provided input on appropriate purchases and this continued input from partners should be utilized for other grants at these colleges in the future.

4. Student academic readiness for programs was a constraint of the grant. Programs within these colleges could consider using an aptitude test moving forward to determine preparedness for programs. Those who are not ready to enter specific programs could be directed to preparatory coursework.

Introduction

The Nevada Community College Consortium (NCCC) project was funded through a $9.9 million, four-year Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Round 4 grant from the US Department of Labor (DOL). The grant was administered by the project lead, Western Nevada College (WNC), and also included Great Basin College (GBC) and Truckee Meadows Community College TMCC). In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act amended the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize the TAACCCT Grant Program. On March 30, 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act, which included $2 billion over four years to fund the TAACCCT program.

TAACCCT provides community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program, and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations. Through these multi-year grants, DOL is helping to ensure that our nation's institutions of higher education are helping adults succeed in acquiring the skills, degrees, and credentials needed for high-wage, high-skill employment while also meeting employers' needs for skilled workers. DOL is implementing the TAACCCT program in partnership with the Department of Education (ED). The NCCC grant was awarded in October 2014 and supported services at WNC, GBC, and TMCC through March 2018. The project also initially included three academic programs at the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) but DOL that those programs were not enhanced enough, so CSN left the consortium and a program was added at TMCC and WNC partway through the grant.

The NCCC project was designed to provide workforce development and training in four industry sectors: healthcare, transportation, advanced manufacturing, and HVAC. The project brought not only new education and training programs in these four industry sectors, but also curricular and program innovations, strong industry engagement, and resources for veterans.

In April of 2015, WNC partnered with Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) to design and conduct the third-party evaluation of the NCCC project. PRE designed and executed a comprehensive plan for the implementation and impact evaluation components required by DOL and collected additional data to inform continuous program improvements throughout the life of the grant. The evaluation plan as performed is summarized below.

Research Plan

PRE's evaluation methodology included an implementation evaluation to assess formative questions and a concurrent cohort comparison for two programs from GBC and a historical cohort comparison impact evaluation for four programs from TMCC and WNC to assess the impact of the NCCC programs on participants in terms of key student outcomes.

Implementation Evaluation

The implementation evaluation included a two-step evaluation with a focus on the initial assessment of the program plan and curriculum as well as an ongoing assessment of how the program was implemented. The initial assessment was focused on collecting background data with regard to the development of the

NCCC project. Specifically, qualitative data were collected to learn more about how the project was designed as well as how curriculum was developed and selected for use in the TAACCCT academic programs. In order to gather this information, PRE conducted a focus group and interviews with the NCCC project team as well as interviews with the partner organizations.

The ongoing formative evaluation focused on the operational strengths and weaknesses of the programs upon implementation. Formative data regarding staffing, delivery methods (assessment, recruitment, and career guidance), participation, and partner contributions were collected from students and staff at the three colleges and partner organizations through surveys, interviews and focus groups throughout the grant period. The following table summarizes the methods used and timeline for addressing each of the formative evaluation questions.

Table 1. Evaluation Methods

Formative Evaluation Question	Evaluation Method	Timeline
What were the steps taken by the institution to create and run the training program?	Staff Survey Project Team FG & Interviews	Year 2
What were the operational strengths and weaknesses of the project after implementation?	Staff Survey Student Survey/FG	Years 2-4
How was curriculum selected, used, or created?	Staff Survey Project Team FG	Year Two
How were programs and program design improved or expanded using grant funds?	Staff Survey Student Survey/FG	Years 2-4
What delivery methods were offered?	Staff Survey Student Survey/FG	Years 2-4
What was the program administrative structure?	Staff Survey	Years 2-4
What support services and other services were offered?	Staff Survey Student Survey/FG	Years 2-4
Did grantees conduct an in-depth assessment of participants' abilities, skills, and interests to select participants into the grant program?	Staff Survey Student Survey/FG	Years 2-4
What assessment tools and processes were used?	Staff Survey Project Team FG	Year 2
Who conducted the assessment?	Staff Survey Project Team FG	Year 2
How were the assessment results used?	Staff Survey Project Team FG	Year 2
Were assessment results useful in determining the appropriate program and course sequence for participants?	Student Survey/FG	Year 2
Was career guidance provided and if so, through what methods?	Student Survey/FG	Years 2-4
What contributions did each of the partners make in terms of program design, curriculum development, recruitment, training, placement, program management, leveraging of resources, and commitment to program sustainability?	Project Team FG Partner Interviews/Survey	Years 2 & 4 Years 2 & 4
What factors contributed to partners' involvement or lack of involvement in the program? Which contributions from partners were most critical to the success of the grant	Project Team FG Partner Interview/Survey	Years 2 & 4

Formative Evaluation Question	Evaluation Method	Timeline
program? Which contributions from partners had less of an impact?		Years 2 & 4
To what extent are practices being embedded into broader institutional policy and practice?	Staff Survey Project Team FG	Years 2-4 Year 4

Data Collection Tools

Table 2 summarizes the methods used for collecting data to address the formative evaluation questions and provide continuous program improvement data over the course of the grant. Each of these methods is described in more detail below.

Table 2. Summary of Data Collection Methods

Activity	Year 2 (2015-16)	Year 3 (2016-17)	Year 4 (2017-18)
Project Team Focus Group	✔		✔
Project Team Interviews	✔		
Student Survey	✔	✔	✔
Student Non-completer Form	✔	✔	✔
Staff Survey	✔	✔	✔
Student Focus Groups	✔	✔	
Student Interviews	✔		✔
Partner Interviews	✔		
Partner Survey			✔

Project Team Focus Group and Interviews

A project team focus group was conducted in Years 2 and 4 of the grant. Fourteen staff members involved in the NCCC participated in the Year 2 focus group, which was held at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, Nevada, on October 28, 2015. The discussion explored steps taken by the consortium to create and run the training program, shared goals for improving or expanding programs using grant funds, administrative structure of the consortium, expectations for students in funded programs, contributions from program partners, strengths and areas for improvement, and goals for sustainability. Similar questions were asked in follow up interviews with individual college leads in November and December of 2015 in order to learn more about grant activities for each of the four colleges in the consortium.

On January 23, 2018, evaluators conducted a final focus group with staff members involved with the NCCC. Staff members participating in the focus group represented each of the three schools involved with the NCCC, as well as both academic programs and VRCs. The focus group was held at the WNC campus with some representatives from TMCC and GBC participating through a video conferencing system. The discussion explored how the academic programs met expectations for students participating, how the academic programs met employment demands in the region, contributions partnering organizations made to academic programs and the VRCs, factors contributing to partner involvement, successes that stand out from implementing academic programs and VRCs, and plans for sustainability. The interview questions were designed to address the DOL formative evaluation questions, summative outcomes, and other areas of interest to the NCCC; the complete project focus group protocols and interview protocol is provided in **Appendix A**.

Student Survey

Students in the grant-funded academic programs completed a student survey at program exit. Surveys were either administered by NCCC staff or online by evaluators. The student survey explored program entry, student support services, career guidance, education and career plans, wage data, and general program feedback. The survey is included in **Appendix B**.

Student Non-Completer Form

In an effort to ensure information was collected for students who enrolled in a NCCC academic program but did not complete the program, an ongoing student non-completer form was available for NCCC staff to complete on behalf of the student. The form asked staff to indicate which program the student withdrew from and to select from a list of options the reason the student withdrew from the program. The non-completer form is provided in **Appendix C** and was completed on behalf of 53 non-completers.

Staff Survey

In an effort to gather staff feedback about the NCCC, evaluators administered an online survey to staff in Years 2, 3, and 4. In Year 2, evaluators distributed a survey between May 20 and June 17, 2016 to 41 staff members who were involved in the NCCC. The survey was sent via email with three follow-up email reminders. Twenty-six (26) staff members completed the survey for a response rate of 63.4%.

Evaluators administered a survey via email between March 29 and April 21, 2017 during Year 3. The survey was sent to 49 staff members from GBC, TMCC, and WNC who are involved with the NCCC. Evaluators sent three reminder emails. The survey was completed by 43 staff members for an 87.8% response rate.

In Year 4, evaluators distributed a survey via email between February 27 and March 15, 2018. The survey was sent to 55 staff members from GBC, TMCC, and WNC who are involved with the NCCC. Staff received two reminder emails on top of the initial survey request. The survey was completed by 44 staff members for an 80.0% response rate. The staff survey is available in **Appendix D**.

Student Focus Groups and Interviews

Academic Programs

In addition to surveys, evaluators collected feedback from students in academic programs via focus groups or phone interviews during Years 2, 3, and 4 of the grant. On October 6, 2016, during the second year of the grant, PRE evaluators conducted three focus groups with Diesel Technician students at TMCC, Welding students at WNC, and Machine Tool Technology students at WNC. The focus groups were held during each program's class period, so all program students who were present that day participated in the focus group for their program area.

In Year 3, evaluators conducted phone interviews from September to November 2017 with five students in the Rural Nursing program and four students who had completed the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program at GBC. Staff at GBC provided evaluators with a list of program participants and a sample of participants was randomly selected by evaluators to participate in the interviews.

PRE evaluators conducted phone interviews from September to November 2017 with five students in the Rural Nursing program and four students who had completed the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

program at GBC. For this Year 4 data collection, staff at GBC provided evaluators with a list of program participants and a sample of participants was randomly selected by evaluators to participate in the interviews. Students were asked about program entry, career guidance and support services, future education plans, and barriers to program completion.

In all focus groups and interviews, academic students were asked about program entry, career guidance and support services, future education plans, and barriers to program completion. A sample of student focus group and interview questions is provided in **Appendix E**.

VRC

In addition to conducting focus groups and interviews with academic program students, evaluators employed these data collection methods with VRC participants as well during Years 2, 3, and 4. PRE spoke with students involved with the VRC at CSN in Year 2. Because CSN is no longer involved in the NCCC, results from that data collection are not included in this report.

During Year 3, PRE evaluators held a focus groups with veterans utilizing the TMCC VRC on October 6, 2016, and held a focus group with veterans utilizing the WNC VRC on October 7, 2016. Those participating in focus groups reported enrollment in a wide variety of certificate and degree programs such as Manufacturing Technologies, Electrical Engineering, Business, Associate of Arts, Criminal Justice, IT and Associate of Science. Most participants indicated they have used the VRC for at least a year, with some having visited the VRC prior to enrollment at the college.

Year 4 phone interviews were conducted in September 2017 with five veterans who had utilized the VRC at GBC. Evaluators randomly selected participants from a list of potential participants identified by VRC staff. Interview participants were current students at GBC who reported enrollment in a wide variety of certificate and degree programs such as land surveying, natural resources, social science, and social work. All participants indicated they had used the VRC for at least a year, and three participants said they had been visiting the VRC since it first opened on campus.

Focus group participants were asked about advising services, assessments, credit for prior learning, benefits of the VRC, and suggestions for improvement. The Veterans Resource Center focus group and interview questions are also available in **Appendix E**.

Industry Partner Interviews and Survey

Evaluators interviewed industry partners in Year 2 and surveyed them in Year 4 (**Appendix F**). Fourteen industry partners involved in the NCCC TAACCCT-funded programs participated in phone interviews during Year 2, which were conducted from March 21 to July 12, 2016. Partners included local area employers as well as workforce development agencies. Of the partners interviewed, four were involved with GBC, five were involved with TMCC, and six were involved with WNC.

In Year 4, evaluators administered a survey to industry partners involved in the NCCC TAACCCT-funded academic programs over the course of two campaigns. The first dissemination of the survey took place from February 27 to March 23, 2018 and the second from April 10 to 25, 2018. For each administration, the survey was sent out via email with two reminders. Nineteen NCCC partners completed the survey.

Impact Evaluation

Due to the fact that participants were enrolled in NCCC courses and programs based on eligibility, it was not feasible to conduct an impact evaluation that included true random assignment. Thus, PRE worked with the project team to determine the best possible comparison group for each program. Comparison groups were created for six of the eight NCCC programs including: CNA (GBC and WNC), Rural Nursing (GBC), HVAC, Machine Tool Technology/CNC, and Welding. There were no comparable programs with relevant student outcomes in the NCCC system for Diesel Technician and Rural Nursing at WNC. Employment data were only available for comparison groups from earlier rounds of TAACCCT funding, which includes the CNA, Machine Tool Technology/CNC, and Welding programs at WNC. Individual level data for the comparison groups were not available, so these data are reported in aggregate. Using concurrent and historical comparison groups allowed us to compare outcomes for participants in the grant-funded training with participants in concurrent and historical cohorts that were comparable on key dimensions such as learning objectives, credential attainment, and certification outcomes. Table 3 below provides a summary of the NCCC courses and programs, their concurrent or historical comparison groups as applicable, and the TAACCCT outcomes relevant or available for each.

Table 3. Impact Analysis

NCCC Program	Comparison Group	Comparison Type	Available Outcomes at Time of Interim Report
GBC Certified Nursing Assistant	GBC Certified Nursing Assistant Spring 2015, Summer 2015, Fall 2015 & Spring 2015 (Non-TAACCCT funded)	Concurrent Comparison	Completion, Certifications, & Credits
GBC Rural Nursing	GBC Rural Nursing Fall 2015 & Fall 2016 (Non-TAACCCT funded)	Concurrent Comparison	Completion, Certifications, & Credits
TMCC Diesel Technician	No Comparison Available	N/A	N/A
TMCC HVAC	TMCC HVAC Fall 2014 & Fall 2015	Historical Comparison	Completion, Certifications, & Credits
WNC Certified Nursing Assistant	WNC Certified Nursing Assistant Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015 – Fallon & Spring 2015 - Carson	Historical Comparison	Completion, Certifications, Credits, Incumbent Workers, Wage Gain, Employed After Completion & Retained Employment
WNC Machine Tool Technology	WNC Machine Tool Technology Fall 2013, Spring 2014 & Fall 2014	Historical Comparison	Completion, Certifications, Credits, Incumbent Workers, Wage Gain, Employed After Completion & Retained Employment

NCCC Program	Comparison Group	Comparison Type	Available Outcomes at Time of Interim Report
WNC Rural Nursing	No Comparison Available	N/A	N/A
WNC Welding	WNC Welding Spring 2013 - Carson, Spring 2013 – Fallon & Fall 2013	Historical Comparison	Completion, Certifications, Credits, Incumbent Workers, Wage Gain, Employed After Completion & Retained Employment

NCCC Program Development

Three primary components of the NCCC will be reviewed below, including: 1) The development or modification of courses and programs in the healthcare, machine trades, transportation, and HVAC fields, 2) The enhancement of student support services, and 3) The leveraging of relationships with local industry partners. The courses or programs that were created or modified through the NCCC include:

- Certified Nursing Assistant (GBC and WNC)
- Diesel Technician (TMCC)
- HVAC (TMCC)
- Machine Tool Technology/Computer Numerical Control (WNC)
- Rural Nursing (GBC and WNC)
- Welding (WNC)

In addition to these academic programs, the NCCC also created or enhanced Veterans Resource Centers (VRC) at each of the three participating colleges.

Course and Program Development

The courses or program offerings listed above were either added to the course schedule or modified using the grant funding. The sections below detail the steps taken by the NCCC to create and run each of these courses or programs, including the VRCs; the administrative structure of the project; how curriculum was selected, used, or created; how programs were designed or improved using grant funds; and what delivery methods were offered.

What steps were taken by the institution to create and run the training program?

Project team members indicated that because the consortium was the recipient of several other rounds of TAACCCT grants, some of the training programs had been developed over time with other TAACCCT funding: "We're continuing our programs from other TAACCCT rounds, but we're doing something different. We are improving them as we go." However, one program element that was developed by the consortium is the VRC. As part of the grant, GBC opened a VRC while TMCC and WNC improved their existing VRC:

> *"As a consortium, we were looking for something to tie us all together because we are so diverse. CSN came up with the idea of the VRC. At the time, TMCC and WNC had VRCs but didn't have any money for staffing. So, we decided to put funding toward that. GBC didn't have a VRC at that time, so they created one through the grant."*

In addition to the aspects of the grant that were developed collaboratively across the consortium, each college developed individual programs based on the needs of their geographic area: "Each college has individual programs as determined by their local market or as determined by what the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) decided we were going to do. Those decisions were made individually." Specifically, project team members explained that colleges determined which individual programs to incorporate based on market research and employer needs:

> *"GBC used the employment data for the state in Winnemucca and Pahrump and talked to the employers about the needs they have for qualifying nurses. The healthcare providers are thrilled to be able to have the trainings available now. Because we are tiny and rural, there aren't a huge number of people going through but it's a big help for rural Nevada."*

In addition, to working with employers to determine needs, some industry partners were also responsible for ensuring programs came to life. The WNC Rural Nursing program, in particular, was expanded as a result of industry partners providing the "input and the political power to encourage the college to expand the program."

What is the program administrative structure?

The NCCC was managed by a Grant Project Director based out of WNC who also served as the lead for the grant at WNC. GBC and TMCC each had a project manager who led the grant activities at their colleges and who reported to the project lead. For the first couple of years of the grant, the consortium was also supported by an Institutional Research Analyst who provided support with student outcome data. Furthermore, a project team member explained that the administrative structure had evolved since Round 1 of TAACCCT grant funding and that update worked well:

> *"The consortium structure has evolved over the various TAACCCT rounds. With the current round of the grant, changes have been made to help make the consortium easier to manage. For example, each college is reporting financials through the lead and the lead is having some authority to approve budget realignments for consortium members."*

How was curriculum selected, used, or created?

Colleges created grant funded programs based on existing curriculum with some small changes. Many of the programs had been created during Round 1 of the TAACCCT grants, so only modifications were needed. These changes were made with the input of advisory board members. For example, the Diesel

Technician program was developed from existing curriculum and the advisory board provided input for changes:

> *"The Diesel program at TMCC is based on existing curriculum, but we used advisory board members from the industry to guide us for important components. For example, we now have embedded math content. They learn the math concepts, but it's much more applied to diesel industry topics and what they'll need as they're working in the industry."*

Similar to utilizing input from an advisory board, curriculum for the Machine Tool Technology/CNC, Welding, and CNA programs were selected with feedback from area employers. For the Welding and Machine Tool Technology/CNC programs, WNC adjusted the curriculum based on feedback gathered each year from employers who hired exited students. As a result, the curriculum was updated to include content about course print reading, because this was an area of interest to the employers. Similarly, employers of CNA completers made suggestions that led to focusing on specific skill areas prior to clinicals and purchasing technology that would meet requirements in the workplace.

How were programs and program design improved or expanded using grant funds?

The grant allowed the colleges to adjust the format of their academic training programs to better serve students. As such, the coursework for the Diesel Technician, Machine Tool Technology/CNC, and Welding programs were accelerated to allow students to build job skills more quickly. The HVAC program was modularized, which minimized scheduling conflicts for students. Students' needs were also met in the healthcare programs by offering the classes on satellite campuses in more rural locations via videoconferencing and interactive lab technology purchased through the grant. The NCCC purchased equipment and made lab upgrades through the grant as well, in order to provide hands-on opportunities that would better prepare students for employment following program completion. The NCCC also used grant funding to provide support services to students in grant-funded academic programs at TMCC and WNC. These services were provided by an adult learner concierge.

Another major component of the grant was the VRCs. With a goal of improving, expanding, and standardizing services veterans receive across the three campuses, a VRC was added to the GBC campus and the VRCs at TMCC and WNC were expanded. Each of the three VRCs used grant funding to hire staff certified in supporting veterans in order to provide services. Veterans received a variety of resources through the VRCs including academic and job placement support, opportunities to attend outreach events, and a place to meet with other veterans

What delivery methods were offered?

Image 1. Rural Nursing Equipment

Academic programs that are part of the NCCC provided a variety of delivery methods depending on the program. For example, the Diesel Technician, Machine Tool, Technology/CNC, and Welding programs delivered course content in an accelerated format to help students complete more quickly than they would traditionally allowing them to search for employment opportunities sooner. These programs, along with the HVAC program, and the CNA and Rural Nursing programs, also delivered curriculum with hands-on opportunities for students. Participants could gain practical experience in these courses by utilizing equipment and lab updates purchased for these programs such as hydraulic benches and a Dodge diesel engine purchased for the Diesel Technician program or the Computer Numerical Control (CNC) lathe purchased for the Machine Tool Technology/CNC program.

Remote options were also offered has part of course modifications. For the CNA and Rural Nursing programs, this meant creating an online, which allowed the programs to reach more students in rural areas: "The curriculum was already in existence, but we tweaked it so it can be distance delivered. This also included reaccreditation with a national nursing board…We put the CNA program online, because GBC has over 86,000 square miles of service area." The NCCC purchased and used the Lecture Capture technology to allow students who were off-site to participate in these courses.

Image 2. Welding and Machine Tool Technology/CNC Equipment

Finally, the HVAC program at TMCC was modularized for open entry/open exit delivery, which minimizes barriers for students related to scheduling courses. Thus, this course format is accessible for incumbent workers.

How did the project effort support institutional capacity building?

Various aspects of the NCCC program will be sustained following the TAACCCT grant. All NCCC academic programs will be sustained beyond the end of the grant. The Burning Glass tool that was purchased through the grant and used to help students obtain labor market data, allowed the NCCC demonstrate the need for sustaining these programs due to the need for employment in the programs' industries as shown through the Burning Glass tool.

Despite plans to sustain the academic programs, Year 4 project team focus group participants noted that certain components of the programs may not be retained. As one participant said, "The plan at this time for the training programs throughout the three colleges is that in one way, shape, or form, they will be sustained." The participant then added that it is possible that not every dollar will be sustained toward the

academic programs by noting, for example, that Welding may operate with less equipment: "Maybe Welding will have to operate with less equipment. There might not be as much equipment but those instructional programs will be sustained." Participants also expressed uncertainty as to whether the accelerated format of the programs would be retained. "It's going to be up to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) director if they're going to continue with the accelerated format," one participant explained. Another participant said that while the colleges intended on "keeping some form of the accelerated format" in all of the academic programs, some programs might be lengthened due to the high number of credits required. WNC's Welding program, for example, consists of over 20 credits, which some students may not be able to feasibly complete in the accelerated format. Further, additional teaching assistants were hired under the grant, and the loss of these positions could impact class sizes.

Besides sustaining academic programs in some form following the conclusion of the grant, another way in which the NCCC supported institutional capacity was through the purchase of equipment that allowed for the CNA and Rural Nursing programs to be administered on satellite campuses. This expanded the reach of GBC and WNC by enrolling students in rural locations.

Additionally, students in TAACCCT-funded academic programs at WNC and TMCC received concierge services from staff hired through the grant, but those concierge positions will not be sustained following the grant. Similarly, a job placement and internship services position at WNC that was created under the grant also will not be sustained. Furthermore, Burning Glass will discontinue.

Finally, the VRCs at each of the three colleges will be sustained beyond the end of the grant. The permanency of the VRCs was particularly important to project staff since the beginning of the grant: "A permanent VRC on every campus. That's probably our number one goal."

> "My long-term goal is to keep the VRC going, increase the number of student veterans, and get more resources for better outreach."
>
> -VRC Participant

NCCC Students

Characteristics
Program enrollment forms provide demographic data on students entering the NCCC programs.

GBC Certified Nursing Assistant Student Characteristics
A total of 298 students participated in the CNA program at GBC. Data showed that a large majority of participating students were female (92.3%, n=275). Of the 280 CNA participants who disclosed their race, 239 were White, 20 were Asian, 13 were American Indian or Alaskan Native, five were Black or African American, and three were Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander. Further, 88 of these students indicated their ethnicity was Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants at intake was 27.4 years. Thirty-eight participants disclosed that they were Pell Grant eligible, four were single parents, 12 students were eligible for disability accommodations, and three were eligible veterans.

GBC Rural Nursing Student Characteristics
The 35 students participating in the Rural Nursing program at GBC were mostly female (88.6%, n=31). Most of the 34 Rural Nursing participants who disclosed their race were White (n=26), three were Asian, two were Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander, 1 was American Indian or Alaskan Native, and one was

Black or African American. Additionally, 13 of these students indicated their ethnicity was Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 28.6 years. Eight participants were Pell Grant eligible and one was an eligible veteran.

GBC Veterans Resource Center Student Characteristics

Fifty-three veterans utilized the VRC at GBC during the grant. Participants had served an average of 12.6 years in the military. Almost half of the participants were in the Army (n=26), 11 were in the Marines, eight were in the Navy, six were in the Air Force, and two were in the Coast Guard. All but one participant was seeking a degree or certificate. Further, a little over one-third (n=20) of the participating veterans had a VA disability rating, and 22 were employed at the time of intake.

TMCC Diesel Technician Student Characteristics

The Diesel Technician program had 200 participants. One hundred and seventy-two (93.5%) of those participants were male, while 12 (6.5%) were female. Nearly all of the 137 participants who disclosed their race were White (n=107), 13 were more than one race, five were Black or African American, four were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and one was Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander. Fifty of these students disclosed their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 24.2 years. Twenty-five participants were Pell Grant eligible, 23 were eligible veterans, and 13 were eligible for disability accommodations.

TMCC HVAC Student Characteristics

A total of 93 students participated in the HVAC program. Nearly all participants were male (97.6%, n=83). Additionally, many participants (n=49) were White, five were Black or African American, three were American Indian or Alaskan Native, three were Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander, and one was more than one race. In addition to race, 20 participants reported they were Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 27.4. Eleven participants were eligible veterans, five were eligible for disability accommodations, and two were Pell Grant eligible.

TMCC Veterans Resource Center Student Characteristics

The VRC at TMCC served 321 students during the Round 4 TAACCCT grant. On average, VRC participants had served 10 years in the military. Most of the VRC participants were in the Army (n=165), 52 were in the Marines, 47 were in the Army, 42 were in the Air Force, and three were in the Coast Guard. Additionally, 12 participants were military dependents. All but two VRC participants indicated they were seeking a degree or certificate. Further, 163 of the veterans were employed at the time of intake.

WNC Certified Nursing Assistant Student Characteristics

A total of 235 students participated in the CNA program at WNC. Data showed that a majority of participating students were female (89.0%, n=202), which is similar to the gender breakdown of the CNA program at GBC. More than three-quarters (n=148) of CNA students were White, 10 were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 10 were Asian, eight were more than one race, three were Black or African American, and two were Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander. Additionally, 54 participants indicated their ethnicity was Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 28.6 years. Ninety of the participants were Pell Grant eligible, 11 were eligible veterans, and seven were eligible for disability accommodations.

WNC Machine Tool Technology/Computer Numerical Control Student Characteristics

The Machine Tool Technology/CNC program had 30 participants. Twenty-five (83.3%) of those participants were male, while five (16.7%) were female. Most of the Machine Tool Technology/CNC participants (n=20) were White, two were American Indian or Alaskan Native, two were Black or African American, and one was more than one race. Further, five students' ethnicity was reported as Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 32.7. Twelve participants were Pell Grant eligible, five were eligible veterans, and two were eligible for disability accommodations.

WNC Rural Nursing Student Characteristics

The 16 students participating in the Rural Nursing program at WNC were nearly all female (93.8%, n=15) with one participant being male (n=6.3%). Most of the Rural Nursing participants (n=9) were White, two were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and two were Asian. Additionally, four of the participants indicated their ethnicity was Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 30.62 years. Several (n=10) participants were Pell Grant eligible.

WNC Welding Student Characteristics

A total of 70 students participated in the Welding program. Most of those participants were male (90.0%, n=63). Additionally, many participants (n=52) were White, six were American Indian or Alaskan Native, two were Black or African American, two were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and two were more than one race. Five of the participants reported their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino. The average age of participants was 31.4. Nineteen participants were Pell Grant eligible, 10 were eligible veterans, three were eligible for disability accommodations.

WNC Veterans Resource Center

Staff working with the VRC on the WNC campus opted to collect information about participants, which was not provided to evaluators.

TAACCCT Grant Components

NCCC Courses and Programs

A series of courses and programs were developed through the NCCC. Each of these courses or programs is described in more detail below. In addition to the academic programs, the VRCs are also described below.

GBC Certified Nursing Assistant

The CNA program at GBC is an introductory healthcare course that provides students with the basic competencies required for certification as a nursing assistant. The CNA course at GBC existed prior to the Round 4 TAACCCT grant, but through the grant, the course was added at two satellite locations. Interactive video capabilities and labs are available at both sites, which allows students to do all their coursework, lab, and clinicals in their respective community. Coursework is delivered through both online and classroom delivery. Further, students gain hands-on experience through simulation labs at the satellite campuses and clinicals at local hospitals and healthcare providers.

GBC Rural Nursing

This two-year program at GBC is similar to the CNA program in that it is offered at two satellite locations. Coursework is delivered online and through interactive video capabilities that connects the

satellite locations with the main GBC campus. The grant also allowed for the purchase of equipment utilized for simulation labs. Students obtain hands-on experience through clinicals at local hospitals and healthcare providers.

TMCC Diesel Technician
The Diesel Technician program existed at TMCC prior to the grant and was modified to an accelerated format. This format allows students to get through the program faster and to have a cohesive, cohort structure. In modifying the program, TMCC used existing curriculum but consulted with an advisory board to incorporate content participants will need to learn prior to working in the industry. Further, new equipment was purchased to increase lab capacity and students had the opportunity to complete internships in the field and to earn industry-recognized credentials.

TMCC HVAC
The TMCC HVAC program combines classroom instruction with hands-on practice and provides the opportunity to earn certifications that help students become more competitive when seeking employment. Through the grant, new equipment was purchased for state-of-the-art labs that provide students with hands-on training. The program was also modularized to allow open entry/open exit, which minimizes scheduling conflicts, particularly for students who are employed. The program existed prior to the grant and was added to the NCCC partway through Round 4.

WNC Certified Nursing Assistant
This course prepares students for certification as a nursing assistant and offers students hands-on training through expanded partnerships with clinical sites as well as new lab equipment and supplies purchased through the grant. Similar to the CNA program at GBC, this program offers coursework online and at satellite locations through equipment purchased with grant funding.

WNC Machine Tool Technology/Computer Numerical Control
Through the grant, the Machine Tool Technology/CNC program was modified to incorporate an accelerated format allowing adult learners to complete the program more quickly. The training was also expanded to include a welding component and career awareness. New equipment was purchased through the grant, which gives students hands-on training opportunities. In addition to hands-on learning in the classroom, students also gain experience through internships in the community. Further, participants can earn a variety of industry-recognized credentials through the program.

WNC Rural Nursing
This program was also added to the NCCC partway through the grant and was modeled after the Rural Nursing program at GBC. As such, coursework is delivered through interactive video capabilities that connects satellite locations with the main WNC campus as well as online. Through the grant, equipment was purchased for simulation labs, and students also obtain hands-on experience through clinicals at local hospitals and healthcare providers.

WNC Welding
The Welding program was expanded to include an accelerated format. Participants also gained hands-on training through internships and the use of classroom equipment purchased through the grant. Additionally, the program incorporated career awareness and the opportunity to earn industry recognized credentials.

Veterans Resource Centers

Each of the three campuses provided veterans with a VRC on campus. This resource is described in more detail under Student Support Services.
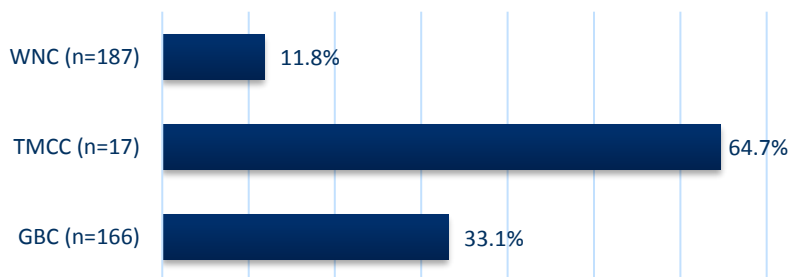
Student Support Services

Aside from the instructional development and enhancements made as part of the NCCC courses and programs, student support services are a significant component of the TAACCCT grant, and provide both academic advising and career guidance as detailed below.

What support services and other services were offered?

NCCC academic students had access to support services in the form of academic advising and career guidance. Through the grant, TMCC and WNC each hired an adult learner concierge who helped students enroll in the correct courses and understand their academic path. Each student in a TAACCCT-funded academic program at TMCC and WNC met with this advisor once when enrolling and was contacted by the concierge each semester. Students often met with the concierge more times throughout the program. The adult learner concierge offers students enrollment counseling, job planning, as well as guidance around enrollment forms, financial aid, community housing, and veterans services. Lastly, if students are falling behind in their academic program, the instructor contacts the adult learner concierge who then reaches out to students to provide additional needed supports. Support services were also often provided by instructors in the grant-funded academic programs: "The instructor is the number one support. He comes in on days off to help students and stays three hours late. He's amazing; he's a true teacher."

With these resources in place, a majority of TMCC students and one-third of GBC students indicated they received support resources from their program's instructors or staff (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Program Completers Receiving Support Services

Campus	Percentage
WNC (n=187)	11.8%
TMCC (n=17)	64.7%
GBC (n=166)	33.1%

Despite the overall low percentage of students reporting they received support services within their program, these results differed from focus group participants who noted that they received tutoring support through their institution including tutoring provided by program instructors. Additionally, students noted that instructors made themselves available to answer questions and helped students preparing for certification exams.

Through grant funding, GBC was able to add a VRC to its campus, while TMCC and WNC were able to expand their pre-existing VRC, which included providing more consistent hours of operation, more outreach, and staffing. The VRCs are a place on campus where veterans can go to receive resources and
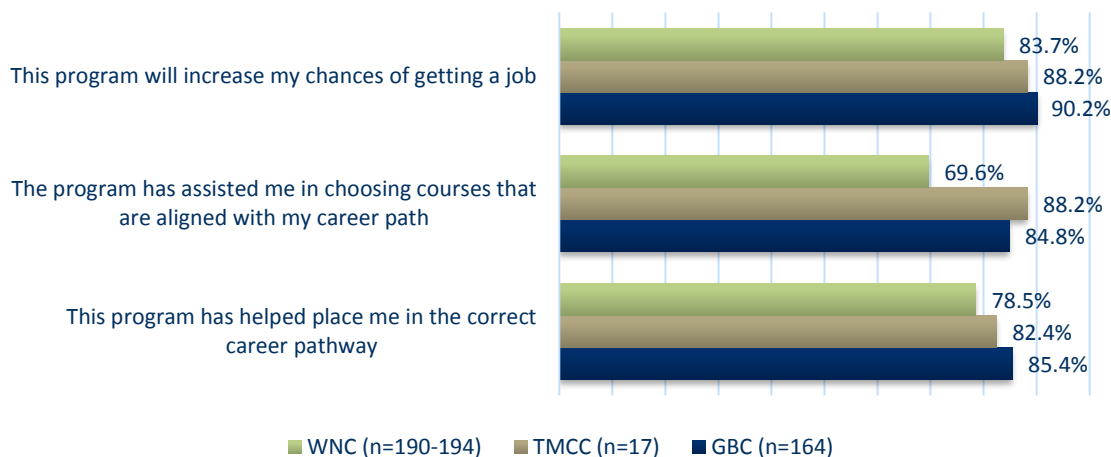
supports as well as enjoy a sense of community with other veteran students. Resources veterans received at the VRCs include outreach events, tutoring, professional development, career guidance from staff and the WorkKeys assessment tool, academic advising, and the opportunity to earn Credit for Prior Learning, which allows veterans to earn credit for military service and/or training. At each location, there were "Certified Veteran Services Advocates" hired through the grant, which is a state certification that equips support staff with knowledge of all the benefits available to veterans. Finally, veterans described the VRCs as a place where they felt safe, comfortable, and at home. They also highlighted the sense of community that existed at the VRCs, because the centers provided veterans with a space to socialize with other veterans:

> *"As a veteran in general, it's my favorite place to go. I get up in the morning and go straight there. Then I go to work, which is on campus, I go back there, and then I go home. So, I spend a great deal of time throughout the week in there. I don't know where I'd be if that wasn't there, I think I'd be a little bit lost. It's a community of veterans. It's not just vets that go in there to spend time and study. I think of the word 'community' in the sense of that social structure that we have there. I feel comfortable with the people that are in there and I feel good when we help out other veterans or even students that are looking for something. It almost feels like we provide a service to the college. And for me, it gives me purpose knowing that I'm a part of that."*

Was career guidance provided, and if so, through what methods?

Career guidance was provided to students as part of the NCCC through a variety of methods. Regardless of the method, students agreed that career guidance impacted their experience in the NCCC. As shown in Figure 2, more than three-quarters of students reported that the program will increase their chances of getting a job and that the program has helped place them in the correct career pathway. A majority of students also indicated that the program assisted them in choosing courses aligned with their career path.

Figure 2. Completers Reported Career Guidance

	WNC (n=190-194)	TMCC (n=17)	GBC (n=164)
This program will increase my chances of getting a job	83.7%	88.2%	90.2%
The program has assisted me in choosing courses that are aligned with my career path	69.6%	88.2%	84.8%
This program has helped place me in the correct career pathway	78.5%	82.4%	85.4%

One way in which WNC students received career guidance was through a job placement and internship services position that was hired through the grant. Students from each school received informal career guidance from instructors and school counselors who informed students about job opportunities and different career paths and specialties within their industry. The instructors were particularly helpful in career guidance activities, because they provided a connection with the industry and knew who to contact in the industry.

> "It has been nice, because my teachers have actually been involved and invested in my career plans. I had mentioned that I wanted to do EMT work, and I was telling them my own interests and they were super adamant about helping me find ways to incorporate that into jobs."
>
> -Student in Grant-Funded Academic Program

Students in grant-funded academic programs also received hands-on learning opportunities in the classroom and in the field that prepared them for careers. The in-class experiences were facilitated by the purchase of equipment through the grant that allowed students to practice skills in the classroom that they would later use in the field: "The nature of the shop class allows you to think on your feet too. You have to be constantly aware of your surroundings and know where your hands are and make exact measurements, which are all important skills." The internships and clinicals also introduced students to potential employers.

Additionally, the NCCC purchased Burning Glass software, which was utilized by 1,645 individuals throughout the course of the grant including students in grant-funded academic programs, VRC participants, and other students not otherwise affiliated with the grant. Students utilizing Burning Glass received resume preparation assistance through the tool. The NCCC also used the Labor Insight Tool within Burning Glass to measure job demand associated with the training programs.

Students received job placement support through the availability of industry-recognized credentials that could be earned through each of the grant-funded academic programs. By earning these credentials, students made themselves more appealing job candidates to potential employers. In some cases, the certificates are required to obtain certain jobs in their industry. Students noted the benefits of being able to earn these certificates through the grant-funded programs and pointed out that their instructors were supportive in helping them prepare for certification exams.

Further, students at TMCC involved with the Diesel Technician program could receive additional career guidance support through a program called CareerLink, which enables participants to sign up for job opening notifications and provides resume building support.

Students accessing the VRCs also received career guidance. According to veterans participating in the focus groups, they received support from counselors in selecting a career path and coursework that aligns with that path: "The counselor is a great mentor and great leader. He finds out about our military experience, what we value in life, and uses all of that information to guide a student into a career path." Through the VRC, veterans also received, internship opportunities, help with resumes, information about Engage events, networking and veteran job fair opportunities, and information about job openings. One way in which VRC participants learned about job opportunities for veterans was through VRC's partnership with the statewide job connection network, JobConnect: "They have a good relationship with JobConnect here. A representative from JobConnect comes in, and if there's anybody in need, the

representative will sit down with them. There are always postings for job opportunities for those with military experience, and they'll be like, 'Hey, this might be something you're interested in.'"

Industry Connections

From the beginning of the grant, the NCCC leveraged partnerships with local industry partners. NCCC engaged industry partners early in the grant to help advocate for the programs that were offered. Industry partners engaged in program design, curriculum development, training opportunities, placement, and leveraging of resources. Both staff and industry partners were asked to reflect on the contributions that the partners made to the NCCC program in terms of:

- Program Design
- Curriculum Development
- Recruitment
- Training
- Placement
- Program Management
- Leveraging of Resources
- Commitment to program sustainability

What contributions did each of the partners make in terms of: Program Design, Curriculum Development, Recruitment, and Commitment to Program Sustainability?

As stated above, partners contributed to the NCCC in a variety of ways. The section that follows highlights the areas of greatest involvement including program design and curriculum development, recruitment, shared resources, training opportunities, and employment of program completers.

Inform Program Design/Curriculum Development

Industry partners were involved in the early stages of developing and enhancing the NCCC programs. Specifically, staff indicated that partners were involved in providing useful input on curriculum and ensuring course content provides skill development valued in the current job market. Figure 3 illustrates this and shows that partners were particularly involved at TMCC.

Figure 3. Staff Perceptions of Industry Involvement
(% Agree/Strongly Agree)

Project administrators or other project staff have created successful partnerships with relevant organizations in the community
- WNC: 82.2%
- TMCC: 80.6%

Feedback from industry partners has helped ensure course content offers skill development desired by the current job market
- WNC: 66.7%
- TMCC: 89.2%
- GBC: 69.7%

Industry partners have provided useful input on curriculum design
- WNC: 66.7%
- TMCC: 91.9%
- GBC: 52.9%

■ WNC (n=72) ■ TMCC (n=37) ■ GBC (n=34)

Partners also confirmed their involvement in informing program design and curriculum development. At GBC, partners assisted with these tasks by coordinating "with the instructor on types of patients we see and inform the college of the machinery that we use to take care of patients so they can mirror that."

Several of the partners involved in the Diesel Technician program at TMCC provided input on program design and curriculum development, which included guidance in equipment selection. Much of this feedback was provided in advisory board meetings, according to one industry partner: "I sit on the transportation advisory board, which meets at TMCC and we discuss their curriculum, the direction they're going, the new tools and equipment they're purchasing, and how they're training our apprentices to be prepared in the field."

Similar to TMCC, WNC partners provided input in advisory board meetings related to enhancing teaching strategies. A WNC partner noted that he/she worked with instructors and the department chair to discuss ways to improve the Welding program: "I stop at the college to talk to the instructors and the department chair. I'm part of a metal technology committee at the college. We meet twice a year to gauge where the program is at and how the business is going as far as hiring. We discuss what we can do to improve the program."

> "We look at different ways of helping students learn the necessary math for becoming machinists. We developed relationships with some of the teachers and have that opportunity to exchange ideas. We are here to support them."
>
> -Industry Partner

Recruitment

Partners from each college reported that they have contributed to recruitment efforts. Workforce development agencies partnering with GBC and TMCC mentioned helping to place students in TAACCCT academic programs. For example, at GBC, a workforce development agency used aptitude assessments to help place students: "Sometimes people come to us and aren't exactly sure what they want

to do. We can give them a career aptitude assessment to see if it looks like they'll fit in well in the medical field and will then sometimes direct people to the CNA program at GBC."

> "I was always an advocate of trying to get students to the college. I saw that as a bigger obligation, to get students up there rather than critique the program. Having a successful program begins with filling the classes."
>
> -Industry Partner

Other ways in which industry partners helped with recruitment of students to NCCC academic programs was through working as an administrator of an apprenticeship program and placing apprentices in the Diesel Technician program at TMCC, organizing career fairs at high schools to inform students about the Diesel Technician program, coordinating other high school activities with WNC, participating in job fairs, and informing individuals about job opportunities related to the CNA program.

Leveraging of Resources

A workforce development agency that is partnered with GBC supported students by paying for courses, board fees, and class supplies: "We fund the class and the cost of the state board fee. We fund other things needed to complete the class as well, such as books and scrubs." Similarly, a TMCC Diesel Technician partner also contributed resources to training: "I donate scrap parts. I've donated two failed engines and wiring schematics that were used as training aids and I've sold them trucks."

Provide Training Opportunities

> "The instructors contact me directly when they have a class going through to arrange for their clinical hours. They usually come in groups of nine to 14 students. I've worked with them for several years and it always works out wonderfully...We welcome the students, and I think it's a really comfortable setting for them."
>
> -Industry Partner

GBC and WNC partners provided students with opportunities to utilize their new skills and knowledge. For instance, The Rural Nursing program at each school provided access to a hospital facility for hands-on clinicals. Similarly, partners of the GBC and WNC CNA programs also provided facilities for students to gain clinical experience. Internship opportunities with community partners were embedded in the Diesel Technician, Machine Tool Technology/CNC, and Welding programs.

Employ Completers

Partners from each of the three colleges planned to or had already hired program participants at the time of this evaluation. Specifically, several partners of the TMCC Diesel Technician program reported hiring program completers as well as students still in the program. Partners involved in the WNC programs also contributed by hiring program completers. A Machine Tool Technology/CNC partner explained that they are "always looking at people coming out of the program as potential immediate hires, because in this area, it's few and far between and that's one of the best sources we have for people." GBC Rural Nursing partners also intended to hire program completers.

What factors contributed to partners' involvement or lack of involvement?

Industry partners were asked questions gauging their experience working with the NCCC program as shown in Figure 4. A majority of the partners reported that communication with the colleges has been good and that their organization is excited about the grant funded programs. This positive feedback regarding communication and program buy-in likely played a role in partners' involvement with the NCCC.

**Figure 4. Partner Perceptions of NCCC Involvement
(% Agree/Strongly Agree)**
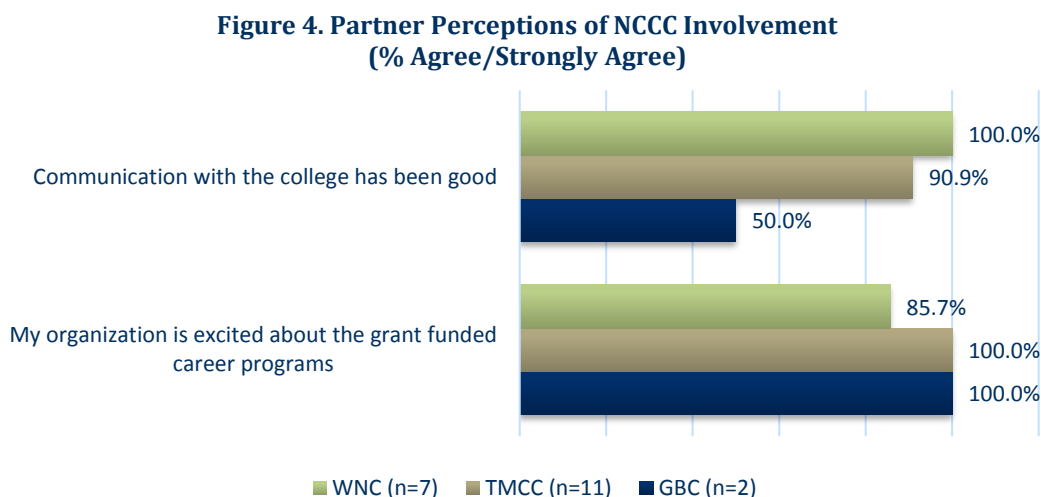
Across the three NCCC colleges, strong, open, ongoing communication between partners and program faculty and staff facilitated partner involvement, according to an industry partner:

> *"Our communication with the college is excellent. We have an open-door policy. They can come into our office anytime, I could go over there anytime, and they can call anytime. We're partners. We did a program review a couple years ago and it was an open book…I think our relationship is very strong."*

Partners also noted that a strength of the program was that it prepares students for employment, which benefitted partners resulting in increased buy-in. Specifically, one partner stated that the most useful aspect of working with the college on this grant was being "able to get employees that are safety focused, quality-minded, and willing to learn." Therefore, the NCCC program was beneficial to involved partners, which also played a role in partner involvement. Conversely, lack of availability of time was a factor that impacted some partners' level of involvement with the grant.

Which factors from partners were most critical to the success of the grant program?

Staff participating in the survey described the most useful aspects of partner involvement. Partners from different program areas and schools highlighted employment as a critical area of partner involvement both in providing job placement opportunities to program completers and their support in developing curriculum that meets industry needs and therefore prepares students for work in the field. Similarly, for

both the CNA and Rural Nursing programs at GBC and WNC, staff members acknowledged the usefulness of partners allowing opportunities for students to practice skills through clinicals, which prepares them for employment in the field.

Partnerships were also important to the success of the VRCs. Specifically, staff provided several examples when discussing the most useful aspects of working with partnering agencies. A couple of staff members explained that partnering agencies allow the VRCs to obtain additional resources for students that might not otherwise be available to them. Additionally, partnerships have allowed VRCs to expand and strengthen services, provide awareness in the community for issues veterans face, create a space where veterans can come together, guide veterans toward career opportunities, and offer training and job opportunities to veterans.

> "Partners bring current industry needs/trends and can make us aware of training gaps."
>
> -NCCC Staff

Program Strengths

Noteworthy program strengths reported by staff, industry partners, and students include industry partnerships, quality of instructors, hands-on training opportunities, career preparation, and comradery at VRC.

Industry Partners

Both project team members and staff reported that industry partnerships and connections in the community have been a strength of the NCCC. Industry partners were involved with many vital aspects of creating and implementing each training programs and the VRCs. Industry partners helped advocate for programs to be included in the grant, provided input on curriculum design, recruited participants, provided financial assistance and donated equipment for hands-on training, trained students through internships and clinicals, and employed program completers.

Instructors

Industry partners, staff, and students all reported that program instructors are a strength of the NCCC. Several students explained that the program instructors are knowledgeable, organized, willing to answer questions, and informative about the industry. Members of the staff agreed that instructors are a positive attribute of the program by noting that that instructors are highly skilled. Staff also pointed out that there is a small faculty-to-student ratio, which is also beneficial. Industry partners also agreed with this sentiment that the quality of instructors is a valuable aspect of the program: "The Health Sciences department here on campus offers state-of-the-art training. They have wonderful instructors, fabulous training, and state-of-the-art instruction. Our campus and our instructors are a huge strength."

Hands-On Training

The opportunities to get hands-on training is another major strength of the NCCC according to many students completing the student survey. For example, students involved with an allied health program cited the opportunity to engage in clinicals as an aspect of their program that went well: "Clinicals were the best part. Being one-on-one with patients and nurses was an incredible experience."

Career Preparation

Several students and staff members also reported that a strength of the program is that it helps prepare students for a career in the field they are studying. Students explained that they learned what they needed to work in the field: "I gained the knowledge to go out in the field and do a good job as an employee

wherever I go." Students also noted that they gained knowledge through their program about expectations of the industry they were entering. Staff agreed that a strength of the program was the ability for students to gain skills necessary for employment: "The Diesel Technician program at TMCC provides students with the entry-level skills necessary for employment in the local industries that use diesel powered equipment, such as trucking, mining, and construction. Industry partnerships have provided valuable input to the program in the form of equipment donations and curriculum advisement."

Comradery at VRC

In addition to aspects of academic programs that are working well, veteran students and staff commented on strengths of the VRC as well. One component that stood out is that the VRC offer a place for veteran students to come together. One staff member explained: "This has created an opportunity for veterans to have a place to come together. Many are not sure how to move forward with education or even what they might want to take for courses and the VRC has created this place for them to generate ideas." This sentiment was echoed by another staff member: "It provides a sense of community for student veterans and encourages degree completion."

Number of Participants Served

When the grant was written, consortium members indicated they planned to serve 988 students in grant-funded academic programs. Despite three programs at CSN exiting the NCCC and only two programs replacing them later in the grant, the consortium almost met their original goal by serving 954 participants. This demonstrates, that the NCCC excelled at marketing programs and offering programs that met a need in the community.

Program Constraints

Themes that emerged when providing feedback regarding program constraints included a need to improve student readiness for program entry, obstacles related to working with different federal agencies, and concerns that more suitable technology services could have been purchased through the grant.

Student Readiness

Both students and staff suggested that some students are not prepared for the academic program they entered. Specifically, one student commented that he/she believes that "requirements should be met prior to joining" the program. Staff agreed that there is a need for ensuring students are better prepared for coursework and offered a suggestion for addressing this concern: "Provide pre-course learning opportunities especially in the area of reading so that students will enter the program at a reading level high enough to be successful." Additionally, another participant suggested that an aptitude assessment prior to program entry could be useful: "Assessment of student aptitude and likelihood for success prior to entering the program."

Federal Agency Guidelines

Project team members reported that there was a disconnect between the DOL and the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), particularly with regard to the recognition of the accelerated format for academic programs. While DOL is in favor of the accelerated format, the VA had multiple obstacles in place that precluded veterans from obtaining maximum benefits. Similarly, the NCCC faced issues in getting the Department of Education (ED) to recognize the accelerated format, which impacted students' access to financial aid.

The original grant application outlined specific equipment requested for each program, but project team members felt that the correct equipment was not identified. As a result, project team members did not believe that the grant application requested suitable equipment for each program. They eventually obtained authorization to purchase the correct equipment, but the process delayed the purchase by six months. The NCCC also purchased Burning Glass software through the grant. Several project team members noted that there were a number of design flaws with the technology and that it was not being utilized as intended.

TAACCCT Outcomes

TAACCCT grants are geared toward the attainment of both academic and employment outcomes for program participants. Education outcomes include program completion, continued enrollment, credential earned, credit attainment, and enrollment in further education. Employment outcomes include wage increases for incumbent workers as well as entered and retained employment for non-incumbent workers. The education and employment outcomes specific to the NCCC participants are detailed in the sections below.

Education Outcomes

At the time of this report, education outcome data were available from Institutional Research for all NCCC participants (n=954) as of August 2018. Figure 5 below breaks down NCCC enrollment by grant year and college and shows that enrollment was highest in Years 2 and 3.

Figure 5. Number of Participants Enrolled

Year 1 (2104-15): WNC 40, TMCC 54, GBC 37
Year 2 (2015-16): WNC 108, TMCC 104, GBC 139
Year 3 (2016-17): WNC 136, TMCC 115, GBC 97
Year 4 (2017-18): WNC 55, TMCC 19, GBC 50

■ WNC ■ TMCC ■ GBC
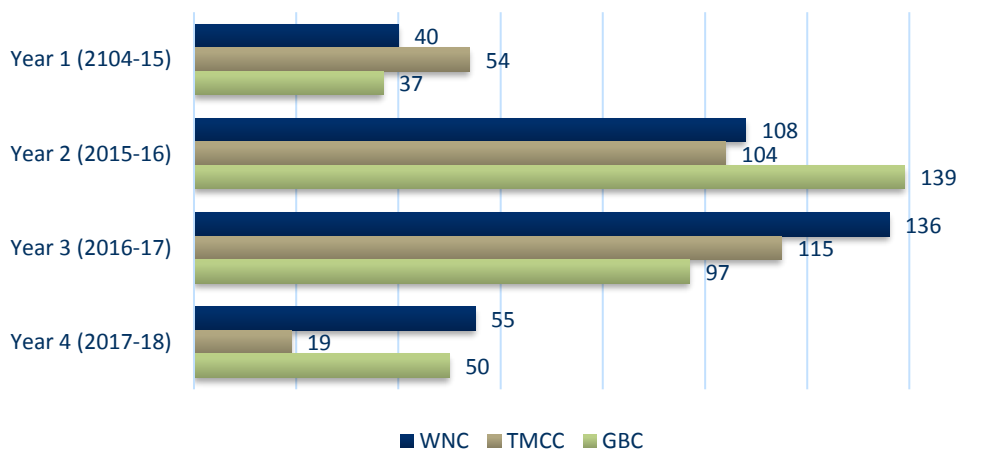
Program Completion

Figure 6 shows the number of NCCC participants within each college who completed their program of study during each year of the grant. A total of 593 of the 954 participants completed a NCCC program for a completion rate of 62.2%.

Figure 6. Number of Program Completers

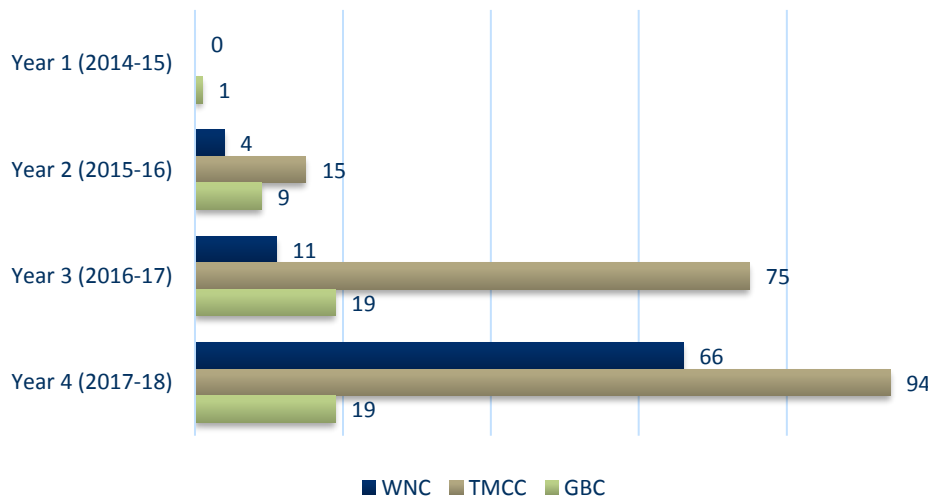| Year	WNC	TMCC	GBC
Year 1 (2014-15)	0		4
Year 2 (2015-16)	89	20	139
Year 3 (2016-17)	110	28	97
Year 4 (2017-18)	59	5	50

■ WNC ■ TMCC ■ GBC
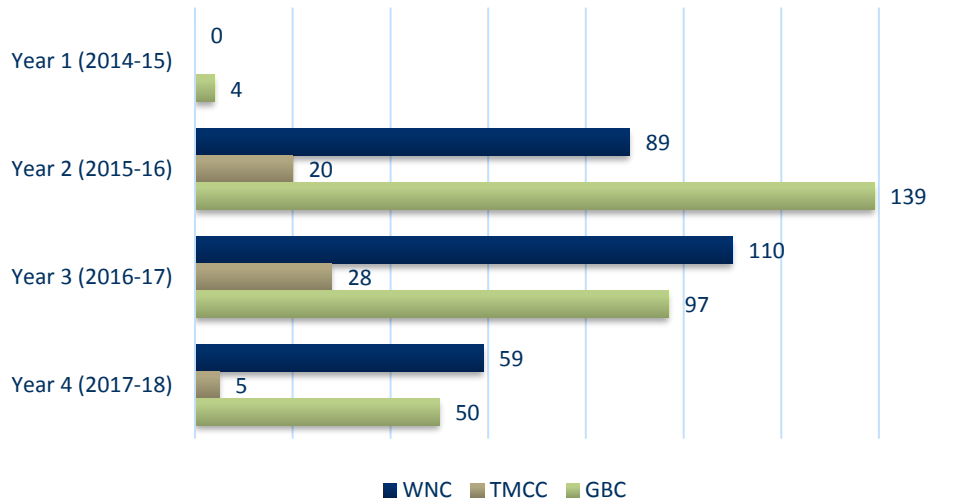
NCCC used a non-completer form to capture information about participants as they exited the program prior to completion. This form was completed for 53 students and the results showed that the reason for 43 of these students exiting the program was unknown.

Retained in Program of Study

For the retention outcome, 313 of the 361 students who had not completed the program were retained in the NCCC program for a retention rate of 86.7%. A majority of these participants were retained in Year 4 (n=179), which is to be expected as they were still completing their programs of study when outcome data were pulled. TMCC showed the highest number of retained participants but this is likely because GBC and WNC both had CNA programs which are shorter in length (Figure 7) than the programs offered by TMCC.

Figure 7. Number of Participants Retained in Grant-funded Program of Study

Year	WNC	TMCC	GBC
Year 1 (2014-15)	0		1
Year 2 (2015-16)	4	15	9
Year 3 (2016-17)	11	75	19
Year 4 (2017-18)	66	94	19

■ WNC ■ TMCC ■ GBC

Credentials Earned

Credential attainment includes both certificates earned from a NCCC college and industry-recognized credentials. Through August 2018, a total of 1,067 skills certificates or degrees were earned by NCCC students. The highest number of credentials earned were in Year 3 as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Number of Credentials Earned
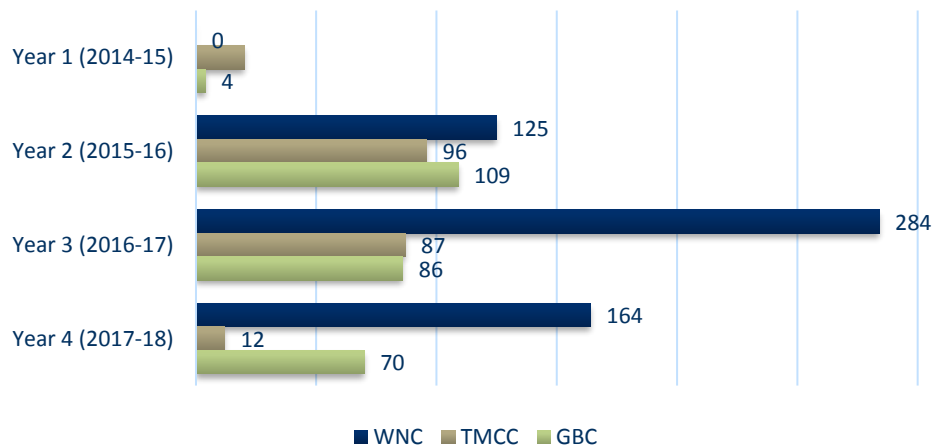
Figure 9 presents the number of skills or occupational certificates earned by program of study. The number of certificates earned in the CNA program at GBC was the highest followed by the CNA program at WNC (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Number of Skills and Occupational Certificates Earned by Program
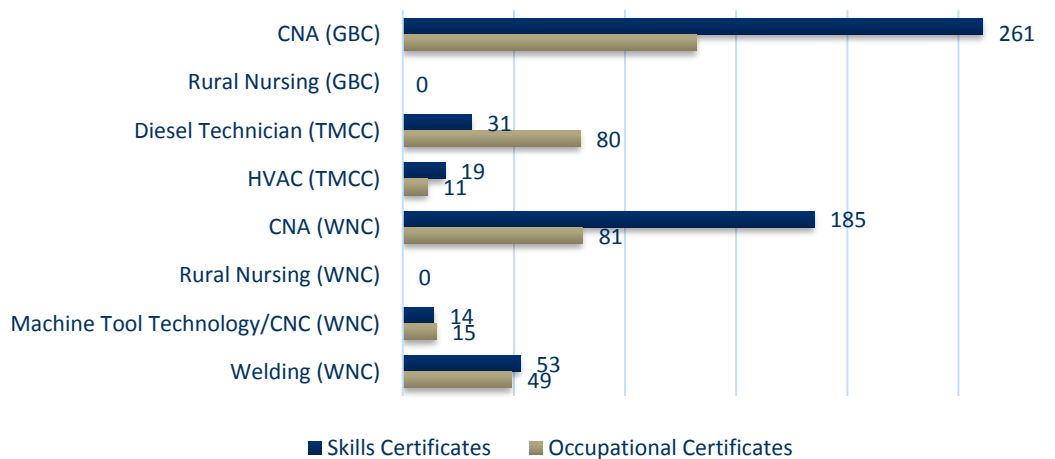
Completed Credit Hours

For NCCC credit-bearing programs, the total number of credits earned by year and industry is presented in Figure 10. Participants earned the most credits in Year 4 of the grant followed by Year 3. The highest number of credits earned over the course of the four years was at WNC. Additionally, 342 participants earned a total of 3,735 credits for a rate of 19.92 credit per participant (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Number of Credit Hours Earned

Year	WNC	TMCC	GBC
Year 1 (2014-15)		0	4
Year 2 (2015-16)	89	94	126
Year 3 (2016-17)	122	159	118
Year 4 (2017-18)	131	92	94

■ WNC ■ TMCC ■ GBC
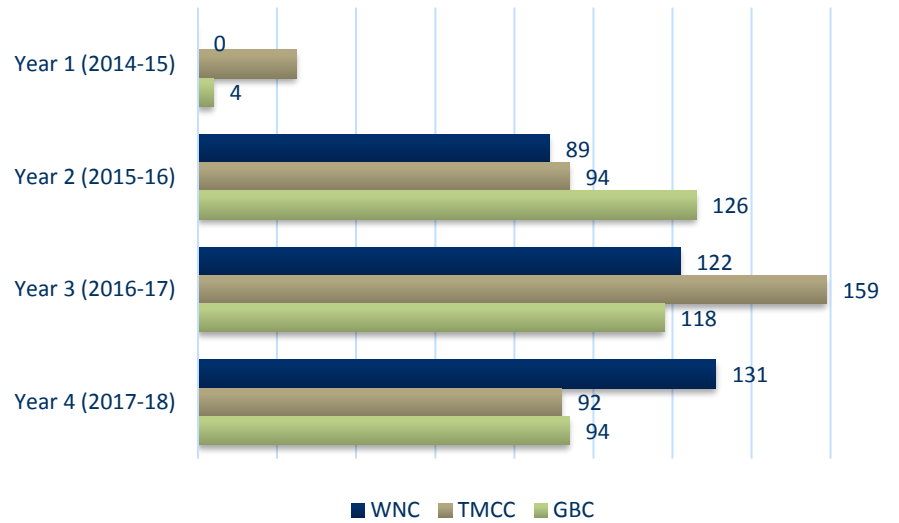
Enrollment in Further Education

Four participants, all of which were from GBC, were enrolled in further education after completing their program of study. Students were asked to self-report plans to pursue additional education. Figure 11 below illustrates that a large majority of participants at each college anticipated pursing additional education. For example, many CNA students noted in focus groups that they were using the program as a catalyst for gaining entry into a different type of nursing program.

Figure 11. Completers Self-Reporting Intention to Pursue Additional Education

College	Percent
GBC (n=165)	87.2%
TMCC (n=17)	94.1%
WNC (n=191)	88.5%

Employment Outcomes

Entered Employment

Figure 12 presents the number of incumbent workers enrolled in NCCC program during each year of the grant. These numbers provide context for the low number of participants (n = 59) who were employed within the first quarter of program completion (See Figure 13) as incumbent workers are excluded from this outcome.

Figure 12. Number of Incumbent Workers
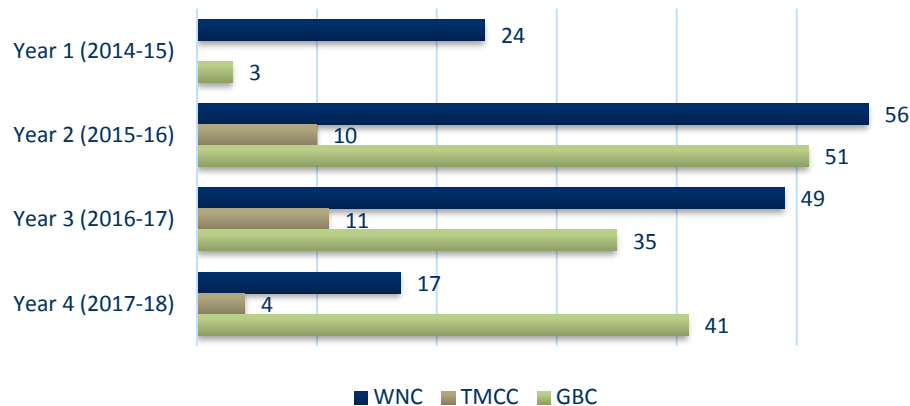
Figure 13. Number of Participants Employed After Program Study Completion and Exit
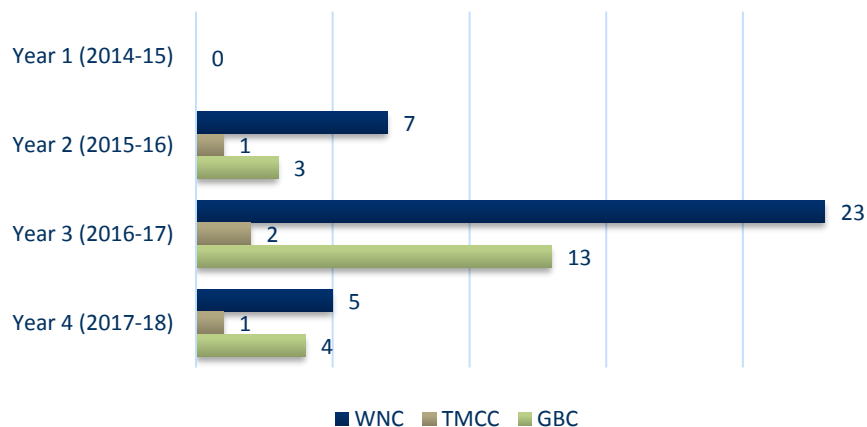
Retained Employment

Evaluators calculated the number of participants who were retained in employment, which was defined as non-incumbent workers who completed the program, obtained employment within the first quarter of exit, and who were employed for two additional consecutive quarters. Thirty-eight of the 59 participants who had obtained employment were retained for a rate of 64.4%. WNC had the highest number of retained employees as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14. Number of Participants Retained Employment

Year	WNC	TMCC	GBC
Year 1 (2014-15)	0		
Year 2 (2015-16)	0		1
Year 3 (2016-17)	18	1	6
Year 4 (2017-18)	6	1	5

■ WNC ■ TMCC ■ GBC
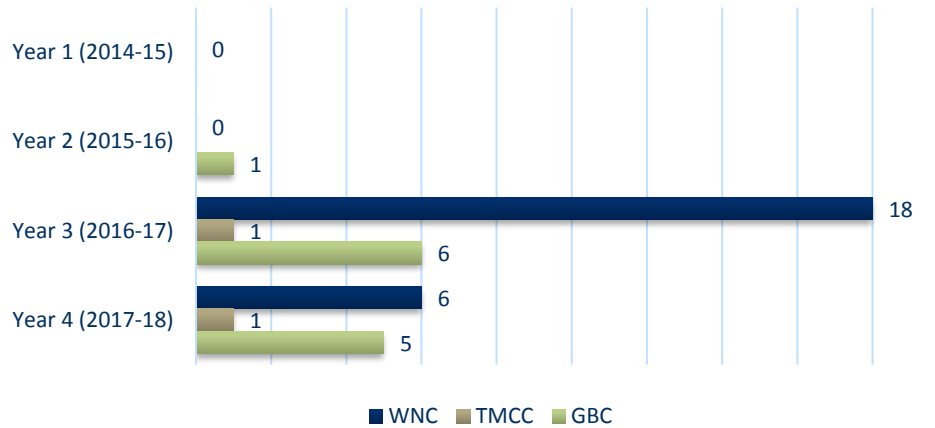
Wage Increase in Employment Post-Enrollment

A total of 300 participants received a wage increase post-enrollment. This calculation included both incumbent workers and those who obtained employment during the course of their program. The number of participants who received a wage increase is broken down by year and program in Figure 15 below.

Figure 15. Number of Incumbent Workers Receiving a Wage Increase

Year	WNC	TMCC	GBC
Year 1 (2014-15)	0	1	2
Year 2 (2015-16)	34	33	33
Year 3 (2016-17)	40	46	41
Year 4 (2017-18)	17	29	24

■ WNC ■ TMCC ■ GBC
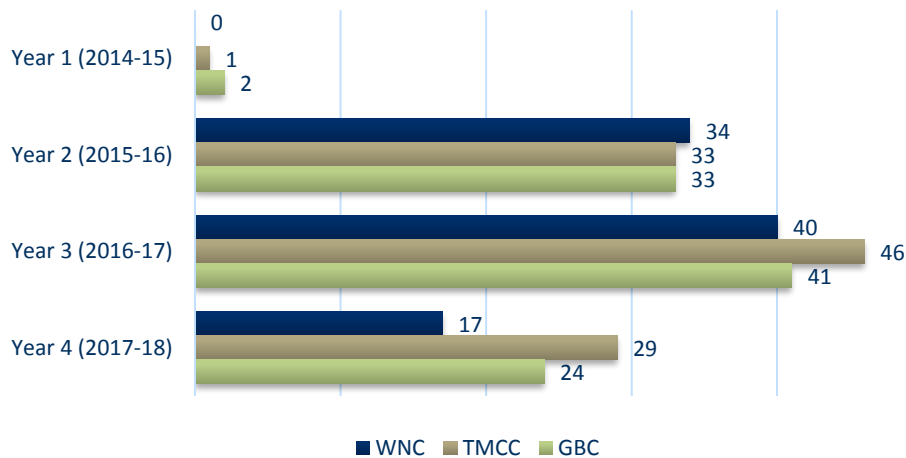
Program Impact

In order to examine the impact of three NCCC programs on student education and employment outcomes, PRE utilized a quasi-experimental comparison cohort design with concurrent and historical comparison groups. This method allowed us to compare outcomes for participants in the grant-funded training with participants in concurrent and historical cohorts who were comparable on key dimensions such as learning objectives, credential attainment, and certification outcomes. PRE worked closely with the NCCC project leads to determine the best comparison group for each of the treatment groups.

PRE was unable to test for significant differences between groups due to the fact that individual level data were not available for either treatment or comparison groups. Further, participant outcomes were shared with evaluators in aggregate by college and, as a result, comparison group outcomes were also aggregated by school to examine descriptive differences between groups.

Academic Outcomes

Figures 16 and 17 present the number of GBC participants and their concurrent comparison cohort who completed and the number of earned a credential over the course of the grant. Given the number of enrollees for each program (323 for the treatment group and 131 for the comparison group), GBC treatment students had higher rates of completion (86.4%) than their concurrent cohort (66.4%). Treatment group participants earned 2,618 credits (8.11 per enrollee) compared to 522 (3.98 per enrollee) for the concurrent cohort.

Figure 16. Number of Completers for GBC Treatment and Comparison Group

Completers — GBC Comparison: 87; GBC Participants: 282

■ GBC Comparison ■ GBC Participants
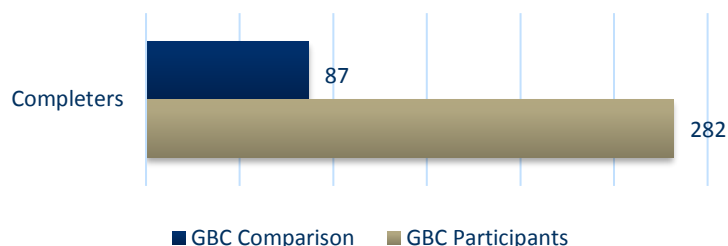
Figure 17. Number of Credentials Earned for GBC Treatment and Comparison Group

Credentials Earned — GBC Comparison: 87; GBC Participants: 279

■ GBC Comparison ■ GBC Participants
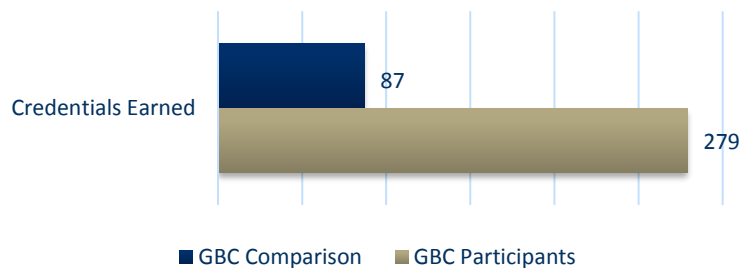
Figures 18 and 19 present the outcomes of completion and credentials earned for TMCC participants and their historical comparison group. There were 292 participants in the TMCC treatment group and 33 in the historical comparison group. Treatment group participants had a higher number of completers and number of credentials earned than the comparison group, but the rate of achieving these academic outcomes was lower than it was for the historical comparison group based on number of enrollees. For example, 51.5% of comparison group students completed their program of study compared to 18.2% for the treatment group. Treatment group participants earned 3,078 credits (10.54 per enrollee), while comparison group students earned 510 (15.45 per enrollee). It should be noted that only the HVAC program at TMCC had a comparison group and since treatment data were not reported by program, this is not a particularly meaningful comparison.

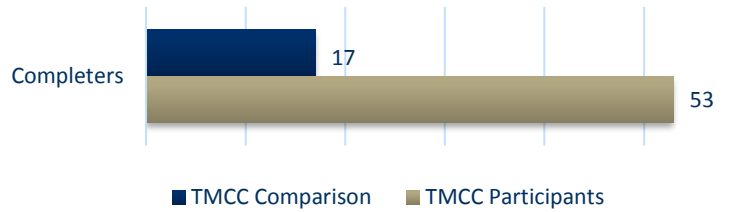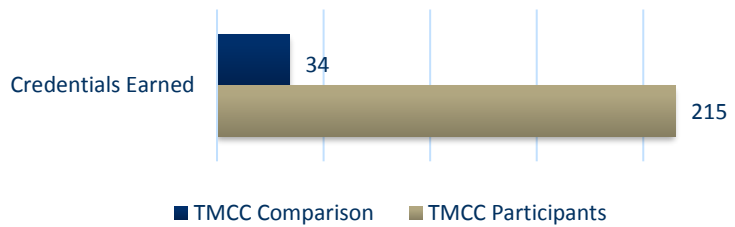**Figure 18. Number of Completers for TMCC
Treatment and Comparison Group**

Completers	17
	53

■ TMCC Comparison   ■ TMCC Participants

**Figure 19. Number of Credentials Earned for
TMCC Treatment and Comparison Group**

Credentials Earned	34
	215

■ TMCC Comparison   ■ TMCC Participants

Figures 20 and 21 present the outcomes of completion and credentials earned for WNC participants (n=339) and their historical comparison group (n=105). As shown in the graphs, there was a higher number of completions and credentials earned for the treatment group than their historical comparison cohort. Students in the treatment group earned a higher number of certificates per person (1.69) than the historical comparison group (1.22). Similarly, treatment group participants earned more credits per person (11.02) than the comparison group (9.85).

**Figure 20. Number of Completers for WNC
Treatment and Comparison Group**

Completers	98
	258

■ WNC Comparison   ■ WNC Participants
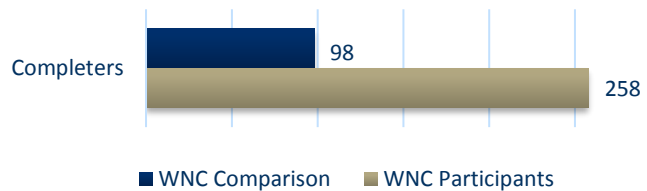
**Figure 21. Number of Credentials Earned
for WNC Treatment and Comparison Group**

Credentials Earned	98
	258

■ WNC Comparison   ■ WNC Participants
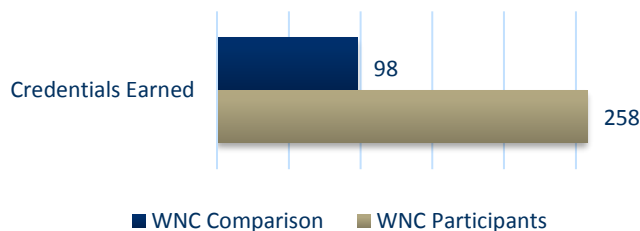
Employment Outcomes

WNC was the only college with employment outcome data for the comparison group. This is because the historical comparison groups were from an earlier round of TAACCCT funding, which allowed staff from the NCCC access to this data. As was the case with the academic impact data for WNC, the Rural Nursing program is not represented within the comparison group but is included in the treatment group. There were 224 non-incumbent workers in the treatment group and 61 in the comparison group. Thus, the rate of comparison group participants who were employed after completion was 37.7% compared to 15.6% for the treatment group. Despite this, Figure 22 illustrates that the treatment group saw more success with employment retention with 68.6% of those participants retained their jobs versus 56.5% for the comparison group. Finally, comparison group participants received wage increases at a rate of 31.4%, while 26.8% of treatment group participants earned a wage increase.

Figure 22. WNC Employment Impact

Evaluation Insights

Although TAACCCT grant funding for the NCCC will conclude in September 2018, PRE would like to offer the following insights regarding the project. These insights are based solely on the data collected through the evaluation activities referenced in this report.

1. The NCCC successfully maintained strong relationships with industry partners over the course of this grant. This evaluation showed that the NCCC programs benefited from help with curriculum design, financial support and donated material, recruitment of students, work-based learning opportunities for students, and job placement. Overall, it would be beneficial for GBC, TMCC, and WNC to continue to collaborate with industry partners in the creation and modification of new programs and courses moving forward. The clinicals and internships in the community should also continue as the benefit both students and partners.

2. The VRCs were another area of success for the NCCC. Partners played an important role in providing resources for the VRCs. With the VRCs being sustained but potentially with fewer staff members, these partnerships will be even more important.

3. The software services purchased through the grant, specifically Burning Glass, was not suitable for programs and support services, according to some project team members. Partners provided input on appropriate purchases and this continued input from partners should be utilized for other grants at these colleges in the future.

4. Student academic readiness for programs was a constraint of the grant. Programs within these colleges could consider using an aptitude test moving forward to determine preparedness for programs. Those who are not ready to enter specific programs could be directed to preparatory coursework.

Appendix A. Project Team Data Collection

Year 2 Focus Group Questions

1. Can you tell us about the steps that were taken by the consortium to create and/or run this training program as it pertains to determining needed programs and grant obtainment?

2. What is the consortium's shared goal for improving or expanding programs using grant funds?

3. What is the administrative structure of the program?
   - How is the consortium structure working for you?
   - Do you have any suggestions for improvement to the consortium structure?

4. What are your expectations for students in the funded programs?
   - How do you expect this program to affect TAA-eligible individuals? (e.g., re-entry into the workforce, fast completion)
   - How do you expect this program to affect Veterans?

5. At this point, what contributions have partner organizations made to this project?
   - What level of involvement would you like to see from partners over the course of the grant?

6. At this point, what would you identify as the strengths of this training program?
   - How about the weaknesses?
   - Have you encountered any barriers to program implementation?
   - Do you have any recommendations for program improvement at this point?

7. Thinking long term, what are your goals for program sustainability?

Year 2 Interview Questions

1. Can you summarize how programs at your college have or will be improved or expanded using grant funds?

2. Do you have any suggestions for improvement to the consortium structure (if needed)?

3. How was the curriculum for the programs at your college selected or created?
   - How is it being used?

4. What are your expectations for students in the funded programs at your college (if needed)?
   - How do you expect this program to affect TAA-eligible individuals? (e.g., re-entry into the workforce, fast completion)
   - How do you expect this program to affect Veterans?

5. At this point, what contributions have partner organizations made in terms of program design and curriculum development for programs at your college?
   - What level of involvement would you like to see from partners over the course of the grant?

6. Do you have any other comments about this TAACCCT funded program at your college?

Year 4 Focus Group Questions

1. How have the NCCC programs met your expectations for students who participated?
   - Did student demand for programs/VRC meet your expectations?
   - How did programs do in regards to participation, completion, and industry certification achievement rates?

2. How have the NCCC programs met the employment demands in the region?

3. What contributions did partnering organizations make both to academic programs and the VRCs?
   - Program design
   - Curriculum development
   - Recruitment
   - Training
   - Placement
   - Program management
   - Leveraging of resources
   - Commitment to program sustainability

4. What factors contributed to partners' involvement or lack of involvement in the programs?
   - Which contributions from partners were most critical to the success of the grant program?
   - Which contributions had less of an impact?

5. What successes stand out from your implementation of the NCCC programs/VRC over the past few years?

6. What have been some of the barriers to successful implementation of these programs/VRC?
   - Thinking about the original grant application, how did what was implemented compare to the original plans for the grant?
   - What kind of barriers from the original application existed?
   - What aspects of the original application worked well?

7. What are your plans for sustainability of the NCCC programs including VRCs?
   - To what extent are practices being imbedded into broader institutional policy and practice?
   - What are your expectations for student demand of these sustained programs in the future?

- Please discuss sustainability of student <u>assistance</u> services, for example, counseling, enrollment, and job placement. Maybe you'll keep a program/VRC but what will be lost or gained from the TAACCCT experience?
- If some portions of programs/VRCs won't be sustained then what are the plans for implementing those programs/VRCs?
- What are the plans for sustainability of job placement services such as the Burning Glass tool?

8. Do you have any other comments?

Appendix B. Student Survey

Student surveys varied slightly by program area. The sample below is for the WNC CNA program.

You are receiving this survey because you participated in the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program, which received funding from the Department of Labor for a Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant:

We would like to get some feedback from you about your experience with the program and any suggestions for improving it. This survey includes questions about program entry, program elements such as career guidance, and future career goals.

Your responses are confidential and will be sent to an outside research company. Your feedback is extremely valuable to the success and continuous improvement efforts of this program so please take 15 minutes to complete this survey!

Background Questions

1. Where did you complete the CNA program?

( ) Western Nevada College Carson City Campus   ( ) Western Nevada College Fallon Campus

	Yes	No
2. I am currently employed.	( )	( )
3. I am currently employed in the industry I am receiving my degree/certificate.	( )	( )
4. I am a veteran.	( )	( )
5. I am an eligible spouse of a Veteran	( )	( )
6. I receive or am eligible for Trade Act/Trade Adjustment Assistance lay-off benefits.	( )	( )

7. If **yes**, to number 2, what is your current hourly pay rate? $ _____/Hour

	Yes	No	I am not currently employed
8. I anticipate a salary increase at work because of my participation in this program.	( )	( )	( )
9. If you answered **yes** to number 8, how much per hour of an increase do you anticipate?	$_____/Hour		
10. I have already received a salary increase at work due to participating in this program.	( )	( )	( )
11. If you answered **yes** to number 10, how much of an increase have you received per hour?	$_____/Hour		

Program Feedback

12. What went well with the CNA program?

13. Have you participated in an unrelated course/program at this college?

( ) Yes   ( ) No

14. If you answered **yes** to number 12, how is this program different?

15. Do you have suggestions for improving this program?

	Yes	No
16. I was already or planned to be a student at this college before I enrolled in this program.	( )	( )
17. I was already employed in this industry before entering into this program.	( )	( )
18. I intended to pursue a career in this industry regardless of this program being offered.	( )	( )
19. Now that I have completed this program I plan to pursue additional education.	( )	( )
20. Did you take the WorkKeys assessment?	( )	( )

21. I would recommend this program to another student interested in this industry.

( ) Strongly Disagree   ( ) Disagree   ( ) Neutral   ( ) Agree   ( )
Strongly Agree

22. This program was a good fit for me.

( ) Strongly Disagree   ( ) Disagree   ( ) Neutral   ( ) Agree   ( )
Strongly Agree

Program Entry

23. How did you hear about this program?

24. Did you experience any obstacles with <u>entry</u> to the CNA program?

( ) Yes   ( ) No

25. If you answered **yes** to number 24, please describe these obstacles to <u>entry</u>.

26. Did you take an assessment upon entering into the CNA program?

    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

27. If you answered **yes** to number 26, please describe the assessment and how these results were used.

28. What were the biggest obstacles to program <u>completion</u>?

Career Guidance and Other Support Services

29. Have you received career guidance through this program?

    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

30. If you answered **yes** to number 29, please describe your experience with career guidance.

31. Have you received other support services through this program?

    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

32. If you answered **yes** to number 31, please describe these support services that you received.

Career and Educational Plans

Please tell us how much you agree/disagree with each statement regarding your career and educational plans.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
33. I plan to pursue a career in the healthcare industry.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
34. I plan to pursue a career in the healthcare industry in this region.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
35. I am more likely to get a local job in the healthcare industry because of my participation in this program.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
36. The likelihood that I will pursue a career in the healthcare industry has increased since participating in the program.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

37. Please list any certificates you have earned through the CNA.

Program Feedback

Please tell us how much you agree/disagree with the following statements about the program you are completing. The CNA program…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
38. …has helped place me in the correct career pathway.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
39. … has assisted me in choosing courses that are aligned with my career path.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
40. …will increase my chances of getting a job.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
41. … will help me reach my career goals at a faster pace.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
42. …is the only program of its kind in the region.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

43. Do you have any additional comments about this program?

44. We would like to follow up with you in a year about your employment. If you give us permission to do so, please include your name and phone number or email address.
Phone:_____Email:_____

Appendix C. Student Non-Completer Form

Please include the name of the student who has withdrawn from the program.*

Select the program of study this student has withdrawn from.*
( ) Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at WNC

( ) Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at GBC

( ) Diesel Technician at TMCC

( ) HVAC at TMCC

( ) Machine Tooling/Computer Numerical Control at WNC

( ) Rural Nursing Program at GBC

( ) Rural Nursing at WNC

( ) Welding at WNC

Please indicate the date of the student's withdrawal from the program.

*Select the reason(s) this student has withdrawn from the program. (Check all that apply.)**
[ ] Academic difficulties

[ ] Conflict with family responsibilities

[ ] Conflict with work responsibilities

[ ] Financial

[ ] Incarceration

[ ] Relocation

[ ] Other - Write In: _____

[ ] I don't know

Please provide any additional comments about this student's withdrawal from the program.

Thank You!

Appendix D. Staff Survey

This is an abbreviated version of the survey, which would be too long to include here. Instead, as an example, the WNC CNA section is included here.

Background

Please indicate which program area(s) you have been involved with through the NCCC. (Check all that apply.)*

[ ] Business Administration at CSN

[ ] Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at WNC

[ ] Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at GBC

[ ] Diesel Technician at TMCC

[ ] Information Technology at CSN

[ ] Machine Tooling/Computer Numerical Control at WNC

[ ] Rural Nursing Program at GBC

[ ] Practical Nursing (LPN) at CSN

[ ] Welding at WNC

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at CSN

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at GBC

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at TMCC

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at WNC

[ ] Administrative support for the grant (not working directly with a program above)

Please describe your role with the NCCC.

When did your involvement with the NCCC begin?

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at WNC - Career Preparation & Student Feedback

Please rate your agreement with the following items:

The CNA program at WNC...*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
...is a good fit for workers who have been displaced from the local trade impacted industries sector.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
...is a good fit for workers who are just entering the healthcare field.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
...prepares students for immediate employment in the region.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
...will increase chances of entry into the healthcare field for participating students.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

I believe there is local demand for workers in the healthcare industry.

( ) Strongly Disgree

( ) Disagree

( ) Neither Disagree nor Agree

( ) Agree

( ) Strongly Agree

Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Students are excited about the CNA program at WNC.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Students have had positive reactions to new or modified CNA program curriculum delivery format.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Students entering the CNA program are prepared for the coursework.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at WNC - Industry Partners

Please rate your level of agreement with the following items regarding industry partners.*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Project administrators or other project staff have created successful partnerships with relevant organizations in the community.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Industry partners have provided useful input on curriculum design.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Feedback from industry partners has helped to ensure course content offers skill development desired by the job market.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Industry partners are excited about	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

the CNA program at WNC.					
Communications with industry partners has been good.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

What has been the most useful aspect of working with CNA industry partners?

Please answer the following questions regarding workforce development agencies.*

	Yes	No	I don't know
Are you working with workforce development agencies to recruit students?	( )	( )	( )
Are you working with workforce development agencies to place students in jobs?	( )	( )	( )

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at WNC - General Program Feedback

Thinking about the CNA program at WNC in general, please rate your level of agreement with the following items.

The CNA program at WNC...*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
…is helping to place students in the correct career pathway.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
… is assisting students in choosing courses that are aligned with their career path.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
… will help students reach their career goals at a faster pace.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
...is the only training program of its kind in the region.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
…provides training to staff and faculty involved in the program.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please discuss the strengths of the CNA program at WNC.

Please discuss areas for improvement for the CNA program at WNC at this point in time.

Do you have any additional comments about the CNA program at WNC?

NCCC General Program Feedback

Thinking about the Nevada Community College Consortium in general, please rate your level of agreement with the following items.

The Nevada Community College Consortium...*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
...is the only training program of its kind in the region.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
…provides training to staff and faculty	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

involved in the program.					

Please discuss the strengths of the Nevada Community College Consortium.

Please discuss areas for improvement for the Nevada Community College Consortium at this point in time.

Do you have any additional comments about the Nevada Community College Consortium?

Thank You!

Appendix E. Student Focus Groups and Interviews

Academic Student Focus Group and Interview Questions

1. How did you hear about the program you are in?
   - Did you experience any obstacles entering the program?
   - Did you take an assessment to gain entry into the program? If so, was it useful in determining whether this program is an appropriate program for you?
   - The Diesel Tech program purchased new equipment for the program using grant funding. What role did new equipment play in deciding to enter this program? *(New equipment for Diesel Tech includes chain hoist, hydraulic benches, bridge crane, tools and tool boxes, used engines, used box trucks, international 2010 and 2012 trucks, 6,500 lb pneumatic fork lift, Dodge diesel engine, hybrid cut-away trainer)*
     - Do you have any other feedback regarding equipment in the classroom?

2. What kind of career guidance has been provided through the Diesel Tech program?

3. What are your career plans?
   - Do you think your involvement in this program will increase your chances at gaining employment in your field of study?
   - Are you more likely to enter the transportation or mining field because of your involvement in this program?

4. What other support services have you received as part of this program?
   - How was your experience?

5. Have you received any industry certifications through this program?
   - Do you anticipate these being helpful to you in getting a job in your field?
   - How was the process for obtaining these certifications?

6. Do you have additional education plans following this program?

7. What do you anticipate as the biggest barriers in completing this program?

8. What is working well with the program?
   - Do you have any suggestions for improving the program?

9. Do you have any other comments?

VRC Focus Group and Interview Questions

1. How long have you been utilizing the Veterans Resource Center at (college name)?

   - What certificate of achievement or degree program are you enrolled in at (college name)?

2. How did you learn about the Veterans Resource Center?

3. What kind of advising services have you received through the Veterans Resource Center? How was your experience with academic advising?

- Career guidance?
- Academic advising?

4. What role has the Veterans Resource Center played in placing you in a career pathway?

- Has the VRC connected you with any local organizations?
- Have you used any of the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) job assistance or job seeking computer systems such as Silver State Solutions?

5. Have you taken any assessments through the Veterans Resource Center? How were these results used?

- WorkKeys assessment?
- Did you use a self-assessment tool for career guidance?

6. We also want to ask you about Credit for Prior Learning. Did you receive credit for military service and/or training?

- What did the process for receiving credit for prior learning look like? Did you take an assessment?
- What did you like or not like about the process?
- Do you think credit for prior learning will help you complete your academic program sooner?
- What role did Credit for Prior Learning play in pursuing a degree or certificate of achievement at (college name)?

7. What is the most valuable benefit provided by the Veterans Resource Center?

8. Do you have suggestions for improving the Veterans Resource Center at (college name)?

9. Do you have any other comments about the Veterans Resource Center at (college name)?

Appendix F. Industry Partner Data Collection

Year 2 Interview Questions

1. Can you start by talking about how you have been involved in the (program name) program over the past year?
   - Have you contributed to the design of the program or curriculum?
   - Assisted with recruitment?
   - Other areas of involvement?
   - Have you hired a program completer?

2. What factors have contributed to your level of involvement in the (program name) program? Are there things that have made it easier or more difficult for you to participate?
   - Would you like more or less involvement in the coming year? (elaborate)

3. What are your expectations for the new or expanded (program name) program at (college name)?
   - Expectations for student participation?

4. How do you see this program impacting the (industry name) industry in your region?

5. What are the strengths of the (program name) program at this point in time?
6. Were you involved with the college prior to the TAACCCT grant? If so, how does the quality of students before compare to the quality after the grant?

7. What are the barriers or challenges of the (program name) program at this point in time?

8. Do you have any other comments about the (program name) program at (college name)?

Year 4 Survey Questions

Background

Please indicate the program(s) in which you are or have been involved.*

[ ] CNA at Great Basin College

[ ] Rural Nursing at Great Basin College

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at Great Basin College

[ ] Diesel Technician at Truckee Meadows Community College

[ ] HVAC at Truckee Meadows Community College

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at Truckee Meadows Community College

[ ] Rural Nursing at Western Nevada College

[ ] CNA at Western Nevada College

[ ] Machine Tool Technology at Western Nevada College

[ ] Welding at Western Nevada College

[ ] Veterans Resource Center at Western Nevada College

How long have you been involved with the program(s)?

_____

Career Preparation-GBC Rural Nursing Partners

Thinking about the Rural Nursing program at GBC, please rate your agreement with the following items:

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither Disagree nor Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**I Don't Know**
This credential is a good fit for workers who have been displaced from an industry other than healthcare.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
This credential is a good fit for workers who are just entering the field of healthcare.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither Disagree nor Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**I Don't Know**
This program prepares students for employment in the region.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Student participation in this program will increase their chances of entry into the healthcare field.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I believe there is a local demand for workers in the healthcare industry.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Do you have other comments you would like to share about the Rural Nursing program as it relates to career preparation?

_____

Partnership Experience

Please rate your level of agreement with the following items regarding your organization's involvement with the TAACCCT funded program(s).*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I Don't Know
My organization has provided feedback to help ensure course content offers skill development necessary for the current job market.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Project administrators have created successful partnerships with relevant organizations in the community.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
My organization is excited about the grant funded career programs.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Communication with the college has been good.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

What has been the most useful aspect of working with the college in program development?

_____

Please rate your organization's involvement in terms of the following:

	None	**Little**	**Some**	**Substantial**	**N/A**
Program Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Curriculum Development	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Student Recruitment	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Student Training	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Student Placement	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Program Management	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Providing or Sharing Resources with the Program	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Commitment to Program Sustainability	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Is there any other type of involvement in the program(s) that would be beneficial to your organization?

_____

What factors have led to your involvement or lack of involvement with the program(s)?

_____

Do you have any other comments you would like to share about partnerships?

_____

Additional Feedback

Please discuss the strengths of the program(s) at this point in time.

_____

Please discuss areas for improvement in the program(s) at this point in time.

_____

Do you have any additional comments about the grant funded program(s)?

_____

Thank You!