

Workforce Learning Summit Innovation or Best Practice

Pamlico Community College

Growth and Employment in Pamlico County

'Growth and Employment in Pamlico County' (GEPC) is a comprehensive program that provides seamless transitions to employment in Pamlico County and the eastern region within various career clusters. This program integrates and advances various ongoing activities such as academic/instructional programming, apprenticeship/hands-on/work-based learning, and career counseling/student support services that lead to goal completion, employment, or transfer to four-year institutions.

DETAILS

The catalyst for this initiative was the Back-to-Work grant the college received in August 2013. Using these grant funds, we were able to respond to the construction needs of the county, specifically welding, electrical wiring and contractor training with green technologies. We involved local employers and an advisory committee in the development of training modules that embedded the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) and OSHA 10 or 30 card; modules also followed NCCER requirements, which resulted in completers acquiring the necessary skills and credentials to meet entry level positions in their respective fields. In addition to these, students were afforded the opportunity of earning credentials from external accrediting agencies like the American Welding Society, National Electrical Code, and the International Code Council. Students were assessed on their performance in each module of the respective curriculum by written and practical exams. The success of this continuing education initiative prompted us to look at replicating it in the curriculum arena as well.

In light of current social and demographic shifts, Pamlico County is experiencing a heightened need for qualified workers in the field of health and human services. As a result of longstanding partnerships, Pamlico Community College (PCC), Pamlico County Schools (PCS) and the Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board are well-positioned to respond to this need through the GEPC Program. A steering committee will be appointed with representatives from PCC, PCS and local businesses and community agencies; the Director of the Career Center (former JobLink); the Pamlico County Economic Developer; and the Chair of the Workforce Development Board.

Under the advisement of the steering committee, GEPC seeks to develop internal pathways between high school Allied Health and PCC Human Services Technology (HST) curricula, engage faculty in the integration of work-based learning activities, identify and hire an intermediary/coordinator to facilitate learning outcomes relevant to HST careers, develop both assessment and marketing materials, explore the possibility of embedding entrepreneurial Small Business Center seminars or content, and disseminate best practices and lessons learned. Intended outcomes for this program include graduates equipped with stackable and portable credentials who are competitive both on a local and regional level, high school and community college programs that are aligned with economic development initiatives within the service area; improved visibility and awareness of the human services and other programs and opportunities offered by PCC; enhanced advising, mentoring and resources to students entering Allied Health

careers; the creation of a replicable process that incorporates best practices and can serve as model for expansion; and increased participation in HST and other Allied Health programs and careers.

Partner Type(s):

- Business/Industry (direct involvement)
- Workforce Development Board
- Public Schools
- Career Center(s)
- Nonprofit Organization(s)
- Other: Chamber of Commerce

Partnerships within the educational institutions include linking in Pamlico Community College's Small Business Center and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) at Pamlico Community College and Pamlico High School.

Impact/Outcomes

1. Competitiveness of graduates in this growth market both locally and regionally, with portable credentials
2. Alignment of high school and community college programs with economic development initiatives of the service area
3. Improved visibility and awareness of the human services program/opportunities offered by PCC
4. Enhanced advising, mentoring and resources to students going into Allied Health careers
5. Creation of a replicable process that incorporates best practices and can serve as model for expansion

Funding Source(s)

- NC Community College Back-to-Work grant: \$97,000 (2013-14)
- NC Works Career Pathways Grant (Perkins funds)-applied for/awaiting response: \$66,500 (2014-16)

REFLECTIONS

Innovation or Best Practice

This initiative has allowed us to integrate various ongoing efforts in a comprehensive replicable manner that will advance our strategic initiatives and commitment to the completion and success agenda: student success and completion, increased and stronger partnerships, retooling of courses and programs, and creation of seamless pathways. Discussions around the GEPC program have helped us identify and enhance synergies between curriculum and continuing education instructional opportunities.

Lessons Learned

PCC has had a long tradition of training the workforce in Pamlico County. This program has reinforced the importance of involving not only local and regional employers directly and through more engaged advisory committees, but the public schools as well.

Scalability

This model can be used with any program. The primary cost is associated with the employment of

the intermediary/coordinator who can help better connect with businesses and agencies in the county and with the coordination of the various moving pieces of the process.

RESOURCES

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