



FACT SHEET

COMMUNITY COLLEGES CAN

College Mentoring Program

The college mentoring program is a central component of *Community Colleges CAN*, [www.communitycollegescan.org](http://communitycollegescan.org) (<http://communitycollegescan.org>), an initiative funded through June 2009 by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education. The initiative, which is administered by JBL Associates, is designed to strengthen the capacity of community colleges to meet students' academic needs and support their success in college and the workforce.

The program consists of six mentoring communities – each with one mentor college, two mentee colleges, and a facilitator with strong professional experience working with community colleges. Through the program's fast-track, collaborative learning experience, the mentoring communities will develop practical strategies that mentee colleges can use to advance their own initiatives. The mentoring communities encourage the exchange of ideas and knowledge. The mentee colleges also receive coaching and technical assistance.

Each mentoring community focuses on a program area that is important to all community colleges and centers on an initiative successfully implemented at a mentor college. The mentoring communities are: Academic and Student Support Centers, Career Pathways, Developmental Education Learning Communities, Innovations in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), P-20 Educational Partnerships, and Teaching and Learning Centers. Below are brief descriptions of the mentoring communities and their participants.

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SUPPORT CENTERS

Community college students do their best when colleges set high expectations and provide high support. Academic and student support centers emphasize the college's commitment to providing comprehensive support and helping students make connections that address their academic, personal, and other needs.

Mentor College: Parkland College (Champaign, IL)
Mentee Colleges: Lake Superior College (Duluth, MN)
Macomb Community College (Warren, MI)
Facilitator: Cindra Smith, consultant to community college governing boards and leadership groups in the US and Canada. She has more than 30 years experience with state and national community college associations and as a college administrator and faculty member.

Parkland College's Center for Academic Success is a comprehensive, one-stop learning assistance center that provides a variety of academic services, including peer and faculty tutoring, study skills workshops, writing support, and academic and personal planning. The Center encourages innovative teaching approaches, such as faculty-led tutorials that are based on students' needs. These voluntary sessions are essentially group tutoring that focuses on elements of the curriculum the faculty member identified as stumbling blocks for this particular group of

students. The Center provides support for all students, and it has a particular focus on strengthening the skills and persistence rates of at-risk students, notably those taking developmental education courses.

Lake Superior College aims to improve the persistence and success of developmental education students. The college is creating Innovations for Student Success, a highly coordinated student success program that includes both exemplary teaching practices and a commitment to high-level student support that stems from both faculty/teaching and the learning center.

Macomb Community College's Developmental Education Success Initiative is an institution-wide effort to improve the college's developmental education activities, delivery, and outcomes. Like Parkland College, Macomb delivers many of its support services through learning centers.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Career pathways refers to community college initiatives that use academic program design, counseling, and other interventions to help high school students and adults design and follow a clear path to higher levels of employment in their chosen industry. Students earn certificates or associate degrees at the community college or transfer to a four-year institution to continue their education.

Mentor College: Southwestern Oregon Community College (Coos Bay, OR)
Mentee Colleges: Jefferson Community and Technical College (Louisville, KY)
Laramie County Community College (Cheyenne, WY)
Facilitator: Brenda W. Brecke, an educational consultant with twenty years of community college experience

Career Pathways at **Southwestern Oregon Community College** guides and supports high school students and adults re-entering the workforce in identifying and attaining academic credentials that will help them achieve their career objectives. The Career Pathways model developed at the college engages secondary and postsecondary education institutions, job training agencies, and student support services to help students earn the certificate(s) or degree(s) that will help them succeed in their chosen careers. This model has become a statewide model for improving adult education and high-school-to-college transition in the state of Oregon.

Jefferson Community and Technical College has a career pathways program that focuses on health care and would like expand this effort to other academic areas. The college plans to work with the mentoring community to develop a plan to achieve this goal. In addition to planning, it will focus on building greater collaboration among faculty and staff as well as building support among internal and external constituencies to create partnerships that will support its career pathways program.

Laramie County Community College has a five-year plan for designing and implementing linked secondary/postsecondary programs using the Career Clusters/Pathways model. The college's efforts now are focused on building relationships among secondary and postsecondary education, business, and industry; increasing the integration of academics with career technical education programs of study to reduce the need for remediation; and designing and implementing a program of study in wind energy technology.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Students in learning communities take two or more courses together. A learning community, for example, might combine developmental coursework with life skills or other classes that provide extra support. They often involve team teaching across disciplines. Because the group shares an experience that is broader than one class, the students typically give each other high levels of support. Students in learning communities also demonstrate higher engagement with their studies.

Mentor College: Skagit Valley College (Mount Vernon, WA)
Mentee Colleges: Aims Community College (Greely, CO)
Delta College (University Center, MI)
Facilitator: Arleen Arnsparger, program manager, MetLife Foundation Initiative on Student Success, The University of Texas at Austin

Skagit Valley College's counseling-enhanced developmental learning communities are designed to strengthen the college's basic skills education as well as its network of academic and student support services. Within each counseling-enhanced learning community, counseling and teaching faculty members work collaboratively to incorporate college success skills into course content. The team tailors the content for the students in the learning community, addressing needs as they emerge in class. This collaborative work also supports student learning and educational planning throughout the college. The counseling-enhanced developmental learning communities help the college better serve its most academically challenged students, accelerating their progress to academic-level coursework and improving their persistence to degree or certificate completion. The program emerged from the college's highly successful experience with learning communities as a method to achieve positive learning outcomes.

Aims Community College plans to build a comprehensive foundation for implementing learning communities with a focus on addressing the needs of developmental education students. The college intends to provide support services that include a counseling-enhanced support network for students who participate in learning communities to assist them in successfully achieving their academic goals.

Delta College aims to develop an integrated studies, counseling-enhanced developmental learning community centered on students' career interests and student success strategies. This learning community would address the needs of developmental education students, particularly in their first semester of college. This focus on entering students would seek to boost retention by ensuring that, in their earliest weeks of college, more students are aware of and use the many available support services.

INNOVATIONS IN STEM

Educators and economists alike point to the need to increase our nation's capacity to educate students in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Community colleges can play a leading role in giving students hands-on experience that prepares them for further education and careers in these fields.

Mentor College: Salt Lake Community College (Salt Lake City, UT)
Mentee Colleges: Miami-Dade College (Miami, FL)
Hagerstown Community College (Hagerstown, MD)
Facilitator: Russell Hamm, principal, Russell E Hamm, Inc; "Strategic thinking, planning, managing"

Salt Lake Community College's InnovaBio is a student-run contract research organization that is housed in the college's biotechnology department. It gives community college and high school students industry-based biotechnology research experience, which is critical in a region that is heavily invested in STEM-related fields. Students who participate in the lab — currently more than 60 college students and more than 500 high school students — can earn high school internship or community college credits for their work. The initiative also demonstrates an innovative partnership between secondary education, postsecondary education, and business.

Miami-Dade College's biotechnology program has established a new bioscience curriculum and new biosciences laboratories at two of its campuses. The college plans to use knowledge gained from the mentoring community to expand this program. In particular, the college is interested in establishing articulation agreements with four-year colleges that offer biotechnology or biosciences degrees to create a better pipeline for graduates who wish to continue their formal education. In addition, the college is interested in developing a student-run contract research program like InnovaBio and, in the process, improving the qualifications of students transferring to four-year institutions. As part of this mentoring relationship, Miami-Dade wishes to learn from other colleges' experiences to further develop its mentoring and internship programs by increasing its interaction with biotechnology and bioscience employers and industry representatives.

Hagerstown Community College is developing a career pathway in biotechnology using the College and Career Transitions Initiative (CCTI) model. Partners in this pathway include HCC, the Washington County Public Schools, biotechnology employers, and four upper division institutions. The HCC biotechnology program, which is the core of the pathway, includes a required internship. Students can complete the internships at an off-campus laboratory or industry site or on campus at one of the start-up research bioscience companies that are housed on campus. These companies occupy 11 new wet labs in a facility recently added to HCC's technical innovation center. The focus of the peer mentoring initiative will be learning from the InnovaBio program at Salt Lake Community College to develop a robust internship program for HCC and its biotechnology partners.

P-20 EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration among community colleges, secondary schools, and four-year colleges and universities can help more students move successfully from high school to community college to four-year institutions.

Mentor College: El Paso Community College (El Paso, TX)
Mentee Colleges: Ashland Community and Technical College (Ashland, KY)
South Texas College (McAllen, TX)
Facilitator: Katherine Boswell, director, AED Center for Community College Policy,
Academy for Educational Development

El Paso Community College and the University of Texas at El Paso, along with the 12 local independent school districts in the El Paso area, share a comprehensive working partnership that addresses the needs of students and the community in economically challenged southwestern Texas. The collaboration involves a wide variety of programs, including cooperative academic and scholarship programs, research projects, joint committees, and other collaborative arrangements.

Ashland Community and Technical College will focus its work on the college’s effort to increase collaboration among secondary and post-secondary institutions and to create a magnet learning site for STEM. This effort was in response to a statewide report that concluded “collaboration among STEM professionals within P-20 education is not currently sufficient to produce widespread improvement in Kentucky’s STEM performance. Improved collaboration between P-12 and higher education is critical to the creation of an adequate STEM pipeline within Kentucky.”

South Texas College would like to leverage the experience of El Paso Community College to launch its proposed initiative *Adelante... College Access and Success*, a collaboration between the college and local high school districts. The initiative would help more high school students prepare for college, attend college, and earn degrees by creating a seamless system to transition students from high school to college.

TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTERS

These collaborative centers provide a central location for students to interact with instructors to share ideas and receive extra support. The centers also may provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

Mentor College: Pasadena City College (Pasadena, CA)
Mentee Colleges: Mount San Antonio College (Walnut, CA)
Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (Cumberland, KY)
Facilitator: Richard (Rick) Voorhees, principal, Voorhees Group LLC.
Voorhees has more than three decades experience with community colleges and state systems of higher education.

Teaching and Learning Communities (TLC) at **Pasadena City College** support underprepared, first-generation college students by helping them advance from basic skills to transfer and vocational courses. The program includes a number of initiatives, such as a summer bridge/first-year experience program, intensive math courses, career pathways, ESL blocks, and transfer and probation workshops. Faculty members also have professional development opportunities that help them make the most of hand-on learning, small group projects, applied learning, and other collaborative instructional techniques. The college views TLC as an incubator in which students and teachers engage in the learning process together, students receive extra academic and personal support, and faculty members can use and evaluate new ideas, teaching strategies, and services.

Mount San Antonio College is interested in building on Pasadena City College’s experience with instituting a culture of inquiry and embedding faculty-initiated examinations of how their students learn. The college plans to design a teaching and learning center — it envisions an instructional consultation center — that focuses on professional development.

Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College seeks to develop a summer bridge and first-year experience program on its campus. The program initially will focus on entering students who have plans to enroll in health sciences and have been placed in at least one developmental education course. For these students, the college will aim to increase student retention and licensure exam pass rates and to support the overall success of students pursuing nursing or other allied health careers. Ultimately, the college would like to expand the initiative to include at-risk students in all fields of study.