# Building Tomorrow's Workforce:

## Promoting the Education & Advancement of Hispanic Immigrant Workers in America

Authors: Mary Gershwin, Tammy Coxen, Brian Kelley, Gary Yakimov

CSW corporation for a skilled workforce

Center for Workforce Success The Manufacturing Institute NAM National Association of Manufacturers

LUMINA Foundation for Education

NCWE National Council for Workforce Education

Excelencia! IN EDUCATION

# Acknowledgements

Corporation for a Skilled Workforce thanks the following:

**Lumina Foundation for Education** for providing financial support for this effort. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not represent the view of the Lumina Foundation or its employees.

**Our partners** for their many contributions to this project and report, including making suggestions on research methodologies, referring potential sites, attending site visits, and reviewing and refining the final report. They are: Phyllis Eisen and Stacey Wagner at the **Center for Workforce Success** of the **National Association of Manufacturers**, Jim Jacobs at the **National Center for Workforce Education**, and Sarita Brown from ***Excelencia* in Education**.

**Our sites** for sharing their facilities, histories, employees and time with us. We especially thank the many **students** who shared their stories of opportunity and hope with us. We interviewed many people at each site – too numerous to list here – and we thank you all. We would like to thank by name our **site visit hosts**, who took extensive time out of their busy schedules to show us around:

**Jose Anaya,** Cerritos Community College (CA)
**Bill Burrows,** Florida Power and Light (FL)
**Tom Dubois,** Instituto del Progresso Latino (IL)
**Matt Houghton,** Shoreline Community College (WA)
**Terry Jones,** Florida Power and Light (FL)
**Christia Moore,** Seguin ISD Adult Education Program (TX)
**Mike Morphew,** Central Texas Technology Center (TX)
**Shirley Penn**, Morgan Community College (CO)
**Russ Weimer,** Cargill Meat Solutions (CO)
**Richard White,** Miami Dade College (FL)

The **National Center for Workforce Education** (NCWE) for giving us the opportunity to present our findings at their meeting in October 2007, and **Nick Kremer**, Cerritos Community College and **Federico Zargoza**, Alamo Community College District for representing their sites at our presentation.

Our **CSW project team** for their great work: Tatiana Bailey, Tammy Coxen, Brian Kelley, Mary Gershwin, Adriana Nichols, and Gary Yakimov.

©Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, May 2007

# Table of Contents

# Executive Summary

During the next decade, one out of every four new workers in the United States will be an immigrant from Latin America.[1] While some of these newcomers speak English well and enter the United States with strong academic credentials and skills, most do not. Over 50% of Hispanic immigrants have less than a high school education, and like other low-skilled working adults, they face a host of barriers if they want to earn the credentials they need to compete in today's labor market.

In spite of overwhelming odds, some of these immigrants are finding their way to college. They are preparing for and entering post-secondary programs and earning credentials that provide them with the skills required to get and keep good jobs. From food processing to aviation, employers are turning to these newly skilled people to meet their needs for skilled workers.

These immigrants are making significant progress, and many are doing so with the assistance of new and innovative partnerships among employers, community colleges, and community organizations. These partnerships are the subject of this study.

> "When you have companies coming to you every week looking for people and you can't provide them, you're not doing your job. We're bending over backwards trying to help manufacturers. Employers are desperate for people – they just want to get them in the door at the entry level with the right skill set so that they can groom them and move them up."
>
> Jose Anaya, Director of Economic Development, Cerritos Community College

Funded by the Lumina Foundation, this study was led by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce and supported by its partners: The Center for Workforce Success of the National Association of Manufacturers, The National Council for Workforce Education, and *Excelencia* in Education. This report presents promising employer/community college partnerships that expand access to higher education and benefit low-skilled, immigrant Hispanic adults.

This report examined partnerships that met three basic criteria:

- **Results with students:** Hispanic immigrants with no post-secondary experience are enrolling in college level programs as a result of the partnership. Because college participation rates are actually declining among Hispanic males, we were especially interested in programs that are reaching Hispanic immigrant men in the workforce. Several of the programs presented here show promising results with this population.
- **Employer Engagement** in the success of the program. With the support of the Center for Workforce Success at the National Association of Manufacturers, we focused our analysis on the role manufacturing employers are playing in successful programs that expand access to higher education for immigrants. Over 80% of manufacturers report skilled workforce shortages, and we were interested in how this need might be translating into new investments in skills and education that benefit Hispanic immigrants.

1 Calculated from US Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates

- **Participation of Community Colleges.** There needed to be sufficient evidence that a community college is involved in the success of the program.

## Emerging Lessons from Leading-Edge Partnerships

It is important to note upfront that our search for successful and innovative partnerships that met these criteria was not easy. In spite of the compelling need, few partnerships strategically connect working Hispanic immigrants with college level opportunities. We did find a multitude of programs that focus on expanding access for Hispanic youth to attend college full time. We also found many programs where employers and educational institutions are working together to provide courses in English for working immigrants. Far fewer programs are making the connections that link working immigrants with the English skills, the job skills, and the academic credentials needed to compete in today's labor market.

The programs profiled in this report address this critical gap. They recognize that most adults must work, and have developed new approaches that fit for working adults, and appear to be especially effective with Hispanic immigrants.[2] They also do more than teaching these adults the English they need to get and keep a job. These partnerships between colleges and employers are opening doors for participants to advance at work, to earn post-secondary credentials, and to make a good living. They are also addressing the critical needs employers have for skilled workers.

We found that five core themes of practice were important across all six partnerships.

- A clear pathway to employment and/or job advancement is a critical part of the process;
- Employer investments are essential, although they may take different forms;
- Community college innovation is important, but "reinventing" the college is not required;
- Community partnerships are necessary to expand the boundaries of the program, a key element for recruitment and retention; and
- A clear and focused commitment to harness the potential of working Hispanic immigrants is required.

## Recommendations for Practice and Policy

One core lesson we learned from our discussions with leaders from companies, colleges, and community groups is that we must reshape our thinking in order to reshape our workforce. Some basic principles are common across multiple sites.

PRINCIPLE #1:

### Identify work as an asset to expanding access to post-secondary education, not as a barrier.

For far too long, work has been viewed as a barrier to getting a higher education. This perspective ignores the realities of millions of people, including those in our growing Hispanic immigrant workforce, who must work *and* who want to earn post-secondary credentials. Leading communities and employers are reimagining the relationship of work and learning and no longer see work as a barrier to higher education. Successful partnerships are using work as an asset to expand access to college. These partnerships recognize and leverage the role employment plays in workforce education in two key ways that can make a difference for the future of America's competitiveness:

- The workplace is a new gateway to basic skills and higher education. Our policies should recognize this potential.
- Employers spend more on basic skills of working adults than the federal government. Our policies should leverage this investment, and stop ignoring it.

PRINCIPLE #2:

### Establish partnerships at the regional, state and national level that build on existing capacity and address the shared interests of Hispanic immigrants, employers, colleges, and people concerned with economic and educational development.

2 According to the US Bureau of the Census, almost half of the foreign born population in the United States is Hispanic (http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-34.pdf)

A very successful program we visited was constructed through a partnership that was much more than just a deal to achieve short term objectives. These alliances are founded on shared understanding that all partners come to the table with needs and that each member will commit resources to the effort. Partnership development should address two fundamental opportunities:

- Support and address the workforce development/economic competitiveness goals of students and companies.
- Connect the needs and potential of the growing Hispanic immigrant population with allies in higher education, adult learning, and adult basic education.

PRINCIPLE #3:

## Engage leaders from business, community colleges, government agencies, state legislatures, and the community.

We hope the examples of innovation presented in this report will inspire leaders from industry, government, community colleges, and community-based organizations to learn from these partnerships and expand on these models. Each group of leaders can play a significant role to move beyond isolated projects to sustainable efforts that improve the quality of our workforce by expanding opportunities for Hispanic immigrant adults. This report includes specific action steps leaders can take that can expand capacity.

**Terms and Data Used in This Report**

The report focuses on partnerships between manufacturing firms and community colleges that help documented Hispanic immigrant adults access higher education. This report uses the terms "Hispanic immigrants" to refer to individuals of Hispanic origin that have immigrated to the United States. The US Census Bureau notes the distinction between "foreign born" and "immigrants," and defines "immigrants" more narrowly as "aliens who are admitted to the United States for lawful permanent residence."
Hispanic immigrants that were the focus of this study primarily come from Central America (including Mexico), Latin America, and the Caribbean.
It is important to note that this study focuses on programs that serve documented Hispanic immigrants. Programs that serve undocumented immigrants are outside the scope of this study.

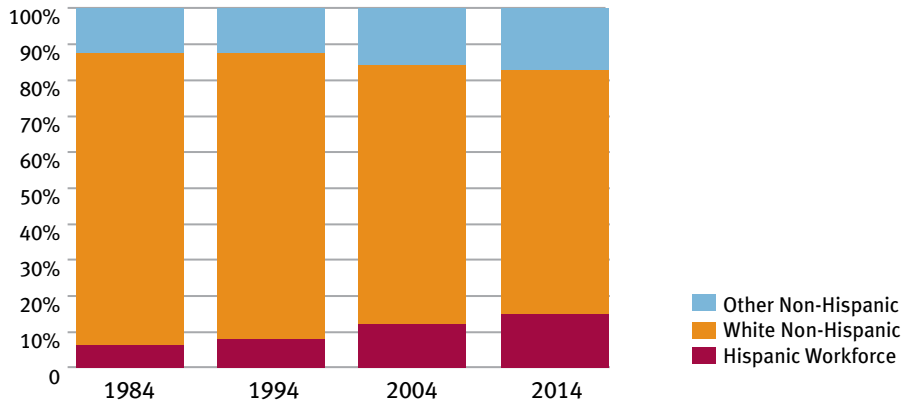
# 1 An Emerging Workforce Asset: Hispanic Employees

This report explores one specific part of the intersection of three very powerful demographic and economic forces: the increasingly intense competition from a globalizing economy; the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation of employees; and the unprecedented growth of the Hispanic and other immigrant workforce, which is too often overshadowed by media coverage and public concern over the issue of illegal immigration. Growing international competition is fundamentally changing the nature of employment in the U.S. while increasing retirements are and will continue to create high-skill job vacancies through the economy. The rapidly growing Hispanic[3] workforce may represent a potential source of newly skilled employees.

The core issue underlying this analysis is that for the growing Hispanic workforce to help fill the emerging high-skill employment opportunities such as those created by retiring baby boomers, Hispanic residents must find ways to acquire the knowledge and skills that are increasingly required by the economy. This report describes a set of case studies in which a combination of employers, community based organizations, and community colleges worked together to provide a pathway for Hispanic immigrants to access higher education and acquire much-needed advanced skills and educational qualifications. Overall, this analysis underscores the importance of the Hispanic workforce population, describes the three-part partnership that seems most effective in enabling access to higher education, and suggests that currently there is too little attention paid to this important and growing national workforce asset.

For the country to respond to these massive economic and demographic forces, multiple institutional actors within the economy must re-imagine the relationship of work and learning, and how we as a country train and educate both our youth and our adult population. This conclusion

Civilian Labor Force (1984-2014)
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics




3 While the focus of this report is on the Hispanic population, all the concerns and issues apply as well to individuals and workforce cohorts from other ethnic backgrounds.

has particular relevance to the twin pillars of our study: the rapidly growing Hispanic population and employer partnerships with community colleges.

Even based on this report's brief analysis, it becomes an unavoidable fact that the Hispanic population is an essential ingredient in the nation's ability to retain a vital workforce. Absent the growth of the Hispanic workforce, the overall workforce will shrink and age at a rate that will have severe economic repercussions, as we are beginning to see in some European countries and Japan.

Stepping back from the details of the workforce education programs that are reviewed by this project, CSW's research suggests that helping Hispanics bridge the gap between high school and college has received quite a bit of attention, while too little attention is being paid to helping improve skills and access to institutions of higher education for the large number of Hispanic immigrants who are already in the workforce. Fundamentally, this report is a "call to action" to the three key institutional actors in the Hispanic workforce development process: employers, community colleges, and community based organizations.

To achieve any significant positive progress, each of these three institutional actors has a key role to play. It is essential for all three to realize that they must become much more proactive leaders in terms of how the country develops the next generation of skilled employees, and that it has an insufficiently tapped resource in the Hispanic workforce. One of their primary tasks must be to build linkages between private employers and local community colleges, examples of which are described in this report. The purpose of these linkages will be to bring more employed Hispanic residents into the community college system so that they can gain the skills and knowledge that will make them more effective employees.

As this report illustrates, the growth in the U.S. workforce over the coming decades will unavoidably come from ethnic minorities. "For the past 20 years, businesses have relied on the dramatic growth of the native born workforce to find an ever expanding supply of new workers. That growth is now over." However, unless members of this emerging population are given the access and support to attend higher education, especially community colleges, they will not be effective employees for firms facing increasing international competition. Because these individuals are often recent immigrants, they may not have the resources to attend a community college full time. These employee-students will require a different path to access additional skills and education, requiring a change on the part of both employers and the community college.

Traditionally, employment has been a barrier that hindered an individual's ability to acquire more skills and knowledge. This tradition must be reversed, so that employment is viewed as an asset for employees as they pursue additional education and skills, not a liability.

Growth in the native-born workforce (25-54) in the last 20 years: 44%.
In the next 20 years: 0%

Increase in the share of workers with post-high school education in the last 20 years: 19%.
In the next 20 years: 4%

(Grow Faster Together or Grow Slowly Apart. The Aspen Institute)



4 "Grow Faster Together, Or Grow Slowly Apart." The Aspen Institute, 1998.

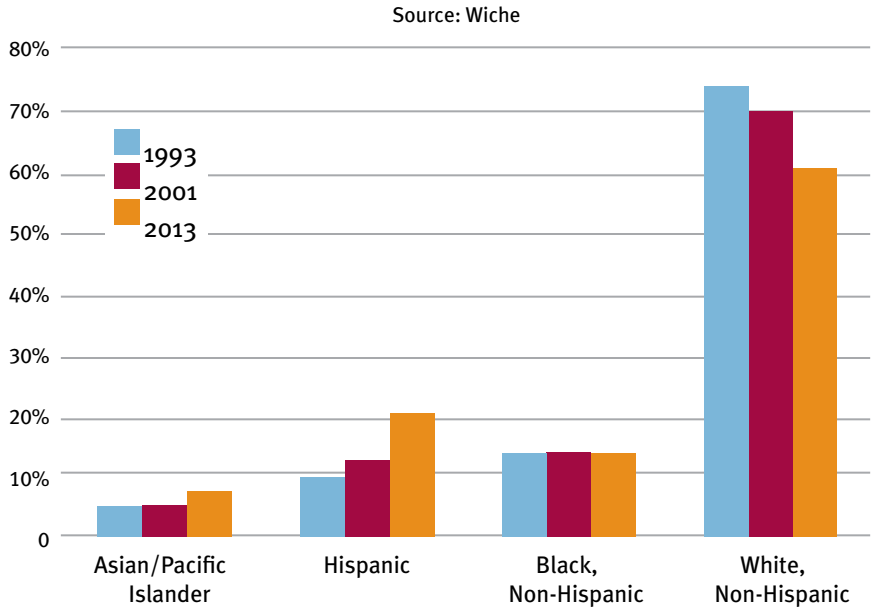
# 2 Demographics and the Emergence of the Hispanic Workforce

Although demographic trends can seem too abstract, understanding these tsunami-like forces is an essential task before moving to the more specific Hispanic-related employment and education issues. The workforce of 2014[5] will be strongly defined by two factors: the large number of "baby boomers" leaving the workforce and the growth of a rapidly emerging Hispanic workforce. Within that context, the following discussion develops three key points: the Hispanic and larger immigrant workforce is large and growing in significance; it is younger than the native born population; and it is a population characterized by a high labor force participation rate. Any one of these factors would make the Hispanic workforce important, but the three of them taken together create a very strong case that this population is essential to the country's future economy.

In 1980, only 6% of the U.S. population was Hispanic. In 2006, approximately 14% of the population was Hispanic and by 2050, it is estimated that about 25% of the U.S. population will be Hispanic. In absolute numbers, this means 35 million Hispanics in 2000 and a projected 100 million in 2050. To avoid any confusion, it is important to note that this report focuses only on the legal Hispanic immigrant population. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, in 2005 there were a total of 10.8 million legal Hispanic immigrants in the United States, of which 4.4 million were naturalized citizens.[6]

Percent Distribution of High School Graduates by Race and Ethinicity (1993-2013)

Source: Wiche




5 2014 is selected because this analysis draws upon the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics' workforce projections for that year.

6 http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/74.pdf page 27.Based on the March 2005 U.S. Census Current Population Study.

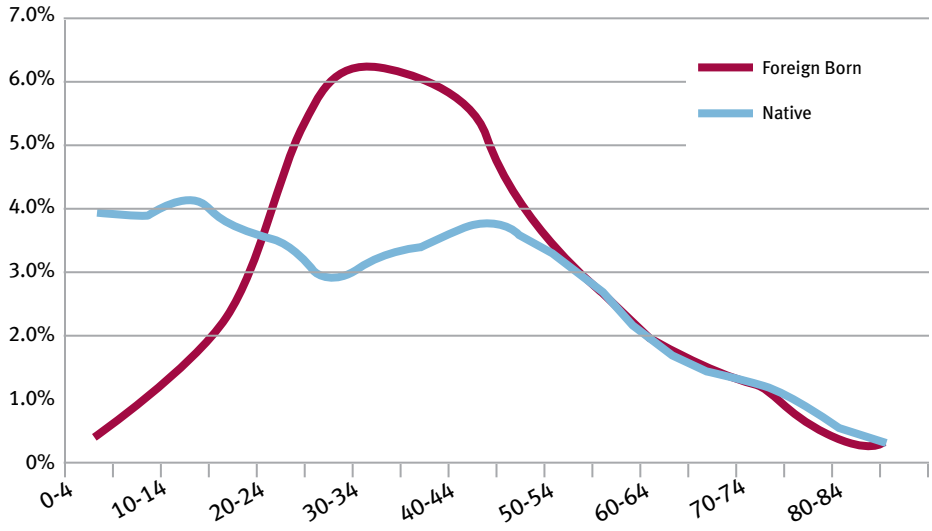
The size of a workforce is defined by the size of the overall population and the level of workforce participation by that population. Overall, the U.S. labor force will grow from 147 million to 162 million between 2004 and 2014, due entirely to population growth, not an increase in workforce participation rates.[7] This population growth will come from continued immigration. During this period, the Hispanic workforce will increase by 7 million, from 19 million in 2004 to 26 million in 2014, and thus account for nearly 50% of the nation's workforce growth during this time.

Absent significant immigration, the national workforce would shrink substantially. In contrast to the projections of U.S. workforce and population growth, German demographers project that by 2030 their country will have 7 million fewer people of working age than at present. Some other countries are facing an even steeper demographic slide. By 2050, the United Nations projects that Italy will shrink from 57.5 million people to just 45 million, Hungary from 10 million to 8 million, Poland from 39 million to 33 million, while Russia will shrink from 145 million to barely 100 million. Within this macro context, it becomes clear that the emergence of the growing Hispanic workforce is a very important element for retaining a healthy and vital US workforce.

Another key element of a healthy workforce is its age composition. For the U.S., the annual growth rate of the 55+ age group is projected to be 4%, four times the rate of the growth of overall workforce. By contrast, the annual growth rate of the 25-to-54-year age group will be 0.3 percent, and growth of 16-to-24-year-olds will be essentially flat. Over time, the result of this disproportionate growth of older employees as a percent of the workforce has been to increase the median age of the workforce from 35 in 1984 to 41 in 2007. This increase in median age would have been even greater without the strong influx of the younger, in-migrating population. As the age profile chart illustrates, the foreign-born population has a much higher percentage of workers in the younger workforce age segments than does the native-born population.

Finally, a third factor which determines the strength and health of a workforce is the percent of people 16-65 that are in the workforce: the workforce participation rate. Participation rates vary significantly with age, culture and gender. In 2004,

Workforce Age Profile
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics




7 "Labor Force Projections to 2014: Retiring Boomers." Mitra Toossi, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.Monthly Labor Review. November 2005.

for instance, the total labor force participation for all employees rate was 66%, varying from 14% for individuals 65+ to 83% for the 35 to 44 age group. The Hispanic workforce has a very high participation rate, consistently higher than the white population's rate. This is a positive characteristic for any workforce, particularly in light of the nation's aging population and baby boomer retirements.

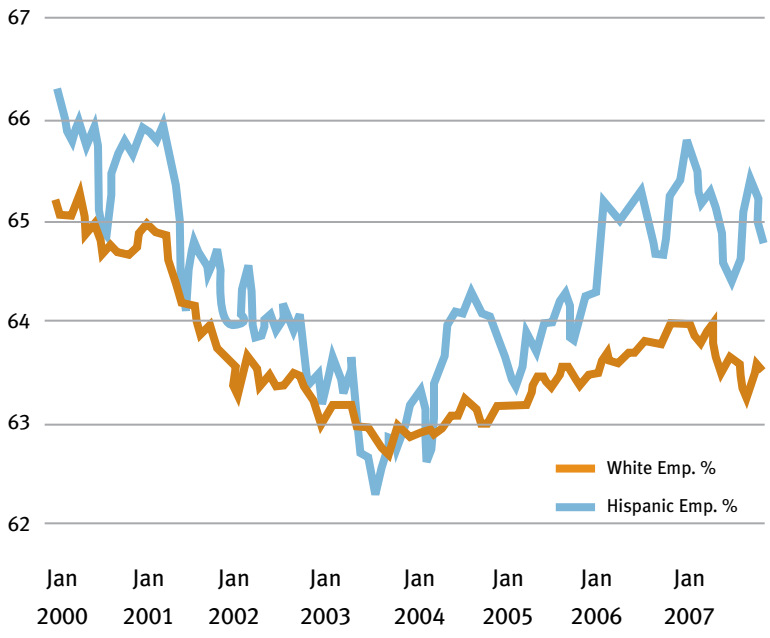
In summary, the Hispanic population is growing, is relatively young and has a very high labor force participation rate—all very attractive elements for a workforce. Unfortunately, the growing Hispanic population performs very poorly on every measure of educational achievement: 60% of 4th grade Hispanics lag behind in reading, math and science; at 13, Hispanics are two years behind their peers in math and reading, and four years behind in science; and the high school dropout rate for Hispanics is 21%, versus 7% for whites and 12% for African Americans. According to the U.S. Census, Hispanic males are the only group whose postsecondary educational attainment actually declined between 1990 and 2000.

The implication is that without a fundamental change in national practices and the educational achievement levels of the Hispanic population, this growing influx of young and hardworking U.S. residents will not be a solution to the growing baby boomer workforce gap. Without a significant shift in current practices, the growth of the Hispanic workforce might instead create a very large underclass of low skill residents vying for the shrinking number of low-skill jobs.

The community college system is an especially important partner in this process as the primary route to higher education and skills acquisition for Hispanics. Culturally and institutionally, community colleges are most open to workforce-education partnerships with private employers. Community colleges are able to offer not only traditional two-year degrees but also shorter term certificates, have an open door policy, and are the most affordable of all educational institutions.

Part of the inherent difficulty and challenge of this task is that this is a drama with multiple "leading actors." The private sector is not in the business of education and training, just as community colleges do not face international competition nor do they have the workforce knowledge of an employer facing growing competition. And neither the private sector nor community colleges have or will build the type of personal and neighborhood networks that community based organizations will. Each of these three have

Labor Force % Participation Rates (2000-2007)
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

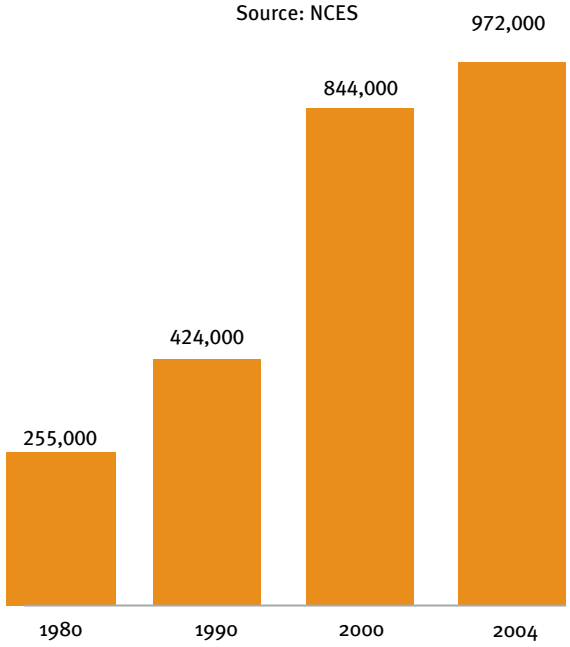


their role and each is necessary to building a successful initiative.

We hope that colleges can learn from some of the promising practices identified in this report, and move beyond their concentration on students in their traditional role. As the demographics and skill requirements of the workforce fundamentally shift, community colleges will need to find ways to serve adults in their dual roles as employees and students. To connect with the workforce and their regional economy, community colleges should seek out progressive employers willing to push the envelope at a time when all important demographics point to the need for innovative solutions that move beyond "business as usual."

Hispanic Community College Enrollment
(1980-2001)

Source: NCES




8 Latinos and Higher Education: Snapshots from the Academic Literature." The College Board. www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/highered/de/latinos-and-highered_snapshots.pdf

9 Given that over 50% of Hispanic youth come from families with less than $25,000 per year, cost is a serious issue. Source: Pew Hispanic Center. Latino Youth and the Pathway to College.

# 3 The Changing Nature of U.S. Employment and the Aging of the Workforce

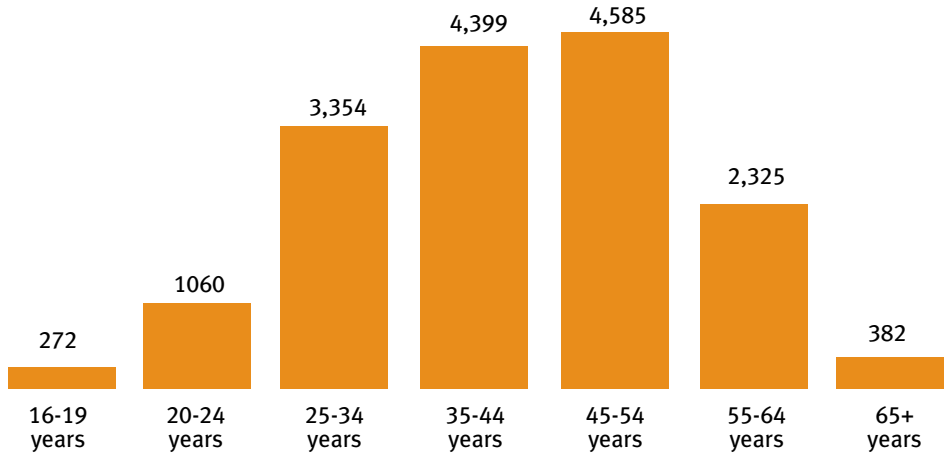
Another important factor that forms the context for this "Call to Action" is the rapidly globalizing economy, the result of which has been simultaneously a transfer of jobs overseas to lower-cost, developing countries and a transformation of the jobs that remain in-country to those that require a higher level of skills and knowledge. Overall, the share of workers with a high school education or less dropped by 21% between 1979 and 2005, while the share of the workforce with some college or a college degree rose by 21% during the same period.

These dual forces of exporting jobs while at the same time increasing workforce skill requirements is particularly visible in the manufacturing sector. While manufacturing has lost almost five million jobs over the past 30 years, a significant portion of that has been due to increasing workforce productivity, an achievement that is not possible without a significant increase in workplace skills.

The relevance of this powerful workforce transformation is particularly acute for this study because it underscores the increasing demand for higher-skilled employees. The manufacturing sector is not alone in this workforce transformation. Employment sectors across the economy are demanding higher levels of knowledge, experience, and skills.

To complicate this watershed global economic and workforce transformation is the exodus of the baby boomers from the workplace; 76 million of America's largest single demographic cohort—comprising nearly 20% of the country's adult population—will be leaving the workforce between 2011 and 2029. As the graph below illustrates, 382,000 manufacturing employees are already over 65 years of age, and another 2.3 million are between 55 and 65. All told, 2.7 million manufacturing sector employees are likely to leave the labor force over the next 10 years.

Manufacturing Sector
Employee Age Profile (ooos)
Source: Census 2006 CPS




10 "The Truth About Middle Class Jobs." Progressive Policy Institute. October 2007.

Other sectors are facing the same retirement exodus: education, energy, government and medical services are all facing very strong retirement dynamics over the coming two decades.

Taken individually, any one of these forces would be formidable and would by itself have a significant impact on the nature of American society and its economy. The confluence of these three powerful forces, however, will have an impact on many dimensions of the American culture, politics, and economy; greater than any since the industrial revolution.

Through the examination of a set of innovative community college-private sector partnerships, we work to identify ways to increase the number of Hispanic males that complete some amount of higher education, and are thus able to fill the shoes being emptied by the Baby Boomer generation.

To understand the nation's manufacturing workforce transformation, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York divided the manufacturing workforce into three segments: low, medium and high skill jobs. Between 1983 and 2002, the invisible manufacturing workforce story is that employment in high-skill manufacturing occupations rose 37%, an increase of 1.2 million jobs. At the same time, low-skill manufacturing jobs declined 24% from 1983 to 2002, a loss of roughly 2 million workers, and during the same period mid-skill jobs declined by 18%, or 1.3 million jobs.

A Leaner, More Skilled U.S. Manufacturing Workforce." Federal Reserve Bank. March 2006.

# 4 What We Were Looking For & Our Methods

This project builds on the growing body of work that addresses enhancing educational opportunities for the nation's Hispanic population. Within the larger conversation, we focus on the narrow, but very important, segment of the Hispanic immigrant adult population.

## A Focus on Hispanic Immigrant Adults

Our initial literature review and outreach to the field confirmed that significant work is underway to examine the needs of Hispanic children and youth, including how they are prepared and supported in their path to college. Less is known about adult Hispanic immigrants, particularly those who are already working and who are interested in upgrading their skills and earning post-secondary credentials. We know little about what these adults need to overcome barriers, the assets they bring to advancing their education, or what works for this population.

It is critical that we increase our understanding. Fewer than 7% of the adult immigrants who come to the United States from Latin America arrive with any post-secondary education. If they are to access higher education, they will do so here in the United States. Very few of these adults can afford to quit work and attend school full time. Programs that integrate work and learning will be especially relevant in meeting the practical needs of these adults. Hispanic immigrants are significant contributors to workforce growth in the United States. These immigrants are young and they will be working for a long time.

## A Focus on the Manufacturing Sector

We also decided to focus our examination on the role that employers play in expanding access by targeting work within the broad manufacturing-related economy. We made this determination for two key reasons. First, manufacturers are experiencing significant skills shortages and they report that having a skilled workforce is the number one competitiveness issue.

Secondly, manufacturers are investing in the immigrant workforce and this investment merits closer review. According to the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) Skills Gap report, 14.5% of manufacturers offer English as a Second Language programs, and 15.8% offer workers training in basic math. And while NAM reports that the initial objective of employer-sponsored training is improved workplace productivity and employee retention, less is known about whether these employer investments are having any impact on postsecondary access and success for Hispanic immigrant workers.

Finally, we decided to focus on manufacturing because we had a partner in the sector who agreed to join in this work, to advise in our process, and to share results with the employer community. The Center for Workforce Success at the National Association of Manufacturers joined this project at its inception, worked as a partner in the research, and is assisting in dissemination of results.

## Our Methods

Reaching out to our broad constituencies in community colleges, manufacturing firms, community-based organizations, and government we

asked for nominations of successful programs that met three basic criteria:

- **Results with Students,** defined as Hispanic immigrants with no post-secondary experience who are enrolling in college level programs as a result of the partnership. Because college participation rates are actually declining among Hispanic males, we were especially interested in programs that are reaching Hispanic immigrant men in the workforce. As noted in our site summaries, several of the programs presented here show promising results with this population.
- **Employer Engagement in the Success of the Program.** With the support of the Center for Workforce Success at the National Association of Manufacturers, we focused our analysis on the role manufacturing employers are playing in successful programs that expand access to higher education for immigrants.
- **Participation of Community Colleges.** There needed to be sufficient evidence that a community college was or is truly involved in the success of the program. Because long term sustainability and scalability were important to our work, we looked for partnerships that included the participation of community colleges.

Through this outreach process, we identified programs that were having success. This process resulted in the identification of six partnerships.

## Finding Successful Partnerships

Once the partnerships were identified, we then worked to interview the people who created and maintained these efforts. We did not want a random sample of people who might have good ideas about expanding Hispanic access and what might work for employers. Rather, we focused on identifying a select group of people who are having success and from whom we expected to learn a great deal.

## Our Interviews and Analysis

We developed a research protocol and conducted site visits to six communities. Our interviews were with people from the participating companies, the community colleges, and community-based organizations. In each category, we interviewed key leaders who support the work (such as college administrators or company managers/owners) and key staff who were responsible for program implementation (such as faculty or supervisors). We also interviewed current and former students. The interviews addressed the following key areas:

1. Genesis of the program and the process to establish
2. Goals and context
3. Program design
4. Data and outcomes
5. Funding and policy
6. Benefits to college, company, individuals
7. Recommendations/lessons learned

Given the small size of our sample and the exploratory nature of this work, our job was not to generate a set of truths about what works. Rather, we sought to listen to experiences and gather insights that could inform the field.

This strategy of outreach, selection of sites, and interviews led us to the identification of some emerging lessons about successful partnerships and the recommendations for the field. The “lessons” section below presents key insights from our study.

# 5 Emerging Lessons from Leading-Edge Partnerships

It is important to note upfront that our search for successful and innovative partnerships that met these criteria was not easy. In spite of the compelling need, few partnerships strategically connect working Hispanic immigrants with college level opportunities. We did find a multitude of programs that focus on expanding access for Hispanic youth to attend college full time. We also found many programs where employers and educational institutions are working together to provide courses in English for working immigrants. Far fewer programs are making the connections that link working immigrants with the English skills, the job skills, and the academic credentials needed to compete in today's labor market.

The programs profiled in this report address this critical gap. We found that five core themes of practice were important across all six partnerships.

## A Clear Pathway to Employment and/or Job Advancement is a Critical Part of the Process

Students at all the sites were interested in the programs because of what it meant for their employment opportunities, rather than education for its own sake. An essential element of a successful program has to be a clear pathway to employment that is an improvement on their current situation. This is one of most important reasons for the private sector—individually or as a group—to be heavily involved in this process. In most cases, stable employment was a necessary prerequisite to having the opportunity to pursue an advanced certificate or degree.

**Cargill Meat Solutions** offers the education program to their existing employees, with the clear intent that this will help the employee advance; 10% of program participants move into management positions.

**Florida Power and Light** signed a Memorandum of Understanding with its partner Miami Dade College that it would hire at least 20 graduates per year for full time positions as well as 30 summer interns.

Shoreline Community College's partnership with the **Puget Sound Automobile Dealers Association** sponsors an industry recognized General Service Technician program (45 credits, 500 hours) that provides a clear path to employment in a high demand occupation.

"People who have been involved in workplace education are more loyal to the company, and better employees. They tend to stay in the community longer, too. They get the skills to help their own kids in school, and to understand what they need to buy a house and put roots down here. It really raises their feelings of self-worth. I find it helps me identify who are good candidates for advancement too – by coming to workplace education they're showing that they really care about improving themselves."

Kenny, Shipping Supervisor, Cargill Meat Solutions

## Employer Investments are Essential

Employer investments and leadership were critical to the success of the programs we visited. Employers were not just the recipients of the programs' outputs (i.e., workers), but were themselves invested in the programs' success. Investment was demonstrated in a variety of ways:

### Investments in Participants

- In Colorado, **Cargill Meat Solutions** pays employees half their hourly wage for participating in on-site Workplace Education classes taught by Morgan Community College. Cargill also provides 100% attendance awards, funding for childcare, allows employees to take time off to participate in a class, and regularly brings in other community services to help students.
- **Florida Power and Light** workers attend college classes "on the clock" at Miami-Dade College, and return to the worksite to finish their day.
- Members of the **Puget Sound Automotive Dealers Association** provide paid internship opportunities to students in Shoreline Community College's General Service Technician Program.

### Investments in College Partnerships

- Employer partners at **Cerritos Community College and Shoreline Community College** make generous donations of equipment and/or materials. Shoreline's Professional Automotive Career Training Center is co-owed by automotive employers and the college. The Puget Sound Automotive Dealers Association is also located on campus.
- **Cargill Meat Solutions** provides classroom space on-site at the plant.
- **Florida Power and Light** completely funded the curriculum development of the program, and provides instructors for some classes.
- Across the board, employer advisory committees take an active role in guiding development of curriculum that meets real skill gaps.

### Investments in Career and Academic Pathways

- Executives at **Cargill Meat Solutions** credit the Workplace Education Program with helping them increase the percentage of Hispanics in supervisory roles at the company. Workers interested in advancing are referred to the program to fill skill gaps.
- Dealers hiring graduates of the **Shoreline Community College** General Service Technician programs can then sponsor those employees to return to the college for the full two-year Automotive Service Technician program.
- **Florida Power and Light** guarantees enrollment in the Electrical Power Technology program to six incumbent workers each year. Workers completing the program advance from the semi-skilled "utility worker" position to a certified

journeyman technician upon completing the program and a 1-year employer-run apprenticeship.

## Community College Innovation is Important, but "Reinventing" the College is Not Required

Community colleges in this study reinforced that they are finding success not because they are using a new set of practices to work with students. Instead, they are combining and applying proven strategies in new ways. They are using practices that have been proven to work to teach adults with limited skills, such as integrating English skills with technical skills, adapting assessments, and accelerating instruction. They are also using the best of customized training, such as building strong relationships with the employer, linking learning with workplace needs, and asking business partners to pay release time for training. The most interesting innovation we encountered in these programs is in *the new combinations of effective practices*: the programs are integrating the best of what we know from diverse fields of practice, including customized training, effective strategies to recruit and retain first generation students, lessons from work with low income, adult working students, and lessons from work with second language learners. See page 23 for a list of **promising community college practices** that we identified through our site visits.

### Building on Existing Strengths/ Not "One Size Fits All"

In short, it appears that success in integrating strategies does not require reinventing the community college. Successful programs seem to build from their strengths and adapt these strengths to serve new populations or to serve existing populations in new ways. Some of the colleges we visited started their work from a strong base of customized training, and the successful partnerships they created that benefit Hispanic immigrant adults are an extension of this area of strength. Other colleges started from a point of strong community connections and outreach to underserved student populations. They used this strength to move into employer-based partnerships.

> "We need to address the other barriers that keep people from success. For example, one student was close to finishing and came to drop out because he was spending so much on gas. Students drive as many as 100 miles a day to get to this specialized training. The Opportunity Grants make it possible to help people solve these financial problems. We helped pay his gas and he graduated and is now working."
>
> Matt Houghton, Program Director, Shoreline Community College

### Diverse Funding for Long Term Success

Additionally, long term success requires a sound sustainability plan that builds on strengths and creates new partnerships. Rather than implementing a "cookie-cutter" model for how to fund their programs over the long term, the programs we

> "Programs like this exist all over, but their funding model means programs go away when funding dries up. They're not sustainable. We are trying to create a sustainable model by getting programs approved for contact hour reimbursement and working with local WIBs to pay for tuition and provide case management services where needed."
>
> Federico Zargoza, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development, Alamo Community College District

visited used a very diverse set of resources to create and maintain their programs. As noted in the site summaries (Appendix A), funding sources included the following:

**Funding Sources that Get Programs Launched and Pay Operational Costs:**

- Corporate funding
- Workforce Investment Act funds
- State subsidies in support of community colleges
- U.S. Department of Labor grants (High Growth Grants and Community-Based Training grants)
- State incumbent worker funding sources

**Funding Sources that Support Student Costs**

- Pell Grants and other tuition assistance
- Opportunity Grant Funds (specific to Washington State)
- Funds from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act
- College scholarship funds

## Community Partnerships are Necessary to Expand the "Boundaries" of the Program, a Key Element for Recruitment & Retention

Partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) played a significant role in the success of most of the partnerships we profiled. These organizations play two critical roles:

- The CBO can help with recruiting Hispanic students from the community, based on an existing credibility and a trusted communication process.
- The CBO can help with student retention, an important issue to students, the college and the employer, because the CBO can directly or indirectly provide services ranging from transportation to child care.

For example, at Chicago's CNC Manufacturing Bridge Program, a partnership with the Wilbur Wright City College of Chicago, includes non-college partners that provide multiple services beyond education:

- **The Institute del Progresso Latin** focuses on recruitment within the Hispanic community, preparation with Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) and other courses, and wrap-around family services that support the student during the education process.
- **Manufacturing Works** was launched and is funded by the Chicago Workforce Board and the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development. As a sector-based one-stop center focused on meeting the workforce needs of the manufacturing sector, its role is to provide an ongoing linkage with private manufacturers and a job placement process.

Frequently, the CBOs will have access to a wider variety of funding streams to support student support services than does the college, with its often more limited and restricted resources.

## A Clear and Focused Commitment to Harness the Potential of Working Immigrants is Required.

In our search for effective practices, we found many employer-based programs that focused on the language needs of the Hispanic immigrant population. Often in partnership with a community college or school district, these programs provide

> "I don't think City College has to be everything to everyone. Especially when there's a CBO that can do that job well, why not let them do it? Let the college do what it can do best."
>
> Madeline Roman-Vargas, Director of Humboldt Park Technical Center, Wright College, City Colleges of Chicago

English classes to workers that are delivered on-site at their places of employment. Some employers also offer training programs that teach technical skills for the job and related English skills.

However, in most cases these approaches treat training of participants as an isolated event that is disconnected from longer term opportunities to seek post-secondary credentials. These programs help people get skills, but they do not make any explicit effort to connect these skills with the next steps of earning post-secondary credentials. In many cases, the courses may be delivered by the community college, but the participants are never connected with broader college opportunities.

We also found many college-based programs that target immigrant students by offering English as a Second Language and other academic preparation, yet fail to connect this work with the participants' career goals. While these programs address participant skill needs and may also help them plan a path to college, they are disconnected from the world of work. Participants go to school to study and go to their jobs to work. There is little linkage between the two activities.

Mike Chabot, Plant Manager for Cargill Meat Solutions noted the importance of linking with broader goals, "Too many companies only focus on specific skills, and not the value of a general education. Employees and employers reap a lot of benefits from general education. Higher education equals higher self-esteem which equals more productive employees. Everybody wins."

The programs profiled in this study close this gap. They recognize that most adults must work, and have developed new approaches that fit for working adults, and appear to be especially effective

"Hispanic immigrants are a great asset to our community and our economy. Our programs are designed to ensure that employers who are offering good jobs can find the skilled workforce they need ... and that everyone who is willing to work to get ahead has the opportunity to learn skills and earn degrees they need.

Mike Morphew, Manager, Central Texas Technology Center

When we started this, our plant had 80 supervisors and 95% were white males. Today, white males comprise about 45% of our supervisory workforce and 45% are Hispanic males.

Mike Chabot, Plant Manager, Cargill Meat Solutions

More employers are asking us for bilingual employees. They tell us they want people with technical skills and bilingual skills. Employers can be much more successful in the community when they have employees who customers can talk to in their own language. The trust is greater.

Mark Hankins, GST Instructor, Shoreline Community College

with Hispanic immigrants.[11] They also do more than teaching participants the English they need to get and keep a job. These partnerships between colleges and employers are opening doors for people to advance at work, to earn post-secondary credentials, and to make a good living. They are also addressing the critical needs employers have for skilled workers.

11 According to the US Bureau of the Census, almost half of the foreign born population in the United States is Hispanic (http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-34.pdf)

# Promising *Community College* Practices in Expanding Access to College for Hispanic Immigrant Adults.

## Student Services:

The college…

- Takes active steps to recruit and serve Hispanic immigrant adults who are in the community, but may not have accessed the college. In partnership with community based organizations, the college reaches into immigrant communities.
- Has an assessment and intake process that is geared to the strengths and needs of immigrant students with limited English.
- Uses career counseling materials that clarify what is needed for career advancement and that are adapted culturally and linguistically to address needs of immigrant students.
- Provides (or partners to provide) key services that are critical to student success (childcare, transportation, financial aid, housing, etc).
- Actively facilitates transition from work-based ESL programs to college enrollment with counseling support to address financial aid and other needs.

## Instructional Services:

The college…

- Contextualizes learning to teach basic skills and English in the context of meaningful academic and technical skills content.
- Works closely with employers to ensure learning is linked with career and job advancement and opportunity. The college integrates information on career advancement into coursework.
- Accelerates learning whenever possible to address adults' needs.
- Modularizes curriculum. Breaks long courses into shorter modules that can stand alone and that yield interim credentials.
- Schedules courses to consider the needs of working adults.
- Builds a real pathway from low level ESL to college.
- Links non-credit programs with credit programs. Enables working adults who take one or two courses through a credit division to apply non-credit coursework toward attainment of credentials.
- Builds on assets of students. Emphasizes the strengths the immigrant worker brings to the workplace and the community and not what needs changing.

## Partnership with Employers

College leadership negotiates with employers to maximize the impact of programs and encourages employers to:

- Offer courses on company time.
- Encourage the commitment and involvement of supervisors.
- Recognize and reward workers who make academic and skills gains with tangible benefits, including advancement opportunities, increases in pay, and/or additional training opportunities.
- Develop space dedicated to instruction, including space for computer labs and one-on-one instruction and career planning.
- Offer courses at convenient hours for students.
- Fund courses and materials.
- Clearly articulate the goals of the program and partner in development of evaluation plans.
- Make skills and educational development of workers a corporate priority and include immigrant workforce development on management's agenda.

## Strategic Planning

The college…

- *Understands the local economy and plays a strategic role in building the workforce for key industry sectors.* The college leadership knows where the jobs are expanding, the skills required, and the current workforce gaps. The college works strategically to build partnerships with employers in key industry sectors.
- *Knows the community and seeks to serve populations that have been ignored or underserved.* Colleges that serve Hispanic immigrant students effectively understand how this community is growing and seek to learn more about their needs. The college regularly examines census data and other data sources to stay informed on who is living in the community. The college examines its penetration rates with adults, immigrants, and people who speak English as a second language.
- *Builds partnerships effectively.* Leading colleges examined in this report noted that the employer is a key partner in serving Hispanic immigrant workers, but it is not the only one. Partnerships with community based organizations play a critical role.
- *Evaluates the program with measures that are meaningful to Hispanic immigrant students and employers.* Program level evaluation addresses goals of both employers and students. Reporting to employers is not "one size fits all". Rather, evaluation links with specific goals of employers, such as increased retention, improved safety, increased productivity, worker advancement, etc.
- *Leverages resources.* Leading programs use a variety of strategies to fund programs, including establishment of cooperative agreements among agencies, use of tax credits, implementation of cost-sharing strategies, funding sought through grantsmanship, and policy innovation with state level leaders.

# 6 Recommendations

## Some Principles to Shape Policy

A core lesson we learned from our visits is that the leaders of successful partnerships have reshaped their own thinking in order to reshape their workforce. While each state and region faced unique challenges, a few basic principles shape the responses of effective leaders in business, community colleges, government, and not-for-profits.

PRINCIPLE #1:

### Identify work as an asset to expanding access to post-secondary education, not as a barrier.

For far too long work has been viewed as a barrier to getting a higher education. This approach ignores the realities of millions of Americans, including those in our growing Hispanic immigrant workforce, who must work and want to earn post-secondary credentials. Successful partnerships are using work as an asset to expand access to college. These partnerships recognize and leverage the role employment plays in workforce education in two ways that can make a difference for the future of America's competitiveness:

- **The workplace is a new gateway to learning basic skills and accessing higher education. Our policies should recognize this gateway.** One of the most impressive sites we visited was Cargill's Workplace Education Program, where over 200 workers access education programs each year. New employees are invited to participate in education programs. The Cargill model goes beyond typical on-site English as a Second Language programs by also offering academic counseling to help workers chart their course to college as they develop basic skills. Most of these workers have less than a high school education and have poor skills in English. They are unlikely to walk into the local community college, but they do walk into work everyday and the college is there to meet them. Each year, around 15 participants in this program transition to college. Many more move up career ladders at Cargill.
- **Employers spend more on teaching basic skills to working adults than the federal government. Our policies should leverage this investment, and stop ignoring it.** Employers invest over $100 billion a year in training and education. They spend over $4 billion on remedial education alone. However, few policy makers at the state level have designed their strategies with an eye to leveraging this massive source of investment.

Our examination of successful partnerships confirmed that these employer-led investments can play a significant role helping low wage workers, including Hispanic immigrant employees, to gain skills and prepare for college. These investments must be integrated into our policy strategy.

PRINCIPLE #2:

### Establish partnerships at the regional, state, and national level that build on existing capacity and address the shared interests of Hispanic immigrants, employers, colleges, and people concerned with economic and educational development.

Every successful program we visited was constructed through a partnership that was much more than just a deal to achieve short term objectives. These

alliances are founded on shared understanding that all partners come to the table with needs and that each member will commit resources to the effort. Employers need to recruit and retain skilled workers. Community colleges need to fill classes, expand access to college for underserved groups, and improve their retention and graduation rates. Hispanic leadership groups need to help expand opportunity and promote success of the community-based groups to help local residents get and keep good jobs. For the various partners to get involved and stay at the table, each must see clear benefits that address their specific needs.

**Building economic vitality is a goal that brings participants, employers, key legislators, and education, workforce, and economic development partners to the table.** While we did not conduct a formal survey, it is important to note that nearly every student we interviewed said they were attending the program because they wanted access to better jobs and expanded economic opportunity. Most liked the idea of earning a certificate or degree, but saw this as a tool to achieve the goal of getting and keeping a better job. Like the participants, the employers we visited are focused on the workforce development outcomes of these partnerships. They are willing to invest in programs that help them to solve their current needs for skilled labor, and are increasingly drawn to partnerships that will position them to recruit a new source of labor to replace the vacancies created by the retirements of baby boomers.

Our interviews confirmed that while all employers are focused on workforce competitiveness, their specific needs, interests, level of resource commitment, and kinds of accountability vary greatly. Effective partnerships take these unique issues into account. For example, the dealer association in Washington is looking to develop a source of employees with specific skills to work in entry level jobs in dealerships. They would also like a source of entry level workers who can move up into more skilled jobs. The program we visited at Shoreline addresses this need, captures new resources from employers, and is designed in a way that also meets the needs of students for a career path that opens doors to economic opportunity. By contrast, Cargill is more interested in using their education partnership as a means to retain the existing workforce, create a new pool of bilingual/bicultural supervisors, and strengthen connections with the local community. Leaders from community colleges, workforce boards, government, and non-profits, who partner effectively understand the broad workforce goal, but also go much deeper to understand specific goals and implement an alliance that meets the dual goals of expanding access to opportunity for participants and meeting employer needs for skilled workers.

PRINCIPLE #3:

## Engage leaders from business, community colleges, government agencies, state legislatures, and the community.

We hope the examples of innovation presented in this report will inspire leaders from industry, government, community colleges, and community-based organizations to learn from these partnerships and expand on these models. Each group of leaders can play a significant role to move beyond isolated projects that die to sustainable efforts that improve the quality of our workforce by expanding opportunities for Hispanic immigrant adults.

As with any collaborative endeavor, commitment from a core of top level leaders from business, education, government, foundations, and non-profits is critical to success. Effective engagement of champions includes the identification of leaders who will:

- Promote the cause in the broader community and create understanding of the shared vision of educational advancement of the immigrant community and economic competitiveness for firms;
- Make sure their organization does its part to make the overall collaborative effort a success; and
- Support the development of a network of leaders that sustains success and promotes replication of best practices beyond their local or regional contexts.

Beyond community based organizations that are primarily focused on Hispanics, many other community based organizations provide workforce and social services to the Hispanic population and should be brought into the effort. While these organizations may not be able to directly shape policy they are often a critical element in providing linkages and opportunity to the Hispanic population. The following groups can take specific action steps to expand capacity.

## Employers can ...

### Help workers overcome barriers to education

- Provide financial support for education: tuition reimbursement or up front funding for tuition, books, and fees.
- Recognize and reward employees for attainment of skills, certifications and/or degrees.
- Offer flextime or time off to attend classes.

### Invest in community college program capacity

- Donate equipment or supplies.
- Advise on curriculum committees.
- Hire graduates.
- Provide data/feedback and evaluation on program success/weaknesses.
- Educate other business leaders about the college.

### Educate policy makers

- Contribute to long term systems change by educating key elected officials, boards of trustees, and business leaders about the skilled workforce challenge and solutions that work.

## College presidents and key college leaders can ...

### Make a strategic level commitment to understanding the role immigrant labor plays in their community.

- Learn the demographics of the community. Who is living in your service area today? How has that changed from a decade ago? Is the immigrant population growing? Is this population attending college? If so, where and what programs? If not, why and what can you do to make a difference?
- Learn the needs of your employers relative to the Hispanic immigrant workforce. Is the immigrant workforce playing a growing role for employers in your community? Is the immigrant workforce qualified to meet employer needs? If not, what skills are needed and who in your community is addressing this need?

### Place a top priority on creating opportunities for all individuals, including immigrants, to gain the skills they need for good jobs and career advancement.

- Gather data on your performance. Do your data systems provide information on all students, including working adults, low-income students, minorities, and immigrants? Make sure this analysis includes a review of your college performance with students who face barriers (many shared by immigrant students), such as:
  - ✓ Low income students
  - ✓ Adults or youth who need remediation before they can enroll in college level coursework
  - ✓ Working adults who must balance work and family responsibilities
- Where do you lose students from these groups?

### Examine and strengthen your current partnering strategies.

- How does your college partner address workforce needs and provide student support? Who else in your community is making significant investments in the populations you serve? What are potential allies doing, including

government agencies, employers, employer associations, community-based organizations, or the philanthropic community? What are you doing to align or coordinate?

**Adopt innovative and student-centered practices from colleges that have demonstrated impact on improving performance.**

- Innovative college practices identified in this study varied from institution to institution, but they all had the common theme of stepping beyond standard practice and consciously designing policies and practices geared to the unique needs, strengths, and barriers that the students faced. See page 23 for a list of **promising community college practices** that we identified through our site visits.

## State legislators and government policy makers can...

**Get to know your state's demographic trends for the next 10 to 30 years.**

- Legislators and key policy makers cannot begin to articulate meaningful goals for expanding access to higher education for working Hispanic immigrants without good information about upcoming population changes and the role this population will play in your state in the coming years.

**Get to know your state's workforce development challenges and the role Hispanic immigrants are playing in the economic success of key industries.**

- Chicago' s City Council examined the growing Mexican immigrant population in the city and made recommendations on how to bolster the region's economic power by harnessing the full capacity of the Mexican community.[12]

**Examine your policies to ensure that business/ private investment are leveraged and invited. Identify partners who will join with you to build a public agenda for expanded access and success and make sure the needs of working Hispanic immigrants are included in this discussion.**

- Washington State's Skill Panels promote industry collaboration. These panels bring together diverse funding streams to examine needs and support services that provide workers with better training while simultaneously addressing employers needs for a more productive workforce.

  While not designed specifically to address the needs of immigrants, these panels have benefited immigrant workers by harnessing multiple funding streams to address needs for improved industry/college collaborations, development of vocational ESL curriculum, and expanded apprenticeship programs.

- Pennyslvania's "Job Ready Pennsylvania" is similar to the Washington Skill Panel model in that it uses a sector based approach to examine needs and catalyze private sector investments in workforce development.

  This initiative significantly escalated state support by allocating $20 million in funding to support sector initiatives in nine clusters: $5 million to organize industry partnerships and $15 million to support the incumbent worker training developed by the partnerships. There are currently more than 70 industry partnerships, which, in the last fiscal year (05/06), trained more than 7,500 workers at more than 900 companies.

- Florida's matching funds program addresses the need to increase philanthropic investments in community colleges. Created by the Florida Legislature this approach combines funds raised by Florida's twenty-eight community college foundations with legislatively appropriated matching funds. Through 2005-06, the Program has a cumulative total in private contributions for match of $329.4 million and a cumulative

12 "A Shared Future." Douglas Doetsch, Clare Munana, and Alejandro Silva. The Chicago Council on Global Affairs. 2006 2 "A Shared Future." Douglas Doetsch, Clare Munana, and Alejandro Silva. The Chicago Council on Global Affairs. 2006.

total in state match appropriations of $262.1 million. These funds address needs of all low-income students and demonstrate an innovative way to attract philanthropic funding and leverage public resources.

### Examine financing and ensure budgets align with priorities.

- **Enhance curriculum:**

✔ The State Legislature in Texas instructed The Texas Workforce Commission to allocate $850,000 from its federal funds for the development of a demand-driven workplace literacy and basic skills curriculum. Texas LEARNS' blueprint for success calls for seamless linkages between English language development, technical training, and job sourcing to produce workers ready for employment and job advancement, and to ensure that adult learners have access to a continuum of education and training services.

✔ Washington State is funding an integrated approach to serving non-native English speaking students seeking workforce training. The Integrated Basic Education Skills Training (I-BEST) approach creates classroom teams of English as a second language (ESL)/adult basic education (ABE) instructors and professional-technical instructors, who co-teach an integrated course of language and vocational skills training at the same time. The program was designed to reach students with limited English proficiency seeking the skills that lead to higher wage and higher skills jobs.

Evaluation of the program revealed that I-BEST students earned five times more college credits on average and were 15 times more likely to complete workforce training than were traditional ESL students during the same amount of time.

- **Address financial barriers:**

✔ *Financial aid policy*: In 2006, the Washington State Legislature appropriated $4 million to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to create the Opportunity Grant pilot program. The goal of the Opportunity Grant is to help low-income adults to get the skills they need to enter high-wage, high-demand careers. Eligible students may receive funds to cover tuition/mandatory fees for 45 credits and up to $1,000 for books and supplies for per year. Support services such as tutoring, career advising, college success classes, emergency child care and emergency transportation are also part of the Opportunity Grant program. The program is showing success: 10 pilot programs demonstrated excellent results with 73 percent retention and approximately 850 low-income students participating in training for high-wage, high-demand career pathways.

In 2007, the Legislature appropriated a total of $11.5 million per year to expand the Opportunity Grant program to all 34 community and technical colleges. In 2007-08 the Opportunity Grant program expects to serve approximately 4,000 students.

### Examine your data systems and accountability measures.

- Florida and Texas have established data warehouses that allow aggregation of data across boundaries of community colleges and universities.
- The State of Kansas has proposed linking data systems from pre-school through graduate school.
- The Washington State Board for Community Colleges analyzes how participation in community college programs affects wages of low income students. Washington's leaders are using this data to make decisions about priorities and investments.

### Provide a big table.

- While employers, community colleges, government agencies, and state legislatures play an important role in impacting and shaping policy, other organizations play key roles in differing ways.
- State and local workforce and economic

13 http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/texaslearns/st/pdf/st3.pdf
14 http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/docs/data/research_reports/resh_05-2_i-best.doc
15 http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/s_opportunitygrants.aspx

development boards can provide connectivity points to other programs and opportunities in which employers, community colleges, and Hispanic workers can all take part.

- Community development agencies can link together other resources that may be necessary as support services during these educational opportunities, such as housing and child care assistance.
- Community based organizations who do not serve Hispanic workers as their primary mission may still serve Hispanic workers as part of their overall workforce and social service missions. Key partners may be missing an opportunity to leverage and align resources and strategies by not including these organizations.

# Appendix A: Site Summaries

## From Low-Skilled Labor to College Grad

Located on the rural high plains of Colorado, **Morgan Community College** (MCC) has a service area of 11,500 square miles, with a population of just 70,000 people in that area. This unusual situation calls for creative solutions, and MCC has adopted a wide variety of methods for delivering post-secondary education. Their creative approaches are paying off—the college has experienced 25% growth over the last 10 years, and has the highest graduation, retention and growth rate in the state system. They serve 3,500 individuals a year (1,020 FTE) through a combination of traditional classes, distance learning, partnerships with school districts and partnerships with employers. It is their 14 year partnership with one particular employer that made them the focus of our attention for this study.

**Cargill Meat Solutions** is a subsidiary of Cargill, International. With over 2,000 employees, its meatpacking plant in Fort Morgan is the largest employer in the college's service area, and one of the largest employers in all of Northeastern Colorado. Cargill relies heavily on Hispanic and immigrant populations to fill its workforce requirements, and these positions contribute to the community's high Hispanic population of 35%. With Hispanic workers making up 85% of its workforce and having on average only a 6th grade education, Cargill was also in need of some creative solutions for helping those workers perform and prosper at work and in the community. MCC was ready and able to help.

The program, known as the **Workplace Education Program (WEP)** began in June 1993 as part of an 18 month Federal Workplace Literacy Grant. What began as ESL (English as a Second Language) classes offered three times per week has expanded to a robust program that includes multiple levels of ESL offered three times a day, GED and citizenship classes, as well as college preparation and application assistance—all offered through permanent WEP classrooms located at the employer site. Employees are paid half their hourly rate for up to 3 hours per week of participation in Workplace Education classes. The program no longer relies primarily on grant funding, using a combination of direct funding from the employer, the college and WIA funds.

The results of the program are tangible and significant.

> When we started this, our plant had 80 supervisors and 95% were white males. Today, white males comprise about 45% of our supervisory workforce and 45% are Hispanic males. Now our job is to perpetuate

SITE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✔ Program began in 1993
- ✔ Worksite based
- ✔ Can take workers from 6th grade all the way to college
- ✔ Program participants make up an ever-increasing percentage of supervisory positions at Cargill
- ✔ Demonstrated pathway – an average of 15 students enrolled in college each of the last two years

the system (of workplace learning)."
—Mike Chabot, Plant Manager

Abel is an example of the program's success at moving employees into supervisory positions.

Before I came to workplace education, my toolbox was very small, but now I have a huge Craftsman toolbox. I oversee 12 supervisors, and I've encouraged them to come to workplace education. I work with Shirley to identify what help they need on an individual basis to help them succeed. I have great retention among that group of 12, and now some of them are getting ready to advance as well. I am an example of what workplace education can do. At first I wasn't comfortable here, but now it's second nature for me.
—Abel, supervisor on the fabrication floor

Supervisors evaluating workplace education systems report not just improvements in ability to communicate, but also in the employee's productivity, self-esteem, involvement and general attitude.

I'm not involved in workplace education myself, but I encourage all the people I supervise to go. Many of them can't read or write in Spanish, let alone English. They're people who were denied opportunity in their home countries, and thought they were stupid and couldn't learn. Workplace education opens up a whole world of opportunity for them.

People who have been involved in workplace education are more loyal to the company, and better employees. They tend to stay in the community longer, too. They get the skills to help their own kids in school, and to understand what they need to buy a house and put roots down here. It really raises their feelings of self-worth. I find it helps me identify who are good candidates for advancement too – by coming to workplace education they're showing that they really care about improving themselves.
—Kenny, Shipping Supervisor

Of the 200 employees who participate each year, about 15 enroll annually in college at MCC, a significant number given the low English literacy and basic skills that many of the employees bring with them when they arrive.

I'm currently in the ESL 3 program, but am eventually planning to get my GED and hopefully enter college. —Fernando

I've been working at Cargill for four months and have been in workplace education for three months. I come in three times a week to get help with my math and reading skills to get ready for college. Workplace education referred me to the workforce center to get some additional help I needed, and I've enrolled in college for next semester! —Lucia

Family members of employees may participate in WEP, and as employees learn to speak English, they are better able to help their own children succeed in school and advance to higher education.

This program makes me very happy. I've been coming to classes for four years. Learning English has helped me help my daughter, and she's going to college now.
—Anna

Cargill attributes the success of this program to having a single consistent presence from the college in the person of Shirley Penn, Director of Workplace Education. Although employed by the college, her salary is paid by Cargill and she has a permanent office at the plant. She provides a day-in-day-out connection between Cargill and MCC that has proved essential to the program's success.

In terms of other critical success factors, Cargill management identified MCC's willingness to work with them to really understand their needs, rather than approaching them with preconceived notions, while at the same time being proactive and making the program happen without Cargill needing to contribute a great deal of time. Cargill management also believes strongly that their focus on general education rather than specific skills has been enormously beneficial.

> Too many companies only focus on specific skills, and not the value of a general education. Employees and employers reap a lot of benefits from general education. Higher education equals higher self-esteem which equals more productive employees. Everybody wins. —Mike Chabot, Cargill Plant Manager

From the perspective of MCC, the program is made possible by flexibility on the part of college leadership, and also on the part of the state college system. "There's no policy that says we CAN'T do it, so we do!" says Shirley Penn. WEP is a natural outcome of the college's strong sense of ownership and commitment to the community, and its desire to be a force for economic and workforce development. This community connection is echoed on the part of Cargill management, who sees this partnership as more than just about improving its productivity and bottom line. Cargill management considers it an essential part of its corporate citizenship in Fort Morgan to help the Hispanic immigrant workforce that is so essential to company success to find their own success and become full members of the community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Shirley Penn
Coordinator of Workplace Literacy
Morgan Community College
970-542-3238
shirley.penn@morgancc.edu

| Program | Workplace Education Program |
|---|---|
| **Key Partners** | Morgan Community College, Cargill Meat Solutions |
| **Industry Sector** | Food manufacturing |
| **Problem Statement** | Employee population is 85% immigrant, primarily Hispanic, with low English proficiency.<br><br>Employer wanted to support the broader community and to give incumbent workers the skills to advance within the company. |
| **Description of Program** | Program began in 1993 as a result of a Workplace Literacy Grant that focused on ESL instruction.<br><br>Program offers 3 levels of ESL, with classes scheduled at 3 different times to meet the needs of the various shifts at the plant. Employees may attend ESL classes on-site after or before their work hours and are paid half their hourly wage for up to 3 hours per week.<br><br>Program has since expanded to include additional services delivered through the on-site Learning Center, including Basic Skills and GED classes, job-specific skills training, and citizenship classes.<br><br>The Learning Center also provides college assessment and advising, financial aid assistance, and assistance with college preparation for students who do not place at college level. |
| **Funding** | Originally funded by a Workplace Literacy Grants, now funded by the college and employer.<br><br>Employer pays for program director and provides facilities.<br><br>Funding for ESL, Basic Skills, and GED components through CO Department of Education WIA grant.<br><br>Remaining costs paid by the college. |
| **Enrollment/Outcomes** | 200 participants in Workplace Education from July 2005 through June 2006.<br><br>Average of 15 students per semester who enroll in community college. |
| **Hispanic Immigrant Participation** | 186 participants were Hispanic (93%).<br><br>173 participants were immigrants (87%). |
| **Employer Involvement** | On-site program. Cargill provides four classrooms and an office for the program.<br><br>Employees receive half their hourly wage for up to 3 hours of class per week.<br><br>Management, clerical and hourly management employees proceeding to college are eligible for tuition reimbursement.<br><br>Cargill reimburses the college for the salary and benefits of the Workplace Education Director, and covers the costs of the on-site center (ie. phone service, Internet access).<br><br>Cargill recommends program to employees seeking to advance but who have skill deficits. |
| **Nature of Academic Pathway** | Workplace education program begins with three levels of ESL and progresses to include GED preparation.<br><br>Students with GED or high school diploma can get individual assistance in applying for college classes, including on-site Accuplacer testing and financial aid assistance.<br><br>Students gain confidence and inspiration to move up the pathway from their own improvements and by seeing colleagues at higher levels. |

# Growing Local Talent

Arrive just a few miles from the Homestead campus of Miami Dade College, and acres of fertile farmland will remind you of Homestead's long agricultural history. Now this campus, through its partnership with Florida Power and Light, is growing something else: a high-skilled workforce for the electrical power production industry.

The city of Homestead is located at the tip of Southern Florida, 30 miles south of Miami. The region has long relied on a Hispanic and immigrant workforce, and their presence in the region has grown since 1994 when much of the Anglophone population moved away in the wake of Hurricane Andrew and was replaced by Mexican and Haitian immigrants. Today, the student population at the campus is two-thirds Hispanic.

**Florida Power and Light (FPL)** operates the Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant outside of Homestead. The nuclear power industry is very highly regulated, and these regulations extend to the workers in a variety of jobs. Combine rigorous skill requirements with an aging workforce, and utility companies nationwide are competing for the same pool of workers. To fill its open positions, Florida Power and Light was hiring out-of-state workers and paying large relocation bonuses and moving expenses, only to find that they there was a revolving door and new workers left after their first hurricane.

Meanwhile, FPL had a large pool of semi-skilled utility workers. These workers—many Hispanic and immigrant in keeping with the region's population base—are reliable and local and have strong roots in the community. But what FPL didn't have was a cost effective way to move these workers up in the company while meeting the Federal requirements.

**The answer to this problem was found** in a close partnership with Miami Dade College. The two partners spent over a year developing a curriculum for an associate degree program in Electrical Power Technology that would meet the standards of the Nuclear Academy, as well as include all the required competencies in the State's curriculum frameworks.

The program launched in the summer of 2007. It is heavy on labs and internships to ensure that workers have the aptitude and mechanical skills to do the job. Students are a mix of existing and new Miami-Dade students and incumbent workers from FPL. Six slots in each class are guaranteed to FPL workers, who attend classes on the clock and return to FPL to finish out their work day. Students in the program who are not incumbent workers will receive paid 3.5 month summer internships, and FPL has committed to hiring at least 20 graduates per year. Upon hire, these graduates will enter a one year apprenticeship and when they complete it, they will be certified Journeymen who meet all the requirements of the regulations.

All existing utility workers were given the opportunity to participate in the first year of the program. FPL offered a worksite-based college remediation class to help prepare those who were interested in applying, and the students who

### SITE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✔ Extensive curriculum development process
- ✔ Guaranteed employment for at least 20 graduates annually, plus paid internships
- ✔ Draws on a local, ethnically diverse population to fill jobs previously filled by out-ofstate, mostly Caucasian workers

participated were looking forward to advancing their education.

> I'm 45 years old and I have kids at home. I thought it might be too late for me. But the first day one of the instructors talked about his own career and that really encouraged me. —Clarence

> This definitely woke something up in me. I'm just going to keep working at it little by little to see what I get. —Alberto

This is a truly win-win situation. For the community, this program brings a well-defined and virtually guaranteed pathway to good-paying skilled jobs. For FPL, it will result in a more stable workforce, and help the company meet its additional goal of growing ethnic diversity in upper level positions by being able to do more of its hiring from the local, largely Hispanic and immigrant population.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Richard White
Director, School of Computer and Engineering Technologies
Miami Dade College
305-237-3735
rwhite@mdc.edu

| Program | Electrical Power Technology |
|---|---|
| Key Partners | Miami Dade College, Florida Power and Light |
| Industry Sector | Energy |
| Problem Statement | Industry faces a growing demand for workers due to retirement of an aging workforce.<br><br>FPL has previously done most hiring from out-of-state which involved significant expense in relocation benefits. Most new hires didn't last long when faced with Florida cost of living and hurricanes.<br><br>At the same time, have a pool of less-skilled "utility workers," but no cost-effective path to move them up the career ladder while meeting Federal regulatory requirements. |
| Description of Program | Company collaborated with college to develop a two-year associate degree program in Electrical Power Technology.<br><br>Includes three sub-tracks that correspond to the needs of the plant.<br><br>Targeted at both incumbent workers and college students.<br><br>Includes summer internship.<br><br>Graduates who are hired by the company have a one-year onsite apprenticeship and become certified journeymen upon completion.<br><br>While targeted to the needs of this particular facility, because of use of Nuclear Academy standards, graduates will qualify for jobs at other nuclear facilities and non-nuclear power plants. |
| Funding | Employer paid for curriculum development, and pays tuition for incumbent workers.<br><br>Non-incumbent students pay regular college tuition and are eligible for financial aid. |
| Enrollment/Outcomes | 14 students enrolled in first cohort (January 2007)<br><br>35 students enrolled in the second cohort (August 2007) |
| Hispanic Immigrant Participation | First Cohort<br>✔ 12 of 14 are Hispanic<br>✔ 4 of the 14 are Hispanic immigrants (29%)<br><br>Second Cohort<br>✔ 25 of 35 are Hispanic (71%)<br>✔ 10 of the 35 are Hispanic immigrants (26%)<br><br>There is a very large Hispanic population in the area, and moderate ethnic diversity in the low-skill jobs at the company. By providing a pathway for the local workforce to enter and advance within the company, the company hopes to increase diversity in the higher skill level occupations. |
| Employer Involvement | Employer assisted the college with curriculum development by supplying the college with subject matter experts to design a program that would reconcile both Nuclear Academy standards and college core competency requirements.<br><br>Employer provides instructors for some classes, and pays difference between their regular rate and the adjunct rate paid by the college.<br><br>Incumbent workers attend classes during their work day and return to work to complete their work day.<br><br>Employer has agreed to hire 30 summer interns and at least 20 graduates of the program each year. All internships are paid. |
| Nature of Academic Pathway | Graduates receive an Associate in Science Degree in Electrical Power Technology<br><br>Employer has agreement with union to enroll six incumbent workers each year. |

# Playing to Respective Strengths

**Instituto del Progreso Latino (Instituto)** is a Chicago community based organization (CBO). It was incorporated in 1977 to meet the needs of Latino immigrants to learn English, find employment, accustom their children to the U.S. educational system, and adjust to life in Chicago in a myriad of ways. Today, Instituto is a recognized leading city and state educational center which serves more than 14,000 participants annually and helps them advance their basic academic skills, obtain a high school diploma, pass the GED exam, become U.S. citizens, increase their job skills, and find employment.

Instituto has been operating its very successful manufacturing bridge program for over 10 years, and in 2005 it joined forces with a new partner to launch a CNC Machining Bridge program that directly addresses the Chicago region's need for CNC operators. This new partner is the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center, a campus of Wright College (one of the City Colleges of Chicago). Like Instituto, the Humboldt Park Center was founded with a goal of helping to bring skills and jobs to Hispanic immigrants, in this case those residing in the depressed and predominantly Hispanic (Puerto Rican) community where the Center is located.

This program has been a boon for many newly dislocated workers in Chicago. The city's manufacturing workforce is highly Hispanic, but these workers are often employed in lower skilled and easily outsourced positions. When their employers close or move, the workers aren't able to compete for in-demand manufacturing positions because of skill deficiencies and a lack of English language proficiency. The CNC Bridge Program directly addresses both of these challenges.

> My goal is to be a machinist, but I need to get better English and my GED. I need to improve my English to understand problems better. —Emilio

SITE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✔ A Latino-serving community based-organization is the major partner
- ✔ Pathway from education to jobs is well articulated at all levels
- ✔ Leverages a variety of funding streams, particularly Trade Adjustment Assistance Act funds

Students can enter at a variety of levels, and move between training and employment as they need to. Students who score well enough on the TABE exam may enter the bridge directly. Otherwise, they begin in the first or second level of a Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) course taught at Instituto. Upon completing the second level of VESL, students are ready to enter a 320 hour CNC bridge program with 100 hundred hours of hands-on CNC training, taught at the Humboldt Park Center by a bilingual instructor. Students who complete the course will have the skills to get a good-paying job as a CNC operator, or to enter a nine-month Advanced Certificate program at Humboldt Park that will qualify them to be CNC programmers. Job placement rates are very high for both the Bridge and certificate programs, with all students who want to get a job being able to do so.

What makes this program work so well is the way it leverages the respective strengths of the partners. The College focuses on providing the students with a high quality education. Instituto

focuses on recruitment and preparation and provides wrap-around services that ensure student success, supported by a wide variety of funding streams that circumvent the bureaucratic hassles frequently associated with college funding streams.

> I don't think City College has to be everything to everyone. Especially when there's a CBO that can do that job well, why not let them do it? Let the college do what it can do best.
> —Madeline Roman-Vargas, Director of Humboldt Park Technical Center

The college credits Instituto's VESL programs with providing better foundation skills for manufacturing than typical college based programs. Instituto also provides a direct connection to manufacturing employers, as the operator of ManufacturingWorks, the City of Chicago's one-stop center for manufacturing employers and workers. Manufacturing Works! coordinates its efforts directly with a large number of the city's manufacturing employers, and has an in-depth understanding of employers' needs that drives curriculum development for the various levels of the Bridge program. They act as an intermediary, referring dislocated workers to the Instituto/Humboldt programs and helping place graduates from the program in jobs. With the most recent class, they have begun coordinating open houses, site visits, and internships to give students real world insight into the technology.

Many of the program's students have been dislocated from companies that moved overseas and are thus able to access Trade Adjustment Assistance Act funds. The Trade Act funds pay for up to two years of education, and—perhaps more importantly—allows students to receive unemployment benefits for that entire time. This enables them to continue to support their families while they improve their skills in order to get an even better paying job. Two years is enough time for a student who entered at the lowest level of the VESL to complete the Bridge program and possibly even the Advanced Certificate program. Displaced workers without access to the extended unemployment benefits must enter with a higher level of English proficiency in order to get the greatest benefit from the program.

The students found the Bridge program's focus on advancement and career pathways particular important. For example, two of the students encountered at the site visit had been referred to Pharmacy Technician classes. Not only is this a big skill shift for workers who have been in the manufacturing industry for upwards of 20 years, but the workers recognized that there was no easily accessible career path. The Bridge program clearly articulates the kinds of jobs workers will be qualified for at all steps along the ladder, and it's easy for the students to see what is required of them to reach the next level.

> I was thinking about going into another field, like Pharmacy Tech. But I talked to someone at Manufacturing Works, and he encouraged me to stay in manufacturing. I saw that in CNC there are a lot of different steps. A career path. —Jaime

> [In CNC] there's lots of room for improvement the more you learn – smaller steps. After Pharmacy Tech, the next step is a four year degree. Here I can spend another two or three years and get where I want to be.—Enrique

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Thomas DuBois
Director of New Initiatives
Instituto del Progreso Latino
773-890-0055
tom@idpl.org

| Program | CNC Manufacturing Bridge Program |
|---|---|
| **Key Partners** | Instituto del Progreso Latino, Humboldt Park Vocational Educational Center (part of Wilbur Wright College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago), Manufacturing Works and other manufacturing employers. |
| **Industry Sector** | CNC machining for a variety of manufacturing sectors. |
| **Problem Statement** | Strong demand for CNC operators in the area.<br>Manufacturing workforce in the area is highly Hispanic, but many have low English proficiency and low skills<br>When companies close, these workers aren't able to compete for in-demand manufacturing positions |
| **Description of Program** | The CNC Machining Bridge is a 320-hour non-credit class that provides students with the skills needed to be employed as CNC operators, and includes blueprint reading, applied math and metrology, and computers in addition to 100 hours of hands-on CNC operator training.<br>Depending on English proficiency (TABE test results), students may enter the Bridge directly, or may be placed into VESL instruction first.<br>VESL classes includes English, math, and computers – all contextualized for manufacturing in order to prepare students for success in the Bridge program.<br>CNC Bridge instruction is bilingual, with most delivery in Spanish and reinforcement of key technical terms and process language in English.<br>Upon completing the Bridge programs, students are encouraged to enroll in a 9-month for-credit Advanced Certificate program in CNC that will qualify them for higher level positions.<br>Instituto provides extensive wrap-around services throughout Bridge program, as well as to those who proceed to Advanced Certificate program. |
| **Funding** | Instituto leverages multiple streams of funding, including WIA ITA and Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Funds. |
| **Enrollment/ Outcomes** | **FY '05-06**<br>Of 43 enrollments, 38 or 88% completed<br>Of 38 completions, 27 were placed and 3 were not seeking employment, for a placement rate of 77%<br>Of 27 placements, 23, or 85%, had 90 days retention<br>Approximately 10 students when on to the CNC certificate program. |
| **Hispanic Immigrant Participation** | All participants in the Bridge Program are Hispanic. An estimated 90-95% are first generation immigrants. |
| **Employer Investment** | Instituto operates ManufacturingWorks (MW), which is the Manufacturing Sector Center for the City of Chicago.<br>MW has a broad pool of affiliated companies who use them for filling job openings. This gives them a very up-to-date perspective on employer skill demands, which Instituto uses in developing their programs.<br>Provides enrichment activities to students in CNC classes, such as site visits and assistance with internships.<br>MW provides placement services to graduates from all levels of the Bridge Program. |
| **Nature of Academic Pathway** | Students enter at a variety of levels, depending on their readiness (as assessed by TABE).<br>Can enter at either of two levels of VESL.<br>Students with sufficient English language proficiency can proceed directly to non-credit Bridge program.<br>Students completing the Bridge program are prepared for and encouraged to enroll in Advanced Certificate program for CNC.<br>All levels of program are structured for ease of transition to work and back to education |

# Rungs in the Ladder

Tucked into a quiet wooded area outside Seattle, **Shoreline Community College** feels a bit like a retreat center. But amidst the peace and calm lies a state-of-the-art Professional Automotive Training Center (PATC) that has been the regional training headquarters for service technicians for GM, Chrysler, Toyota and Honda since 1992. Today, faced with high demand for service technicians and a fast growing Hispanic and immigrant population in need of good jobs, the leadership of Shoreline Community College is creating new rungs on the ladder to these positions.

Enrollment in the official Automotive Service Associate degree programs at PATC is very competitive. In order to qualify, students must be employed and sponsored by a dealership in addition to meeting other entry requirements. Many interested students, particularly those with ESL and ABE needs, aren't able to meet those requirements. Rather than turn those students away completely, the college created a program to help them take the steps that will lead to success. The General Service Technician (GST) program is a 500-hour, 45 credit program that results in an industry recognized credential sanctioned by the National Institute of Auto Service Excellence (ASE). It qualifies students for a variety of entry-level jobs in automotive service and includes an internship component. The internship is particularly important in creating a pathway to the dealership programs, as it improves students' chances of getting a job at a dealership, a necessary prerequisite to entering the associate degree programs.

**The GST program doesn't teach only automotive skills.** Classes are integrated with ABE or ESL instruction, and co-taught by two teachers, one specializing in automotive and the other in ESL or adult education. This integrated model is made possible by the state of Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST) program, which encourages integrated course delivery in high demand occupations and pays for the additional costs associated with that delivery. The program also includes a module on employability skills.

Jesus Jasso is an example of the kind of student this program is created for. He has been in the U.S. for a few years, and was working as a server at a restaurant. While that job helped him learn English, he wanted a job that was more meaningful to him, "Something I could tell my daughter that I liked." Jesus graduated from the GST program, and through a referral from another GST student got a job at a Toyota dealership. The dealership sponsored him to enter the associate degree program, and at the time of the site visit, he had already completed three of the eight levels required to reach "professional" level certification. Jesus' experience has made him an ambassador for the program, but he recognizes that there are a lot of barriers to success.

> There are some Mexican guys who work in the shop cleaning up and sweeping. I'm very good with my community, and these guys ask me, "How did you get a good job like this?" They see that this is not just my job ... I'm a professional.
>
> They tell me they can never do what I did. They have two kids, are working

### SITE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✔ Program results in an industry- ertified credential and creates a pathway to associate degree
- ✔ ESL and ABE instruction are integrated with automotive content
- ✔ Opportunity Grant program allows wrap around services and comprehensive support

three jobs, and they are driving without insurance. They say, "But you know English." I told them I went to English classes and they can go. They are still just surviving and they are paralyzed with fear.
—Jesus Jasso

Shoreline Community College also recognized that GST students were likely to have lots of barriers. To address those, Shoreline has tapped into another State of Washington program, Opportunity Grants. These flexible funds can be used to cover not only tuition and supply costs, but also childcare, transportation and other wrap-around services that help ensure student success.

We need to address the other barriers that keep people from success. For example, one student was close to finishing and came to drop out because he was spending so much on gas. Students drive as many as 100 miles a day to get to this specialized training. The Opportunity Grants make it possible to help people solve these financial problems. We helped pay his gas and he graduated and is now working.
—Matt Houghton, Program Director

An essential piece to the program's success is the college's longstanding relationship with the Puget Sound Automotive Dealers Association (PSADA), which has its office on the campus. This partnership was key in attracting the PACT Center to the campus in 1992 and, more recently, in the college being awarded a $1.5 million U.S.DOL High-Growth Jobs Initiative grant. A portion of this grant was used to launch the GST program, including extensive curriculum development with ASE and an advisory group made up of PSADA members and others.

We are driven by our advisory committees. They are the folks we look to tell us about our curriculum. I've been around places that have "advisory councils" where they bring the employers in once or twice a year and feed them dinner and tell them what they are doing. That's not the way we do it. We listen to them about their skill needs. We ask for help for the equipment we need. We listen to their input about the workforce. We include our local Workforce Investment Board on the advisory committee to help make sure the needs of the non-traditional students are represented at the table with industry.—Mark Hankins, GST Instructor

Unlike many programs that end when grant funding goes away, the GST program is being sustained through the college's regular funding streams. It has been successful with students and area employers by including an industry-recognized certification and clear career pathways that address both worker and employer needs:

More employers are asking us for bilingual employees. They tell us they want people with technical skills and bilingual skills. Employers can be much more successful in the community when they have employees who customers can talk to in their own language. The trust is greater.
—Mark Hankins, GST Instructor

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Matthew E. Houghton
Project Director , Opportunity Grant - Automotive
Shoreline Community College
206-546-4695
mhoughto@shoreline.edu

| Program | General Service Technician (GST) |
|---|---|
| **Key Partners** | Shoreline Community College, Puget Sound Automobile Dealers Association |
| **Industry Sector** | Automotive Service |
| **Problem Statement** | Region has high demand for automotive service technicians.<br><br>Shoreline is the regional training headquarters for many of the major automotive manufacturers; offers two-year program with industry certification through National Institute of Auto Service Excellence (ASE).<br><br>In order to qualify for these programs students must meet entry requirements and be employed by and sponsored by a dealership.<br><br>Many interested students aren't able to meet those requirements. This is particularly true of ESL and ABE learners. |
| **Description of Program** | The General Service Technician program is a 500-hour (45 credit) program that results in an industry recognized credential.<br><br>The automotive content is integrated with ABE or ESL components depending on learner needs.<br><br>Students receive a variety of wrap-around services to ensure success, including financial assistance beyond tuition through the use of Opportunity Grants, and by partnering with WIA case managers<br><br>The program qualifies students for a variety of entry-level positions in automotive service and includes a paid internship component.<br><br>Students who go on to be hired by a dealership have the opportunity to be sponsored to return to Shoreline and enroll in one of the two-year programs. |
| **Funding** | Startup was supported by a USDOL High Growth Jobs Initiative. Used to develop curriculum, conduct recruitment activities and build partnerships with industry.<br><br>State IBEST program pays for additional costs beyond FTE required to provide integrated instruction.<br><br>Opportunity Grant funding used to provide wrap-around services, augmented by WIA partners |
| **Enrollment/Outcomes** | 42 students have completed the program since 2004 |
| **Hispanic Immigrant Participation** | 23 of the 42 students were immigrants (55%); seven of the 42 students were Hispanic immigrants (17%).<br><br>As conceived, the program had the goal of targeting the Hispanic immigrant population as a rapidly growing population in the region. However, the school didn't yet have existing inroads established with the Hispanic community, so was unable to meet this goal. As those inroads develop, Hispanic participation is expected to increase. |
| **Employer Involvement** | Training is conducted in the Professional Automotive Training Center that is located on the campus and co-owned by the automotive partners and the college.<br><br>Allows students to learn on the most current technology.<br><br>Puget Sound Automotive Dealers Association is located on the campus and provides connections to over 200 area automotive dealers and active engagement by local employers in employer advisory committee. |
| **Nature of Academic Pathway** | Students receive college credit and a recognized industry credential upon completion of the program.<br><br>Upon employment with a dealership, students are positioned to pursue advanced certification through 2-year programs that require sponsorship through an automotive dealership. |

# Funding Innovation

The Alamo Community College District contains five community colleges and a network of affiliated partners. One of those is the **Central Texas Technology Center (CTTC)**, which acts in many respects as the district's R&D site for innovative instructional and student support practices. CTTC is itself an innovation: its buildings are owned jointly by the cities of Seguin and New Braunfels, and the physical plant incorporates a variety of adaptations to allow for maximum flexibility and configurability. The site is not accredited; instead, students are enrolled at any of the five community colleges in the district, and take their classes at CTTC from instructors representing any of their schools.

The CTTC was built to respond to the needs of the local population, which is predominantly Hispanic and immigrant. Seguin and New Braunfels see these immigrant community members as a workforce resource: strong potential employees who will allow them to maintain existing industry and grow new companies. So they invested in the construction of the center to allow them to serve the diverse needs of a population that ranges from those who are illiterate in their native language to highly educated.

> Hispanic immigrants are a great asset to our community and our economy. Our programs are designed to ensure that employers who are offering good jobs can find the skilled workforce they need ... and that everyone who is willing to work to get ahead has the opportunity to learn skills and earn degrees they need.
> —Mike Morphew, Manager, Central Texas Technology Center

One important way that CTTC is helping the local population make connections to work and higher education is through a strong focus on Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL).

SITE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✔ Unique facility allows for flexibility and leveraging of funding streams
- ✔ Marketable skills certificates provide a way for those who don't qualify for college entrance to get a marketable credential
- ✔ Focus on long-term sustainability

Through their partnership with the Seguin Adult Education Cooperative, they have been responsible for designing and piloting a Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) curriculum for manufacturing and health services that is currently being rolled out and piloted at several locations across the state. Now CTTC is taking the next step and incorporating that focus on VESL with hands-on vocational training that responds to the needs of local industry.

The first class entered the Production Worker Training (PWT) program in the summer of 2007. Students are concurrently enrolled in GED and/or ESL classes and the college's 120 hour Production Worker Training program. Classes feature integrated instruction between GED/ESL instructors and the college's technical instructors, and a great deal of self-paced computer based instruction. The curriculum has been approved by an advisory committee of local companies that see this introductory course as providing the entry level skills that they need and providing a bridge to employment. Early results of this pilot program indicate that the 120-hours is insufficient for students with very low ESL proficiency to complete the seven modules of the program, but employers are already eager to hire students who were able to complete only part of the program.

> I'm looking for a job after class is finished. I want to work with a company doing assembly. Now that I can fill out my own job applications, I'm applying for a lot of jobs. —Maria

> This program is excellent for me. I'm learning about manufacturing and [how to use] different machines. I'm learning computers and mathematics. I would like to work as a machinist. —Sylvia

The PWT is a non-credit class, but can be converted to credit through the district's use of Marketable Skills certificates and fractal credit. The district recognized that there are many barriers to entering higher education. These are compounded by the State of Texas's requirement that all students have a high school diploma/GED for community college admission. To address these challenges, beginning in the fall of 2007, 30% of the college's programs in high-demand industry clusters were broken down into "marketable skills" components. Individuals are able to connect to these marketable skills components without formally enrolling in the college and to receive Marketable Skills Certificates in a variety of fields. Certificates are based on employer identification of minimum technical and language skill needs, and provide the students with a credential that they can present to an employer. Additionally, upon meeting college entry requirements, these certificates can be immediately converted towards a one-year certificate program or an associate degree.

Similar programs have been tried elsewhere, as noted by Dr. Federico Zaragoza, Vice Chancellor of Economic & Workforce Development:

> Programs like this exist all over, but their funding model means programs go away when funding dries up. They're not sustainable. We are trying to create a sustainable model by getting programs approved for contact hour reimbursement and working with local WIBs to pay for tuition and provide case management services where needed.

The district plans to continue driving innovations like this one. According to Dr. Zaragoza, flexibility is the key to ensuring success, not only for immigrant workers, but also for the employers who rely upon them.

> All our efforts attempt to keep in mind that low English proficiency populations bring a lot of skills with them. But if we have a one-door only system, it doesn't work.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Mike Morphew
Director
Central Texas Technology Center
830-609-2101
mmorphew@accd.edu

| Program | Production Worker Training Program |
|---|---|
| **Key Partners** | Central Texas Technology Center, Seguin Adult Education Cooperative, WorkSource Career Centers, local industry |
| **Industry Sector** | General manufacturing |
| **Problem Statement** | High demand for employers by manufacturing employers in the New Braunfels/Seguin area.<br>Need to bring training to a large low-skilled, low-English-proficiency workforce in the region who won't leave the area for education or a job.<br>TX requirement for a high school diploma or GED for college admission requires some creative problem solving. |
| **Description of Program** | Students are concurrently enrolled in GED or ESL classes and the 120-hour Production Worker Training Program.<br>Integrated instruction, with basic manufacturing competencies infused into the ESL/GED curriculum.<br>Students receive technical components via computer-based instruction as well as traditional instruction.<br>Curriculum was approved by area manufacturers and provides entry level skills that they have identified.<br>Program builds on an existing Manufacturing ESL program.<br>Qualifying students receive case management services through the WorkSource Center |
| **Funding** | Community-based Job Training Grants, WIA funds, community college system funding to support innovation. |
| **Enrollment/Outcomes** | 12 students entered the first cohort, seven in the ESL group and five in the GED group; four of the ESL students completed at least two of the seven modules during the summer semester. Due to self-paced nature of the program, students can take varying times to complete, and all students are planning to return to continue classes with the fall cohort. |
| **Hispanic Immigrant Participation** | All students in the ESL group are female Hispanic immigrants. |
| **Employer Involvement** | Employer advisory group identified skill needs and approved curriculum.<br>Employer advisory group has committed to interviewing graduates. |
| **Nature of Academic Pathway** | After an additional 180 hours of instruction (Level 2), students are prepared to take the Production Worker Certification exam.<br>This is equivalent to the college's "Marketable Skills" certification, which can be immediately converted to college credit once a student meets college entry requirements and enrolls. |

# Partnering to Help Dislocated Workers

After a three-minute news spot on the local Spanish language television channel, 250 dislocated workers called **Cerritos Community College** for information on their CNC Machining program. This program is tailor-made for Hispanic immigrant workers, who make up a large percentage of the manufacturing workforce in the region. These workers are most at-risk in these times of economic shift, because although they have good employability skills and some technical skills, they lack the English proficiency and formal training that they need to compete for the new higher-skill jobs that are in-demand in the region. The program aims to fill that gap through directly addressing employer skill demands and providing integrated Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) instruction.

While this television spot was an unexpected source of recruitment, the program is designed around a growing relationship with the local One-Stop Workforce Center, SASSFA (Southeast Area Social Services Funding Authority). Dislocated workers receiving unemployment benefits and looking to receive training are referred to the program, where they received 200 hours of technical training and 40 hours of VESL instruction over the course of 12 weeks. Those who enroll qualify for extended UI benefits, and following recruitment, SASSFA provides case management and support services such as transportation and childcare assistance. By focusing on the needs of the students, SASSFA allows Cerritos Community College to focus on the technical instruction.

This is a focus area that Cerritos knows well. The college has devoted a great deal of time and attention to creating an effective economic development division. Jose Anaya, the director of the division, comes from a manufacturing background himself, and is passionate about meeting the needs of employers. To accomplish this, the division works closely with its network of employer advisors to develop curriculum that is responsive to the entry level requirements of these employers, allowing the employers to quickly fill job openings, and for dislocated workers to quickly get another job.

> When you have companies coming to you every week looking for people and you can't provide them, you're not doing your job. We're bending over backwards trying to help manufacturers. Employers are desperate for people – they just want to get them in the door at the entry level with the right skill set so that they can groom them and move them up. —Jose Anaya, Director of Economic Development

The leadership at Cerritos believes strongly in the importance of credentials and providing career pathways, so it ensures that students in as many programs as possible receive college credit for their efforts. In this case, even though the program is being operated by the contract training arm of the college and no contact-hour reimbursement is being received from the state, students finish the program

### SITE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✔ Integrated VESL and technical instruction
- ✔ Strong partnership with local one-stop
- ✔ Acting as an intermediary to enable employers to take better advantage of state training funds they pay into

with six credits towards the 24 they would need to get a certificate in machining, or to apply toward an associate degree. Student orientation to the program includes an explanation of the certificate program and associate degree opportunities, and instructors emphasize these as students move through the curriculum. While most workers are just looking for a quick fix – 12 weeks and they'll be working again – three of the first cohort of 23 students have enrolled in the college.

**To pay for this program**, SSASFA and Cerritos are helping employers take advantage of a funding source that they already pay into, but that is difficult for them to access. The Employment Training Panel Fund is funded by tax money paid by employers who have competition outside of the state of California. Many employers use money from this pool to train their incumbent workforce, but few take advantage of the new hire program component, which is cumbersome and perceived as risky (payment of training costs is contingent on placement within 30 days of completing training). By acting as the fiscal agent, SASSFA takes on the administrative burdens of tracking and reporting activity and shoulders some of the risk that has traditionally made it difficult for small companies to access these funds. ETP funds pay for all the student costs, materials, space at the college and administrative time for the college and SASSFA. Support services such as transportation and childcare are funded through WIA dollars.

Near the end of the 10-week program, Cerritos begins recruiting local employers for a job fair. The first job fair was attended by 11 employers. The intimate nature of the job fair, with less than a two-to-one ratio of employers to students, meant that employers were able to devote quite a bit of time to each candidate, conducting mini-interviews during the job fair. Employer response has been very positive:

> We were given the opportunity to meet with several of the graduating students in a Job Fair environment prior to their final commencement. I have to be very truthful and tell you that the industry is suffering due to lack of machinists in the Aerospace Industry. My visit afforded me the opportunity to meet with many applicants, and their willingness to study a new trade as well as their dedication convinced me that to employ two of your students was well worth the risk. They have been employed more than two months at $12.50 per hour and are now in various circumstances accomplishing their own set-ups and measuring dimensions. Their attendance is exemplary and as an individual who has been in this industry for 28 years, I am proud that there are institutions like yours helping our industry. —William E. Burgen, General Manager, Merco Manufacturing (in a letter to the college)

Some students received job offers before leaving the job fair, and 17 of the 23 students have since found employment in the field. While in some cases their pay is lower than it was at the jobs they left due to losing seniority, they know they have the skills they will need to advance and thrive in the new world of advanced manufacturing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Jose Anaya
Director of Economic Development
Cerritos College
562.860.2451 ext. 2510
janaya@cerritos.edu

| Program | CNC Training for Dislocated Workers |
|---|---|
| **Key Partners** | Cerritos Community College, One-Stop Career Center, local employers |
| **Industry Sector** | CNC machining for a variety of manufacturing sectors |
| **Problem Statement** | The manufacturing industry in the region is in flux right now.<br>Companies that rely on low-skill jobs are relocating or out-sourcing, while at the same time there is a very high demand for higher-skilled manufacturing workers.<br>Employees who become dislocated need skills upgrading and improved<br>English proficiency in order to qualify for the jobs that are in demand. |
| **Description of Program** | The program is targeted at dislocated workers referred by the local One-Stop Center's Rapid Response Unit.<br>Participants receive 200 hours of training, which includes 40 hours of VESL.<br>Curriculum was adapted from a similar program targeting at-risk youth, which was developed with the assistance of a group of six key manufacturing employers.<br>Have an existing pool of manufacturers who are eager to higher graduates from the program.<br>A job fair is held on completion; small number of students per cohort means that employers can do interviews on the spot. |
| **Funding** | Tuition is paid through WIA training funds for dislocated workers. |
| **Enrollment/Outcomes** | 23 students in first cohort (summer 2007).<br>17 students were placed in jobs upon completion.<br>3 students enrolled in college following program. |
| **Hispanic Immigrant Participation** | 18 of 23 students are Hispanic immigrants (79%). |
| **Employer Involvement** | Employers were involved in the original curriculum design.<br>Employer provides feedback about workers they have hired regarding missing or inadequate skills is used to modify the program.<br>College has strong employer advisory group and received extensive donations of equipment and materials for use in manufacturing labs. |
| **Nature of Academic Pathway** | Course provides 5 units of college credit.<br>College policy is to provide credit wherever possible in order to help individuals build career pathways and have a portable credential. |

# Appendix B: Sources

"Building America's Future Workforce: Employers, Immigrants and Skills." NAM Center for Workforce Success. 2004.

"Closing the Immigrant Skills Gap." NAM Center for Workforce Success. 2002.

"Gauging the Labor Force Effect of Retiring Baby Boomers." Monthly Labor Review July 2000. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"Improving Workplace Opportunities for Limited English Speaking Workers." NAM Center for Workforce Success.

"Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State, Race/Ethnicity, and Income." WICHE. 2003.

"Latino Youth and the Pathway to College." Pew Hispanic Center. 2004.

"Resources for Increasing Latino Success and Participation in Higher Education". The College Board. June 2007.

"Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics." NCES. 2003.

"The Impact of Demographic Change on Higher Education." College Board. 2005.

"Wising Up: How Government Can Increase Skills to Increase Skills and Advance Low Wage Workers." Center for Law and Social Policy. April 2006.

Digest of Education Statistics. NCES. 2005. Appendix B: Sources and Endnotes