

Developmental Education: A National Perspective

by George Lorenzo



published by
The SOURCE on Community College Issues, Trends & Strategies
in partnership with
The Roueche Graduate Center at National American University

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Executive Summary

Community colleges have always been responsible for accepting students who are not yet ready for college and then cultivating and supporting these students on pathways to become better prepared academically and ultimately successful. The challenges that come with this enormous responsibility are numerous, varied and have existed for decades at community colleges across America.

With such challenges comes two schools of thought: One is that community colleges are insufficient in this arena, with inadequate placement-testing and less-than-stellar student support systems. For instance, in *Redesigning America's Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success*, Thomas Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins synthesized the Community College Research Center's intensive study of community colleges over the past eight years and claimed that "improving developmental education, instruction, student supports, and the overall student experience is necessary but not sufficient; targeted reforms must be implemented as part of a broader institutional restructuring."

The other is that community colleges are getting a lot smarter about developmental education and bringing about positive change through creative and innovative programs and initiatives that enable greater numbers of underprepared students to succeed and graduate. Positive results can be seen in such initiatives as Achieving the Dream, a well-funded non-profit that is leading "the most comprehensive non-governmental reform movement for student success in higher education history," and a good number of other developmental education initiatives that have strong sponsors and dynamic missions and goals.

However, despite such determined efforts, the numbers for student success haven't reached substantially better results from a national perspective. They do continue to grow positively in silos or spikes, so to speak, at institutions large, small, urban, suburban and rural.

This monograph covers some of these silos/spikes with profiles of programs at community colleges that focus very specifically on developmental education efforts that are working.

Every community college is different in the way it serves underprepared students through a wide variety of programs and styles based on an institution's location, demographics, local labor demands and its ability to supply workers who are capable and educated.

More than 25 representatives who work in developmental education from eight colleges were interviewed for this monograph, ranging from mentors, tutors, directors and presidents. Additional interviews were conducted with experienced professionals in the field who represent the Roueche Graduate Center's Doctor of Education in Community College Leadership Program.

Each of the eight colleges is unique in their ways and means, and they are all Achieving the Dream (ATD) colleges. All eight colleges noted that their involvement with ATD was a positive and enlightening game-changer for their overall efforts toward enhancing developmental education efforts. Four are city campuses; two are suburban and two are rural campuses. Overall these institutions ranged in size from 3,900 Fall student enrollments to 60,000 annual student enrollments.

Executive Summary

Of course, there are many more colleges that could have been featured in this monograph for their innovative work in the area of developmental education. While these eight are featured through interviews, more than a dozen additional colleges were cherry-picked and also featured as representations of successful community colleges in the developmental education space. These examples have been recently profiled in the research and literature on this topic.

Still, completion figures on the national level have not improved much today. Completion-rate statistics at public two-year institutions with data analyzed through February 2015 published by the Department of Education's National Student Clearinghouse Research Center show that the persistence for students who start college at two-year public institutions was up only 0.8 percentage points from the prior year, but down 1.6 percentage points since 2009.

This doesn't mean that community colleges aren't working hard at increasing student success, as is stressed throughout this monograph. In summary, the overall aim of this monograph was to provide a basic representation of successful developmental education efforts at community colleges located across the country.

Monograph Structure

To bring out the unique characteristics of the eight colleges interviewed, a synopsis of each college features a brief amalgam of geographic, labor and demographic-related descriptions that was created by accessing information from a variety of sources, including the institutions interviewed, the National Center for Education Statistics, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System and the U.S. Census Bureau. A brief description of each college's involvement with ATD as well as any awards or special recognition received from any other national programs were also presented. These were followed by the descriptions of the developmental education initiatives at each college based on interviews held with college representatives working in their respective departments, as well as by reviewing any related information on each college's website.

The next section of the monograph lists and briefly describes other successful developmental education initiatives at community colleges outside of the eight interviewed. These descriptions were culled from the vast amount of literature on the topic of developmental education, with an eye toward some of the more recent research. Following this section, are synopses of what some of the most important and successful national initiatives in the field have been doing to promote and support developmental education reform at community colleges across the country. A glossary of terms is also provided, and the end notes section makes for a substantial listing of links to numerous additional resources.

Preface

Community colleges have always been responsible for accepting students who are not yet ready for college and cultivating and supporting these students on pathways to become better prepared academically and ultimately successful. The challenges that come with this enormous responsibility are numerous, varied and have existed for decades at community colleges across America.

Beginning post World War II, student demographics at community colleges shifted due to the educational opportunities provided by the G.I. Bill and a new influx of diverse students, placing “a greater demand on educational services because many of the students did not receive either adequate academic preparation or even a formal education before enrollment.”¹ This remains true today.

Edmund J. Gleazer, who was president of the American Association of Junior Colleges for 23 years (from 1958 to 1981), was once asked what he considered to be the greatest challenge facing community colleges. His answer: “the greatest challenge is to make good on the promise of the open door.” More than 30 years since Gleazer retired, the “open door” still catalyzes the greatest challenges facing community colleges. In short, community colleges, unlike their four-year counterparts, accept all who apply, from adults working on earning their GEDs to determined high achievers close to earning associate degrees by the time they graduate from high school.

There are no barriers to admission at America’s community colleges. Students who are not quite ready to take on the rigors of a higher education still come pouring through these doors in large numbers, creating a revolving door of students who often drop out and return. In addition to lacking skills and knowledge in basic math and college-level reading and writing, they come with a wide diversity of road-blocks to success that are

difficult to quantify and qualify without providing proactive and consistent support on a personal and individual basis to get a clearer picture of their unique needs.

Community colleges have historically addressed all the numerous challenges that come with helping underprepared students succeed. There are basically two schools of thought on this topic. One is that community colleges are insufficient in this arena, with inadequate placement-testing and less-than-stellar student support systems. For instance, in *Redesigning America’s Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success*, Thomas Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins synthesized the Community College Research Center’s (CCRC) intensive study of community colleges over the past eight years, and claimed that “improving developmental education, instruction, student supports, and the overall student experience is necessary but not sufficient; targeted reforms must be implemented as part of a broader institutional restructuring.”²

The other is that community colleges are getting a lot smarter about developmental education and bringing about positive change through creative and innovative programs and initiatives that enable greater numbers of underprepared students to succeed and graduate. Such positive results can be seen in such initiatives as Achieving the Dream, a well-funded non-profit that is leading “the most comprehensive non-governmental reform movement for student success in higher education history,”³ along with a good number of other organizational and institutional developmental education initiatives located across the country.

In addition, with the advent of applying so-called “Big Data” to the equations relative to student success, we are starting to see extraordinarily innovative and results-oriented developments. In short, educators continue to create new ways to assist the underprepared college student.

However, despite such determined efforts, the overall tally claiming student success has not reached significantly positive results on a national scale. Success-oriented results do continue to grow in silos or spikes, so to speak, at institutions large, small, urban, suburban and rural. This monograph covers some of these silos/spikes with profiles of programs at community colleges that focus very specifically on developmental education efforts that are working.

Introduction: The Challenge of Turning Around the Open Door

John Roueche, president of the Roueche Graduate Center at National American University—where a cohort-based Doctor of Education program in Community College Leadership has been growing enrollments since it launched in early 2013—frequently quotes Gleazer at the numerous presentations he has made to education professionals over the course of his community college career that spans more than 50 years. “Can our colleges do the work?” Roueche has repeatedly asked. “Can they turn around the revolving door and help students who need not just basic skills but also lots of work with their basic attitudes and self-concepts?” The answer is yes, but not yet ubiquitous enough in large numbers across the country.

In a related book, “Making Good on the Promise of the Open Door,” authors Byron McClenney, retired Director of Student Success Initiatives at the University of Texas at Austin and former National Director of Leadership Coaching for Achieving the Dream, and Margaretta Mathis, Senior Vice President and Dean of Master’s and Doctoral Programming of the Roueche Graduate Center, reiterate that “a high proportion of the students arriving at our institutions’ doorsteps—including those fresh from high school as well as returning adults—are often underprepared for college.” Their book offers an excellent overview concerning how to boost student success and completion and close “the college degree attain-

ment gaps that threaten to weaken our nation’s economic fabric.”

McClenney and Mathis reveal the magnitude and importance of the need for developmental education reform by pointing to statistics related to students who completed, meaning they either earned an associate’s degree or certificate or transferred to a four-year institution. Those under 19 and those who were not in need of developmental education when they first enrolled completed at the highest rates. Forty-six percent of students who did not need to take developmental education courses completed as opposed to 24 percent of non-completing students who were required to take at least one developmental education course.

They also point to research showing how 60-70% of the students in 2011 were arriving at community colleges with a minimum of one academic deficiency. “This is certainly not a new message or anyone’s first rodeo,” noted McClenney and Mathis. ⁴

Overall, completion rates at America’s community colleges can be correlated in large part to incoming students who are required to first enroll in developmental education sequences in math, reading, English or all three subject areas in order to be “ready.” These are students who typically drop out of before completing a sequence and ultimately getting on a pathway toward accumulating college credit that can be directly applied toward earning an associate degree.

Completion figures on the national level have not improved much today. Completion-rate statistics at public two-year institutions with data analyzed through February 2015 published by the Department of Education’s National Student Clearinghouse Research Center show that the persistence for students who start college at two-year public institutions was up only 0.8 percentage points from the prior year, but down 1.6 percentage points since 2009. ⁵

This doesn't mean that community colleges aren't working hard at increasing student success, as is stressed throughout this monograph.

Community Colleges that are Increasing Completion Rates of Underprepared Students

Every community college is different in the way it serves underprepared students through a wide variety of programs and styles based on an institution's location, demographics, local labor demands and its ability to supply workers who are capable and educated.

More than 25 representatives who work in developmental education from eight colleges were interviewed for this monograph, ranging from mentors, tutors, directors and presidents. Additional interviews were conducted with experienced professionals in the field who represent the Roueche Graduate Center's Doctor of Education in Community College Leadership Program.

Each of the eight colleges is unique in their ways and means, and they are all Achieving the Dream (ATD) colleges. All eight colleges noted that their involvement with ATD was a positive and enlightening game-changer for their overall efforts toward enhancing developmental education efforts. Four are city campuses; two are suburban and two are rural campuses. Overall these institutions ranged in size from 3,900 to 60,000 student enrollments.

Of course, there are many more colleges that could have been featured in this monograph for their innovative work in the area of developmental education. While these eight are featured through interviews, more than a dozen additional colleges were cherry-picked and also featured as representations of successful community colleges in the developmental education space. These examples have recently been profiled in the vast amount of research and literature on this topic.

In summary, the overall aim of this monograph was to provide a basic representation of successful developmental education efforts at community colleges located across the country.

The descriptions of the eight colleges are in alphabetical order, starting in Ohio, then traveling to Texas, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, back to Texas, then over to Florida, across the country to the state of Washington, and back to Ohio. All these colleges have unique characteristics that make up the great American community college education landscape that continues to serve the underserved and those who need academic and financial assistance the most. Indeed, community colleges are still alive and well, tackling their missions under challenging circumstances, including a 2008 recession that is still limping toward recovery and a continuing trend across the country resulting in reduced levels of state funding particularly for developmental education initiatives.

Monograph Structure

To bring out the unique characteristics of the eight colleges interviewed, a synopsis of each college features a brief amalgam of geographic, labor and demographic-related descriptions that was created by accessing information from a variety of sources, including the institutions interviewed, National Center for Education Statistics, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System and the U.S. Census Bureau. A brief description of each college's involvement with ATD as well as any awards or special recognition received from any other national programs were also presented. These were followed by the descriptions of the developmental education initiatives at each college based on interviews held with college representatives working in their respective departments, as well as by reviewing any related information on each college's website.

The next section of the monograph lists and briefly describes other successful developmental

education initiatives at community colleges outside of the eight interviewed. These descriptions were culled from the vast amount of literature on the topic of developmental education, with an eye toward some of the more recent research. Following this section, are synopses of what some of the most important and successful national initia-

tives in the field have been doing to promote and support developmental education reform at community colleges across the country. A glossary of terms is also provided, and the end notes section makes for a great listing of links to numerous additional resources.

Eight Colleges with Successful Developmental Education Initiatives

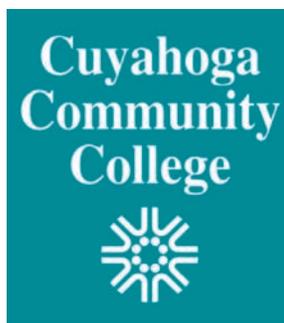
Eight Institutions	State Full-Time Retention 2011	Total 2013-14 Student Population	Minority Percentage	Enrolled in Distance Ed	Full-Time Returning Students	Metro H.S. Graduates over 25	Metro Bachelor Degrees or Higher over 25	Metro H.S. Non-Completers 18 to 24	Dev Ed Initiatives Highlighted
Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)	48.8%	52,000	43%	41%	48%	77%	15%	28%	Test Prep, Bridge Courses, Paired ALP, College Success Program
El Paso Community College	57.4%	43,532	85%	11%	63%	76%	23%	15%	Integrated Reading and Writing, Office of Student Services, Dual Enrollment, Trio Program
Guilford Technical Community College	60.4%	39,986	49%	26%	49%	93%	44%	17%	Completion By Design, New Dev Math, Center for Academic Engagement, Get On Track Program
Montgomery County Community College	56.9%	20,250	19%	16%	62%	98%	66%	11%	WritePlacer, New Dev Math, Gateway to College Program, Mentoring Program
South Texas College	57.4%	48,247	93%	12%	86%	74%	27%	22%	Dual enrollment, Puente Program, New Mathways
Valencia College	61.9%	60,000	52%	23%	NA	88%	33%	16%	Effects of state legislation on dev ed students, New Orientation and Advising Services
Walla Walla Community College	58.8%	10,536	21%	14%	67%	87%	22%	20%	I-Best, Adult Basic Education, High School 21+, SkillUp Washington
Zane State College	48.8%	3,900 Fall only	3%	13%	52%	80%	11%	21%	Quick Start, Math Start, Welcome Week, Accelerated Courses, Unmet Pre-req Advising, GISS

Estimates are based on the following sources combined: Interviews with institutions, U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder, National Center for Education Statistics, and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C), Cleveland, Ohio

In the state of Ohio, the retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions are 48.8% for full-time students and 42.4% for part-time students.

Cuyahoga Community College (commonly referred to as Tri-C) is located in Cleveland and had more than 52,000 unduplicated headcounts in 2013-14. Sixty-eight percent of Tri-C's enrollments are part-time students, with 61% female and 39% Black or African American and 4% Hispanic/Latino. Forty-one percent are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 48% of full-time students and 34% of part-time students.



In the Cleveland metro area 77% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 15% have a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 28% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in Cleveland is \$48,954. An estimated 15% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 8% have income over \$150,000 or more.

Cleveland is an American Rust Belt city that has seen its once strong manufacturing and steel industries diminish in recent decades. The highest percentage of workers in Cleveland (25.5%) fall under the category of educational services, health care and social assistance. Incidentally, this category shows the highest percentage across all eight colleges, ranging from 19.4% to the high twenties. Next in Cleveland is manufacturing at 14.5%, followed by retail trade (10.8%) and professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (10.2%).

Tri-C has been active in ATD since 2005 and has been a Leader College since 2009. It is involved in ATD's Developmental Education Initiative, PRESS for Completion and STEM Regional Collaboratives.

The Developmental Education Initiative ran from 2009-2012. Fifteen colleges in six states participated in this initiative that was geared toward identifying obstacles to completion, phasing in common statewide placement standards, collaborating with K-12 systems, using state-level data systems to track outcomes in remedial courses, and more.⁶

Press for Completion was a 2012 competitive grant funded by the Walmart Foundation and administered by ATD. This initiative featured 15 of 50 ATD Leader Colleges over a 27-month process in which each college agreed to serve as a peer coach and participate in a learning community that was shared with more than 200 colleges belonging to the ATD network.⁷

STEM Regional Collaboratives started in February 2014 as a 10-month initiative in partnership with Jobs for the Future in which three community colleges—Tri-C, Miami Dade College and Norwalk Community College—were tasked with developing stronger STEM education and employment pathways.⁸

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) honored Tri-C for initiatives focusing on student success and safety planning and leadership.



Test Prep, Bridge Courses, Paired ALP & College Success Program at Tri-C

Some of Tri-C's recently successful developmental education efforts include its Test Prep program, along with the continuous progress being realized in its bridge courses and accelerated learning courses. Jennifer Spielvogel, Tri-C's Vice President, Evidence and Inquiry, provided an in-depth and interesting overview of these programs, beginning with Test Prep.

No-Go Policy Prior to Placement Testing

Spielvogel explained that when she thinks about a student's journey through college, she immediately focuses on the front-end and the student's experience with taking the all-important placement test that will inform the college as to whether or not a student is college ready. "We recognize that these students are coming into these tests cold, so we created Test Prep," she said. Test Prep is basically a mandatory hour-long review of test-taking strategies, including sample test items, that can be taken online or in-person to prepare for the COMPASS® Mathematics Skills and Writing Skills tests that the college administers to its incoming freshmen.

"Now, when a student comes into the test center, we don't say go in there and take your test," said Spielvogel, adding that the program started in 2012 and was developed by math and English faculty at Tri-C. "We say go in there and do the prep. At the end of the prep, there is a paper you have to fill out so that we know you went through it. Then (and only then) you can go into the testing center and take the placement test."

Short Bridging Option

At the same time that Tri-C was implementing Test Prep, developmental educators were working on "bridge courses," which are two-week courses, six hours in length, created specifically for students who had placement test results that put them on the cusp between having to take a developmental English and/or math course or actually enrolling in a 16 or 14-week credit-bearing, college-level English and/or math course.

Faculty members in the bridge courses assess whether a student should or should not move up into a credit-bearing courses. Spielvogel said that through the new Test Prep and this identification of students who were on the cusp, so to speak, "we went from 65% of students placing into developmental education to 35%. They were either ready to take the test or they were placing into the bridge course." Overall students did well in the English bridge course but, perhaps as expected, not so well in math.

She explained that many of the students who qualified for the math bridge courses opted out and preferred going into development education. "They did not want anything that was accelerated." Regardless, in math, "we went from 92% of our students needing intermediate Algebra developmental math to 89%." Not a huge improvement but nonetheless a positive step in the right direction. At the lower levels of developmental math "we went from more than half of the students placing into the lowest level to less than 20%." However, a good number of those students preferred taking developmental math, she added, primarily because they lacked the confidence and wherewithal needed to pursue a two-week accelerated process. "It's frustrating," she said. "We have less students actually taking the math bridges than those who qualified for them."

Accelerated Learning Program Option

Spielvogel also talked about another Tri-C Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) that has been at the college for a good number of years and utilizes "paired courses." In a single 16-week English course, for example, students in this ALP take eight weeks of developmental course work and eight weeks of college-level English. In math, students take three developmental math sequences – low, intermediate and high - in one 16-week course divided into three five week periods. In another ALP course, an intermediate level math sequence is paired with a study skills course. "That has been a paired course for about eight or nine years," Spielvogel said. "It works really well."

College Success Program

In other Tri-C developmental education pursuits, President Alex Johnson noted—in an interview for a 2013 SOURCE on Community College Issues, Trends & Strategies report—that the college has “reached out to the public schools to ensure that English and mathematics curricula are in line with what a student can expect in college. That requires us to not only work with individual schools but also with faculty members. That’s critical.”⁹

This kind of thinking is very much in line with the Tri-C’s “College Success Program,” which, as noted on its website, is “a partnership between Tri-C and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) designed as a pre-college program to prepare high-school students for a successful transition to college and to begin their studies in college on level, eliminating the need for remedial math and English courses. This college preparatory approach will ease the high school transition to a successful college career.”

The College Success Program, currently in effect at six high schools, has three primary components:

1. The creation of College Success Outreach Centers where Tri-C staff are on site to provide services.
2. A College Success Summer Academy, which is a six-week Summer Academy for 11th and 12th grade students held at the Tri-C Metropolitan Campus.
3. A First-Year Experience for entering freshmen where students who transition to Tri-C are paired with a Transition Coach their freshman year.¹⁰

Finally, “I don’t think developmental education is going to go away soon,” Johnson explained, “but I do feel very, very strongly that there are ways that we can decrease, number one, the number students who place in developmental education

“I don’t think developmental education is going to go away soon, but I do feel very, very strongly that there are ways that we can decrease, number one, the number of students who place in developmental education and then ultimately the time that they spend in developmental education.”

– Alex Johnson, President, Tri-C

and then ultimately the time that they spend in developmental education.”

El Paso Community College (EPCC), El Paso, Texas

In the state of Texas, the retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions is 57.4% for full-time students and 47.2% for part-time students.

EPCC is located in El Paso and had more than 43,500 unduplicated headcounts



**El Paso
Community
College**

in 2013-14. Sixty-eight percent of EPCC’s enrollments are part-time students, with 57% female and 85 % Hispanic/Latino. Approximately 11% are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 63% of full-time students and 51% of part-time.

EPCC has a thriving and diverse economy with an international trade flavor due to its location bordering Mexico. El Paso is the second busiest international crossing point in the U.S. behind San Diego. In metro El Paso, 76% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 23% have a bachelor’s degree or high-

er. An estimated 15% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school.

The median income of households in the El Paso, TX Metro Area is \$40,062. An estimated 18% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 5% have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (25.5%) fall under the category of educational services, health care and social assistance. Next is retail trade at 11.9 %, followed by arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (9.3%) and professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (9.3%).

EPCC is involved with ATD's Developmental Education Initiative. It has been active in ATD since 2004 and a Leader College since 2009. It received the 2013 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education. EPCC was also named a finalist in the 2015 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

EPCC's Integrated Reading & Writing Curriculum, Office of Student Services & Dual Enrollments

At EPCC, course redesign initiatives, an expansive and effective Office of Student Services, and a strong focus on Dual Enrollment programs, among a good number of other initiatives, have put this institution on a straight line toward achieving better developmental education student success outcomes.

Redesigning Courses

Writing and Reading Professor Michael Coulehan explained that the Texas state mandate known as the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSI) became the impetus for some changes to reading and writing developmental education courses at EPCC. TSI is a program designed for institutions to determine which students are college ready as well as what type of course or intervention will best meet a student's needs to be better prepared for college-level course work if he

or she is not ready. It advises community colleges in Texas to use only one assessment for determining college readiness, which is essentially the College Board's Accuplacer assessment.¹¹

TSI has been in effect since 2003. The state mandated that beginning August 26, 2013, no other assessment tests will be used to satisfy the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requirements for college readiness.¹²

"We basically decided to combine the exit-level reading and the exit-level writing into one class, and we call that integrated reading and writing," Coulehan said. He, along with several colleagues, were tasked with developing a training program to teach faculty members how to teach the new integrated course. "We had a lot of reading instructors who never taught writing, and we had a lot of writing instructors who never taught reading."

After a challenging transition period, the new integrated course has now completely replaced developmental English and reading starting in the Spring 2015 semester. Coulehan noted that the results of this course are being monitored closely in order to apply any updates and/or redesigns that may or may not become evident.

Office of Student Services

In other developmental education progress at EPCC, Director of the Office of Student Success Lucia Rodriguez provided an overview of some important initiatives that are helping students



break out of the typical frustrations that come with being forced to take non-credit remedial courses, beginning with a strong tutoring program that works out of centers located at each of EPCC's five campuses.

“Our tutors are trained in developmental education all the way up into higher math and all the credit courses, including social sciences and the STEM area,” she said. “We also have a program called RAP (Retention Action Program) that provides academic and personal support for students enrolled in Career Technical Education studies, including in AAS (Applied Associates of Science) degrees.”

Additionally, the Office of Student Services manages a PREP (Pretesting, Retesting Educational Program) program, “which specifically works with students who are entering and taking the TSI assessment. We work with them prior to taking the exam to prepare them for hopefully getting into the highest level of developmental education or to get out of developmental education all together.”

Long-standing TRIO Program

EPCC's TRIO program is another important facet of its developmental education efforts. TRIO Programs “are Federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.”¹³ Through TRIO's Student Support Service grant competition, EPCC has consistently been awarded funds to “provide opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education.”¹⁴ “The TRIO program is very competitive, but we have managed to have the program for more than 30 years,” Rodriguez said, adding that the program currently works with more than 600 students.

Collaborative Campus-wide Efforts Produce Positive Results

Overall, the Office of Student Services is assisted and guided by the college's Developmental Education Council. The Council's mission is “to promote the success of developmental students in College-level courses leading to a degree, by assisting in setting performance standards that all developmental students must meet, addressing state and College performance standards (including bench marks and time-frames), facilitating improvement strategies, improving collaboration among programs, and recommending professional development activities, while allowing disciplines flexibility in program design.”¹⁵

The Council meets during each semester and “proposes different curriculum and rules that are guided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board,” Rodriguez explained. “They come together to report so that we can all be collaborating together.”

Collaboration on numerous fronts is an important key for EPCC's developmental efforts across the board, including at the highest administrative levels. The college has a strong drive to help underprepared students through a long history of support that has its origins in the president's office. Current President William Serrata, who came on board in August 2012, inherited a consistent and effective administrative support system for developmental education from his predecessor Richard Rhodes, who served as EPCC president for ten years before becoming president of the Austin Community College District.

Avoidance and Acceleration

For instance, Serrata is highly supportive of dual enrollment programs, which is no surprise given that he came from South Texas College where he served as Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management for over seven years. South Texas College has one of the largest bodies of students enrolled in dual enrollment programs in Texas (see South Texas profile). Serrata says

that South Texas College “learned a lot about early college high schools from El Paso.”

“Our focus since I have been here is on really expanding dual credit, which is tied to college readiness and developmental education studies,” he said. “We have done a good job with what I call AA degrees, meaning avoidance and acceleration. So we avoid it by ensuring students are college ready prior to graduating from high schools.” Acceleration obviously occurs as high school students actually earn college credit.

Currently 5,000 El Paso high school students are in dual credit or early college high school programs. Much of this progress, which has been growing steadily, comes from a strong high school testing program, Serrata explained. At the end of their sophomore year, students are tested at their local high school testing centers. “We get those who are college ready into credit-bearing courses during their junior year. We retest those who are not college ready at the end of their junior year to see if they are ready for dual credit in their senior year.” Serrata calls this process “a paradigm shift. We have trained the high schools so they are their own testing centers. It has been paramount for us, and it is really the avoidance piece. Students see the benefit of being college ready.”

The students who wind up in dual credit have an 89% success rate at EPCC. When they transfer to a four-year institution they are twice as likely to graduate if they have taken at least one dual credit course, and they are four times as likely to graduate if they come from the bottom half of their high school class and have taken dual credit. “The data is indisputable, and the statewide data is even stronger,” Serrata said.

“We have trained the high schools so they are their own testing centers. It has been paramount for us, and it is really the avoidance piece. Students see the benefit of being college ready.”

– William Serrata, President, EPCC

Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC), Jamestown, North Carolina

The retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions in North Carolina is 60.4% for full-time students and 45.4% for part-time students.

Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) is located in Jamestown, NC, a suburb of Greensboro-High



Point, and had more than 39,900 unduplicated headcounts in 2013-14. Fifty percent of GTCC’s enrollments are part-time students, with 57% female and 43% Black or African American and 6% Hispanic/Latino. Twenty-six percent are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 49% of full-time students and 43% of part-time students.

In metro Jamestown, 93% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 44% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. An estimated 17% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in the Greensboro-High Point, NC Metro Area is \$43,608. An estimated 15% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 6% have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (22.3%) fall under the category of educational services, health care,

and social assistance. Next is manufacturing at 16.9% followed by retail trade (12.4%) and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (8.8%).

GTCC has been active in ATD since 2004 and a Leader College since 2009. In addition to being an ATD Developmental Education Initiative Leader College, Guilford is involved in the PRESS for Completion grant program. GTCC is also the managing partner for North Carolina in Completion by Design (CBD), a five-year program funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In 2010, GTCC was honored with the second annual Leah Meyer Austin Institutional Student Success Leadership Award.

CBD at GTCC

Ed Bowling is Executive Director of the North Carolina CBD initiative. He is located at GTCC, the grantee institution leading the CBD North Carolina cadre consisting of “the three largest community colleges in the state, a medium-sized suburban college, and a small rural college . . . Across the cadre colleges, the percentage of students referred to developmental education ranges from 55% to 87% . . . The North Carolina cadre is redesigning the areas of developmental education, programs of study, intensive advising, and student management technology.”¹⁶

Five Key Ingredients for Comprehensive Change

Bowling talked extensively about how CBD in North Carolina has been developing five areas that can bring about comprehensive change in the way students go through their college experience. Here they are in brief:

1. Restructure programs of study—both technical programs and transfer programs—to become clearer, more prescriptive and better sequenced.
2. Provide intrusive or proactive advising where students are assigned to someone

and then support that advising with technology to provide such services as early alerts, academic planning and a mechanism for continuity.

3. Accelerate or get students into their programs of study as quickly and effectively as possible.
4. Implement policies, both local and state-wide, around developmental education reform, such as using high school GPA as a measurement for placement of students in developmental education courses (or not) as well as in some kind of placement test.
5. Adopt pilot interventions, such as those coming out of ATD, for example, that have been shown to have great efficacy in helping students get on the right track. These can include such services as first-year experiences, mandatory orientations, career counseling and using student success courses early in the student’s experience.

CBD’s Data Analysis

Bowling also addressed what everyone has been talking about for quite some time now: data. He referred to the work by CBD in this field as well as what he has seen at GTCC from his previous position as coordinator of GTCC’s ATD Developmental Education Initiative grant from 2009-2012.



CBD, for instance, has key performance indicators that have been developed by the five cadre colleges in combination with the Gates Foundation, CCRC and the National Center for Inquiry and Improvement (newest partner), Bowling explained. “We spent a lot of time looking at data (seven years of data) to get a better sense of who our students were and where they tended to drop out. What were the points during the student experience where we see students leave? What happened?” Reasons for dropping out ranged from academic, financial and life challenges in general.

Regarding the developmental/college readiness side of these data points, Bowling noted that 75% of incoming students needed remediation in math, and these students, in particular, often became stuck in a developmental education cycle where they failed. “They would get frustrated or they would get close to the maximum number that financial aid would cover, especially if they started two or three levels below college ready. That was a big loss point.”

Other students were attending community college for too long of a period of time. At GTCC, for instance, there were 1,800 students who had been enrolled for five years and had accumulated 30 credits or more without any kind of credential. The probability for such students to get accepted into a nursing program, as an example, was very low, but there were other opportunities at the college in the health field that they could get into but were not aware of. The bottom line, said Bowling, was that for both of these groups, the failures and the long-term students, “we got a better understanding of how to redirect and help them, which is part of the intrusive advising model that we have started to implement.”

Kristi Short, Director, Center for Academic Engagement, and Susan Barbitta, Director, Student Success Learning Institute, are on the front lines of these kinds of efforts at GTCC.

Attacking Developmental Math

Barbitta works with those students whom Bowling identified as getting stuck in math developmental courses. She explained that GTCC’s developmental math staff, comprised of 15 full-time faculty and several administrators, redesigned the curriculum to avoid redundancies from one course to another. In addition, 16-week courses were broken up into eight one-credit, four-week modules. So if a student was not successful in a four-week course, they would only have to repeat a four-week session as opposed to a 16-week course.

In addition, GTCC created a “Math Emporium,” which is a flexible-paced environment that has “soft due dates for assignments,” she said. “Students can more easily accelerate through the curriculum, completing more than one module in four weeks.”

The redesign and acceleration strategies, which were piloted in spring 2011, have thus far shown “great results,” she added. “We have gone through several modifications to the modules and the sequence and whether students can do the module when they have not demonstrated mastery, and our newest results show an 80% success rate in developmental math, but even more important, an 80% success rate in subsequent math courses.” Barbitta added, however, that they have not been able to maintain that consistently since 2011, hovering in the 70s percentile at times, “but we are beginning to climb up again.” She noted that “we are constantly looking at data. Every semester we look at a plethora of data and are able to tweak for improvement.”

GTCC utilizes Pearson’s MyMathLab, a popular online developmental math tool utilized by numerous institutions across the country. “The most expensive part is the online access code which is about \$150 for the workbook,” she said. “However, it is good for two years. In the past, students were paying \$110 for a book and access code every semester, so if they needed it for an

entire four-semester sequence, it cost more than \$400.”

New Center for Academic Engagement

Short offered an overview of the Center for Academic Engagement, a new department started in October 2014 (see below). She previously worked on the CBD initiative at the institution. The Center offers tutoring services, advising services, academic preparedness classes, college transfer for success classes, supplemental instruction programs, a writing center and a math resource lab. Short also works with a program, called “Get On Track,” which helps Adult Education students who have either earned a GED or are in the process of earning a GED.

Get On Track Program

Launched to the public in the Summer 2014, Get On Track is a week-long program that helps students with their admissions application, along with introducing them to the many services offered by GTCC for students who often need considerable assistance with everything from time-management, study and test-taking skills, to discovering a career path and completing pre-orientation.

The program has started out with a small number of enrollments and intentionally will keep it at minimum of 30 students per course. “We have faculty and staff from all over the college come in and give presentations,” Short said. “It is a great opportunity for students to get exposed to the people at the college and see friendly faces and become more familiar and more comfortable with the college-level program. It is here to get them out of their comfort zones and to help them get over any intimidation factors they might have.”

Center Helps Bring Everything Into One Place

In addition to the Get on Track Program, Short added that the new Center for Academic Engagement “is a way to bring together the disparate service units across campus into one unit.” The Center is comprised of three learning-assistance

coordinators, one writing center coordinator, two supplemental instruction coordinators, a student success specialist, six interns, “quite a few” faculty members, and “a lot” of student tutors, Short explained. She added that the implementation of a proactive advising model “is really the key to all of our efforts.”

With a high percentage of low-income, first-generation students at GTCC who are often in need of developmental education and support services, building solid relationships with these students has become a high priority. The advising model centers around every student having a faculty coach in their program of study. These coaches have an assigned case load by program. In addition, there are professional advisors, called student success specialists, who advise students who are trying to get accepted into the college’s limited enrollment programs, primarily in subjects such as health or cosmetology or avionics. “We help them understand the entry criteria and the supplemental application process for limited enrollment programs,” Short explained.

The specialists also advise undecided students and assist them with conducting career inventories to help them get into a program they are interested in. Once accepted into a program, students meet with their assigned advisor at least once in an academic year to help them go over course selection. “The assigned faculty coach builds them an academic plan with our student success plan software, so it is electronic,” Short noted. “We can print it out or email it to them. Students can pull it up online. Our goal is to create a plan at least until the next time they meet up with the student.

“So we have had a lot of training for faculty and a lot of resources to help them, and we have gotten a lot of good feedback from faculty and students about the new system. Students really like having a single point of contact at the college—somebody they know they can get in touch with to help them and answer their questions.”

Montgomery County Community College, Blue Bell, Pennsylvania

The retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions in Pennsylvania is 56.9% for full-time students and 41.3% for part-time students.

Montgomery County Community College is located in Blue Bell, PA, a suburb northwest of Philadelphia,

and had more than 20,250 unduplicated headcounts in 2013-14. Sixty-five percent of MCCC's enrollments are part-time students, with 56% female and 14% Black or African American and 5% Hispanic/Latino. Sixteen percent are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 62% of full-time students and 40% of part-time students.

Corporate headquarters of Unisys, a global IT firm, is located in Blue Bell. Aetna also has a significant corporate presence in Blue Bell, as well as UniTek Global Services, an international telecommunications, cable and satellite services company.

In Blue Bell, 98% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 66% have a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 11% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in Montgomery County, PA is \$79,183. An estimated 7% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 20% have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (25.4%) falls under the category of educational services, health care, and social assistance. Next is professional, scientific, man-

agement, administrative and waste management services at 14.4 % followed by manufacturing (12.0%) and retail trade (10.5%).

MCCC has been active in ATD since 2006 and a Leader College since 2011. MCCC was a 2014 Leah Meyer Austin Awardee. In February 2015, MCCC President Karen Stout was named the new President and CEO of ATD, beginning July 1, 2015.

President Stout, English Professor Diane McDonald; Mathematics Professor Barbara Lontz, Coordinator of Mentoring Services Wendell Griffith, and Director of Gateway to College Keima Sheriff were interviewed for this monograph.

How Switching Placement Tests Changed Developmental English

McDonald talked about how switching from Accuplacer to WritePlacer—both College Board placement tests—resulted in a 40% reduction of students being placed in developmental English, from 60% to 20%, without any change in their success rates.

Essentially, Accuplacer is a multiple choice exam and WritePlacer is an essay exam. McDonald explained that the switch made logical sense because an essay exam would provide “a full understanding of the student's ability. We like students being assessed based on their writing rather than their ability to answer a multiple choice question.”

The one element of WritePlacer that a good number of academics do not like, however, is that it is computer graded, but “when we switched over we had the placement committee periodically see who was being placed in English 101 and for the most part it was accurate.” Overall she said the computer grading is more of an assessment that “looks more for a sense of logic that follows through.” For now, however, “we keep watching our numbers, and I am sure there is more that we have to do to support these students.”



Montgomery County
Community College

New Developmental Math

Lontz explained how prior to 2008 their first level of developmental math courses hovered between a 35% to 40% success rate, the lowest success rate for all courses at the college. “So, we developed a new arithmetic course that went from a lecture-based course to a discovery-approach type of course. The course also went through the material conceptually versus topically.”

Lontz further explained how a typical arithmetic course starts with whole numbers and then goes into fractions, decimals, percentages, etc., but this new course does not go through such topics. Instead, it goes through concepts. “So, for example, in the addition unit students add whole numbers, fractions, decimals, integers, positive/negative numbers and algebraic additions. They do addition applications. So instead of looking at numbers by topic, like this is a fraction and this is a decimal, students do the operation using the concept of addition and combining numbers.”

Understandably this course redesign presented a “huge change for faculty,” she added. Consequently a good deal of faculty orientation was provided during the pilot and post-pilot phases. In 2011, they were fortunately awarded a grant from CCRC “in order to replicate the course and try to improve it within. So, the finances really helped us in launching this full-scale in 2011.”

Results of this redesign have shown, Lontz said, that “our success rate went to between 60% to 63% (from the earlier noted 35% to 40%). The course is now being taught at 11 colleges, including one in Alaska.”

Gateway to College Program

Sheriff talked about an alternative education model at MCCC called Gateway to College that was created about 11 years ago by Portland Community College “to engage students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, or who had already disengaged from high school, or are off track for timely graduation, and give them an

opportunity to change their environment and complete high school while also earning college credit”—so, in effect, a challenging dual enrollment program geared specially toward at-risk high schoolers.

Started at MCCC in September 2013, Gateway to College has to date graduated 21 students. Sheriff explained how the program attracts a mix of students. “Some come from well-resourced backgrounds, but they may have had challenges—such as a family divorce or an unsettled home life—affecting their ability to be successful in high school. But I also have a large number of students who come from under-resourced, socio-economic backgrounds and might be the first student in their family to attend college.”

Students are referred to the program by their high school and are then interviewed by Sheriff and evaluated with placement testing on the MCCC campus. “They have to demonstrate a level of readiness; they have to want to engage. I have to see that hunger in their eyes and in their persistence to complete the application,” she said. Accepted students transfer from their high schools to taking all their coursework at the college and are assigned an MCCC “resource specialist,” who basically follows their progress and provides them with life-skills management and academic advising. The specialists also work closely with guidance counselors at high schools.



“There is something about changing your space and when people around you have high expectations,” Sheriff said. “You are forced to meet those expectations, and there is a change in our students that occurs over time that we are very happy to see.”

Mentoring Program

An impressive Mentoring Services program coordinated by Griffith currently provides more than 115 students with assistance on numerous levels, both academic and personal. The one-on-one mentoring program started as a male-only minority mentoring program in 2009 and added female students in 2011. The more than 60 mentors in the program are all volunteering professionals come from across the college, including MCCC’s president, a number of vice presidents, academic advisors, and tutors. “We have a lot of buy-in,” Griffith said. The mentors commit to meeting with their assigned students at least once per semester. “We strongly encourage and prefer that it comes through a physical meeting, but they can use other modes of communication. It is our job as a team to come up with a success plan for the students.

“The mentors are pretty much the student’s lifeline.” Griffith further explained that these students have what he refers to as a “hidden curriculum,” outside of the college’s “evident curriculum” that they all have “trouble figuring out.” So these mentors assist with everything from instructor relationship building, arriving to class on time, and overall academic planning and study skills.

In addition, the program holds personal development workshops throughout the year that cover such issues as managing finances and how to sustain healthy relationships. Students in the program are also sponsored to attend various college-related conferences held in other states, giving them an opportunity to network with peers and meet with other higher education administrators and/or professionals in their major

field of study. Additionally, mandatory tutoring is provided to students whose GPAs fall below 2.5. Community service opportunities are also presented to these students to consider “giving back” to important neighborhood initiatives.

Overall the mentoring program builds on three areas: mental toughness, academic discipline, and organizational skills. “We challenge our students in those areas because we do more than just help students achieve an associate degree,” Griffith said.

It Takes Time

It is easy to see that, similar to all of the colleges highlighted in this monograph, MCCC has very robust developmental education plans in effect, but these plans and initiatives did not happen overnight and they do require high levels of both institutional and governmental support to sustain and grow over time. President Stout explained that the so-called student-success movement that we are all witnessing today across America got an early start at MCCC back in 2001 when she first arrived as its new president, and the leadership increasingly started to pointedly focus on “placing learning first.” She also noted that joining the ATD network in 2006 became a game changer for the college’s overall developmental efforts, as has been similarly noted by all of the other colleges interviewed.

“ATD brought to us a theory of change framework that we could understand and build out, and it brought us an organizing structure to really look at where we needed to go with our student success planning,” Stout said. “And it brought coaching.”

She added that ATD gave them more support and energy to “get to work. We looked at our data and said ‘okay, we need to put a lot of work around developmental education reform.’” This included looking at acceleration models as well as placement accuracy and pedagogy. “Pedagogical reform (such as noted in Lontz’s math redesign) is honestly not something that most

“Like many colleges in many states, we have faced significant funding challenges, and we are trying to keep tuition affordable. We have had to cut back on programs, and we have cut back on faculty, but somehow we have kept a laser-like focus and a lot of energy on our students.”

– Karen Stout, former President, MCCC

colleges are doing,” Stout said, adding that being able to share that kind of work with 11 other colleges has proven to be “a wonderful way to contribute.”

And then we looked at our educational achievement gaps,” resulting in the establishment of the mentoring program. In addition, “in 2010 we said that we need to have a K-12 strategy. So we are really working with our high schools on the readiness initiatives,” resulting in the Gateway to College but also a stronger intent on dual enrollment classes in general. “We have intent around dual enrollment pathways that are going to lead to something meaningful. We are making sure that students are college ready when they do get to us full-time.”

Stout also talked about the challenges running parallel to all of MCCC’s work in developmental education. “We continue to move our student success initiatives forward,” she continued. “Like many colleges in many states, we have faced significant funding challenges, and we are trying to keep tuition affordable. We have had to cut back on programs, and we have cut back on faculty, but somehow we have kept a laser-like focus and a lot of energy on our students.”

South Texas College (STC), McAllen, Texas

In the state of Texas, retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions is 57.4% for full-time students and 47.2% for part-time students.

South Texas College (STC) is located in McAllen, TX and had more than 48,200 unduplicated headcounts in 2013-14. Sixty-seven percent of STC’s enrollments are part-time students, with 57% female and 93%

Hispanic/Latino. Twelve percent are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 86% of full-time students and 60% of part-time students.

McAllen, TX has a growing economy through its reputation for international trade and first-rate commercial, rental, office, industrial, medical, retirement and education facilities. It has overcome a rather negative past, with a 22.6% unemployment rate in 1990 that fortunately dropped to 7.7% by 2012. Nonetheless, McAllen does have its high share of poverty, being listed as the poorest metro area in the nation in 2011. In metro McAllen, 74% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 27% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. An estimated 22% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in the McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX Metro Area is \$34,146. An estimated 24% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 4% have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (29.8%) fall under the category of educational services, health care, and social assistance. Next is retail trade at 15%



followed by professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services at 8.2 % and construction (8.0%).

STC has been active in ATD since 2004 and a Leader College since 2009. STC is involved with ATD's Developmental Education Initiative and the Texas Peer Coaching Initiative, which is a \$10,000 grant that ATD awarded to seven Texas Leader Colleges to partner with other Texas colleges. Through these relationships, colleges have been able to spread the reach of effective practices throughout the state. STC was also a 2013 Leah Meyer Austin Awardee.

Strong Leadership at a New, Badly Needed College

President Shirley Reed is a down-to-earth, no-nonsense community college leader who tells a great story about what STC has discovered in its on-going quest to help more students in the area succeed. First off, it is important to note that STC is only 21 years young, opening its doors in 1993 in order to serve a region of more than 700,000 people that did not have any access to a community college. Reed is the founding president.

She explained that the lack of educational opportunities in the region was one of the primary reasons for its high unemployment rates in the 1990s. However, since STC has become embedded in the region along with the city of McAllen's economic development in recent years, "the area is flourishing and growing," with new levels of trade and business partnerships with its Mexican neighbors. She said that STC has become a major catalyst for this growth along with "improving the quality of life in our region."

Hugely Successful Dual Enrollment Initiative

Of course, there has been and continues to be challenges in the area of developmental education at STC, but things have improved dramatically since the 1990s. "We have done some pretty

crazy things," she joked. "Some have worked really well and others are on the fringe of either lunacy or brilliance. When the college was established we were running at about 70% of our students needing to go into developmental education, and that was a Herculean challenge." Today that 70% figure has dwindled down to "about 17%," Reed said, and she contributes that success mostly to the college's strong dual enrollment program.

STC has one of the largest dual enrollment programs in the county, with 13,000 students from 26 high schools enrolled. The program started with high school academies for gifted and talented students – those students who were pretty much motivated enough to earn an associate degree while still in high school. "We found those students to be so successful, so we opened it up to many more high school students - and there is no cost to them. The high schools pay for the textbooks, so students can literally get two years of college for free, and that is a motivator" - for both parents and students, as well as for moving a good number of students away from the developmental education pathway.

"Dual enrollment revolutionized the need for developmental education," Reed claimed. "For example, if you are a 10th grader who is messing around and you are not sure about what you are going to do with yourself and your best friend is taking college classes – well, that gets your attention. Then the parents say, 'hey, son, if you



want to go to college you better straighten up and do better in math and reading because you are going to start taking college classes.’ It just builds the momentum of confidence.”

The fact that the State of Texas has a lot of confidence in this program and supports it also helps. “We are very fortunate in Texas,” Reed said. “The community college gets a typical contact hour funding for these students and the high school gets their Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funding. That’s how we make it work financially.”

Overall STC’s public school partners share in the vision and commitment to dual enrollment. Reed said that the collective will of the school districts, superintendents, and board of trustees “is absolutely adamant to provide opportunities that have never been available before.” Each year STC holds a variety of summits for all the high school principals, counselors, superintendents and school boards.

In addition, STC faculty members are shared with the high schools, and there has been a general increase in the hiring of master-degreed teachers at the high schools. “We have learned that we have to raise our own,” Reed said. “Many of the high schools provide incentives for faculty to earn their master’s degrees, working closely with the university to offer courses after the school day. There has been a variety of partnerships and collaborative efforts to transform this region. It is like when you have nothing, you cannot believe how creative you can be and how well you can work together.”

Puente and New Mathways Projects Also Working

Beyond dual enrollment, STC has two other successful developmental education initiatives: the Puente Program and the New Mathways Project. Puente is a year-long program with a 30-year-history and successful track record that started in California. It is a writing program that includes counseling services provided through a personal development course with a mentor from

the community. It is mostly for ESL students and is designed so that assignments are culturally relevant to the student rather than having students read and write about things that are foreign to them. “They may read and write about Mexican heroes, for instance,” said Reed, “or they may write about their family. It has been very effective at keeping students engaged.”

The New Mathways Project is a popular reform developmental math program that comes out of the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the Texas Association of Community Colleges. It is basically an accelerated program that lets students take math courses most relevant to their degree.

Students start with a Foundations for Mathematical Reasoning course designed for them to develop foundational skills and a conceptual understanding of college level course material. Students learn about numeracy, proportional reasoning, algebraic reasoning, descriptive statistics, and basic probability and modeling. Students also enroll in a co-requisite course called Frameworks for Mathematics and Collegiate Learning that gives them the necessary strategies and drive to succeed. After learning about different careers and creating a completion plan, students choose one of three educational pathways: Statistics, Quantitative Literacy or STEM-Prep.¹⁷

“We believe the New Mathways Project is transformative,” Reed said. “We have been able to

In the past high school teachers would often tell some students that they simply were not college material. “We do not hear that anymore. They have accepted the fact that they have to get these kids ready for college courses.”

– Shirley Reed, President, STC

reduce our three development math courses in each area to two.”

Finally, Reed explained that in the past high school teachers would often tell some students that they simply were not college material. “We do not hear that anymore. They have accepted the fact that they have to get these kids ready for college courses.”

Valencia College, Orlando, Florida

The retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions in Florida is 61.9% for full-time students and 50.4% for part-time students.

Valencia College is located in Orlando, FL and had more than 60,000 unduplicated headcounts in 2013-14.

The logo for Valencia College, featuring the word "VALENCIA" in red and "COLLEGE" in yellow, both in a serif font.

Sixty percent of Valencia College’s enrollments are part-time students, with 57% female and 17% Black or African American, 31% Hispanic/Latino and 4% Asian. Twenty-three percent are enrolled in distance education courses.

Its location in a dynamic and prosperous tourist destination gives Valencia a different set of unique factors and support from big corporations in the entertainment, hospitality and restaurant industries.

In metro Orlando, 88% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 33% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. An estimated 16% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL Metro Area is \$48,459. An estimated 12% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 7% have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (19.4%) fall under the category of educational services, health care, and social assistance. Next are arts, enter-

tainment, recreation, accommodation and food services at 17.5% followed by professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services at 13.3% and retail trade (13.0%).

Valencia has been active in ATD since 2004 and a Leader College since 2009. Valencia is involved with ATD’s Developmental Education Initiative and the PRESS for Completion program. Valencia was the first winner of the Leah Meyer Austin Award in 2009.

A Controversial State Law

Karen Borglum, Assistant Vice President, Curriculum & Assessment, addressed how recent Florida state legislation, SB 1720, signed into law in May 2013, has had a strong influence on the college’s developmental education efforts. Under SB 1720 legislation, all of Florida’s 28 state colleges “will no longer require recent high school graduates to take the state’s standard placement test or enroll in noncredit remedial courses.” Essentially the law put more pressure on the state’s K-12 system to bear the responsibility for remediation. While college placement testing is mandatory for students in the 11th grade, those students who do not pass the test are required to take the necessary remedial courses in their senior high school year. As noted in *Inside Higher Education*, “when they arrive at Florida community colleges, recent high school graduates will still be able to take placement tests or enroll in noncredit remedial courses. They just won’t have to. . . Some critics say the remedial legislation in Florida challenges community colleges’ commitment to open access by allowing less-prepared students to choose a path that will probably lead to failure.”¹⁸

Borglum explained how she and many others at Valencia are now struggling with the new law, saying that there are provisions of the law that are contradictory. “On the one hand the law says that we can’t use placement test results, and on the other hand it says we need to deter-

mine communication and computation readiness in their meta-major selection.” She added that when community college educators questioned state legislators about the contradictory elements of the bill, “we were told that we can’t use the placement test results. So we were forced to find other ways to engage students in really deep conversations about what it is they want to do with their lives.”

The Complete College America Agenda

These changes in state law got their start when Complete College America started a campaign in 2012 that challenged remedial education. “Established in 2009, Complete College America is a national nonprofit with a single mission: to work with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations.”¹⁹

Complete College America’s research and views on remedial education pretty much stressed that remedial education efforts at community colleges were “hopelessly broken and failing students,” adding that students who do not do so well on placement tests should ultimately be “placed into credit-bearing courses with extra academic support, rather than in the typically noncredit remedial pathway. “The organization eventually persuaded 30 states to sign on to its completion goals, including Florida. However, many community college leaders across the country did not support this agenda, grumbling that the organization’s plans were “flimsy at best given that states are much more likely to pass limits on remediation (which happened in Florida) than to provide funds for tutoring or other aids for remedial students,” as explained in *Inside Higher Education*.²⁰

Interesting Experiment or Abject Disaster?

Valencia President Sandy Shugart talked about the decisions made by Complete College America and its influence overall in an interview two years prior to when this monograph was created for the 2013 SOURCE report, “Twelve Important

Questions for Sixteen Community College Leaders.”

“I can’t understand what theory informed their decision,” he explained. “How is not knowing whether you are college ready helpful to a student? There are some real challenges down that trail. I hope that Complete College America turns out to be an interesting experiment and not just an abject disaster.”

As noted in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* feature article, the law’s consequences include “forcing professors in college-level composition classes to spend time on basic sentence structures, while mathematics teachers who were ready to plunge into algebra are going over fractions.” The article went on to say that Stan Jones, president of Complete College America, believed that the Florida law had gone too far, noting that the nonprofit was “pushing the co-requisite model, which offers remediation alongside of, instead of before, college-level classes, especially for the weakest students.” Jones was quoted as saying “our point has never been to put them in college classes and let them fail. Our point is to put them in and give them support.”²¹

As things are going presently, according to Borglum, the results of SB 1720 are indeed teetering on a disaster in the making. “What we are seeing is that students are not enrolling in courses that we need them to enroll in,” she said, adding that enrollments in developmental reading are down



by 83%, in math down by 57%, and in writing down by 45%. Statistics are currently being looked at by the college regarding how well these students might be doing, and it is too early to see all the pulled data at this time (Spring 2015).

“What I have heard faculty say is that there are lower grades in their classes, that students are not doing as well, and there are more withdrawals,” Borglum claimed.

She added that overall educators have good intentions and are “trying to do what is best for student learning. But my deepest concern is that our legislators do not care about student learning, but they do care about student completion. But I do not know how you complete something if you have not learned the foundational skills to get you moving forward.” She further noted that “we have 6,000 students coming in during the Fall term, and 3,000 come in under this new exemption bill. What happens to those students? I hope we don’t lose them because of this.”

More Advising

So, in the spirit of a long nationwide community college history in which educators vigorously attack the numerous challenges that come their way, Valencia is doing everything in its power to bring about student success, beginning with a very determined effort to provide more and better advising services, including making it mandatory for all incoming 1st-year students to attend a New Student Orientation where they meet with an advisor and register for classes. Here students are given an ungraded series of questions in math, reading and English that provides advisors with a sense for what students may or may not need before enrolling in introductory college-level courses, called “gateway” courses.

“If students don’t know what their major is, they may take the wrong math path,” Borglum said, “which causes them to back-track. We like our Math Pathways²² because it makes more sense.” A student might need to work on Algebra, for example. “But wouldn’t it be great to have these wonderful conversations with students that say

“I can’t understand what theory informed their decision. How is not knowing whether you are college ready helpful to a student? There are some real challenges down that trail. I hope that Complete College America turns out to be an interesting experiment and not just an abject disaster.”

– Sandy Shugart, President,
Valencia College (from 2013 interview)

‘let’s think about your skill sets, and let’s think about your interests, and let’s think about what will make sense given the area you like?’”

So, they have to get advisement. “We can say ‘wow, you need to take elementary Algebra,’ and the student says ‘okay, but I still want to be a STEM major.’ We can’t make the student take the developmental math course they need to get their skill level up.” So, what happens? “Some students do (take the developmental course) but not every student,” which is the reason for the aforementioned 57% drop in students taking developmental math courses at Valencia since SB 1720 went into effect.

The bottom line is that despite decades of reform, students are still coming out of high schools not college ready.

In some respects, as Complete College America’s thinking on developmental education testing and placement starts to take shape in other states, the future looks to continue to put more pressures on the community colleges to solve the college readiness challenges themselves—with less funding—as opposed to K-12. At least that is what seems to be panning out in Florida.

Walla Walla Community College (WWCC), Walla Walla, Washington

The retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions in the state of Washington is 58.8% for full-time students and 42.5% for part-time students.

Walla Walla Community College (WWCC) is located in Walla Walla, WA and had more than 10,500 unduplicated headcounts in 2013-14. Forty-two percent of WWCC's enrollments are part-time students, with 43% female and 6% Black or African American and 15% Hispanic/Latino. Fourteen percent are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 67% of full-time students and 33% of part-time students.

WWCC has experienced an explosion in its wine industry over the last ten years.

Today there are over 100 wineries in the Walla Walla Valley and a host of shops catering to the wine industry. The wineries generate over \$100 million to the valley annually.

In metro Walla Walla, 87% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 22% have a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 20% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in the Walla Walla Area is \$46,195. An estimated 15% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 6 percent have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (31.8%) fall under the category of educational services, health care, and social assistance. Next is retail trade at 8.4% followed by professional, scientific, management, administrative

and waste management services at 8.3% and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (8.1%).

WWCC has been active with ATD since 2013 and was a 2013 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence Awardee.

Using I-BEST

WWCC is currently piloting the infusion of I-BEST principals into selected high enrollment/low completion "gatekeeper" courses, among several other important initiatives that help underprepared students. I-BEST (Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program) is a nationally recognized program known for boosting students' literacy and work skills so that they can "earn credentials, get living wage jobs, and put their talents to work for employers." The program "pairs two instructors in the classroom—one to teach professional/technical or academic content and the other to teach basic skills in reading, math, writing or English language.

"I-BEST challenges the traditional notion that students must complete all basic education before they can even start on a college or career pathway. This approach often discourages students because it takes more time, and the stand-alone basic skills classes do not qualify for college credit. I-BEST students start earning college credits immediately."²³

Understanding the Gaps

Darlene Snider, Dean of Transitional Studies at WWCC, spoke primarily about the college's incoming Adult Basic Education (ABE) student population (those pursuing a GED or have been disengaged from education for more than one year). She described WWCC's overall approach to developmental education as being based on getting a clear understanding of where students have gaps, "thinking in terms of adult education theory, which says they bring a lot with them into the classroom," she explained. "Rather than taking the K-12 developmental skills training



kind of approach, “we look at how do we accelerate students who come in below college level by understanding that they are not trying to re-do their high school experience. This is different. They are college students, and they have some areas where they need support in order to accelerate. It is really a hard population to work with.”

Helping Those Who Need It Most

The reasons behind the difficulties are across the board, from life getting in the way, to students who are juggling the demands of parenthood, to those who are under-employed, and much more. “Sometimes education has not been a positive experience for them, and they are bringing in a lot of negative ideas about what being in the classroom is all about and their potential for success,” Snider said.

She added that a “cohort model” strategy could work well in certain circumstances, such as when incoming students with similar developmental needs are placed together in a college success course. Here the emphasis is placed on skill development and just-in-time support from faculty, staff and each other. “It is a mechanism that keeps them engaged,” she said. Similar to the I-BEST program, cohort-model courses include attaching students to a support person “who is going to help them as they are trying out some of the more challenging things and keep them on a pathway to completion.”

Another program is called High School 21+. As its name indicates, this program is for people who are 21 or older and are seeking to earn a high school diploma. The program costs students only \$25 a quarter in tuition costs and it includes a provision where students “receive credit for prior work experience, high school credits, military, parenting experience, and other types of applicable life experience.” In addition, students receive “one-on-one advising, career education goal planning and support, and financial aid/college scholarship information.”²⁴

In all areas of assisting students with developmental education needs, Snider said it’s imperative to look at these students holistically by reviewing both the data coming from in-house sources combined with all of an individual’s needs. She pointed to an ESL program, for instance, where the in-house data is showing steady progress. She contributes that to WWCC redesigning the ESL curriculum to include more computer usage scenarios in courses in conjunction with offering more online courses. There has been a 10 percent increase in ESL success rates due to faculty and staff engaging these students more frequently and effectively online, despite some initial hesitations regarding computer literacy issues and challenges.

Additionally, WWCC’s ABE program has been “looking more at partnering with community-based organizations, with people who can provide some of the things that we cannot,” Snider said. A good example is SkillUp Washington’s Skill Link Training Initiative, supported by the Gates Foundation. Skill Link creates opportunities for young adults ages 18-25 by improving their work readiness and education skills through a partnership between WWCC, and two local non-profits, Rural Resources Community Action (RR) and the Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC). RR is part of a nationwide network that is a primary source of support for people who live in poverty, and BMAC works with low-income people to achieve self-sufficiency by providing vital, self-help techniques, advocacy and limited financial assistance.



“I always say students are coming to a face and not a place. We make sure they are connected to someone who understands and can demystify college culture and describe how it is maybe different from what they experienced before.”

– Darlene Snider, Dean of
Transitional Studies, WCCC

The program recruits cohorts of 20 to 25 young adults with very low basic skills but who are motivated to succeed. The program puts in place “on-ramps to I-BEST and career pathways as well as community pipelines and infrastructure needed to support the successful engagement of these young people. It also implements incentive-driven, navigation, and support service strategies to promote student persistence.”²⁵

“These students make bigger steps when they are engaged in programs like these because we are keeping them in school and putting them into relevant career pathways,” Snider said. “It’s not just getting a GED or a high school diploma but it is really that forward focus on what’s the next thing that we are preparing you to do and how can we get there as quickly as possible.

“I always say students are coming to a face and not a place,” she explained. “We make sure they are connected to someone who understands and can demystify college culture and describe how it is maybe different from what they experienced before.”

Zane State College, Zanesville, Ohio

The retention rates of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates in 2-year public Title IV postsecondary institutions in Ohio is 48.8% for full-time students and 42.4% for part-time students.

Zane State College is located in Zanesville, Ohio and has more than 3,900 students (Fall 2014 unduplicated headcounts). Sixty-four percent of Zane State College’s enrollments are part-time students, with 52% female and 3% Black or African American. Thirteen percent are enrolled in distance education courses. Returning students from 2012 to 2013 comprise 52% of full-time students and 26% of part-time students.

In Zanesville, 80% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school and 11% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. An estimated 21% of 18 to 24 year olds have not completed high school. The median income of households in the Zanesville Area is \$40,524. An estimated 16% of households have income below \$15,000 a year and 3% have income over \$150,000 or more. The highest percentage of workers (25.2.8%) fall under the category of educational services, health care, and social assistance. Next is retail trade at 15.7.4% followed by manufacturing at 13.2 % and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (9.5%).



Zane State College is involved with ATD’s Developmental Education Initiative. It has been active in ATD since 2005 and a Leader College since 2009. Zane State College received the 2012 Leah Meyer Austin Award.

Quick Start

Becky Ament, Dean of Developmental Education; Provost and Executive Vice President Chad Brown and President Paul Brown shared information about at least six developmental education-oriented initiatives at Zane State College, beginning with a program called Quick Start College for older, non-traditional students.

Quick Start started in 2007 through a Lumina grant. It's for those students who "want to register for college but really have little college knowledge and are really not understanding the processes they need to take care of in order to have a successful start," Ament said. It's a free eight-week course that covers the admission process, how to use the college's computer services and training in computer literacy, financial aid, career planning, a math review, and a writing review.

The program is boosted by a coordinator who visits with local social service agencies, GED programs, probation officers, and church ministers—people from the local communities who know of prospective students who are unemployed or under-employed. "It requires a lot of work to go to all these places where there may be students we can capture," Ament said. "We focus on the fact that there is a significant return on investment for the resources we put into this course," added Chad Brown. The program has seen some interesting success, including a student who ultimately graduated from Zane State College as a presidential scholar, which is the college's highest academic honor offered.

Math Start

Another free, eight-week course that has garnered success, called Math Start, started in 2009 and is a developmental math program for those students who placed below the very first level of math. The course is "individualized," with average students in Math Start moving their developmental math scores up by a minimum of 32 points.

The course includes a diagnostic test in computation skills that was created by faculty members utilizing Pearson's MyMathLab product. After taking the diagnostic, each student creates a study plan for the areas they need to work on. In addition to a course instructor, there are peer tutors who work in each course. The students take another diagnostic at the end of the course.

"They must succeed in the Math Start class in order to move forward and become a full-time student," Ament said. "We were able to accelerate some students."

Welcome Week

Welcome Week is an important program that is a mandatory requirement for all new students entering Zane State College. With the college's conversion to semesters from quarters in Fall 2012, Zane State College implemented a major change to its first-year experience requirement. For more than a decade, the college required all students to complete a first-year experience course. The data on this course, however, showed that "students were on one end of the spectrum or the other," said Chad Brown. "They either appreciated the course or not. When they did not, it was because of the content," which highlighted things they had already experienced during their first days attending classes. So, the course was changed to Welcome Week, a mandatory five-day, 15-hour program now held one-week prior to the actual start of classes in three optional sections: morning, afternoon, or evening. The week-long course culminates with the college's New Student Convocation and a day of activities that provides students the opportunity to engage with their specific program faculty and interact with student clubs and organizations.

"Prior to moving to the Welcome Week strategy our average completion rate was between 72% and 76%. Now it is between 94% and 96%," said



Chad Brown. “The attitude of the students has changed dramatically,” Ament added. “They write in our end-of-course surveys how excited they are. They had lots of questions that have been answered and now feel comfortable being on campus.”

Accelerated Courses

Another area related to developmental education is the college’s ADVANCE acceleration program that was implemented during its ATD Developmental Education Initiative grant in 2009-2012. “We have done a lot of work around accelerating students, and our goal has always been marked on getting as many students as possible to complete 20 college-level credits in their first year,” said Chad Brown.

“Students who place in the upper half of the cut-off scores have the opportunity to enroll in compressed or linked developmental education courses that enable them to complete the material traditionally offered in two developmental courses in just one term. This ultimately allows students who need even moderate levels of remediation to move fully into a program of study after only one semester of enrollment. In addition, it avoids the use of finite financial aid resources toward paying for unnecessary developmental coursework. ADVANCE courses are offered in the subjects of reading, English and math.”²⁶

In math, for instance, Ament explained how a good number of entering students placed in both basic arithmetic and algebra at the same time. “It’s generally because people get rusty on computation skills when they use a calculator.” So, in these compressed ADVANCE math classes, which are similar to the Math Start program, the first three weeks of the course cover brushing up on arithmetic skills in order to ultimately pass an exit exam on computational skills. Over the remaining 12 weeks of the ADVANCE course, students move to the next levels. “In Algebra, students have one or two levels to go,” Ament

said. “In pre-business math, students have one level to move through in order to get to the college level. We are basically giving them two levels in one semester and spending most of our time on the levels that will move the students forward.

“It saves students money because if they go the traditional route and take eight weeks of computation skills and then move to the second level in the following eight weeks, they are paying for six credit hours. In this compressed math they are paying for only four credit hours.”

Similar changes have been made to accelerate developmental reading and writing. In addition to saving students money, “these courses are motivators for students because now they can earn some credits that also count toward graduation,” said President Brown. He added that “one of the challenges we have as a small college, however, is that it is hard for us to scale up these accelerated courses because some of our students have selected out of them even though the success rates are greater than the college-level courses by themselves.”

Unmet Prerequisite Advising

Another piece of Zane State College’s developmental education efforts is labeled “Unmet Prerequisite Advising,” Ament explained. “It has made a significant difference in the number of students who complete developmental math, reading and English in their first year.” Students’ grades in these courses are closely monitored, and those who have been unsuccessful get advised and re-registered in the course(s) they failed. “This intervention has been extremely successful, resulting in a 10% increase in students completing developmental math in their first year and a 20% increase in reading and English completion.”

GISS Fosters Presentations with Evidence

President Brown concluded with mention of a Gates Foundation-sponsored Governance Insti-

“We have talked to our board members for many years about how we market our program, and now we talk to them with data. We show them evidence of where we are and where we want to be in the student success arena. It has changed the way we do business at our board meetings.”

– Paul Brown, President,
Zane State College

tute for Student Success (GISS), which is focused on fostering community college student completion based on a leadership model that blends the skills and knowledge of the Association of Community College Trustees’ (ACCT) ACCT’s Governance Leadership Institute (GLI) and the Student Success Initiative’s (SSI) Board of Trustees Institute at the University of Texas at Austin Board of Trustees Institute (BoTI).

“GISS uses a state-based approach to provide trustees and presidents with the insights, guidance and engagement to promote policies and create accountability measures to increase student success and completion within their campuses and states. It propels trustees to influence their colleagues and key stakeholders in the student success and completion conversation.” Ohio along with eight other states are participants in GISS.²⁷

“It has changed the way we do business at our college,” President Brown explained. “We have talked to our board members for many years about how we market our program, and now we talk to them with data. We show them evidence of where we are and where we want to be in the student success arena. It has changed the way we do business at our board meetings. Our board is now much more in tune with how we approach student success and the results we are producing. It not only informs but it also allows them to monitor our progress.”

Additional Institutional Developmental Education Efforts

The aforementioned eight community colleges interviewed for this monograph reveal a good number of successful and innovative developmental education initiatives that any institution can replicate under the right circumstances and support. There are, of course, a good many colleges among the more than 1,100 community colleges in the U.S. that can also be considered innovators in the field. A much longer book-length piece could be written with many more community college best practices profiled. For now, however, the aim has been to show a fairly substantial overview, while at the same time listing and describing all of the great things happening across America’s community college developmental education landscape would be next to impossible.

In this new section, we start with two interviews conducted in 2013 for the creation of the SOURCE’s 12 Questions monograph, one with George Boggs, President and CEO Emeritus for the American Association of Community Colleges and a faculty member for the Roueche Graduate Center (RGC), and the other with Terry O’Banion, President Emeritus of the League for Innovation in the Community College and Chair of the Graduate Faculty at RGC. Both pointed to several promising, still relevant programs in the area of developmental education.

“Assessing students for basic skills or college readiness while they are in high schools gives students an opportunity to work on improving these skills before coming to college,” Boggs said. “Offering refresher courses prior to administering placement exams seems to be effective in keeping students out of unnecessary remedial coursework. Boggs also mentioned that using a student’s GPA in addition to placement scores is a more accurate gauge of student readiness as opposed to placement score alone.

He also referred to the Statway® and Quantway® projects of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching—with the Charles A. Dana Center as the principal design partner—as “making significant headway in revising developmental mathematics.” Also called “Community College Pathways,” these two tools “accelerate students’ progress through their developmental mathematics sequence and a college-level course for credit. Statway and Quantway reduce the time required to earn college credit while improving the content and pedagogy of developmental mathematics. The Pathways present engaging, relevant, and useful mathematics concepts that students can use in their daily lives.”²⁸

O’Banion pointed to promising initiatives such as the ETS Success Navigator®, saying that “it may be the best new assessment on the market.” This assessment is a 30-minute, non-proctored online assessment with results that provide a view of academic skills, commitment, self-management and social support—in order to identify at-risk students and deliver action plans.²⁹ O’Banion also mentioned Chaffey College in California, among several other institutions, as “a leading college in the nation with a record of significant success with developmental students.” For more than a decade, the college has perfected a “risk-tolerant, change-oriented culture, and a signature set of student support programs that produce impressive performance outcomes for Chaffey students.”³⁰

The following are brief descriptions of some directly and indirectly related developmental education initiatives that have happened at a good number of individual and system-wide community colleges across the country. These were culled from relatively recent literature on developmental education. Links to the full reporting of these initiatives are provided in the end notes.

CUNY’s ASAP

The City University of New York (CUNY) launched the Associated Study in Associate Program (ASAP) in 2007 with funding from the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity. It has been implemented at six of the seven CUNY community colleges with the primary goal of boosting graduation rates. MDRC evaluated the ASAP - which targets low-income students who needed one or two developmental education courses - at three CUNY community colleges: Borough of Manhattan, Kingsborough and LaGuardia. The evaluation revealed that ASAP “substantially increased enrollment in college and credit accumulation and nearly doubled graduation rates after three years. ASAP’s effects are the largest MDRC has found in more than a decade of research in higher education.”

MDRC randomly selected 896 students for the evaluation who met the following criteria: had family income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level or were eligible for a Pell Grant (or both), needed one or two developmental education courses, had already earned 12 or fewer credits, were New York City residents attending college full time, and were enrolled in an ASAP-eligible major.

A good number of key differences were discovered between ASAP and the usual college services provided to students. For instance, the student-to-advisor ratio for ASAP students was 60:1 and 95% met with an advisor during their first year on average of 38 times. Under “usual college services” the student-to-advisor ratio was 600:1 with 80% of students meeting with an advisor during their first year on average of six times.

There were many more key differences outlined in MDRC’s report. Overall, in an “implications of the findings” section it was noted that “developmental education students’ outcomes can be markedly improved with the right package of supports, requirements, and messages – without changing what happens in the classroom.”³¹

Chabot College's Accelerated Developmental English

In order to illustrate the long-term effects of acceleration at Chabot College in Hayward, California, Alameda County, CCRC researchers conducted an analysis of the college's accelerated developmental English program. CCRC followed a sample of first-time students who entered the college between summer 1999 and fall 2010.

Data were collected and analyzed from interviews with faculty, administrators, and staff; student focus groups; and classroom observations. The analysis revealed that the benefits of an accelerated course structure were amplified at Chabot College through the redesign of a developmental English curriculum to be more closely aligned with college-level English. The sample of students analyzed consisted of 4,593 accelerated students compared to 5,231 who took college-level English 101A.

The findings affirmed evidence of the benefits of reforms that were designed to accelerate students' progression through developmental education. Enrollment in Chabot's accelerated developmental English program was associated with higher entry-level college English completion rates. The findings also shed new light on the positive long-term effects of developmental education interventions. Students who enrolled in the accelerated course earned more college credits and were more likely to graduate or transfer.

It was also concluded that the qualitative insights of the analysis spoke to "what students who come to college academically underprepared are capable of when held to high standards and provided the emotional and academic support they need. And they suggest that structural changes to remedial courses must be accompanied by thoughtful modifications to curriculum and pedagogy if colleges are to substantially improve outcomes for developmental students."³²

Seven Kresge-Funded Student Centers Making Progress at State Levels

The March/April 2015 issue of *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* had an interesting article relevant to developmental education at community colleges titled "Student Success Centers: Leading the Charge for Change at Community Colleges" and written by Caroline Altman Smith, senior program officer at The Kresge Foundation; Christopher Baldwin, executive director of the Michigan Center for Student Success; and Gretchen Schmidt, program director at Jobs for the Future.

The article notes that the overabundance of student success initiatives at community colleges across the country have been catalysts for confusion and fatigue; that the creation of seven student success centers funded by The Kresge Foundation in Arkansas, Connecticut, California, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, and Texas can help organize community colleges around unified statewide agendas to improve student persistence; and that these centers provide a clear vision and shared venue for overall student success.

While such centers are good news, the authors note that there is still plenty of bad news, with few colleges significantly improving overall student outcomes and with attainment gaps between low-income and higher-income students remaining too wide.

The seven centers are out to change the bad news, each hosting "a small but nimble student-success organization that provides a vision; a shared venue; and practical support for research, collaboration, policy development, and program design and implementation."

The authors describe the overall strategy and framework for the centers, along with descriptions of all the work going on at each center, the challenges on the horizon, and the next steps for continuing to build "structured" or "guided" pathways to completion.

To read the entire article, visit http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/2015/March-April%202015/success_abstract.html.

Virginia Community College System's Math Placement

VCCS implemented a new Virginia placement test for math (VPT) to improve placement accuracy and then compared the placement rates of a 2012 cohort who took the VPT to a 2010 cohort who took COMPASS. In addition, the developmental math curriculum was segmented into nine modules that covered everything from positive fractions to functions and quadratic equations. Liberal arts majors had to show proficiency in modules one through five, and STEM majors had to be proficient in all nine modules. The redesign was meant to increase college-level math placements by reducing developmental math requirements for the liberal arts.

“There were no substantial differences between the two cohorts in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and part-time/full-time enrollment status. . . . A greater proportion of students placed into entry-level college math during the fall 2012 semester, in which the VPT was used for placement (43 %, than in the fall 2010 semester, in which the COMPASS was used (19 %). Liberal arts college math placements grew from 4 to 10 %; STEM college math course placement rates increased from 15 to 33 %... When all students who placed into college math are taken into account—not just those who enrolled in a college math course but also those who never attempted one—results indicate that a larger percentage of college-math-placed students successfully completed entry-level college math (with a C or better) after the introduction of the VPT.”

Overall, the study exposed what happens when there is higher placement and enrollment in college-level math courses, and it established that lower conditional pass rates, at least initially, in order to facilitate more students attempting such courses, can lead to higher college-level math completion rates. Additionally, changes to the deployment of academic supports services as well as to teaching and learning strategies could improve the conditional pass rates for these courses over time.³³

Oregon Community Colleges Examine Rates of Participation in Developmental Education among High School Graduates

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance conducted this study that compared high school graduates who enrolled in an Oregon community college to high school graduates who enrolled in four-year colleges who both took at least one developmental education course. As was consistent with research on developmental education, in general, high school graduates “who started at a lower level of developmental education were less likely than their counterparts who started at a higher level to stay in college and earn a degree. Another key finding revealed that “individual academic achievement in high school influences participation in developmental education at community college more than socio-demographic characteristics and school-level factors.”

The study suggested that school-level quality and other school characteristics on college readiness persist over time and influence academic preparedness. With that in mind, it was noted that under preparedness for college needs to be addressed “well before students graduate.”³⁴

Summer Bridge Programs in Texas

The National Center for Postsecondary Research commissioned an impact study called “The Developmental Summer Bridge” project that looked at these summer programs at seven community colleges in Texas. Developmental summer bridge programs are known to increase college readiness and are considered accelerated alternatives to traditional developmental education programs.

After two years of follow up for programs attended by students in 2009, the study found that summer bridge programs did not affect the number of credits students earned in both a control group and a program group. The summer

programs did impact first college-level course completion rates in math and writing but did not impact reading. Students in the program group passed first college-level math and writing at higher rates than students in the control group. However, at the end of two years, the differences between the two groups were no longer significant. In addition, the summer programs did not affect persistence rates.

The impact study suggested that summer bridge programs do contribute to positive outcomes only during the first year and a half after program completion, and have no significant long-term impact on persistence and credit accumulation. Additionally, it was noted that summer bridge programs are basically not cost effective and that “educators may want to consider if there are ways to reduce costs by embedding support programs such as these into the regular high school or college schedule.”³⁵

Accelerated Models at CC of Denver, CC of Baltimore and Washington State

Hanover Research explored strategies for accelerating developmental education for the Tarrant County College District serving the Fort Hood, Texas area by looking closely at three innovative initiatives: Community College of Denver’s FastStart program (compressed model), the Community College of Baltimore’s Accelerated Learning Program (mainstreaming), and Washington State Board for Community and Technical College’s I-BEST program (contextualization/basic skills integration). The report that came out of this exploration includes detailed profiles of each of these models.

Findings included that the longer students stay in developmental education, the more likely they will fail. Students who go through accelerated developmental programs are more likely to complete the program than students who go

Issues Surrounding Assessment Instruments Covered in Journal of Developmental Education Article

In “Effective Student Assessment and Placement: Challenges and Recommendations,” published in the Spring 2014 issue of the Journal of Developmental Education, co-authors D. Patrick Saxon, Associate Professor Developmental Education Administration, Sam Houston State University, and Edward A. Morante, Emeritus Faculty, College of the Desert, tackled the issues surrounding assessment instruments. Saxon and Morante addressed how assessment and placement have been impacted by efforts to eliminate or redesign developmental education, and they provided recommendations to improve assessment and placement processes.

The authors note how common assessment tests are often inaccurate, misused, and lack sufficient predictive validity. Additionally, the results from a single skills assessment test should definitely not be the sole measure to determine student placement.

Saxon and Morante also show the research that supports mandatory placement, explaining that students who complete developmental mathematics and writing, for instance, are more likely to persist in college than those who opted out.

Other research reveals that a lack of student support, misunderstandings of assessment instruments, and failure to enforce policies and adhere to systematic procedures are some of the shortcomings of many assessment and placement systems. In addition to describing these shortcomings in detail, the article covers redesign and elimination agendas, recommendations for an effective assessment and placement system, and much more.

The authors conclude that their research-based recommendations “should all be part of a comprehensive assessment, advising, placement, and registration system. Indeed, it takes resources and commitment in order to put such systems in place, but planning and rethinking how best to meet student needs while utilizing alternative processes can accomplish an important part of serving students, especially at-risk students at what may be the most at-risk point in their college matriculation.”

To see the entire article, go to http://www.nade.net/site/documents/articles/SaxonMorante_ArticleV37.pdf

through traditional developmental education programs. In addition, strategies being utilized in these accelerated programs include course pairing (content is paired with skills courses); mainstreaming (developmental students placed in college-level courses immediately); course compression (remedial content is shortened); and curricular redesign and modularization. All of these strategies are explored in detail in the Hanover report.³⁶

Program Pathways at Miami Dade

In 2005, Miami Dade College (MDC) devised 10 learning outcomes that all of its graduates should master. These outcomes are evaluated semiannually and the results are used by faculty to identify where students need to improve and how instruction needs to be strengthened accordingly. During this process MDC discovered that students who did not complete typically did not understand the curriculum in their programs of study. There were too many core courses and not enough guidance. Additionally, academic support needed to be revamped.

“These realizations provided the impetus for a comprehensive, college-wide effort to redesign programs and supports in ways that help students more easily navigate college and achieve their goals. In 2011, the college launched a major new initiative to strengthen pathways to degree completion, facilitate transfer to baccalaureate programs, and support students’ advancement in the labor market.”

A comprehensive set of recommendations were created, including one that focused on developmental education. MDC leaders identified the need to “strengthen students’ transition from developmental education and English language learner programs into college-level programs of study by redesigning and expanding contextualized, accelerated, and modularized course offerings and linking them to diagnostic information about individual student skill gaps and needs.” This resulted in the streamlining of developmental education programs, including the college’s ESL program. Students were introduced to college-level coursework earlier, and the instruction was basically contextualized to reflect foundational skills in the student’s field of interest.³⁷

ECS Delves into Statewide High School, College and Career Readiness Assessments

For an excellent overview concerning how states should consider making all students’ high school senior year a much stronger and meaningful period for preparing them for college, see a March 2015 Education Commission of the States (ECS) Education Policy Analysis titled “Using assessments to inform 12th-grade interventions and accelerations,” by Jenner Zinth, director of the High School Policy Center at ECS, and Marie Millard, policy analyst at ECS.

Some of the “Key Takeaways” of this policy analysis are:

- “Statewide college and career readiness assessments present an opportunity for states to

identify students who would benefit from college readiness interventions or advanced coursework in grade 12.”

- “Relatively few states have articulated the scores on these assessments that deem a college student ready or in need of interventions to achieve college readiness by the end of grade 12.”
- “Adopting and implementing meaningful statewide intervention and acceleration policies means making numerous critical decisions on student identification metrics, forms of interventions, curriculum and instructional supports, to name just a few.”

To read the entire analysis, see <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/18/05/11805.pdf>.

New Technology Helps Hawaii's Community Colleges Empower Students' Decision Making

The University of Hawaii created new technology, called the Academic Pathway System (APS), that has been utilized successfully by the state's seven community college since 2007. The system helps students explore academic options and commit to one program of study/major. It also helps the community colleges provide more appropriate and targeted resources to help students successfully complete their degree programs.

One of the key elements of the APS is that it constructs a student's best academic pathways forward. "No matter where a student is in his degree program, the APS needs to be able to map out the student's best path forward to graduation regardless of whether the student is an incoming first-year student, a transfer student, a part-time student, a full-time student, etc. Hence, no matter where the student is in his or her degree program or which requirements the student has already completed, the APS will be able to identify the best path forward semester by semester to graduation. The easiest comparison to existing technologies is the GPS that keeps recalculating your path even if you take detours."

Since APS went live in 2008, it has grown to more than 1.6 million logins annually and has seen an increase in completions of degrees and certificates awarded by all the campuses in the UH system from 8,988 in 2010–2011 to 9,628 in 2011–2012—an increase of 7.1%.³⁸

Tulsa Community College Removes Barriers to Dual Enrollment Programs

Poor policies concerning academic admissions, along with financial and transportation-related challenges, were the root

causes of barriers that were being felt by low-socioeconomic, first-generation, ethnic minority students seeking to enroll in dual enrollment programs at Tulsa Community College (TCC). To address this issue, a special council of local education leaders, including TCC's president and the superintendents of Tulsa Public Schools and Union Public School districts was formed in 2010. This collaboration resulted in what's called an "EXCELeRate program."

The EXCELeRate program made seven "exceptions" to what were standard policies in order to seriously alter and transform how more high school students could participate in dual enrollment:

- Changed placement requirements to accept mid-academic-level students
- Allowed sophomores to participate
- Excluded high school extracurricular credits in the calculation of a 19 semester credit hour limit for participating in dual enrollment
- Students whose GPAs fell below 2.0 were put on academic probation for one semester to allow them an opportunity to continue in dual enrollment.
- High school teachers who met TCC's full-time faculty qualifications were allowed to teach dual enrollment courses at the high schools.
- Dual enrollment students were allowed to enroll in remedial courses being offered by TCC and these courses were provided at the high school campuses.
- Allowed the ACT PLAN (otherwise known as PLAN) test score to be used as a qualifier for dual enrollment

The program has faced its share of challenges and new solutions, but overall the results of its

data analysis have been favorable, and the model continues to expand to an increasing number of high schools.³⁹

Organizations that Have a Strong Focus on Developmental Education Reform

The following organizations are all important contributors to the overall development and creative progress occurring across the country in the area of developmental

education. The enormous amount of research and development that emanates from all of these organizations combined is a strong testament to American educators' willingness and focus to sincerely assist underprepared students complete college and move toward meaningful and productive career pathways.

The focus of the following abstracts of each organization is on showing what kind of online resources they publish that can be helpful for any community college to examine. The links in the end notes section will take visitors to the websites of these noteworthy organizations.

A Systemic Approach to Reform: The New Mathways Project Sees Developmental Math as Sequence

Community College Week published this article in its January 20, 2014 issue. It covers the New Mathways Project (NMP) at the Charles A. Dana Center and its work with the Texas Association of Community Colleges. NMP has received the unanimous support of all 50 community college districts in Texas to develop and implement the NMP. It features four fundamental principles:

- Offer multiple mathematics pathways with relevant and challenging math content aligned to specific fields of study
- Accelerate through the pre-college math sequence allowing students to complete a college-level math course more quickly

- Intentionally use strategies to help students develop skills as learners
- Utilize curriculum design and pedagogy based on proven practice

Amy Getz, manager of Community College Services at the Center, writes that NMP re-envisioned the mathematics course sequence as a pathway allowing for modernization of the mathematics content to be more applicable to the skills and knowledge needed for the workplace and to be an informed citizen and consumer. "This creates another systemic challenge — connecting mathematics pathways to programs of study. This calls for faculty to work across disciplines to define content and to create ways to make the connections explicit to students."

To read the entire article, visit <http://ccweek.com/article-3725-pov-a-systemic-approach-to-reform.html>.

Achieving the Dream

ATD can easily be seen as the preeminent developmental education reform organization in the country, having launched in 2004 with the help of its founding investor Lumina Foundation and seven partner organizations:



American Association of Community Colleges (AACC); Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas-Austin (CCLP); Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University (CCRC); Jobs for the Future; MDC; MDRC; and Public Agenda. ATD's network as of Spring 2015 is comprised of 200 colleges, 100 coaches and advisors, 15 state policy teams, and numerous investors and partners working through 34 states and the District of Columbia.

Guided by a mission to be evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, ATD is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional change, 2) influencing public policy, 3) generating knowledge, and 4) engaging the public. ATD claims to be now assisting close to 4 million community college students.

One look at ATD's online resource center reveals an unparalleled wealth of shared expertise organized into four categories: Knowledge Center, Initiatives, a Technology Solutions Resource Center, and an Interventions Showcase.⁴⁰

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

The Foundation has two important programs relative to the topic of this monograph: College-Ready Education and Postsecondary Success. College Ready is a K-12 program that invests in strengthening the



connection between teachers and students and works with education communities "to expand and accelerate successful programs and identify innovative new solutions." Postsecondary Success seeks to increase low-income students' college completion rates and invests in acceleration efforts, lowering costs, and basically "raising the quality of the U.S. postsecondary education system."⁴¹

The Foundation's focus on developmental education is one part of a larger effort. As noted on the Postsecondary Success website that highlights the organization's work in this particular area: "Our work in developmental education supports the creation, integration, and expansion of new and more effective approaches to developmental education, with the goal of getting underprepared students off to a strong start and on track toward a degree.

"There are many promising interventions being tried to address specific shortcomings of developmental education. They take on weak alignment of college entry and K-12 graduation standards, assessment and placement challenges, redesign of remedial courses and student advising and support services. A growing body of evidence shows that to improve the prospects for students requiring remediation these interventions cannot be applied as single-point solutions. They must be effectively woven together."⁴²

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

In 2010, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching initiated a



network of faculty members, researchers, designers, students, and content experts to create a new system to increase student success in developmental mathematics. Out of this has come

Statway® and Quantway®, both aimed to accelerate students' progress through developmental mathematics sequence and a college-level course for credit. Statway and Quantway reduce the time required to earn college credit while improving the content and pedagogy of developmental mathematics. Referred to as “The Community College Pathways,” these present engaging, relevant, and useful mathematics concepts that students can use in their daily lives.

Their website has a fair amount of reports and articles about how to adopt and implement these tools, including a blog, special publications and videos.⁴³

Charles A.

Dana Center

The Charles A. Dana Center

Located at the University

of Texas at Austin, the Charles A. Dana Center Austin works with education systems “to ensure that every student leaves school prepared for success in postsecondary education and the contemporary workplace.” The Dana Center focuses on K–16 mathematics and science education with an emphasis on strategies for improving student engagement, motivation, persistence, and achievement. It also develops curricula, tools, protocols, and instructional supports and delivers instructional and leadership development.

The Dana Center’s most current development is the New Mathways Project, a systemic approach to improving student success and completion through implementation of processes, strategies, and structures built around three mathematics pathways and a supporting student success course. The Dana Center entered into a unique joint enterprise with the Texas Association of Community Colleges to develop and implement the NMP as a statewide reform effort.

The Dana Center’s founder and executive director is Philip Uri Treisman, professor of mathematics and of public affairs at The University of Texas at Austin.⁴⁴

CCRC

The Community College Research



Center at Columbia University is a leading authority and research organization that has created numerous important resources for educators since it started in 1996. Its Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness (CAPR) “conducts research to document current practices in developmental English and math education across the United States, and to rigorously assess the effects of innovative assessment and instructional practices on student success.”⁴⁵

The amount of research and publications that come out of CCRC have contributed greatly to the overall progress of developmental education initiatives at community colleges across the country. Its website is loaded with valuable information, including a Developmental Education Overview section that covers how developmental education fits in with the “access mission of the traditionally open-door community college, and how can it be improved to achieve better results for students and institutions?”⁴⁶

In addition, an Adult Education and Basic Skills section covers factors that “contribute to low rates of college completion among community college students assigned to remedial coursework. CCRC identifies these factors and evaluates reform efforts aimed at helping underprepared students achieve greater college success.”⁴⁷

CCCSE

The Center for Community College Student Engagement is a highly respected research and



survey organization out of the College of Education at the University of Texas. “Since 2002, the Center has surveyed more than 2 million

community college students cumulatively representing a total credit enrollment of more than 6 million students. Member colleges represent an overwhelming majority of all accredited, public, associate-degree-granting institutions in the United States.”

Some of the Center’s highly useful and informative activities and accomplishments include: the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), and a wide variety of additional qualitative research from numerous student interviews and focus groups. Such work has “resulted in numerous Center publications and journal articles, extensive media coverage, and a growing number of dissertations.” Additionally, the Center produces “a growing online collection of tools and resources for member colleges’ use in strengthening their understanding and use of data for institutional improvement, reaffirmation of accreditation, and accountability.”⁴⁸

Complete College America

Complete College America has been heavily involved with developmental education since it was established in 2009. Its mission is



“to work with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations.”

In addition to publishing a good number of multi-state reports, issue briefs, event presentations and other resources that are relevant to the topic of developmental education, the organization claims that its goal “is to help build widespread public understanding and support of the game changers that will make it possible for all students to complete a credential or college degree.”

Complete College America’s website is loaded with valuable information and case studies, including a “Corequisite Remediation” section along with interesting sections labeled “Performance Funding,” “Full-time is Fifteen,” “Structured Schedules,” and “Guided Pathways to Success”—all in some way related to developmental education initiatives at community colleges. The site also features an interactive map of states where visitors can see snapshots of student success data.⁴⁹

Completion by Design

CBD is a five-year Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation initiative started in June 2011 with three groups of community colleges in Florida, North Carolina and Ohio that were awarded grants



“to help transform their students’ experience” and “substantially increase completion rates for these students while holding down costs and maintaining access and quality.”

CBD has a National Assistance Team comprised of professionals from the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement, Public Agenda, Jobs for the Future, JBL Associates, CCRC, MDRC and ATD. A CBD blog and Knowledge Center are two excellent sources of information. The Knowledge Center publishes “expert-identified and vetted research and planning documents to support Completion by Design colleges through the planning, decision making, and implementation stages.”

Another section of the CBD website, titled “Our Approach,” highlights “CBD key tools and processes so that institutions can adapt them to their own local context.”⁵⁰

Education Commission of the States

ECS has been in existence since 1965 and has numerous projects that help state education leaders



across the country. Through funding from the Lumina Foundation, ECS is currently working on a “Report Remediation” project that interprets how different states calculate remedial rates. Another developmental education-oriented initiative is called the “Blueprint Project.” Funded by the Gates Foundation, the Blueprint features 10 critical policies that promote college readiness.

There are many resources available on the ECS website, including research studies that tackle such topics as high school exit exams, boosting reading and math achievement, and reducing dropout rates. In addition, a Reports & Databases section features numerous publications and databases related to everything from assessment, reading/literacy and leadership, to curriculum, data-driven improvement, mentoring/tutoring, and much more.

ECS also provides state education policy tracking databases that list more than 36,000 education laws and specialized databases focusing on remedial education and dual enrollment. Over the years ECS has “played a pivotal role in the transition to a standards-based education system, and in enlarging policymakers’ recognition and understanding of emerging issues, trends and challenges: the needs of at-risk children, minority teacher quality and recruitment, system restructuring, service-learning, school choice, postsecondary access and brain research.”

Jobs for the Future

JFF is a widely known national organization based in Washington, D.C. with a



worthy cause to “ensure that all underprepared young people and workers have the skills and credentials needed to succeed in our economy by creating solutions that catalyze change in our education and workforce delivery systems.” It is supported by a long list of who’s-who in the world of major philanthropic funders of education, including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Gates Foundation, the Lumina Foundation, and many more.

While heavily about workforce development issues and trends as they relate to community colleges, JFF also has loads of information about developmental education efforts. Its “Publications & Tools” web section alone has a very useful compendium of reports and articles related to developmental education, covering such issues as math placement policies and processes, accelerated teaching and learning, community college success centers, and plenty more.

Lumina Foundation

Lumina Foundation is a premiere organization with a



very large and important national agenda that helps community colleges in numerous ways. First and foremost, it is totally committed to increasing college completion rates. It claims to be “the nation’s largest foundation focused solely on increasing Americans’ success in higher education.”

Lumina publishes an enormous amount of resources that can be useful for community college

educators, including regularly published reports, daily news feeds, and much more. Its President & CEO Jamie P. Merisotis also frequently shares informative speeches and leadership insights on the Lumina website.

“Lumina’s priority is to fundamentally rethink how higher education is delivered, and what outcomes can be expected from postsecondary completion. Lumina Foundation is leading a national conversation about the disruptive innovations helping to design and build a 21st century system that meets the needs of all students.” Additionally, the organization calls for “a redesigned postsecondary system” that “must be flexible, affordable, and relentlessly focused on quality” – one that is student-centered system, “one designed to meet the needs of students—all types of students—not just the needs or traditions of institutions. The ultimate goal is to build a learning-based system that offers broad, connected pathways to high-quality credentials for a vast and growing number of Americans—from all walks of life.”⁵¹

MDC

Originally known as Manpower Development Corp., MDC



is a nonprofit organization that publishes research and develops program that are “focused on expanding opportunity, reducing poverty, and addressing structural inequity.”

The organization “creates programs that employ integrated, sustainable solutions that connect people with the financial supports that can stabilize their lives, the education and training they need to get better jobs, and the industries that will benefit from their labors and improve the entire community.”

Its “Our Projects” and “Resources” sections has 45 years of reports and reports, all easily accessible. Its publications section has a community

college category that is loaded with information on a wide variety of issues, mostly about financial and poverty-related challenges and projects. However, MDC also publishes research on developmental education, such as its “Right from the Start: An Institutional Perspective on Developmental Education Reform,” which is a series of three practitioner briefs on developmental education. Created with Achieving the Dream, the briefs spotlight successful reform efforts in developmental education at seven Achieving the Dream colleges.⁵²

MDRC

“Created in 1974 by the Ford Foundation and a group of federal agencies, MDRC is



a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve programs and policies that affect the poor. MDRC is best known for mounting large-scale demonstrations and evaluations of real-world policies and programs targeted to low-income people.”

Among a fairly large amount of reports, videos, publications and projects, MDRC publishes a developmental education section in its website. Some of the resources in this section include a report published in 2013 that covered two-year results from an evaluation of accelerated study in associate programs for Developmental Education Students, titled “More Graduates,” as well as a report titled “Unlocking the Gate: What We Know About Improving Developmental Education.”

MDRC also works in close partnership with CCRC on the Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Research (CAPR), which was “established in the summer of 2014 through a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education to conduct

research to document current practices in developmental education and to rigorously assess the effects of innovative programs. The center also engages in leadership and outreach activities aimed at improving student success.”⁵³

National Center for Developmental Education

NCDE “provides instruction, training programs,



National Center for Developmental Education

research, and other services consistent with the purpose of developmental education and the missions of Appalachian State University and the Reich College of Education. These services are provided to a national audience of professionals dedicated to serving underprepared and disadvantaged college students.”

NCDE provides publications that inform practitioners and researchers in the field of developmental education and learning assistance, including the subscription based *Journal of Developmental Education* (JDE) as well as *Research in Developmental Education* (RiDE), which is a research-based publication designed to review and analyze current developmental education practices or report on current research literature and studies.

Its “Reports and Research” section along with its “Resources & Services,” and “News & Events” sections all contribute greatly to the field of developmental education.⁵⁴

NADE

The National Association of Developmental Education (NADE) is a membership organization that was founded in



1976 in Chicago as the National Association for Remedial/Developmental Studies. “NADE seeks to improve the theory and practice of developmental education at all levels of the educational

spectrum, the professional capabilities of developmental educators, and the design of programs to prepare developmental educators. NADE focuses on the academic success of students by providing professional development for faculty and support professionals, supporting student learning, providing public leadership, disseminating exemplary models of practice, coordinating efforts with other organizations, facilitating communication among developmental education professionals and anticipating trends.”

A paid individual or institutional membership in this organization includes access to NADE’s publication and sponsorship of journals, monographs, newsletters, directories and other materials covering numerous areas of developmental education including: theory, field research, exemplary programs, and current trends. All Individual NADE members receive *The Journal of Developmental Education*, electronic access to the NADE Newsletter, the NADE Digest and other publications.

NADE also serves as a clearinghouse for information regarding positions within the developmental education profession through its Professional Job Opportunities Committee.⁵⁵

Public Agenda

Public Agenda is a nonprofit organization that was founded by social



scientist and author Daniel Yankelovich and former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in 1975. Its higher education division publishes a wide variety of special reports, including many that are focused entirely on community colleges.

Some of these publications include “Indiana Regional Transfer Study: The Student Experience of Transfer Pathways between Ivy Tech Community College and Indiana University,” “Not Yet Sold: What Employers and Community College Students Think About Online Education,” a “Cut-

ting Edge Series” on “Scaling Community College Interventions,” and much more.

Public Agenda also hosts an in-depth Community College Completion section on its website that covers the organization’s working partnership “with other organizations and various community colleges to help students, especially students of color and low-income students, complete their degree or transfer to a four-year institution.”

These partnerships include working closely with such organizations as Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, and the Lumina Foundation.⁵⁶

Glossary of Terms

Acceleration in developmental education is a strategy used by community colleges to reduce the amount of time students spend in remediation and allow them to enroll more quickly—or immediately—in courses leading to certificates or degrees. Acceleration requires rethinking the content to be taught, in addition to the timeframe in which the learning occurs. SOURCE: “Acceleration in Developmental Education.” West-Ed.

Achievement gaps occur when one group of students outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant (that is, larger than the margin of error), especially in groups defined by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity and gender. SOURCES: National Assessment of Educational Progress and Wikipedia

ACT Compass® offers test modules in the subject areas most frequently used by postsecondary institutions to evaluate the skill levels of their incoming students. SOURCE: ACT

ACCUPLACER® tests a student’s knowledge in math, reading, and writing and helps identify a student’s strengths and needs in each subject area. SOURCE: College Board

Achieving the Dream (ATD) Leader College is a national designation awarded to community colleges that commit to improving student success and closing achievement gaps. These leaders have shown how data-informed decision making can inform policy and practice to help community college students achieve their goals, resulting in improved skills, better employability, and economic growth for families, communities, and the nation as a whole. SOURCE: ATD

Bridge Courses are a type of pre-credit-bearing course for students who require remediation. Typically bridge courses are shorter in length than full-scale remedial courses and are geared for students whose placement scores show them as being close to having the required skills and knowledge to enroll in credit-bearing courses. SOURCE: The SOURCE on Community College Issues, Trends & Strategies

Cohort Model is a teaching and learning environment where students work together, typically within a group of peers. Cohort members build relationships with each other and with faculty. Through the relating of experiences and interaction, students discover there are many ways of approaching and expressing learning. Unlike a traditional class where students come and go every 10 to 15 weeks, students in a cohort remain together for the duration of their program. The cohort model also provides students with support in terms of completing their degree. SOURCE: California Institute of Integral Studies.

Contextualized Courses utilize the concept of relating subject matter content to meaningful situations that are relevant to students’ lives, and hence offering a promising approach and teaching and learning environment that helps students learn more effectively. SOURCE: The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges

Cut scores are selected points on the score scale of a test. The points are used to determine whether a particular test score is sufficient for some purpose. For example, student performance on a test may be classified into one of several categories such as basic, proficient, or advanced on the basis of cut scores. SOURCE: Educational Testing Service

Developmental Education is a field of practice and research within higher education with a theoretical foundation in developmental psychology and learning theory. It promotes the cognitive and affective growth of all postsecondary learners, at all levels of the learning continuum. Developmental education is sensitive and responsive to individual differences and special needs among learners. Developmental education programs and services commonly address academic preparedness, diagnostic assessment and placement, development of general and discipline-specific learning strategies, and affective barriers to learning. SOURCE: National Association for Developmental Education

Dual Enrollment refers to students being enrolled—concurrently—in two distinct academic programs or educational institutions. The term is most prevalently used in reference to high school students taking college courses while they are still enrolled in a secondary school or to the programs that allow high school students to take college-level courses. For this reason, the term *early college* is a common synonym for dual enrollment. SOURCE: The Glossary of Education Reform

ETS Success Navigator® is a 30-minute, nonproctored online assessment that claims to provide a holistic view of the critical factors that most greatly influence incoming student success — academic skills, commitment, self-management and social support. It identifies at-risk students, delivers action plans and is expected to improve first-year retention rates. SOURCE: ETS

I-Best is the state of Washington’s Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST) model that claims to boost students’ literacy and work skills so that students can earn credentials, get living wage jobs, and put their talents to work for employers. I-BEST pairs two instructors in the classroom — one to teach professional/technical or academic content and the other to teach basic skills in reading, math, writing or English language. SOURCE: Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Modular Courses teach specific skills in modules rather than in a single more comprehensive class. SOURCE: “Models of Accelerated Developmental Education Prepared for Tarrant County College District.” Hanover Research.

MyMathLab is a popular Pearson product launched in 2001 that is an online homework, tutorial and assessment tool for mathematics. MyMathLab offers two options for Adaptive Learning — The Adaptive Companion Study Plan and Personalized Homework. Instructors have the flexibility to incorporate the style and approach of adaptive learning that best suits their course structure and students’ needs. SOURCE: Pearson

New Mathways Project (NMP) is the Charles A. Dana Center’s vision for a systemic approach to improving student success and completion through implementation of processes, strategies, and structures built around three mathematics pathways and a supporting student success course. The Dana Center entered into a unique joint enterprise with the Texas Association of Community Colleges to develop and implement the NMP as a statewide reform effort. SOURCE: Charles A. Dana Center

Paired courses are where students take two different classes together in one convenient block of time. The Paired Courses are coordinated, so the material in each class reinforces the other and enhances learning. The result is a learning community where students and faculty help each other learn, grow, and succeed. SOURCE: Montgomery College

Quantway® is part of the Community College Pathways Program at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. It is focused on quantitative reasoning that fulfills developmental requirement with the aim of preparing students for success in college-level mathematics. The goal of Quantway is to promote success in community college mathematics and to develop quantitatively literate students. SOURCE: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Remedial Education, also called developmental education, refers to classes intended to bolster the basic skills of new college students so they are adequately prepared for college-level work. These classes may be non-credit courses and may not be covered by a student's financial aid. SOURCE: Colorado Department of Higher Education

Statway® is part of the Community College Pathways Program at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. It is focused on statistics, data analysis, and causal reasoning, combining college-level statistics with developmental math. It is designed to teach mathematics skills that are essential for a growing number of occupations and are needed for decision-making under conditions of uncertainty. SOURCE: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Texas Success Initiative Assessment is a program designed to help institutions determine if students are ready for college-level course work in the general areas of reading, writing and mathematics. This program also will help determine what type of course or intervention will best meet a student's needs to help them become better prepared for college-level course work they are not ready for. SOURCE: College Board

TRiO Programs (TRiO) are federal outreach and student services programs in the United States designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are administered, funded, and implemented by the United States Department of Education. SOURCE: DOE

WritePlacer® is an essay writing assessment that gives students an opportunity to show how effectively they can develop and express their ideas in writing. The completed essay is given a holistic score that represents how clearly and effectively the student expressed his/her position. SOURCE: The College Board

Interviewees

A special thank you goes out to the following educators who graciously shared their views for this important monograph.

Cuyahoga Community College

Alex Johnson, President

Jennifer Spielvogel, Vice President, Evidence and Inquiry

El Paso Community College

Michael Coulehan, Writing and Reading Professor

Lucia Rodriguez, Director of the Office of Student Success

William Serrata, President

Guilford Technical Community College

Susan Barbitta, Director, Student Success Learning Institute

Ed Bowling, Executive Director of North Carolina Completion by Design

Kristi Short, Director, Center for Academic Engagement

Montgomery County Community College

Wendell Griffith, Coordinator of Mentoring Services

Barbara Lontz, Mathematics Professor

Diane McDonald, English Professor

Keima Sheriff, Director of Gateway to College

Karen Stout, President

Roueche Graduate Center, National American University

George Boggs, Professor; and, President and CEO Emeritus for the American Association of Community Colleges

Margaretta Mathis, Senior Vice President, and Dean of Master's and Doctoral Programming

Terry O'Banion, Chair of the Graduate Faculty; and, President Emeritus of the League for Innovation in the Community College

John Roueche, President

South Texas College

Shirley Reed, President

Valencia College

Karen Borglum, Assistant Vice President, Curriculum & Articulation

Sandy Shugart, President

Walla Walla Community College

Darlene Snider, Dean of Transitional Studies

Zane State College

Becky Ament, Dean of Developmental Education

Chad Brown, Provost and Executive Vice President

Paul Brown, President

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The Roueche Graduate Center at National American University offers a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Community College Leadership that is designed for senior administrators, faculty, and other aspiring leaders who opt for a doctorate to be well prepared for leadership positions in community and technical colleges. Instruction and engagement include a combination of face-to-face and online sessions with community college experts, teleconferencing with national leaders, team work and interaction with fellow students, topical webinars, and a practicum to address emerging college/district/system issues. For more information, please visit <http://cclp.national.edu/>.



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