

## Owensboro Community and Technical College Breaking Through Report for June 30, 2007

The following is a report on the status of Owensboro Community and Technical College's *Breaking Through* initiative for January 2007 through June 2007.

### Summary of Overall Learnings

**Leadership Support:** OCTC welcomed new president, Dr. Paula M. Gastenveld, on April 24, 2007. Dr. Gastenveld served as the former Provost of Valencia Community College's West Campus in Orlando, Florida, a leader in innovative community college programming. Prior to that, she held leadership roles at community colleges in Ohio and Massachusetts.

Dr. Gastenveld has a unique advantage in relating to students attending a two-year college. She began her postsecondary education at Henderson Community College, approximately 30 miles from Owensboro. "*Without a community college in my hometown, I would not have been able to attend college. My success as a student, a teacher, and an administrator can be attributed to the educational opportunity that the Kentucky Community College System gave me,*" says Dr. Gastenveld.

We are confident Dr. Gastenveld's proven leadership, personal commitment to community college education, and innovative spirit will support and strengthen our *Breaking Through* efforts for serving low-skilled, low-income adult learners.

**Cohort Progression:** During this reporting period we became more aware of the flexibility needed for adult students to progress at their own pace, even when participating in a cohort learning community. For example, each of the learning cohorts for our manufacturing pathway began with projected academic goals to be reached by the entire group during a particular time period. However, the reality of student life interruptions and changing employment needs required us to refocus learning efforts and progression goals to the needs of the individual versus the needs of the group as a whole. Within the same cohort, some of the students earned associate degrees while others earned a certificate that led to new employment and others completed a course that met a skill upgrade requirement in an existing job. Our first healthcare learning cohort consisted of some students who had already completed the required pre-nursing courses and others who needed to take two or three courses or a developmental math refresher to catch up.

We believe the cohort learning experience is valuable. In our *Breaking Through* initiative we witness firsthand the impact that learning communities have on enhancing student performance and improving student intervention and retention. However, we also learned a cohort's progression cannot be managed so rigidly that individual performance is sacrificed for the sake of a consistent group outcome.

## **Deliverable Status**

The following is a status report on deliverables for the January 1- June 30, 2007 reporting period.

**1) The 2<sup>nd</sup> Business Cohort Learning Group.** Two kick-off sessions were held on-site at Owensboro Municipal Utilities (OMU) January 4-5, 2007. An extensive cohort learning orientation session was held on January 24, and February 1. OMU, the largest municipal electric/water system in Kentucky, worked with OCTC in 2006, to develop a skill upgrade initiative utilizing the college's new learning option - Team Leadership Certificate (TLC) - a hybrid blend of interactive web-based learning and instructor-led sessions.

Fifty-six participants were chosen for two cohort learning groups with the expectation of completing the three-credit hour, five-module course 287: Supervisory Management by December 31, 2007. Participants include both low-skilled (those without training or college experience taken from service jobs and placed in a new leadership role) and skilled employees with some training. All employees are given paid release time to attend the GameDay (in-class) sessions, along with two hours of study time per week. Completion of this course is a requirement for both career and salary advancement within OMU's leadership development program. To date, 54 of the students have completed the first two modules and have started the third module. Two students withdrew from the program after they changed jobs within the organization. The cohorts are listed below.

### **OMU – Team Leadership Certificate Cohorts A and B**

#### **Cohort A Students:**

1. Allen, John
2. Baker, Dee
3. Boarman, David
4. Cates, Roger
5. Clark, Scott
6. Coffman, Sharon
7. Crowe, Tony
8. Edge, Clarence
9. Flake, Darrell
10. Ford, Ed
11. Gibson, Greg
12. Gilstrap, Gerald
13. Gordan, Joel
14. Hardy, Barry
15. Hooks, Larry
16. Keach, Louise
17. Marchand, Ron
18. Miller, Mark
19. Murphy, Randy
20. Potter, Jeff
21. Potts, Sam
22. Pulliam, Scott
23. Roberts, Dwayne
24. Skaggs, Gary
25. Tarrence, Doug
26. Taylor, Teresa
27. Wall, Ken

#### **Cohort B Students:**

28. Blandford, Bud
29. Brown, Jason
30. Castlen, Don
31. Chapman, Steve
32. Ferguson, Jeff
33. Ford, John
34. Frey, Gary
35. Frizzell, Kevin
36. Gaddis, Jody
37. Galloway, Rod
38. Hahus, Roger
39. Hill, Ben
40. Hook, Kim
41. Huff, Greg
42. Keach, Bill
43. Keown, Kevin
44. Klump, Jamie
45. Merimee, Steve
46. Muench, Scott
47. Murphy, Tom
48. Raymer, Steve
49. Reedy, Jack
50. Roberts, Jim
51. Stephens, Joanne
52. Stickler, Stephanie
53. Thurman, Rick
54. Whitehouse, Richard

**2) The 1<sup>st</sup> Business “Pilot” Cohort Learning Group.** The pilot course, BA 288: Personal and Organizational Leadership, was offered during the spring 2007 bi-term semester. The cohort students included: Rita Doubiago, Ron Irwin, Vance Martin, and Frank Rust. Originally, we estimated that a pilot group would earn a complete Team Leadership Certificate (18 credit hours) by this time period. As we’ve learned, this was an unrealistic measurable since the curriculum and course structure for several of the six courses are still in the development or initial testing stages.

**3) Manufacturing Cohort Learning Groups.** To date, 35 students (dislocated workers and employer-sponsored participants) have participated in manufacturing cohort groups taking IMAC Manufacturing courses. Only three students have dropped out before completing a course. Those earning credentials and/or completing courses are listed below. Please note: The first three students on the list graduated with honors during OCTC’s 2007 Graduation ceremonies.

<b>IMAC Manufacturing Student Progress Report</b>		
<b>Student</b>	<b>Credential(s)</b>	<b>Completion</b>
1) Jeffrey C. Bratcher	AAS Degree, Diploma, IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2007
2) Shawn S. Payne	AAS Degree, Diploma, IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2007
3) Ricky L. Keller	AAS Degree, Diploma, IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2007
4) John C. Evans	IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2007
5) Stanley W. McKay	IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2007
6) Steven S. Smith	IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2007
7) William E. Carlock	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
8) Richard G. Hayden	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
9) Jacob W. Humphrey	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
10) Eddie L. Mattingly	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
11) Daniel E. McNeily	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
12) James M. Nalley	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
13) Shane M. Smith	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
14) Ricky D. Wilson	IMAC Mechanical Certificate	Spring 2007
<b>Student</b>	<b>Credential(s) in Process</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>
15) George G. Carter	AAS Degree, Diploma, IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2008
16) Joseph D. Russell	AAS Degree, Diploma, IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2008
17) Kevin W. Ward	AAS Degree, Diploma, IMAC Electrical Certificate	Spring 2008
18) Jeffrey S. Beavers	IMAC Electrical Certificate	Fall 2007
<b>Student</b>	<b>Courses Completed for Skill Upgrade</b>	<b>Completion</b>
19) Mike Brozzo	150/151 IMT- Maintaining Industrial Equipment & Lab	Spring 2007
20) Kelly G. Clark	110 IMT – Electrical Principles	Fall 2006
21) Mike Denton	100/101 FPX - Fluid Power and Lab	Spring 2007
22) Joseph M. Edge	110/111 IMT – Electrical Principles and Lab	Fall 2006
23) Matt Hagman	110/111 IMT – Electrical Principles and Lab	Fall 2006
24) Bryan R. Hamilton	110/111 IMT – Electrical Principles and Lab	Fall 2006
25) Josh Horn	100/101 FPX – Fluid Power and Lab	Spring 2007
26) Jim Howard	150/151 IMT- Maintaining Industrial Equipment & Lab	Spring 2007
27) James Morris	100/101 FPX - Fluid Power and Lab	Spring 2007
28) Norman Newman	100/101 FPX - Fluid Power and Lab	Spring 2007
29) Daren Sanders	150/151 IMT- Maintaining Industrial Equipment & Lab	Spring 2007
30) Jeff Tindle	110/111 IMT – Electrical Principles and Lab	Fall 2006
31) Jeff Weterfield	276/277 EET – PLCS I and Lab	Spring 2007
32) Craig Wheatley	100/101 FPX -Fluid Power and Lab	Spring 2007

**4) Contextualized Developmental Education Reading and English Workshops.** This initiative is still in the design phase. As mentioned in the last *Breaking Through* report, OCTC's SkillTrain Adult Learning Center successfully piloted the reengineering and delivery of the college's developmental math (MT 55) courses. While this effort was met with great resistance from the college's math faculty in the beginning, these math courses are now offered each semester through SkillTrain. It is our goal to work past the reluctance of development education personnel again to pilot contextualized reading and English courses. We are currently discussing strategies to develop a "jump-start college" initiative patterned after the Community College of Denver's Fast Start program and its new College Connection program. It is our belief this initiative would offer a seamless transition for offering improved developmental education and student support services for under-served adult learners.

**5) Student Evaluation for Business IMAC Pathway.** Evaluations were conducted with the OMU Learning Cohorts and the students in the first pilot cohort. Overall responses were positive regarding the TLC. Students like the flexibility of learning, the interactive GameDay sessions, the interesting content, and the engaging web-based CoachTalks. Students also made suggestions about improvements for the technical interface. The evaluations were shared with the TLC team and as a result, enhancements were implemented.

**6) Healthcare Pathway Started -- First Healthcare Learning Cohort.** Work began on the design of a healthcare career pathway which includes accessible learning options and contextualized development bridge courses. As part of the college's Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded-initiative, 27 OMHS employees were chosen for the first OCTC@OMHS learning cohort. Selection was based on job performance, supervisor recommendations, personal interviews with senior management team and potential for program success. This first cohort group includes representation from across the organization as well as diversity of race, gender, and age. Coursework began on January 8, 2007. One student withdrew from the program due to a serious health concern of an immediate family member and one student chose to slow down a bit and join the second cohort. A copy of the cohort student survey is attached.

#### **OCTC@OMHS First Healthcare Cohort**

1. Adams, Mandi
2. Baize, Kimberly
3. Brown, Tiffany
4. Burden, Cindy
5. Calhoun, Tracy
6. Carrier, Cynthia
7. Case, Tim
8. Daniels, Katie
9. Franzell, Felicia
10. Gilmore, Josh
11. Henry, Crystal
12. Housman, Chasity
13. Kennedy, Debbie
14. Kost, Louis
15. Ling, Christy
16. Marksberry, Sonia
17. McDowell, Heather
18. Scott, Samantha
19. Smith, Trisha
20. Toliver, Dorisha
21. Trogdon, Delena
22. Warner, Robert
23. Wilkey, Tina
24. Yonts, Ashley
25. York Clary, Tamara

**7) Mentoring and Tracking Program for the Healthcare Pathway.** Clara Dorris, our part-time “Success Coach” works onsite at the hospital to support our cohort students as well as counsel other employees interested in health careers. A student status report tracking program was developed by Tonya Mann-Howard, the program facilitator for the OCTC@OMHS program. These reports track classes taken, grades obtained, the term of each class, tests taken (ACT, CNET), and overall GPA.

**8) Strategies Designed and Implemented by Engagement Specialist Measured for Effectiveness and Enhanced as Needed.** The primary learning strategy developed and tested for the Manufacturing Cohorts focused on improving competency and skill attainment. The IMAC program is designed for students to learn the concepts and theories of each course through an interactive web-based option that is supplemented with face-to-face instructor assistance when needed. Periodic progress checks along with graded exams at the end of each learning module are included in the web-based program. The Engagement Specialist discovered quite a few of the students were memorizing information in order to pass the graded exams but were struggling to apply this knowledge in the lab when demonstrating the skill for evaluation. To address this, the Engagement Specialist designed a comprehensive final exam for students to take before they begin the lab work which focuses on real-world scenarios for application. If a student fails, he is required to remediate the learning portion and retake the exam. In addition, the Engagement Specialist expanded the lab proficiencies required of the students and developed a standardized evaluation skill check-off list that is aligned with on-the-job application.

Other strategies relating to all three programs (manufacturing, business, and healthcare) involved improving communication channels. Various methods were implemented including weekly e-mail updates, regular “touch-base” visits and/or phone calls, and a comprehensive, face-to-face evaluation meeting each semester with the respective cohort participants and program personnel.

## **Data Report**

- **54 students in 2<sup>nd</sup> Business Cohort**
  - BA 287 Supervisory Management course in progress
- **4 students in 1<sup>st</sup> Business “Pilot” Cohort**
  - BA 288 Personal and Organizational course complete May 2007
- **35 students in Manufacturing Cohorts**
  - 3 earned AAS degree, diploma, and certificate in May 2007
  - 11 earned a certificate in May 2007
  - 9 completed a course for a skill upgrade in May 2007
  - 5 completed a course for a skill upgrade in December 2006
  - 3 currently working toward AAS degree
  - 1 currently working toward certificate
- **25 in Healthcare Cohort**
  - Completed first semester in OCTC@OMHS program

## Obstacles and Needs

A challenge we face is maintaining a high level of quality and service while expanding our manufacturing, business, and healthcare initiatives. Our main emphasis for *Breaking Through* is to prepare under-served students to succeed in occupational and technical degree programs. So, it is imperative we uphold this strong commitment to student service as program participation increases. This is a labor-intensive effort and our ultimate goal is to build self-sustaining programs. To meet this challenge, we need to plan tactically for the greatest utilization of resources and manpower.