



Strategies for Transformative Change

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH AND LEADERSHIP

Transformative Change Initiative Overview

The Transformative Change Initiative (TCI) is dedicated to assisting community colleges to scale-up innovations that improve student outcomes and program, organization, and system performance.

Transformative Change Definition

TCI defines transformative change as follows: Raising the individual, organizational, and system performance of community colleges to unprecedented levels without sacrificing their historic commitment to access and equity.

Major Themes

- **Accelerated Training through Blocked Scheduling.** The DeMaND Project has utilized blocked scheduling to accelerate short term and certificate training toward the goals of improving retention and achievement rates and/or reducing time to completion. Short term training programs (e.g., C.N.A., Phlebotomy, Hazmat/Hazwoper, Commercial Truck Driving, Forestry, and Oilfield Training) are offered in blocked scheduled formats, often with employers' input and sometimes held at employer sites. The C.N.A. courses are typically offered at medical facilities where students can experience the culture of the profession and the rigor of a typical workday. Courses are held from morning to late afternoon, and students complete the program in two weeks, including the clinical portion. Students benefit from reduced costs associated with commuting.

Some one-year certificate programs are also accelerated to 16 weeks through blocked scheduling. Welding, Carpentry, Electrical Technology, CDL, Heavy Equipment Operator, and Electrical Line Worker certificate programs are scheduled five days a week from early morning to late afternoon. In addition to the time advantage, blocked scheduling has contributed to students forming close relationships with each other. Project staff report this has contributed to increased student persistence.
- **Innovative and Flexible Faculty.** Blocking the schedule required the willingness of faculty to work long days. In addition, they have had to redesign their instruction to accommodate the accelerated format so that the concepts are taught using multiple modes of learning and including ample time for hands-on practice. Their approach to teaching is to mentor students toward skill proficiency while holding them accountable as an employer would. Blocked scheduling also required the

SHORT TERM AND ACCELERATED TRAINING THROUGH BLOCKED SCHEDULING

The Tribal College Consortium for Developing Montana and North Dakota Workforce

The Tribal College Consortium for Developing Montana and North Dakota Workforce (DeMaND) includes four Tribal Colleges and is led by United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) of Bismarck, ND. Partner colleges include Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) in Fort Totten, ND, on the Spirit Lake Nation; Fort Peck Community College (FPCC) in Poplar, MT, on the Fort Peck Reservation; and Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC) in Harlem, MT, on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

The large Bakken Oilfield in northwest North Dakota and northeast Montana (as well as in Canada) has spurred the need for skilled workers to not only work directly in the oil fields, but also to build up the infrastructure necessary to support the growing number of oil-related workers and their families moving to the region. There are 20 programs of study among the four colleges that have been created or enhanced by TAACCCT funds and are educating students to enter in-demand careers in the geographic region served.



cooperation of general education faculty who departed from their typical schedule to teach courses in the evening or accelerate them, similar to the technical courses. "What we are doing is meeting the demands of what students want...to get trained and get to work. It isn't the traditional way of teaching but it is working for our students and is what employers in the area want...entry level training for entry level employment." Steve Shepherd, Welding Director, UTTC.

- **Support for Faculty and Students.** Blocked scheduling at least doubles contact time for instructors. Therefore, administrators have supported offering salaries commensurate with workforce salary demands as an incentive. College leaders have addressed accreditation and Department of Education (DOE) Title IV challenges related to contact hours and the federal definition of full-time enrollment posed by the accelerated format. Primary sources of funding for DeMaND students include PELL, WIA, or other tribally sponsored funding.

Students enrolled in the DeMaND accelerated certificate programs often have unique needs as compared to other degree-seeking students. To accommodate the need for affordable housing near the college, often far from their homes, UTTC allows students the option to stay in campus housing for up to two months after they complete training. Without this support, many students would not be able to maintain their employment due to lack of affordable housing. Also, FPCC shortened the curriculum for certificates so students could become employed more quickly. Because the completion rates for students in blocked programs are much higher than for those in traditionally scheduled programs, FPCC leaders are considering blocked schedules for other programs of study they offer.

Meeting the Challenges in Tribal Colleges. *Historic and generational poverty in combination with the rural locations of the communities pose unique challenges for Tribal Colleges. Further, the employment rate for Native Americans in North Dakota and Montana is under 50% among those who are 16 years or older and who are living in or near the tribal areas.¹ The DeMaND project works towards engaging this chronically unemployed and underemployed labor force in employment opportunities that exist in the region. The DeMaND training programs developed at each institution take into consideration students' expressed needs and interests: careers that are available in or near their communities and short term training programs to quickly obtain credentials for employment. This has required a cultural shift for some of the institutions, from a traditional focus on general education and transfer to advanced degrees. Short term training provides industry-recognized skills for those who otherwise may not have access to any educational opportunities that lead to employment. Students who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent can study to get a state Commercial Driver's License or become a Certified Nursing Assistant. Increased opportunities inspire hope and self-confidence for many DeMaND students whose first goal is to obtain an entry level credential. The project has spurred the four colleges to build high quality workforce development programs that reach a wider range of students, increasing access and success of a critical population of traditionally underserved students.*

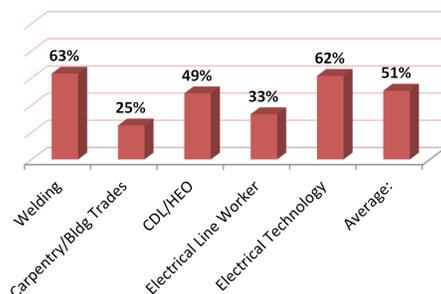
1. 2013 American Indian Population and Labor Force Report (January 2014) U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, retrieved from www.bia.gov (5/26/2014)

Social Media. Storytelling through social media has played a big part of telling the DeMaND story as it has evolved. To address the issue of lower college attendance and labor participation rates for young American Indian men as compared to young American Indian women, the project engaged the services of the 1491s, a comic group known for its use of political and cultural satire to address difficult topics in Native American communities. "Indian humor" is a well-known concept in Indian Country. The group first developed videos designed to challenge men to be "modern day warriors" by getting training through DeMaND; other videos highlight the programs and each of the consortium's colleges. Student success stories are also shared using YouTube and Facebook. The DeMaND Workforce Training YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/DeMaNDTraining/featured>) has exceeded 18,000 views as of January 2015. The DeMaND Workforce Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/DeMaNDTraining>) has over 1,100 "likes" to date.

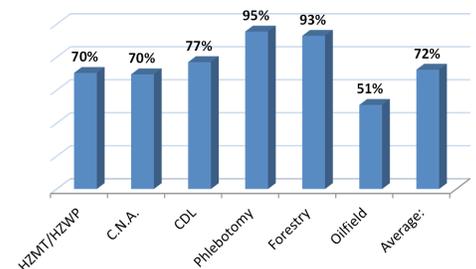
Strengthening Partnerships. Tribal Colleges have historically worked closely with the communities they serve, typically tribal communities. The DeMaND project has helped build partnerships and working relationships with non-tribal businesses and organizations in both states. The SkillBuild Project, sponsored by Job Service of North Dakota, targeted veterans and Native Americans, including students in the DeMaND project. SkillBuild, available from fall of 2012 through spring 2014, provided qualified applicants with educational assistance that included tuition, fees, books and required tools. This support was awarded to 57 students in programs that had not yet achieved Department of Education approval for Title IV. As a result of DeMaND, ANC and FPCC have also developed much stronger relationships with the Montana Job Service providers who now include the colleges in planning and refer potential students for training and education.

Promising Outcomes. Completion rates for students in DeMaND's blocked and short term training programs are generally higher than more traditionally scheduled courses. Of the 412 enrollments in the short term training programs, completion rates averaged 72%, ranging from 51% in the Oilfield training to 95% in the Phlebotomy program.

Blocked One-Year Certificates



Blocked Short Term Training



Five, one-year certificate programs were also accelerated to a 16 week format. Of the 233 enrollments, completion rates averaged 51%, ranging from 25% in Building Trades/Carpentry to 63% in welding programs across the consortium. Three of the four DeMaND colleges offer a welding program; one of the colleges reported a 70% completion rate.

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