

Pueblo Community College

Background

PCC serves a multi-county large geographic area and has a high percentage of Hispanic students for a middle-sized college (32%). While the Pueblo campus serves a relatively urban/industrial hub, the college's other locations serve rural communities. Perkins funds are used at each of PCC's campuses in Mancos, Durango, Pueblo, and Canon City.

Fifty-seven percent of PCC's students are classified as "first generation." 70% of their "initial" college students need remediation.

Pueblo Community College (PCC) has moved from managing Perkins funds via a "Perkins Committee" to a strategic planning model in which deans prioritize with department heads.

PCC has a concurrent enrollment program for high school students known as the Advanced Vocational Education Partnership (AVEP). Some of these AVEP courses occur on campus and integrate secondary with post-secondary students.

PCC used Perkins funds this past year to implement or purchase the following:

- Resources to build their own electronic instrumentation trainers.
- New, smaller welding equipment, for post-secondary and secondary sites. This equipment is permitting students to practice more than stick welding. Students can now practice tig and mig welding.
- Salaries for faculty to launch programs. These salaries are moved to general college funds in three years if the program has become successful (e.g., cosmetology, interior design, polysomnography.)
- Tutors to serve CTE students in PCC's Learning Center.
- PCC's AVEP concurrent enrollment program with the District 60 and District 70 school districts. PCC teaches Career and Technical Education courses at high schools and on campus, giving high school students the opportunity to complete college level courses.
 - This past year, PCC used Perkins funding to respond to a demand for a Welding program at County High School. This funding, limited to personnel and equipment, enabled PCC to launch this endeavor. The program is being taught by a PCC faculty member.
 - Perkins funding has also enabled PCC to operate an Automotive Service program at high schools in Pueblo and Canon City.

Key Innovation(s)

Perkin-funded tutors at PCC's Learning Center enable the college to offer this very popular drop-in tutoring program for math and writing skills to Career and Technical Education students. This program has been dubbed "The Pro Shop." The program boasts a 96% pass rate for those who take advantage of its group tutoring services.

PCC's Perkins-subsidized "Learning Express Library" is all internet-based so students at all campuses can access valuable resources such as:

- e-books
- Health Professions students use their "Learning Express" online access for testing. District 60 Health Academy students access "Learning Express" in their junior year to get ready to pass Accuplacer.

Perkins-funding has permitted the creation of a multiuse lab with special tables that have been designed to be used by Graphic Communications, Art, and Interior Design students. This set-up also permits software to be shared.

PCC is in the second year of using Perkins funds to build electronic trainers for its Industrial Electronics program which will significantly enhance the hands-on learning of their students. Perkin funds were used to help replicate PCC's successful Pueblo-based cosmetology program in Mancos (facilitating the sharing of expertise between these two campuses which are 300 miles apart from one another).

Through one of its advisory committees, PCC was able to use Perkins funds to help launch the *first* Polysomnography program in Colorado.

When the Nursing commission recently began to accept 25% student-experience via simulation, PCC used Perkins funds to hire a part-time simulation coordinator. Additional funding was secured through a foundation to upgrade PCC's simulation software. This simulation-software can now be used for outreach purposes and shared among PCC's various health programs including EMT, PT, Respiratory Therapy and Nursing.

Remarkably, many of PCC's Perkins-funded endeavors help students transition to the next level of education or employment. For instance, PCC:

- Provides great support for high school students to attend PCC campuses or to have a program in their home high school (e.g., Welding in District 70 and Health Academy in District 60).
- Has on-campus programs that show secondary students that they can succeed alongside post-secondary students.
- Has demonstrated good job placement in all of its programs: 100% have gotten jobs from the cosmetology and welding programs and PCC expects 100% of the graduates from their new Polysomnography program will secure employment.
- PCC's on-campus medical and dental clinics not only provide easy access to learning opportunities they have doctors on site for students and faculty. Health Professions students are able to get required immunizations from the medical clinic.

PCC has achieved much success in its deployment of Perkins funding through:

- Collaboration among the Deans of Arts/Science, Health Professions and Business & Technology.
- Their defined process in which Deans can prioritize their areas of need while making sure that PCC is meeting the goals of the federal money while aligning the college's Perkins plan with its strategic plan. Deans prioritize with their respective department chairs in divisions. PCC demonstrated a great team effort transitioning from a Perkins committee process to Deans working directly with their department chairs. PCC relies on its Grant Director to bring an entire college perspective to this Perkins-funding management process.
- Having new-program faculty do a three year Perkins-funded rotation at high schools and then moving them to general post-secondary funding after a new program has proven to be successful.
- Developing a guide book that helps Deans work with faculty on understanding the Perkins planning process.
- Convening a Perkins Local Plan committee, with external participation, four times per year. This committee has two representatives from the regional workforce center who contribute ideas for possible funding.
- Working closely with each of their campuses in Pueblo, Durango, Mancos and Canon City ensures all programs like Nursing have the same resources everywhere they are offered.
- Using the College's Five Major Goals to guide investments in personnel and capital. These include:
 1. Enhancing connections to high schools.
 2. Strengthening student academic and technical skills and using effective assessments of student learning.
 3. Focusing on projects which strengthen PCC's link to industry.
 4. Integrating academics into PCC's CTE curriculum and providing opportunities for professional development to that effect; and,
 5. Ensuring PCC provides effective support services.

PCC Perkins-funded endeavors support STEM skills by:

- Ensuring all programs have current technology resources (e.g., Industrial Electronics students build their own PLC trainers).
- Dedicating a separate room in The Learning Center for Math instruction and providing tutors who specialize in Math.
- Maintaining four motorhome-like Mobile Learning Labs to expand access to STEM training across PCC's service area.

PCC's plan to support the recruitment and retention of underrepresented genders in non-traditional career programs involves increasing its concurrent enrollment opportunities for high school students as well as encouraging participation of both sexes.

Key Factors to Implementation

PCC has promoted the success of its Perkins-funded programs by recruiting faculty directly from industry to ensure they possess the most current specialized skills necessary for success in the career being taught. PCC has made use of a camera system in these programs that not only fosters student learning but helps instructors refine their teaching techniques. Further, the Massage Therapy and Cosmetology programs use a camera system where students can test by demonstrating skills or techniques learned.

When PCC has sought to add new programs or expand existing ones one of the primary obstacles has been a lack of open physical space.

PCC relies on a variety of support systems to promote the success of its Perkins-funded initiatives, including:

- Relying on great community support. Every program faculty-member addressed how their program had expanded or changed due to advisory input (e.g., an advisory committee wanted Polysomnography to be a separate program from Respiratory Therapy).
- Staff actively refer students needing extra support to the Learning Center, which has become a highly valued resource of PCC for assisting students academically.
- Aligning Perkins-funding efforts with PCC's strategic plan.

PCC's Perkins-funded programs begin and are sustained via linkages to industry. For example: PCC's Cosmetology program began with a business plan from community representatives. Further, all programs are able to demonstrate strong and functional advisory committees.

PCC ensures the success of its Perkins-funded programs by cultivating other means to financially strengthen each. This includes securing many donations of equipment, resources, supplies and other considerations. In fact, Lincoln recently extended the warranty on the welding machines that they furnished to the college by two years. Finally, when a Perkins-funded program demonstrates three years of success PCC then commits general funds to support its continued operation.

RESULTS

PCC's Perkins-funded programs have produced many tangible results, including:

- High Job placementThe pass rates of students taking advantage of their Learning Center.
- Student testimony about the value of these programs and how each facilitated their learning the skills necessary for success in their chosen career.
- Execution of meaningful student projects to demonstrate learning (e.g., Interior Design students were able to design therapeutic equipment and space for an autistic child.)

PCC not only strengthens its programs via Perkins-funding but also through its commitment to acquiring

current technology, teaching a relevant curriculum, relying on advisory committees for continuous improvement and expansion, and collaborating internally and with those at the college's other locations.

PCC's recent deployment of Perkins-funds is readily replicable by other Perkins recipients across Colorado. To replicate their success, PCC would advise a Perkins-recipient to:

- Form a collaborative team effort; create goals together and implement them
- Base decisions on visits to their instructional sites and conversations with faculty and students; and,
- Turn to their CTE Director for strong leadership.