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LEAVING NO WORKER BEHIND

Community Colleges Retrain the Michigan Workforce—and Themselves

By Tom Hilliard

May 2011



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report draws on numerous sources, notably interviews with the staff and leadership of the five case-study institutions—Grand Rapids Community College, Lake Michigan College, Macomb County Community College, Mott Community College, and Northwestern Michigan College—as well as staff of Michigan Works! Agencies, particularly Todd Gustafson and Craig Coney. A thanks goes to all of these individuals who gave generously of their time and expertise. We also benefited from interviews and data furnished by Andrew Levin, acting director of the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth, and his staff, as well as Adriana Phelan at the Michigan Association of Community Colleges and Vickie Choitz at the Center for Law and Social Policy. Larry Good of the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce provided insightful comments. Special thanks for guidance provided by Chris Baldwin and Richard Kazis of Jobs for the Future.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007, Michigan undertook a bold mission: to retrain tens of thousands of adults to qualify for jobs in emerging and expanding sectors of the economy. The state's proposal to jobless, dislocated, and low-income residents was simple but appealing: enroll in up to two years of postsecondary education, and Michigan would cover up to \$5,000 in tuition, fees, and books each year, along with related supports such as child care subsidies and transportation assistance.

Michigan rolled out "No Worker Left Behind" in August 2007 and stuck with it in the face of budgetary crises and ongoing economic deterioration. The target population has responded in large numbers. More than 150,000 adults enrolled in NWLB-financed training by the end of 2010, and many more were steered to Pell Grants. Just as important, 59 percent of NWLB participants eligible for federal workforce programs found a new job after completing their training. At its peak, FY2009, Michigan devoted \$189 million to No Worker Left Behind, particularly from federal funding sources available to the state.

Policymakers turned to community colleges to lead the way in implementing NWLB, which forced a focus on improving student success that some considered overdue as thousands of unemployed workers showed up asking for a chance to retrain and get back in the labor market. Serving this group required new and stronger relationships with the local Workforce Investment Boards, called "Michigan Works! Agencies."

Community colleges worked hard to implement No Worker Left Behind and to address the particular needs of older workers. They developed programs and interventions to meet the needs of these students. They strengthened basic literacy and numeracy, updated computer skills, and instilled confidence in adults who doubted their ability to succeed in this different world. And they connected services into an achievable path of skills progression that ideally would lead to new careers.

To explore the role of NWLB in strengthening the student success infrastructure of Michigan community colleges, Jobs for the Future studied five institutions with a strong track record of innovation to begin to answer these critical questions:

- > How have colleges organized their efforts to assist low-skilled adults in gaining marketable postsecondary credentials?
- > What role has No Worker Left Behind played in the ability of Michigan community colleges to develop innovative strategies for serving this population?

JFF conducted detailed interviews with presidents, vice-presidents, and managerial staff of Grand Rapids Community College, Lake Michigan College, Mott Community College, Macomb Community College, and Northwestern Michigan College.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE STUDENT SUCCESS

The design of No Worker Left Behind demanded closer collaboration between community colleges and the workforce training system. NWLB's architects also sought to encourage colleges to develop strategies for helping students with low basic skills succeed—perhaps the most vexing dilemma for any institution.

JFF found an entrepreneurial driver at these colleges: the willingness to try new strategies, identify supportive funding, and use outcome data and student feedback to tweak operational performance. At the same time, these institutions embraced certain high-leverage strategies for capitalizing on No Worker Left Behind to strengthen services for nontraditional students:

Learn about the unique needs of students who are dislocated workers. College staff at all levels realized they needed to learn much more about the needs and challenges of students who had been separated from their employers through mass layoffs or plant closures. These workers differ not only from recent high school graduates but also from other adult or nontraditional students were familiar to community colleges.

Develop strategies to connect basic-skills instruction with college-readiness training. Dislocated workers were likely to fall short in both literacy and numeracy. Community colleges needed not only to provide that instruction but also to integrate it with related skills required for college-level instruction.

Build partnerships with local Michigan Works! Agencies. All of the colleges in the study developed innovative programs to assist dislocated workers. However, only colleges that built a collaborative partnership with at least one Michigan Works! Agency leveraged NWLB funding successfully to educate large numbers of dislocated workers.

Build relationships with other stakeholders. All the colleges reached out to important stakeholders outside the workforce system. These included adult education providers, economic development agencies, and employers.

Integrate multiple funding sources to support long-term training. While the state committed funds to No Worker Left Behind, the primary strategy was to leverage and align federal funding streams to support adults seeking long-term training. The most important federal programs were the Workforce Investment Act, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, vocational rehabilitation, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the stimulus bill).

CHALLENGES

While No Worker Left Behind was intended to help community colleges serve displaced workers, Michigan colleges faced several major challenges, some created by the NWLB structure itself.

Workforce agency goals are not always aligned with community college goals. Each Michigan Works! Agency is autonomous in its operations. In the absence of explicit guidance or rewards, some agencies established arms-length transactional relationships with colleges.

Many displaced workers need basic-skills training to become college ready. Many of the workers who surged into Michigan Works! Agencies to make use of NWLB subsidies were unprepared for college-level work.

Accelerating the pace of an overall program of study is harder than adding an innovative course. While colleges added courses that prepared displaced workers for college-level vocational study, they rarely redesigned an entire program of study to meet the needs of this population.

Confusion over the scope of NWLB coverage for basic-skills instruction hampered service to low-skilled adults. There was considerable confusion over the extent to which NWLB would cover basic-skills instructions for students who were not college ready. Moreover, NWLB's broad eligibility rules were believed to bias workforce agencies toward orienting training services to adults who required shorter and less intensive instruction to obtain new employment.

LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

The NWLB experiences of the case-study colleges provide valuable lessons for policymakers in Michigan and elsewhere about promoting innovation to increase student success, particularly for lower-skilled, dislocated workers:

- > Reward collaborative relationships between community colleges and Workforce Investment Boards.
- > Target benefits to adults with low basic skills.
- > Support a shift in the Adult Basic Education system to support postsecondary transitions.
- > Develop a common understanding of college readiness among workforce and higher education systems.

A final, critical lesson is the need to strengthen data systems and analysis. Because of data limitations in Michigan, it is impossible to say whether the NWLB strategy substantially increased college access or to compare the success of NWLB-financed students to other students. A uniform, effective system of data collection and analysis is critical to inform and drive better policymaking and institutional decisions.

INTRODUCTION

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The state of Michigan has undertaken a bold mission since 2007: retraining tens of thousands of adults to qualify for jobs in emerging and expanding sectors of the economy. The state's proposal to jobless, dislocated, and low-income residents has been simple but appealing: enroll in up to two years of postsecondary education, and Michigan would cover up to \$5,000 in tuition, fees, and books each year, along with related supports such as child care subsidies and transportation assistance.

Michigan rolled out "No Worker Left Behind" in August 2007 and stuck with it in the face of budgetary crises and ongoing economic deterioration. The target population responded in large numbers: more than 150,000 adults enrolled in NWLB-financed training between mid-2007 and year-end 2010, and many more were steered to Pell grants.

This large-scale training endeavor has been central to Michigan's efforts scrub the rust off the state's economic prospects. Yet NWLB has had its critics, who have questioned the value of job training initiatives in a slack labor market. As one answer, the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth reports that 59 percent of NWLB graduates have found employment. Yet debate continues to swirl around the extent to which the job-placement cup is empty or full.

Largely unexplored, however, has been another issue with far-reaching implications: the effect of NWLB on the state's community colleges, long a major service provider for adults seeking to enhance their skills. Policymakers turned to community colleges to lead the way in implementing NWLB. It made sense: community colleges deliver long-term training that could effectively retool the skills of large numbers of adult students, and they already serve the communities hardest hit by layoffs and plant closings. At the same time, community colleges serve a wide spectrum of students, and in any given year only a minority are dislocated workers changing careers.

NWLB raised the stakes for many community colleges—and forced a focus on improving student success that some considered overdue—as thousands of unemployed workers showed up asking for a chance to retrain and get back in the labor market. This population's educational needs differed from those of traditional-age college students with high school diplomas newly in hand, and even from other adult students with secure jobs seeking to upgrade their skills. Further, serving this new group required building new relationships with the local Workforce Investment Boards, federally mandated organizations that disburse federal workforce funding under the Workforce Investment Act and related workforce funding streams. In Michigan, these boards are called "Michigan Works! Agencies," and their institutional culture differs greatly from that of community colleges. The two entities are not always natural partners.

"We see community colleges as the engine of change and the subject of change at the same time," says Andy Levin, the acting director of the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth and the driving force behind NWLB.

Community colleges have adapted to the needs of No Worker Left Behind. They have developed programs and interventions to meet the needs of students. They have strengthened basic literacy and numeracy, updated computer skills, and instilled confidence in adults who doubted their ability to succeed in this different world. And they have connected services into an achievable path of skills progression that ideally would lead to a new career.

In some cases, the obstacles to change have been serious. For example, a Michigan Works! Agency might define "college readiness" differently from its partner community college and use a different test to measure it. The students might find basic-skills instruction tiresome unless it related to their lives and goals. A college's noncredit courses might not provide students with a clear path to credit-bearing coursework. Community college leaders have had to navigate these and other challenges to fully support the displaced workers targeted by NWLB.

The role of NWLB in strengthening Michigan community college sector's student success infrastructure clearly merited further exploration. It would be highly significant if NWLB drove systems-level improvements in instructional strategies—evidence that state-level policymaking can spur reform and strengthen student success at individual institutions.

Unfortunately, a quantitative analysis is not possible. Data are not available to confirm (or even investigate) a causal relationship between NWLB and student success at the state's community colleges.¹ Instead, Jobs for the Future, as the technical assistance provider for both the *Breaking Through* initiative and *Achieving the Dream* in Michigan, commissioned a qualitative analysis. We studied five community colleges with a strong track record of innovation to begin to answer these critical questions:

- > How have the colleges organized their efforts to assist low-skilled adults in gaining marketable postsecondary credentials?
- > What role has No Worker Left Behind played in their ability to develop innovative strategies for serving this population?

The JFF study focused on a variety of community colleges in different parts of the state—ranging from very large to fairly small institutions, in urban and rural settings, and serving communities at varying levels of dependence on manufacturing employment. The colleges studied were Grand Rapids Community College, Lake Michigan College, Mott Community College, Macomb Community College, and Northwestern Michigan College (see *Table 1 on page 4*).²

At three of the five institutions—Lake Michigan College, Macomb Community College, and Mott Community College—we found clear evidence of innovation from an "NWLB effect" on their strategies for helping adult students. All three colleges actively promoted No Worker Left

Table 1.
Demographic Profiles of the Case Study Colleges

	GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	LAKE MICHIGAN COLLEGE	MACOMB COMMUNITY COLLEGE	MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE	NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE
	Grand Rapids	Benton Harbor	Warren	Flint	Traverse City
Undergraduate enrollment	16,944	4,688	24,376	12,151	5,065
Attending part time	55%	66%	61%	64%	51%
Age 25 and over	34%	37%	37%	49%	40%
Percent receiving Pell Grants	36%	39%	24%	50%	40%
Percent receiving federal loans	28%	14%	11%	27%	37%
NWLB participants served	1,533	1,020	3,401	3,529	368

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education

Behind, found themselves flooded with NWLB-financed students (or students receiving other funding through the NWLB application process), and developed programming to meet the specific needs and challenges of dislocated workers. The colleges also developed stronger and more collaborative relationships with their Michigan Works! Agencies, which were charged with referring NWLB participants to them.

Grand Rapids Community College and Northwestern Michigan College received fewer NWLB participants and reported only modest NWLB-related impacts on their programs. Nevertheless, they received many dislocated workers, and their interventions to improve student success were equally impressive. College staff and leaders at these institutions gained valuable insights into how No Worker Left Behind or a similar program could be made more relevant to their work.

This report describes the pressing need for workforce retraining in Michigan, summarizes the approach of No Worker Left Behind, and details how community colleges responded to the initiative's opportunities and challenges. It concludes with important lessons about how our nation's community colleges, in collaboration with workforce systems, can better serve nontraditional students seeking to improve their skills at this critical economic time.



MEETING AN URGENT NEED FOR STATEWIDE RETRAINING

MEETING AN URGENT NEED FOR STATEWIDE RETRAINING

Michigan's urgent need for a workforce retraining program is hard to dispute, given the collapse of the state's traditional economic mainstays, which once provided high-paying jobs for life to millions of people. But that collapse is more recent and dramatic than commonly appreciated. Employment in Michigan actually stabilized during the 1990s before dropping by almost one-fifth from 2000 to 2009.³ Jobs in the motor vehicle and parts industry fell by two-thirds, and in construction by 44 percent. In manufacturing as a whole, the state lost almost 450,000 jobs during the past decade. From 2006 to 2010, Michigan had the highest unemployment rate of any American state.⁴

Fortunately, economic development experts have seen growth opportunities in several sectors, notably life sciences, "green" construction, and advanced manufacturing. The theory behind No Worker Left Behind is that unemployed Michiganders could shift to these promising fields. State economic development officials launched a "21st Century Jobs Fund" to capitalize on emerging industries, through investment in research and commercialization efforts.⁵ As the structure of the economy changes, however, employers increasingly require education and training beyond the high school level. That poses a problem for many out-of-work adults. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of all working-age Michigan adults lack a college degree, and 9 percent lack a high school diploma.⁶ One-third—which amounts to roughly 1.7 million adults—lack "the basic skills or credentials necessary to attain a family-sustaining job and contribute to the states' economy," according to a report by the state Adult Learning Work Group.⁷

Governor Jennifer Granholm introduced No Worker Left Behind to bridge the gap between low-skilled (and mid-skilled) workers and the advanced, often technological skills needed to obtain jobs in emerging sectors. Previously, workforce development initiatives had paid for short-term "express training" services to move unemployed adults rapidly into jobs, typically low-wage jobs with minimal potential for advancement. But NWLB provided two years of funding for adult residents seeking retraining for in-demand fields, enough time to learn a new trade with earning potential. After three and one-half years, the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth reported that more than 150,000 Michigan workers had enrolled in training; 59 percent of NWLB participants eligible for federal workforce programs found a new job after completing their training, 82 percent of them in a field related to their NWLB training.⁸ Nationally, unemployed adults were much less likely to find work during the recession and its sluggish recovery.⁹

At its peak, Fiscal Year 2009, Michigan devoted \$189 million to No Worker Left Behind: roughly speaking, \$43 million from Workforce Investment Act Title I, \$60 million from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, \$46 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, \$12 million from Vocational Rehabilitation, \$11 million from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and the remainder from other sources. Starting in 2008, however, the federal government began reducing WIA funding to Michigan as other states' unemployment rates climbed. Between 2008 and 2010, Michigan's WIA allocation to serve adult and dislocated workers fell by \$72 million (39 percent of the baseline). As a result, the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth alerted Michigan Works! Agencies in July 2010 that funding was no longer available to add new participants. The state has committed to helping everyone who started training to complete it. However, it is unclear whether enough funding will be left to train those on the waiting list.

Key No Worker Left Behind Provisions

Eligibility: Any Michigan resident who is unemployed, working with a household income of \$40,000 per year or less, or working and in receipt of a notice of termination or layoff. NWLB participants must be at least 18 years old and out of high school for at least two years.

Benefits: Up to \$5,000 per year, for two years, to participate in a training program that leads to a credential in an emerging or high-demand field, as determined by the regional Michigan Works! Agency. The benefits cover tuition, fees, and books. NWLB is a "last-dollar" program: applicants must use up all other grant aid for which they are eligible before they may access NWLB funds. The state also provides supports such as child care subsidies and transportation assistance.

Procedure: Applicants report to a local workforce investment board (known as Michigan Works! Agencies in Michigan) for orientation and screening. A career adviser determines the individual's literacy and vocational skill levels, then helps develop a personalized training plan. The applicant may enroll in any training program approved by the Michigan Works! Agency that leads to a certificate or degree in an emerging or high-demand field.

PLAYING TO THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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The relationship between No Worker Left Behind and the community college sector in Michigan is as complex as it is important. State policymakers consider community colleges critical to the NWLB mission, because colleges provide longer-term training that is more valuable than the brief, job-specific courses provided by proprietary or other institutions. Nationally, almost two-thirds of all jobs in 2018 will require more than a high school diploma, according to a recent projection.¹⁰ Adults lacking postsecondary education and a marketable credential are likely to find their career opportunities increasingly narrowed.

"We see community colleges as playing a huge role in No Worker Left Behind," says Levin. "They are way cheaper than proprietary schools, they are not intimidating to people, and many of the jobs we want to train people for are middle-skill jobs that community colleges specialize in."

James Jacobs, president of Macomb Community College and an NWLB architect, concurs: "This was a real attempt to get away from short-term specific training, and emphasize long-term credentials much more. So the program played to the strengths of the community colleges in the sense that we offer career programs that are much more than six weeks of training."

If NWLB played to community colleges' strengths, it also confronted their weaknesses—and not by accident. "Community colleges have issues," says Levin. "Many of them are stuck in semester-based systems. There needs to be more change—more distance learning, more for-credit training. We wanted the colleges to find a way to integrate students in their thirties, forties, fifties, with their typical . . . students." Michigan's community college system is also highly decentralized. Unlike states with a strong systems-level orientation, such as Virginia or Washington State, community colleges in Michigan are fully autonomous. NWLB therefore became a vehicle for aligning institutional and state policy goals without infringing on institutional prerogatives.

The Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth designed No Worker Left Behind to promote closer collaboration between the community college and workforce training sectors. The Michigan Works! Agencies that provide workforce services in communities throughout the state disburse funding for federal workforce programs, notably the Workforce Investment Act Title I, the Trade Adjustment Act, Vocational Rehabilitation and Temporary Assistance for

Needy Families, called the Jobs, Education and Training Program (JET) in Michigan. These agencies are also fully autonomous, and prior to NWLB did not have a consistent record of coordination with community colleges in their regions.

Program architects also sought to encourage community colleges to develop strategies for helping students with low basic skills succeed—perhaps the most vexing dilemma for any institution serving a disadvantaged population. “Because a good deal of the students who come to us are underprepared, NWLB really opened up discussion of how you integrate delivery systems, and challenged all of us in community colleges to try to figure some of this out,” says Jacobs.

In the end, NWLB enrollment at community colleges may have fallen short of expectations. About 33,000 adults with NWLB financing enrolled in community colleges between August 2007 and January 2011, fewer than one-fourth of the 150,000 NWLB participants during that time period (see *Table 2 on page 11*). However, that figure may underestimate the initiative’s true impact on community colleges. First, many prospective adult students applied for NWLB funding but were found eligible for Pell Grants. Exactly how many Pell-financed students initially applied for NWLB is not known, but informants at Michigan Works! Agencies we spoke with believed it to be a substantial number. Second, NWLB-financed enrollment varied dramatically from one institution to another, ranging from 1 percent of the student population at Schoolcraft College to 10 percent at Mott Community College.

Table 2.
Michigan Community Colleges, Enrollment and NWLB Participants Served

	ENROLLMENT 2008-09	NWLB PARTICIPANTS 2007-10
Alpena Community College	2,077	267
Bay de Noc Community College	2,742	495
Bay Mills Community College	608	42
Delta College	11,354	2,038
Glen Oaks Community College	1,691	421
Gogebic Community College	1,162	266
Grand Rapids Community College*	16,944	1,533
Henry Ford Community College	17,542	1,579
Jackson Community College	7,729	1,779
Kalamazoo Valley Community College	11,999	791
Kellogg Community College	5,976	1,430
Kirtland Community College	1,972	769
Lake Michigan College*¹¹	4,688	1,020
Lansing Community College	21,123	2,127
Macomb Community College*	24,376	3,401
Mid Michigan Community College	4,767	814
Monroe County Community College	4,624	319
Montcalm Community College	2,328	703
Mott Community College*	12,151	3,529
Muskegon Community College	5,144	1,430
North Central Michigan College	3,123	473
Northwestern Michigan College*	5,065	368
Oakland Community College	28,042	1,596
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College	132	1
Schoolcraft College	13,042	575
Southwestern Michigan College	2,970	775
St. Clair County Community College	4,884	1,688
Washtenaw Community College	14,202	615
Wayne County Community College District	20,771	1,689
West Shore Community College	1,553	219
Other	—	940
TOTAL	254,781	32,752

* Case study colleges

SOURCES: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education; Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth.

INFLUENCING THE WORK OF INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTIONS

INFLUENCING THE WORK OF INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTIONS

The role and impact of No Worker Left Behind differed across the five college. Macomb, Mott, and Lake Michigan community colleges received large numbers of NWLB students, while Grand Rapids and Northwestern received a modest influx (although more than other community colleges in the state, such as Schoolcraft and Washtenaw). These differences relate to a number of factors, most notably regional variations in the rate of plant closures and layoffs that create the primary pool of NWLB participants. Policies at regional Michigan Works! Agencies also have been critical. In theory, NWLB applicants may decide for themselves where to use their funding, but in practice, their ultimate destination is greatly affected by agency policy and workforce philosophy, as exercised by the Michigan Works! intake system. If a Michigan Works! Agency sees the local community college as a partner, it is more likely to establish a process by which college-ready adults can be identified and referred for enrollment, and unready students can receive the appropriate instruction to prepare them for enrollment.

COLLEGES STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY NO WORKER LEFT BEHIND

Three case study colleges were strongly influenced by No Worker Left Behind. Lake Michigan College, Macomb Community College, and Mott Community College have received more than 3,000 NWLB-financed students apiece, and they responded by developing innovative strategies to meet their needs.

Lake Michigan College

Lake Michigan College, located in the Benton Harbor/St. Joseph region of western Michigan, enrolls just under 5,000 students, about two-thirds of whom study part time. Over the past three years, it has served almost 3,000 NWLB-financed students, the largest proportion of any community college in the state. More broadly, the number of adult LMC students receiving some form of financial aid tripled from 2007 to 2009.

Lake Michigan College has built a substantial set of vocational training courses, closely informed by labor market trends. “Our noncredit division is out talking to employers on a daily basis,” says LMC President Robert Harrison. One key market-responsive program is in energy production. Operators at two nuclear power plants expressed concern that much of their skilled workforce was nearing retirement age. So LMC designed a noncredit program in energy production to train the next generation of skilled nuclear power professionals. This has provided a natural springboard for the college to develop programs in solar and wind energy production as well.

No Worker Left Behind has dramatically increased LMC's population of displaced-worker students, thanks in large part to a close collaboration between the college and its local Michigan Works! Agency. The agency funded LMC and worked closely with LMC staff to develop the "Career Transitions" program, a cohort-based course that teaches basic literacy and numeracy skills. The course also instructs students in computer proficiency—a weak spot for most displaced workers—and key aspects of "college knowledge," such as how to transition from noncredit to credit courses and how to take advantage of opportunities for career-interest exploration. Career Transitions is intended to prepare dislocated workers for college-level, for-credit coursework.

Macomb Community College

Macomb Community College, located in Warren, a suburb north of Detroit, is a large institution, with 24,000 students. NWLB directed a large flow of students to Macomb. Because of NWLB, says President Jacobs, "We co-located Michigan Works! counselors here for the first time and got into discussion of things we should have known but didn't know, such as, what does 'college ready' mean?"

With funding and assistance from the Macomb/St. Clair Workforce Development Board, Macomb staff developed programs to help displaced workers with low reading and math skills improve to college-ready standards. "Basic Skills Upgrade," an intensive open-entry/open-exit course, provided literacy and numeracy instruction, contextualized to life themes that would be meaningful to students. Students enrolled with reading levels between third and eighth grades, and they could continue instruction for as long as six months. "Vocational ESL" provided English-language instruction contextualized to the world of work but not to specific occupations. After completing either program students worked with counselors to assist them with job searches and referrals to certificate trades programs and other educational opportunities.

College leaders considered both courses successful, particularly when some adults who entered with low reading levels graduated and transitioned successfully to credit-bearing college work. But the local Michigan Works! Agency ended grants for both programs in fall 2010 due to lack of funding and lower-than-expected student enrollment. However, Jacobs remains committed to starting a new iteration of both programs in the future.

Mott Community College

Mott Community College is located in Flint, a city hit hard by automotive plant closures. The college enrolls 12,000 students, including a large population of NWLB-financed students—more than 3,000 over the past three years. Mott's workforce education division has worked closely with the local Michigan Works! Agency, known as Career Alliance, to develop programming that meets the needs of low-skilled adult workers.

"No Worker changed the way we talk with students," says Mott Vice-President Scott Jenkins. "Now we do our career advising up front." With funding from NWLB and other programs, Mott created Operation Fast Break, a highly intensive precollege bridge program that meets

30 hours per week for eight weeks. Operation Fast Break utilizes KeyTrain computer software to provide individualized instruction in basic literacy skills. The course also instructs students in computer skills, career counseling, and “soft” skills needed for employment, such as collaboration and problem-solving.

Mott also expanded and extended its career pathways initiative, which provides clear routes from noncredit vocational courses yielding certificates to credit-bearing coursework leading to Associate’s degrees. The career pathways programs, developed in coordination with the national *Breaking Through* initiative, have targeted several areas: business, management, marketing and technology; engineering/manufacturing and industrial technology; human services and public administration; green construction; and health sciences. “It used to be that noncredit students were not part of the college,” says Jenkins. “Now workforce education is an access point.”

Packaging noncredit and credit courses together into career pathways enables Mott training programs to tap funding from the largest single component of NWLB, the federal Workforce Investment Act, Title I. Since this funding stream only pays for instruction received in a “program of study,” most noncredit basic-skills or vocational courses do not qualify. At Mott, however, these courses qualify because they lead into career pathways. “They can’t be undecided in No Worker Left Behind,” notes Jenkins. “They have to pick a program.”

COLLEGES WEAKLY INFLUENCED BY NO WORKER LEFT BEHIND

Grand Rapids Community College and Northwestern Michigan College were less influenced by No Worker Left Behind. The two colleges innovated vigorously to meet the needs of newly enrolled dislocated workers but not because of (nor with significant funding from) the initiative. The causes differed: at Grand Rapids Community College, lack of collaborative support from the local Michigan Works! Agency may have been the single greatest constraint, whereas Northwest Michigan College received fewer NWLB-financed students for demographic and economic reasons. Both colleges, however, successfully innovated to improve the odds of success among their adult students.

Grand Rapids Community College

Grand Rapids Community College is a large institution in western Michigan, with about 17,000 students, about one-third over 24 years of age. GRCC has a modest NWLB-financed population, and staff at GRCC do not cite NWLB as a major influence on their work. “Our response is really to the crash of the auto industry, not to No Worker Left Behind,” says George Waite, director of the college’s Michigan Technical Education Center (M-TEC).

Grand Rapids has been highly innovative in its strategies for assisting low-skilled adults, especially dislocated workers who fall short in basic skills and self-confidence. The centerpiece of its support for low-skilled dislocated workers is the “Career Advancement Program,” a mixed credit/noncredit, semester-long course that “bundles everything they need

to be prepared,” according to Adult Education Director Linda Spoelman. This intensive course provides English, reading, and math, all contextualized for the world of work. The course also integrates computer and “college knowledge” skills. Students can take the course more than once until they are prepared—both academically and emotionally—to enter GRCC in either a noncredit vocational area or on the for-credit side of the college.

Grand Rapids Community College has created pathways that enable students to move from ESL and GED instruction into a vocational training program in carpentry or welding. “We’ve got some traction with energy production, and we’re developing what we call the ‘Medical Mile,’” says GRCC President Steven Ender, describing a sectoral initiative to expand life sciences and medical device engineering fields in the region. Financing these vocational programs requires the braiding of multiple federal funding streams. GRCC’s job-training courses qualify for Pell Grant funding because of “clock-hour” arrangements approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

Ender acknowledges shortcomings that limited NWLB’s value to his college. “We didn’t get the traction we wanted from No Worker Left Behind,” says the GRCC president. “Those dollars did not allow for developmental education to be offered or for the creation of new programs or new program models.”

According to officials of the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth, though, No Worker Left Behind does not prohibit the use of funds for developmental or basic-skills instruction. Funding restrictions may be a function of federal Workforce Investment Act rules, or a communications gap may have arisen with GRCC’s local Michigan Works! Agency, the Area Community Services Employment and Training Council.

Northwestern Michigan College

Northwestern Michigan College, located in Michigan’s Grand Traverse region, enrolls about 5,000 students. Northwestern has a relatively small population of NWLB-financed students, which staff attribute to regional outmigration of laid-off employees rather than any shortcoming of the program itself. “No Worker Left Behind served as evidence of need and a call to action,” says Marguerite Cotto, Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning. But she attributes the college’s growing population of displaced workers primarily to the deteriorating labor market for unskilled work.

A 2008 plant closing had a galvanizing effect at Northwestern, says Cotto. “We needed to get the workers in and out of a construction technology program in 12 weeks. We sat down with our Michigan Works! staff to find out what the requirements would be.” Out of this experience came a tight collaborative relationship with the local Michigan Works! agency, as well as accelerated pathways from developmental courses into vocational programs.

The college’s “Bridge Program” is a basic-skills course that organizes college-bound adults into a learning community to cover reading, writing, math, and computer skills in a mixed noncredit/for-credit class. The course, which Cotto calls a “foundational boot camp,” leads naturally into vocational courses in technical fields such as electro-optics, energy auditing, and construction technology.

Northwestern built a seamless pathway from noncredit to for-credit instruction so that low-skilled adult students could see clearly how to move from step to step toward their goals without hitting a dead end or wondering what to do next. “In my area, we’re trying to blur the line of noncredit and credit,” says Cotto. “Construction tech is noncredit, but it fast-tracks into credit.” Construction technology is a key vocational program that Northwestern incubated on the noncredit side and now offers on a for-credit basis as well.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES AT COLLEGES INFLUENCED BY NO WORKER LEFT BEHIND

No Worker Left Behind sent a clear message that the retraining of displaced workers is a top state priority.

The enactment of No Worker Left Behind and related initiatives communicated the state’s policy strategy in a very forceful way. Governor Granholm made clear to individual state agencies, community colleges, and state residents that it was time for displaced workers to get long-term training for a new career. No longer would short-term training for a specific job be promoted as the most desirable option. “This is one of the few times in the state bureaucracy when there’s clear direction provided by the chief executive that this is what we’re going to do,” says LMC President Harrison. “The branding and strategic focus was great.”

No Worker Left Behind channeled a surge of nontraditional students to the doors of community colleges, which forced a rethinking of existing institutional systems.

Staff at community colleges that received large numbers of NWLB-financed students reported having to develop new strategies for helping them to succeed. “When No Worker Left Behind passed, we got thousands of new clients,” says Robert Matthews, Executive Dean for Workforce and Career Development at Mott Community College. “We had to get everything right the first time, and process everything people needed when they walked in the door.”

No Worker Left Behind created opportunities for deepening the relationship between community colleges and Michigan Works! Agencies.

Regional Michigan Works! Agencies served as the clearinghouse for NWLB applicants but could not provide training services directly. In some cases, these workforce agencies forged close partnerships with nearby community colleges. These partnerships fostered innovations and seamless transitions for NWLB participants. “The neat thing that evolved was our relationship with Michigan Works,” says Jenny Schanker, chair of Transitional Studies at Lake Michigan College. “We talked about academic issues, about readiness, about what a student needed to know, what test you should use.”

DESIGNING NEW STRATEGIES TO INCREASE STUDENT SUCCESS

DESIGNING NEW STRATEGIES TO INCREASE STUDENT SUCCESS

JFF conducted detailed interviews with presidents, vice-presidents, and managerial staff at the five case study institutions. The most salient common factor across the colleges was an entrepreneurial perspective—willingness to try new strategies, to identify supportive funding, and to use outcome data and student feedback to tweak operational performance. At the same time, these institutions found certain high-leverage strategies for capitalizing on No Worker Left Behind to strengthen the services they provide nontraditional students.

LEARN ABOUT THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WHO ARE DISLOCATED WORKERS.

College staff at all levels realized that they needed to learn much more about the needs and challenges of students who had been involuntarily separated from their employers through mass layoffs or plant closures. These dislocated workers differ not only from recent high school graduates but also from other adult or nontraditional students familiar to community colleges.

Administrators and faculty put considerable effort into understanding the psychology of dislocated workers and testing pedagogical approaches that would yield desired results. They found differences, both concrete and intangible, between their traditional students and their new students. “They’re more established in the community,” says LMC President Harrison of the dislocated workers they serve. “They’ve grown up here, so they’re not a transient population.” In addition, their education levels vary widely, from high school dropouts to those already with college degrees. “It’s not just the poorly educated,” Harrison says.

A major challenge for this population is low self-confidence. GRCC President Ender describes the thought pattern of a typical dislocated worker who enrolls for NWLB training: “I was providing for my family, had a good-paying job, good benefits. Now I’m literally starting over again. There’s a lot I’m going to have to learn if I’m going to get back anywhere close to where I was.” Ender draws a clear distinction between an employed adult attending school at night to advance his or her career and one who has been laid off. Dislocated workers wonder how they will pay their bills and may be overwhelmed with worries, says Enders: “ ‘I don’t have a line to go to.’ ‘I don’t have a paycheck.’ ‘My family is depending on me and I don’t have any skills.’ That’s a whole different human dynamic we’re dealing with.”

Adult students also know far less about the labor market than one might expect, and they require considerable guidance in selecting a new career, according to those interviewed for this report. “An assumption many of us made was that they must know the labor markets because they’re out in the labor markets, and they must know what they want to do,” says Macomb Community College President Jacobs. “That proved false. If anything, they knew less because they were so encapsulated in their own little job.”

Dislocated workers frequently apply to positions for which they are unqualified or from which they may even be barred due to felony convictions. “We’ve got illiterate people coming in wanting to be a doctor or a nurse,” recounts Todd Gustafson, executive director of a Michigan Works! Agency in western Michigan who partners with Lake Michigan College.

DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO CONNECT BASIC-SKILLS INSTRUCTION WITH COLLEGE-READINESS TRAINING.

All of the case study colleges identified basic-skills instruction as the major gap in their existing training portfolios. Dislocated workers were likely to fall short in both literacy and numeracy. Community colleges needed not only to provide that instruction but also to integrate it with related skills required for college-level instruction. For example, many dislocated workers knew little about computers and, in some cases, feared using them. Many needed an introduction to the culture of college in order to understand key skills such as asking questions and setting a study schedule. The challenge for colleges was to design efficient delivery vehicles for teaching all of these skills on a relatively compressed schedule.

While the institutions built programs to match the specific needs of their student populations, common characteristics included:

- > **Learning communities:** Instructors found that dislocated workers responded well to learning in cohorts with other dislocated workers, especially those from the same workplace.
- > **Open-entry and open-exit:** The schedules on which dislocated workers became available for courses (or were approved by their local Michigan Works! Agency) typically did not correspond to the beginning of a semester. Students therefore were permitted to enter at any time and leave when they had learned the necessary skills or felt ready to begin vocational coursework. This approach is typically incompatible with collaborative learning instruction. But Mott succeeded in aggregating smaller sets of students entering together into study groups, and these groups obtained the benefits of collaborative learning and peer reinforcement.
- > **Contextualized curricula:** Instructors tailored curricula to the goals and cultural interests of their students. These basic-skills courses were broadly contextualized to financial literacy, workplace culture, and similar concepts.

All of the programs described at the case-study colleges were related in some way to noncredit coursework. The colleges did not implement student success initiatives for

dislocated workers in for-credit areas. While the reasons may have varied, the regimentation of for-credit coursework due to rules governing articulation and transfer, financial aid, and accreditation proved to be a serious obstacle. “For-credit courses have to be delivered in the same way,” says Jenny Schanker of Lake Michigan College. “The ability to innovate is a little more on the workforce side.” However, some colleges pursued strategies to facilitate the transition from noncredit to for-credit instruction.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL MICHIGAN WORKS! AGENCIES.

All five case study colleges developed innovative programs to assist dislocated workers. But only the colleges that built a collaborative partnership with at least one Michigan Works! Agency leveraged No Worker Left Behind funding to educate large numbers of dislocated workers. Indeed, as LMC President Harrison notes, No Worker Left Behind is “more about the behavior of the Michigan Works! Agencies and how they’re operated than a community college issue.”

At Lake Michigan College, Harrison built a close partnership with the Michigan Works! Agency of Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. When Todd Gustafson became executive director of the “three-county MWA,” as it is commonly referred to, he found the service delivery structure to be confusing and fragmented. After discussions with Harrison and LMC staff, the two institutions developed a tight working relationship in which LMC became the three-county MWA’s primary contractor. This helped tremendously when the agency found itself flooded with NWLB applicants soon after the program was announced. The partners had to collaborate on developing complex processes, from intake and eligibility determination to agreement on common standards for college readiness or suitability for basic-skills training. With MWA funding, LMC developed the Career Transitions course to bring dislocated workers with weak basic and computer skills up to a college-ready level. “If not for the relationship we have, the things we have done would not have occurred,” says Gustafson.

Mott Community College and the Career Alliance (Genesee/Shiawassee Michigan Works!) similarly built a cohesive working relationship. The organizations are based in adjacent buildings and had developed enough mutual trust that Career Alliance contracted out its screening process to Mott. This enabled Mott to overhaul the screening process internally, an invaluable asset in meeting the unique needs of NWLB students.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.

All of the case study colleges reached out to important stakeholders outside the workforce system. These included:

> **Adult education providers:** These providers of basic-skills instruction frequently helped offer literacy services to low-skilled dislocated workers. However, state budget cuts have fallen harder on adult education than on other sectors, which limited the value of these providers.

- > **Economic development agencies:** These agencies were valuable allies in connecting colleges to area employers. In one case, community college staff took part in negotiations to recruit a large company to open a plant in the region.
- > **Employers:** The overriding priority at all of the community colleges was connecting their vocational programs to employer demand, so employer contacts were critical to success. College staff showed great flexibility in designing programs to meet employer needs. For example, Lake Michigan College designed an energy-production program around projected employment demand at two regional nuclear power plants.

INTEGRATE MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM TRAINING.

While Michigan committed state funds to No Worker Left Behind, the primary strategy was to align federal funding streams to support adults seeking long-term training. The most important federal programs related to the Workforce Investment Act, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and vocational rehabilitation.

The colleges strongly influenced by NWLB used multiple funding streams to support their students, even though they were not necessarily in the driver's seat. The Michigan Works! Agencies that partnered with them received funding from each of these programs and set the terms by which participants were deemed eligible for a particular funding stream.

Because Mott Community College conducted screening on behalf of its local Michigan Works! Agency, administrators there could evaluate federal funding streams from both the workforce and postsecondary perspectives. They devised an intake system to identify appropriate funding sources for all adult students. "The idea was that even though there may be different eligibility requirements, we needed to spend time up front identifying the various programs that persons might be eligible for, and then to access those funding streams to support the person to program completion," says Robert Matthews, Mott's Executive Dean for Workforce and Career Development.

Not all funding sources could be fully integrated. For example, expanding the use of federal Pell Grants reduced fiscal pressure on Michigan's workforce programs, making them an important resource for the state as well as for the adults receiving grants. Michigan Works! Agencies learned how to assist applicants in completing financial aid forms to receive Pell Grants. Because these grants go directly from the federal government to the student, however, agency staff could not track students with Pell funding or integrate the program into a broader structure.

There was also some confusion over the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act. While the state clearly viewed this funding stream as a core component of No Worker Left Behind, staff at colleges less significantly influenced by NWLB tended to view it as distinct. The federal government established TAA to cover education and training costs for workers dislocated

by international trade, and workforce agencies apply it to this purpose regardless of NWLB's existence. However, aligning TAA with other funding streams helps to supplement weak areas. "In some cases, the funding streams cover different costs," notes Matthews. "While TAA students have access to training dollars, they don't have access to supportive services unless they are dual-enrolled in [the Workforce Investment Act] as dislocated workers."

The college's senior leadership made the decision to break down historic silos in order to ease the transition of students from noncredit to for-credit classes. PCC president Cleve H. Cox has remarked, "I want students to simply progress without stigma attached to basic skills or developmental education."

CHALLENGES

• The challenges of the new era

• The challenges of the new economy

• The challenges of the new society

• The challenges of the new politics

• The challenges of the new culture

• The challenges of the new technology

• The challenges of the new environment

• The challenges of the new globalisation

• The challenges of the new democracy

• The challenges of the new internationalism

• The challenges of the new global citizenship

• The challenges of the new global governance

• The challenges of the new global economy

• The challenges of the new global society

CHALLENGES

Leaders and staff at the case-study colleges felt they had to make significant changes to meet the needs of displaced workers enrolling in their institutions. No Worker Left Behind was intended to help them make those changes. Nonetheless, they faced several major challenges, some created by the NWLB structure itself.

WORKFORCE AGENCY GOALS ARE NOT ALWAYS ALIGNED WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGE GOALS.

While the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth urged collaborative relationships between Michigan Works! Agencies and community colleges, each workforce agency is autonomous in its operations. The agencies administer or oversee a wide variety of federally funded workforce programs, many of which are driven by outcome metrics that are unfamiliar to most community colleges, such as job placement, job retention, and income gain. In the absence of explicit guidance or rewards, some agencies established arms-length transactional relationships with colleges. For example, George Waite describes the relationship between Grand Rapids Community College and Area Community Services Employment and Training Council, the Michigan Works! Agency that serves Grand Rapids, as formal rather than collaborative. He notes that GRCC is only one of a dozen or so contractors: “We’re one of the larger contractors, but we’re just one contractor. The agency contracts with a for-profit company, Ross Providence, to screen people, and they get rerouted to go somewhere quick.”

ACCELERATING THE PACE OF AN OVERALL PROGRAM OF STUDY IS HARDER THAN ADDING AN INNOVATIVE COURSE.

Community college staff responded to the needs of displaced workers by adding courses that prepared them for college-level vocational study. However, the colleges rarely redesigned the entire program of study to meet the needs of this population. The most significant exception is Mott Community College, which developed the Fast Break accelerated courses that integrated instruction in basic and computer skills, as well as instituting career counseling, noncredit vocational coursework, and credit-bearing vocational coursework.

MANY DISPLACED WORKERS NEED BASIC-SKILLS TRAINING TO BECOME COLLEGE READY.

As displaced workers surged into their local Michigan Works! Agencies to make use of NWLB subsidies, it became apparent that many were unprepared for college-level work.

A subsequent study found that one-third of all Michigan adults lacked the literacy skills needed to perform college-level work. No Worker Left Behind did not adequately address the needs of this population, but the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth quickly began developing additional strategies to extend No Worker Left Behind to adults whose literacy level left them unable to make use of it. Subsequent to the launch of NWLB, however, the state took other measures to support training among low-literacy adults, including the disbursement of “innovation grants” to community colleges and the development of a comprehensive plan to build collaboration among community colleges, other adult education providers, and Michigan Works! Agencies.

CONFUSION OVER THE SCOPE OF NWLB COVERAGE FOR BASIC-SKILLS INSTRUCTION HAMPERED SERVICE TO LOW-SKILLED ADULTS.

We found considerable confusion over the extent to which NWLB would cover basic-skills instructions for students who lacked college readiness. “No Worker Left Behind will not pay for foundational courses,” says George Waite, M-TEC director at Grand Rapids Community College. “It’s the great weakness of the program. Thousands of people aren’t getting trained.” Mott Community College administrators, on the other hand, believed that basic skills were covered if the students were enrolled in a “program of study.” In the view of officials of the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth, however, NWLB clearly does cover basic-skills instruction. From their perspective, Michigan Works! Agencies set widely varying standards because of perverse incentives created by the Workforce Investment Act, which tends to discourage the training of low-skilled adults.

NWLB’S BROAD ELIGIBILITY RULES ENCOURAGED COLLEGES TO PUT A PRIORITY ON SELECTING THE BEST-PREPARED STUDENTS.

No Worker Left Behind provides universal access to any unemployed adult, while holding workforce agencies accountable for placing graduates into in-demand jobs. Taken in combination, these rules were believed to bias workforce agencies toward orienting training services to higher-skilled adults, who require shorter and less intensive instruction to obtain new employment. “What has happened with No Worker Left Behind is that there are a number of people who are extremely well qualified and pursuing second careers using these dollars,” says MCC’s Jacobs. “A lot of people are using the program for interesting and useful things but not as useful as helping low-skilled adults.” This orientation toward “well qualified” clients left less money available to support NWLB applicants with low basic skills and who needed more intensive support to reach college readiness.



LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

No Worker Left Behind had a dramatic effect on three community colleges in the JFF study. Dislocated workers already were present in each community, and some had enrolled on their own initiative. But the initiative significantly increased the enrollment of dislocated workers at these colleges by providing funding, a local point of access, and a persuasive message from state officials at every level.

The influx of NWLB-financed students, in turn, prompted changes at the institutions. These changes included collaboration with workforce agencies to agree on standards for college readiness, streamlining of the intake process, and co-location of workforce agency caseworkers in community college facilities. The colleges also established new courses to teach basic and foundational skills needed before entering credit-bearing coursework, and they established or expanded career pathways initiatives.

It is important to note that No Worker Left Behind was not the only force catalyzing change at the case study colleges. Indeed, Grand Rapids Community College and Northwestern Michigan College established similar programs prior to and independent of NWLB implementation.

The experiences of the case study colleges provide valuable lessons for policymakers in Michigan and elsewhere about what worked well—and less well—in promoting innovation to increase student success.

REWARD COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND MICHIGAN WORKS! AGENCIES.

The most successful community colleges were those that established collaborative relationships with their local Michigan Works! Agencies. Workforce agency and community college staff who built these relationships reported starting with face-to-face meetings to learn the very different professional cultures and organizational structures of their counterparts. Next, they shared data on student assessments and enrollment history, as well as aggregate student/participant trends and outcomes. Finally, they met regularly to plan agency-funded courses and discuss problems. They also co-located agency staff at the community college to serve students referred by the agency. These collaborative relationships, built on trust and reciprocity, remain rare. Adding incentives for collaboration might nurture successful innovation to community colleges around the state.

TARGET BENEFITS TO ADULTS WITH LOW BASIC SKILLS.

While No Worker Left Behind serves multiple constituencies, a sharper focus on adults with low basic skills would have resulted in a larger number of dislocated workers enrolling and completing their studies. NWLB created tremendous demand for education and training services, particularly among dislocated workers, but most of these adults did not possess the literacy or numeracy to succeed at the college level. Officials at the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth argue that low-skilled adults were eligible for NWLB funds. But this policy was not consistently understood or applied at the local level. The shortcoming may have been exacerbated by NWLB's broad eligibility standards, which enabled Michigan Works! Agencies to serve unemployed adults who were already essentially work-ready and could therefore be "re-skilled" and placed in employment with modest effort. Strengthening support for basic-skills instruction should be a top priority in the future, and consideration should be given to focusing eligibility standards on low-skilled or mis-skilled adults.

SUPPORT A SHIFT IN THE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM TO SUPPORT POSTSECONDARY TRANSITIONS.

Involvement by Adult Basic Education providers varied from college to college but generally did not play a central role. The most important reason was inadequate and declining funding. In addition, the providers cited certain characteristics of their programs that did not align well with community colleges, such as nine-month schedules and a lack of contextualized instruction.

DEVELOP A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF COLLEGE READINESS.

College readiness is a crucial determinant of college success. There is no single standard for college readiness: different courses of study require different levels of literacy and other skills. Yet the importance of reconciling differing standards between Michigan Works! Agencies and community colleges emerged as a key theme in our interviews. For example, workforce agencies and community colleges use different tests to determine college readiness, and the lack of any approved concordance between them makes the process of identifying college-ready NWLB participants more cumbersome.

STRENGTHEN DATA ANALYSIS.

The state could not provide data on NWLB enrollment or outcome patterns at community colleges. This makes effective policymaking extremely difficult. For example, the state made a great effort to enroll eligible adults in college using Pell Grants, but officials of the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth could not determine how many adults actually did so. As a result, it is impossible to say whether the strategy substantially increased college access. It also will be impossible to determine whether NWLB-financed students are more or less successful in community colleges than other students. Going forward, it will be essential to put in place a uniform and effectively structured data collection and analysis system to inform policy and institutional decision making.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The state of Michigan took on a vital and difficult task in 2007: weaving federal workforce funding streams into a coherent system that would enable adults to retrain for new careers. While any overall judgment of the success of No Worker Left Behind will take longer to determine, we found that the effort led to important breakthroughs at community colleges around the state. The institutions we visited made significant changes to support adult students and boost their chances of success. Administrators at these colleges, ranging from field staff to presidents, directly credited No Worker Left Behind as a spur to their efforts. While the program faces an uncertain future, as do many workforce programs in the current fiscal climate, policymakers and institutional leaders in Michigan have learned a great deal in the No Worker Left Behind era. Those lessons deserve to be shared, scaled up and sustained.

APPENDIX

NO WORKER LEFT BEHIND TRAINING FUNDS ALLOCATIONS AND PROJECTIONS, FY 2007 TO 2010
Prepared by Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth, January 2011

FUNDING SOURCES	ALLOCATED TO TRAINING, AUGUST 1, 2007-JULY 31, 2008	ALLOCATED TO TRAINING, AUGUST 1, 2008-JULY 31, 2009	ALLOCATED TO TRAINING, AUGUST 1, 2009-JULY 31, 2010	PROJECTED ALLOCATION FOR TRAINING, AUGUST 1, 2010-JULY 31, 2011
WIA Adult	\$12,028,899	\$36,894,747	\$24,664,098	\$16,434,441
WIA Dislocated Worker	\$26,963,381	\$22,224,599	\$16,384,645	\$15,490,569
WIA DW for NWLB	\$1,219,614	N/A	N/A	N/A
ARRA Adult	N/A	\$3,598,344	\$16,916,445	\$1,831,728
ARRA Dislocated Worker	N/A	\$5,296,797	\$27,007,607	\$4,490,195
ARRA ECAR	N/A	\$28,305	\$339,409	\$280,000
DOL National Emergency Grant (WIA DW) Auto	Included in DW	\$1,915,453	\$1,147,657	N/A
DOL National Emergency Grant (WIA DW) REI	N/A	N/A	\$15,889,658	\$6,740,601
WIA Incentive Funding	\$877,218	\$400,000	\$322,463	\$320,000
WIA Statewide Activities NWLB	3,640,560	N/A	N/A	N/A
ARRA Statewide Activities NWLB	N/A	N/A	\$1,388,916	N/A
Demonstration Grants (WIA)	Included in IW	N/A	N/A	N/A
Incumbent Worker IW (WIA)	\$4,811,000	\$1,898,255	\$1,268,940	\$1,160,000
Trade Adjustment Assistance	\$24,448,926	\$33,148,721	\$60,598,331	\$70,000,000
TANF	\$1,433,288	\$8,208,514	\$9,540,910	\$6,500,000
JET GF/GP	\$1,610,381	N/A	\$1,105,344	N/A
TANF (JET Plus)	N/A	\$9,224,513	N/A	N/A
FAET	N/A	\$719,407	\$436,097	\$450,000
Vocational Rehabilitation Client Services	\$10,660,445	\$10,947,098	\$12,193,115	\$12,000,000
NWLB GF/GP	N/A	\$6,755,437	N/A	\$4,500,000
Private Contributions (Grainger)	\$22,500	\$52,500	N/A	N/A
Private Contributions (Chrysler)	N/A	\$38,713	\$40,000	\$40,000
TOTAL FUNDING	87,716,212	\$141,351,403	\$189,243,635	\$140,237,534

NOTES:

WIA Adult: Based on an average of 40 percent of the WIA allocation used for training.

WIA DW: Based on an average of 40 percent of the WIA allocation used for training.

ARRA Adult: Based on an average of 40 percent of the WIA ARRA Adult allocation used for training (P.I. 08-29)

ARRA DW: Based on an average of 40 percent of the WIA ARRA DW allocation used for training (P.I. 08-29)

ARRA ECAR: Training allocation through P.I. 09-12

DOL N.E.G.: (Auto) Allocated P.I. 08-09

TAA: 90 percent of actual allocation used for training

TANF: Based on 5 percent of the total allocation used for training, August 1, 2009-July 31, 2010 represents a 15 percent cut from the previous year

GF/GP JET: 2009 based on 40 percent of P.I. 08-26 funding used for training

TANF JET PLUS: Based on actual expenditures (a/o 5/5/09 when money was rescinded)

GF/GP: Based on premise that 90 percent of actual FY 2010 allocation will be used for training

Grainger: Represents a donation to NWLB for training through M-TECs

Chrysler: Estimated contribution to NWLB from Chrysler for hourly workers taking buyouts.

ENDNOTES

¹ Like other states, Michigan does not require any central data reporting from community colleges other than that necessary for federal reporting standards, which focuses narrowly on full-time enrollment and completion rates.

² JFF conducted site visits to Lake Michigan College, Mott Community College, and Macomb Community College and extensive telephone interviews with staff at Grand Rapids Community College and Northwestern Michigan College.

³ See: Eric Scorsone & David Zin. 2010. *The Michigan Economy and State Revenue: A 10-Year History (1999-2009)*. Senate Fiscal Agency. April.

⁴ For the Michigan rate, see: <http://www.milmi.org>. The national rate was 9.4 percent at that time, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

⁵ See: <http://www.michiganadvantage.org/targeted-initiatives/21st-century-jobs-fund/default.aspx>.

⁶ See: Nadwa Mossaad, analysis of 2008 American Community Survey, Population Reference Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau.

⁷ See: CLEG Low-Wage Worker Advancement Committee Adult Learning Work Group. 2008. "Transforming Michigan's Adult Learning Infrastructure." A report to the Council for Labor & Economic Growth.

⁸ See: Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth. No date. "No Worker Left Behind After Three Years: Successes and Challenges."

⁹ Debbie Borie-Holtz et al., *No End in Sight: The Agony of Prolonged Unemployment*, Rutgers University Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, May 2010.

¹⁰ Anthony Carnevale et al., *Help Wanted: Projections of Job and Education Requirements Through 2018*, Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce, June 2010.

¹¹ Lake Michigan College total provided by Michael Tucker, Michigan Works! Agency of Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Counties. A data entry problem made it necessary to substitute administrative data for the DELEG total.



JOB S FOR THE FUTURE

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