SERVING ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED ADULT POPULATIONS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES
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>> MARR: Hello, I'm John Marr, Columbus State Community College, and I would like to welcome you to today's National Dissemination Center's Webcast, Serving Economically Disadvantaged Adult Populations in Community Colleges. Our presenter today is Dr. Holly Moore from Shoreline Community College in Seattle, Washington. Holly, it was terrific having a chance to kind of talk with you in preparation for today's Webcast. And thank you for joining us today.

>> MOORE: Thank you.
As John has said, I'm the president at Shoreline Community College, it's a small community college in the northwest, just north of Seattle. We serve about 15,000 students a year. And today I'm going to talk about community colleges as the great equalizer.
I have to give credit to Rich Noffsinger, who was the state workforce development director in Washington, for coining this phrase, and I really believe in the mission of the community colleges and how this issue of being the great equalizer can even the playing field for so many adults in our country.
Much attention has been placed on community colleges in the last eight years. You think about President Clinton's advice that a community college be within six miles of every citizen. Or even more recently when Bush stated -- President Bush stated in the State of the Union address how important community colleges were to workforce development. That was a monumental moment for community colleges when both sides stood up and applauded that comment.
It really demonstrated that the mission of community colleges is a nonpartisan endeavor.
But even before this, when the Truman Commission, in 1947, envisioned our system, they envisioned a system that was about hope and promise, that was about creating an open door.
We have been successful in taking folks from where they are and helping to get them where they want and need to be. And that's what I'm going to talk about today.
I want to start out by talking about why we deliver services to disadvantaged adults. I have a personal goal in this.
A personal goal around breaking the cycle of poverty.  
35 million men, women and children are living in poverty today.  
The answer, the way out, for these folks is through the community colleges.  
In 1999 over 90 million adults were seeking some form of postsecondary education.  
I'm sure in five years it's well over that number now.  
We all have felt the explosion of students on our campuses.  
Whatever the actual numbers are, there has been a 50% increase in participation in postsecondary education in the last decade.  
That's an important reason why we, as community college professionals, need to deliver services to disadvantaged adults.  
The other one is that we always have heard about 80% of the jobs in the future are going to require some postsecondary education.  
We've always heard that word "some."  
What we really need to attend to is what is in the context of that "some."  
Certainly it's basic skills, certainly it's communication and math skills.  
But a growing number of companies are saying that they need people to be technologically literate.  
So, in addition to these 80% of jobs requiring postsecondary skills, they're going to require technological skills more than anything else.  
Tony Carnevale has calculated that if our current trends continue, by the year 2020 we will have a deficit of 12 million adult workers without the skills necessary to be successful in their jobs.  
This is a reason why we need to deliver services to disadvantaged adults.  
And then the final -- my final bullet really has to do with the multiple mission of the community college.  
We know that community colleges have historically served transfer students, students planning to go on for advanced degrees.  
We have also, in the past 20 years, become strong providers of workforce education.  
And throughout our mission -- our existence, rather, we have always been there to provide for a basic education for all citizens.  
That means that we are about access.  
We are about keeping that door open, regardless of the trials and tribulations that we all might undergo with trying to keep the funding available to keep that door opened.  
The community college is the great equalizer is what I started this conversation out with.  
And I really believe that's what we're about.  
We're about leveling the playing field.  
We are about giving people a chance to be self-sufficient.  
Many people are concerned right now about access to colleges, and thus access to career opportunities.  
And they are concerned that community colleges and colleges in general
really are about providing education to families with high incomes and with high levels of parental education.
That has never been what the community college is about, and we cannot allow it to become a driver for postsecondary education in the United States.
Back to our comprehensive mission.
The workforce mission of our college means that most of our institutions have a wide assortment of programs in professional technical areas.
I'm going to use Shoreline as an example.
Over the past 10 or 15 years, we have increased our professional technical offerings to include about 50 different programs across our institution, where students can complete degrees and lead -- that lead to family wage jobs.
These pathways are important for disadvantaged adults so that they can get and find their way out of this cycle of poverty.
Whether it's into programs in the automotive industry or biotechnology or the health care industry, we have the connections that lead folks to high-wage jobs.
We also have the experience.
We have had a long history now of taking dislocated workers and training them and educating them to regain their skills and regain their wages.
And with these folks, we have learned that there is more than educational challenges that they face.
They face personal and emotional challenges.
And with our work with dislocated workers we've been successful in meeting these challenges; and, therefore, will demonstrate that we are successful in meeting the challenges for disadvantaged adults.
And then finally -- this is a very important part, and I'm going to go into this a little bit more in the next slide -- but most of the community colleges across this country are strong multicultural environments.
We're diverse campuses.
And that makes people feel comfortable.
They see their faces reflected in the faces of other students, of faculty, and staff.
And they become comfortable.
They know that this is a place where they can learn and gain the skills necessary to be successful.
Let's take a little closer look at some of the demographics, at least in the state of Washington.
In the fall of 2003, our enrollment of people of color in the community colleges was 29%.
This compared to a state population of people of color of around 22%.
More important than that, the number of students of color has increased by about 5% every year for the past four years.
What I think is most important -- interesting to look at, and I'm
about to point to this screen, and I know that you can't see me pointing to the screen -- is if you'll look at the Latino and Hispanic bars, you'll see that that's been tremendous growth in the past several years in their population -- in their participation in community college -- in the community colleges in the northwest. That is a group of individuals that have historically and in the last decade been under-represented in higher education. And so it's -- it's significant to see those students attending community colleges and becoming a part of the fabric of those institutions.

In addition to our diversity of color, we also have a huge diversity of income, more so than any other institution. We know that by the number of students that we have continually served who are on TANF, or students who have come to us as a result of long-term unemployment.

One of the things that -- one of the reasons that they've come to us is because we have been successful. If we look at, again, that dislocated worker population, in the state of Washington we've been very successful with that. Our wage recovery for dislocated workers has hovered around 85% for the past several years. So we know that we can be successful in taking people to where they need to be.

And we know that education pays off. This is a slide from 1999, but I still think it's important and significant to look at. When we look at in 1999 the poverty line was $300 earnings per week, and if we look at men and women, women in the first column and men in the second column, you see that without a high school education, women were earning an average of $200 a week, and men were earning right around $300 a week. This is -- this poverty line of $300 a week, I might add, is for a family of four. And with inflation, I'm sure that's changed, but that's still significant.

One of the things that we can look at is that education has a return on investment, and the return on investment is absolutely evident when you look at the wage of people with an A.A.

The average salary, weekly salary in 1999, for a woman with an associate of arts degree doubled to $400. That's a significant return on investment. And for a man, it is just under $600. So you can see that education pays off and will help break this cycle of poverty.

But beyond that, aside from the importance that we give to society by educating disadvantaged adults, there are benefits to the college that will pay directly to the college. First of all, as I've mentioned time and time again, this defines our
multiple mission. It makes it real to the community. It demonstrates that we're not just about transferring students, we're not just about serving the elite student. We're about serving all students. That's what our mission calls for. We're about keeping the door opened and accessible to all students. Therefore, by involving disadvantaged students on your community college campuses, you are defining your mission. We also -- it also expands and draws attention to our partnerships. Certainly, all of the attention we have received in Washington, D.C. in the past few years has to be because we, as community colleges, have strong partnerships and have been successful in serving those partnerships and providing our part of the deal. One of the things that serving disadvantaged adults do is that it expands those partnerships beyond businesses and industries to community-based organizations and social service agencies, and to other colleges and universities. In addition, it establishes our role in economic development. It provides more than just lip service that the community college has a part in economic development. You've seen demonstrated the return on investment, the ROI, for an education. But it also -- we also provide tax-paying citizens, increasing the tax base, increasing the economic stability of the region. Beyond this, companies and industries and businesses stay, communities become viable when there is a ready pool of skilled workers to provide what is needed for that company to be productive. The real -- this -- the final bullet demonstrates our ability to be really accountable. I don't know about your state, where you're listening from across this nation, but I will tell you, in the state of Washington, like many other states across the nation, we are being faced with accountability measures. How do we demonstrate that what we do is viable and accountable? When we show progress with taking people from where they are with the challenges they have to our legislators, to the funders, to the federal government, we demonstrate that we are successful in real terms, in accountable terms, in terms that we know we can achieve. I'd like to consider for a moment the goal of economic development. And I want to tie economic development into the community colleges and into our serving disadvantaged adults. Because I think that's another reason why we do this. It's good for the economy. The goal of economic development is to improve the standard of living for all citizens. As Rich Noffsinger, I mentioned him earlier, mentioned, any strategy around economic development that doesn't lead directly to higher
incomes for all citizens is a bad one, and it is a bad one for disadvantaged adults in particular. We have a ready pool of workers. We can help our communities achieve economic stability by providing education to disadvantaged adults.

There's another interesting factor to play into this whole scenario around what we do in our communities. One thing we know is those regions of the world that do not have industries that can compete in a global economy are poor, and that they must have this skilled workforce.

I'm back to 35 million adults -- million people living in poverty. Millions of more individuals with academic challenges. All of this equals the potential of a pool of highly skilled workers, if we take the advantage to educate disadvantaged adults.

I want to share with you kind of the -- that -- the concept of how workforce education to disadvantaged adults can build a cycle that helps create a competitive advantage. By providing workforce education, we give disadvantaged adults the skills that are necessary to work -- to achieve in the workplace. By achieving in the workplace with these skills, they increase the company's productivity. By increasing the company's productivity, we increase the standard of living for the entire community.

This is a direct representation of why community colleges need to get into the business of two things: Providing education to disadvantaged adults, and being a vital part of the economic development of your region.

Productivity and prosperity, or plus prosperity, equals a competitive advantage.

I want to read this first bullet. Increasing productivity and sustaining growth is the only real way to increase the standard of living of our citizens. I think that's important to realize.

If we increase the productivity of a company, we will sustain its growth and thereby increase the standard of living for everyone in that community.

If you think about it, the world's most competitive country -- companies are not located in low-wage, no-regulation countries. They are most often found in areas with the highest wages, areas with the highest qualities of life, areas that have factors that can sustain high productivity and educate the workforce, create entrepreneurialship and have a sound infrastructure.

That's where we find them, in areas where there are community colleges.

I want to emphasize this, the second bullet about productivity is about working smarter. It's not about working cheaper.

That ties to my interest in making sure that the disadvantaged adults
that we educate, we educate for high-wage jobs so that they can have family self-supporting, self-sustaining incomes. This is essential to our country, not just our communities, but to our country as a whole in our future. We know that economic development is regional. We've heard this time and time again. I want to say to you that disadvantage is regional, too. Just by the phrase "pockets of poverty," that demonstrates the regional nature of poverty and disadvantage just as much as it demonstrates the regional nature of economic development. This idea that there are clusters of industries in areas that support a regional economy would support that there are also clusters of areas where poverty exists, where there is not the same kind of access to education and industry, or at least people haven't seen themselves in -- in that arena.

In Michael Porter's classic study, "The Competitive Advantage of Nations," he found that the market leaders in virtually every industry tended to cluster around specific geographic locations. Those specific locations provided advantages to those industries, but they had certain qualities in -- in common. They usually had certainly available transportation, but they also had colleges there to provide the skills to give the workforce what was necessary to be successful. That is what we have as an advantage, community colleges are in your neighborhood. We are in the industry's neighborhood. And we are in those pockets of poverty that can lead folks out of that environment. The other thing is that community colleges being regionally based are great conveners. We can work with our community-based organizations to provide a pipeline for entry-level work to disadvantaged adults. We can work with the departments of social and health services, with unemployment agencies, to help produce this pipeline of folks to lead to family wage jobs.

In sharing this, this is from the Washington Competitiveness Council, and I found this interesting, but I found this also supported in a recent article in the Community College Journal by Charles English. Charles is a trustee at Seminole Community College in Florida. And he kind of sums of our Competitiveness Council by saying, in today's world, human resources or human capital increasingly determines the competitive advantage of our country. That is so essential to this whole dialogue that we're engaged in about serving disadvantaged adults and linking it to the economy of a region, of a community, of a nation. So what's the role of economic development in a community college? And why connect this with the disadvantaged?

One of the roles that we provide is adult literacy and basic skills to
ensure that our folks have a foundation for the rest of learning. That is of primary importance. It's a part of our mission -- remember that multiple mission -- and it's a part that people are increasingly asking us, why do we do this, shouldn't this have been done in K-12, in the kindergarten through 12th grade. If you are like we are in the northwest, our average age is crowding around 24 years old. That means that most of our students didn't come directly to us from high school, and that we cannot blame the public education system for the deficits that their -- that folks are facing in order to be successful in higher education. Many of our students went to work, didn't complete high school, many of our students are immigrants and refugees. So basic skills becomes an imperative, not just an educational imperative, but an economic imperative. As Charles English again noted, colleges committed to diversity -- colleges are committed to diversity and to assuring that America is prepared for the economic challenges of the future. As such, we must accept the fact that preparing disadvantaged adults will require support for developmental and basic education. We also have strong linkages to professional and technical careers, as I have said, that lead to family wage jobs. We provide -- and this is an important issue -- we provide access to transfer. This is important when we think about career lattices and career pathways. And we think about a student who comes to us now may say, what I want today is X; but what I want tomorrow is to be a lifelong learner. And to be a lifelong learner, that means that we need to have access to the whole postsecondary system for our students, and community colleges are uniquely positioned to prepare students to make those moves and to have the partnerships that are required to make those moves successful. Some of the other things that we provide in the economic arena, I'm not going to go into in terms of companies. But I do want to leave this slide with the mention of partnerships again and the importance of the role of community colleges in these partnerships. These partnerships are what's going to keep that door opened. Partnerships with other colleges, partnerships with K-12, partnerships with business and industry, and partnerships with community-based organizations, are what's going to keep that door opened and access for those disadvantaged adults as viable. In order to do this, we need to increase our effectiveness in this role. We need to increase our effectiveness in economic development. To do this, we need to not just partner with everyone, but to be
strategic around our partnerships, to make sure that those partnerships are designed to increase student success. We need to look at partnerships that will be successful for career lattices.

And I know that I'm using career lattices instead of career ladders, and I want to take a moment to talk about that. Career lattices provide students with not just one-way tracks. Ladders say, I start here at the bottom rung, and I go up step by step.

Many of us know that that's not how our careers went or our education went. We started here, and we went this way and this way and this way. It's more like a lattice.

And so I continue to refer to our colleges as providing lattices for future learning and future careers. So why take a community college approach to all of this? Eisner and Cliff, in 2002, described community colleges as uniquely positioned to be the neutral conveners, bringing all parties together, and to bind divergent interests for the betterment of the community and of the students. So that's why.

There are over -- I think over 200 colleges serving more than a million students across the nation, in both urban and rural areas. That's important, both urban and rural.

Joseph Barwick says that community colleges are particularly important to the social and human capital in rural areas. So regardless of where we are, we are accessible. We have the unique ability to combine developmental ed with vocational ed with case management.

We know about the educational needs of our communities. Most of the community colleges conduct frequent surveys of business, industry, labor, schools, graduates, and we know how to modify programs based on the needs of these students.

We have lower tuition, along with that comes lower allocations, but we have lower tuition that makes us more accessible. Robert Goliath in Workforce Intermediaries for the 21st Century reported that when they asked focus groups about community colleges as providing this kind of service, community colleges carried the best mix of brand attributes, characteristics, and positive experiences needed to limit risk associated with serving this population.

So if we think about it, the cycle of poverty can be broken, and community colleges are best situated to reverse this trend.

Right now you -- you can look at this slide and see that young people with high incomes are most likely to complete college by the age of 24.

Whereas, young people with low incomes, only about 7% are completing college by the age of 24. This is from McCabe's book, "No One to Waste," and it's the methods
that ring loud and clear about the importance of serving disadvantaged adults in our system.
More education equals higher wages, and more education equals lower unemployment.
This the common knowledge.
It's common knowledge that education includes socioeconomic conditions.
I want to point out two numbers on this slide, and they may be a bit difficult for you to see.
But the first number is the -- with the spike at the 6%.
That's the unemployment for folks with less than a high school education, earning on the average of about $18,900 a year.
And, as I said, unemployment exceeding 6%.
If we move down to an associate of arts degree -- and these are newer figures than what I shared earlier -- these figures are showing still an almost doubling in the average earnings to $33,000 a year.
But more important, look at that unemployment.
People with an A.A. degree are looking at about a 2% unemployment, just a bit over 2% unemployment on the average.
That says that more education does pay off.
This is one of my favorite slides.
I got this slide from a colleague, Dr. Darlene Miller, and I know she enjoys it, I enjoy it, too.
It calls for a paradigm shift in the way that we typically deliver college education to disadvantaged adults.
It creates a challenge, because higher education is bound up in years of tradition, whether our community college history is only a hundred years as compared to 500 in other postsecondary educations, we are still the youngest.
Because of that, I hope we're the most nimble.
But we've got huge dilemmas to face.
Legislation like the Higher Education Reauthorization Act is directed toward the needs of traditional students.
The concept of, it was good enough for my dad and my grandfather and my professor, won't hold any longer, we can't sustain the 10-, 16-week terms, we can't sustain no classes on weekends.
We can't sustain these long breaks between terms.
So we must shift our paradigm.
We must move from the traditional model, where we have a comprehensive assessment, be it an SAT, an ACT, a -- in the state of Washington it's an ASSET test.
We must move away from sequential forms of learning, English 101, English 102, Math 1, Math 2.
We must move away from segmented courses where we teach math in isolation.
How many of us remember hearing our kids say -- or hearing children say -- why do I have to know geometry?
What am I going to use it for?
And then they become a carpenter. We've got to move away from segmented instruction. We have to move away from the talking heads. That's what we're doing now, but hopefully we'll have an opportunity a little later on for a give-and-take. But we do need to move away from the lecture-based. And we need to recognize other ways of acquiring information rather than strictly from watching and reading and listening, but from being involved in the learning process. I'm going to talk now about some ways of re-engineering programs so that we can be more successful at serving disadvantaged adults. First of all, and primary, we need to have high levels of communication between the learners and the faculty and the staff, and learners with each other. Our assessment processes need to take that on. Our orientation processes need to take that on. We need to look at integrated ways to deliver services and instruction, interdisciplinary, if you will, and we'll take a page from that a little later on, and I'll describe some of how we can do that. We need to get off of place-bound learning. Learning does not occur just in the classroom. You can see that now, we're capitalizing on a distance-learning mode. Off-site delivery is going to be paramount, whether it's convenient to work, or convenient to the social service agency, or convenient to the bus lines, or in a mall, wherever it's convenient, that's where we need to be delivering services. We also need to modify our practices. I mentioned just a second ago that we can't go on the 10- or 16-week quarter. Most adults want to learn now in 11- to 12-hour chunks of time, maybe in a weekend. We need to think about open entry and open exit. We need to think about how we can chunk our curriculum in these 10- to 12- to 15-hour blocks into modules that build on each other. I refer to these as the Lego building blocks of education, where you take up a green Lego that makes up math and English and workplace basics, and you build it with a yellow Lego that is technology and sociology and other -- and we build these together into degrees and certificates, all the way through. We need to think about scheduling, as I've mentioned. In the May 4th edition of the Community College Journal, Terry O'Bannion and Jonathan Kaplan called for a pedagogy of engagement where students are active partners in the learning, not simply receptacles where information is stored and then dumped. These authors challenged faculty to relinquish their traditional teaching styles and to perceive themselves not merely as lecturers or performers, but rather as knowledge managers, as facilitators; not as
the featured star of a show, but as the host for students to embark upon a journey of education.

Further re-engineering of our programs are needed to provide the information necessary so that learners can make informed decisions, so that we're not deciding for them, we are not presenting them with the proscribed course of study, but we are involving them in the proscribed course of study.

We also need a system to recognize prior learning.

How many times have you heard that I learned this by the seat of my pants, or I learned this once I got onto the job.

We, in formal higher education, do not recognize other forms of learning -- of prior learning.

And this kind of learning needs to be incorporated into a transcript.

This is where I think we really need to do some work.

We need to modify our transcripts.

We need our transcripts to reflect not just what the student learned at that institution while enrolled in that institution.

We need to look at things that they learned in noncredit programs, professional certifications that they might have gotten, experiences that they've gotten on the job, and from life in general -- in general.

In essence, this document needs to reflect all of the person's learning, skills and competencies, not just what they learned from the textbook in that series of courses that they took at Shoreline Community College.

And, it needs to be transportable.

It needs to advance as people advance.

It needs not to be from one institution or one place of employment, but to be electronically managed throughout the person's lifelong learning experiences.

Our advantage -- our technological advances can do this.

I believe that we can work on a transportable electronic transcript that is fully articulated between colleges, employers, and even community-based organizations.

We also need to establish bridge programs that create clear pathways to degrees for students to go from where they are in a rapid fashion to where they need and want to be.

And then we need to get into the business that we haven't been in before.

We need to look beyond completion, beyond graduation, to how do we make sure that that student that we have educated is successful in their next steps.

And I'll talk about that a little later on.

I want to talk briefly on some assessment strategies, because I think this is one of the areas where we need to take a divergent viewpoint, we need to move differently than we have before.

I mentioned earlier the importance of communication.

When we look at assessment strategies now, we need to do them in a
one-to-one dialogue fashion. We need to look at what students can do. We need to communicate with students and find out what they can do and what they need to do next. We need more than standardized assessments. But we do need supplemental samples of their writing. Now, this does not have to be written on the spot, on the topic of why I want to go to college. It can be a business letter. Something that they have done that demonstrates their ability to write. They can demonstrate their checkbook, for example, and their ability to balance a checkbook, if they have one, those kinds of things. We need to look at supplemental samples in a different way. We do have to do some basic skills tests, but I don't think that those have to be in a standardized fashion either. We also, when we're looking at a student's readiness to learn, we need to look at their work and life experiences. This is important. We need to find out what their past history has been. We need to know what their family history has been. Has anybody in their family ever gone to college? I was a first-generation community college student many, many years ago, and if people hadn't taken the time and the energy with me, I don't think I would be here today. So that's very, very important. As well as all of the things I've mentioned, we need to include students, include the learner, in the evaluation, in the assessment. They need to do a self-assessment, so that they can work with faculty and staff to develop learning plans. When we bring -- when we are bringing students in, we need to do more than just gather that standard information. We need to look at information that can enhance the student's success factors and provide students with strong connections to individuals and to college groups. I want to explain one program that we have at Shoreline Community College that I'm particularly proud of that does just this. We have a program called CEO, it's Career Education Options, and CEO is a program that serves out-of-school youth. It's students who have exited school without a high school diploma. We serve about 500 students in this program, and we have been very, very successful from -- by taking this group of disadvantaged students and doing exactly this, engaging in a one-to-one dialogue, looking at other kinds of samples of their skills and abilities, meeting with them and connecting with them, considering their life experiences, and taking them to their next step. These students, many of them, don't have addresses, they have not been successful in the traditional college -- the traditional educational
arena, and they are being successful.
This year I watched one of those students walk down graduation and receive her R.N. degree.
I also watched another student become the number one General Motors technician in the nation out of this program.
So I know it can be done, and I'm particularly proud of the people that take the time to assess in new and different ways that assure success of students.
The other assessment strategies are around their academic goals.
We need to look at career assessment.
Many colleges have reduced counseling staffs.
I don't think that that's a good idea as we serve a more diverse student body.
I think it's really important that our counseling centers become centers as -- that are resources to our students, that help them look at their careers, that help them look at their interests, that help them define a work and school experience that can be positive, that in the end help them to find their passion.
If disadvantaged adults are going to be successful in the future and become self-sustaining, they have to have and find a passion for what they do.
I -- I'm reminded of a work-first approach, and I find that the problem with the work-first approach, is that we put people into any job.
They may not like what they're doing.
If they don't like what they're doing for the majority of their day, they aren't going to sustain that kind of involvement.
There has to be a passion.
And we, as educators in the community college system, have to help folks find that passion.
We need to find out where their anxiety points are, where their stress points are.
Do they hate talking in front of groups?
Do they hate -- are they extremely nervous just in being in a classroom because it's so foreign for their personal experiences?
Do they have any familiarity with technology?
When I started this talk, I mentioned the importance that industry is placing on technology.
We have to find out what their -- what folks' comfort is with technology.
Not just what they can do with the computer or with a technological device, but how comfortable are they with that tool in their hands, and what can we do to make them comfortable.
And then our assessment strategies typically leave right here.
We usually don't look at folks' personal goals.
But part of an assessment strategy for disadvantaged adult learners needs to consider personal goals.
We can do this through partnerships with community-based organizations
that have -- already have the knowledge and already have seen the challenges that this area of assessment can -- can bring. They can help us with intervention strategies that can lead to success for our students.

We need to think about how long is it going to take this person to get to the family wage job.

Oftentimes what we find is that we take an immigrant or refugee who -- who English is not their primary language, and we say, well, we'll put them in ESL classes for a quarter or two, that's what we have the funding for.

A quarter or two is not going to be enough to get a person to the level of -- the communication level that they need to be successful to get into a family wage employment position.

So those are the kinds of things.

We need to look at personal challenges, children, transportation.

We need to think about living conditions.

We need to think about those people who are living in shelters and homeless.

If we're going to serve disadvantaged adults, we don't cream, we don't pick and choose, we open our doors so that everyone can have access.

We need to think about financial supports, and we need to partner.

We need to look at who we can -- who can help us in getting the support necessary so that this person can be successful.

And we need to look at people's feelings and motivations.

Why do they want to be here?

As I said, passion is a big motivator.

All in all, our assessment needs to be ongoing.

It can't be a one-shot, done in one day, on one test, or in one conversation.

Conditions change, and people change, and that assessment must be ongoing.

We must actively listen and interpret what we hear.

And if we're going to do that, we will create intervention strategies that breed success for our students.

I'm going to take one assessment strategy and talk about it just briefly, and that's the prior learning assessment.

I want to acknowledge in this area the work of the CALE, the Council On Experiential Learning, and their initiative called ALFI, the Adult Learning-Focused Initiative.

These initiatives and this group have worked long and hard to develop tools for prior learning assessment that validate the work that folks do independently, that help us identify career processes, pathways, and that provide us with a document that our accreditation agencies say validate the learning process that took place outside of the college.

An adult learner-focused initiative is the same as an institution that is directed toward not just adult learners but disadvantaged adults. It's an institution where the learner is central, where what happens
to the learner is central, where the institution -- everyone in the institution is sensitive to our -- to the learner's needs and is flexible, and where communication is the driving practice for the entire college.

One other program that I mentioned earlier, and that's bridge programs. These programs not only teach basic skills like communication and math, but they incorporate problem-solving. And it is all done in the context of work and in the context of specific industries.

We use these programs in a collaborative fashion where learning occurs between the faculty and the student and the student's work and life experience. It supports for us many non-native speakers in short-term training programs.

And it assists students in developing their career lattices and making these career and educational choices that are built on passion, that they help -- it helps them find their passion and what they're interested in doing, and it does lead to stable economies -- I mean stable employment.

The bridge programs that I'm going to just provide quick examples of are two. One is the health care and the other is the automotive, we call on-ramp.

The students didn't get on-ramp, but we think it's a good term. The students receive an overview of the entire field in these programs.

And in the case of health care, we combine medical terminology and anatomy and physiology with the -- with the English.

Any of our programs or bridge projects are strategies for disadvantaged adults, we need to ask certain specific questions, and that is what are the learners' needs, how can we meet the needs, how can our academic and student support services be convenient, and how can we assist folks to meet their personal goals?

Bridge programs help do that. Very quickly, postemployment services and graduation -- and services upon graduation.

We need to provide more than placement services. We need to work with industries to be mentors for our students. We need to work at opportunities for lifelong learning by blending work with education.

We need to have support groups for students after they enter, and these need to be systematic. And we need to build strong relationships with our employer partners so that students can continue to learn. And that's where I have these lifelong learning accounts, LiLa's.

I would be happy, if anyone's interested, to provide more information on LiLa's.
One thing that is not mentioned in the slide is the need to prepare students for a global workplace. 
While we have reports that over a million students study outside of the United States -- outside of their home countries, but less than 1% of those are American students. 
If we're going to prepare students for a global workforce, we need to increase opportunities to study abroad. 
And one of the things that we have done at Shoreline Community College is to work with our international partners to provide scholarships for disadvantaged adults to travel abroad and study abroad in Asian countries, in South America, all over the world. 
A unique experience for freshmen and sophomore students to be able to do this. 
It will change a cycle of poverty. 
Finally, educating disadvantaged adults is not something that we simply should do. 
It is an educational imperative. 
Authors Hahn and Lieberman conclude that if job education problems of disadvantaged adults are not addressed in the United States, we could be faced with family instability, involvement in and exposure to crime, poverty, unemployment, and a home life for children that perpetuates the continuance of this lifestyle. 
We are the great equalizer. 
We are the college where Americans can achieve self-sufficiency. 
As the president of AACC, Jess Carreon says, we are America's colleges, we are the college of the people. 
We are the place where disadvantaged adults can realize the American dream and become productive members of a democratic society. 
I believe that community colleges must educate disadvantaged adults, it's the cornerstone of the open door. 
Thank you, and I believe we're going to have a few minutes to take some questions. 
>> MARR: That's correct. 
Holly, you can go ahead, and if you would, join me up here at the table. 
And we will give you an opportunity to respond to a few questions that have come in. 
Thank you for your insight and your experiences and your comments today. 
One of our participants is interested in knowing more about -- I've been trying to decipher some of these and make sure I'm presenting the questions as fairly as possible -- this question appears to be within the context of assessment, your comments regarding transcripts, documenting learning. 
What the person has sent us, they see your comments as more of a case for application learning versus book knowledge, or some comments or some concern in that area, and their concern is how will some of your ideas relative to documenting work experience and real skill and
competencies be both articulated and then -- both evaluated and articulated into the community college?

>> MOORE: Well, let me take that in two parts. Okay?

First of all, applied learning versus textbook learning, I think they both have value, and they both have a place in higher education. I would never say that one is better than the other. And I think it's important that we recognize -- John Gardner talks about -- Howard Gardner talks about the different types of intelligence, and he refers to seven different types of intelligence. Some of that intelligence is gained through what we read, through textbooks, but -- but not all of it.

There's a huge variety of different kinds of intelligence and different kinds of learning, and we need to acknowledge that. Some people, they are not less intelligent because they have difficulty sitting in a seat and listening to a speaker for an hour and....

That -- that doesn't mean that there's anyone above the other. What does happen now is: Now, how do we validate that learning in the way that our accrediting bodies will accept it?

I did mention briefly at the end about some of the work that CALE has done around prior learning assessment, and there are some very sophisticated ways of standardizing that learning so we can report it out and articulate it to existing courses that we have.

If we look at the outcomes that we expect a student to gain in, say, English 101, in terms of -- or in a basic writing and research class, to put it rather than in terms, in a basic writing and reading class, if we look at the outcomes that we want that student to gain, and then we can look at that student both orally and their written work prior to coming in, can't we say that this student can write a -- a paper, let's say they've written a paper about -- just about anything in their work, maybe they've written a paper about a new product that's coming on-line, and they're in a sales and marketing position of some kind.

If you can write what you've done, can't we look at that and say, okay, this has all of the components of a research paper. The person has shown a variety of sources, has indicated where those sources came from, all of the kinds of things that are required, then we can in essence say the student has achieved those outcomes, achieved -- in the workplace, we can look at competencies, skills and abilities.

So there are ways that we can do that.

And I think CALE has done some monumental work, and that's where their history is, is in prior learning assessment.

I believe they're moving in some directions now to look at how can we use the workplace as a learning environment, too, and how can we transcript that.

>> MARR: Another question that another participant's kind of
interested in your take on, seminar communities have significant doubts about the community college's ability to truly deliver a pathway out of poverty for the millions that you've spoke of. How do we make the case for truly honoring the community college's role in serving disadvantaged adults?

>> MOORE: That, we have to -- we, in the community college, and especially administrators, have to find ways to demonstrate the successes of students. We also have to -- we will fail at this, we will not lead people out of poverty, if we continue to offer our classes the way we do in the areas we do.

Right now we offer -- we have a program that's called Learning Center North, it's housed in a Department of Social and Health Services agency. And those students come to that program, and they know that they're in college, but they don't feel the pressures of being in a foreign place. And college for many people is like walking down a street in China or Japan might be for you and I, and not knowing the directions, and not knowing the language, and not knowing the faces. So if we can get ourselves out of there -- and that's a challenge for administrators, because we need to figure out how can we support those folks that are providing that education in those environments in the way that they need to be supported so that the students can be successful. We won't lead people out of poverty if we continue to do things in the traditional ways.

I agree with this comment, if we continue to do things in the traditional way and continue to demonstrate our success by the number of students that we transfer to the university, we will not lead people out of poverty.

>> MARR: Your comments actually dovetail with another question that you've just hit on. For as welcoming as community colleges attempt to be, we still encounter many disadvantaged adults who find community college campus to be somewhat intimidating. How do we do a better job of taking your message directly to the adults who most need our services?

>> MOORE: We don't wait for them to come to us, we go to them. I mean, that's number one. A community college needs to reflect their middle name. We need to be in the community, among the people that are in that community that make up our communities. And we need to be delivering our message, our services, our support in every way we can. We need to be seen as a partner with the departments of social and health services and the unemployment agencies. We don't need to be seen as an adversary.
You know, it's been a long -- I heard mentioned from an industry partner that colleges shake hands on a partnership like this (indicating).
The way we need to be shaking hands on these partnerships are like this (indicating).
We need to do this parallel.
We need to say what can we do, and how can we help, and mean it.
>> MARR: Another question that I think you might find particularly interesting.
It appears that more people are beginning to question the open-door access component of our mission.
How do we respond to members of our communities both within and outside of the academy who are suggesting that we take a more selective approach to admitting students?
>> MOORE: We've never -- this is very true.

I mean, when -- I had a trustee recently confirmed in our -- in our state legislature, and one of the questions that was presented that day was: How are we going to begin to close the door?
And I think that we -- we have to provide a better message.
This is -- community colleges have never -- we've never done a really good job of telling our story.
It's only recently, in maybe the past five years that -- and I'm a good example, you know, not -- I didn't tout for a long time my community college experience the way I should have.
I should have been broadcasting that from the tops of hills.
I was from a low-income family.
I was a person that got the break because I went to a community college.
And that's the message we need to be giving out there.
We need to give out there that students who come to us for basic skills are not necessarily the students that just graduated from high school.
In fact, there probably is only about a quarter of the students in our basic skills program.
Most of the people that are in our basic skills program are people who came to us who either are immigrants, refugees, dislocated workers who have been out of school for 20 years, a variety of people who, for a variety of reasons, don't have the basic skills.
It's not the fault of K-12.
The blame game is what we need to get away from.
Because the blame game puts us in a situation where the legislature and funders say, it's an either/or.
Either we fund it in K-12, or we don't fund it in higher ed.
It's not an either/or, it's two different stories.
And that's the message we've got to get across.
It's important that we get that message across, because we can't limit access.
That destroys the dream.
The unique nature of the American community college system is the open door. It is what makes us different than any other educational system in this world. Not just this nation, but in this world. And our linkages, our partnerships, is the other part of that unique mix. We can't close the open door.

>> MARR: Holly, your passion for your work is obvious in your comments and certainly how you express your point of view. So I’m going to ask you for your most unbiased response relative to the next question that's been provided for us. For many years now, many other providers of education and training have entered the higher education marketplace. In your opinion, do community colleges continue to hold a unique position in the higher education market; and if so, why and how might that be?

>> MOORE: Well, I think we continue to hold a unique position, whether it’s because our tuition is lower, although it's creeping, but our tuition is lower; whether it’s because of the open door; or whether it's because of our partnerships with business and industry and with colleges and universities that can lead students to lifelong learning. For those reasons, we are unique. I personally think that there have -- the issue of other private providers or other providers entering into higher education is a good one. I think that we need to not limit our partnership. I think we need to look at, how can we work with those agencies. It's just like CBOs, I think when we first got into welfare reform and the Workforce Investment Act was authorized, all of those kinds of things, we began to see ourselves in competitive roles. And a certain amount of competition is good. We need to form that competition around what can we do collaboratively to achieve success for the citizens of this country. That's the bottom line. How can we become an economically stable country where we are not looking at 35 million folks living in poverty and numbers growing every day?

>> MARR: And the final question that I have at this point -- I'm not sure if we've had any other submitted, we'll check on that momentarily -- and I find this question particularly -- very interesting. Rapidly changing technology would appear to place disadvantaged adults at an almost permanent disadvantage relative to long-term employment viability. How does Shoreline or other community colleges in general address this digital divide and truly position these adults for long-term
I think that when we look at the literature on disadvantaged adults, inserting them, we always hear about basic skills. We hear about workplace basics, we hear about soft skills, which are really the hard skills, we all know that, hardest to learn, hardest to gain.

But we don't -- we have neglected -- and I did say this in my opening comments -- we have neglected this issue of technology. There are a lot of ways we do this.

Part of it starts with the assessment. We need to find out how familiar -- comfortable, not familiar -- I really think I need to change that word on my slide. I think we need to find out how comfortable people are with technology.

I look at my mother, and she has a computer at home, and my dad usually does all of the Internet and all of that kind of stuff, and she was a media specialist, this is a person who should be comfortable with technology.

She's totally -- that computer is totally foreign. It took us a day to teach her how to turn it on, I think. But what became necessary is that she get comfortable with it. Have you ever seen a kid come to -- to a remote control on a TV or anything?

I mean, they just go up there and they start punching buttons. We go up there, and we go, okay, if I punch this, will the machine break, will this whole thing stop. They're not afraid of it; that's the comfort.

So part of what our challenge is going to be is how do we make disadvantaged adults comfortable with technology when they don't have it in their home.

That's where partnership becomes important. We have been -- we have worked on a partnership for TANF recipients who are on our pre-employment programs, and what we were able to do is make computers available to them at home, after they had completed the initial training program and enrolled in the second phase of the program and had completed the class with a B or better, then we made a computer available to them and to their home -- in their home permanently.

And we hooked them up with the Internet, as long as they were students of the college. And that created a cycle at home.

All of a sudden now Mom has a computer in her home, and this fifth-grader, who has -- who all of his friends have a computer in their home, now has one, too, and he can do his papers on the computer, and Mom's doing her papers on the computer, and all of a sudden there's a synergy around the technology that ignites the whole family.
We've got to do our work as administrators with funders, with outside organizations, with businesses, to get them to support this kind of thing, if we are going to break this digital divide, if we are going to give people the skills. And if we base it on this economic argument that I predicated this whole presentation on, businesses are going to be more likely to want to do this, because they're going to have a pool of skilled, trained workforce. That's good for the whole economy.

>> MARR: It certainly spells out a huge amount of work that's still out there for all of us who care about these issues.

And so again, thank you so much for sharing your insights about the role of community colleges in serving disadvantaged adult learners. We would like to invite you to join us again on July 27th for our next Webcast, our guest at that time will be Thomas Bailey with the Department of International and Transcultural Studies of Teachers College at Columbia University, and he will be discussing Accelerated Success Project Findings at that point in time.

Again, we thank you for being with us today, and we hope you'll join us again on the 27th.

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