

DRIVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE IMPACT OF THE ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

The Illinois Community College System prepares citizens to face the challenges of global competition and to meet the “skills gap” between the increasing needs of employers and the lack of trained workers. As the third largest system in the country, Illinois’ 48 comprehensive community colleges play a vital role in Illinois’ educational system and workforce preparation. Community colleges are critical to Illinois’ economic development, serving nearly one million residents each year.

No longer are there two sets of skills - those for the college bound and those skills for those bound for work. It takes the same skills and education at work or school.

In the system’s strategic plan, the community colleges pledge to:

75% of students enrolled in Illinois public higher education institutions annually are enrolled in community colleges.

- address workforce development needs with flexible, responsive and progressive programs;
- offer rigorous courses and programs designed for college and university transfer;
- expand adult education and literacy programs;
- escalate efforts to meet the growing demand for trained workers in high demand occupations.

..... **The Impact of Illinois Community Colleges on the State’s Economy**

Illinois community colleges strengthen academic skills, offer occupation-specific education and training, and prepare students for transfer to 4-year institutions. These activities represent significant economic contributions by increasing workers’ earnings and generating additional tax revenues.

- 8 out of 10 Illinois employers (81.2%) hired a community college student at some point over the past 10 years (2007).
- Illinois community college students who attended school in 1995 paid an estimated \$3.3 Billion in state taxes and \$12.8 Billion in federal taxes between 1996 and 2005 (2007).
- An Illinois community college education increases earnings for workers by 31% (2007).
- 49,628 community college degrees and certificates were awarded in Fiscal Year 2006 which is an increase of 27.4 % compared to 5 years ago.
- 5,575 businesses were served through community college Business and Industry Centers (2006).
- 95,546 individuals received customized training (2006).
- 271 businesses were attracted to Illinois, or retained, because of community college intervention.
- 13,406 individuals earned their GED (2006).
- 17,606 Adult Education students gained skills that helped to reduce their public assistance grants (2006).

..... **The Impact of Illinois Community Colleges on Transitions into Postsecondary Education**

Helping students prepare for, access, and succeed in postsecondary education is a crucial component of the community college mission. Through the development of innovative programs and partnerships, the colleges have established themselves as an indispensable component of the education to workforce continuum.

- One hundred **Adult Education** providers throughout the state deliver instructional and supportive services in English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, and vocational services.
- **Adult Education** services are provided by a diverse system, including community-based organizations, community colleges, school districts, Regional Offices of Education, correctional institutions, and universities.
- **Bridge programs** move students seamlessly from Adult Education or community college remediation to career and technical training that leads to high-wage, high-demand employment.
- Community colleges are engaged in addressing **critical skills shortages** in three major industry sectors: healthcare; transportation, warehousing, and logistics; and manufacturing.
- Community colleges help workers “re-skill” after plant closings or mass layoffs. **Dislocated workers** often enroll in one of over 240 career and technical programs.
- In collaboration with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, community colleges support entrepreneurs and small business owners through the **Illinois Entrepreneurship Network**.
- **Small Business Development Centers** (SBDCs) located on community college campuses provide businesses with management, marketing, and financial coaching.
- **Tech Prep** prepares students for high-wage, high-demand careers by connecting secondary and postsecondary programs, reducing duplication, and developing seamless secondary-to-postsecondary program pathways.
- All 39 public community college districts, all 59 Illinois regional vocational systems, and over 500 high schools are involved in **Tech Prep**.
- **Dual credit** allows qualified secondary students to enroll in college courses while still in high school. By aligning program content, dual credit positively impacts the way educators, students

- 934,902 students enrolled in community colleges in FY2006.
- High school student enrollments in dual credit programs at community colleges increased to 13,524 in 2005, up 370% from 1997.
- 99,805 students took at least 1 remedial course in FY 2006.
- 132,266 students enrolled in Adult Education Programs statewide.

- 4,774 individuals/organizations received counseling and management services in FY 2006.
- 87,460 high school students were enrolled in a Tech Prep program in FY 2006.
- 73% of all first year college Tech Prep students had earned college credit in high school (FY 2006).
- 21,369 secondary students enrolled in 10,918 dual credit courses in FY 2006, a 96% increase over FY 2002.

- and institutions connect and, ultimately, raises educational interaction.
- **Dual credit** programs increase student access to higher educational opportunities, enhance the value of the senior year experience, and reduce the financial burden of college on Illinois’ families.
 - All community colleges have active **developmental education** departments that help remediate academic deficiencies and transition students into college-level coursework.

..... **The Impact of Illinois Community Colleges on Transitions through Postsecondary Education**

Supporting students as they transition through postsecondary education - on community college campuses and beyond - is an important part of the system's purpose. By providing the right programs, at the right times, community colleges make it possible for all Illinois residents to take advantage of the benefits of postsecondary education.

- **Contract training** contributed to the start up of 75 companies; the expansion of 91 companies; the retention of 105 companies; the development of 1,618 jobs; and the retention of another 7,230 jobs.
- Community colleges continue to be an excellent resource for local businesses and individuals to receive short-term training or **continuing professional education**.

- *4 out of 10 credit students are enrolled in Baccalaureate/transfer programs.*
- *more than 1/4 of all credit students are enrolled in Career/CTE programs.*
- *1 out of 6 credit students are enrolled in Adult Education programs.*

In fiscal year 2006, Illinois community colleges provided 1,869 noncredit public training courses; 2,896 noncredit workshops and seminars to 28,932 individual participants; and served 2,738 organizations.

- Community colleges use **bridge programs** to address the needs of current students in remedial math, reading, and writing courses to move them more quickly to postsecondary credit classes within a community college.
- Adult Education provides individuals 16 years and over, without a high school diploma, an opportunity to return to school and complete their **GED** or learn the English language and transition to postsecondary education.

- The **Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI)** facilitates student transfer, saving students time and money toward baccalaureate degree completion. 271,657 students enrolled in community college transfer programs (FY 2006), and more than 110 institutions voluntarily participate in the IAI.

- The **IAI iTransfer.org** website is visited by over 2 million individuals annually.

- 67% of public university **teacher education graduates** were enrolled at a community college at some point prior to graduation. Nearly 1,000 transfer courses are offered in teacher education at community colleges, generating nearly 100,000 semester credit hours per year.

- **Partnering to offer bachelors degrees** on community college campuses is a priority - 27 community college districts have agreements with 4-year institutions to offer bachelors degree completion programs for their students.

- 254,584 students enrolled in 240 different **rigorous and relevant community college Career/CTE programs** (FY 2006).

- **Career/CTE programs** prepare students for high-wage, high-demand employment and further education.

- Community colleges assist Career/CTE students to transition into bachelors degree options through capstone programs with 4-year institutions, further expanding student earning potential and workforce opportunities.

- *20% of all degree seeking students enrolled in at least one remedial course (FY 2006).*
- *12,533 community college contract training courses were provided to 2,837 companies.*
- *18,693 students entered employment immediately after exiting an Adult Education program. 83% retained employment.*

..... **The Impact of Illinois Community Colleges on
Transitions from Postsecondary Education**

Community colleges significantly impact local economies throughout the state of Illinois, as well as the overall state economy. They stand as the primary workforce development resource for both individuals and businesses within their communities. The commitment of community colleges to their communities and the businesses that reside within them is the foundation of Illinois' economic success.

- Illinois community college students who graduated in 1995 paid an estimated \$168 million in state taxes and \$650 million in federal taxes over the next 10 years.
- More than 9 out of 10 Illinois community college **graduates** remain in Illinois after completing college and contribute to the state's economy.
- The four **career and technical program areas** with the largest completer earnings gains per credit hour were Protective Services, Construction Trades, Health Professions and Related Sciences, and Precision Production Trades – high-wage, high-demand jobs.
- Illinois community college graduates employed full-time averaged \$32,369 in **annual earnings** after completing their programs of study. This represents about 250% of the state's minimum wage.
- **Program completers** increased earnings by \$6,628 immediately after graduation (pre-post).
- Community colleges meet the needs of **unemployed or underemployed** serving 4,895 individuals through 958 courses, workshops, and seminars (2006).
- 16,899 students were served through counseling, job placement, job fairs, tutoring, networking, resume preparation, assessments, and advisement (2006).
- High school graduate/GED recipients earn \$7,899 more per year than those without a diploma.

- *49,628 students completed a community college program in FY 2006, up 27.4% compared to 5 years ago.*
- *1/3 of completers were in baccalaureate/ transfer programs, 2/3 were in career and technical programs.*
- *3/10 completers were minority students.*