

Training Initiatives Draft Reorganization Plan

As required by Section 30.10(a) of Session Law 2001-2004

**Submitted to the State Board of Community Colleges for
presentation to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight
Committee**

February 14, 2002

Reorganization of the Training Initiatives Program

Section 30.10(a) of Session Law 2001-2004 transferred the Training Initiatives program from the North Carolina Department of Labor, to the North Carolina Community College System, as a Type I transfer as defined under G. S 143A-6. As indicated in the legislation, "the Bureau of Training Initiatives is designed to provide training services and develop new training innovations similar to the North Carolina Community Colleges System's Workforce Development Programs. Consolidating these efforts at the North Carolina Community College System will result in greater efficiencies and coordination."

As required by the legislation, no changes in the organizational structure of the program could take place prior to January 1, 2001. Further, the State Board of Community Colleges is required to present a plan for changes to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee no less than 30 days before they are proposed to become effective.

This report represents the plan proposed by the State Board for reorganization of the Training Initiatives program, with a proposed effective date of April 1st, 2002

Program Funding

The Training Initiatives program is currently funded entirely through the Worker Training Trust Fund. For 2001-2002, the program received \$941,760 from WTTF "for customized training of the unemployed and the working poor for specific jobs needed by employers."

History of the Training Initiatives Program

Training Initiatives is a program outgrowth from the PreApprenticeship Division at the NC Department of Labor. Begun as an "in house" unit within PreApprenticeship, Training Initiatives used "performance based contracts" from the JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) system to create novel occupationally specific pre employment training for targeted populations. Operated within this context the small team working on this basis came to appreciate the lack of "human resource management" expertise in the public sector as an inhibiting factor in making quality placements of individuals. Seeking additional funding outside of the JTPA stream allowed the unit to develop a focus and staff capacity in the areas of job analysis, human resources management, field testing and human performance improvement methods and research.

Based on its success, the unit was awarded special appropriations from the Worker Training Trust Fund in 1992 to serve economically disadvantaged individuals and/or those who were unemployed or "underemployed". The unit was formally created by administrative re-organization within the Department of Labor as a new stand alone specialized operation under the same administration

that included Wage and Hour, Private Personnel Services, Employment Discrimination, The Apprenticeship Division and The Pre-Apprenticeship Division (renamed Workforce Development Division). Within four years the unit had won several grants and additional special appropriations from the state and participated in joint ventures with private and public sector project partners. Reflecting a strategic decision, the staff was contracted to become a smaller core group of full time permanent career employees who would have project and budget responsibilities within designated multi-county regions.

The projects and programs of the unit evolved over time to become more comprehensive. The first projects of the unit were straightforward pre-employment training programs linking individual members of a target population to specific job vacancies with pre-determined employers or occupational areas showing promise for stable and progressive employment. Other projects included the development of entirely new classroom based courses. A significant number of recent projects have focused on the identification or development of pathways to industry through recognized third party certifications as alternative qualifying routes to employment or career advancement.

Building on a history of involvement with pre-employment training programs, Training Initiatives has become nationally recognized for their early advocacy and use of a variety of objective assessments used in personnel selection and placement. All regional staff are now credentialed job analysts and most now also possess credentials in Human Resource Management (awarded by SHRM and HRCI-Society for Human Resource Management and Human Resources Certification Institute). In fact, most of the staff have Professional in Human Resources certification from the Society of Human Resource Management, as well as multiple job profiling credentials, making them well qualified to address workforce/human resources needs. The staff has participated in technical team constructions of national skill standards and in the validation of skill or occupational standards for the National Skill Standards Board and a variety of industry groups.

The program has also been innovative and cutting edge in developing, field testing and/or identifying new tools and approaches in the human resources arena. They have developed resident staff expertise in training, job analysis, and the six disciplines recognized as component parts of human resource practice*. In addition the unit is on track to develop collateral skills in the emerging study of "human performance improvement".

Regardless of program area, all activities of the program are based on the potential of human capital in the workforce arena and applying scientific principles and advances in human resources science to the operation of training, development or workforce operations. The program has routinely been active in the development or demonstration of new programs, and field tests new tools or processes in training and development area. The program has provided

leadership in the development or adoption of skill standards and the requisite assessments and certifications necessary to make those standards relevant to the worlds of employment and training. Training Initiatives has also been among the leaders in developing or using human resources metrics which identify the economic impact of training or performance interventions.

When administratively transferred to the North Carolina Community College System in November 2001, the Training Initiatives staff consisted of a Program Director and Administrative Assistant, six field-based Regional Managers (one vacant), and a position jointly funded with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to support youth apprenticeship.

Benefits of New Organizational Structure

Within the North Carolina Community College System, Training Initiatives will function as a program unit under the Economic and Workforce Development Division. It will support innovations and infrastructure for existing workforce development programs that include: Workforce Continuing Education, Human Resources Development, New and Expanding Industry Training, Focused Industrial Training, and the Small Business Center Network.

The addition of the Training Initiatives unit, with its focus on training innovations, provides a significant complement to the Community College Workforce Development programs. Training Initiatives has been the only state agency specifically funded to foster innovations in workforce development through program development, models, pilots, and demonstrations. By aligning the unit within the Community College System, the designated primary deliverer of workforce training, the program will be able to directly support innovations in training delivery through the community colleges. While North Carolina community colleges have traditionally been recognized as one of the leading workforce training programs in the nation (ranked #2 in 2001 by *Expansion Management* magazine), there have been very few Statewide resources available for continuously improving specific workforce development offerings.

While differing in function to the existing Community College programs, Training Initiatives has had a similar strategic focus in its program emphases that significantly enhances ease of integration within the Community College System. For example, Training Initiatives has developed model short-term training programs similar to those offered through Workforce Continuing Education, and played a significant role in the development and monitoring of national industry skill standards and certifications which is a current focus of Community College Workforce Continuing Education programs. Training Initiatives has focused efforts on support for unemployed and underemployed workers, the focus clientele of the Employability Skills Training now provided through the reorganized Human Resources Development Program, and supported entrepreneurial training innovations through development of programs like those

offered through the Small Business Center Network. The Training Initiatives program has played a very active role in supporting innovations in pre-employment training and services such as job analyses/work profiling, as commonly provided through the New and Expanding Industry Training Program. Finally, the Training Initiatives program has sponsored training pilots to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of traditional North Carolina manufacturers, similar in focus to programs delivered through the Focused Industrial Training program.

The integration of the Training Initiatives program within the Community College System offers a significant opportunity to enhance the program offerings of the Training Initiatives and Community College Workforce Development programs, and in turn enhance the workforce training provided to North Carolinians through all 58 community colleges and the Center for Applied Textile Technology. From a community college perspective, Training Initiatives provides a unique resource for continuously enhancing its workforce development programs through new program development and models, pilots and demonstrations, and the provision of hands-on technical assistance directly to community colleges to support local workforce development efforts. From a Training Initiatives perspective, the integration will allow sustainability of innovations by directly connecting the State-sponsored training innovations unit with the system designated the primary deliverer of workforce training in the state.

Training Initiatives Mission within Community College System

The mission of the Training Initiatives program within the North Carolina Community College System will be to enhance the delivery of workforce training through the 59 community college institutions by:

- 1) Developing short-term training programs in collaboration with local colleges and industry that will be disseminated freely to all North Carolina community colleges for delivery through continuing education, customized training, and Small Business Center programs. Efforts will focus on occupational profiling analysis, curriculum development, and train-the-trainer programs.
- 2) Sponsoring models, pilots, and demonstration training programs through local college workforce development programs, and disseminating successful models to other community colleges throughout the state.
- 3) Providing infrastructure support and technical assistance at the request of local colleges to enhance delivery of training services. These may include training related services such as job/task analysis, seminar type training programs not normally offered through current college programs, and/or strategic workforce development planning.
- 4) Conducting training research and development, monitoring and coordinating Community College System participation in national training initiatives such as national skill standards and certification programs, and benchmarking best practice training programs throughout the United States for the purpose of

continuously improving training delivery by North Carolina Community Colleges.

- 5) Sponsoring field tests of training programs and tools developed by third-party vendors, and negotiating opportunities for rights to these programs for delivery through the North Carolina Community College System.

Strategic Directions

The addition of Training Initiatives provides all Economic and Workforce Development Programs and every geographic region or occupational arena in the state an important new way to begin or continue important and strategic operations. Reflecting this important role, Training Initiatives strategic emphases will be reviewed with the Program Committees of both the State Board of Community Colleges and the NC Community Colleges Presidents' Association, and the Peer Review Team of Senior Continuing Education Administrators. They also will be incorporated into the Annual Strategic Initiatives of the Economic and Workforce Development Division.

Because Training Initiatives is dedicated to "beginnings or initiatives" it is perfectly attuned to the continuous development of new approaches, strategic "starts" and the addition of new training programs, resources and projects. In this regard Training Initiatives can be seen as an "innovation" function where new processes, tools or programs can be researched, explored and tested before a large scale ramping up of resources is directed to these untested approaches.

In its previous location the annual strategic plan for Training Initiatives was based largely upon an analysis of regional occupational needs for each of the multi-county TI regions. Based loosely upon the NC cluster analysis these programs sought to develop strong regionally based programs that would address a specific sector or target population through a local network of interested parties within a given geographic region. Likewise the delivery of programs, services and projects was focused regionally, within a particular staff member's assigned region.

By joining the Community College System, TI now has both the option and ability to develop strategic plans that encompass both regional and statewide needs and objectives. Staff will maintain a regional presence and activity base but their focus can now be directed to assignments for specific occupational and/or training areas and target populations that are statewide in scope. Because the community college system provides 59 institutions and multiple locations these "initiatives" can be designed from the start to complement or enhance the existing delivery system of the colleges and can build on resources already present. Likewise by focusing on a particular project or target group *as it relates to the community colleges* Training Initiatives staff can conduct needs assessments with these projects that will identify the areas needing additional resources throughout the system. Charging staff with this statewide

responsibility will bring new resources to compare, contrast and inventory existing resources, locate additional resources and identify needs in a more consistent and connected manner.

Staffing Reorganization

The current 8.5 staff positions now supported by Training Initiatives will be reduced to seven. The vacant position will be eliminated and the funding of the apprenticeship related position shared with the Department of Public Instruction will be supported through DPI. Per agreement with the Department of Public Instruction, NCCCS support for the position through the Apprenticeship program may be reexamined, should the transfer of the Apprenticeship program be approved by the U.S. Secretary of Labor.

The reorganized Training Initiatives program will be directed by a **Program Director**, who in addition to staff management and leadership responsibilities, will play a lead role in training research and development efforts including national skill standards and industry certification programs, and development of North Carolina specific skill standards and occupational profiles. She will also aggressively pursue resource development, including Federal and other grant opportunities that may enhance workforce development through North Carolina Community Colleges, and work closely with Senior Continuing Education leadership at Community Colleges to support program development for workforce continuing education programs, and coordinate program development activities with State and regional training resources including the Media Development Office and Regional Safety Training Specialists.

An **administrative assistant**, who in addition to her staff administrative duties, will assist in providing Service Center administration for sponsored job/task analysis and work profile/skill standards databases.

Each of the five current "regional staff" will convert to "**field staff**." Instead of focusing their efforts on each commonly supporting a specific region of the state, they will coordinate key initiatives that have statewide impact and develop key specialties and program affinities. They will however continue to be regionally deployed, located at community college sites, so they may form close partnerships and efficiently support local college efforts around the state. Each Field Manager will split their time between **program development** efforts that enhance college training offerings through curriculum development, and coordination of pilots, models, and demonstrations, and **program deployment support**, where at the request of local colleges, and dependent upon resource allocation priorities, they will provide training support services such as job/task analysis, or specialty seminars that enhance college offerings.

Field Staff will be assigned a **Program Affinity** area to support development of tools and programs relating to the five Economic & Workforce Development

program areas (Workforce Continuing Education, Human Resources Development, New and Expanding Industry Training, Focused Industrial Training, and the Small Business Center Network). Within the Economic and Workforce Development Division, they will also be lead staff for a specific **Strategic Project** area, to coordinate and foster development of resources and programming in priority training areas. Initial key project areas will include:

- **Manufacturing Programs** including coordination of further development of the North Carolina Manufacturing Certification Program..
- **Employability Skills Training** development, with a focus on curriculum development to enhance the core course offerings of the Human Resources Development program
- **Economic Literacy**, including broadening of the System's current Economic Literacy Initiative to include personal financial literacy.
- **Customer Service and Industrial Maintenance** program development; and
- **Strategic Human Resources Management** including coordination of job/task analysis services provided in coordination with customized training programs.

In addition to existing State positions, Training Initiatives project funds will on a limited basis support staffing at local colleges involved in statewide delivery of strategic training services. For the 2002-2003 program year, these will include staffing support (1/2 position) for the Task Analysis Service Center at Central Piedmont Community College (now funded through New and Expanding Industry Training), and support for an Economic Literacy Specialist (1/2 position now funded out of Focused Industrial Training). In both of these cases, coordination of these programs with local colleges will be placed under the Training Initiatives Program.

Participant Registration

Instruction provided by colleges that are supported with Training Initiatives funding allocations will not generate budget FTE. Training Initiatives supported training will be registered by colleges under a common prefix on the Continuing Education Master Course List. This will allow participants to be captured through the Common Follow-up System. When Training Initiatives supports instruction for pilot/demonstration programs or specialty seminars, it is recommended that these courses be fee waived.

Conclusion

The addition of the Training Initiatives program to the Economic and Workforce Development Division provides a significant complement to the workforce development programs offered by North Carolina community colleges. Increasingly, workforce development programs are seen as increasingly strategic

to economic development as evidenced by a recent study that indicated that access to a skilled workforce is the number one factor in global high-tech business location decisions. As a result, states across the nation are increasing resources in strategic workforce development programs. A report by the National Governors' Association indicated that state funding of customized training programs approximately doubled during the 1990s.

North Carolina maintains a reputation as one of the leading states in the nation for its workforce development programs, but continuing this position will require us to be more strategic with our limited resources. The integration of the Training Initiatives program into the Community College System is a sound move, coupling a proven innovation function with one of the nation's most extensive deployment systems. It provides the Community College System with a focused and flexible resource to enhance and continuously improve its workforce training programs.

