Cybersecurity Training – Key to getting people back to work

Meeting the demand for optical communications training

Positioning managers for leadership and success
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Getting people trained in cybersecurity and getting them back to work were the two key themes addressed at an event this summer hosted by Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) to celebrate the Pathways to Cybersecurity Careers Consortium’s one-year anniversary.

Representatives from nearly 70 businesses and organizations from the region’s top cyber and technology industries packed the room, demonstrating the interest is clearly there in providing a trained workforce for this high-demand and rapidly growing field.

Looking under a three-year, $4.9 million U.S. Department of Labor Community-Based Job Training grant, the consortium has already trained more than 500 people to meet the requirements of industry-recognized certifications. In addition to the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC), the consortium is comprised of workforce and government agencies and businesses as well as educational institutions that include Harper Community College, Howard Community College, University of Maryland University College and Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

Congressman John P. Sarbanes (D-3rd District) joined other speakers at the AACC-hosted event in lauding the consortium’s success in cybersecurity training, saying this kind of investment in human infrastructure is what is needed to help create jobs, not only in Maryland, but across the nation.

“We talk about the need to build physical infrastructure and security infrastructure, but this program represents the intersection of security infrastructure and human capital,” he said.

As the lead community college, AACC has enrolled 313 dislocated and incumbent workers in its cybersecurity training program since August 2010. An additional 160 participants have registered for the fall semester which began the third week of August 2011. Combined, these enrollments clearly illustrate that AACC is close to meeting its goal of training 500 participants long before the sunset of the three-year grant. Nationally recognized for its cybersecurity program, AACC has been named a Center for Academic Excellence (CAE2Y) for two-year schools in information assurance.

Part of the program’s success, said AACC President Martha A. Smith, Ph.D., is the longevity associated with a cyber career.

“The demand for cybersecurity training is clearly very high, and we know more is going to be needed in the future as technology constantly changes. In short, we have to get more people trained in cybersecurity. The demand is there, the need is clearly there, and this program works,” Smith said.

Kirkland J. Murray, president and chief executive officer of AAWDC, the lead partner in the consortium, agreed, adding the partnership works because the community colleges are nationally recognized for their cyber training while the industry advisory board ensures the curriculum meets workforce needs so program graduates can be hired.

“This project is about getting Marylanders back to work. The partnership between workforce agencies, community colleges and businesses has successfully built a pipeline that will simultaneously enhance the skills of our cybersecurity professionals, while giving our unemployed citizens the tools to enter this high-growth career,” Murray said.

According to keynote speaker Robert J. Giesler, “the most effective defense against cyber attacks is a human being,” adding this cybersecurity program can provide the spark to the students that the nation needs to continue developing new strategies and pathways to prevent cyber attacks.

Mr. Giesler, senior vice president for cyber consulting at SAIC, said when he was with the U.S. Department of Defense in 2006, the Comprehensive Cyber Security Initiative estimated it would cost $16 billion to combat cyber attacks. “As big a figure as that was, the main question was not where will we find the money, but where will we find the people to meet the demand,” he said.

County Executive John P. Leopold agreed, saying the program is good for county residents who need training to take advantage of jobs requiring cyber and STEM-related skills. According to AAWDC statistics, 536 people have enrolled in the training since July 31, 2010 with 92 receiving one or more certifications for a cumulative total of 162 industry certifications earned.

As a critical care nurse, Kimberly Downey became interested in the training as a way to maintain patient privacy when health professionals exchange patient information electronically. She’s since expanded her interest to include providing military personnel a protected way to communicate when deployed, both to family members back home and to other military sites.

The range of occupations in cybersecurity include computer programs, computer software engineers, computer support specialists, computer and information scientists, database administrators, networks and computer systems administrators, network systems and data analysts. For more information about the Cybersecurity Careers Consortium, visit www.aawdc.org/cyber.

By Susan S.C. Gross
Ciena’s optical Communications Certification is based on a tiered training curriculum that is part of a GCC national pilot program. Once students complete each course, they need to pass an exam to receive the certification. The first courses are offered at an associate certification level, but there are four levels of training:

- **ASSOCIATE CERTIFICATION (OC-A)** - This introduction is designed for anyone seeking a firm understanding of optical communications technology. This course focuses on the fundamentals and conceptual theories behind optical communications. It also covers optical communications protocols, devices, networks and emerging technologies. Potential candidates for this course are entry-level network technicians, sales and marketing personnel and anyone seeking higher levels of certification.

- **PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION (OC-P)** - The applications course is designed for technicians seeking a practical understanding of optical networks.

This course focuses on how devices are deployed in optical networks. Potential candidates are technicians and engineers responsible for installing, configuring, monitoring and troubleshooting optical devices and networks, and beginner-to-intermediate-level Tier II network support engineers who troubleshoot network problems at the device level.

- **CONSULTANT CERTIFICATION (OC-C)** - Building on the consultant certification, the OC-E course is designed for an expert-level engineer seeking an understanding of optical communications network architecture. This course utilizes a case study approach that tasks students with designing and formally proposing architectural solutions for optical network applications. Potential candidates for this course are intermediate Tier IV network design engineers and network planning engineers. Training for each certification lasts five days. The associate certification teaches standards, terminology, concepts and applications that are the center of today’s global networks. When OC-A is complete, students can continue their education in the networks of tomorrow by moving on to the other certification levels.

- **EXPERT CERTIFICATION (OC-E)** - The advanced session is designed for intermediate-level engineers seeking an understanding of optical network planning, sales and implementation. This course focuses on optical network applications based on consumer requirements, including network capacity, topology and features. Using case studies, students analyze customer requirements to determine which devices, topology and features best meet the requirements. Potential candidates for this course are intermediate Tier III network systems or sales engineers.

- **CONSULTANT CERTIFICATION (OC-C)** - The approach that tasks students with designing and analyzing makes it an exciting time for those who can design and implement optical technology-based solutions.

The relationship between Ciena, GCC and AACC gives industry employees worldwide access to this training. Walton said Ciena has partnered with numerous colleges in the United States, but there also have been partnerships with two colleges in London. He said they currently are in talks to give training in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

“This is a great partnership we have with GCC. At Ciena, we deal with so many companies who have offices, customers and employees in such diverse locations that we had to find a way to bring the training to them in a way that was both cost-effective and convenient,” says Walton. “Our ability to have classrooms in practically any city where any of our customers and their customers are located makes our partnership with the GCC crucial. Having the ability to have a classroom that’s in the back yard of NASA or AT&T or any major telecom company creates an entirely new strategy for us. It’s a benefit for them, and a cost-effective model for everyone.”

**THE SOLUTION**

This partnership is a great opportunity for the college to help businesses, government agencies and individual IT experts become proficient with technology that is expected to transform the network industry,” says Laura E. Weidner, a vice president, global HR development and learning at Ciena.

Ciena, with its extensive history and high level of expertise in optical communications, is uniquely qualified as a leader in this technology. “There are many companies that offer training in optics, but what you’re really getting is training on their optical product,” said Paul Walton, Ciena Learning Solutions business manager. Ciena opted to develop new courses which would provide vendor-neutral optical communications technology training and build on the group’s existing Carrier Ethernet program.

Through a unique partnership with Ciena Learning Solutions and the Global Corporate College (GCC), Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) is offering training in Ciena’s Optical Communications Certification at AACC’s Regional Higher Education Center at Arundel Mills.

**THE APPROACH**

Weidner said the college recognizes the potential for optical communications technology to transform the network industry and the need to prepare network specialists to meet the demands for expertise with this new technology. This partnership allows the college to demonstrate its strengths of providing training to professionals with varying needs and of helping other colleges replicate that training at their locations, Weidner said.

In Ciena’s Optical Communications Certifications, “we’re offering training on the technology itself. We are totally vendor neutral. It doesn’t matter whether you’re working on fiber optics with a piece of Ciena equipment or Cisco or Lucent – it’s all about the technology and not a vendor’s product,” Walton said.

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Whether you access web pages, send and receive email, or even talk on the telephone, the optical communications industry touches your life. Fiber optics gives you a clear, quick connection over the phone. It helps you get your email faster at home and at work. It’s what allows users to download movies in minutes rather than at a glacial pace.

“As demand for faster communication and increased bandwidth rises, so does the need for high-capacity, optical communications network and knowledgeable experts who know how to design, build and operate them,” said James Caprara, vice president, global HR development and learning at Ciena.

The approach that tasks students with designing and implementing makes it an exciting time for those who can design and implement optical technology-based solutions.
Ethical hacking and Countermeasures” course. Participants are prepared to sit for the EC-Council’s Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) industry certification exam. The CEH credential meets U.S. Department of Defense 8570.01M Change 2 requirements.

AACC is also a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance 2-Yr Education (CAE2Y). For course and training information, contact me at 410-777-7145 or cws@aacc.edu. All of us at AACC look forward to helping meet your cybertraining needs!

Why would someone want to become a Certified Ethical Hacker?

A

Organizations hire ethical hackers to attempt to penetrate their networks so that they can identify weaknesses that would otherwise go undetected until an unethical hacker finds those vulnerabilities and exposes them to malicious harm.

How is the course set up? Is it mostly lectures?

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Absolutely not. This is a 60-hour course, so there are plenty of lectures where the information is presented in an engaging manner. The best part is students get to learn real-world hacking techniques in hands-on, computer lab based exercises in one of AACC’s state of the art cyber labs.

What background does an individual need to become a Certified Ethical Hacker?

A

To start the course, individuals should have a minimum of two years of experience in a security-related field and computer experience.

Kip Kunsman, who has more than 20 years of experience in workforce development and contract training in the higher education arena, was appointed Aug. 1 as interim director of the CyberCenter at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC). Kunsman will now oversee the sales and execution of all educational contracts for cybersecurity courses and training, both for credit and noncredit instruction at AACC.

Kunsman served as director of workforce solutions for AACC’s Center for Workforce Solutions since 2006. He came to AACC from the Governor’s Workforce Investment Board, where he was a manager of administrative and regulatory operations. He also worked at the City of Baltimore Mayor’s Office of Employment Development as a workforce development coordinator. Prior to that, he spent 12 years with Baltimore City Community College in the training and professional development office of its Business and Continuing Education Center.

According to Kelly Koermer, AACC Dean of the School of Business, Computing and Technical Studies, Kunsman was selected for his extensive experience in workforce development and higher education.

“Kunsman has been closely involved in cybersecurity workforce development for the college over the past year,” Koermer said. “His extensive experience in workforce development, coupled with his strong background in higher education, has given him a valuable perspective in the cybersecurity workforce development arena.”

Kunsman earned a bachelor’s degree in emergency health services management from the University of Maryland Baltimore County and a master’s degree in human resources development from Towson University.

@ AACC

CONSIDER SENDING ONE OR MORE OF YOUR STAFF to AACC’s “Certified Ethical Hacking and Countermeasures” course. Participants are prepared to sit for the EC-Council’s Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) industry certification exam. The CEH credential meets U.S. Department of Defense 8570.01M Change 2 requirements.

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How can businesses block today’s top-notch computer hackers?

Training is the answer!

Send your staff for hacker training at Anne Arundel Community College, which offers a four-credit “Certified Ethical Hacking and Countermeasures” course.

Participants master strategies and techniques to thwart cyberattacks and prepare to take the national certification exam. As the popularity and reputation of this course continues to grow, so have the questions fielded by AACC.

Through hands-on lab scenarios, they will also have the chance to perform actual attacks. Other topics include intrusion detection, footprinting, Google hacking, social engineering, phishing, denial of service attacks, session hijacking, physical security, Linux security, password cracking techniques, cryptography, penetration testing, SQL injections, and many others.

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By Kip Kunsman, interim director of the AACC CyberCenter established in 2010

For more information about AACC’s extensive cybersecurity program, visit www.aacc.edu/cybercenter.

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Who is AACC?

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC), established in 1961, is Maryland’s largest community college with more than 21,000 students at its main Arnold campus and a second campus in Laurel. AACC offers 196 associate degree programs, 97 career education certificates, and 95 noncredit courses. AACC is a founding member of the Maryland State University system. AACC’s courses and training are offered for credit and noncredit instruction at AACC. Kunsman will now oversee the sales and execution of all educational contracts for cybersecurity courses and training, both for credit and noncredit instruction at AACC.

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Leading the way

Companies around the world can tap into a comprehensive Supervisor and Manager Curriculum offered by the Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) Center for Workforce Solutions (CWS) through its exclusive role as a member of the Global Corporate College (GCC). CWS can provide its exceptional workforce training to global organizations that need to effectively train employees in key leadership positions.

The curriculum was developed with GCC's distinctive international vision of reducing the talent gap for businesses worldwide. This allows organizations to use the curriculum "off the shelf" precisely as designed - or with modifications. Training is structured in modules so organizations can choose the most relevant topics within courses to build an effective training program to meet both the employees' and organization's goals.

This new curriculum features 32 specific courses covering today's most pertinent management issues. These issues include communication, coaching and development, decision-making and problem-solving, leadership, managing conflict, personal effectiveness, supervision and teamwork.

"These flexible, comprehensive learning modules are being used across a variety of industries to help managers not only be more successful in their current jobs, but also to prepare themselves and their employees for higher level leadership positions within their organizations," says Laura E. Weidner, Ph.D., AACC dean of workforce training.

CWS can tailor modules within the courses to specific clients and use the organization or industry's specific vocabulary, relevant case studies and appropriate examples to provide realistic workforce situations. Key audiences for the program are supervisors, managers and leaders.

While most courses last four or eight hours, the leadership training course spends a thorough 24 hours focusing on change management and 16 hours on strategic thinking. Each course includes tools for extended learning so employees can explore topic areas even after completing specific coursework.

As one of the key offerings of GCC, the Supervisor and Manager Curriculum is particularly well suited to the type of training in which CWS excels.

Launched in June 2008, GCC was developed to serve national and worldwide organizations in need of consistent training programs in multiple locations. GCC features a network of innovative United States community colleges that stand ready to design training or offer training. GCC's top member institutions, calling the college "entrepreneurial, truly innovative and responsive to the community."

"Anne Arundel Community College was instrumental in GCC's development. Reading credits the duo with making AACC one of GCC's top member institutions, calling the college "entrepreneurial, truly innovative and responsive to the community,"" says Kawika Riley, TSA spokesman.


The Supervisor and Manager Curriculum program leverages AACC's strength in business administration and management education. CWS is offering this exceptional program to Maryland-based organizations and corporations, whether their reach is local, regional, national or international.

For information, contact CWS at 410-777-2732 (toll free: 866-311-8926) or email cws@aacc.edu. Check out the Web site: www.aacc.edu/cws.

Global Corporate College curriculum positions managers for leadership and success

Global Corporate College, a leading provider of executive education and training, is offering an exceptional program to businesses and organizations worldwide. This program leverages GCC's strength in business administration and management education. CWS is offering this exceptional program to Maryland-based organizations and corporations, whether their reach is local, regional, national or international.

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Eye-opening Series at AACC Kick-Starts Your Day

Anne Arundel Community College’s popular Java Spot series continues to draw crowds with its roster of timely topics.

The early morning complimentary sessions sponsored by AACC’s Center for Workforce Solutions (CWS) offer information on a variety of business and industry topics suggested by CWS clients and representatives of business, industry, government and the nonprofit sector. A subject matter expert leads each Java Spot presentation, with sessions generally lasting between 90 minutes and two hours.

“We started offering Java Spots in 2009 to highlight the extensive training and business services we provide our clients, as well as to highlight strategic partnerships and initiatives at AACC. The sessions tend to be informal with a focus on information exchange and networking,” said Sonja Gladwin, CWS workforce solutions manager.

“During each Java Spot, we provide a brief overview on front line topics ranging from mobile device forensics and supply chain competitiveness to perpetuating leadership. We also touch on industry trends and professional development opportunities,” Gladwin says. “Our Java Spot participants tell us they gain valuable insight and information to take back to the office.”

International speaker John Kennedy delivered the most recent Java Spot that took place in August, titled “Riding the Blue Train of Innovation and Change: Don’t Waste This Recession, Learn From It.” Mr. Kennedy, also the author of “Management that Cooks,” provided a model for systematically creating a culture of innovation and change that is driven from inside the organization. This begins, Kennedy explained, with a “can do” attitude that is supported by ongoing sharing of winning ideas and the commitment and ownership to move forward toward common goals. Mini-games with a scoreboard inspire the team to achieve success. The sessions kick off with a 10-minute segment introducing the topic and presenter, followed by a presentation, question and answer period and then a few minutes to review AACC programs of interest to business and industry, such as internships and new academic programs or strategic initiatives, as well as time for networking.

“We try to provide sessions on topics that we think most businesses would find beneficial and address specific issues or needs they are dealing with in the workplace,” Gladwin said. “Many of the attendees have found the sessions helpful and several have signed contracts with AACC to schedule extended versions of the training to their workplace. Because of the overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants, we will continue to schedule sessions every other month.”

“The Java Spot series has proven to be a great way for the business community to access the resources of the college. It doesn’t take an enormous amount of time and participants walk away with a good understanding of the services and resources available to them here at AACC,” says Laura Weidner, Ph.D., AACC dean of workforce development.

Created to serve as a snapshot of the training capabilities CWS provides, each Java Spot can be available to your organization as customized training. For more information, or if you have questions about upcoming sessions or have an idea for a future Java Spot, contact the Center for Workforce Solutions at cws@aacc.edu or 410-777-2732.

MEASURING RESULTS FROM TRAINING
Examine how to measure the tangible/intangible benefits and costs of training within your organization.
Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2011; 7:30 am – 9:15 am
AACC’s Arundel Mills location, 7009 Arundel Mills Circle, Hanover

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND THE FOUR GENERATIONS
A practical approach on how to get multiple generations to commit to the success of your organization.
Thursday, Dec. 8, 2011; 7:30am – 9:15am
AACC’s Glen Burnie Town Center location, 101 Crain Highway North, Glen Burnie

SUCCESION DEVELOPMENT
Perpetuating Leadership for the Future of Your Business
Successful organizations plan the development of their future leaders. Learn to move from planning to active development of your bench strength.
January 2012 (Date and location TBD)

NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IMPACTING MARYLAND
Learn about national security challenges and their impact on the Maryland business and intelligence communities.
March 2012 (Date and location TBD)

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS
Move beyond having a social media presence to making that presence work for you. Learn tips about using LinkedIn, Google, Twitter and other social media to help your business grow.
May 2012 (Date and location TBD)

While Java Spot training sessions are complimentary, space is limited and they fill up quickly so be sure to reserve your seat today! To RSVP, email cws@aacc.edu or call our offices at 410-777-2732.

By Debbie McDaniel-Shaughnessy
THE CHALLENGE

The Bowling Proprietors Association of America (BPAA), the bowling industry’s leading nonprofit trade association, received feedback from its members about challenges they were experiencing adapting to technological advances in the industry. In an effort to help members improve operations and increase profits, BPAA also identified several service opportunities members could offer customers, such as retail, merchandising, hosting parties and corporate events, fundraisers, etc. After further assessment, the group’s Education Committee recommended the industry pursue higher education and certification training to address the skills gap of their members’ workforce.

THE APPROACH

BPAA partnered with Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) to create the first of its kind online certification program for the bowling industry. Working closely with the college’s Center for Workforce Solutions (CWS), BPAA staff and its Education Committee identified specific areas for training. BPAA then launched Bowling University, an innovative learning platform they could offer exclusively to more than 2,000 members world-wide, comprised of the Online Training and Management certification program, the School for Bowling Center Management and Virtual Staff Training programs.

THE SOLUTION

Through Bowling University, industry proprietors, managers and bowling center employees from across the globe can come together in a virtual classroom to learn how to operate their centers more profitably. Featuring 36 modules addressing a typical bowling center’s primary areas of activity, the Online Training and Management Certification program helps employees develop essential critical management, supervisory, operational and strategic skills and knowledge. Topics include sales and marketing, food and beverage, facility maintenance, customer service, finance, human resources, supervisory skills, entertainment income and leadership, among others.

By offering the training in modules focused on specific topics, employees can select the training most relevant to their current positions or even train for advancement with additional courses. And, the self-paced format makes it easier for employees to weave training into their work and personal schedules.

THE OUTCOME

From April 2010 to July 2011, AACC has run 172 Online Training and Management certification modules with 668 registrations. And because the program is available online, BPAA members around the world are taking advantage of the training.

Recognizing the opportunities that online training offers BPAA members, the Maryland Distance Learning Association presented AACC and BPAA with its 2011 Program of the Year Award for the design and implementation of the Bowling University Online Training and Management Certification program!

BY SUSAN S.C. GROSS

BPAA Vice President of Business Development

The Bowling University online Training and Management Certification program is an incredible initiative that enables us to empower thousands of proprietors with the latest tools and programs to achieve operational excellence while growing their bottom line.”

Bart Burger
BPAA vice president of business development

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THE FUTURE
People feel greater gratification from their work if they feel like they’re competent to address what the clients’ needs are.

Mike Drummond
Executive Director, Arundel Lodge

Moving forward
Training sets human services workers on career path

By Sue Donaldson

THE APPROACH
The Sar Levitan Center at the Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies was awarded a grant to examine the entire health services workforce system due to the shortage of entry-level workers. Representatives met with the providers, from administrators to the entry staff, and determined training was needed to be able to attract – and retain – employees.

Anne Arundel Community College partnered with Sar Levitan Center to create a pilot program and provide training for entry-level employees at two of Anne Arundel County’s largest mental health service providers – Omni House and Arundel Lodge – which would aid in both the hiring and retention areas of the profession.

The two partner employers then worked with Sar Levitan to find grant funding for 75 percent of the program.

The employees agreed to pay the remaining 25 percent of the cost, and guaranteed a pay raise to each participant who successfully completed all the certificate requirements.

THE SOLUTION
Sonja Gladwin, Workforce Solutions manager in AACC’s Center for Workforce Solutions, met with representatives from the partner organizations to help determine the needs. AACC, she says, already had a certificate and degree program in place to fit the participants’ needs.

“AACC’s Human Services Certificate Program, at 30 credits, is relatively large. The initial idea for the pilot was to provide higher credentialing to the students in a traditional, structured, collegiate environment. As a bonus, students will be halfway to an associate’s degree when they’re done,” Gladwin says.

The coursework is accelerated and the students maintain working hours during training.

THE OUTCOMES
“This is an absolute godsend,” says Marie Macklin Lacy, director of residential services at Omni House. “Clients need consistency and stability, and the relationship between staff and clients is crucial to how a client can progress. You don’t have that relationship established if you have turnover.”

Halfway through the training, Macklin noticed changes in the staff members involved. “Their writing is different. Their behavioral language has changed, and I think that is a direct result of being involved in this program. The knowledge base they’re receiving gives them greater esteem as they work with clients. They don’t have to guess at what they do; they’re coming out of professional training and using skills they’re learning.”

Mike Drummond, executive director at Arundel Lodge, agrees with Macklin’s observations and believes their staff must have the ability to demonstrate they have credentials. “People feel greater gratification from their work if they feel like they’re competent to address what the clients’ needs are.”

Higher education also commands more pay, which leads to employee retention. Drummond made a commitment to the project and those involved in the training that for those who go through the 18-month training, they will receive a $1 per hour raise.

Omni House Inc., the largest provider of mental health services in Anne Arundel County, has provided psychiatric and rehabilitative services for adults with mental illness and co-occurring disorders (COD) for more than 25 years. Arundel Lodge Inc. has been providing psychiatric rehabilitation services to county adults with serious mental illnesses since 1975.

WITH THE PILOT PROGRAM MORE THAN HALFWAY COMPLETE, the goal of enhancing education for entry-level workers is more of a reality than a hope. For some, the certificate may be just a first step.

“This provides a gateway to continue their education,” Drummond says. “They can get an associate’s degree or, if they want to, transfer and get their bachelor’s or even master’s, if they saw that as a career path.”

Macklin agrees. “It was dreamed that we can take these people as far as they can go. If they want to go for a bachelor’s or a master’s, we can bring them up through the ranks. I don’t know where that money would come from, but it’s a beautiful dream. I would love for this to be a part of what Omni House has to offer potential candidates.”
THE CHALLENGE

THE SUSTAINED GROWTH OF THE WEST ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE keeps Chamber President and CEO Claire Louder and her small staff tremendously busy these days. The chamber’s territory includes the bustling business communities of Odenton, Severn, Gambrills, Hanover, Crownsville, Jessup, Maryland City, Annapolis Junction along with other companies interested in growth at Fort George G. Meade and the surrounding area.

Louder leads an organization of 370 members that has grown at a rate of 10 percent annually for the last 4½ years. “We’ve been very proactive in the community and the businesses have responded,” she said.

Her chamber serves an extremely high-growth area. Development of the 1,620-acre Odenton Town Center project, coupled with the influx of companies linked to the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) implementation at Fort George G. Meade, is creating an ever-expanding pool of prospective members. The chamber’s strong reputation as a key player in the region’s economic development and its dynamic business promotions are also driving membership increases.

Louder knows from experience that one key to having a successful board of directors is ensuring members know their role within the chamber and their responsibilities as board members. During her two decades in leadership roles with nonprofit organizations, Louder discovered the best way to communicate board roles and responsibilities is through a formal orientation.

“We currently try to incorporate board orientation into our annual retreat,” she said, “but when you only have two or three people who need that information, that’s in my head and put it into this orientation that anyone can access,” Louder said.

One module is geared to new members on the chamber’s board of directors. A second module orient director chairs of nearly a dozen chamber committees on their duties and responsibilities. The committee chair module, for example, will cover the need to get an agenda out to members before meetings and share the key outcomes of the committee meetings with the full board of directors. The final orientation module features the chamber itself and is designed for prospective, new and current board members.

“The last online module will serve as a marketing tool to provide businesses with a full perspective of what the chamber is doing and how it can benefit the business as a member,” Laura Weidner, Ph.D., AACC dean of workforce development, said.

THE APPROACH

Louder was informally discussing her orientation challenge with staff from the AACC Center for Workforce Solutions, when they suggested the chamber tap into the college’s expertise in online orientations.

Several AACC health professions programs, from nursing to radiologic technology, require prospective students to attend orientations. Because not all students could fit the in-person orientation into their schedule, the programs now offer an online orientation for prospective students in addition to in-person orientations.

The chamber staff, CWS and the AACC Virtual Campus staff met to discuss the project and how best to meet the chamber’s needs. The result: creation of online orientations for three separate chamber audiences.

“We’ve taken all of the information that’s in my head and put it into this orientation that anyone can access,” Louder said.

THE SOLUTION

The orientations, which will range from 15 minutes to one hour, will go live by September “This will be a huge timesaver and allow our busy board members to schedule their orientation at a time convenient to them,” Louder said. “We’re very excited about it.”

AACC will tweak the orientations as needed after receiving feedback from Louder and her board of directors.

“This is a problem that a lot of businesses are trying to solve,” said Jennifer Hartless, e-learning project manager for AACC’s Virtual Campus. “With an online approach, you can be sure you conserve limited resources while offering a timely and consistent quality orientation.”

LOUDER PLANS TO SHARE NEWS OF THIS INNOVATIVE APPROACH to board orientations with other chambers of commerce at conferences and meetings. Her first target is the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, where she serves on its board of directors as an ex-officio member through her role as president of the Maryland Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. She also plans to share the news with her association.

“I’ve been in this business since 1989,” she said. “I was amazed at how many organizations were not doing board orientations. It’s a whole different skill set, serving as a board member and recognizing you’re fiscally responsible for the organization.”

For information on the online orientations, contact Laura Weidner at 410-777-2732, cws@aacc.edu or visit www.aacc.edu/cws. For information on the chamber, contact Claire Louder at 410-672-3422, info@westcountychamber.org or www.westcountychamber.org

THE FUTURE

Orientation Express

Chamber gets its board members up to speed – online.

By Debbie McDaniel-Shaughney
AAHS improves productivity with customized project management training

**THE CHALLENGE**

As Anne Arundel Health System (AAHS) has grown into a regional medical center serving more than 600,000 area residents, so has the need for a more systemized planning approach to project management. Given its service-oriented environment, the emphasis for the health system's highly skilled clinicians has understandably been on caring for patients, and less on project management. But since many of these clinicians are also in supervisory positions, AAHS recognized the need for developing a project management structure that could also work for a large organization with a focus on services.

**THE APPROACH**

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) went on a fact-finding mission with AAHS, parent organization to Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC). Together they identified the knowledge and skills AAHS wanted its staff to receive and gain a better understanding of roles and responsibilities as well as project management best practices. In addition, AACC provided a client services team that worked with AAHS representatives to ensure the training process objectives and outcomes were met.

**THE SOLUTION**

AACC developed a three-pronged approach to provide and implement project management tools, templates and processes that would work effectively in the AAHS environment while educating staff on those processes, as well as project management best practices. In the first phase, focus groups set up by AACC discussed and evaluated current procedures and came up with recommendations for standardizing and improving them. The second phase was broken down into two tasks: developing and implementing project management tools, templates and processes; and developing project management course materials.

The actual training was delivered in the final phase. Because AAHS operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, multiple training sessions were needed to accommodate participant schedules. AACC also provided college registration services so that participants could earn continuing education units (CEUs) upon successful completion of training.

**THE OUTCOMES**

Two training programs were offered, one targeted for executive leadership and the other geared specifically toward supervisors, managers, directors and executive directors. In all, 91 people completed the project management course.

**THE FUTURE**

Decarlo says she received good feedback from other directors about the course. “If you follow the guidelines, you should think of everything you need—budget, material resources, human resources and if there’s another way to do something.”

Jennifer Gurka
Director of Inpatient Rehabilitation Services, AAMC

**Talking the same language**

Having a uniform format for submitting a proposal and using terminology that is understood by everyone and meets the expectations of leadership, gave me clarity.”

For Susan M. O’Connor, RN, OCN, an oncology nurse by trade who is now the administrative director of the medical center’s Breast Center, the training is especially helpful for someone who had not had project management classes before. In her current role, she sometimes is involved in coordinating community events and health promotions that often need extensive coordination and advanced planning.

“I am more comfortable with managing projects now,” she says. “Taking the class helped to reemphasize that you need to be sure you’re involving everyone who will need to be part of the event.”

Then there’s Jennifer Gurka, director of inpatient rehabilitation services, who manages 55 to 60 people and is responsible for steering new projects as well as staffing and developing budgets.

“This pulled a lot together for me. Having a uniform format for submitting a proposal and using terminology that is understood by everyone and meets the expectations of leadership, gave me clarity,” Gurka says.
An innovative, new credential at Anne Arundel Community College is preparing some workers, career changers and job seekers need to take to train to expand their skills, demonstrate their competence and qualify for new assignments, promotions or new jobs.

In 2009, AACC became a Maryland higher education leader in offering a noncredit continuing education credentials as a new workforce credential and since then has been adding new credentials at a steady rate. Participants complete a specific noncredit course or a series of short-term, non-credit courses that improve skills or technical knowledge.

Some of the noncredit courses are online and some prepare participants to take national certification or licensing exams. Some of the continuing education certificates exist because AACC’s research shows the field has a strong demand for workers.

“We are intentionally developing certificate programs in areas identified by the U.S. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation as experiencing a shortage of trained, entry-level workers,” said Faith Harland-White, Ph.D., dean of the AACC School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Her area oversees programs and open enrollment classes offering the credentials.

“These fields offer good salaries for this region,” she said. “They may also have career ladders that give workers the opportunity for future promotions and continued professional growth.”

AACC now offers more than 120 continuing education certificates and professional certifications.

“These certificate programs enable workers to master new technologies or on-the-job skills required for promotion or reassignment,” said Laura Weidner, Ph.D., AACC dean of workforce development. Her team at the AACC Center for Workforce Solutions (CWS) provided contract training for the Maryland-Transportation Authority (MDTA), which resulted in 54 employees earning Administrative Professional certificates.

“The noncredit certificates are a big success with MDTA,” Weidner said, noting that the agency is among the first group of employers using AACC’s contract training to a customized noncredit certificate program. Both public and private organizations can benefit from employee training leading to award of this credential.

“We hope more employers will consider these noncredit certificate programs as training options as a value added to the customized contract training to the center staff so capablely provides,” said Laura Weidner.

For information on the noncredit certificates, visit www.aacc.edu/comedi/certificates or call 410-777-2325.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CERTIFICATES

- Accounting and Bookkeeping
- Accounting Technology
- Alternative and Sustainable Energy
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- Building Maintenance
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- Child Care
- Child Development Associate
- Family Child Care Provider
- Nursery/Preschool
- Construction
- Construction Estimating
- Dental Assisting
- Dental Assisting and Radiology
- Dental Assisting Expanded Function
- ESL
- Teaching English as a Second Language
- Esthetician
- Esthetician Preparation
- Floral Design
- Floriculture
- Health Care
- Administrative Medical Assistant
- Electrocardiogram and Intravenous Therapy Technician
- Licensed Nurse Refresher
- Managed Care Operations
- Medicine Aide
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Hospitality, Culinary Arts and Tourism
- Baking and Pastry Cook
- Bartender
- HVAC
- HVAC Entry-level Technician
- Music Industry
- Audio Technician
- Master Audio Technician
- Music and Entertainment Media
- Business Administrator
- Music and Entertainment Media Management
- Parenting and Family Life
- Mental Health First Aid
- Power Plant Operations
- Power Plant Operator
- Technology
- Computer Training for the Re-entry Professional
- Digital Home Technology Integration
- e-Learning Instructional Design
- iPhone and iPad Programming
- Mobile App Programming
- Synchronous Learning
- Video Game Console Design
- Web Graphic Design Certification
- Telecommunications
- Network Cable Installer
- Truck Driving
- Commercial Driver’s License Class A
- Commercial Driver’s License Class B
- Veterinary Assisting
- Veterinary Assisting
- Welding
- Welding for Work – MIG, STICK, TIG
- World Language
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Farsi
- French
- German
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish

Earn New Credentials at AACC

By Debbie McDaniels-Shaughnessy

Boosting workforce efficiency with effective leadership training

THE CHALLENGE

The Garrison at the Fort George G. Meade Army Post has a fairly fluid population, with personnel moving in and out on a regular basis. It is comprised of nearly 100 agencies, each with its own mission and administration, and a wide myriad of individuals overseeing projects, including senior leadership, directors, managers and people moving in and out of supervisory roles. To help ensure the agencies meet their mission goals while also best serving the Fort Meade Garrison and its clients, they worked with the Center for Workforce Solutions (CWS) at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) to create training opportunities that allow both senior leadership and military and civilian staff to learn those tools used by successful leaders.

THE APPROACH

Both the Fort Meade Garrison leadership and the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) offer training on a regular basis. Bernadette Baldeo, director of Plans Analysis and Integration Office at Fort Meade, is responsible for planning and conducting training for Garrison leadership to meet base objectives. Because most supervisors have served in the military and have also already received some leadership training, Baldeo aimed to customize the training so that they could provide techniques that would work for several management styles.

Bob Haagenson, human resources specialist and Fort Meade Installation Civilian Employee Training Manager for CPAC, manages training for more than 2,500 employees at the base. He surveys managers on their top training needs and then works with the Fort Meade Garrison commander to select the 10 most requested courses. Haagenson also works closely with AACC and other training providers. Because the Garrison’s focus on its strategic goals may change from year to year, CWS works with Baldeo to provide training that best prepares the leadership for that year’s focus. CWS also works with Haagenson to come up with training that most closely matches the proposals he and the Garrison commander have selected for the CPAC employees.

THE SOLUTION

CWS delivers senior leadership training at one of the Garrison’s bimonthly spring and fall conferences each year for directors of each of the Directorates: Emergency Services; Human Resources; Logistics; Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation; Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security; Public Works; Mission and Installation Contracting Command – Fort Meade; Plans, Analysis and Integration Office; Resource Management Office and Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

Training includes an interactive workshop that focuses on developing the qualities for effective leadership. A second interactive workshop, titled “The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Effective Communication and Leadership Through Understanding Our Type,” participants’ individual types are identified and studied in relation to how they communicate and lead.

THE OUTCOMES

Calling the leadership training a “value-added course that was a good use of my time,” Chad Jones, public relations director for the Fort Meade Garrison, says he learned a lot about his own strengths and weaknesses to shape a stronger leadership style. And thanks to the Myers-Briggs training, he’s also better able to pick up on some behavioral cues in colleagues which helps him adjust communication strategies so that he can work more effectively with them. Baldeo agrees that the leadership training definitely helps the senior leaders, noting the instructor “did an excellent job of making the training relevant to what we are doing.”

Since the training began, Haagenson estimates that at least 200 employees each year receive the leadership training through the Center for Workforce Solutions at AACC, adding that CPAC prefers to offer courses that cover more than basic education. “We want to whet the appetite of our employees, allowing them to start something here and then pursue developing that education to that skill wherever they go.”

THE FUTURE

Baldeo plans to work with AACC on training provided at future leadership conferences. Haagenson also has plans for future offerings with the college, such as leadership training for workers recently appointed to supervisory positions but who have never had formal training in leadership skills.
The Center for Workforce Solutions at AACC offers numerous customized and creative strategies to give your organization the competitive edge, including:

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