

ARAPAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BACKGROUND

The Perkins Field Council was attracted to the Arapahoe Community College Perkins Local Plan initially because of the insight they demonstrated by providing Perkins funding to multiple programs and the ability to bring in exceptional faculty who are willing to come together to present ideas and not hesitate to explore best practices for students. The College asks Perkins fund requestors to look across disciplines since this encourages and maximizes the use of higher cost infrastructures and programs. Altogether, they provide a creative, cohesive practice of “Dream Big” attitudes and respect for one another’s strengths.

This approach, in its second year of development, is generating huge interest and is well on its way to creating student success. Increasing student retention and best practices and procedures are the end results. All Deans, with involvement of local community leaders, participate and develop the Perkins Local Plan.

KEY INNOVATION(S)

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) and the College’s Health CTE Programs provide unique opportunities for students to surround themselves in a full spectrum of practicality as they cross train students in the aspects of real life scenarios. In addition to classrooms, labs, faculty, books and coaches (to help boost students’ levels of learning and confidence); Perkins helps fund simulated work environments to give students practice and self-assurance of their application of their learned competencies.

Some of the FY2015-2016 Local Plan action steps are the outcome of the population needs in the fields of community safety and community health care. Practice of learned competencies is greatly enhanced through once per semester simulated Mass Casualty Incidents (MCI). Several departments work together to perform a simulation of one of the highest challenges of a community, a mass casualty event. The Nursing, Emergency Medical Sciences, Police Academy, Emergency Dispatcher and Mortuary Science students must remain calm, alert, attentive to their learned skills, and support accurate processes necessary for effective responses to assure life preservation; safety securing; crowd control; and other mass casualty defined activities that they have studied. Exposure of students to a mass casualty simulation each semester helps students manage unforeseen issues while still doing the jobs they are trained to do. Students can learn to overcome fear, horror, panic, and other natural psychological responses to tragedy and learn how to help bystanders with the same types of possible reactions.

Students also gain respect and understanding of the role of the other participants. How does Nursing relate to Police Science? How should Emergency Medical Technicians interact with Nursing? How are lifesaving decisions made? What symptoms must be addressed instantly? Who will comfort a victim’s spouse or friend? How are pathways cleared? Agencies notified? What are the priorities? How do we deal with death? These critical questions can be realized and dealt with by students as they witness and participate in a mock tragedy so they can be

the best solutions if they were ever exposed to an actual major catastrophe. Students can focus on their role and skills rather than the real incident becoming a battle with shock and surprise. Faculty help guide students to understanding the tragedy as a holistic and integrated situation that must be coordinated, communicated, and efficiently supported.

Arapahoe



Community College students practice emergency transportation and emergency medical care at the bi-annual simulation of a mass casualty incident.

Volunteers serve as victims adding to the reality of a mass casualty experience. It is a comfort to the community that Perkins Federal funds can help support these real life laboratories by funding tools and supplies that allow repetition of this extensive project.

Students take the event seriously. They learn how to work with and communicate with diverse patients and colleagues; discover the critical importance of their skills; and can reflect on what worked and what they would do different next time. This also helps students understand if there are units of their classroom learning that they need to study more. Faculty discover where they need to adjust curriculum and classroom assignments.

Community partners can observe and study the processes to determine if and what might need to be modified in order to be more effective. They also make suggestions for curricular additions or amendments. Dr. Samuel DeVries, Dean of Health, Math, and Science works with all aspects of health at the College. He notes that the Perkins grant structure of looking for big projects across multiple CTE Programs has facilitated all departments to look at the bigger picture so they too can show how encompassing CTE programs are. This practice

helps to break away from the simplicity of singular department structures of the past. Science components have been pulled into the CTE Programs by widening the vision of what needs to be included in the disciplines to best support career development for CTE students.



ACC Nursing students work as a team to properly treat and monitor a severely injured victim from the mass casualty incident.

KEY FACTORS TO IMPLEMENTATION

This collaborative event evolved out of the ideas coming from individual programs and priority was placed on collaboration. To have a Perkins Local Plan action step implemented departments had to think about asking faculty what results were they looking to achieve and what would be the best use of funds to meet those outcomes.

RESULTS

This cross collaboration that resulted in the Mass Casualty Incident Simulation program has stimulated more ideas. The Allied Health programs are now starting to see strategies that take them beyond simulation and they are asking what other structures can be integrated!

This approach helps demonstrate to a community that safety and health are mutual concerns and involve partnered approaches. Now that's "Dreaming Big!"