

## **GROSSMONT COLLEGE ADULT REENTRY PROGRAM**

### **1. Typically, how do you identify an Adult Reentry student?**

- 25 years and older; separated from education or formal training for three to five years or longer;

### **2. What does the Grossmont Adult Reentry program offer the returning student?**

- We help identify the students fears and concerns. Assist students one on one with application, registering for classes and referrals to any support services that meet their individual needs.

### **3. How long has the program provided services for adult students?**

- The program started up on the Grossmont College campus in 1977; for two decades populations served included, displaced homemakers, Vietnam Veterans and laid off workers from the aerospace industry (cyclic). In 1999 my research concluded and in 2000, I changed the paradigms to encompass the “new world of work”, and to meet evolving needs of the heightened economic pressures of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- This meant that 75% of adult reentry students would currently be in the workforce – and become savvy of the need of “life-long learning”; presently with the economic slump Grossmont College has approximately 6,600 adult reentry students currently enrolled.

### **4. How does the center support the adult reentry student?**

- We offer support through our Orientations before the start of each semester which feature a peer panel discussion with former Adult Reentry Students who tell their success stories and are available for questions. We feature presentations from student services and instructional programs offered at Grossmont College. Counselors and Admission and Records reps are also available to assist the students with application and academic planning.
- We also offer two workshops per semester geared toward the adult student. Each workshop is offered day and evening to accomodate the students schedule.
- The center is available for students throughout the semester as a support system.

### **5. What makes an Adult Reentry student different from traditional college age students? What are their characteristics?**

- They perceive themselves in contrast to traditional college (18-22) students – as old, not technology savvy, lack of current basic & soft skills required by employers today: reading, written and oral communication, computation and computer competencies; may feel their brains are rusty; They turn out to have higher GPAs’ then traditional age college students and Initially, they feel that they will not be able to compete in the classroom and suffer from feelings of isolation much like – “an outsider, in a strange world;
- They fear that college Instructors won’t like having an older student in class;
- Affordability with initial concern for tuition, books and child care expenses or time away from family;
- Overwhelmed by all the years they perceive it will take to get their degree or certificate

6. I understand that a High School Diploma is not necessary for community members to sign up for community college – **What are some of the reasons adults return to school?**
- Job Loss
  - Re-Career or lifestyle change
  - Upgrade skills for promotion or job change at current employer
  - Returning Veteran
  - Divorced or Widowed
  - College Career put on hold due to work, family or economics
  - Ready for the challenge of college
7. Our society collectively has a phobia about aging and the related work problems it might create. **What are you doing to support your student's perspective of current, positive aging and working paradigms?**
- We present a intensive workshop entitled, "Success after 40, 50 & 60; where in we detail the values of "Boomers" raised in the "Patriarchal" world-of-work in contrast to X-geners and milieniuals; for example, when a 50 year old loses a job, it's a trauma; expectations have been different and their self-image is affected deeply; it is not just a job it is their life; people that are mid-lifers were raised to believe that work has more meaning then just earning a living; loss of a job means failure to them; they just want to fix what's broken;
  - I explain to them and show stats, for example: Boomers are turning 50 every 7.5 seconds
  - Mid-life is a moving target – and Boomers are hitting it like a tidal wave
  - Which means – we have 78 million Boomers; and 46 million Gen Xer's; for the first time ever the largest part of our working population is not early in the "life experience"
  - The U.S. Labor Market requires older workers to postpone retirement or come back; to compete in the Global Market we need every one in the workforce – which means groups traditionally discriminated against, the disabled, parolees, immigrants and the older worker.
8. **For example, if I were one of your students, what is the first step you would take to Career Counsel me in preparation for my new future?**
- I would warmly welcome you and after you felt comfortable, I would listen while you told me your story – background, experience, skills, feelings of job loss or perhaps divorce;
  - I would then explain my credentials to you and my limitations; you might be recommended to career assessments – which we have a nice variety and interpretation; I would talk all options available to you at Grossmont College, (i.e., programs, services);
  - You would decide where you wanted to begin; you would be instructed about the national, state and local labor markets; and research occupational information; decide what kind of training or college education is necessary and then begin your career plan with possibly short-term, mid-term or long-range goals;
  - To reinforce you successful feeling with this transition, we would have you attend the Adult Reentry Orientation – listen to other adults who have gone through many life barriers to accomplish their education and change their life.
  - Reinforce the commitment of the older worker and excellent work ethics that employer needs that younger workers do not have.

9. Employment advertisements routinely refer to workplaces that are “fast-paced”, “fresh thinking,” “high energy;” “vibrant,” “challenging,” and “constantly changing.” Many people believe that use of such language and imagery is “code” for “older, slower workers need not apply.” **What are some of “Truths” and “Myths” of the aging process?**

- Myth: Intellectual capabilities of older people are not retained; Growing up means running down.
- Physical decline, loss, feebleness, (mind & body); loss of control; Wilting originality;
- Truth: Intellect is retained and in many categories of cognitive functioning, actually improve with age; A time of freedom, choices and options; Majority of older people – are in really good physical shape; creativity flourishes for the first time ever.

10. **What are the “Nuts & Bolts” of the Grossmont College Adult Reentry Program?**

- Adult Reentry Orientations
- Adult Reentry Workshops
- Support Services
- Outreach Services

11. **Can you give us an idea of some of your workshop topics? Support Services?**

**Past Workshops:**

- Finding Career Success after 40+,50+,60+...
- Generational Clash in the Workplace
- Team Building
- Managing Change
- Mastering Communication

**Support Services:**

- Financial Aid
- EOPS/CARE
- Tutoring
- Disabled Student Provided Services
- Veterans Affairs
- Career Center
- Student Employment Services
- Academic Counseling and Transfer Center

12. **What are some Tips For Surviving The Velocity of Change you can give our listeners today?**

- Change is Constant
- Focus On the Journey
- Keep On Learning
- Team Up With Others
- Follow Your Heart

