



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Doing What **MATTERS**™

CONTRACT EDUCATION



California Community Colleges—Providing Education and Training That Improves Workforce Performance

By Jon Wollenhaupt

A primary mission of the California Community Colleges is “to advance California’s economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous workforce improvement.” To help realize that mission, many colleges have a contract education unit to provide customized workplace education and employee training services to local businesses that seek to increase the skills and productivity of their workers.

To gain additional insights into contract education’s role and the types of organizations it serves, I spoke with Sandra Sisco, Director, Economic and Workforce Development, for Chaffey Colleges.

Q. How does contract education help the California Community Colleges fulfill their mission regarding economic and workforce development?

A. All the California Community Colleges share an explicit economic and workforce development mission, which is to impact the state’s economic growth and competitiveness through industry-specific education and training that helps create a highly skilled workforce. The community colleges fulfill that mission by graduating students with the academic education and skills that meet the workforce needs of business. In addition to academic degrees, the colleges help meet businesses’ needs by providing intensive, short-term customized training for their workforce. This training helps increase productivity and close the skills gap within the organization. The California Community Colleges play a key role in not only helping companies develop a skilled



workforce but also, through contract education, help keep employees’ skills current with the latest industry, technical, and business practices. This is the reason why so many companies and government agencies across the state partner with their community colleges’ contract education department for customized training programs.

Q. How do the California Community Colleges respond to the ever-changing training needs of business?

A. California businesses typically require a rapid response to their employee training needs. In most cases, it is not practical to delay training until a credit-based program can be developed and approved. By tapping into the vast resources composed of workplace-specific curriculum and subject area experts, contract education staff at the community colleges can quickly deliver a customized training program that meets an

organization's immediate training needs. By being agile and responsive, contract education plays an important role in understanding the training needs of local business and developing long-term relationships with business and industry.

Q. Does contract education provide training that prepares workers to receive industry-recognized certifications?

A. Yes. Contract education staff are aligning curriculum and other training resources so they can deliver programs to business that will prepare workers to attain industry-recognized certificates.

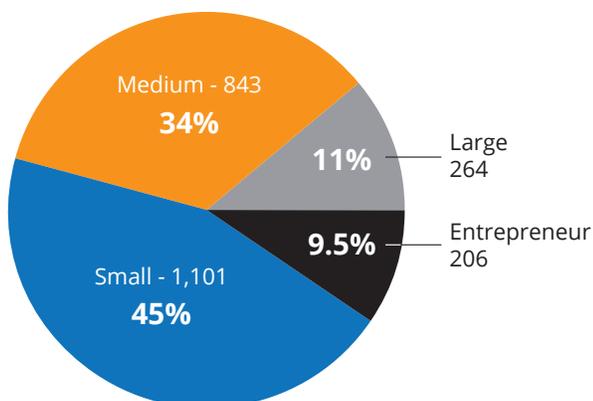
Q. What types of services does contract education provide?

A. Along with instructional programs, contract education programs also offer additional services designed to improve organizational efficiencies and employee performance that include:

- Training needs assessments
- Development of training materials
- Performance needs analysis
- Job profiling
- Consulting services

Q. What types of businesses are partnering with the community colleges to develop programs that upskill employees?

A. Contract education represents a unique and valuable resource for all sizes of employers seeking customized training and skills development for their workforces.



In fiscal year 2014–2015, a total of 2,414 employers statewide were served by contract education. A breakdown of businesses by size shows that 45% were small businesses (defined by the state as 100 employees or less), 34% were midsize, and 11% were large businesses. Additionally, entrepreneurs represented about 10% of those served.

The largest sector served by contract education is the public sector, consisting of federal, state, and local government. This sector accounted for more than 28% of all trainees served by the community college system.

Q. Which are the main industries the community colleges serve?

A. The community colleges have identified the following priority industry sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Transportation and Renewables
- Agriculture/Water/Environmental Technology
- Energy (Efficiency) and Utilities
- Global Trade and Logistics
- Healthcare
- Information Communications Technology and Digital Media
- Life Science and Biotechnology
- Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism
- Small Business

Other sectors served include:

- Administration of Justice
- Military
- Nonprofits
- Government (State, County, Local)

Q. What kind of recognition are the community colleges getting from the business community?

A. The community colleges receive recognition from the business community for their contributions to local economic and workforce development. For example, in 2005, Chaffey College and San Bernardino Community

College Districts were invited to become founding members of the Manufacturers' Council of the Inland Empire. That invitation was the result of Chaffey College's long-standing efforts to meet the needs of business and to build relationships with employers, the county economic workforce development agency, and city government.



These long-standing relationships were instrumental when Chaffey College applied for and won a \$14.9 million grant from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program to improve manufacturing training and education in the Inland Empire region. Chaffey College and the Inland Empire Regional Training Consortium used the grant money to create the **Industrial Technical Learning Center (InTech)**, which is located on the campus of California Steel Industries—a major local employer. The InTech Center will train more than 2,000 workers in advanced manufacturing, advanced transportation, logistics, energy and utilities, and computer/information communications technology/digital media. It is projected that the InTech Center will have over a \$1 billion economic impact for the Inland Empire region.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jon Wollenhaupt is a marketing consultant who works as a contractor with the California Community Colleges. The development of this article was funded by the Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) Grant that is hosted at Mt. San Antonio College. He can be reached via email at jon@golaunchmarketing.com.

A sample of organizations that have partnered with the California Community Colleges to develop workplace education and training programs include:

MANUFACTURING/AEROSPACE/AUTOMOTIVE

Alcoa Fastening Systems
Boeing Company
Honda Performance
Northrop Grumman
Raytheon
SpaceX
Tesla

CONSUMER GOODS/FOOD

Ghirardelli Chocolate Company
The Hain Celestial Group
Kraft Foods
Nestlé
Wonderful Orchards

FEDERAL & STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

California Department of Agriculture
CalHR
Department of Transportation
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
U.S. Department of Education

RETAIL

IKEA
Starbucks
HEALTHCARE
Kaiser Permanente
O'Connor Hospital
Providence Del Rosa Villa

