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# HPOG HOPES

HEALTH PROFESSION OPPORTUNITY GRANT

HEALTH CAREER OPPORTUNITIES WITH  
PERSONALIZED EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS

## Employment Case Study



**PimaCommunityCollege**

- Pima Community College (PCC) serves approximately 56,000 students annually across six campuses and various community locations.
- Most students come from Pima County (pop. 998,050), which is the eighth poorest Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the nation and is home to 15% of Arizona's residents.<sup>1</sup>
- PCC offers workforce and business development for 18,900 students annually and has a proven track record of working with industry to rapidly develop courses and programs to meet the needs of local employers.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census, "Poverty: 2010 and 2011," Sept. 2012; at <http://tinyurl.com/lu5uvn6>

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# HPOG HOPES Program

## Health Professions Opportunity Grant

- Pima Community College (PCC) is an HPOG grantee and operates the Health Career Opportunities with Personalized Educational Supports (HOPES) grant.
- At the end of the first HPOG, HOPES Program leaders took a look at their data and questioned why their healthcare employment numbers were not higher.
- Leadership focused on what could be changed in HPOG 2.0 to increase healthcare employments.

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# Strategy

- The HOPES employment team selected several occupational training programs on which to focus and conducted interviews with area employer representatives who recruit for these targeted occupations. These conversations made them realize that employment information must be interspersed throughout all HPOG services for participants.

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# Employer Engagement

- HOPES began engaging with employers in ways that contributed to strong healthcare employment outcomes for targeted training programs.
- Specifically, the HOPES employment team asked employers if they wanted to learn more about the changes and possibly partner in hiring LPN graduates.
- They would then schedule an appointment to visit the employer's facility to learn more about the work setting and the employer's hiring needs. In spring 2016, the HOPES employment team met with eight employers who hired LPNs regularly.

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# Findings from Employer Interviews

- The conversations with local employers offered many new ways to better align PCC and HOPES employment support services with specific employers' recruiting processes. Some of the recruiting strategies HOPES learned about were:
  - One human resources representative spent 3 hours demonstrating the online recruiting system, which revealed that recruiters often only reviewed the first 30–40 résumés they receive. For this employer, responding to an older job posting would be a waste of a participant's time.
  - Another interview revealed the employer's terminology for first aid/CPR certification was different than the language used by PCC and HPOG participants. This vocabulary mismatch resulted in LPN applicants being labeled "not qualified" for positions where they did, in fact, possess the required certifications.
  - Another recruiter did not value the "skill set" features that were listed prominently at the top of the résumé format recommended to HPOG participants. This meant that HPOG applicants didn't pass the "20-second" résumé review rule and were rarely selected for interviews.

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# Program Specific Job Fairs

- PCC and the HOPES Program offer a series of targeted activities during the last 2 months of training, which culminate in a specialized job fair for targeted programs like LPN and Medical Assistant. These job fairs are the HOPES employment team's top point of engagement with participating employers.
- The job fair is generally held 1 day prior to the program graduation. Many employer-partners are pleased with the results, they return to participate in the job fair each term.

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# Job Fair Timeline

In order to best prepare HPOG participants, job fairs are planned out to provide participants before, during, and after the job fair.

1. Three weeks in advance of the job fair, invite and confirm employers who are actively recruiting for jobs that are related to the program. The college generally has 6–9 employers that participate.
2. A few weeks prior to graduation, HPOG coaches begin preparing students who are completing the program to ensure that they have a complete portfolio of materials and information needed for job applications and interviews.
3. One week before the job fair, college staff, including HPOG's employment team members, conduct mock interviews with students and provide feedback.
4. On the day of the event, an HPOG employment team member gathers students before the fair starts to review tips and questions to ask employers and to help boost participants' confidence.
5. Post-job fair, HOPES follows up with participants to learn which employers the student is interested in and arrange individual career counseling appointments when necessary.

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# Employment Tools

- **Checklists To Run Successful Job Search:** This participant checklist lists 14 items that are necessary for the job search. The list includes fingerprint clearance card, state occupational licenses, and personal documentation such as a Social Security card, citizenship ID, etc. The remainder of the document has space for participants to record information that they will need to complete online applications and to include in their résumés.
- **Professional Dress for Job Search:** This tool lists “Dos” and “Don’ts” on appropriate dress for men and women to wear for interviews or other professional events. The description includes pictures of professional clothing and suggests specific Tucson-area nonprofit/secondhand stores at which to acquire professional clothing at low cost.
- **Mock Interviews:** This guide lists competencies in six areas, such as first impressions, attitude, quality of responses, etc. Within each competency area are three levels of ratings that each have specific descriptions of behaviors observed.
- **Sample Job Descriptions:** These job descriptions are used to guide participants in developing position-specific résumés and job applications. This file includes sample job descriptions for targeted healthcare jobs, including certified nursing assistant (CNA), medical assistant, phlebotomist, surgical technician, etc.

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# HOPES Academy

- The HOPES Academy is an orientation for all HOPES students new to the grant. It gives participants an early introduction to the HOPES employment team.
- Additionally the academy introduces students to:
  - Available supports from the college and outside agencies.
  - Initial team meeting between other HPOG students.
  - Tips on how to be successful in school.
  - Time management.
  - An overview of healthcare training programs offered at Pima Community College.

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# Looking forward

- Expanding the HOPES Academy to a series of workshops including:
  - Professionalism
  - Soft skills training
  - Communication skills
  - Study skills
  - Interviewing and resume building
- Continuing communication with employers in order to stay on top of employment trends and employer needs.

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# Resource Guide

## Employment Virtual Learning Cohort Resource Guide

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/employment-virtual-learning-cohort-resource-guide>



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