

**Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan
Adult Education Partnership Meeting**
Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (15 S. 7th St.)
Wednesday, November 5, 2008 – 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Meeting attendees:

- **Terry Brubaker** (Fort Carson)
- **Barbara Graves** representing Dr. **Edwin Ray** (VP Education Services, PPCC)
- **Cheri Arfsten** (PPCC)
- **Jerry Fritz** (PPCC, Division of Workforce Development)
- **Shannon Watkins** (Troy University)
- **Bobby Cartwright** (Troy University)
- **James Malm** (CSU-Pueblo)
- **Candida Bennet** (UCCS)
- **Dana Rocha** (UCCS)
- **Laura Barela** (UCCS)
- **Erica Rolloson** (UCCS)
- **Mike Boyd** (Colo.Tech Univ.)
- **Kate Hatten** (PPACG)
- **Jason Wilkinson** (PPACG)
- **Lisa Westerbeck** (PPACG)

Welcome and Introductions

Kate Hatten, PPACG Military Impact Program Manager led the introductions, including Dana Rocha (Co-Chair) and Terry Brubaker (Co-chair) and provided a brief synopsis of the purpose of the Adult Education Partnership Group, noting that this and all partnership groups will have representatives on the Colorado Defense Mission Coalition (CDMC), which serves as the steering committee for the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan, in order to ensure information-sharing and coordination for all issue areas affected by Fort Carson growth.

Phase 2 Status/Update

Ms. Hatten briefly described PPACG's efforts from Phase 1 and asked for input from the group regarding the Growth Plan. She indicated that PPACG has received additional funding of \$1.74 million from the Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to address Fort Carson growth impacts in more detail, and that PPACG is currently in the process of hiring a consultant to work on specific tasks for Phase 2 of the Growth Plan. The grant covers adult education, transportation, housing, and several other issue areas impacted by Fort Carson growth. PPACG staff, and the consultant team will work with members of this and other partnership groups to obtain and share information and make recommendations to address regional needs related to the growth.

The project timeline is July 1, 2008-December 31, 2009. An RFP for consultant services was released this week to gather more – and more detailed – information regarding soldier and family demographics and conduct additional research across key issue areas. The adult

education/workforce component of the RFP was distributed. The entire RFP can be obtained from the PPACG Website (www.ppacg.org).

Phase 2 RFP

One key component of Phase 2 will be updated demographics, particularly related to if and when families accompany the soldier, factors that are affected by deployments. The 4th Infantry Division headquarters and another brigade will relocate to Fort Carson from Fort Hood in 2009, bringing approximately 5,000 soldiers and their families to the region. Through Phase 2 of the Growth Plan, we will work to determine more accurate projections of soldier and family needs, including the amount and type of employment and education they will seek.. It was noted that, currently over 18,000 soldiers are assigned to Fort Carson, but approximately 9,000 are deployed. While more units are returning next year, others will also deploy. By the end of FY 2009, over 23,000 soldiers will be assigned to Fort Carson and over 28,000 will be assigned by FY 2011. However, more detail is needed, particularly regarding the effects of deployments on the timing of arrivals of family members.

The outcome of the process is to develop a plan that provides better planning numbers, information on what demand and types of services are currently available in the community and potential gaps in services, such as the need for more facilities, etc.

It was noted that the OEA grant does not provide funding for implementation of the action steps that will result from the plan. It is intended that the Growth Plan will give adult education/workforce service providers with key information needed to obtain funding from federal and other entities to meet increased demand. It was also noted that OEA and the federal Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC) are looking at community needs related to military growth and that the Phase 2 planning process can help document local needs to assist federal agencies with funding decisions.

Members discussed key issues related to adult education and workforce needs, particularly related to Fort Carson growth. One key issue is the needs of wounded warriors, which range from disabled access to facilities to identifying soldier needs before issues arise in classrooms. For example, in one instance, a soldier was assigned a writing assignment about a topic he or she was not ready to deal with, and when the soldier asked for a different assignment – the professor told the soldier that he or she needed to be identified as needing special consideration class prior to the class.

In addition to wounded warriors, attendees discussed numerous issues/concerns that should be addressed in determining and making recommendations regarding Fort Carson growth. These issues included the following:

- The need to train faculty and staff on how to work with wounded warriors, whether it is a physical or psychological limitation.
- Need to determine how to counsel them when they arrive at the school and what support or services are available to them, including:

- New GI Bill
- Chapter 33
- Tuition Assistance
- Lumina Grant – hopefully Colorado will be awarded this funding
- How to implement the action of soldiers transferring their benefits to their spouses
- Disabilities and access to facilities is an issue (no elevators)
- Identifying other model programs that might be replicated here, such as a wounded warrior program in California (possibly Ontario)
- Unit command cooperation conflict between sergeants knowing about them taking the educational opportunity, but do not provide time for it
- Demographics will help with soldier needs and projections, such as
 - What are the soldiers looking for in a school
 - Types of services
 - Career tracks for spouses
- Providing training for military members about to separate or retire who adequate skill training for a job in the civilian world and identifying what resources are available for spouses.
- More training for enrollment services and concerns about shifting funds to counseling and enrollment
 - The need for standards on transferring classes
 - Especially when apply for online programs it is difficult to get classes approved because it is not a face-to-face advisory discussion. Students shouldn't have to take classes twice just because the name of the class is a little different.
 - Responsibility has now shifted to the soldier to know what training/things are coming up in their job and then provide acceptance to a institution to go to school and get it approved
- Providing Microsoft Office and written/spoken word skills / customer service skills
- Type of Delivery Model– Internet or classroom-based?
- Capacity/Facilities – What types of facilities and services will be needed and when?
- Curriculum needs for the soldiers and their spouses
- Education must be portable and recognizable by other institutions. Collaboration agreements must be worked out with other institutions.
- Increased spousal participation – Currently, Fort Carson has a program with over 300 spouses.
- How to utilize Career Advancement Accounts or future programs.
- Potential workforce shortfalls in the larger community; for example, social services may need more staff.
- Does Fort Carson want the institutions to bring the information to the installation instead of the student seeking information through the university?
- The need for flexibility in where classes are provided. (Deployments mean less soldiers taking class on-post, but more possibly taking on-line classes.)

- Need for more classes on post – this will help with student success because it is hard to go on- and off-post for class and daycare is easier on-post. Portable classes are also good.
- Educating soldiers and family members on services available to them.
- Do schools offer the programs soldiers want or are curriculum adjustments needed?
- Type and amount of staffing needed, and when
- What type of support will the school get from the community?
- Knowing the location of soldier housing is important to help put facilities in locations that are easily assessable.
- What can be done to help students succeed while they are working and also when they are deployed? It is important that they can continue their program while deployed and also return to it easily.
- Is there a need for more contract courses?
- Developing spouse programs. Pikes Peak Community College has a spouse program in the technology field.
- Need to determine the best time of day and time for classes taking into account taking kids to school, daycare, etc.
- Federal Laws/Discrimination – Need to define wounded soldiers, but all institutions believed all soldiers should get the same benefits and to give people certain classifications.
- Providing courses/programs that meet the scheduling needs of soldiers and spouses.
- The need for state-of-the-art training facilities on-post
- The need for ADA-compliant facilities to meet wounded warrior needs.
- Special accommodations for wounded warriors (such as additional time to take tests, special assignments, etc.)
- The need for job placement programs.
- Develop internships and mentors within the community; this may provide potential employment upon completion of school.
- Adult daycare needs for spouses taking care of wounded warriors.
- Assistance for soldiers transitioning out of the military and are no longer eligible for education benefits.
- Assistance for newly-arrived spouses who do not qualify for in-state tuition.
- Nursing – Lack of facilities and clinical teachers – 2 to 3 year waiting list to get into a program. UCCS and PPCC both have nursing programs, but the demand is high.
- The need for clinical spaces for nursing programs; there is currently a long waiting list.
- Fort Carson is surveying soldiers during their in-processing to see what soldiers want. They just finished a needs assessment. In terms of a delivery model, in FY 2006 army-wide 72% of soldiers took classes via distance learning. Fort Carson was behind in percentage points and is now ahead.

Next Steps

Kate Hatten reported that PPACG is currently in the process of hiring a consultant team to complete a needs assessment of adult education/workforce, and other key impacts. PPACG will work closely with partnership group members to identify key issue and make recommendations to meet soldier and family needs. As a follow-up to this meeting:

- PPACG will distribute the above list of key issues identified by the group so that members can review and prioritize.
- PPACG will work to identify other entities who should participate and will invite John Vukich from Pueblo Community College to participate.

CDMC meeting (November 19)

- As co-chairs, Terry and Dana will participate in the CDMC and represent the Adult Education/Workforce Partnership Group. Other partnership group members are invited to attend the CDMC when adult education issues are on future CDMC agendas,
- A Fort Carson Town Hall meeting is scheduled tentatively for February 6, 2009. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Next Partnership Group Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled in January when a consultant is onboard. PPACG will coordinate and send meeting notices.