

# Communities of Practice: Secrets of Successful Implementations (Part II) March 24, 2016

Michael Lesiecki – Alright thanks everyone let's go ahead and begin our webinar today this webinar is being recorded eventually just turned on the recorded message my name is Mike Lesiecki here at the Maricopa Community Colleges. I'd like to welcome you to the webinar today titled Communities of Practice Secrets of Successful Implementations Part II, today is March 24, 2016.

## **Webinar Details**

Michael Lesiecki – In this webinar you'll be in listen-only mode using your computer or phone and you could use the question to ask questions and we'll address those as time allows. As I mentioned this webinar is being recorded that you'll be sent not only a link to the recording itself but a link to the slides as well.

## **Brought To You By**

Michael Lesiecki – Webinar is brought to you by the Centers Collaborative for Technical Assistance with additional support by the ATE Collaborative Impact Project and we gratefully acknowledge the support the National Science Foundation recognizing that any opinions expressed here are those of the authors and not of the National Science Foundation itself.

## **The CCTA is Led By**

Michael Lesiecki – So what is the CCTA thing, well it's a group of centers in the ATE world you can see them listed here, The one in Collin college in Texas, at Florence Darlington in South Carolina, Hillsborough at Florida, City College of San Francisco, and my college here Maricopa Community Colleges in Phoenix, Arizona we collaborate to produce this series.

## **CCTA Purpose**

Michael Lesiecki – Why? Well CCTA is responding to requests from the Department of Labor and the National Science Foundation to really talk about providing TA that's technical assistance to TAACCCT grantees and other grantees and people who don't necessarily have grants.

## **CCTA Activities are Relevant for**

Michael Lesiecki – These are very relevant activities for people that do have these type of grants and any work force oriented programs of any type.

## **Deliverables**

Michael Lesiecki – What is CCTA suppose to deliver well things like today topical webinars and teleconferences on solutions other media we have now a number of white papers that are starting to being posted on the website also we reference the holdings of the ATE community that are archived on atcentral.net very useful place for you to visit.

## **Deliverables Continued**

Michael Lesiecki – There is specific conference coming up this summer we'll mention that at the end of today's webinar the HI-TEC conference which has a convening of people interested in these topics.

## **Presenters**

Michael Lesiecki – It's my pleasure today now to turn to our presenters. Let me introduce my colleague Ann Beheler, she's the Principal Investigator and Executive Director at the National Convergence Technology Center at Collin College in Texas. Welcome Ann, say hello to everyone and please introduce your co presenters.

Ann Beheler -Thank you Mike! We're very pleased to be here today I'd like to introduce Helen Sullivan who's the Director for the National Convergence Technology Center and I'd also like to introduce Elizabeth Halweg, who is a professor at Fox Valley Technical College she's a member of our community of practice and I think we have ended up with a few technical difficulties with her hopefully those will get resolved by the time we get to her portion of the presentation cause I really would like for everyone to hear from her. Could we have the next slide please Mike.

## **Poll #1: Your Affiliation**

Ann Beheler – Ok we're ready for our poll, would you please take a moment and let us know if you are in an NSF grantee, a TAACCCT grantee, or both and Mike will let a few seconds pass probably close to a minute so that everybody can fill that out and we'll get an idea of whose here.

Michael Lesiecki – Thanks Ann were just taking a minute while people are responding to the poll and I'm just about ready to show you the results and Elizabeth has just logged in so we should be ok there. Let's go ahead we'll close the poll now thanks everyone for responding and let's take a look the results. There's about a third roughly with NSF and a fraction that have both of them and a considerable fraction today about 24% that are not involved with either of these grant program. Pretty interesting.

Ann Beheler -That is very interesting Mike, and you're at the right place because the work that we're doing through the Centers Collaborative for Technical Assistance actually applies to just about any grantee as long as your focusing on a workforce program and it also apply to workforce programs in general so we're really glad to have you.

## **Evolution From A Network to a Community of Practice**

Ann Beheler - I'm gonna start by talking about how we evolved from our network to a community of practice next slide.

## **What is a CoP**

Ann Beheler - Ok so let's start with the definition I would expect that many of you were involved in part one of this webinar series so I'm going to remind you that a community of practice is actually a term that has a definition it is a group of people who share a concern or set of problems or a passion about a topic and to deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. I would like to highlight one word in that and that is if you could go back just one second. One word in that is passion people who are passionate about what they are doing and who also have a willingness to help one another. We did not set out to immediately to become a community of practice, I will, we're going to give you our evolution about how we ended up there and I would suggest to you that it's not necessarily a linear path and although it's very valuable to be working in a true community of practice because the group does basically have a mind of its own and a life of its own once it gets going it doesn't necessarily have to start there. Next slide please.

## **Similar Groups**

Ann Beheler – I will also remind you that there are groups that are similar to communities of practice and they are the networks where their nodes and linkages and information flows also project teams driven by deliverables, roles, and tasks and then community of interest people who are not necessarily experts or practitioners or planning to be experts and practitioners but who are just interested in topics, next slide.

### **CTC- Evolution of a CoP**

Ann Beheler - You may be familiar that many of the centers in fact I think all of the centers under National Science Foundation have a responsibility to disseminate our work. Well we're working on taxpayer money were funded by your money as well as ours and it makes sense that we would not want to invest that money twice to accomplish the same goals. So when we started out as a regional center in 2004 part of our goals included sharing curriculum a popular term at that time was curriculum in a box we could have all the various pieces of curriculum in a virtual box by putting it on a website and packaging the syllabus, modules the labs all the little bits and pieces altogether so at that point what we plan to do what you put it on the website and more or less the field of dreams approach would take over and it would be there so everybody that wanted something would come there however it didn't exactly work that well let's try the next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Ann Beheler - That created our second problem which was people might go to our website and look at the curriculum but then there were many other questions that came out of that some of them are listed here what about the equipment how does it fit in with what we're doing already and oh by the way you're calling what you're doing convergence what does that mean? By the way convergences is IT and communication that's not necessarily my term but it was in fact a term that our business team that leads all of our work chose to use for us and then if you do to train someone in convergence are the students going to get a job all of us that are doing workforce programs are focused very intently on ensuring that our students have the appropriate skill to be employed and then if it's something new how do we get faculty up-to-date so as you can see one attempt to solve a problem created yet again a whole different set of problems, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Ann Beheler – So this generated our second idea and I have to say that in fact we copied like crazy both the Mentor Links project and ultimately the Mentor Connect project actually came out of the Mentor Links project that has been working since about the mid-nineties through AACC. So what we decided was it wasn't enough to create materials for people we needed to provide some kind of mentoring some kind of explanatory information and also a human I know in this day and age that we use a lot of virtual resources we use email for virtually everything in terms of communication or texting or whatever however it's important to have relationships as well. So the components of our mentoring relationship started to be developed and that's about the time that one of our speakers later on is going to be what they joined into our network we wanted them to create a business team to provide direction for them we didn't really want people to adopt our courses and then realized that they didn't fit on their campus we wanted the folks to actually work with the local business team to figure out whether if somebody is trying to be a convergence technician in some remote place in the world are they actually going to get a job. We also wanted them to use the business team to identify the priorities in terms of curriculum that they expected to see and then we wanted the faculty to figure out how to address gaps if the business team really wanted additional information to be taught and then also a real problem that is ongoing in any technical areas that changes frequently and I will allege that IT and cybersecurity and many technical areas change very frequently we have to figure out how to ensure the instructors know how to

teach the new material and so there's a whole professional development component that had to be involved and then oh by the way students don't just automatically know what you're teaching and that your program is the best that's around. So we had to come up with strategies to recruit students and share that via the mentoring relationship, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Ann Beheler - Then our National Visiting Committee officers, all centers need to have a National Visiting Committee composed of business and other educators and grantees to review and advise the program and our National Visiting Committee was very impressed with what we created and they just were intense that we spread program throughout our entire region to all the area that is in the North Texas region so we targeted six new colleges and interestingly enough we presented at national conferences and what ended up happening is the first six colleges weren't from our region at all they were from all over the country and at that time the mentoring was taking place through one full-time Director Helen a part-time Program Manager, the PI me and a couple of CO-PI's that we're working on very limited hours so our heart was in the mentoring but we might not have had a huge amount of time to spend mentoring others, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Ann Beheler – Idea number three here we go, the program we learn we were intent on everybody replicating our program in lockstep however we learned about how to defuse innovation and realized that it would be just as appropriate if a college were to adopt and adapt our program to meet their own colleges need and the business needs in their area. So we wanted to spread the adoption and adaptation beyond 1 to 1 mentoring because up until this time all of the mentoring had been coming out of the grant office to colleges across the US- rather than 1 to 1 we started doing conference calls and yearly face-to-face meetings with the group and it became a one to many type of mentoring event, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Ann Beheler - And this is the beginning of our community of practice we had lots of colleges now we're up to fifty it was six and then ten and then you know if you more each year lots of colleges and the folks that are involved in the work are involved because they have an informed self-interest that is my way of defining it such that I think people do best when they are operating in terms of their own informed self-interest. We all want to help others however well I don't know if we all do but most of us want to help others but we also want to get something out of the relationship ourselves so that was the beginning of our community of practice and here is the link that you'll be able to click on to get more information from the Wenger article, next slide.

### **The Rest of the Evolution to a Community of Practice (so far)**

Ann Beheler - Now I'd like to introduce Helen again and turn it over to her so she can talk about the evolution of the rest of it, thank you Helen.

Helen Sullivan - Thank you Ann, Mike if you'll go to the next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Helen Sullivan - So if you think about the thread that we have going here so far each challenge or each issue spurred us on to have an idea on how to address it and what is interesting how we thought we were going to dress initially just disseminating our products and services actually evolved in to something that was more rich and engaging and very effective so the next step in this process which was

trying to grow this network but without adding more people on the Grant staff to do it and this is how it shifted over to community of practice we saw the people who were the people receiving mentoring by this time they had been on board for a few years they developed their own programs they were starting to make presentations at conferences they were taking leadership roles at the meeting that we were having and so it looked like they were really in a position to start doing some leadership and helping others so instead of a mentor mentee relationship we started the evolving into a community and so four of the initial members and the mentored network started taking some leadership roles and they evolved into an advisory board so these were four people Elizabeth who's going to speak in a moment is one of the four and the exciting thing for us was instead of us trying to drive the program on our own we learned so much from collective knowledge, collected experience and new ideas that they were going to help drive this as well so they started mentoring new people, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Helen Sullivan - And so from this we came up with our next idea, so as they were on this board of advisors and they were giving it some ideas they were geographically located in different parts of the country so it seemed like it was a pretty interesting idea for them to start mentoring or working with people around their geographic location and spreading this network where they were almost like hubs. So it became like a mesh network in the community of practice so this would be another thing that was very helpful for us to expand the program where we weren't depending on everyone at the grant center the very limited staff we had to mentor and bring people on board or to have these people on the advisory board help spread the word, bring people on board, help where we weren't able to you and they brought some other things into this process that we weren't able to do. One these are people in the trenches they were in the field they had already done their programs they either started them from scratch or they enhanced what they already had. so they already knew challenges that needed to be overcome they had done that, they had gotten their curriculum approved very quickly, they had recruited students into the program, they had done all the steps in the processes that because they had done it they were very helpful in helping new people overcome obstacles that they were going to face. So as you see the bottom bullet they were able to share information, their best practice and their leadership skills as well, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Helen Sullivan - To give you an idea for those of you who are not familiar with what we do the CTC which is the Convergence Technology Center offers the Convergence College Networking at this point we changed the name of the group from the Mentor College Network to Convergence College Network to reflect more of it being a community of practice. So the center offers free professional development every summer we do a week-long training called Working Connections and we do a half a week in the winter and this allows faculty to learn topics that they're able to teach in subsequent semesters we get them travel reimbursement help to come to these training sessions as well as some conferences that we feel like are very helpful for them in teaching and learning what's going on in the field. We have a lot of resources on a Wiki that we provide to our CCN members and it could be recruiting material, curriculum, how to engage your business and industry leadership team, how to grow a program in your network just a lot of resource material that's very helpful. The other thing that we've heard from our community practice is that the network opportunities that they have with each other is invaluable many times we have colleges either from rural areas where they're very small colleges and the IT faculty staff is very very small so they may have limited opportunities to network with peers and usually that may happen at a conference other than the one or two they may know on their campus so this opened up a whole new realm of networks for people who perhaps didn't have that opportunity they also were able to maximize their business and industry leadership relationship we help them with that. We offer them access to

virtual labs, so for those who are struggling a little bit to get the lab equipment they need they can plug into a virtual labs and teach class that way and we also offer them some feedback if they're doing grant proposals to help them have a better chance of success and getting those grants, next slide.

Michael Lesiecki – Helen I can't resist breaking in for second, it's Mike a question came in and it's right on this slide you referred to it as a network and then in the same voice as a community of practice are they one in the same or do you distinguish a network from a community of practice in your mind.

Helen Sullivan - It's kind of a double mesh thing it's a network of people but because of how they are dealing with each other it's a community of practice as well. This is what makes it interesting the branded new people who come on board do get some mentoring so there is that component that is still there. Those that are in the network have a lot of information they share amongst each other but it's also a community of practice where they develop curriculum, they provide to each other, as they have issues they will put maybe a blast out on our communication link to say has anybody encountered this problem how did you deal with it. There are a variety of components it just all kind of fit together.

Ann Beheler – And Mike this is Ann, just a comment here on this slide the CTC offers all of this through the Convergence College Network and I guess we call it network because that's our focus were in computer networking too. But the group that is offering the help some of these things are handled by some of the more mature nodes in the network if you will for example the virtual labs they are not just offered through Collin, they're offered through Georgia Southern. Also giving information or help on working with the business community can come from the more experienced colleges as well.

Michael Lesiecki – That makes sense Ann, of course I like your double use of the word network and network and its two contexts, maybe we should I think Helen gave me the idea here if you think of these two things like we in mathematics right in seventh grade were we hooked two sets of things together mathematically whether they were convergence or something like that that's probably a good analogy at least for me. Helen, thanks I'm sorry for the interruption but I couldn't resist and we had some questions about that. So now I'll finally let you go to the next slide, so just one second here.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Helen Sullivan – No that's very good because one of the things that we stumbled a bit on or we've had a little bit of an issue on in when you're wrapping what we do around a title or name sometimes it doesn't fully describe what it is and what it does and because it's a bit of a hybrid because of the mentoring component but because we have so many members who procure now and provide communication and they're on peer levels with other is it more evolved into a type of community of practice. That's why I call it a type of community of practice.

Michael Lesiecki – Ok gotcha

Helen Sullivan - Ok to finish the other side of the point that we are funded by the grant to provide certain business services to help people, so on this slide if you join in this network of community there's responsibility as well. As you can see on this slide to engage with the group and share your expertise and we also think it's very important for people to have a very strong business and industry leadership team helping guide, lead, you know co-lead the effort at their own college and one of the key things that they do is a knowledge skills and abilities KSA that's referred to there or they will do a vetting of the skills that businesses are looking for in new grad so this is a key component of that program that we would like our colleges to do. We have four CCN meetings a year three or online and one is in person but if you can't

attend in person one we also offer that online. They have also been very affective in recruiting other schools into the network right now we're up to 50 school we're going to cap at 60 that was part of our grant target and then the other thing that we ask from them is an annual report and we're getting into report season right and basically we ask them about some numbers thing that I'm going to show you at the end where we are on this, the grads they have, how many enrollees they have, how they are doing with their recruiting things of that nature. So we just want to know how they're doing and we want to brag on them so if we do reports to the NSF, if we do some marketing material we want to tell how great these colleges are doing and if other students are interested in them, businesses are interested in them, other colleges want to find out what's going on there now a variety of contacts that they can have or they can go next with them to help grow their programs as well, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Helen Sullivan - So as we evolved further the board or the advisory board that I talked about earlier that they have now become partners they suggested to make sure that the colleges have skin in the game is that we create two levels of engagement mainly reflecting on how much effort they put into their program and how they are working with the network meaning the community of practice or the community that we have in convergence. So we have them at two levels, at level one if they do more activities and I'll show you what that is on the next slide, they will receive more benefits but because of that they do more responsibility, one of the key things that they get is more travel reimbursement when they got to events or come to training etcetera. They also have access to virtual labs that the next level does not have. Level two you do not have to do many things and you still have the benefit of the connection with the other people in your network you can come to training or travel reimbursement amount isn't quite as high, but the responsibilities are fewer as well. So basically the lead people in our community decided they wanted a point system to help with accountability and they thought it would also encourage engagement and over time we have done some analysis of how this has worked actually that proved to be true, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP**

Helen Sullivan – I don't anticipate that you'll be able to read all this and this is just an example of what we've done. We created a point system to kind of quantify the engagement that the schools have in our system. So for the first year, or the first year that we were collecting points we wanted schools to have a minimum of 15 point the next year it was 20 points which is where we are now. If you joined the first two years were expecting you to come up to speed so you don't have to gather points, but the key is to make sure you're engaged in every step along the way. If you look at the three items at the very top these are required for level 1 participation which is evidence of having this business meeting and that at least one of the meetings that you're having during the year you're doing the skills validation with your businesses to see what they're looking for where you can map it back to curriculum and the third piece that is required is the annual status report of what you're doing. Now on the list we have somethings here like if you attend meetings you get a point, if you go to conferences you get a point, if you submit an idea for a blog you get a point, if you recruit people you get a point, and because we have four meetings a year of the CCN, we have meetings during the year for their administrators, we are now having meetings for university partners. So there's a pretty lengthy list of activities that they can become involved in and it's not that difficult to get up to 20 points and yet it also encourages them to become engaged at this level to keep these ideas going and keep their program robust, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP- 2006**

Helen Sullivan – So to keep with the theme on the evolution of this community this is a sad looking little tree but this was the very beginning, if you look at the bottom of the root system that's Collin College

which got the grant to begin with and the circle above that reflects the National Convergence Technology Center then above that we have colleges that are on these branches so this was the first set of colleges we had in our network. So we had one in California, we had one in Wisconsin, we had one in Michigan, one in Florida and then we had some in Texas, next slide.

### **CTC –Evolution of a CoP -2016**

Helen Sullivan – So here's what our tree looks like today so as we talked about the nodes and the network as we have new people come in we want to make sure they have a point of contact to help ridged them into the group, to explain what's going on, to help bring them up to speed. So this color code so I hope all of you can see that, so the different branches that have the different colors on them have a main college s at the beginning of that branch and that person is the point of contact for the colleges that branch. Also there's some different little circles and things that we have that are things that are offered on those colleges branches to everyone, it could be virtual labs, now that working connections, even though it started in Texas we have them now in Wisconsin we have them in Michigan and we have them in Florida. So we have a lot of things that are available to all the colleges in the network but it basically has taken a village to bring this up to speed and have everyone communicate and work together. So on the next slide, I want to introduce Elizabeth Halweg, who was one of our first leaders in the Mentored Network and has now become a partner with us in the grant and she is a professor at Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton, Wisconsin and Mike if you move to the next slide she's going to talk about the secrets of a successful Implementation.

### **Communities of Practice/Secrets of a Successful Implementation**

Helen Sullivan – Elizabeth?

Elizabeth Halweg - Hey everyone can you hear me?

Michael Lesiecki – Elizabeth you sound good.

Elizabeth Halweg – Ok wonderful, Hi everyone, I am an instructor at Fox Valley Tech and I was hired back in 2000 to fill the spot of a retired instructor who was teaching telephony and had been there for many years at the college and just to give you a little history of how I got involved I was an adjunct instructor teaching telephony courses in the evenings at the college once I was hired fulltime as a networking instructor I started attending our advisory business meetings are business owners were telling us that they wanted our graduates to have skills related to voice over IP so little bit of a story to tell you how I got involved with the Convergence Technology Center as you all know the Y2K forced many business to conversion for better returns on investments, they started conversion of voice video and data traffic over IP networks and it was happening it was necessary but we're in a situation now where we needed to prepare our students with skills necessary for the voice and I started to search out other colleges who were also teaching these skills and I saw nothing absolutely nothing and what am I going to do I'm an instructor I need to teach you skills so I just kept searching until one day I came across this notice that the League of Innovations conference there was going to be a session on voice I need to attend this session maybe they can help me, I need to know what they're doing, what are they doing to teach these skills, what equipment are they using, what are the competencies that they are finding most important, what are the labs etc. And that's the first time I came across and met Ann Beheler and Helen Sullivan, both of these ladies we're really happy to share what they were doing in the VOIP world and they shared with me what the Convergence Technology Center was doing, suppose I should have said next slide please.

### **Fox Valley Technical College – Situated in the Midwest**

Ann Beheler - I think you might be needing to say next slide for the next thing too.

### **Benefits were the Rewards**

Elizabeth Halweg – Sorry about that guys.

Ann Beheler – She had technical issues.

Elizabeth Halweg - So here we are so I would just like to share with you a little bit what happened. So Ann and Helen started joining people, converging people together, bringing these college from all over that had the same needs, who were all willing to share their accomplishments or resources or advice and as more and more colleges came in, the more and more resources from the Convergence Center was being shared and made available to all of the colleges and this is happened more and more of us wanted to join. Along the way we have developed some really great relationships, friendships, collaboration. I remember that day at one of our meeting that Ann and Helen proposed that we start serving as an Advisory Council those colleges that were mentoring other colleges and bring on the new college to join this growing network of community and I was one of those colleges and we helped formulate the new rules of engagement, for becoming a member and participation. FVT is now part of this very talented group of professionals it includes your instructors, Deans, administrators, business professionals, grant people and we all work together very well in this community we help each other out and the really cool thing is, is that if you don't know or don't have an answer you just contact the community and someone is always willing to help or have an idea of which direction to steer you into. These resources, here let me give you an example, in the Midwest we usually hear things a little later than both coasts, we can hear when we were in these meetings we find out what the people on the east and west coasts are experiencing before it ever hits the Midwest so we're really better prepared to address a lot of the changes that are coming our way. The Convergence Network people bring a ton of curriculum resources, blog information, updates, again the Business Leadership group brings us future trends what's coming down, what are businesses looking for, what do we need to prepare students for. And most importantly I guess I'd like to say that one of the biggest rewards is being part of this bigger family this larger family of community of people working together supporting each other. Next slide please.

### **Insights as We Move Forward**

Elizabeth Halweg – Thank you, so moving forward we could all better deal with the upcoming changes that are coming we share ideas, our successes and as our group grew we also realized that we need to modify and adapt our practices to better meet the directions of our goals, the grant and everybody within the Convergence College Network. In supporting each other's efforts we found to that not everybody worked the same, we all had different passions, directions, management and we had to adapt to those needs. As, flexibility I guess that one of the biggest things I'd like to pass on, that everything in IT is not consistent and we are in constant change all the time and one of the wonderful things about being involved in this community is we adapt as things happen, we have people retired, we have people who are new to the community it's all about working together and we know that things are converging even as we go in to the internet of everything in this conversion continues we continue to have these new technologies and skills sets that we have to teach and the resources made available to us as a college, you just can't put a price on it, it's just crazy. What's trending, what's hot, what's not, what's coming, what's going, we could all keep up to speed on what all of this lists of being part of this wonderful community that I can only say thank you for letting us be part of.

Ann Beheler – Well and we thank you and I will say that it is really nice to recognize that we now have 50 resources that we can pull from and it takes a lot of pressure off the grant staff to always have to be the fount of knowledge because that's kind of a huge goal as it seems, thanks Elizabeth. Helen do you want to take a few slides from here.

Helen Sullivan – Yes, thank you and Mike you wanna show the next one.

### **Learning Leadership Skills: The Think Tank**

Helen Sullivan -So Elizabeth I don't know whether you want to say anything about this but we had a session with most of the people in this group are in the Convergence Network and we had a leadership skills class we call the think tank which was part of working connections last summer and we gave them some hands-on training and opportunity on how to conduct the skills validation, honing their communication skills on how to negotiate with the administrator, they learned about student recruitment from advisers who are in the field trying to work with technology students, they heard from a futurists, they heard from a business person on the business side of things when they come to these meeting and what they're looking for so it was really a cool thing and then we did end the week on community of practice and how we work together as a community of practice. I don't know whether you want to throw any two cents about that Elizabeth or not.

Elizabeth Halweg - Well I just want to say it was a great experience learning even though I've been involved with the group for such a long time I'm still learning, I'm still finding out its just hard to explain I'm always learning we for example I learned that my learning skills which I'm better person in front of the classroom because I understand how I learn and understand now how my students are learning. So it was a great experience and I hope others can take advantage of this great opportunity.

Helen Sullivan - Thank you Elizabeth, Mike do you want to go on to the next slide.

### **Learning Team Skills: The Toothpick Factory**

Helen Sullivan – This is another example of the group working together this was Marilyn Barger's. Marilyn Barger came to our group a couple of summers ago from Florida and she conducted the toothpick factory which is how to work as a team, how to think outside the box so these folks are working together as a factory developing toothpicks to make their customers happy to meet their customers criteria. That was really kind of fun to see them think outside the box and also learn teamwork skills that they can pass along to their students. So it was a very nice hands on immersion type activity we're very grateful to Marilyn for bringing that to us and when that was over we were able to disseminate kits to all the colleges in the CCN who wanted to go out and implement that on their own campuses, next slide.

Ann Beheler - Oh Helen don't you think that doing the toothpick factory was good opportunity for us to involve some of our newer colleges in the network because we're adding colleges all the time and the ones that have been around forever like Elizabeth, they know almost everybody but new people didn't and this gave them an opportunity to work on teams with people they didn't know so it helped in this area.

Helen Sullivan -Right usually when we have these face-to-face meetings in the summer for probably a day or half a day and we try to have at least one activity where they're having to work together in teams or as a group and one of the reasons why we do that is for them to get to know each other better, put a

name with a face, learn who they are where they from are what they do and figure out who resources are, or people they can contact when they have questions. Next slide.

### **Networking in Person**

Helen Sullivan -This was taken at one of our face-to-face meetings a few years ago its different than the toothpick factory meeting or the one where we had the think tank, next slide.

### **CCN Enrollment and Graduates**

Helen Sullivan - So to talk about the impact of this and why this is good for everyone you can kind of see the growth in enrollment and graduates this is from about a year ago we haven't gotten all our data from this past year yet, but we have gotten quite a few numbers of students who are enrolled our graduate numbers have increased, next slide.

### **CCN by the Numbers**

Helen Sullivan - The other thing that we ask, and these are numbers and things that come out of these your reports that we ask them for. So from the prior year they had updated 21 courses; they added 15 courses; they added 13 new degrees; they added 41 new certificates and you can just see on and on and on how many things that they have done. We had started tracking this to see how our point system was affecting it and the numbers really have increased proportionally with the new schools that have come in. So we really think the way it's set up now has been very effective and it's working well but as you can see after idea one, problem one, idea two, problem two as things grow and get bigger I'm sure were going to run into another problem but the problems have helped germinate another idea so we're quite excited that the networks bigger and we have already been talking to them about sustainability how do you guys wanna function you know if and when grant money isn't there anymore to support you. So we've already got that mechanism in place to see how this is going to have life going forward. So I hand this back over to Mike or Ann, I'm not sure who is going to facilitate at this point to do question and some rap up after this.

### **Quesitons?**

Michael Lesiecki – I have some questions Helen that I'd like to advance to you and your fellow panelists from the audience. I'll start with you Helen there's been several questions I'll synthesize them together, these most about how these community of practices operate in particular Communication you know I see the face to face stuff here and you've mentioned online well how does that work I mean you point to the CTC website, maybe you can start and then Ann can chime in about the way that the CoP communicates that's really the question.

Helen Sullivan -Well we have bounced around a lot of ideas we talked about Lifter we talked about threaded discussion, concern with threaded discussion is unless somebody is out there all the time or they get email pings all the time they may not keep up with it and we had an issue getting support analyst we've done basically is we've done it through email with everyone copied on it so they know what's being asked they know what's going on. So as soon as a question comes in they either respond directly to the list or they will send us communication, we blast it out and then it just starts going around the horn from there. So that's normally how we've done it up to this point although when we do have our online meetings there's some discussion that comes up during the meeting and sometimes a small group will take some things off topic you know away from the meeting and then come back to the group but usually these questions that come up we do start disseminating it through the email list and then everyone is copied as the conversation goes or as resources are being shared or some contacts are being shared as well.

Ann Beheler -Yeah and also we have two online meeting through WebEx now, they had been GoToMeeting, whatever it is the web meeting we have two of those the year for the faculty representatives and we also have some for the administrators and at those meetings we request topics that people want to discuss so if there's something that is coming up that is going to be a major program shift they'll usually ask to put it on the agenda and we will basically talk it out at that point. We use our Website significantly, we have a Wiki attached to it and so forth but I guess the point I would make is people communicate with each other because they want to help and also because they're getting something out of it. When I talked about informed self-interest the informed part is I want to help others the self- interest is I need to get my job done and this is actually quite an efficient way of doing a national search to find material that might be useful on your own campus.

Elizabeth Halweg – This is Elizabeth, I would just like to add too that there is a central point of contact as well, Helen and Mark so if I come up and have a need for example I'm look for some curriculum in a certain skill set I just call them and they coordinate contacts, phone numbers, email addresses they are a great resource.

Michael Lesiecki – Well thank you all three for commenting on that, so that's more clear now how the communication works in other words Helen said she's going to add to my email burden no I'm just joking about that.

Helen Sullivan - (laughing) that's right!

Ann Beheler – But Mike the request for new things in between meetings they're not huge maybe five or six of them, were not talking about filling up your entire email box.

Michael Lesiecki – Oh ok, not bad. Now here is a tough question for you Ann, and I'll address this one to you. You're supporting this community of practice through your grant from the National Science Foundation and maybe other resources what happens if that source of support goes away suppose the grant ends not that it ever should but suppose it does can a community sustain itself without some sort of centralized, it must have something are there plans for sustainability beyond the horizon here what do you think?

Ann Beheler - Yes I think that again I'm gonna say when people operate in their own informed self-interest their both giving and receiving the network is so valuable at this point that I do believe that especially since we have no great barrier to entry in terms of having to have somebody manage a list server or somebody really put a whole lot of effort into keeping a web site up to date. I believe that at the time that we are no longer funded which I agree with you I want to be funded for the rest of eternity but that's probably not realistic either I do believe that the network as it exist will continue for quite some time now the growth of the network may slow down because we're actively going after new colleges that want to participate Helen and I and some of the other partners present at conferences regularly and talk about what we're doing in our community of practice in fact we have done that recently at the innovations conference this week and we have new people that are prospects to fill out the sixty colleges that we said we would have but I do think the existing ones will continue.

Helen Sullivan – Oh I'm sorry so Mike I'll jump in I said it fast and it wasn't picked up we've already had the first meeting people who are interested in being influential on what's going to happen from a sustaining standpoint I met with them last May and so we discussed what would happen when and if the

grant money goes away what components of this group would you like to have to go forward how do you think it could be organized and what are you willing to do to help in that effort. So we had the initial conversation started we even discussed with the working connections how could we do that without money and I won't go into a lot of the discussion because the funding model has changed over time as well but we talk about online offering, educator to educator teaching, etc. so there is quite a bit of discussion that we've had up to this point and will continue going forward as far as what are the key thing that this group of like going forward and perhaps they're going to help set up a structured like we had, like when we had an advisory board we don't have an advisory board now but perhaps we bring that structure back in to make sure that there is some group making sure momentum keeps going and its volunteer and they could change it on a year to year basis or however they want to do it but as Ann said that if you have informed self-interest and you're willing to help that one reason why we put in the point to make sure they had skin in the game and they really valued the benefits they get out of it. And from what we've heard from the people that are participating they really don't want this group to drop so I think they are motivated to keep it going in some iterative form or fashion.

Michael Lesiecki – I think Ann summarized it in a similar way Ann excuse me Helen by saying self-interest that make sense you're exploring where the self-interest is. That makes a lot of sense to me. I'm gonna try question here we just have a couple of minutes left as we get near the wrap up today hopefully I don't make a mistake but I going to try jumping back to a prior slide and see if that works here so let's see what happens it's not really jumping back so I think I'm just gonna toggle back through the slides so excuse me everyone for watching me go back through the slides here but I wanna show this diagram again it's the point system here it comes and here's where lots of people are interested in this points system number one what if you don't meet those three level one criteria can you still play a little bit can you like have a provisional membership or something?

Ann Beheler and Helen Sullivan – Yes

Helen Sullivan - The answer is yes, that is required for level one we have several rehab mitigation things in place you can be level 2 and participate come to the meetings, get the training and you don't have to do those top three now we really feel like you're gonna be more successful if you do those tops three. But yes you can participate, you get the email, you're a part of the group, you can come to working connection you just don't get as much travel reimbursement and you may not have access to the virtual labs but you will get a lot of the other benefits from it but we think and I did not have a whole list, so if anybody wants to see the entire list you know I can put that out there for you, but we feel like what happens with the list is not exactly competition but some of the people are kind of interested to see well how fast can I get up to the number what can I do to kind of double a bit so it's been, I won't say a game but it sort of is, its marking your progress I won't say it's like marking your progress on the United Way temperature scale but it's something kind of like that. But yes definitely and we have people if they were at level one for whatever reason couldn't do that one year we do have quote unquote rehab program where we help them get back to level one if they would like to do that.

Ann Beheler – You know things happen Mike, there will be an administrative change at a college and a group no longer has support and they just can't do something but interestingly enough this whole point system was not our idea it came from the advisory board by more mature colleges they're comment was coming there really should be an extra advantage for those people that are heavily involved vs. those that only show up once in a while and that its worked incredibly well.

Michael Lesiecki – Good, I gotta take that to heart here and see how I can use that idea cause you're right people incentives are important right and that's one of these things but this leads to the second question about this slide am I my Mike Lesiecki a member here or is my institution the Maricopa Community Colleges a member?

Ann Beheler - It's the college

Michael Lesiecki – The College

Ann Beheler – It's the college, the answer for you could be different because you have 10 colleges in your district so you can, I mean it ten of you that are members.

Michael Lesiecki – Sure, yea I could see that. So the college level as opposed to a single person being.

Helen Sullivan - If we have a meeting and you can't attend well actually any of you want to from your college can attend the meeting you're not limited.

Michael Lesiecki – Ok

Helen Sullivan - So if you can't attend but at least somebody from your college attends they get credit and they get the point and the great thing about the way we have it setup we have a system set up where we monitor attendance so you don't even have to keep track of it we'll do that for you but there are certain things that you will turn in on your yearly report that's how we get the rest of the information.

Michael Lesiecki – I see.

Helen Sullivan -So it's not like we're constantly asking you for data all time, we collect some of it as we go during the year and then we ask at one point during the year for your information and you know what that template is from the beginning so you know what to be collecting and that by the time April first rolls around you'll have it ready to send it in.

Ann Beheler - I'd also like to comment though remember that word passion that I pointed out at the very beginning that was a key element for the community of practice I do not see institutions being passionate I see leaders within the institution being passionate so it kind of some of both Mike.

Michael Lesiecki – So that brings us to the final question that we have time for I know it's a detail but I think it's important one and you just alluded to it so on your email list does that go to an institution or does it go to a person who then distributes it within their institution?

Ann Beheler - A person who then distributes it.

Michael Lesiecki – Ok I thought that was case, I just wanted to double check.

Helen Sullivan – So each college when they join they have a person who's the prime or point of contact for that college the problem is and we do have names of faculty from each of the colleges for example who will get the invitation to working connections but we do depend upon the primes we call them the primes, we do depend on the primes to disseminate that information at their school because there is a

fair amount of turn that can happen and there's no way we can keep on top of that but we believe that the people at the school can and we have also had some turn in the primes not that much but a little bit but that's a lot easier to manage than trying to manage that entire list with everybody trying to shoot out stuff to everybody all the time.

Michael Lesiecki – Sure we'll Helen and Elizabeth and Ann, I'm going to end with the indulgence of our of our participants as they watch me walk through our slides here I'm going to take us to the end and were perfectly on time hold on just a minute folks. Oh by the way people are very impressed by these numbers Ann and Helen just wanted to mention that.

Ann Beheler – Good that what I call impact, their numbers but their impact it's not how many bodies attended training it's what they did with what they did have been learning.

### **Join Us –All Webinars 3pm Eastern**

Ann Beheler - Ok I'd like to invite you to attend the next one of these webinars April 28 is going to focus on Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology Resources it's going to be led by a group of centers that are in that area and I would let everyone know here that we're doing a community of practice not every center is doing that however every center is willing to share something for free so if you want to start something in I was gonna in underwater basket weaving but I really don't think we have a center in that but if we did you could contact them and they could help you so this is what coming up and next slide Mike.

### **Join us in Pittsburgh, PA!**

Ann Beheler - We also have our HI-TEC convening, our HI-TEC conference that will come up this summer the 25th through the 28<sup>th</sup> is the actual HI-TEC event, the first two days are pre-conference, the second two days are the actual conference itself. Helen and I we're both on the Program Committee and I think we have eighty some odd sessions, 20 posters a lot of really good topics are going to be covered so you're invited to that and next slide.

### **Register or HI-TEC and TAACCCT Convening**

Ann Beheler - the day after HI-TEC is the TAACCCT convening but that's not just for TAACCCT it's also for NSF grantees or anybody else who's interested in workforce education. We will have an entire morning that is dedicated to topics with technical assistance that will be valuable for you so you're invited to that and that is 100% free other than you do have to get yourself there.

### **Q&A and Contacts**

Ann Beheler -So if you have any questions here's the contact information for the three of us. I'd like to thank Mike for facilitating this. I'd also like to thank Helen for basically being a major presenter, and Elizabeth Halweg as well. Elizabeth had a few technical issues but I think it always helps to hear from someone who is a part of what's going on and that ends our webinar today Mike would you like to close it up?

Michael Lesiecki – Thank you and I do have one last question as we wrap up for today why do people always pick on basket weaving I don't understand that.

Ann Beheler – (laughing) no idea why

Michael Lesiecki – Well I couldn't resist so friends thank you very much that officially concludes our webinar as you log off today a new browser window pops up and there's a very short couple of questions a survey please don't close the browser window and flee just take a moment and help us improve our webinar series. Thank you again for joining Ann, Elizabeth and Helen thank you this officially ends our webinar, I'm going to stop the recording and see you all next time goodbye everyone.