

WAITING TO EXHALE

A Rapid Response to a Transitioning Workforce

Chris Pody and Linda Brown

Blackhawk Technical College

[Ex-G.M. Workers](#)
[Try to Reboot Their Lives](#)

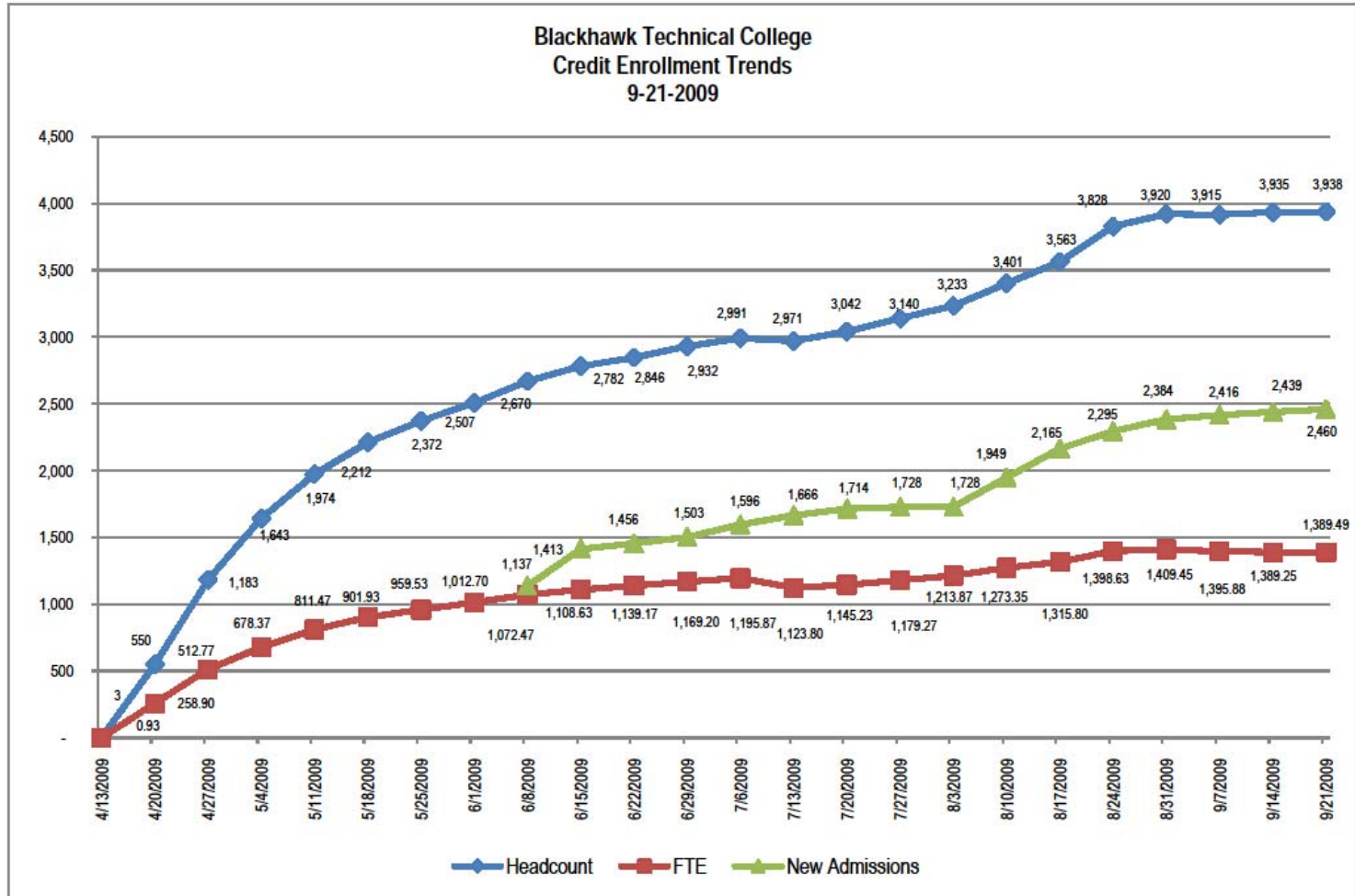
New York Times, Feb 12, 2009

“My grandfather worked here, and my father worked here...The one thing my father told me is you work hard to make things better for the next generation, but now I worry we won’t be able to do that anymore.”

Kevin Corkhill



A Changing Landscape



State's Technical Colleges
Humming as Economy Goes Flat

Wisconsin State Journal, Feb 8, 2009

"People are really lost...People get overwhelmed with choices. It seems like a great idea to go back to school, and it is. But there appears to be so many choices. Too many choices creates confusion."

Chris Pody



Advising Dislocated Workers/Prospective Students

Suggestions...

Take care of the essentials first

Encourage research on their own first

Provide just enough information to the next step

Assure them that COMPASS test scores will not keep them out of the college

Advise them that COMPASS test scores may keep them out of certain classes

Observations...

Earning potential over finding the ideal career

Expect to walk in and immediately be served

Prefer daytime, weekday classes

Prefer printed materials over online

Most lacked computer skills

[School Picks Up Where Jobs Left Off in Janesville](#)

Susan Bence, Milwaukee Public Radio, March 12, 2009

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS:

THE TRIAGE TEAM

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Group sessions are beneficial

Stress the importance of applying early

Be honest about program facts

They will attend orientation

Prepare for them to start with you when problems
occur

A Very Rapid Response

Increased need strains institutional budgets

Hired LTE faculty, counselor and support staff

Used part time faculty as much as allowed

Everybody worked harder, smarter and longer

Added “stress reduction” sessions

Started one-on-one tutoring sessions

Added “Study Skills” Lunch Sessions

Added computer classes

A Very Rapid Response

Added additional 88 course sections

Increased seat maximums in classes

Added Friday and Saturday classes

Added 98 Parking spaces

Started Cohort Contracts:

LPN, Medical Assistant, CNA, Phlebotomy, Industrial
Mechanic

Student Success Course became mandatory

Budget modifications continue...



August 24, 2009

The first day of Fall 2009 Semester dawns...7:45 a.m.

MANUFACTURING TO EDUCATION:

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture Shock: Manufacturing to Education

Factory Culture

- Belonging to a strong union
- Detail spelled out in roles
- Us vs. Them mindset
- Punishment mindset

Academic Culture and the Culture of Healthcare

- Learning is a process – must be self-directed and its own reward
- Pass or fail – but not punishment
- It is up to the student to self-advocate
- Students must develop a support network of instructors, staff and fellow students

The Ex-Worker becomes a Student

Initially, anxiety and fear

Retention issues

Students are adjusting and most are good students

Now enjoy getting up in the morning

Still do not want to enroll in evening classes

The Ex-Worker becomes a Student

“These students are ‘heart-attack serious’ about getting their education and getting back to work. This is their chance and they’re going to take full advantage of their chance and get it while the getting good, so to speak”.

General Education Instructor, Dave Gile

Communications with Partners:

SHARING THE LOAD

NBC Evening News with Brian Williams - March 3, 2009



The Silver Lining

