Howard Community College (HCC) has submitted a new Military to Registered Nurse pathway sequence to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) for approval. If approved, this sequence would give advanced standing in the associate of arts degree in nursing for students with relevant nursing experiences in the military.

EARN (Employment Advancement Right Now) Maryland is a state-funded competitive workforce development grant initiative to bolster a skilled workforce. The college has partnered on an EARN implementation grant with the Maryland HealthTech Coalition and the University of Maryland Center for Health Informatics. The focus of the grant was to bring awareness to the growing field of Mobile Health Technologies. The outcomes included the development of a mobile health design and development course, an executive education course, as well as a health information technology (IT) challenge for high school students throughout the state and a full-day Health IT Expo that brought together approximately 200 professionals to discuss the latest research and new ideas that are shaping this field.

The continuing education and workforce development division has established an introduction to dental assisting and radiology course. This 80-hour course is designed to provide skill training for individuals to work in a dental office as an entry-level dental assistant. The course meets Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) requirements in preparation for the Radiology Health and Safety (RHS) certification exam.

The continuing education and workforce development allied health area created the following hybrid courses to meet student demand: advanced patient care skills, nurse assistant for the pediatrician office, and birth doula preparation for health care professionals.
A hybrid course is an ideal combination of classroom interaction with the use of online resources. Because so many of the course interactions are conducted online, the amount of class meeting time is half that of the traditional onsite version of the course. Students may use computers in the campus computer labs or use their home computers with Internet access to complete online course activities.

- Currently, interdisciplinary simulations are taking place between nursing and several of the allied health programs. Interdisciplinary simulation has proven to be an effective tool in both perfecting clinical skills and developing professionalism in the health care arena. Nursing and allied health students have expressed a greater understanding of and appreciation for the role of other health care providers.

### Partnerships

- The new fire science and leadership associate of arts degree program, a partnership between Howard Community College and the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (HCDFRS), is designed to prepare graduates to perform as entry-level officers and to provide a pathway for career advancement within the department. The curriculum emphasizes fire science technology, firefighting competencies, and organizational leadership. Students in the program will learn about fire prevention, fire protection, incident management, and leadership and will develop the critical thinking and analytical abilities that are necessary in the firefighting field. The college is committed to close collaboration with the HCDFRS in order to provide educational pathways and lifelong learning for firefighters and to provide an educated workforce to serve the residents of Howard County.

- HCC faculty members are developing course syllabi and service projects for consideration in a Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) partnership among the University of Maryland College Park, Howard County government, and HCC for implementation in academic year 2015-2016.
Leading Edge

• HCC was one of several community colleges to receive grants to develop Early College programs with its local high school system. The college received two grants to work with the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), one to develop a program in network security and the other to develop a general studies science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) program with Oakland Mills High School. Students in both programs will complete 30 college credits before graduating from high school. The network security early college program finished its first year with 27 of the 28 students continuing into their second year of the program.

• The college enhanced its profile with high school students by contracting with Naviance, a software tool used by HCPSS and school systems throughout the state for career and college planning. HCC’s more robust profile positions the college as a strong choice for post-secondary education.

• In winter 2014, HCC launched Career Coach as part of its web services to the community. Career Coach features four important pieces of data: local wages for nearly 800 occupations, career trends, current job postings, and how career choices relate to HCC’s programs.

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

• The PyNight Hackathon, the first Python programming language technology event, was held at HCC with sponsorship, marketing, and participation by Booz Allen Hamilton. Over 100 people including community members, Booz Allen Hamilton consultants, and HCC faculty, staff, and students participated in the event, which featured a hacking competition and lectures by Booz Allen Hamilton for individuals interested in learning the Python programming language.
• The college has demonstrated substantial growth in STEM program credit enrollment and credit awards over the past several years, and has exceeded the MHEC benchmarked goals.

• Cyber lab technology and applications were upgraded to enhance and expand its virtual servers’ capabilities to allow students to work on the same technology environments that are found in a work environment.

• The Life Journey software was implemented on the campus website in October 2014.

Sustainability

• The transportation demand management plan (TDMP) was completed in June 2015 as part of the facilities master planning process. College staff are reviewing the recommendations and developing an implementation plan. The TDMP and traffic study has been incorporated into the college’s recently completed Facilities Master Plan 2015-2025.

• The college has spent the past two years developing and strengthening its relationships and collaborative programs with local, county, and state agencies. The goal is to become a sustainability leader and show how institutions can plan for and react to changes in the economy, environment, and society. These partnerships will provide HCC with the resilience the college needs to continue to grow and serve the community.

Some of the organizations that the college partnered with include: Columbia Association, Howard County Department of Sustainability, Howard County Department of Transportation, Howard County Forestry Board, Howard County Transportation Associates, Maryland College Climate Action Group, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Green Registry, Maryland Native Plant Society, Maryland Sea Grant Extension Program, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, and Watershed Improvement Network.

• HCC joined the Sustainability Education and Economic Development (SEED) Center. Sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges,
SEED supports community colleges in educating for and building a green economy. It promotes the development and sharing of sustainability curriculum and programs among community colleges. In fall 2015, a Faculty Professional Learning Community of HCC faculty and staff will start a year-long study of the resources available to the college and conclude with a presentation on how those resources can be implemented at HCC.

One of the first resources the college plans to use is SEED’s Green Genome survey tool, which will evaluate and benchmark current sustainability levels compared to similar community colleges. After establishing these baselines, the college can plan to use the more comprehensive Sustainability Tracking And Rating System (STARS) to benchmark against all higher education institutions in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

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- Howard Community College granted 1,270 degrees/certificates in the 2014-2015 academic year to 1,197 students, the highest number in the college’s history. The college’s graduation numbers have increased 86 percent between FY 2009 and FY 2015, the highest among community colleges in the state. HCC graduates, whether planning on pursuing transfer or immediate entry into the workplace, expand a well-trained and well-educated workforce.

- The continuing education and workforce development division has expanded its offerings of Project Management Professional (PMP®) Certification Exam Preparation both in class and online and supports students with study groups and practice tests. Partnerships with several Workforce Investment Act agencies around the state give unemployed individuals, as well as those in the business community, the opportunity to obtain this training. An Advanced Microsoft Project course has been added and each month the college hosts the Baltimore chapter meetings of the Project Management Institute (PMI), giving Howard County business members and HCC students an opportunity to hear great speakers and obtain professional development units.
Global Competency and Civic Engagement

- HCC was named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for the ninth consecutive year. This award recognizes higher education institutions nationwide for their commitment to and measurable outcomes in helping communities address and solve challenges.

- HCC initiated two new programs supporting civic engagement in order to provide more opportunities for students to volunteer in the community, which included:
  
  ➢ Ambassadors for Community Transformation (ACT) – This collaborative endeavor between the college’s Center for Service Learning and the Office of Student Life was designed to provide a supportive environment for students to identify, plan, and execute service projects in the community. Twenty students took part in this initiative.

  ➢ Operation Community Outreach – This program featured a series of three one-time, group volunteer service outings to local non-profit organizations. Each outing supported a different social cause and involved a different partnering community organization. Approximately 25 students participated in this program.