Partnership for Cultivating Resilience:
Improving Retention, Persistence and Achievement

This partnership outline proposes to support and measurably enhance the success of Texas community college students by ensuring that students, faculty, and administrators are equipped with proven methods for measuring and strengthening resilience—an essential ingredient to success in our adversity-rich world. Community colleges have a long history of institutional resilience and utilizing innovative methods to meet the needs of students; enhancing these strengths is necessary to meet the current challenges faced by the community college system. This partnership aims to create a deliberate, robust, integrated approach to increasing student and faculty resilience. It will equip students with the mindset and tools needed to make significant gains in academic performance and achievement of their goals despite the many obstacles and challenges they may face.

We understand that student persistence and engagement are essential to the progression of students from completion of courses to obtaining professional certifications and degrees. Strengthening resilience will measurably improve these behaviors by building student capacity to overcome the barriers and hardships they face, persevere when challenges arise, and cultivate the personal fortitude to achieve their goals of obtaining a higher education degree or certification. Research reveals that additional, measurable benefits students and faculty should enjoy from the AQ-based approach to enhanced resilience include:

- Greater optimism, health, energy, and quality of life
- Measurably stronger decision making, problem solving, innovation and performance
- Gains in productivity, capacity, agility, and tenacity

The AQ-Based Resilience Approach

The Partnership for Cultivating Resilience brings together PEAK Learning Inc., Integrated Work Strategies, LLC, and the Texas Community College Teachers Association (TCCTA) to measurably strengthen the resilience and tenacity of Texas community college students and faculty using the world’s leading measurement and improvement protocol: the Adversity Quotient® (AQ®) developed by Dr. Paul G. Stoltz Founder and CEO of PEAK Learning, Inc. More than one million people have completed the AQ assessment worldwide, across all socio-economic strata. AQ has also been selected by some of the world’s elite institutions, including Harvard Business School.

Beyond the aforementioned gains, the objective of this targeted, multi-year effort is to have resilience become a focal point of the community college experience in order to improve key outcome metrics including:

- Student persistence, retention, academic performance, certificate completion, graduation, post-graduation degree completion, and job placement
- Faculty resilience, engagement, effectiveness, wellness, and energy
- Comparative success of community college institutions in improving student retention, completion and graduation rates by measurably improving resilience, not by lowering standards.
Documenting the improvement in AQ/resilience across program participants and its impact on community college success metrics will be a key component of the program and a focal point of the Partnership. Outlined below are specific details of how the innovative Resilience Advantage program can be incorporated into the Texas community college system through this partnership at three levels:

- AQ Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Students
- AQ Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Faculty/Administrators
- AQ Research and Outcome Reporting

**AQ Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Students**

To prepare incoming and current community college students to succeed, PEAK Learning and Integrated Work will customize the online Adversity Quotient Assessment and Video Coaching to be branded for each specific school that includes the AQ Resilience Advantage as a requirement for students. Through the online training, students will better understand their relationship with adversity, why it is important to their success as a student and in life. They will learn to develop a resilient mindset and be trained in specific tools to assist them as they work through challenges and obstacles to completing their chosen degree or certificate program.

The AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program will include the following:

- Customized video introduction about the role of resilience in success at school and life
- Initial assessment of resilience using the AQ Profile®
- Printable individual report which can be reviewed and discussed as part of a Learning Frameworks course, mentoring program, or comparable initiative
- Customized video coaching exercises designed to provide students with tools to develop a more resilient mindset—increasing their engagement, energy, and perseverance
- Re-assessment using the AQ Profile, documenting the increased resilience of the student at the completion of the program, individually and collectively

The AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program can serve as a vital component to the achieving outcomes of programs designed to support student success at community college, such as Learning Frameworks courses and mentoring programs. Including the program as a requirement in such initiatives immediately increases their depth and value, leading to better results with little added cost or effort on the part of the institution.

**Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Faculty/Administrators**

To outline the purpose of the Partnership for Cultivating Resilience and the rigor behind the Adversity Quotient methods and measures to Texas community college faculty and administrators, Integrated Work/PEAK will deliver a keynote presentation during the 2013 TCCTA Conference. The focus of this session will be to develop an understanding of the important role that resilience plays in student achievement, the impact that the AQ Resilience Advantage program will have on performance metrics of participating schools, and an introduction to the principles of the Adversity Quotient. Integrated Work will develop the presentation in collaboration with PEAK Learning with TCCTA providing input and feedback on the session outline.
As the partnership works to build the resilience of students across the Texas community college system, it is imperative to develop the capacity of community college faculty and administrators to thrive through challenging times and position themselves as coaches to support and promote a resilient mindset within the student body. To do so, the partnership will make available two methods of faculty and administrator training—a faculty version of the online AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program and in-service Resilience Advantage training.

The faculty/administration version of the online AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program will be developed with TCCTA branding for all Texas Community Colleges and will include the following:

- Customized video introduction about the role of resilience in success at school and life
- Initial assessment of resilience using the AQ Profile
- Printable individual report
- Downloadable guides and worksheets for use when incorporating the AQ tools and methods into Learning Frameworks courses, mentoring and tutoring programs, and conversations with students
- Customized video coaching exercises designed to not only increase the participant’s individual response to adversity but also to build their capacity to provide coaching, counseling, and support to students in a way that increases their resilience
- Re-assessment using the AQ Profile, documenting the increased resilience of the faculty member at the completion of the program

For colleges dedicated to increasing the overall resilience of their campus, Integrated Work will offer full or half-day faculty and administrator in-service Resilience Advantage training on the tools and principles of the Adversity Quotient, leading to increased retention of outstanding faculty and staff, improved health and wellness, and increased energy and effectiveness in their roles. Participants in training sessions sponsored by their school will automatically receive enrollment in the online Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program.

**Research and Outcome Reporting**

To evaluate the success of the Resilience Advantage Programs and ensure quality of the Partnership’s effort, outcomes will be documented on several levels:

1. For each individual college and the program as a whole, the following metrics will be tracked and reported to TCCTA:
   - Total number of students and faculty participating in the program
   - Completion rates of students and faculty participating in the program
   - Range, Mean, Median AQ Profile (and CORE) scores – students and faculty
   - Percentage increase in AQ Profile scores of students and faculty
   - Percentage increase in AQ Profile scores of students for whom participation was a requirement
   - Student and faculty satisfaction with the Resilience Advantage program
TCCTA will be the key point of contact for distributing information to participating schools and utilizing positive performance data to increase future enrollments.

2. Upon receiving payment for a threshold of 20,000 enrollments, PEAK Learning will fund up to three independent studies conducted by a leading psychometrician and academic assessment expert to track and assess the relationship between AQ and student retention, completion, and performance. Design of the study will be a collaborative effort between PEAK Learning, Integrated Work, and TCCTA. Participating schools will provide the academic data need to complete the study in a standardized format.

3. Faculty and administrators completing the program will complete an evaluation of the program through TCCTA, including detailed discussions of materials and guidelines provided, for continued improvement of the program. Best practices for integrating the AQ Resilience Advantage program into the curriculum, counseling, mentoring and any other programs designed to increase success rates will be discussed and documented.

Future case studies, white papers or published documents may be created by any of the Partners for Cultivating Resilience documenting the success of the initiative, providing they credit the collaborative effort and the partners involved.

**Funding the Partnership for Cultivating Resilience**

Each organization involved in the partnership will be making investments in the success of the program. In order to ensure there is momentum for the idea, customized materials, and infrastructure that ensures an outstanding student and faculty experience with the AQ Resilience Advantage materials, we propose the following strategy and methods of funding.

Making the AQ Resilience Advantage an embedded, required component of every new student’s enrollment will provide the most meaningful sample for tracking and improving the vital metrics throughout the TCC system. It will also provide the strongest impact, reaching those students who may need and benefit most from the program.

Individual community colleges participating in the program will be charged a maximum of $50.00 per student and faculty enrollment in the program. This fee includes an unprecedented 83% discount to Texas Community Colleges off the standard rate of $295 per participant and is provided by Dr. Paul G. Stoltz out of respect for and commitment to the tremendous potential impact of this partnership and the countless lives it will improve.

In the event that TCCTA obtains enrollment guarantees from participating community colleges of more than 20,000 students and faculty prior to the start of the Fall 2013 school year, the per participant enrollment fee will be reduced to $47.50. Each participating school that enrolls more than 1000 students will receive 25 complimentary faculty/administrator enrollments. When the total enrollment guarantees reach 50,000 students and faculty, the participant enrollment fee will be reduced to $45.00.

A master contract will be established between TCCTA, PEAK Learning, Inc. and Integrated Work Strategies, LLC. Each community college that participates in the program will have an addendum agreement to the master contract specifying the arrangements and requirements to participate, including the research and data collection provisions and payment procedures.
Once the college clarifies the number of student enrollments they will purchase for the semester, fees for the total enrolled participants per school will be invoiced directly to each school by PEAK Learning Inc. To provide each school flexibility in how they choose to fund the AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching, the college from may collect the fees from students directly, administrated through course fees, or obtain funding through educational or foundation grants or other sources. Alternatively, students can be directed to a specific website that would allow the student to pay online directly to PEAK to enroll themselves in the program. In this case, each enrollment would be $50.00 per student.

For its work convening stakeholders, sponsoring the Partnership for Cultivating Resilience, on-going process improvement, and support for faculty development, TCCTA would receive 5% of the revenue from enrollments in the Resilience Advantage program. Additionally, for every 10,000 enrollments in the program, TCCTA will be provided with a complimentary full-day Resilience Advantage training to be delivered by Integrated Work to community college faculty and administrators during TCCTA Conferences, Regional Workshops, or at the community college of their choosing in order to reinforce the program and further develop the resilience of the community college system. Travel expenses from Boulder, Colorado to the determined location will be the responsibility of TCCTA.

Process
As the partnership works to develop, promote, and roll out the Resilience Advantage Program, the following serves as an initial draft list of activities that will be completed.

Introduction of the Program
- Jessica Hartung of Integrated Work will participate in the October 5-6 Fall Conference for Faculty Leaders to assist Richard Moore of TCCTA is proposing the program to members, presenting information on the role of resilience in student success, the CORE dimensions of the Adversity Quotient, and providing practical tools faculty can use for helping to build students resilience.
- TCCTA and Integrated Work will hold conversations with interested college administrators to test and refine plans for the Resilience Advantage program and to explore the best ways to maximize results on key student success indicators.
- TCCTA will draft the master agreement with PEAK Learning and Integrated Work Strategies to specify the details of the working arrangements in a manner that is compliant with all necessary state laws.
- Integrated Work will collaborate with TCCTA in the development of any informational materials as TCCTA works to develop interest in the program, and align the various stakeholders with the Resilience Advantage concepts.
- Jessica Hartung of Integrated Work will deliver a keynote presentation during the February 2013 TCCTA Conference, and lead a breakout session workshop for those interested in improving their own resilience and learning strategies for building student resilience and reinforcing the Resilience Advantage Video Coaching Program.
• TCCTA will work with interested community colleges to develop an estimated number of enrollments for the Fall 2013 school year.

**Development and Delivery**

• PEAK Learning, in collaboration with Integrated Work, will develop the online Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program for students and faculty.

• Integrated Work, in collaboration with PEAK Learning, will develop downloadable guides and resources for incorporation into the online faculty program

• In collaboration with TCCTA and PEAK, Integrated Work will develop and produce a video introduction to the student and faculty Resilience Advantage Video Coaching.

• TCCTA may wish to develop an initial greeting video for the faculty Resilience Advantage Video Coaching.

• Integrated Work will develop and deliver the Resilience Advantage In-service training, dependent on the number of enrollments.

**Management and Coordination**

• TCCTA will support PEAK Learning and Integrated Work to secure agreements with individual colleges as addendums to the master agreement with TCCTA.

• PEAK Learning and Integrated Work will coordinate with individual schools to obtain enrollment lists and upload to PEAK Learning online systems.

• Integrated Work will coordinate with individual schools and TCCTA to obtain detailed student information, such as whether participation in program was required as part of a school program or course, for use in data analysis.

• Integrated Work will develop an evaluation of the faculty program, for distribution by TCCTA.

• PEAK Learning will collaborate with Integrated Work and TCCTA in the development of study metrics, dependent on the number of enrollments.

This outline of the potential Partnership for Cultivating Resilience is put forth for the purposes of discussion and to clarify the basic components to work through in order to reach agreements from which formal contracts can be drafted. We look forward to further conversations to craft an agreement that can provide the advantages of AQ, the world’s leading measure and method for building resilience to Texas community college students striving to achieve educational goals, and to the institutions that support and nurture their success.

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