Business Partnerships Promote Student Success

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Supported by:
The National Science Foundation
National Convergence Technology Center

- A National Science Foundation Center based in Frisco, TX at Collin College
- Created in 2004 to revitalize IT education in the North Texas region
- Became National in 2012
- Business Led
National Convergence Technology Center (CTC) partners
IT and Cyber-related NSF Centers

• Formed a consortium to leverage their expertise to submit a proposal to the United States Department of Labor for a $20 million consortium to improve Information Technology Offerings

• 7 colleges, 6 states

• 4 IT Specialty areas covered
  – Programming, database, business intelligence (including mobile app development)
  – Network infrastructure (Convergence and what others sometime call ICT)
  – Cyber-security
  – Geospatial technologies
IT and Cyber-related NSF Centers

- CSSIA
- BATEC
- CTC
- GEOTECH

Additional areas:
- IT and Communication Technology
- Cyber Security
- Mobile Apps Development
- GIS
All Shared Work is Business Driven

- Business and Industry Leadership Team (BILT) – 4 National teams for 4 IT Specialties
- Each leads multiple institutions on curriculum, equipment, lab experiences, etc.
- Meets quarterly, not 1-2 times per year
- Right people on the council
  - High-level technical executives
  - First line managers
  - Technicians
  - HR representatives (so long as they are not the only representative for their company)
BILT is More than an Advisory Council

- Businesses LEAD the work and are part of the leadership team

- Appropriate name is Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) Leadership, not Advisory

- Works with colleges and universities alike
Role of the Engaged BILT

• One meeting per year establishes or updates Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities needed from graduates (faculty determine how to address KSAs)

• Other three meetings are via teleconference and cover
  – Trends identified before need for skills to support the trend (allows time to develop curricula)
  – Forecast need for future employees
  – Grant reporting/feedback for accountability
Role of the Engaged BILT

• Involvement in recruitment events
• Professional development for faculty
• Provide internships for students
• Provide externships/job shadowing for faculty
• Provide business mentoring for virtual internship/externship
• Guest speakers
• Co-author whitepapers
• Evaluate capstone presentations
• Participate in panels at conferences
• Hire graduates
Virtual Internship/Externships

- Alternative to traditional Internship for students
- Experience builder for both students and instructors
- “Soft skills” builder
- Strong business involvement

Sustaining Engagement

- High-touch Situation – annual phone calls at least
- Requires Win-Win
- Appreciation via Letters/calls, etc.
- Publicity
- Involvement
Ultimately All of This Is For Students