

912. Extension Of VaNTH ERC Content And Methods Into Community College And Workforce Education

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Calhoun Community College in Decatur, AL, Nashville State Community College in Nashville, TN and Vanderbilt University have entered into a strategic partnership to develop and disseminate instructional materials in bio-, nano-, and information technology in a Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) project application to the Department of Labor (DOL). Implications of this project include: (1) the extension and adaptation of content and methodology developed for bioengineering education by the VaNTH Engineering Research Center (ERC) to community college and continuing education contexts; (2) the development of a common core associates' biotechnology course based on HPL principles for a network of community colleges in Tennessee and Alabama, with subsequent certificate coursework tailored to specific local workforce needs; and (3) the confluence of bio-, nano-, and information technology, all areas targeted in the bioengineering taxonomy developed by VaNTH investigators, in the WIRED proposal. Previous educational market focus by VaNTH has been on undergraduate bioengineering curricula, with interest also developed at secondary education as well. The focus of this project therefore fills an educational niche previously minimally addressed by VaNTH. We expect that techniques of market identification, development of instructional content, dissemination of instructional materials, and assessment of results developed for this study will be effective, scalable and sustainable.