

The Pennsylvania State University  
The Graduate School  
Department of Learning and Performance Systems

**SURVIVING JOB LOSS: MOTIVATION AMONG SECOND YEAR  
TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) STUDENTS**

A Dissertation in  
Adult Education  
by  
Sandra Lee Karnes

©2012 Sandra Lee Karnes

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

August 2012

The dissertation of Sandra Lee Karnes was reviewed and approved\* by the following:

Fred M. Schied  
Associate Professor of Adult Education  
In Charge of Graduate Programs in Adult Education  
Dissertation Advisor  
Chair of Committee  
Adult Education

Gary W. Kuhne  
Associate Professor of Adult Education  
In Charge of Graduate Programs in Adult Education

Melody M. Thompson  
Associate Professor of Adult Education

Edgar P. Yoder  
Assistant Professor of Agricultural & Extension Education

\*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School

## ABSTRACT

This ethnographic case study investigated second year college students who participated in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program at a technical college in northeastern Pennsylvania. In order to understand how learners stayed motivated in a college setting, I selected participants who were in their second year of the TAA program. A total of eleven (out of a population of twenty-two) TAA students participated in this study.

Using semi-structured interview data, observations, and document analysis, six themes emerged: 1) Gaining Opportunities, 2) Supportive Environments, 3) Traveling in the Dark, 4) Coming to Terms and Accepting the Situations, 5) Obstacles, and 6) Gender Issues. This study suggests that TAA participants are motivated to work toward completion of their college degrees despite the obstacles they encounter even though evidence suggests that displaced workers earn significantly less than at their previous jobs. However, training programs at educational institutions have reaped monetary benefits for the institution through the TAA program.

This study shed some light on the 2 X 2 model of achievement motivation framework established by Elliot and McGregor (2001). Although a forced-choice questionnaire was not used with the TAA participants, the 2 X 2 framework – 2 (mastery vs. performance) x 2 (approach vs. avoidance) – provided a partial way of understanding TAA participants' motivations. The mastery goal concept stood out because participants wanted to master the course material in order to move forward with their programs. Even when obstacles surfaced, participants did not demonstrate characteristics of avoidance. However, the 2 X 2 framework has a narrow focus and was

not sufficient to entirely explain TAA participants' motivations. As a result, the study suggests that motivation is a multi-faceted concept that is outcome-based and might best be understood by what is accomplished through individuals' actions.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .....	vii
List of Figures .....	viii
Acknowledgments .....	ix
Dedication .....	xi
Chapter 1: COMING TO THE TOPIC .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Researcher's Identity .....	1
Problem Statement .....	2
Research Rationale .....	6
Purpose Statement and Research Questions .....	8
Organization of the Chapters .....	9
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
Introduction .....	11
TAA: Background Information .....	11
Eligibility .....	14
Positive and Negative Implications .....	15
TAA – Do the Numbers Add Up? .....	18
The National Picture .....	18
The State Level Picture: Pennsylvania .....	24
The Regional Level Picture: Technical School in Northeastern Pennsylvania.....	25
Training Programs .....	28
Economic Issues .....	30
Drawbacks and Assumptions .....	37
Background on Motivation .....	38
Cognition, Affection, and Conation .....	40
Achievement Motivation Theory .....	42
Mastery Goals and Performance Goal.....	44
Two Approaches – Classic and Contemporary .....	44
Approach Versus Avoidance Used to Explain Performance Goals.....	45
Development of Elliot’s 2 x 2 Model of Achievement Motivation .....	47
Experiences with Education and Retraining Programs .....	50
Depression Among Displaced Workers .....	53
Drawbacks and Assumptions .....	54
Conclusions .....	55
Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY .....	57
Introduction .....	57
Overview .....	57
Sampling and Site Selecting .....	58

Selecting Participants .....	59
Purposeful Sampling .....	59
Collecting Data .....	60
Interviews .....	61
Asking Questions .....	63
Field Notes .....	66
Reactive Observations .....	67
Analyzing Data .....	70
Maintaining Validity .....	71
Coding and Categorizing .....	71
Establishing Themes.....	74
Ethical Issues .....	76
Credibility and Validity .....	78
Chapter 4: FINDINGS .....	82
Introduction .....	82
Group Portraits .....	82
Group Demographics .....	82
Job Experiences Before Displacement .....	86
Job Endings .....	87
Theme 1: Gaining Opportunities .....	93
Theme 2: Supportive Environments .....	97
Theme 3: Traveling in the Dark.....	102
Theme 4: Coming to Terms and Accepting Situations.....	109
Theme 5: Obstacles .....	111
Theme 6: Gender Issues .....	117
Conclusions .....	123
Chapter 5: RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS, CONTEXTUAL REALITY, AND FURTHER RESEARCH .....	124
Introduction.....	124
Looking Back at the Literature .....	124
Motivation – A Concept in Disguise .....	132
TAA – A Program in Disguise .....	133
Limitations and Future Research .....	136
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>153</b>
Appendix A: Invitational Letter .....	154
Appendix B: Informed Consent Form .....	155
Appendix C: Semi-structured Interview Question .....	157
Appendix D: Classroom Observation Inventory .....	159
Appendix E: Example of Coding Process .....	160
Appendix F: Example of Data Summary Table .....	168
Appendix G: Semesters with Courses Mapped Out .....	169

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Government Data: TAA Program .....	21
Table 2: Group Characteristics .....	85

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: 2 X 2 Achievement Goal Framework .....49

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I reflect on the past four years, I did not realize what a growing process that working toward this degree would be. I remember signing the condition of employment at the technical college which gave me the opportunity to pursue this degree. With that, I thank the faculty of the college who provided guidance and supervision throughout this mission. To Sandra L., whose continued support provided a listening ear to vent my frustrations, an introspective eye for editing my writing, and solid advice. To Laura, who listened to my frustrations and my conversations with my computer. She told me once that she did not know if she was going to make it through this degree. Even though we share an office, she never asked for a new office replacement. To Cliff, for his attention, support, and time throughout my venture. To Joe, for assisting with the bonded copies of my comprehensive examination, my proposal, and my dissertation. To Connie and the interlibrary loan staff, for assistance with literature, articles, and books. To the TAA department at the college for their assistance with obtaining participants for this study. To the TAA participants who allowed me to delve into their lives. Thank you is not enough for these special people who helped make this dream a reality.

At Penn State, to my advisor and dissertation committee chair, Dr. Fred Schied, who provided support, sound advice, and compassion when challenges showed up in my life. To Cathy Watson and Carol Fantaskey, for their dedication to the adult education graduate program. To my committee members: Dr. Gary Kuhne, Dr. Melody Thompson, and Dr. Edgar Yoder for their time, effort, and advice throughout the process. Dr. Thompson, for her keen editing eye. To Joann, my mentor for providing additional insights to my ideas, answering technical questions, and keeping me sane with her humor.

To my mother, who battled cancer and other health issues, for her continuous encouragement and kind praise. Her unending spirit, despite her medical conditions, kept me motivated to strive toward completion of this degree. She called my dissertation, "The book that I was writing." Unfortunately, death came upon her before I actually finished this degree, and she will not physically see me walk across the stage to obtain this degree. To my daughter, who listened to me vent about my busy life and encouraged me to keep going despite the challenges.

To my special friend, Robert, who understood the need for goals and achievements. He inspired me to, "Get it done." As a business owner, he told me he knew what it was like to strive towards a goal. My friend, Gina, who listened to my frustrations and reassured me that I could do this. My friends, Carol and Andy, for their continual support throughout my degree.

Faculty, staff, administrators, colleagues, family members, and friends provided unending encouragement as I encountered life's obstacles as I worked toward this degree.

Thank you – Thank you – Thank you – Thank you

## DEDICATION

In honor of my mother  
Nancy Marie Karnes  
who has more strength than anyone I know.

**The following poem was taken from the Blue Mountains Arts Collection, (2011).**

## STRONG WOMEN

(by Brenda Hager)

Strong women are those who know  
the road ahead will be strewn with  
obstacles, but they still choose to walk  
it because it's the right one for them.

Strong women are those who make  
mistakes, who admit to them, learn  
from those failures, and then use that knowledge.

Strong women are easily hurt, but  
they still extend their hearts and  
hands, knowing the risk and  
accepting the pain when it comes.

Strong women are sometimes beat  
down by life, but they still stand  
back up and step forward again.

Strong women are afraid. They  
face fear and move ahead to the  
future as uncertain as it can be.

Strong women are not those who  
succeed the first time. They're the  
ones who fail time and again, but  
still keep trying until they succeed.

Strong women face the daily trials  
of life, sometimes with a tear, but  
always with their heads held high as the new day dawns.

## **Chapter 1: COMING TO THE TOPIC**

### **Introduction**

This chapter begins with a discussion of the researcher's identity, problem statement, and research rationale. The purpose statement and the research questions follow. The chapter concludes with a brief outline of the organization of the study.

### **Researcher's Identity**

In this section, I outline my background as an adult learner – highlighting my interests and commitments to adult education and the roles I played as an adult student and an adult educator. In order to commit to an ethnography case study research project, I needed to be aware of my biases in order to research and present my findings as ethically as possible.

When I was in my 30's and 40's, I worked through my bachelor's and master's degrees. As a result of this experience, I believe I am able to relate to others who have decided to return to college not only for employability skills but also to gain richer lives through education.

During the ten years that I have been teaching college, I have encountered many adult students who have found themselves without jobs because of outsourcing, company relocations, or life-changing events, and returned to college after working five or more years. In order for these unemployed people to obtain new job skills, many have encountered the hard decision of returning to school, facing course work – adult responsibilities – full or part-time jobs – domestic responsibilities – spouse commitments – and/or financial burdens.

Even though I have not participated in a government funded program, I can identify with adult learners' frustrations because I returned to higher education as an adult learner when I was thirty years old – juggling courses, a waitress job, two small children, and domestic responsibilities. As a result, I have an understanding of what it is like to venture into an academic setting without much educational background after being in the workforce for some time. Even though I have experiences as an adult learner, I had to be opened-minded during my investigation. Given my interests in adults who return to college after being in the work force, I conducted this study to explore how and why students return to school after being in the workforce. I explored how they accomplished tasks related to educational programs in order to learn new skills and meet academic responsibilities as they attempted to balance other responsibilities in their lives.

### **Problem Statement**

As a result of the federal government instituted Trade Expansion Act of 1962 and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a comprehensive trade liberalizing agreement among Canada, Mexico, and the United States (National Skills Coalition, 2002), research indicates (Couch, 1997; Dervarics, 2009; Gordon, 2005; Lippmann & Rosenthal, 2008; Marcal, 2001) that workers who have been displaced because of increased import competition need to explore educational options in order to gain re-employment.

The federal government funded training program, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), was introduced in 1962 in order to offer unemployment compensation to workers who have been displaced from their jobs because of increased import competition. The program has evolved and has been revised in order to better serve displaced clients since

its inception (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004). I was interested in investigating factors that influenced participants to continue to work toward completion of their degrees. Kletzer (1998) defined the term displaced worker as “individuals with established work histories, involuntary separated from their jobs by mass layoff or plant closure (rather than because of individual job performance), who have little chance of being recalled to jobs with their old employer” (p. 116).

With changing demands in the global market and technology, skilled workers are essential to a competitive global economy (Couch, 1997; Dervarics, 2009; Gordon, 2005; Lippmann & Rosenthal, 2008; Marcal, 2001). TAA recipients have a greater need for education and training because they are not going to be called back, and they lack skills needed for demands related to technology (Marcal, 2001). However, as pointed out by Lafer (2002), the term “skill” is hard to define. This has resulted in an inconsistency in the literature. Even though no concise definition for the word "skills" was found, the word "skills" appeared to be a generic term for learning how to do something the person did not previously know how to do.

Despite the confusion over defining skills, the federal government sought to create programs that would assist workers who were unemployed due to outsourcing to develop new skills. By 2010, U.S. Department of Labor predicted that 80% of new jobs created in U.S. will be high-skilled – mainly technologically centered: "New technology continues to raise the educational bar in every workplace worldwide" (Gordon, 2005, p. 45). As computers raised the need for technological jobs, the need for a college degree increased by 70% from 1979 to 1999 (Lafer 2002). According to Gordon (2009), the U.S. labor market must address the rapidly transforming job market because of

technological advances. Gordon (2009) reported that the U.S. Department of Labor stated that “62 percent of all U.S. jobs now require two-year or four-year degrees and higher, or special postsecondary occupation certificates or apprenticeships. By 2020, we can expect that these talent requirements will increase to include 75 percent of U.S. jobs” (p. 29).

Huitt (1999) discussed changes associated with education as our society encountered a paradigm shift -- the continuation of the movement into the information age. He stated that "we have moved from the agricultural age through the industrial age and into the information age in a span of just 100 to 200 years" (p. 2). We have seen our society increasingly depend on technology and computer-aided equipment. One challenge created by these changes is to motivate adult learners to work through the frustrations and difficulties associated with technology. As a result, the federal government funded programs provided some opportunities for unemployed workers to gain valuable technology skills in order to enhance their chances of gaining employment.

Schulz (2000) warned that throughout the history of the labor market the destruction of one job and the invention of another job have historical complications, and he emphasized that this has been present since the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution: "In a fundamental way, job displacement and unemployment are necessary evils in America's economic growth success story" (p. 75). On the other hand, throughout the literature, one important fact stood out – education and training are essential for employment, and policy statements about developing a skilled workforce for an ever-changing economy appears to contradict with the way that Schulz saw the

unemployment situation (Couch, 1997; Dervarics, 2009; Gordon, 2005; Lippmann & Rosenthal, 2008; Marcal, 2001).

Further supportive evidence for training and higher education is needed because jobs requiring high skills have been on the increase (Gordon, 2005). The United States Department of Labor stated that a relationship exists between education and employment. The more education a person has, the less likely he/she is to become unemployed (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). In 2009, those with either two-year or four-year college degrees were in the category of 4.6 percent unemployment, and those without a high school diploma were in a category that was ten points higher (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). TAA participants are faced with work displacement concerns, low skill levels, a rapidly changing job market, and the federal government's solution to the unemployment situation.

Because of the number of adults who are turning to higher education for retraining, colleges and universities have seen an increase in the number of non-traditional students –defined as those over the age of 25 (Dervarics, 2009; Gordon, 2005). Even as early as 1989, Levine reported that the average age of college students had increased to twenty-six. He speculated that with more adult learners entering higher education full-time students ages eighteen to twenty-two will account for approximately twenty percent of the college population. In line with this trend, Wlodkowski (2008) stated that because of demographics and immigration, the need for adult education will continue to increase. If this trend which the research shows has been going on for approximately twenty years and the current economic situation continues, understanding what motivates adult learners will be essential. As our society moves into a higher

technological period, skilled people are needed to preserve the economic status in this country (Huitt, 1999). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES),

In recent years, the percentage increase in the number of students age 25 and over has been larger than the percentage increase in the number of younger students, and this pattern is expected to continue. Between 2000 and 2009, the enrollment of students under age 25 increased by 27 percent. Enrollment of students 25 and over rose 43 percent during the same period. From 2010 to 2019, NCES projects a 9 percent rise in enrollments of students under 25, and a 23 percent rise in enrollments of students 25 and over. ("Fast Facts," 2011)

### **Research Rationale**

In the early 1970's, the stability of job security gave way to a different job market that was subjected to downsizing, instability, and displaced workers (Kletzer, 1998; Lippmann & Rosenthal, 2007; Rodriguez & Zavondny, 2003). Older workers who remember the employment days of starting at the bottom rung of the ladder in a company and working their way up or who had continuous long-term employment find themselves in the 21st century "characterized by [a] growing flexible economy and employment insecurity" (Lippmann & Rosenthal, 2008, p. 644).

Most of the previous literature and empirical studies associated with displaced workers focused on their wages once they were re-employed after gaining skills through educational programs (Couch, 1997; Decker & Corson, 1995; Fallick, 1996; Greenberg, Michalopoulos, & Robins, 2004; Kletzer & Fairlie, 2003; Marcal, 2001). Since the TAA program is a federally government funded program, it makes sense that the government

would be interested in the monetary implications of the program since the government funds appropriated for training and living expenses was approximately \$751 million for the year 2010 (Joint Economic Committee, 2011, Table 1. Comparison of U. S. Labor Market Adjustment Programs).

Even though some empirical studies looked at status (Lippmann & Rosenthal 2008), academic performance (Boudreau & Kromrey, 1994; O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009), and advising (Coll & Draves, 2009), little qualitative research has been done to interview TAA recipients about their experiences related to working toward college degrees. This study attempted to uncover ways that participants in the TAA program at a technical college in northeastern Pennsylvania persisted despite the obstacles when factors beyond their controls impacted their educational paths. I investigated how aspects relate to their persistence and dedication impacted their lives as they pursued college degrees.

Participants in the TAA program receive unemployment compensation and two years of training in an approved educational program (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004; Marcal, 2001; Robinson, 2002). This program is funded by the federal government to provide a solution to the unemployment situation so that displaced workers gain skills to return to the job market (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004; Marcal, 2001; Robinson, 2002). Unfortunately, this leaves displaced workers on their own to figure out what to do when challenges related to their new circumstances surface (Gordon, 2005). As discussed in Fallick's (1996) review of the literature, many participants enrolled in the TAA program because they did not have the degree that recognizes their capabilities to perform jobs that require technical skills or specialized skills. According to U. S. Department of Education,

approximately 50% of America's adults do not have advanced skills for jobs in technologically based work environments (Gordon, 2005).

### **Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

At a northeastern Pennsylvania college, participants who were in the TAA program volunteered to participate in this study. In order to examine their perseverance for working through their first year of college into the second year, I wanted to understand how these learners stayed motivated to accomplish their goals as they worked toward completion of degrees.

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was, then, to investigate how and why adult learners describe their experiences related to the TAA program technical college describe their experiences that kept them focused on their goals in order to work towards associate college degrees despite the obstacles that surface during the process. This investigation describes factors associated with how TAA participants understand their experiences. By considering them as a group under investigation, I also identified similarities and differences. In order to understand participants' perseverance and persistence in the program, interviewing participants uncovered strategies they used to work toward their degrees. The research questions follow:

1. How do TAA participants continue to motivate themselves to move toward completion of college degrees?
2. How do TAA participants decide, if they do, to set educational goals?
  - a. How do they learn new skills that they understand are expected in classes?
  - b. How have their objectives changed from entry to time of this research?

- c. What is it like being in a college classroom with mainly traditional-aged (19-24) students?
3. What decisions do TAA participants make concerning their educational objectives and their unemployment situations?
  - a. What do they think about their unemployment situation and their new challenges as college students?
  - b. What is it like being defined as a dislocated worker?
4. What factors related to motivation help TAA participants overcome obstacles in order to accomplish their educational objectives?
  - a. How do they do to handle factors beyond their control to keep going despite the obstacles?
  - b. How do the participants think the situation of returning to higher education impacts their families?
  - c. How do the participants meet academic responsibilities and handle other responsibilities necessary in their adult lives?

### **Organization of the Chapters**

Chapter Two reviews four bodies of literature relevant to my research purpose. I begin with background literature on the TAA program. Next, I provide background on motivation leading up to achievement motivation theory. The third section reviews literature related to situations that displaced workers might face when enrolling in higher education. While I was interviewing participants, I found that displaced workers had negative feelings about being unemployed. To help me understand their frustrations with job loss, I searched for literature on this topic. As a result, I located literature on

depression, which helped me understand the challenges related to their unemployment situations.

Chapter Three discusses the methodology used in this study. An ethnographic case study of the TAA participants at a specific college during a specific timeframe provided a framework for understanding these participants and how they understand their new positions as college students. The chapter concludes with demographic characteristics of the group and background on their displaced jobs.

Chapter Four presents the findings for the study. Six themes were identified through my analysis. Theme 1: Gaining Opportunities discusses that TAA funding opened educational training to TAA participants. Theme 2: Supportive Environments discusses the support that TAA participants had while attending college. Theme 3: Traveling in the Dark is based on the idea that participants were in unfamiliar territory and lost the security and routine of their jobs. Theme 4: Coming to Terms and Accepting Situations provides a closure for their situations. Theme 5: Obstacles discusses challenges that they had to overcome while working toward degrees. Theme 6: Gender Issues points out situations related to male and female characteristics that have been prevalent throughout the history of the United States' work force.

Chapter Five links this study with the literature. Then, the chapter ends with a discussion of the conclusions, limitations, and future research of the study.

## **Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews four bodies of literature: a) Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, b) the achievement motivation theory, c) characteristics of adults who have returned to college after being in the workforce, and d) depression related to job loss.

I begin with literature associated with the TAA program in order to gain a contextual understanding of its significance as a government funded program to aid displaced workers. Next, I provide background elements associated with motivation and then specifically use achievement motivation theory (more recently called achievement goal theory) as an element to explain how people accomplish things. The third area reviews literature related to displaced workers and situations that they might face when turning to higher education.

After interviewing participants, I found that they expressed negative feelings associated with being displaced and that some felt demeaned by being classified as displaced workers. In order to help me understand their frustrations with job loss, I searched for literature and found information related to depression that helped me understand their displaced situations.

### **TAA: Background Information**

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), a federally government funded program, was introduced in 1962 in order to offer unemployment compensation to workers who have been displaced from their jobs because of increased import competition (Topoleski, 2010). When the TAA program was first established, the federal

government gave workers an extra fifty-two weeks of unemployment compensation in addition to the twenty-six weeks of regular unemployment compensation as income support (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004). However, the program was of little use until the Trade Act of 1974 (Topoleski, 2010). Since 1974, TAA has been expanded and revised to better meet the needs of displaced workers.

In 1988, the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) offered extended unemployment insurance benefits, and training was made available for eligible workers in an approved training program (Decker & Corson, 1995). The Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) benefits are paid after TAA participants have exhausted their regular unemployment benefits. The amount of the TRA benefits is equal to their regular unemployment compensation (Topoleski, 2010). For example, the unemployment compensation combines a total of fifty-two weeks, which includes regular unemployment compensation (26 weeks) and TRA benefits (additional 26 weeks). Additional unemployment compensation (another 26 weeks) is available for TAA participants who require remedial training for a total of seventy-eight weeks of unemployment benefits. Educational benefits continue for approximately two years. A caveat with this program is that the federal government allows TAA participants only 104 training weeks (Topoleski, 2010; U.S. Trade Deficit Review Commission, 2000). Participants cannot have off more than four weeks at a time, so they must continue taking courses throughout the summer. Once students have been approved for a program of study, they must continue with this program because TAA does not allow them to make program changes once it is started (Topoleski, 2010).

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that took effect January 1, 1994 had the most impact on the job market (Joint Economic Committee, 2011). This agreement removed tariffs (federal taxes) from imports and exports among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. After NAFTA was implemented, trade among these three countries increased between 1993 and 2007. Even though this growth appeared to be a positive outcome, NAFTA supporters have only talked about the benefits of exports and kept quiet about the impacts of imports (Scott, 2001). I concluded from the U. S. Trade Deficit Review Commission (2001) that NAFTA was a double-edged sword. On one hand, those who favored it saw economic benefits; on the other hand, those who opposed it saw job losses in the U.S. (Faux, 2001). Scott (2001) emphasized that training is important because the Trade Acts created situations in which factory jobs could move out the United States. As a result, companies began outsourcing and moved companies to other countries. This created unemployment situations in which U. S. workers would not be called back to their jobs because their manufacturing plants closed (Scott, 2001). On the other hand, Office of the United States Trade Representative stated that trade agreements are essential to America's economy: "The U.S. is the world's largest trading nation, with exports of goods and services of nearly \$1.6 trillion in 2009. For the first half of 2010, it was \$890 billion" ("Benefits of Trade," 2011). This web site claimed that an estimated 10.3 million jobs were supported by exports of U.S. goods and services in 2008 ("Benefits of Trade," 2011).

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act of 2002 policy expanded and increased the TAA's program potential to include more jobs, including more people associated with the labor markets. Baicker and Rehavi (2004) reported on changes in the

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act of 2002, emphasizing that the Congressional Budget Office (2002) legislation would "double the number of TAA recipients and more than triple the total cost of the program to almost \$2 billion annually" (p. 239). The 2002 revisions of the TAA program included a broader population of workers. The changes included the following provisions: 1) 78 weeks of unemployment compensation; 2) included more people associated with the labor markets by including upstream and downstream workers displaced by increased imports or plants relocating overseas; 3) included farmers; and 4) included health care supplemental funding (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004). Other revisions to the TAA program were established under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) to allow participants additional educational time in order to take developmental courses if necessary to improve their skill levels. This act, implemented on May 18, 2009, allowed an extra semester of time for the developmental courses (Joint Economic Committee, 2011).

### **Eligibility**

Specific guidelines must be followed because the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a government funded program that gives educational benefits to displaced workers whose jobs have been outsourced. Companies must have approval from the federal government before their displaced workers can access educational benefits and unemployment benefits. The Employment and Training Administration of the U. S. Department of Labor administers the TAA programs through state employment services (Marcal, 2001). The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers (TAA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) report by Topoleski (2010) for Congressional Research Service indicated that eligibility for TAA benefits must reflect

one of three situations: Jobs have been outsourced to other countries; jobs have been lost due to increased imports; job loss has been a result of a trade-related reason. In order to be eligible for government funds, the company or union petitions the U.S. Department of Labor seeking to become TAA certified. The United States Department of Labor investigates to find out whether the company moved jobs to a foreign country or if workers are directly affected as a result of foreign trade ("Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers," 2010).

In addition, Marcal (2001) indicated that in order to be eligible for the TAA program, recipients must have been employed with the pre-layoff employers for at least six months before the layoff. In Topoleski's (2010) report, once workers were approved for TAA benefits, the 2009 revisions extended the deadline for enrollment in training from "8 weeks after TAA certification or 16 week after separation from employment" (p. 7) to 26 weeks from the date of TAA certification or the date they were laid off.

### **Positive and Negative Implications**

From 1994 to 2000, the United States saw the unemployment rate fall to record low levels. However, in 2001 when companies realized that moving their manufacturing plants to another country would save money, the unemployment situation increased as companies closed (Scott, 2001). Scott (2001) stated that this created a trade deficit because manufacturing jobs were sent to other countries with cheaper wages and lower production costs, which eliminated manufacturing jobs for U. S. workers. The trade deficits indicated that more goods were coming into U.S. businesses than were going out. The U.S. workforce has been affected because of the globalization of trade. Scott (2001) summarized this situation: "Ignoring imports and counting only exports is like trying to

balance a checkbook by counting only deposits but not withdrawals" (p. 3). The U. S. Trade Deficit Review Commission (2000) reported that "U.S. trade deficits have grown steadily from \$29.5 billion in 1991 to a forecasted \$450 billion in 2000."

The U. S. Trade Deficit Review Commission (2000) pointed out that democrats and republicans view trade issues differently. On one hand, democrats argue that the trade deficit has had dramatic costs for workers in the United States – manufacturing jobs have been eliminated, wages have been depressed, and competition has declined. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Census Bureau data, between 1994 and 2000, NAFTA job losses in the U.S. totaled 766,030 workers, and in Pennsylvania, job loss was 35,262 workers. NAFTA is not the only problem with the job market, but it has contributed to displaced workers (Scott, 2001).

On the other hand, republicans argued that trade has had a positive impact on economic growth – the average standard of living has increased, unemployment has decreased, and jobs have been created (*U. S. Trade Deficit Review Commission, 2000*). The report also indicated that the republicans do not have data to support these claims. Most importantly, the report also stated that:

[A] large body of economic research concludes that trade has had a very minor impact on the distribution of income. Technological change is the most important factor in changes in the distribution of income, providing over time relatively higher wages for advanced training and skills. (*U. S. Trade Deficit Review Commission, 2000*)

Consequently, even though the Commission reported this claim, it did not cite any sources that provided evidence for this statement.

In 2001, Marcal (2001) indicated that the thirty-nine-year-old TAA program served approximately 40,000 workers a year and cost approximately \$300 million annually. Baicker and Rehavi (2004) indicated that the Trade Adjustment Reform Act of 2002 increased the TAA benefits. Using data from the Congressional Budget Office, 2002, Baicker and Rehavi (2004) revealed that Trade Adjustment Reform Act of 2002 increased the number of TAA participants and could possibly triple the amount the government previously spent, increasing the cost to approximately \$2 billion annually. Using Marcel's figure of \$300 million and tripling it as reported by Baicker and Rehavi, the potential total could be \$900 million. For the 2010 TAA program, the federal funds allocated to states for TAA benefits were \$975,320,800 (or approximately one billion) for 227,882 U. S. workers who participated in the TAA program (Employment and Training Administration, 2011). This calculated to \$4,280 per person spent on the TAA program. Rosen (2011) indicated that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) had overestimated the cost of the TAA program. The estimation may have come from “optimistic assumption of public awareness” (p. 9) and from reforms made to the TAA program (Rosen, 2011).

The Trade Act with South Korea, Columbia, and Panama, signed by President Obama on October 26, 2011, is expected to increase exports of goods and services. According to the Office of the United States Trade Representative (2011), “Every \$1 billion in new exports of American goods supports more than 6,000 additional jobs here at home. Every billion dollars of services exports supports more than 4,500 jobs” (*President Obama Signs Trade Agreement*). Once again the government reported support for the TAA program without giving sufficient evidence. Simply saying something is

good or bad; positive or negative; beneficial or unbeneficial does not make the federal government's report accurate.

### **TAA – Do the Numbers Add Up?**

#### **The National Picture**

According to the United States Department of Labor, TAA participants have a variety of experiences in the manufacturing sector. They share similar challenges because of job loss related to international trade acts – no post-secondary degree, jobs related to factory work, an average age of 46, and an average of 12 years of experiences in specific jobs that have been eliminated (Employment and Training Administration, 2011).

The United States Department of Labor has a state-by-state Excel chart that gives statistical information for each individual state with a total for the entire United States. Information on this chart comes from two different reporting agencies. The chart is divided into the two reporting agencies: One is the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA), Management Information Systems (MIS), and the other is the Trade Activity Participant Report (TAPR) (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated February 17, 2011). The TAA program is administered by the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA) and funded by the United States of Labor Department of Labor (DOL). TARP reports are prepared by state agencies associated with the TAA program (Employment and Training Administration, 2011).

On the Excel chart, the OTAA data stated, "Full Year FY [fiscal year] 2010" with the data displayed as of "February 11, 2011." The OTAA reports on the number of petitions instituted, the number of certifications, the number of workers covered by

certifications, and the amount of Training Fund Allocation (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated February 17, 2011). In addition on the excel chart, TAPR data stated, "FY [fiscal year] 2010 (October 1, 2009-September 30, 2010)" with data submitted and displayed as of "November 17, 2010" (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated February 17, 2011). Although this information is difficult to follow, it represents the reality of the federal government's reporting system.

In the fiscal year 1999, the TARP was introduced as the reporting system that states are required to submit every quarter based on individuals who have exited from the TAA program (Government Accountability Office, 2006). The TAPR is an exiter [sic] report that provides the outcome measures for the TAA program. Three measures were currently used (in 2011) to measure performance outcomes for TAA participants who have exited from the TAA program: Average Earnings – Reemployment Rate – and Retention Rate (Trade Act Program: Performance Reports, 2011: updated March 11, 2011). In fiscal year 2010, the TAPR was being modified to comply with new statutory requirements in the 2009 Amendments and will provide additional information on TAA program participants once that data is available (Trade Act Program: Performance Reports, 2011: updated March 11, 2011). The TARP report is expected to follow the standardized, consistent guidelines and procedures set by the Department of Labor's guidelines in *The Trade Activity Participant Report: Data Preparation and Reporting Handbook* (Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, 2009). According to the "Trade Act Program – Data Overview," once a petition is filed, the OTAA determines the eligibility and issues a certificate if applicable (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011).

For the United States, the OTAA reported 2,533 petitions were filed, 2,777 were certified, 282,635 workers were covered by certifications, and \$575,000,000 was for training fund allocation. If the number of all TAA petitions filed was 2,533 and the number of certifications was 2,777, how can more be certified than applied? From the "2010 TAA Fast Facts," "2,718 TAA petitions were certified; 280,873 estimated additional US workers were covered by certifications; \$975,320,800 in federal funds allocated to states for benefits and services delivered to assist trade-impacted US workers; and 227,882 US workers accessed TAA-funded benefits and services" (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: August 08, 2011). (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Government Data: TAA Program**

<b>TAA DATA for 2010</b>	<b>OTAA AS OF February 11, 2011</b>	<b>Fast Facts Updated August 08, 2011</b>	<b>TARP AS OF November 17, 2010</b>	<b>Ways and Means December, 2010</b>
TAA Petitions Certified	2,777 2,533	2,718	Not listed	2,718
Estimated additional U.S. workers covered by certifications	282,635	280,873	Not listed	280,873
Federal funds allocated to states for benefits and services delivered to assist trade- impacted US workers	\$575,000,000	\$975,320,800	Not listed	Not listed
U.S. workers who accessed TAA- funded benefits and services	Not listed	227,882	234,949	Not listed

(Employment and Training Administration 2010, 2011;  
United States Department of Labor, January 27, 2011).

Data from the TAPR reports indicated that in the United States, the total number of TAA participants was 234,949 and of that number 86,081 were new participants. The number of participants who exited the program was 50,619 (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). Once participants exited the program, the government used records from the TAPR reports based on the quarters of the year. The percentage of TAA participants who were employed in the second quarter after exiting the program was 58.83%. The employment retention rate of those employed in the second quarter after exiting and the percentage employed in both the third and fourth quarter after exiting were 80.47%. Based on those employed in the second quarter after exiting, the total amount earned by those who earned wages in both the third and fourth quarter after exiting was \$14,696.21, which amounts to \$29,392.42 annual earnings (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). When calculating the number of people based on the percentages, the number of people employed at the end of the second quarter was 29,000, and the number employed in the fourth quarter was about 23,200 which is less than half of the 50,000 who completed the TAA program. The amount of federal money allocated for the TAA benefits in 2010 from the Excel chart was \$575,000,000 (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011) and from the "Fast Facts" sheet \$975,320,800 (Employment and Training Administration, 2010: "2010 TAA Fast Facts" updated August 08, 2011).

For the fiscal year 2010, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) prepared a report on the TAA program. This report indicated that "2,718 petitions or 76%" of the total number of applications for TAA benefits were issued (*Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers: Report of the Committee of Finance of the Senate*

*and Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives*, December, 2010). From these applications, approximately “280,873 workers were covered by certifications, while an estimated 80,074 workers were denied group eligibility” (*Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers: Report of the Committee of Finance of the Senate and Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives*, 2010, p. 4).

For 2010, the spreadsheet prepared by OTAA reported 2,533 petitions (Employment and Training Administration, 2011) unlike the *Ways and Means* reported 2,718 petitions were filed (Employment and Training Administration, 2010). Why are the numbers larger for 2010 reports than 2011 reports if the data are based on the 2010 figures? An obvious change would have indicated more petitions in 2011 because of a longer time to collect data. The OTAA reported 282,635 workers were covered by certifications (Employment and Training Administration, 2011) unlike the *Ways and Means* figures of 280,873 (Employment and Training Administration, 2010). This appears logical because the numbers were higher in 2011 than in 2010. Another interesting statistic reported by *Ways and Means* indicated for the fiscal year 2010, 2,222 petitions was filed and 2,718 were certified and 838 petitions were denied. *The Ways and Means* report explained that "the number of petitions certified and denied in any fiscal year will not total the number of petitions filed in that year because of the processing time for petitions and termination of investigations because, among other reasons, some petitions were withdrawn" (*Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers: Report of the Committee of Finance of the Senate and Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives*, 2010, p. 9). As a result of the federal government's reporting system, reports and statistics are difficult to figure out because of discrepancies in the dates and

the figures that were reported. It appears that their data is subjected to interpretation of those collecting the information.

With 23,200 people employed at an annual individual earning of \$29,392.42, total earnings amounted to \$681,904,144.00 annually. Yet the government spent \$975,320,800.00 (using the "Fast Facts" data updated Aug. 8, 2011). The total income for a year resulted in \$681,904,144.00, creating a difference of \$293,416,656.00. The government appears to be spending a lot of money with little return from these workers. As a result, a conclusion could be interpreted that the TAA program is comparable to welfare programs. The program gives displaced workers approximately two years of unemployment compensation and training/educational funds.

#### **The State Level Picture: Pennsylvania**

For the fiscal year 2010, Pennsylvania received 206 petitions for certification for TAA benefits, and 212 were certified (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). Data from the TAPR reports indicated that in Pennsylvania, the total number of TAA participants was 7,007 and 3,127 were new participants. The Pennsylvania 2010 Data (n.d.) sheet indicated that "15,922 estimated Pennsylvania workers were covered by new certifications." The number of participants who exited from the program was 1,599 (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011).

Once participants exit from the program, the state records data according to the TAPR reports based on the quarters of the year and supplies the data to the Department of Labor. Percentage of TAA participants who were employed in the second quarter after exiting the program was 64.29%. The data from the TAPR report indicated that

Pennsylvania's third and fourth quarters were a zero (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). However, an email correspondence from the Department of Labor stated that there is a problem with the data, and they are working to correct it. The average earnings by TAA participants in the third and fourth quarters after exiting was \$15,038.79, which amounts to \$30,077.58 annual earnings (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). As a result of incomplete data from the Department of Labor, calculations can only be made about the number of employed in the second quarter in Pennsylvania. Because data is missing, calculation cannot be made to indicate how many of the 1,599 were employed at the end of the fourth quarter (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011).

The "TAA State Profile Sheet: Pennsylvania" (n. d.) stated that, "The federal government allocated \$43,132,992 to provide benefits and services." But the data from the OTAA the figure was \$31,056,520 (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). Of the new companies that were approved for TAA benefits, approximately 2,000 General Electric workers, approximately 600 Masterbrand Cabinet workers, and approximately 450 Crucible Materials Corporation workers were the top four companies that impacted the unemployment situation in Pennsylvania ("TAA State Profile Sheet: Pennsylvania," n. d.).

### **The Regional Level Picture: Technical College in Northeastern Pennsylvania**

For this study, I selected displaced workers from the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. The technical college where the research was completed became an approved training provider for the TAA programs in 1993. During the time

period 2009 to 2011, twenty-two TAA clients were approved for training and started at the technical college. These students were from three different counties in Pennsylvania. Not all programs of study at this technical college were available to the TAA clients. Only programs approved by the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) can be offered to TAA clients. The WIB approves majors that lead to occupations that have shown a projected job growth for the future (Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation, n. d.). The total number of dollars spent by TAA at this technical college during the time period 2009 to 2011 was \$674,495.00 (CareerLink<sup>®</sup>). Out of the twenty who enrolled in training programs in the TAA program in 2009, fourteen successfully graduated. This is a 70% percentage graduation rate, higher than the national average. According to the U.S. Department of Education, for all students enrolling in two year institutions, only 20 percent who begin their higher education at two-year institutions graduate within three years (Employment & Training, 2011).

The head of the program at the technical college reported that this particular TAA program is monitored through CareerLink<sup>®</sup>. CareerLink<sup>®</sup> provides opportunities for individuals to improve their employment prospects through education and training. According to the CareerLink<sup>®</sup> web site, “The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) provides federal funding for workforce development nationwide.” This act specified that one location will be created to house several employment services. The consolidated location provided ease of access for the job seekers and employers. Each state has created CareerLink<sup>®</sup> offices in strategic places in order to serve workers (Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation, n. d.).

In Pennsylvania, “Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, is the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for the Central Pennsylvania Region” (<http://www.cpwdc.org/>). Workforce Investment Board (WIB) in Central Pennsylvania serves Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties (<http://www.cpwdc.org/>).

According to the Joint Economic Committee (2011), the TAA program is scheduled to expire in February, 2012. However, on October 21, 2011, President Barack Obama signed trade agreements with Korea, Colombia, and Panama and extended the TAA program through December 31, 2013 (NELP National Employment Law Project, October 19, 2011). The 2011 Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization or the Trade Adjustment Assistance Extension Act of 2011 protects most of the 2009 features associated with TAA. However, the health care credit has been reduced. From 2002 to 2009, 65% of the health care costs was paid by Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC). The 2009 amendments increased the health care benefits to 80% of the health care costs being paid. And with the 2011 TAA amendments, health care costs were reduced to 72.5% (NELP National Employment Law Project October 19, 2011). Benefits for work search and relocation allowances were reduced by congress from \$1,500 to \$1,250 – similar to the pre-2009 levels. Another change is that certified workers will be able to receive TRA unemployment compensation benefits when they are not in training. Previously, in order to obtain TRA benefits, participants had to be rolled in an approved training program. The 130-week limit of Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) payments was reduced by 13 weeks, and the 26-weeks of TRA unemployment benefits

that had been used for extra time for remedial training was eliminated (NELP National Employment Law Project, October 19, 2011).

### **Training Programs**

An article related to Pennsylvania workers in Allegheny County claimed that the federal government has an obligation to provide cash assistance and training money in order to help those who have been displaced from their jobs because of trade agreements. TAA programs also help displaced workers transition from joblessness to reemployment (Robinson, 2002).

During the past 30 years, community colleges have played a role in educating displaced workers. Government funds benefit displaced workers through programs such as "Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA), the 1972 Higher Education Amendments (Pell Grants), and Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) which in 1998 replaced the Economically Displaced Workers Adjustment Act (EDWAA)" (Jacobson, Lalonde, & Sullivan, 2005, p. 274).

In 2009, Pennsylvania Governor Rendell proposed a Tuition Relief Act to provide assistance to families for tuition at community colleges. It is estimated that 10,000 students will be eligible to attend one of the state's fourteen community colleges. There is a need within the state for trained workers and "these free tuition programs enable community colleges to assist these displaced workers as well as meet the demand of employers" (Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges: Governor's Budget Gives Community Colleges New Tools to Help Students and Unemployed Workers; Builds PA Economy, 2009). Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges President Dr. Joe Forrester stated that community colleges are vital for the economic

growth of Pennsylvania (*Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges: Governor's Budget Gives Community Colleges New Tools to Help Students and Unemployed Workers; Builds PA Economy*, 2009).

Baicker and Rehavi (2004) explained that their investigation showed that it was not clear why the TAA program was only for workers affected by international trade. They stated that training and income support should be for all unemployed workers, not only the ones affected by trade. Baicker and Rehavi (2004) argued that it would make more sense and be more equitable if federal government-funding was made available to all unemployed workers. Even though the idea of TAA appears to involve many displaced workers, the Bureau of Labor Statistics data indicated that import competition accounted for only 1.5% of mass layoffs in the late 1990s (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004). In addition, they also argued for increasing the flexibility for "adjustment accounts" (Baicker & Rehavi, 2004, p. 252) so that workers could allocate the funds between job training, wage allowance, child care, and health insurance. Dervarics's (2009) article argued that the rigid regulations of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the federal government's chief job training law, need to be addressed because federal funding is not flexible enough to serve the current market-driven economy.

In order to fill gaps in the literature associated with downsizing, Lippmann and Rosenthal (2008) "utilized data from the Displaced Worker, Employee Tenure, and Occupational Mobility Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted in January, 2004" (p. 646). Using a quantitative method, they investigated the occupational prestige associated with being reemployed after being displaced. As a result, they found that workers who had higher levels of education were less likely to suffer from

occupational prestige than workers with little education. Occupational prestige refers to the emotional status associated with the importance of the job or the job title. These findings, along with other empirical studies, showed that education is an important element in success on the job and as a life-long venture.

### **Economic Issues**

From an extensive literature review in the early 1990s, Fallick (1996) also discovered that earnings losses for displaced workers were substantial. Displaced workers experienced approximately a 15% reduction in hourly wages and total hours when compared to non-displaced workers. Approximately 16-20% of displaced workers suffered greater losses for re-employment when they changed positions than for workers who were re-employed in similar positions. As a result, losses were greater for those who changed occupations (Fallick, 1996). Adding to the dilemma of those in the TRA program, recipients remained jobless longer than those who had exhausted their unemployment benefits and were not in the program (Decker & Corson, 1995).

Decker and Corson (1995) examined the impact of the TAA program by looking at workers who were in the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) program. They studied recipients from fifteen states, which included the five states with the highest TRA recipients, to see if there were differences from other groups of displaced workers (Decker & Corson, 1995). The study compared the average wages of re-employed TRA recipients and average wages of re-employed people who collected unemployment insurance but were not considered displaced. The results showed that TRA's lost more than 20% in weekly wages from their previous job to their new job and 25% of re-employed TRA recipients earned as much or more than on their previous job. On the

other hand, 40% of unemployed workers who returned to work earned as much or more than their previous job (Decker & Corson, 1995). Although this study did find some differences between unemployed workers and displaced worker in the TRA program, the rationale for this remains unsolved. An assumption can be made that displaced workers have lost jobs that are no longer needed whereas the unemployed workers seemed to have useful skills to gain re-employment.

Fallick (1996) found that the duration of joblessness varied. Some experienced no hiatus between jobs, and some had long periods of joblessness. Some workers who worked for long periods with the same employer were more likely to search for similar jobs. The duration also had to do with the worker's attachment to their previous job. These assumptions give merit to the idea that people are comfortable with what they know and that the unknown in unfamiliar territory could pose some concerns. When workers were displaced from union membership jobs, this also increased the likelihood that the joblessness would be longer (Fallick, 1996).

Couch (1997) cited several studies (Flaim & Sehgal 1985; Gardner 1995; Herz 1991; Horvath 1987) that used Displaced Worker Surveys (DWS) to examine the economic impact related to jobs that lasted at least three years. These studies showed similar findings: "older workers experience the highest rates of displacement and the lowest subsequent rates of re-employment" (Couch, 1997, p. 2). In an evaluation of the TAA program, Decker and Corson (1995) pointed out that Topel (1993) reported on four studies that indicated an approximate wage loss of 15%-30%. Wage lose was still a factor even five years after displacement (Decker & Corson, 1995). Highlighting the income losses experienced by older displaced workers, Couch (1997) looked at job

displacement among Americans aged 51 to 61. For his study, Couch (1997) looked at individuals who worked for the same employers for five or more years and experienced permanent loss. People who are temporarily laid off are not considered as displaced workers. His investigation used the 1992 Health and Retirement Survey (HRS) results, a nationally representative sample of Americans aged 51 to 61, used to look at job displacement of older workers prior to normal ages of retirement. The HRS contained data on 9,758 individuals aged 51 to 61 in 1992. Couch (1997) discovered that displaced workers' median earnings decreased from \$23,200 in their previous job to \$12,000. Couch (1997) concluded from his study that as the workforce ages, they are less desirable as employees. Another reason that older workers are displaced has economic implications to the company. Average wages usually rise with seniority, making older workers more costly. Therefore, employers may determine that others inside or outside the firm can perform the same function at a lower cost (Couch, 1997).

As a result, TAA participants were faced with greater losses on re-employment when compared to others who collected unemployment benefits (Couch 1997; Fallick, 1996; Kletzer, 1998); Marcal, 2001). Little research was done to compare other types of unemployment situations with displaced workers (Fallick, 1996). In another empirical study, Kletzer (1998) pointed out that "displacement affects many workers with very little job tenure" (p. 122). Her findings showed that "26 percent of the sample of displaced workers . . . reported '0' years of tenure on the lost job and 58 percent reported job tenures of less than three years" (Kletzer, 1998, p. 122).

In order to understand how the federal government considered who was at risk related to low wages, a method for calculating poverty levels was devised by Mollie

Orshansky, an analyst with the Social Security Administration (Lafer, 2002). Examining the government's findings about the job situations, Lafer (2002) discussed problems associated with the original Orshansky poverty thresholds. She devised a plan to calculate living expenses by estimating the amount of food needed for family budgets. To complete her plan, Orshansky used data from the Department of Agriculture and determined that one-third of a family's budget was for food. As a result, Orshansky used this figure to calculate a poverty threshold according to family size. This theory of calculating seemed reasonable, but it had some flaws. Food budgets were unreasonably low, the calculations were based on gross income not accounting for taxes, and the food ratios was based on a 1955 consumption calculation. As a result of the Original Orshansky Method for calculating the poverty level, Lafer established an alternative Poverty Threshold for the years 1984 to 1996 based on the U. S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau. In a comparison with Lafer's (2002) calculations and Orshansky's calculations, Lafer (2002) determined that his new calculations were more realistic; this is what made the difference between getting by and severe economic hardships. For example, Orshansky's poverty level in 1996 was \$16, 036 compared to Lafer's (2002) alternative calculations of poverty level in 1996 was \$27,632. In order to alleviate the poverty, the supply and demand of jobs would have to balance. Unfortunately, the government has not collected such data.

However, Lafer (2002) argued that training programs do not transform people into professional or management material.

Training could possibly help people become self-sufficient is a more realistic conclusion. Job availability has to satisfy the demand for jobs.

Lafer used information from the United States Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census (March 1, 1996) to calculate the labor force. From his calculations, Lafer (2002) indicated that between 1984 and 1996 the numbers of jobs needed was lower than the jobs available. Throughout the 1984 to 1996 period, the total number of possible discouraged vacancies in decently paying occupations was never more than one-seventh the number of people who needed jobs, and the gap between jobs needed and jobs available was never less than 16 million. (Lafer, 2002, p. 34).

Thus, a gap existed between jobs needed and jobs available. Therefore, job training can account for approximately one out of seven to rise out of poverty; Lafer (2002) argued that realistically job training cannot solve the unemployment issue. The implication from this information for the TAA program is that federal government is spending tax dollars to fund educational programs even though they do not have adequate information that the need for jobs and the availability of jobs is realistic.

As the TAA program continued into the twenty-first century, not much has changed from the 1960s. In another study that looked at wages after displacement, Kletzer and Fairlie (2003) investigated the long-term costs of job displacement for young adult workers. They found little research has been done to examine the impact that displacement has on young workers. They used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth and found that after five years of being displaced, the young displaced workers, with an average age of 25.8, did not experience substantial losses in their annual earnings. This study established some data related to young displaced workers but did

not cite a rationale for their findings. Greenberg, Michalopoulos, and Robins (2004) investigated thirteen government funded training programs in U.S. between 1964 and 1998 to determine the impact of earnings over time because "a major objective of all government funded programs is to increase the earning of participants" (p. 280). Their findings showed that adult men and youth initially increase earnings then decrease over time, and women's earnings showed positive results, grew and did not decrease over time. However, the drawback of the study resulted from short follow-up periods – less than three years after training. No strong empirical evidence exists for the increase or decrease of earnings of people over a long time period (Greenberg, Michalopoulos, & Robins, 2004). Even though the TAA program funds education and training and provides unemployment benefits for displaced workers, most studies (although few exist) looked at the impact of earnings once TAA participants finished the program (Jacobson, Lalonde, & Sullivan, 2005). Following previous findings (Couch 1997; Decker & Corson, 1995), several studies done after 2000 indicated that displaced workers, especially workers aged 40 years and older, suffer economic hardships resulting from job losses and lower wages when re-employed after completing college courses or training programs to increase their skills (Couch, Jolly, & Placzek, 2009).

Even though no concise definition for the word "skills" was found in the literature, the word "skills" appeared to be a generic term for learning how to do something they did not previously know how to do. The word "skill" is defined by *dictionary.com* as the following:

1. the ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc., to do something well: *Carpentry was one of his many skills.*

2. competent excellence in performance; expertness; dexterity: *The dancers performed with skill.*

3. a craft, trade, or job requiring manual dexterity or special training in which a person has competence and experience: *the skill of cabinetmaking* (italics in original source).

Other related words with similar meaning as the word "skill" were accomplishment, acquirement, acquisition, attainment, and science (*dictionary.com*).

It appeared that the government used a general word so that the general public could interpret the word based on his or her background experiences. For example, when someone does not know how to operate a computer, there is a tendency to see this as a lack of computer skills. Although this could be rather ambiguous because there are many levels of computer skills, the word “skills” has become an acceptable way to say things whether it is used in the literature or referenced in government documents. It appeared that the TAA participants need to learn “skills,” so the government created a program so they can learn skills – whatever they might be interpreted by the TAA recipient. This fits in with the idea that meanings are in people and not in words and that interpretation of language is embedded deeply in the culture of those who associate situations in certain ways.

As a way to enhance the accuracy of the TAA data collected for the federal government by each state, guidelines were instituted by the Department of Labor, outlined in the TAPR report in 1999. As a result, each state is expected to submit information to the Department of Labor each quarter about individuals who exited from the TAA program. The TAPR included information about the TAA participant's gender

and educational level; TAA benefits received; employment for the first, second, and third quarters; and earnings. The General Accounting Office (2006) indicated that “only half of the states reported that the data they submit in the TAPR include all TAA participants who exit the program” (cited in Reynolds & Palatucci, 2008, p. 10). This study concluded that TAA programs help displaced workers gain skills through training programs and find new employment. Overall, the downside of this is that their new employment is at lower wages than their previous jobs. Little evidence has been found indicating that displaced workers obtain well-paying jobs after the training (Reynolds & Palatucci, 2008). On the other hand, TAA programs do help displaced workers deal with their unemployment situations by providing unemployment funds and help protect them from their unfortunate job losses (Reynolds & Palatucci, 2008).

### **Drawbacks and Assumptions**

Since the TAA is a federal government funded program, it makes sense that the government would be interested in the income potential that results from the program. Even though some empirical studies looked at status, academic performance, and advising, little qualitative research has been done to interview and observe TAA recipients. Assumptions could be made that most adult students (25 and over) who need retraining have more responsibilities than traditional-aged students (18-24). When adding education and training to those who have additional responsibilities such as families, finances, and domestic duties, it is inevitable that adult students will encounter obstacles and challenges as they retrain for new jobs in the "new" job market for the twenty-first century.

## Background on Motivation

According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, *motivation* originated from the word *motivate* in 1873. In 1904, psychology began using the word *motivation* as the “inner or social stimulus for an action” (*Online Etymology Dictionary*). Misak (2004) indicated that in 1878 philosopher Charles Peirce emphasized that people think in terms of their beliefs about the world. As a result, people’s actions are results of their thoughts. Bandura (1977) theorized that people’s beliefs influence what they will do. People often make choices about what to do and what not to do based on the results of the previous outcomes.

As Henry Wadsworth Longfellow stated in the poem “The Poets,” “Not in the clamor of the crowded street, not the shouts and plaudits of the throng, but in ourselves are triumph and defeat” (1898, p. 82). Longfellow’s quote seems to highlight motivation as applied to human achievement and how people regulate their own behaviors and learning. We have all heard stories of people who pushed themselves, stayed focused, worked hard, and accomplished great things despite the odds against them. These types of situations follow Gholar and Riggs (2004) statement, “The power of ordinary people to do extraordinary things of themselves . . .” (p. 18). Motivation is a term that has been used in psychology to explain some aspects of human behavior. Thoughts can essentially motivate people to action. But it is the action that really demonstrates and accounts for the motivation.

Measuring achievement related to motivation is complex. Corno and Kanfer (1993) emphasized that motivation is difficult to measure because it is not directly observable; it is based on inferences of human behavior and actions. Similar to Corno

and Kanter (1993), Swezey and Meltzer (1994) described similar results about motivation and observations. They emphasized the complexity of measuring motivation because of making inferences about actions and behaviors. Inferences made about motivation are shadowed by perceptions and cultural understandings related to life experiences. As a result, when researchers explain motivation in terms of observable behaviors, they must describe why connections or inferences were made between the behavior and motivation.

Corno (2004) indicated that motivation is the ability to regulate efforts in order to accomplish goals. When adults who have been in the workforce return to higher education, they must seek ways to be successful in academic settings. In order to have successful academic educational experiences, students must stay motivated to accomplish their goals to obtain degrees through high education. Wlodkowski (2008) emphasized, "Enabling people to realize their own power relates to our obligation to create an equitable opportunity to be motivated to learn as well as to have the right to an equitable education" (p. 125). For adult learners to be successful, their ability to stay motivated in an ever-changing economy is a primary concern. It is important to recognize that motivation is one factor, but not the only one, associated with behavior.

Literature related to motivation is extensive. Volumes have been written about motivation and its impact on learning and achievement, certainly too extensive for the dissertation review. Therefore, for this review, I specifically discuss motivation literature associated with achievement goal theory because the research questions referenced how and why TAA participants accomplished tasks relevant to academic accomplishments and domestic responsibilities. I used the 2 X 2 model of achievement motivation (Elliot & McGregor, 2001) as the theoretical framework for understanding how TAA

participants in this study achieved their goals. This theory helped to answer questions related to motivation because of its characteristics related to goals.

### **Cognition, Affection, and Conation**

For clarification purposes, I provide a background on cognitive learning, affective exposure to emotions, and conative aspects that spur individuals to action. These elements factor into the concept of motivation in the achievement motivation goal theory and provide additional explanation. The “will to learn lies within the learner” (Gholar & Riggs, 2004, p. 9) and the "power to get things done" (Campbell, 1999, p. 15) are characteristics of cognitive, affective, and conative attributes that impact human behavior. Cognitive functioning involves the internal thought processes of organizing and storing new information. It accounts for the mental factors that humans use to process and develop information. These include comprehending, recalling, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating in order to solve problems. Affective functioning considers motivations, attitudes, feelings, and values. Cognitive processing of information usually has some affective elements associated with it (Smith & Ragan, 1999). Conation is the "internal engine" that drives our actions to construct meaning; it is the desire to learn, to do something, and to accomplish something. Conation is impacted by cognitive and affective characteristics in order to set the action in motion. Conation and affect, although discussed about in earlier literature, was not studied extensively because the concepts are hard to wrap into a neat package as the quantitative researchers tried to do (Huitt, 1999).

Cognitive, affective, and conative elements have been classified as three categories of the mind for two hundred years; Hilgard (1980) referred to these as the

trilogy of the mind. Hilgard traced the historical development of these terms and their association with the mind. His article discussed the major theorists who developed the trilogy, beginning in the mid 1600s. From this long historical adventure came the notion that the trilogy of the mind played a central feature in mental functions. Even though the trilogy of the mind has been historically separated into three individual parts, they are really intertwined, interactive elements that work together rather than individually (Hilgard, 1980; Mayer, Chabot, & Carlsmith, 1997; O'Neil & Drillings, 1994; Snow & Farr, 1987; Snow & Jackson, 1997; Swezey & Meltzer, 1994). Corno (2004) stated, "The evidence is clear that successful academic functioning extends beyond cognitive [elements of] reasoning and use of symbols. It is a product of feeling, attitudes, and the regulation of efforts toward goals as much as cognitive abilities" (p. 1669-1670).

Between 1989 and 1992, Snow, Jackson, and Corno (1996) completed a review of literature associated with the affective, conative, and cognitive dimensions of the mind by looking at a variety of studies, questionnaires, and theories in order to construct a taxonomy that further explained how the three dimensions function as mental processes. From these reviews, they concluded that some combination of cognitive, affective, and conative elements are involved in human behavior, especially in learning and achievement. Snow and Jackson (1993; 1997) developed a "provisional taxonomy of conative constructs" (p. 4) divided into categories: affective, conative, and cognitive. Their illustration of this theoretical framework emphasized that the affective dimension involves two components: temperament and emotion; conation involved two components: motivation and volition; and cognition involved two components:

conceptual knowledge and procedural skill. There are no simple ways to separate these elements. One builds upon another while one impacts the other, and so on.

### **Achievement Motivation Theory**

Achievement motivation theory provides a theoretical framework for understanding how people accomplish things, and this theory eventually became known as achievement goal theory because the terms mastery goals and performance goals became prevalent in the research on achievement motivation (Harackiewicz, Barron, & Elliot, 1998). Achievement goal theory characterized by the need for achievement – one’s desire for success and need to avoid failure (Boggiano & Pittman, 1992) – “has emerged as a prominent explanatory within the motivational literature over the last 25 years” (as cited in Anderman & Wolters, 2006, p. 370). This theory was developed through the collaboration of colleagues at the University of Illinois in the late 1970s (Ames, 1992; Dweck 1986, 1990; Nicholls 1984, 1989). Following their research, Harackiewicz, Manderlink, and Sansone (1992) introduced the social component into the theory. Studies revealed, mainly through self-assessments, that one judges oneself based on individual experiences and personal standards. On the other hand, the studies also found through self-assessments that people judge themselves in relation to others.

However, throughout the research, goals were not consistently defined. Different vocabulary had been used to explain characteristics of goal theories. For example, social goals were “defined as perceived social purposes for academic achievement” (Urduan & Maehr, 1995, p. 213). A variety of reasons could interplay with social achievements. Individuals could perceive that social goals make one a productive member of society, establish pride in one’s family, or gain approval from peers. Ford and Nichols (1991)

defined goals as “any cognition of a desired consequence,” and Wentzel (1989 & 1993) focused on what individuals were trying to accomplish (as cited in Urdan & Maehr, 1995, p. 216).

Elliot and McGregor (2001) concentrated on defining competence related to goals. They were interested in the requirements of the task to be learned, one’s personal accomplishments, and how individuals compared to others in relationship to the task being completed. When establishing goals, Helm (2001) cautioned that “it seems there must be a tight connection between the decisions we make as the result of deliberation about what to do and what we are motivated to do, for it is by making such decisions that we exercise control over our motivations” (p. 8). For example, we can think about the consequences of eating a piece of cake and even though we know that we should not eat the cake, we eat it anyway. The same can be true of accomplishing goals.

Each type of goal impacts individual’s cognition, conation, and affective traits depending on the factors that surface from one’s efforts for accomplishing things. We might cognitively think about the path we should take or how to overcome the obstacles, but if we do not act upon our thoughts, we will not accomplish our goals either. Motivational problems exist when we are faced with weaknesses of the will (Helm, 2001). Helm (2001) argued that when emotions come into play, situations can get even more complicated. Emotions give us a sense of how things are going. We can have great ideas, high intelligence, and other factors in our favor, but if we do not take the corrective actions, we cannot accomplish things whether it is refraining from eating the cake to doing what is needed to accomplish goals.

## **Mastery Goals and Performance Goals**

Achievement motivation theory was used to understand students' responses when they faced challenges based on achievement (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984). Challenges were mainly examined by looking at mastery goals and performance goals. Mastery goals involve developing competence in something by putting forth effort and meeting a certain level of competence. For example, a student is able to, at least, pass a challenging mathematics class. Performance goals demonstrate competence and outperforming others. For example, a student performs at the top levels in mathematics to outperform others. A drawback is that only a certain percentage of students can perform at peak levels (Nicholls, 1984). Many of the studies related to mastery and performance goals were completed by collecting quantitative data from self-reporting surveys in classrooms and then comparing the results with educational outcomes (Darnon, Butera, & Harackiewicz, 2007; Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Harackiewicz, Barron, & Elliot, 1998; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1987; Karabenick, 2003; Levy, Kaplan, & Patrick, 2004).

## **Two Approaches – Classic and Contemporary**

Achievement motivation researchers aspired to find out why people engage in achievement-related behaviors. Two approaches to achievement motivation theory have been utilized – a classic and a contemporary approach to understanding goal orientations.

The classic approach (Atkinson, 1957; Lewin, 1935; McClelland, 1951) to studying achievement goals demonstrated that behavior is a function of success and failure. Thus, important antecedents to behavior, according to achievement theory, were the need for success and the fear of failure. Thus, Atkinson's (1957) achievement theory, the dominant achievement motivational theory during the 1970s and 1980s, emphasized

these two factors. Atkinson's expectancy theory began with examining risk-taking of undergraduates. As a result, he concluded that a learner's motivation includes both the importance of the goals and the expectations that he/she has for successfully achieving goals. For example, when a person is faced with difficulties, he/she has two choices – increase efforts to achieve success or avoid the situation when he/she feels threatened. This becomes too much like a black or white situation because people have multiple reasons for striving for success and avoiding failure. It is more complicated than thinking in terms of one way or another. As a result, Atkinson's (1957) thinking in terms of one or the other appeared inconsistent with real-world complexity because individuals perceive excellence in different ways and difficulty in different ways.

The contemporary approach (Ames, 1984; Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984,1989) to studying achievement motivation theory shifted as goals became the emphasis and created a change that resulted in achievement goals theory (Elliot, 1997). The contemporary approach indicated that goals have an impact on behaviors and motivations. As a result, this approach helped researchers understand goal-directed behaviors. Dweck (1986, 1990) and Dweck and Leggett (1988) identified the importance of including one's ability and one's intelligence for understanding achievement motivation and the perceptions of competence. Most importantly, Dweck (1986, 1990) examined the responses to success and failure.

### **Approach Versus Avoidance Used to Explain Performance Goals**

Performance goals have been shown in studies (e.g., Ames, 1992; Deweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1989) to "produce susceptibility to a 'helpless' pattern of responses in achievement settings" (cited in Elliot & Church, 1997, p. 218). For

example, a student's perception of the task as being easy or difficult, perception about fear of failure, and perception of enjoyment could interfere with his/her disposition toward the task. On the other hand, mastery goals tended to be more motivating because of taking on challenges, striving for accomplishments, and enjoying the tasks.

Nicholas (1984) incorporated beliefs about one's abilities in the contemporary approach. Responses to success and failure were formulated into patterns and labeled as adaptive or maladaptive. An adaptive response pattern is associated with positive attitudes and the ability to sustain effort (Nicholas, 1984). For example, an individual engages in a task because it is satisfying a need for achievement. A maladaptive response pattern is associated with negative attitudes about the experience and resistance to challenges (Nicholas, 1984). For example, an individual avoids a task because of the fear of failure. A drawback is that motivational aspects are difficult to analyze and predict because they involve many ways of avoiding failure. For example, someone might withdraw from a behavior by avoiding it or withdraw by dropping out of a class (Nicholas, 1984).

Elliot and Church (1997) elaborated on performance goals associated with this theory by adopting the influence of approach versus avoidance and testing these concepts in college classrooms. They found that participants who demonstrated performance-approach goals tended to like challenging goals and valued competition whereas participants who demonstrated performance-avoidance goals tended to avoid competition. Their proposed study represented a combination of classic and contemporary aspects of the research on achievement motivation. Rather than a dichotomy of mastery goals versus performance goals, a theory emerged using a three-

goal framework. Elliot and Church (1997) revised the dichotomy to include approach and avoidance related to motivation. As a result, the mastery goal construct stayed the same, but the performance goal construct included both performance-approach and performance-avoidance.

### **Development of Elliot's 2 X 2 Model of Achievement Motivation**

Elliot's interest in the goal theory spurred him into another revision. Elliot (1999) emphasized that both the classical and contemporary approaches are useful, but neither one is complete. A performance-approach goal helps explain one's desire to demonstrate competence and outperform others. A performance-avoidance goal helps explain one's desire to avoid looking incompetent. The incorporation of performance orientations gave researchers another way to look at achievement goal theories.

As a result of further research and investigations, achievement goal theory evolved to include Elliot and McGregor's (2001) two types of mastery goals. To examine a distinction between approach and avoidance, Elliot and McGregor (2001) divided achievement goals according to approach and avoidance into an achievement goal framework – mastery and performance – to further extend the three goal framework to a 2 X 2 model. As a result, the 2 (mastery vs. performance) x 2 (approach vs. avoidance) model of achievement goals improved the ways of investigating achievement (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). (See figure 1). The mastery goal construct, like the performance goal construct, was partitioned into mastery-approach and mastery-avoidance goals.

Individuals with a mastery-approach goal orientation tried to focus on mastering, learning, and understanding. Individuals with a mastery-avoidance goal orientation tried to avoid misunderstanding, not learning, and not mastering a task. The 2 X 2 model of

achievement motivation has been used with empirical research of achievement motivation.

**Figure 1: 2 X 2 Achievement Goal Framework – (Elliot and McGregor, 2001)**

<b>Positive vs. Negative</b>	<b>Mastery</b> (demonstrating competence by mastering the task)	<b>Performance</b> (demonstrating competence relative to others; related to competition)
Positive Approaching success	Mastery – approach goal Focus on mastering the task, learning, and understanding	Performance – approach goal Focus on being the best at a task in comparison to others
Negative Avoiding failure	Mastery – avoidance goal Focus on avoiding misunderstandings and avoiding not learning the task	Performance – avoidance goal Focus on avoiding unfavorable judgments

Other studies were completed based on the 2 X 2 achievement goal framework to understand the role that achievement goals played in relationship to the outcome of the situation. Svinicki's (2005) study emphasized that researchers found a distinction between students who saw the consequence of a situation related to mastery goal orientation vs. performance goal orientation. Mastery orientation showed that students would work hard to "master" a skill when they were interested in learning. On the other hand, Svinicki (2005) discovered that performance orientated students were more interested in the grade that they would earn in course and less likely to take risks related to learning.

Thrash and Elliot (2001) discussed the need for defining achievement goal theory. They criticized the vagueness when achievement was associated with the purpose for which a person engages in behaviors. As a result, the theory has been limited to mastery goals and performance goals. Elliot and Dweck (2005) identified two weaknesses of the achievement motivation literature. First, the term "achievement" has not been officially defined by researchers and is subjected to a variety of definitions. Second, the literature

has had a narrow focus, mainly looking at achievement as dichotomous situations, of either mastery goals or performance goals. Besides these two weaknesses, nearly all research on the 2 X 2 achievement goal framework has been conducted in academic and work place settings. As the theory developed, Elliot and Dweck (2005) explained that the theory could go beyond the classroom and the workplace. However, little integration of the achievement goal theory has isolated its full potential. Despite the drawbacks, researchers have used this theory to help explain motivation as related to achievement during the past two decades.

The 2 X 2 achievement goal theory provided some understandings related to TAA participants' motivations and achievements. The next section details research on the background experiences of adult students who participated in education and retraining programs.

### **Experiences with Education and Retraining Programs**

In order to find out the experiences that might characterize TAA participants when returning to higher education for training, I investigated literature on adults returning to college to gain a better understand of the problems related to the retraining process. Belzer (2004) investigated "what happens when an adult learning context is not just like 'normal school'" (p. 41). Belzer (2004) wanted to understand how the previous learning contexts of adult learners filtered the participants' expectations/perceptions about how the GED classes should be taught and presented. Because previous studies that she reviewed focused on the positive nature of adult experiences, Belzer (2004) wanted to explore adult classroom situations and expectations. Since her findings revealed that adult students enter adult classrooms with expectations based on their high school

experiences and how instruction should be handled, the adult learners in her study were uncomfortable with the incongruity related to previous experiences when they were in high school.

Adult learners bring their expectations to the college classroom based on how they learned when they were in high school. Belzer (2004) concluded that other adult learners may experience similar uncomfortable feelings with the context and expectations of situations. Participants in this study were uncomfortable with the independence of working on their own without a teacher actually telling them exactly what to do – (like it was when they were in high school). Her study provided insight into how instructors might help adult learners overcome their perceptions about the classroom, something that was lacking in the research.

Unlike many of the quantitative studies, Belzer's (2004) spent time in the classroom. What happens in the classroom could affect how the TAA students overcome challenges. Even though her study looked only at a small sample of African American women in a GED program, it provided an important key related to challenges whether they are classroom related or personally related. When adults return to college or to an educational program, does the mode of instruction influence their ability to strive forward?

Further highlighting the challenges related to adults and their experiences with training program, Jacobson, Lalonde, and Sullivan (2005) investigated the difference in the ages of displaced workers to find out if we should teach “an old dog new tricks” (p. 398). By reviewing a longitudinal sample of 65,000 displaced workers who lost their jobs during the first half of the 1990s in Washington State, Jacobson, Lalonde, and

Sullivan (2005) found that older displaced people (over 35) were more skilled, had more labor market experiences, and were better educated than younger workers (under 35). They speculated that “the higher skill levels of older displaced workers suggest that they may have been more effective learners than our sample of younger displaced workers” (Jacobson, Lalonde, & Sullivan, 2005, p. 402). They looked at the “impact of community college schooling on the earnings of displaced workers who sought retraining around the time of their job losses” (p. 399). They also concluded that one academic year of community college retraining raised older men’s earnings by 7% and older women’s earnings by 10%. The study was limited to a review of looking at unemployment insurance and only workers with a historical attachment to Washington state (Jacobson, Lalonde, & Sullivan, 2005). The results indicated that when older (over 35) displaced workers gained skills, their earnings increased similarly those of younger (younger 35) displaced workers. They concluded that “you can teach old dogs new tricks” (p. 411) when they are enrolled in voluntary training. On the other hand, when displaced workers are “just showing up” (p. 405 & 411) for classes, the question remains that the “cost of retraining makes it less certain whether we *should* teach old dogs new tricks” (emphasis in original, p. 411). Despite these findings (Jacobson, Lalonde, & Sullivan, 2005), the federal government continues to support the TAA program. Future research is needed to clarify the uncertainties of teaching older (over 35) adults.

Coll and Draves (2009) investigated factors that enhanced older adults' motivations to strive forward. They used the “Noel-Levitz’s (2007) National Student Satisfaction Report” (p. 216) and determined that academic advising factors into students' college satisfaction. Using two questionnaires, Coll and Draves's (2009) study confirmed

that advising satisfaction is understood by developing a relationship with the advisor and discussing values and career options through regular contact with an advisor. O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes (2009) reviewed a body of literature that was associated with student success courses. After their review, O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes (2009) used a qualitative method to gather data at two community colleges. Their results indicated that student success courses were essential to students' college successes. Through intensive interviews, students reported that student success courses were key in helping them obtain information about the college, develop study skills, and develop relationships with peers. Despite the age of students, it appears that any age student – especially adults who have been displaced and returned to college – could possibly benefit from student success courses. Even though this study looked at external factors, both the internal and external factors could have an impact on human motivation (O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009). Therefore, it appeared that academic advisors provide assistance with decision-making related to college courses and career options.

### **Depression Among Displaced Workers**

After interviewing my participants, I investigated depression because I found that some of them felt demeaned by being classified as displaced workers. Little is known about the impact of depression on displaced workers. However, the literature that I found on depression provided a basic understanding concerning their negative feelings about job loss. In one empirical quantitative study, Brand, Levy, and Gallo (2008) examined the effects of depression on displaced workers. This study looked at differences between layoffs and plant closings in reference to depression in both men and women. These authors used longitudinal data from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) sample,

which included 12,652 individuals from 7,702 households. The study involved participants who were 51 to 61 years old. Their findings showed that men's depression increased more when they were laid off from their jobs than when their job ended as a result of permanent plant closings. In addition, they found that the opposite was the case for women.

In another empirical study, Mandal and Roe (2008) found that involuntary job loss had an impact on unemployed workers' mental health conditions. On the other hand, when older Americans retire their mental health was found to improve. Similar to the findings in the Brand, Levy, and Gallo (2008) study, Mandal and Roe (2008) reported that women's depression increased more when their job ended as a result of permanent plant closings than when they were laid off from their jobs. In addition, women handled the psychological impact of retirement better than men. Mandal and Roe's research suggested that displaced workers could gain better personal mental health once they were employed again.

### **Drawbacks and Assumptions**

Much of the research and literature associated with displaced workers has looked at the consequence of wages after re-employment (Couch, 1997; Decker & Corson, 1995; Fallick, 1996; Greenberg, Michalopoulos, & Robins, 2004 ; Kletzer & Fairlie, 2003; Marcal, 2001). Since the TAA is a government funded program, it makes sense that the government is interested in the income potential that results from the program. Even though some empirical studies looked at status, academic performance, and advising, little qualitative research has been done to interview and observe TAA recipients. Assumptions could be made that most adult students (25 and over) who need retraining

have more responsibilities than traditional-aged students (18-24). When adding education and training to those who have additional responsibilities such as families, finances, and domestic duties, it is inevitable that adult students will encounter obstacles and challenges as they retrain for new jobs in the "new" job market for the twenty-first century.

### **Conclusions**

Most of empirical research on motivation has been done using quantitative research methods. The few studies that have used qualitative methods have been helpful in understanding aspects of motivation and adult learners. More qualitative research is needed to understand displaced workers' points of view when they enroll in higher education to build skills for the twenty-first century. Even though the federal government funds the TAA program, adult learners must leave the security of their "mechanical jobs" and venture into higher education classrooms with traditional-ways of teaching traditional-aged college students. Even though the research points toward an increase in the number of nontraditional students seeking skill development and college degrees, many classes at the technical college in the study being investigated are filled with traditional-aged students. Most of the research available on the TAA program investigated the economic issues that participants experience after educational programs. The research confirmed that displaced workers earn less money than they did at the jobs from which they were displaced. Since the displacement is permanent, TAA participants find themselves in situations where they must gain skills to get a lower paying job (Couch, 1997; Decker & Corson, 1995; Fallick, 1996). As with any new situations, people need time to adjust and acclimate. As a result, the TAA participants must figure

how to stay motivated when obstacles surface as they strive toward their goal of college degrees.

## **Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodology used for the study. The chapter first provides an overview of the research site, then provides background for sampling and site selecting, moving to selecting participants. The next part examines collecting data, reactive observations, and analyzing data. The chapter concludes with ethical issues, credibility, and validity.

### **Overview**

This study focused on Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) participants at a technical college in northeastern Pennsylvania who successfully completed their first year of college and moved into their second year. I used the TAA program at a specific technical college as the case study and looked at the group as the unit of analysis. I selected participants who were in their second year in the TAA program so I could investigate how their motivations changed through their college experiences. I wanted to understand how learners' stayed motivated to accomplish their goals as they worked toward the completion of their degrees. Thus, the purpose of this study was to understand aspects of how and why TAA participants in a particular program worked through their programs of study in hopes of completing their degrees.

An ethnographic case study allowed me to work with the TAA participants as a bounded case. According to Cresswell (2007), ethnographic studies involved people who share the same culture and characteristics. Yin (2010) emphasized that case studies are concerned with how and why reality unfolds within the case that is being investigated. I was the only interviewer and observer for this study.

### **Sampling and Site Selecting**

The northeastern Pennsylvania technical college is a career-oriented institution which made it attractive to TAA participants and other displaced workers. This site was selected because it has been well established as an approved training provider since the TAA program was instituted there in 1993 and enrolls approximately 15-20 participants per year. I work at this institution, but I do not work in the TAA program or with the TAA participants.

Fetterman (2010) explained that when researchers conduct studies in their own culture, they are familiar with the language and customs. Since I conducted the study at the same college where I am employed, I had to be especially careful of becoming too comfortable with the context and the people with whom I interacted. In a situation like this, the researcher is already an insider (Fetterman, 2010). As a result, I have an understanding of the technical college where participants in this study are pursuing their degrees. Not only was I familiar with the culture and customs of the participants (all of whom live within a sixty mile radius of the research site), I was also familiar with policies and procedures at the institution. Fetterman (2010) warned, "Sometimes a familiar setting is too familiar, however, and the researcher takes events for granted, leaving important data unnoticed and unrecorded" (p. 39). Yin (2009) explained that selecting a specific contemporary concept, in my situation, the TAA program in general, would be too broad, but selecting a specific TAA program at a specific college at a specific time fulfills the characteristics of a case study.

## Selecting Participants

### Purposeful Sampling

Selection of participants was based on Patton's (2002) explanation of, "[p]urposeful sampling focused on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study" (p. 230). Both Patton (2002) and Creswell (2007) emphasized criterion purposeful sampling involves picking a group who meet similar criteria and participants who belong to the same program or criteria. As the name suggests, there are certain purposes for selecting specific participants. The criteria for selecting participants was based on the following items: 1) participants had been displaced from their jobs; 2) participants were affected by the trade act and their jobs were eliminated; 3) participants would not be called back to their jobs; 4) participants were enrolled in the TAA program at the same technical college, 5) participants received funding from the TAA program; 6) participants collected some type of unemployment compensation.

Following the guidelines related to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I worked with the TAA office in order to gain access to the participants. Creswell (2007) indicated that locating key people who can assist with finding participants for the research project as "gaining access through the gatekeeper" (p. 120). The participants for the research were enrolled in the job training program, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). The secretary in the TAA office assisted with sending out invitational letters (Appendix A) asking twenty-two participants in the TAA program who were in their second year of two-year degree programs to participate in this study so I could examine factors related to their perseverance for working through their first year of college into

the second year. I wanted to understand how these learners stayed motivated to accomplish their goals as they worked toward completion of their degrees.

In the letter, willing participants were asked to contact me by telephone, by cell phone, or by e-mail. I allowed participants to contact me if they were interested in being part of the research; I did not specifically select participants, and I did not turn anyone away. Once they contacted me, I set up times and meeting places for the interviews. Eleven of the twenty-two participants responded and were interviewed individually in a private conference room at the technical college. All participants signed an "Informed Consent Form" (Appendix B) before the interviews started so that I could communicate the goals of the study and how I would uphold participant confidentiality.

I interviewed the participants because I wanted to write a detailed description of TAA participants as a group in order to document core elements, common patterns, and unique features that I discovered through the interview process. I wanted the data to help me understand their experiences as a group who lost their jobs and turned to college for training and development. The only way to find out was to look closely at the data and establish "patterns of thought and behavior" (Fetterman, 2010) that emerged by comparing and contrasting themes that stood out as I analyzed the data.

### **Collecting Data**

Since TAA students are required by the government program to attend classes year round, I conducted the research during the summer of 2011. This was also useful because this meant they were at the approximate half-way point of their programs. The TAA program funded their college tuition for two or three years depending on when they entered the program. I became a part of the story that I told because as Fetterman (2010)

explained, people, both the participants and the researcher, have been shaped by cultural "beliefs, biases, and individual tastes" (p. 24) which govern their thinking.

As I interpreted their words and actions, I also had to be aware of my own values and interests because they impact the analysis (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) spelled out that "a paradigm is a world view, a general perspective, a way of breaking down the complexities of the real world" (p. 15). Using a paradigm strategy for looking at complex issues allowed me to investigate a portion of their real worlds by reporting a systemic set of beliefs that included my value judgments because the researcher and the participants cannot be separated from the research. Although paradigms help the researcher break down things that are embedded in culture and society, they also constrain the researcher because the information that was collected may have hidden assumptions, or I might have assigned meanings to the information that was based on my view of factory workers. As a result, interpretations cannot be generalized to all TAA participants, and it could not be assumed that what is good for one is good for all.

### **Interviews**

Interviews, the main mode of data collection, were semi-formal interviews (Merriam, 1998), using mainly open-ended questions (Yin, 2010) (Appendix C). Since the aim was to focus on the TAA participants' perspectives, I asked questions so that I could tie pieces together and synthesize the information in order to answer the research questions. Primary data were collected during the summer of 2011, beginning in May and ending in September. I assigned pseudonyms in order to protect their identities and uphold confidentiality. The interviews took place on a one-on-one basis in a private

room to maintain confidentiality. I used an Olympus Digital Voice Recorder as a way to capture the participants' comments verbatim. While recording the interviews with the participants, I also took notes. Eleven semi-structured interviews were audio-taped. After recording the interviews, I transcribed the interviews by entering them word-for-word into a word processing program on the computer for data analysis. Each typed interview was placed in an electronic folder labeled "interviews."

Merriam (1998) and Patton (1990) indicated that interviewing as a method for collecting data was compatible with an ethnographic study. Face-to-face interviews allowed for observations of non-verbal aspects of the encounter. Using interviews for data collection allowed me to try to uncover the challenges that adult learners in the TAA program have encountered and how they resolved these issues. Each interview lasted from one and one-half to two hours. Initially, I thought that one hour interviews would give me ample information, but I found that working with human subjects was a process of dealing with different personalities and different life experiences. This was not a neat and systemic process because each one had a different story, different life experiences, and different perceptions about his/her world associated with TAA. Because I was the interviewer/researcher, my own personality, demeanor, and ideas contributed to the interview table which may have had an impact on the participants. I also realized that, although I interviewed participants to gather information, the situation was different from everyday conversations (Yin, 2010). There was a definite focus and purpose for meeting and interviewing the participants.

In order to aid my understanding, I also interviewed the person in charge of the TAA program because she worked closely with participants and provided additional

insights about the program. This also allowed me to observe the setting that was familiar to all TAA students. Because the TAA program is government funded, the students must have attendance and progress papers signed weekly in order to continue with the unemployment compensation benefits. Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) benefits are available to participants who are successfully completing the TAA training program when regular federal unemployment compensation has expired. They must use all their regular unemployment insurance before the TRA unemployment benefits becomes available. It is possible that participants could complete the training programs and not tap into the TRA benefits because of government unemployment extensions for unemployed people. The TAA students were eligible for regular unemployment, and then when the regular benefits expired, if needed, TAA participants were eligible for TRA benefits, which extend the regular unemployment payments.

### **Asking Questions**

Before asking questions, I explained to each participant my rationale for investigating their motivation to complete the TAA program. When I began my questioning, my intentions were to keep the same focus for the questions with all the interviewees, but I also wanted to remain flexible to allow them to talk freely, even if that meant that they got off topic. For the semi-structured interviews, I asked interview questions based on the research questions. Because the contexts of people are different, I worded the questions according to the person being interviewed and the context of the situation. I wanted to remain flexible with questioning so that I allowed for variations in the interviews (Yin, 2010). Following Patton's (1990) ideas about questioning, I realized that quality of data collected during the interview was controlled by the questions. I was

careful to stay away from “loaded” questions. For example, I would ask participants to tell me about their experiences associated with the first days of college rather than phrasing the question as, “I bet your first days at college were scary; could you tell me about that?” I had to trust that participants gave me useful information. I had to rely on them for the data collection.

Then I started off with a broad open-ended question: Could you tell me about the job that you were laid off from? I wanted to develop a picture of the context from which the participant came. I allowed the participant to talk freely about his/her experiences. As the interview proceeded, I also had a list of prompts under each main heading to help remind me to probe more information about a particular topic: Length of employment before getting laid off, promotions or position changes during employment time, what he/she liked and disliked about the job, and other information related to the employment time. If the interviewee covered these main points from the broad open-ended question, I did not have to ask as many probing questions. However, working with human subjects created situations where I had to listen carefully to their responses. When a participant indicated confusion by either a wrinkled face or by indicating he/she was not sure what I was asking, I tried to clarify questions. In one interview, when I asked the participant what he did not like about the job, he told me that he liked everything about the job and that was why he stayed there for thirty years. I wondered about his comment and asked, “How could someone like everything about his/her job?” As I probed further, asking about things that bothered him when he went through his daily routine on a work day, he said that he understood what I meant and proceeded to explain that working with fiber glass materials made him itch. He did not like that.

Another broad area that I inquired about was the TAA program. I wanted to understand how TAA participants understood the TAA program and the benefits associated with it. Again, I asked a broad open-ended question: "Tell me about the TAA program." I also had prompts to remind me about the main points that I wanted. For example, I wanted to know what TAA participants knew about TAA program's funding, what TAA participants knew about displaced workers, what it was like being unemployed, and what TAA participants expected to gain from the TAA program.

Another broad area that I asked about was their college experiences. I wanted to hear how they experienced taking college courses in order to discover if there were similar situations that could be traced to cultural beliefs. For example, I wanted to know what classes were more challenging than others. I was also interested in their goals associated with obtaining college degrees.

Another area that I explored was how they handled domestic responsibilities while taking college courses. All participants had jobs taken from them, and they were forced into different routines through no fault of their own. Because of domestic responsibilities and college responsibilities, all participants had new routines in their lives. I wanted to find out how they handled and balanced their new ventures in their lives. For example, Abby told me that she went from a five day week in the manufacturing plant to a seven day week because college assignments were so time consuming, and she would have to read assigned chapters several times in order to "get it."

As I collected the data, I had the opportunity to "step" into their everyday lives and explore what it was like for them to have worked in manufacturing jobs and have lost

their jobs permanently. I wanted to investigate their experiences. Merriam (1998) suggested that gathering data by interviewing participants provides specific kinds of information. Patton (1990) clarified the purpose for collecting data through interviewing:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. . . . We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of the interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into their person's perspective. (p. 278)

Since I was looking at the TAA program as a case study, I wanted to obtain sufficient data in order to analyze and interpret it effectively. I was satisfied after interviewing eleven participants that I had reached a point for analyzing the data through codes and categories and generated themes within it for an ethnographic case study.

### **Field Notes**

In addition to the interview transcripts, I also took notes during the interviews. This allowed me to record some of the non-verbal behaviors so I could include them with the descriptions of the participants. Following the interviews, I recognized the importance of recording my reactions from the interviews by writing memos for later analysis. I also listened to the audio-taped interviews several times in order to become

familiar with the data so that I could write characteristics of the group and analyze the data with confidence.

### **Reactive Observations**

Angrosino (2005) discussed three types of observations. Although these have some overlapping features, they also have defining characteristics: 1) participant observation – long-term immersion of the researcher with the community of people being investigated; 2) reactive observation – people in the study are aware that they are being observed; 3) unobtrusive (nonreactive) observation – people in the study are not aware that they are being studied.

I used reactive observations. In order to actually see what the TAA students do while in a classroom setting, I observed some classes that they attended. The goal was to see how they interacted with traditional-aged students and how they fit in traditional classroom settings.

The participants were aware, through signed consent forms, that I was gathering information when I observed them during class times. The Classroom Observation Inventory (Appendix D) form was used for taking notes related to the class. Others students might have seen me in the classrooms, but I did not tell them why I was observing. Since I do not work in the TAA program at the research site, I was a nonparticipant when I observed them in the classroom settings.

The intention was to observe all eleven participants. I observed six of the participants because I was getting resistance from the faculty. Because I did not want to disclose participant's privacy and wanted to keep confidentiality as required by IRB, I did not disclose my intention to the professor of the course for observing a class when I

requested permission to observe his/her class. Three instructors refused my request to observe their classes even though I informed them that I was not observing their teaching ability or their style of instruction.

During the observations, I saw similar routines in the different classrooms. As a result, I observed the type of classes, the room arrangements, the seating arrangements, and the participants' classroom behavior. Because of limited selection for classes during the summer 2011, I was not able to observe any classes that were interactive or had a laboratory component as part of the course. However, I cannot say that the other five participants demonstrated the same behaviors in the classrooms or had similar experiences.

I found that the data I gathered was not as useful as I had hoped. However, I can report on what I observed during the class time. The classrooms were set up in traditional rows, varying with the room sizes. The number of students varied between fifteen and twenty; none of the classrooms had more than thirty desks for students. All six participants sat at desks that were in the first and second rows. None of the six sat at the desks that were to the far right or to the far left.

From these observations, I noticed that participants focused on the instructions given in classes by alternating eye contact with the instructor and writing in their notebooks. As a result, they appeared to be listening attentively. When I asked to see their notes from the class times, all had content that was discussed during the classes. One participant did tell me that sitting in the front of the classroom allowed her to keep from being distracted by the traditional students who play on their cell phones during class, fidget with pencils, and remove items from their backpacks.

When intruding into the lives of people, researchers try to do research with a minimal amount of interruption. From the observations, I found that classrooms consisted mainly of traditional-aged students. Since I have been teaching for approximately twenty years, I inferred through the classroom observations that the majority of their classmates were younger than the TAA participants. Because of life experiences with people and students in the classroom, I concluded, by the way students were dressed, what they looked like, and their physical presence, that the majority of students were traditional-ages between eighteen and twenty-five. Students in their forties and fifties obviously look older than students in their twenties.

During the observations, TAA student participants appeared serious about their classroom work. For example, TAA participants took notes during classes, appeared attentive to lecture, and asked questions. On the other hand, during one observation, I found one of the traditional students playing with his cell-phone during class, and three others did not even have their notebooks open. In another observation, the professor asked students to hand in previously assigned work. A participant, Edward, did not hand any assignments in during this request, and I made the assumption that he handed things in on time and that the professor was collecting late work. After another observation, I asked Daneen if she had any reason for choosing her seat in the classroom. She indicated that she liked to sit in the front so she was not distracted by traditional students.

Fetterman (2010) emphasized the importance of being there.

However, I gained more data from the interviews than from the observations. One obvious item that stood out was TAA participants did not like being distracted by

traditional students. There seemed to be intensity in the focus that the TAA students had when they were in the classroom.

### **Analyzing Data**

I stayed within the criteria established by the IRB guidelines by using a password protected computer program. Once I had the data from the interviews transcribed into Microsoft Word documents, the next step was to make sense of the information. Since the transcribed interviews generate many pages of text, I reduced the data to important items by analyzing and weaving my thought processes between inductive and deductive thinking (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). I began by highlighting excerpts from the transcripts that I found interesting and selected quotations from the participants that stood out as unique examples. Creswell (2007) and Fetterman (2010) explained that ethnographers present dialogue, and the dialogue becomes vivid descriptions. Stake (2005) emphasized that a case study involves telling the story by adding verbatim quotations, which provide credibility.

I began coding the data and creating categories in order to reduce the information into a workable form in order to draw out themes (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Even though I coded the interviews at separate times, I also had the big picture in my head from all the interviews. For example, all participants talked about having support or lacking support from their families. Once the highlighted parts were complete, I scoured them again and labeled the data that stood out related to the different categories based on the content of the interviews.

### **Maintaining Validity**

I analyzed the data in a way to maintain validity based on what the participants in the study were communicating. Being nonjudgmental became a difficult task throughout the study. I had a negative way of perceiving factory workers as dirty, uneducated, and unmotivated. However, I had to be aware of my biases and values during the study. Because information for the memos was reported through my eyes and my values and beliefs, I had to understand where my beliefs came from because this could result in unfair stereotypes about groups of people and in this case, factory workers. It was important for me to be careful that I did not make inappropriate and unnecessary value judgments about what I saw, heard, and observed when I analyzed the data. Fetterman (2010) emphasized the importance for researchers to maintain a "nonjudgmental orientation" (p. 22). In order to clarify my assumptions and my observations about their actions, I contacted participants by e-mail or by telephone to clarify any confusion about the data and the examples when something was missing to make sure that I had accurate data.

### **Coding and Categorizing**

Over a seven month period, I interviewed participants, translated the transcripts, and listened to and read the recordings several times. From the transcripts, codes and categories provided a system of classifying the data to organize into segments. As a result of using a classification system, I created a framework for the data. This made the pages and pages of transcripts more manageable. Since I had information from the interviews, I had an overall idea of their experiences. As the interviews were read and reread, the codes were then placed in categories. I labeled codes using "words" rather

than using a "TP" for TAA program and "FS" for family support. For example, I inserted the words "TAA program" and "family support" as codes for the meaning units. The meaning units consisted of the exact words from the interviews. This approach seemed to make it easier for me to use words rather than letter labels. Color-coding also helped identify similar items by applying different colors.

I began with some broad categories with an understanding that I would be able to revise, condense, and/or combine items as the analysis evolved. Because I had the big picture in my mind and wanted to narrow the data into chunks, I began with broad categories such as family responsibilities, educational aspects, college experience, financial obligations, personal expectations, and support. Fetterman (2010) indicated that cultural interpretations should be made from what is actually seen and heard in order to present a view of the participants' realities. I went from very general categories to more specific, detailed categories. I thought in order to have an analysis of the participants as a group, I needed to streamline the overly detailed categories.

I wanted to remain flexible in the beginning so that I could synthesize the data and allow the data to bring insights to my thought process. As I continued with the data analysis, I began adding other codes that were a bit more specific such as losing jobs, gaining confidence, frustrations, time management, and strain on relationships because these categories seemed to help me understand the data. I looked at the data in detail, and then created a larger picture from assimilating the data into categories. I saw categories emerging that had common patterns, which helped understand the participants' cultures. For example, I had approximately forty categories for one-hundred and forty pages of data with fifteen to twenty-five lines per page. For example, I thought that some of the

codes could be eliminated because "gaining confidence" could be placed in the "personal expectations" category. "Strains on relationship" could be incorporated into "family support" because when I wrote the narrative of the analysis, I explained both the positive support and the negative support from families. I found more positive support than negative support, so I did not think that it was necessary to use two different categories. Condensing the categories helped me refine my thinking in order to move into assigning themes.

Once I became more confident with the data, I condensed and combined categories when there seemed to be overlapping ideas. Here is what I did as I condensed and combined codes. For example, codes such as TAA program, expectations of college degrees, and economic survival reflected the category, "educational opportunities." Codes such as classroom support, family support, and college classroom were labeled as the category, "support." When I labeled the data using categories, I color-coded items so I could easily see the data that were related to educational opportunities.

I labeled coded data such as goal setting, academic responsibilities, and learning skills into the category, "Setting Educational Goals." I combined the codes: job responsibilities, ending job, survival, and insecurities into the category, "Previous Job." Depression, self-esteem, accepting situations, and filling time related to the category, "Unemployment Situation" because each item appeared to be associated with situations related to unemployment and enrolling in college. When I asked participants how they felt about being displaced workers, they had three types of reactions that I coded as depressed, worthless, and undisturbed which resulted in the category, "Displaced

Workers." I used codes such as obstacles easily controlled, obstacles difficult to control, and obstacles unable to control in the category, "Obstacles to Overcome – Challenges."

I also used field notes/memos to help clarify my thinking. These were italicized in the word documents so I could easily differentiate my thoughts from the participants' statements, the codes, and the categories. These were also useful for making interpretations and conclusions because the sheer amount of data can be overwhelming at times. This also allowed me to have a written record of my internal thinking. This was a critical step because of attempting to foster ideas from the data that were plausible to the findings. As a result, I found that staying organized and creating a system that was useful to me really helped keep the process manageable and productive.

Since I wanted themes to emerge from the data, I was especially careful not to begin with a set of assumptions. Although that was challenging, I had to be aware of my values, attitudes, and judgments as I processed the data. With an open mind, my analytic process guided what I thought the data was saying. Although transcribing and analyzing were tedious, time-consuming tasks, they gave me the opportunity to interact with the data. I decided to analyze the text by generating multiple word documents, color-coding items, highlighting or bracketing data, and creating "data summary table[s]" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 104). These allowed me to generate patterns of behavior that were repeated among the participants.

### **Establishing Themes**

The themes that emerged revealed findings related to the whole group. Because I was constructing an ethnographic case study, I created data summary tables (as suggested by Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008) so that I could see the patterns in the data as a whole and

formulate themes associated with the group once I synthesized the data. Fetterman (2010) emphasized that patterns of thought and action formulate an ethnographic reliability. Researchers analyze data by highlighting findings, interpreting fieldwork procedures, identifying patterns or themes associated with the behaviors, beliefs, and values shared by people who experience similar situations (Creswell, 2007; Fetterman, 2010; Yin, 2010). Since analysis is a tedious process (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995), I spent many hours arranging categories and rearranging categories, defining themes and redefining themes, in order to gain a valuable perspective from the data because of the abstractions associated with analyzing data. From the data collection, I wanted to capture an authentic picture of participants' situations through analysis. Haenfler (2004) indicated that using themes helps create a realistic story.

I looked for patterns of thoughts and behaviors in different situations with different participants in order to construct themes that could tell their stories. I created themes by carefully coding and categorizing the data. The codes were placed in categories, and from these, themes emerged (see appendix E for examples of the coding process). Six themes emerged: 1) Gaining Opportunities, 2) Supportive Environments, 3) Traveling in the Dark, 4) Coming to Terms and Accepting the Situations, 5) Obstacles, and 6) Gender Issues. From the category "Educational Opportunities" emerged the theme "Gaining Opportunities." From the category, "Educational Goals" emerged the theme "Traveling in the Dark." From the categories, "Previous Job," and "Unemployment Situation" emerged the theme "Coming to Terms and Accepting the Situations." From the categories, "Obstacles to Overcome - Challenges" and "Dislocated Worker" emerged

the theme "Obstacles." From the category "Male and Female Differences" emerged the theme "Gender Issues."

### **Ethical Issues**

Once I began to create written profiles about participants using the data, I had to be mindful of Fetterman's (2010) idea that "the emic perceptible . . . is at the heart of most ethnographic research" (p. 20). The emic perspective, or the participant's point of view, has to do with the differences within a particular community, and etic are differences important to the researcher (Wolcott, 1999). Fetterman (2010) stated, "The most important element of fieldwork is being there – to observe, to ask seemingly stupid but insightful questions, and to write down what is seen and heard" (p. 9). Etic is the "external, social scientific perspective of reality" (Fetterman, 2010, p. 22). The etic view involves a surface way of looking at a situation, and an emic view allows the ethnographer to clarify the etic view of a situation, which gives a better understanding of what happened in a situation. Wolcott (1999) cautioned that multiple ways of looking at situations exist whether the person is the insider or the outsider. There is not only one way of looking at situations.

This study gave me an inside look and a better clarification of what is going on within the case study under investigation. In the study, I realized that the analysis was shaped largely by the way I interpreted elements of the data such as tone of voice and demeanor. For example, the evaluation of Edward fluctuated among these characteristics: over confident, arrogant, or exceptionally self-assured. Although it was difficult to describe his tone of voice in writing, I struggled with his demeanor throughout the interview. Several times during the interview he appeared to be boasting about his skill level when he told me that very few people in the western hemisphere actually know

how to manipulate "\$3 million dollars worth of machinery." He appeared to be boasting when he told me, "I pretty much can take one apart and put it back together blindfolded." I was not comfortable questioning his attitude. However, I actually allowed a colleague to listen to his interview, and without disclosing what I thought about his attitude, waited for the colleague's response. The colleague also indicated an overzealous attitude about his skill level. Another example of what I interpreted as his overconfidence was when he said: "I was the second to last person out the door [when the job ended];" and that "professors [in his courses] actually turn to me to explain a concept in a real world." As a result, it was my interpretation. However, another person could have defined his attitude differently.

I also had another situation in which I felt uneasy, and I knew that it was important for me to ask questions to determine if the inferences that I made from their behaviors reflected participants' understanding of their behaviors. The drawback with observing behaviors is that inaccurate conclusions could be made depending on the action of the participants and the perceptions of the researcher. During one interview, for example, Daneen's eyes began tearing when I asked her about being a displaced worker. I did not know if I had upset her with the question or if the whole interview was "getting" to her or if there was a completely different explanation. So I stopped the audio recording at her request, and she told me that she wanted to leave the interview room to calm down. When she returned about five minutes later, the interview resumed. This was when I tried to clarify why she was crying. This was a sensitive time because I was not sure how to continue or if I should ask her why she started crying. So I changed the interview questions to college experiences because I thought that it would give her

something positive to focus on. But the whole time, I was just speculating about how the sudden change in topic would impact the interview. We were about half way through the interview at this point, and Daneen laughed about her tears (once they were gone) throughout the second half of the interview. She also told me [she felt] “like bottom of the barrel, because . . . [she] lost . . . [her] job” when I asked her about being labeled as a displaced worker. One consequence of any research that includes asking people about their experiences around losing jobs and entering new educational programs is that participants may react emotionally to some questions. This raises some ethical dilemmas for the researcher. I tried to be empathetic to the participants’ feelings, but it is impossible to avoid all sensitive issues. I discuss below one particular incident that stands out.

The following analogy demonstrates how situations motivate people or how people are motivated through situations. When we watch a person training for the Olympics, we may think that he/she is performing the routine or task over and over. This could result in thinking that the behavior is mundane and boring. Yet, in order to actually understand the behaviors, researchers must question the dedication to the continuous repetition in order to understand what keeps them going. This is similar to the motivational aspects of TAA participants. The only way for me to understand the actions and behaviors of the TAA participants was to ask questions about their circumstances related to being laid off and taking college courses for skill development.

### **Credibility and Validity**

I had to trust that participants were giving me accurate information, not embellishing the information because of being in the spotlight of an interview.

Credibility came into play with my ability to define categories and themes related to the data. I found that in order to maintain credibility, contradictions such as similarities and differences within the categories must be reported.

Creswell (2007) stressed that validation is "an attempt to assess the 'accuracy' of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants" (pp. 207-208). Creswell (2007) talked about eight strategies based on Whitemore, Chase, and Mandel (2001) that are used by qualitative researchers as techniques that increase the validity of reported finding. Creswell (2007) recommended that qualitative researchers use at least two techniques to ensure the validity of the study. From the eight techniques that Creswell (2007) explained, I focused on the ones that he indicated were the most popular and cost-effective: triangulation and thick descriptions.

One way to compare and contrast the information from different sources is through triangulation. Triangulation is done by using a variety of data sources (i.e. interviews, observations, and documents). Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasized the importance of trustworthiness and the triangulation of the data. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) pointed out that careful triangulation of the mode of data collection adds to the validity of the results of the study. Triangulation involves cross-checking the data by looking at the different modes of data collection (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Fetterman (2010) and Yin (2010) emphasized triangulation as a way to compare different sources of information in order to validate the data, improving the quality of the data and the accuracy of findings. In a case study, Stake (2005) emphasized that the "credibility [is enhanced] by thoroughly triangulating the descriptions and interpretations, not just a single step but continuously throughout the period of study" (p. 443-444).

Even though most of the analysis came from interviews, I used some data from the "Classroom Observation Inventory" to triangulate with the interview information. For example, during the observations, I found that the TAA participants seemed to be serious about their education. During the interviews, eight of the eleven informed me about traditional students' lack of dedication to their class work.

In addition, I looked for correspondence in two sets of data: the interviews and the field notes. Patterns related to content of the interviews and behaviors increased the reliability of the study (Fetterman, 2010). In order to establish patterns from the data, I created charts and data summary tables (Appendix F) in order to look for patterns. I created patterns of data during the coding process by labeling the data and color-coding it.

The second way to check for validity and credibility was through writing detailed, thick descriptions of the data that describe the actions, voices, and context of the situations. Geertz (1973) emphasized the importance of giving detailed descriptions of everyday life experiences – called a thick description, and Fetterman (2010) confirmed that,

Thick description and verbatim quotations are the identifiable features of ethnographic field notes, reports, articles, and books. Ethnographers take great pains to describe a cultural scene or event in tremendous detail. The aim is to convey the feel and the facts of an observed event. (p. 125)

The ethnographic case study gave me the flexibility to seek information from TAA participants in order to understand how displaced workers stayed motivated in college settings. Following the IRB requirement, I considered the ethical issues that

could arise from uncovering sensitive issues related to displacement and educational situations as I interviewed them.

## **Chapter 4: FINDINGS**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents key findings. Previous to the thematic analysis, I provide group characteristics and provide background information on their job experiences before displacement and summarize their experiences when their jobs ended. Next, six themes that emerged from this study are discussed.

### **Group Portraits**

I wanted to present a written contextual picture of the group before synthesizing experiences into themes that materialized from the analysis. All participants lost their jobs as a result of trade related issues. For the participants to be eligible for the TAA program, job losses had to be associated with increased imports as a result of trade-related reasons. The Department of Labor investigates to certify that loss jobs related to trade issues (*Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers*, 2010). TAA participants have to abide by all the laws related to the program. I found that there was more to leaving a job and starting a training program than simply getting funds from the TAA and/or TRA and/or unemployment compensation.

### **Group Demographics**

The eleven participants were in the second year of the TAA program at a technical college in northeastern Pennsylvania. This group had some similar characteristics. All were white. All participants were employed at factory jobs in northeastern Pennsylvania when they lost their jobs. All participants lived within a sixty mile radius of the college where the TAA training was given. All lived at home and

commuted to the campus for their training at the technical college. All participants return home to family responsibilities, domestic duties, and financial expectations.

There was a relatively balance of males and females: five females and six males. Yet the ages varied between the 50s and the 20s. Seven were in their 50s with 58 being the oldest – five males and two females. One male was in his 40s and two females were in their high 30s and one female was in her mid 20s. Seven were married – two females and five males. Four were single – three females and one male. One male was employed as long as 33 years, and one female was employed as short as eight months. Abby, a 56 year old married female, was employed 20 years, and Irene, a 36 year old single female, was employed 7 years. Both were employed at a window design factory. Barry, a 50 year old married male, was employed 30 years, and Curt, a 58 year old married male, was employed 33 years. Both were employed at a textile plant.

Daneen, a 52 year old single female, was employed seventeen years, and Henry, a 44 year old single male, was employed fifteen years. Both assembled nomadic valves. Edward, a 52 year old married male, was employed at a food factory for sixteen years. Florance, a 27 year old single female, ground parts at a carbon factory for three years. Greg, a 54 year old married male, worked in a machine shop in New York for fifteen years but lived in Pennsylvania. Joe, a 57 year old married male, was employed for eighteen years at a paper supply producer. Kathy, a 38 year old married female, was employed two and one-half years part-time and eight months full-time at a factory that made machine parts for paper factories.

Three of the participants came from nonunionized jobs, leaving eight of them to have encountered such things as seniority and pay raises regulated by their unions. Even

though Daneen had worked at her job for seventeen years, she said, "I was on first shift and got bumped to third shift. It was a union shop so if someone with more seniority wanted first shift, they could bump that person with the lower seniority to the shift that they were on." When I said to Daneen, "But you were there seventeen years." She responded:

That's right. The average person's age when they closed the place up was fifty-five years old, and there was people that were there for 45 years. . . . There were [only] five people that had lower seniority than me, and the rest had more seniority than me. . . . And that is how people's jobs were eliminated, based on seniority.

Edward told me that he had worked as a "supervisor/industrial mechanic maintenance supervisor and production supervisor for other companies before." The tone of his voice displayed confidence as he explained:

I have quite a lot of different skills which I wasn't utilizing because of the union; we had mechanics, we had electricians, we have electronic techs, and then we had plumbers, so on, and so forth. And nobody was allowed to do anyone else's jobs although I have skills in all these areas.

Florance explained that because it was a unionized plant, "You get paid how long you've been there. [For example], if you've been there three months, I think it's every three months you would get a raise. [As a result], you could get maxed out around \$16 per hour in about three or four years."

Marcel's (2001) study of 1,328 TAA participants indicated that approximately 73% of TAA participants had worked in unionized manufacturing plants and

approximately half of the workers were machine operators. As a result of consistent, repetitive work, they did not have the skills necessary to obtain well-paying jobs in other areas without additional training. This study found that eight participants worked in unionized manufacturing plants. Nine of the participants confirmed that their jobs were repetitious factory related work. (See Table 2 for a summary of group characteristics.)

The Employment and Training Administration (2011) concluded from its reports that TAA participants had an average age of 46, and an average of 12 years of experiences in specific jobs that had been eliminated. The group of TAA participants in this study had an average age of 47 which is fairly consistent with the Department of Labor's findings. The average length of employment was 16 years, slightly higher than the Department of Labor's findings.

**Table 2: Group Characteristics**

<b>TAA Participants</b>	<b>Male or Female</b>	<b>Length of Employment</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Married or Single</b>	<b>Union Shop</b>	<b>Prior college before TAA</b>
<b>Curt</b>	M	33 years	58	M	yes	yes
<b>Barry</b>	M	30 years	50	M	yes	no
<b>Abby</b>	F	20 years	56	M	no	no
<b>Joe</b>	M	18 years	57	M	yes	yes
<b>Daneen</b>	F	17 years	52	S	yes	yes
<b>Edward</b>	M	16 years	52	M	yes	no
<b>Greg</b>	M	15 years	54	M	yes	no
<b>Henry</b>	M	15 years	44	S	yes	no
<b>Irene</b>	F	7 years	36	S	no	yes
<b>Florance</b>	F	3 years	27	S	yes	yes
<b>Kathy</b>	F	8 months	38	M	no	yes

### **Job Experiences Before Displacement**

Abby revealed that she had worked long, strenuous hours in a factory doing repetitious actions throughout the day for twenty years. In order to cut some of the monotony, she volunteered for other jobs. For example, she could be packing products, cutting cloth, or assembling things. Barry told me that when he started his venture of thirty years for this company, he began as a maintenance worker and spent most of his time as a maintenance supervisor. Curt was the oldest member of the group and the one who was employed for the longest time. As a fifty-seven year old purchasing manager, he was laid off from the textile plant where he worked for thirty-three years. At the time of the layoff, he supervised approximately twenty-five people and was in charge of the warehouse and distribution center where he also supervised the shipping of orders. Daneen worked on an assembly line for seventeen years at a plant, building and testing pneumatic valves. She noted the repetitiveness of her duties on the job. Edward talked freely about his accomplishments, not only about the job where he was laid off from but also about previous jobs and accomplishments. When the confectionary factory closed, Edward was working as an industrial mechanic. Florence, the youngest participant (twenty-seven years old) in the case study, worked at a carbon unionized plant where she cut things to size. Greg worked for fifteen years at a very repetitive job in a machine shop and was eventually promoted as a cell coordinator with about ten to fifteen men working under him. For fifteen years, Henry was a group leader in a unionized machine shop that made pneumatic valves for a variety of industries. Irene worked for seven years in a manufacturing plant and the last three years of that employment as a quality control inspector in the paint department. Joe was a printing press operator for eighteen years

and fourteen of those years were spent on second shift. Joe was fifty-seven years old and a year younger than Curt, making them the two oldest in the case study. Kathy worked in a machine shop that designed parts for other factories. She had been employed for three years as a part-time, temporary worker doing data entry and assisting in the human resources office. Then, she was hired as a full-time worker in customer-service.

### **Job Endings**

There was another finding that, though not rising to the level of themes, needed to be addressed. I called this section *job endings* because it was associated with their experiences with what happened in their last days of employment. It was not a theme to explain their motivations, goals, or unemployment experiences. For example, some workers had to continue working long hours and overtime to build up inventory even though the workers knew that their jobs were ending and going to be eliminated. Although this finding did not really answer research questions, it was an important finding because it seemed to add more complexities to their last days on the job. This finding also seemed like a discrepancy between how I thought their jobs would end and reality of their job endings. Irene worked ten hour days, nine hour days, and Saturdays knowing that in six months her job would be eliminated. Irene explained to me that as the company downsized, her responsibilities increased because she was in charge of the coloring mastering because the company made their own paint. But right before she left the job, she told me that she had to develop a variety of training manuals for different departments. Her job was being eliminated, but the company did not close. Irene told me:

It was really hectic because I had to train several people to do my job because it got split up between two or three people. I had to write up instruction manuals on everything. I had to complete my color re-mastering project. All my books had to be made, shipped out, and approved. I had to come up with about how long it was going to take to get everything done, and that's when I was going to be out of there.

Henry told me as the plant was getting ready to close, "October, November and December were absolutely horrible because they were phasing people out from July on, so there were fewer and fewer people working there." Even though he knew that his job was coming to an end, there was a lot of work to do because workers at other factories were not trained to make specialized parts, "There's a difference between a machinist and somebody that just operates a machine, and they [other plants] didn't have a lot of machinist. . . . The defense contract parts had to be right." As a result, the plant where he worked was building up an inventory before the plant closed, so the workers had to work overtime. Henry told me that some of the workers were getting fed up and indicated that they were going to quit. The company came out and said, "'Go ahead and quit. We'll tell unemployment, and you won't be able to get unemployment, and you'll lose your severance package. We'll take everything away.' So you had to work." As a result of employees' attitudes toward the company and the management's attitude toward the workers, Henry reported:

Towards the end, they [management] wanted workers to fill out papers stating exactly what they did each day, and a lot of people were insulted because they were giving 100% and not slacking. Everybody had a good

work ethic; again that was for corporate, they didn't want anyone dragging their feet because they were mad.

Abby told me her days ended with what I understood as uncertainty. She said that when she went to work during her final three months that she did not know what department that she would be working in, who she would have to fill in for, or how long she would work. Some work days she only worked for four hours before being told to go home. She drove forty miles one-way to work, and she did not know what to expect until she arrived at work that day. She was not given an ending day for her job. Most likely this was because this was not a unionized company. During this time, she went to work without knowing if this would be her last day.

During the last week of her job, even though production continued on the line, Daneen told me that she did not feel like doing anything. When I asked Daneen about her last days of work, she told me that she was not enthusiastic about doing her job: "I was quite bitter, but I still did my job. . . . There was a lot of tension in the whole plant."

On the other hand, Joe had a different ending experience; he expressed his frustrations over not knowing when the job would end: "They called us into work early one day and had a meeting. It was just out of the blue, and they said, 'We're going to close the facility'." The company managers told the workers that they wanted to finalize production as soon as possible. Joe told me that he was shocked because their plant was approved for a new lathe machine worth \$350,000, "So we thought we're safe."

When I asked Joe how he felt about being two years shy of retirement, he told me: "It was a big disappointment obviously and not knowing what I would do next or where I would go." The last week of employment, Joe told me, "We didn't push ourselves very

hard, and there was no reason to because there wasn't always a lot of work to do anyway." Even though Joe was sad about his job ending, he was hopeful that "something's going to be out there." On one hand (Mandal & Roe, 2008), involuntary job loss had an impact on mental health issues, and on the other hand, displaced workers' mental health improved once they were employed again.

The big layoff took place when Greg was on vacation in Florida, and he received a call the day he returned from vacation indicating that he should come in, pick his tool box up, and he was laid off, "I had to sign papers and have my tool box physically inspected to make sure I wasn't stealing a lath or a mill and didn't have any company equipment in my toolbox." When I asked him how he felt about the layoff situation, he told me he felt like he was "kick[ed] in the gut." He did not have any advanced warning that his job was coming to an end:

Getting laid off was tough. It was something I definitely didn't expect.

My wife and I exchanged blank stares at each other; like wow, what do we do now? . . . It just seemed really scary to me to have my life turned upside down in my 50's, and I just had to start all over again.

The company where Barry worked started laying off employees two years prior to Barry's lay off. He told me, "I still did my job, but I did not have as much heart in it. Everybody seemed to be doing the job they were paid to do." When I asked Daneen how she found out that her job was being eliminated, she stated, "Through the grapevine. That's how it came out first. [Eventually], they called us in the office." She told me that she had one week official notice that her job was ending. During the last week she told

me, "It makes you feel like not doing anything. . . . You still worked. You had to get your job done. . . . I was quite bitter, but I still did my job."

Edward told me that the company had announced that the plant would be closing three years prior to its closing:

They had told us it was going to be approximately two years, well things didn't quite go the way they expected. . . . We had plenty of advanced notice. . . . I was the second to last person out the door. We were chaining up the doors as we walked out of the building for the last time on March 31, 2009.

He told me that when the end came, he was given the choice of going to Monterey, Mexico and staying with the company, but he chose to stay in Pennsylvania and look for another job.

When Edward's job came to an end, he told me that it was important for him to make future choices by considering his wife's career because his wife was a production manager at the same company. He told me that he had some uncomfortable feelings about the direction the company was going, "If you're a woman, unfortunately, you're not very well respected [at the plant that was closing] because the glass ceiling is like a steel vault. We pretty much decided that we didn't want to stay with this company."

Once the plant closed, he spoke very confidently about his skills:

I had no difficulty finding work, I told her [my wife] it would be pretty much up to her to decide where we were going to end up. I was very happy to have her find whatever position with whatever company she was

comfortable with. We both wanted to work for somebody or at least for her to work with somebody that had family values.

Because his wife was concerned about safety measures and that he could possibly get hurt doing mechanical tasks on the job since he took so many short cuts for accomplishing tasks, he told me, "If I got a degree in robotics and advanced automation, I'd be working with electronic controls that I would be doing far less of the individual mechanical things that she finds so risky." Edward told me his wife worried about his safety:

Julie has fears about me injuring myself. I have a tendency to charge into things when there's a problem. When there's work to be done, whether it's a 2,000 pound motor that needs replaced or if it's working 20 to 30 feet upon scaffolding, I have no concerns. She wanted me to take the degree in order to work more with my brain rather than my hands.

As the interview continued, I became a bit uncomfortable when he talked about his skills because I was not sure if he was being genuine and self-confident about his skill level or that he had an overinflated ego and embellished his abilities:

I am one of the few recognized experts in W&D Modules. It's a specialty type of machine that's \$3 million dollars worth of machinery which is basically designed to sift and load trays with starch and molding and filling. . . . There's very few of these things actually in the western hemisphere. They're most commonly used in Europe and very few people here in the United States that actually know these things, and I pretty much can take one apart and put it back together blindfolded.

As I said, I have a great many skills, but I have no degree. I have a more than average intelligence level. I study, read constantly. . . . I read an average of 30,000 pages a year not including daily and weekly periodicals. . . . When it came time to introducing new machinery, call Edward and have him come down. Here's \$2.5 million dollars worth of crates of equipment, have him take it up to the fifth floor, get it installed, and have it producing candy in sixty days, not a problem. Just the sort of thing I did.

Once I compiled the group portraits, I analyzed and categorized the data to determine the themes that surfaced and emerged from the analysis. The six themes provide an explanation for the six findings. For the study, I selected quotations that illustrated the themes in order to present rich descriptions so that readers could get a sense of the culture of the group. I provide a mixture of quotations and paraphrases from the participants.

### **Theme 1: Gaining Opportunities**

Gaining Opportunities emerged because workers who lost their jobs had opportunities associated with the federally-funded government program. Even though the participants were eliminated from their jobs through no fault of their own, all participants welcomed the opportunity to either further their education or begin new college careers. All participants were thankful to have the funds available for educational expenses and for living expenses. Not all workers who lose their jobs because of the trade agreement take advantage of the TAA program. However, the group of eleven consisted of workers who chose to take advantage of the TAA opportunities. Barry, Curt,

and Daneen told me that as workers were getting laid off, CareerLink<sup>®</sup> came into the company and explained to the workers how to access funds from the TAA program. Workers were encouraged to take advantage of the government-funds because the program provided opportunities that are not available to all unemployed people.

Five of the eleven had no prior educational experience beyond high school. The campus way of life was completely new to them. Abby, Barry, Edward, Greg, and Henry did not have prior experiences with higher education. They were the first ones in their families to attempt college courses. Abby told me that "TAA has given me the opportunity to get my education because I would have never done it. I would never have done it because I would never had the money." She also said, "A lot of the ones that I worked with would have never done it without the TAA program." Barry told me he decided to try out college courses even though he had not been successful in high school, "I am not out of anything. I am still unemployed, and I don't have a whole lot to do, so I will try it." I thought Edward was boasting because throughout the interview he talked about his high intelligence and multiple skills. However, he did say the degree was "going to give me that opportunity for a few more calls for that first interview. . . . These people who are going to look at my resume and say, 'Oh ok, this guy actually does have a degree; we'll give him a call!'" Further, "So I'm here [at the technical college] to actually expand my opportunities."

Greg and Henry told me that one factor in going back to college was to get a better position in the workplace. Greg said, "The TAA program [provided an] opportunity in today's environment where it is practically impossible to get anything for free anymore, so this is almost too good to be true. I can still collect my unemployment

while going to school.” Since Greg’s wife had her doctorate degree, he wanted a college degree so that he had something that would show a sense of accomplishment. Henry said, "Because I did not have opportunity in the past to go to college, the TAA program gave me an opportunity that I thought that I would never have." But unfortunately, Henry continued with, "I also thought I would not have to worry about losing my job."

Even though Joe had a prior chemistry degree from a large four-year university in Maryland, and his wife had her Ph.D., he decided to attend this technical college. He told me, "I came down to open house [at the participating college] and started talking to some of the people there and was like, wow, this seems like a really great program and a great opportunity, and it seems like a really good school, so I decided to give it a try."

Daneen was no stranger to higher education. She told me she was four credits short of a degree from a large four-year university in 1979. Her brother, nephews, and nieces have degrees from large four-year universities. Daneen’s sister-in-law works for a large four-year university in an administrative office. Daneen told me, "I am thankful that I have this opportunity to go to college. I’m glad! It’s hard work, but I’m doing it." Irene had taken about thirty on-line credits at a large four-year university immediately after the being laid off. Once the company told Irene that she would qualify for TAA benefits, she was "ecstatic," and she investigated the TAA educational benefits. The four-year university where she was taking courses was not an approved training venue for TAA participants because TAA benefits supply funds for two-year college degrees.

With the opportunities through the TAA program, all participants told me that they wanted to finish their degrees and land good jobs. As a result, I found that their educational objectives remained the same throughout the time they worked on their

course work because all participants told me that the reason for beginning college was to obtain college degrees. These participants had high hopes of landing new opportunities as a result of their new college degrees. Edward told me what he expected from the degree. He said,

Getting the degree is important so I can find a job that allows me to utilize my skills. It will allow me to have more choices as far as getting people to actually interview me to find out that I'm actually the person they want to hire.

Greg said, "I want to do this [obtain a college degree] for myself, but I also want to do it to better my position in the workforce. Irene explained that "someday this is all going to be worth it," and with her experience and the degree she was working on at the technical college, she would get a better job. Barry said, "I thought that if I got a degree I could get a better job and better pay." Although the term *better job* or the implication of a better job surfaced during the interviews, I did not ask them to define what better job meant to them because that notion did not surface until I was analyzing the data.

However, I was surprised to find that all participants communicated something to me that I interpreted as "fairy tale endings," something that was not likely to happen. Once they completed their degrees, (participants were working on their second year for their associates' degrees), all participants had high hopes of getting better jobs as a result of their education. Daneen explained, "I'm just looking forward to graduating and finding a job. That's really what I want . . . to graduate from college and get a good job instead of getting a low paying job." She emphasized the importance about some of the traditional students in her classes should get a good education when they are young so

that they don't have to take a job and lose it later in life and be forced to seek training in order to get a better job.

Florence told me that in 2003 she started working on a computer programming degree at a technical college and dropped out. Since the TAA provided an opportunity to attend college, Florence told me, "I've been on the Dean's list every semester. She also stressed, "My goal has stayed the same. Get out and find a job that pays decent that I can actually enjoy that I don't get bored of, because that was another problem with working in a factory." Irene told me, "I knew once I went back [to college] I wanted to make the commitment that I was going to end up with my Bachelor's [degree], and I'm not settling for anything less."

Even though six participants had some college experiences before they lost their jobs, I was surprised because I viewed factory workers as having limited educational experiences. Except for Florence who was the youngest, the five participants had been away from education for several years because of the number of years they were employed. The Employment and Training Administration (2011) made a generalization when they reported TAA participants as not having post-secondary degrees. This was a contradiction because six participants in this study had accumulated previous college credits.

## **Theme 2: Supportive Environments**

A second theme that emerged is that in order for TAA participants to be successful and gain opportunities from the TAA program, they had to have some kind of support system. Because all participants communicated that they wanted to eventually graduate, each emphasized the importance of having a support system in order to be

successful in the educational environment. Even though their financial obligations for course work were funded by the federal government's TAA program, emotional and intellectual support helped these students adjust to the college environment.

Nine of the eleven talked about support from the college environment. For example, Joe told me the college where he was completing his degree invited TAA participants to come for orientation: "They do a good job of orienting the TAA students and making help available to them." He was also pleased with the procedures for scheduling because he told me, "Scheduling courses seems to be effortless." Henry used positive words when talking about the technical college: "excellent tutoring," "compassionate instructors," and "support from TAA advisor and academic advisor." Edward commented about the faculty at this technical college:

That is the one thing about this campus. . . . There are far more professors/instructors here who take a very personal approach to the students, whether they are eighteen, thirty, or fifty plus. Something which I understand from my kids and from the other students from other educational institutions, they don't get that same kind of hands on approach to personalized instruction.

Daneen told me that her professor encourage her to use the tutoring center and join Project Success, a program that provides tips for being successful in the classroom. She also told me about one of her instructors: "She [her professor] was like a mentor to me." When Abby attended open house at the institution, she told me that she found the college environment to be more helpful than she had expected. One instructor at open house told her, "If I have any problems, you come and see me, and I will take care of it."

She was also comforted when he told her: "We have backup – tutoring, if you need help, we will see that you get it." Abby smiled when she told me that was an "eye-opener" for her. Abby further explained, "The support group really surprised me because I thought that when you go to college, you have to get it yourself. And if you don't get it, then you don't get it. That there was no backup." Barry told me that he thought that college would be like high school, and he hated the thought of it. But he found that the developmental classes helped him gain the skills and confidence to be successful in the classroom.

Barry said that he benefitted from support of instructors by going to the professor's office and by using the tutoring center: "I'll use the tutoring center. That's what they're there for. I signed myself up for Project Success my first semester because any help I can get, I'll take." Joe said, "That's one of the things I have heard [from other students] is about the support here at [the technical college]." He told me that he was not surprised by the supportive college environment because students consistently talked about college support as part of their experiences. He said, "Some people thought they were going to be here floundering when they didn't understand something, and they were sort of impressed by the whole system, and the way it works here. . . . There is just a great support network here [at the college]."

Research confirmed that support systems and academic advising are factors that enhance student success rate (Boudreau & Kromrey, 1994; Coll & Draves, 2009; O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009). In this study, I found that participants encountered positive results associated with advising and college support staff. Some participants were surprised to find the educational institution supportive in that, the college support system

provided essential components especially to the five participants who had no prior college experience. The others (except for Florence who was the youngest and the only one in her 20's) had many years pass since they attended college. Kletzer and Fairlie (2003) confirmed that older displaced workers are more at risk than the younger displaced workers. This finding appeared to be consistent with this study because eight participants' ages ranged between 44 and 58, possibly making them more at risk for finding jobs after their training.

Three participants relied on their grades as motivational factors to keep them striving toward the completion of the degrees. Barry told me, "when I got out of high school, I said that I would never step foot into a classroom again" because he disliked school. But Barry told me that when he started to take college classes, his grades were a motivating factor to keep him striving toward the degree: "I was always worried about getting a low grade and anything below a B is low. If you are gonna do something, you should do it right." When I asked him how he was able to view college differently than high school, he responded that his grades provided emotional and intellectual support because when he received his grades for the first semester, "It was like, I can't believe the grades I got." Because of his success with his first semester, his attitude toward school changed when he saw himself competent and successful. As a result, his motivation increased.

Abby told me that "I had four Bs and one C last semester. Before that, three As and two Bs. This was surprising." She told me that she knew that being in college was where she belonged when she told me, "This is where I belong if my grades are as high as they are. It was pretty cool being successful. . . . It is like whoa. I guess I can learn at

this age.” Kathy said, "My grades were a constant motivator because I constantly kept track of my grades during the semester." Her good grades made her feel good about her accomplishments.

Snow, Jackson, and Corno (1996) indicated that learning and achievement involves cognitive, affective, and conative attributes. Snow and Jackson (1993; 1997) emphasized that affective consists of temperament and emotion; conation consists of motivation and volition; and cognition consists of producing knowledge and skills. As a result, it seemed that being successful in college involved more than the cognitive part of learning knowledge and acquiring skills. As a result, it appeared that grades provided some emotional positive support.

In addition to the college's supportive environment and grades, nine participants told me that they received support from family members. Because of enrolling in higher education, their families were impacted by their new college situations. Edward, Greg, and Barry indicated that they worked as a team with their spouses. Even though Abby did not use the words team support as they did, she had support from her mother, sisters, and husband. In fact, she told me, "I have the support from my husband. When I got frustrated and wanted to quit, my husband said, 'You are not going to quit; you can succeed.' He tells me every day you can do it." Barry told me that his daughter was proud of him for taking on an academic challenge. Greg told me that he and his wife talked about team work: "It's a two horse team, and when only one horse is pulling, then you tend to go in circles as opposed to moving ahead. I like to think that I'm participating as part of the team."

Unlike the other participants, Kathy stated that she did not have much family support. Throughout the interview, issues related to her family kept surfacing. She was on her third marriage and did not have emotional support from her current husband because he bought a pet store and worked seven days a week from 8:30 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Kathy told me, "I did not want my husband to buy the pet store in the first place." This situation added more tension to their relationship because she told me they argue more often than before he bought the store. She told me she had one child from the first marriage, two children from the second marriage, and a step-daughter from the third marriage: "I take care of home responsibilities; I transport my kids to school activities, school sports, and other activities." Besides taking care of three children, "I have four dogs and a large home." She also told me that she took care of an ex-mother-in-law (from the second marriage). This mother-in-law moved in with her family during a final exam week because she was being treated for cancer with radiation and chemotherapy. Once she explained her home dynamics, I thought that if she was not laughing as she told me things that she would be crying from her overwhelming circumstances. From this, I suspected that she had quite a stressful life in addition to course work and college responsibilities.

### **Theme 3: Traveling in the Dark**

The third theme, Traveling in the Dark, emerged from the fact that these workers were forced into unfamiliar situations. TAA participants had new responsibilities and had to learning new skills, especially computer/technological skills. They seemed to be traveling in the dark and figuring out what to do as they encountered their new ways of life.

As the eleven TAA participants ventured into the academic setting, they had to figure out how to handle and balance responsibilities. Daneen said, "I own my own home. I help my mom and dad out." She told me that her parents live next to her; her dad is eighty years old and can't talk because he had a stroke. Her mom is seventy-nine years old and has double vision. She indicated that she had to figure how to handle other responsibilities while attending college. She emphasized, "It's hard going to school and taking care of my parents. That's the point where I am in my life, and it's tough." Greg told me that he lived an hour away from the training site: "That's tough [because] it makes your day two hours shorter than everybody else's, and then you try to juggle a family and responsibilities, and it makes it a full day. It is overwhelming at times."

Irene told me that her fiancé actually got laid off before her and completed a training program. While he was in training, she took care of the cooking, cleaning, and launderings. But after her job ended, she explained that they shared domestic responsibilities. At the time of this interview, she said that she was handling most of the home responsibility and her college responsibilities because he was working eighty to ninety hours per week. She also expressed that their lives became a bit more complicated because they have a baby now. She said, "He's working those hours so I can go to school. So I take care of the house, and I go to school, and I take care of the baby and those things." She explained that she has to get up early in the morning and use her time efficiently. In spite all these responsibilities, she only had one complaint: "Parking is my only frustration." Finding a parking place on campus is frustrating because she tries to be efficient and parking takes extra time from her schedule.

The TAA participants also had to either directly or indirectly set some goals. It appeared that Abby knew where she wanted to go. She just did not know exactly how to get there. For example, when I asked Abby about setting goals, she told me that one of her goals was to gain the knowledge from her college courses so that she could set up her own animal grooming business. She saw the elderly and handicapped as people who benefited from the company of animals but had limited transportation. She emphasized that she wanted to "to set up a business where I can go to people's homes, especially the elderly and handicapped to groom their animals. . . . That is one of my heart's desire is to help the elderly." When I asked Barry about goals, he simply said, "Pass the courses and get the degree." Barry acknowledged that if someone told him twenty years ago that he would be attending college, "I would have told them they was nuts because I hated school, but this is not so bad. I am going now because I want to, not because I have to." Barry also expressed, "I would be up until 11:30 [p.m.], 12 [midnight] doing homework." He told me he was depressed about this because he usually went to bed between 9:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., but he still had to get up at 5:30 a.m., but eventually he adjusted to it.

Irene stated that she had a job since she was 15: "It was odd, and I felt out of place. . . . After a couple of weeks, I started getting stuff around . . . for the fall semester." Irene portrayed a positive attitude when she told me that her work skills and her new educational skills were things that could be "placed in her portfolio." She said that she would pack her skills and "someday this is all going to be worth it." She did not get aggravated with the lay-off situation. On the other hand, she reported that some

people that she worked were really stressed about their jobs ending. She said, "It didn't bother me."

One particular course that surfaced during the interviews was mathematics. On one hand, I found that of the eleven participants, four had concerns about their mathematics classes. Abby indicated that she had been out of school for thirty-eight years and knew that she was going to have trouble with mathematics because her school did not have algebra in the program when she went to high school. Barry expressed that mathematics was complicated for him. He had to take three developmental mathematics courses and had to retake one that he failed. Kathy told me that when she took a mathematics class, "Math was horrible. I had to put lots of time into it." But her hard work paid off because she did well in the course. When Irene first began taking college courses, she added that she did not like mathematics. She approached the mathematics challenge with a positive attitude:

I went in with the mindset that whatever this instructor tells me to do, I'm going to do. If she tells me I have to do homework every night, then I'm going to do the homework every night. I did it. I got an A in the class. Actually, I kind of found a new love for math; it kind of changed my outlook on it. She was a good instructor. I followed her instructions, and I did everything she told me to do.

On the other hand, seven of the participants did not have concerns about their mathematics classes. As a result, these were exceptions to the theme, *Traveling in the Dark*. Curt indicated that he had a strong mathematics background and thirty-three years of work experience involved with mathematics. As a result, he did not have to take any

mathematics courses. Daneen said, "I never knew I was good with math until I came to college. I found out I have a love for algebra." Florance earned a 90% on a mathematics placement test through CareerLink<sup>®</sup>. Greg did not have to take any mathematics courses because he chose to go for an Electrical Occupation certificate degree. Certificate programs do not require as much mathematics and English as associate degree programs. Even though Henry had been out of high school for over ten years, he started off with a pre-calculus trigonometry course and did not have problems with it. Joe indicated that he does so well with mathematics that he was asked to be a mathematics tutor.

Edward seemed to be an exception to the theme, *Traveling in the Dark* because he gave me the impression that he was good at everything. Earlier in his working career before the confectionary factory job as an industrial mechanic, Edward told me that he had worked as an investment funds broker which required various mathematical calculations.

Besides mathematics courses, other courses created challenges for some TAA students. Abby had some problems with certain exercises in her physical education classes, but her instructor worked with her after she went for an injection in her knee. Abby also had to deal with a personal issue based on her insecurities that stemmed back to the factory job. When she completed an assignment, she questioned herself about its quality:

Is it good enough? I think that it stems back to the factory job when you are damned if you do and damned if you don't. You can do a good job and still be told you are not good enough. And it still reflects on me. It is

a lot of negativity from the past that is still there that you have to overcome.

Abby noted that when she wrote papers, she never thought that they were good enough. She told me that it is really hard to overcome something that she lived with for many years. But she found that college was helping her become more confident with herself and her abilities.

Joe informed me, "It was a little scary and a little intimidating returning to college." His real fear was computers. He had to overcome challenges related to computers:

While I was working in the factory, all we did was data entry, and I never bothered to learn computers other than to do e-mail and that sort of thing. I couldn't do a spreadsheet. I could do a word document as long as it was already formatted and a simple letter.

Daneen had to spend extra time when she worked on the computer because her technological skills were weak:

I have never been very computer savvy so having to take a computer class . . . was a learning experience. It was a struggle. It took me a long time to learn the little tricks which has helped, but [I] still do not like computers.

Barry also had to figure out how to manage time. He told me that he had trouble figuring out how to complete all of his college work: "I have had to stay up at night and finish math so finding time to get all of these things done has been a struggle."

Greg had to figure out how to manage his time more effectively and become better organized. Greg told me,

We [he and his wife] have a lot of outside distractions. My son is finishing up his high school education and preparing for college so there's always a distraction tugging to divert my attention away from my college work. As a good parent, you try to be there for your kid. Part of being a good husband is supporting your wife, and she's going through a tough time with her mom because of Alzheimer's. . . . When she [his wife] comes home from a visit [with her mom] and needs someone to hold her hand because she's in tears over her mom's situation, what are you going to do? Math is going to wait because you're going sit there and talk to your wife. So you just kind of have to figure out how to juggle those types of things. . . . it's frustrating for me because you have your responsibilities as a parent, as a husband, as a student so you know, it's always a work in progress. . . . There's always just something where you have to juggle your time.

In reference to motivational factors, TAA participants were, in a sense, traveling in the dark, juggling multiple responsibilities. They were so motivated to move forward in the direction of their college degree that they overcame obstacles that they encountered. As they encountered obstacles, they had to come to terms with their situations and accept their circumstances in order to move in a successful direction.

#### **Theme 4: Coming to Terms and Accepting Situations**

The fourth theme, Coming to Terms and Accepting Situations, emerged from participants job loss and unemployment situation. Eventually, they had to accept their situations and decide what to do. Although the TAA participants had to accept the outcomes of their situations, the outcomes may or may not be what they anticipated. This theme provides some insight to the way that TAA participants thought about their unemployment situation and their new challenges as college students.

Barry told me that he felt a sense of accomplishment when he was struggling with mathematics or any challenging assignment when he successfully completed the task. He said, "And sometimes it makes me feel good to look back and figure out what I did wrong and redo it, and it comes out right." Barry told me that despite the trouble he was having with mathematics, he did enjoy going to classes, even mathematics class.

Florance emphasized that most people can't get a job with a year's worth of college because companies are looking for the diploma that indicates that they have actually done something to earn a degree: "At least if I do get out and I have to work a crap job, at least, I have my Bachelor's. I'll have the biggest degree or whatever you call it in my family." She knows that she may very well not get a good job, confirming the United States Department of Labor (2011) findings. Still she takes prided in her educational accomplishments. Florance told me that she talked to someone who graduated with the same degree that she was working on and discovered that this person could not find work in the local area. Although this person did not obtain a job in the local area, she told me that he was able to secure a job making \$50 [sic] per hour working for Sysco in South Carolina.

Even though Abby talked to others who had completed the TAA program in the past and obtained degrees, maintained high GPAs, and earned degrees, she found that they still can't find jobs related to their training because they do not have experience. Abby stressed that "some work at Sam's Club and Wal-Mart." Abby told me, "I have talked to people that went through the TAA program and got the degree and still can't find the job that they are trained for because they do not have experience. Even with high GPAs, they still do not have the jobs [in their field]." They could have obtained these jobs without additional education.

Abby said that this is discouraging, but she continued to strive to do her best in her courses. Even though Abby told me that she heard discouraging news about obtaining a job when she completes the program, it felt good to receive compliments from her family about her college successes. Her husband thinks that it is cool that she is attending college. With a smile on her face, Abby said, "Everybody that knows me is so proud of me." At first, her friends and sisters gave her the impression that college would be too difficult for her. When I asked her if she had surprised herself with her college success, she stated with emphasis and increase volume in her voice: "Oh yes! I have. I have surprised myself several times." As a result of her comments about her successes, I concluded that success and achievement were important to her, and that college was about more than obtaining jobs at the end of the program.

As a result, for people like Abby, education seemed to enhance their self-concept. Abby told me, "It was pretty cool being successful. . . . I know that I should be here [attending college] because of the grades that I am getting and the support system that I have here." Therefore, it appeared that despite the limits of obtaining jobs, TAA

participates were gaining self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-control over their circumstances.

Even though participants were forced into new situations, they seemed to be able to figure out how to survive into their second year of college because all participants were in their second of college courses.

### **Theme 5: Obstacles**

The study's findings helped explain what TAA participants did to keep going despite the obstacles they encountered. Although the obstacles appeared as things that stood in their way, the participants also were determined to conquer challenging situations that their displacement created.

One major obstacle that they had to overcome was being labeled as a *displaced worker*. When I asked participants about being displaced workers, I received a variety of responses. Interestingly, I had to inquire about their feeling associated with this label. No one brought up the idea of displaced worker until I asked the question during the interviews. After listening to their responses, I concluded that they wanted to block out the stigma associated with the label; six participants told me that the label was demeaning. For example, Greg said that he had "envision getting with a good company and retiring . . . with some perks" rather than ending up as a displaced worker. When Abby was first labeled a displaced worker, she told me that "it made me feel like I was not wanted because after twenty years, it was a slap in the face, and I was not good enough." Daneen said, "I felt like bottom of the barrel because I lost my job." The idea of being labeled a displaced worker really bothered Daneen because tears came to her eyes, and we had to stop the interview for a few minutes. Some research suggested that

women's depression increased when their jobs ended (Brand, Levy, & Gallo, 2008; Mandal & Roe, 2008).

Irene told me that "human resources called it a displaced worker. I call it a replaced worker." Barry told me that he simply understood the label describing workers whose jobs had been sent out of the country. However, Joe indicated that he was not offended by the term because he did not even remember being labeled. Edward, Kathy, Florance, and Greg gave little thought to the label. Seven from the group of eleven had to accept and resolve their issues related to the displaced worker label.

This theme provides some insight to the factors related to obstacles and what motivated them to keep going despite these obstacles. Despite the ambiguity surrounding the term *motivation*, factors related to motivation might hold some answers to help explain what keeps them going despite the obstacles that cross their paths. The following examples demonstrate motivation in action.

In order to stay motivated and overcome obstacles, TAA participants actually discovered other reasons for their investment of their time related to college courses. Even though all participants told me that their ultimate goals were to get better jobs, they found pleasure in their successes, accomplishments, and attainments. This is where conation fits into the situation. Conation is the attribute that sets the "internal engine" in motion that drives actions to learn, to do something, and to accomplishment something. Conation is fueled by emotions attached to the circumstances.

It appeared that once the TAA participants sampled feelings of accomplishments and pride in their work, they were motivated to keep striving toward their ultimate goal of the college degrees. For example, Kathy had earned an associate degree in 2000 in

Human Services from a technical college. The fact that she was older now, she told me what it was like for her to be in the college classroom with other traditional-aged students. Kathy said that when she started the first semester, she discovered that many of the students with whom she was in class had established a rapport with each other because they had been taking courses together for two years: "They all knew each other." Therefore, she felt "lost" in the sense of fitting in with the other students. And not only did they have established relationships, they also were traditional aged students, which added to her insecurities because she was in her late thirties. Although she felt challenged by situations related to traditional-aged students, she told me that her grades kept her motivated to continue to work on her degree. Kathy told me that her grades were a constant motivator because she constantly kept track of her grades during the semester. Further, she stated that her good grades made her feel good about her accomplishments and helped alleviate some her insecurities about the fitting in with traditional-aged students.

Being in college classrooms with mainly traditional-aged students created distractions. For example, Barry told me that the traditional students are not serious with their course work – they come to class late; they do not have their assignments completed on time; and their conversations before class begins is associated with their social life and not about the particular course or the particular class. Florance told me about a traditional student in one of her classes who rarely came to class: "I seen this kid in class three times during the semester." She told me that working in groups with traditional students really upset her: "It seems like I'm much older than people who are close to my age." She told me that she has a strong work ethic and likes to stay on top of her

assignments. I concluded from her comments that she found being in class with traditional students was a frustrating experience. Barry told me he was concerned about beginning college courses because traditional students would "make fun of me because I was old." He continued, "But there was a man three years older than me in my first class."

In order for Barry to move forward toward the degree, he had to take some developmental mathematics courses. He worked until he successfully completed all the developmental mathematics courses. Despite Barry's frustrations with mathematics and time management, he was so motivated to get the degree that he stayed up late at night to finish mathematics homework. Barry told me that he became frustrated when projects took longer than he thought they would: "I tried to stay up later to finish projects." Sometimes he stayed up late to figure out mathematics problems. This added to his frustration because he was getting irritable because he was not getting enough sleep, yet the degree seemed to keep him motivated. On the other hand, Barry told me that he received good grades in courses such as Electricity for the Trades, Direct Current Fundamentals, and Alternating Current Fundamentals because he understood what was going on in these classes. Barry said that his job as a maintenance person had given him some of essential components related to electricity because he had to repair electrical problems on the job. Central to Barry's situation with mathematics, the achievement goal theory helped explained his determination to conquer mathematics through the mastery-approach mode of the 2 X 2 achievement goal theory because he focused on learning and understanding the material (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Because he was so focused on the degree, he kept working until he successfully accomplished tasks. Individuals with a

mastery-approach goal orientation focus on mastering, learning, and understanding. As challenging as his mathematics situation became, he did not appear to fit into the 2 X 2 mastery-avoidance goal orientation which labels individuals who avoid misunderstandings, not learning, and not mastering a task (Elliot & McGregor, 2001).

Joe's obstacles were embedded in confidence about himself about how he was going to learn since he had been away from school for such a long time. He worried about his brain functioning the way it used to. Could he still be able to learn? Joe told me that his real fear was over learning computer skills, "because while I was working in the factory, all we did was data entry, and I never bothered to learn computers other than to do e-mail and that sort of thing." Curt told me that he lived and breathed textbooks because he was not a fast reader. "Just to get back into things. It was difficult because of the amount of time necessary to do well."

Even though six participants had prior college educational experiences, all participants told me that they were nervous about entering the college way of life as adult students. Daneen told me that she looked at her first day of classes with "anxious anticipation – I really looked forward to it." She explained to me that she felt like a ninth or sixth grader waiting to go to another school – another step in life. For her first day of classes, she told me that she got up at 5:00 a.m. and was ready for a great day. Throughout the interview, I could not help but to notice her positive outlook on life. It was refreshing to interview her. I suspected that she would be able to overcome obstacles because of her confidence in her ability to achieve her goals.

Once TAA participants decided on approved institutions and educational programs, they were not allowed to change their majors. Not all programs of study at this

technical college were available to the TAA clients. The Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC), the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for the Central Pennsylvania Region, only approves majors that lead to occupations that have shown a projected job growth for the future (Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation, n.d.). After their program of study had been approved, administrators at the technical college set up a schedule for them based on their majors. TAA students receive a written overview of the expectations for the degree with the courses and semesters mapped out for them (Appendix G). After they selected and accepted their programs of study, the TAA office at the technical college sends them their schedules at the beginning of each semester indicating the courses, times, dates, and locations. Barry explained, "They send me a schedule through e-mail – I can't pick; it is set up for me."

Joe was concerned about criteria that were involved with obtaining a license for surveying: "And even after you get the degree, you don't have a license to practice surveying. "It's five years of apprenticeship . . . even after you get the degree. You don't just come out and get your license. You have to work with a company or a certified surveyor." As a group, they had to figure out what was under their control and what they could not control.

Central to understanding motivation and why people behave as they do can be understood through the findings of Corno and Kanfer (1993) and Swezey and Meltzer (1994). They argued that motivation can only be explored by explaining inferences associated with behavior. Although I did not observe their behaviors, I had to understand their behaviors through what the participants told me about how they worked through

situations. I had to interpret their words from my frame of reference and make inferences about their behavior. The ways for me to understand motivation was by exploring attributes associated with motivation: what they did to handle the obstacles that they encountered. Yet Wlodkowski (2008) maintained that "motivation is basic to our survival" (p. 2) and that human behavior directs energy toward accomplishing goals. But it is not that simple.

Understanding the complexity of making meaning related to motivation from the data is really about making conclusions about what participants told me. For example, stay on top of assignments, stay up late at night to finish assignments and projects, get good grades, hard work paid off, learn how to write better, and improve mathematics skills are ways that participants communicated to me that they wanted to obtain educational goals which would eventually lead to degrees. Goals were the main facet of the 2 X 2 motivational goal theory. Elliot and McGregor (2001) focused on two types of mastery goals and two types of performance goals when they constructed the 2 X 2 model of achievement motivation. Although the mastery goal theory partially explains the behavior to master goals in order to move forward with their degrees, it had not been utilized with qualitative research. It was mainly used as questionnaires to explain motivation.

### **Theme 6: Gender Issues**

I found characteristics throughout the interviews that were related to gender issues: traditional duties that females carry out and traditional duties that males carry out. Only one of the five females held a supervisory position, and four of the six males held supervisory positions.

Irene was the only female who I interviewed that had any position of authority. She experienced demeaning comments from males in the department that she supervised. Irene communicated to me that she stood her ground as a supervisor in a male dominated environment. On one hand, she also told me that she was promoted based on her experience and skill level so that she did not experience issues or biases related to males being promoted, "My immediate supervisor was not biased about it at all." Her immediate supervisor and the ones who promoted her were also males. On the other hand, Irene told me, "Once I went into the paint department, I was the only girl; they were all guys with old school thinking that women shouldn't be in the paint shop." I asked her what happened when she went into her new position. She told me that the men actually said to her:

'You don't belong in here because you're female.' They told me that right up front. They're blunt boys and had no bones about it. So it wasn't like 'Welcome to our department.' It was rather, 'You don't belong here. . . . How long are you going to last?'

Reskin and Padavic's (1988) study indicated that male workers see women as possible threats to their jobs and their identities. Male supervisors tended to hold with traditional cultural values of where women should be in the work place. Reskin and Padavic's study indicated that women are usually assigned to typical female duties. However, Irene refused to endure this treatment, and I asked her how she handled this:

I just kind of went in and stood my ground, and said this is how it's going to be, and if you boys don't like it, then too bad. This is my job. This is what I'm doing. You do your job; I'll do mine. The first month or two

was a little rough. They really tried to get under my skin and see how long it would take me to bid out of the department.

Edward told me that from his observations of working with females that they can handle repeating a task over and over better than male workers: "Throughout this country, women are more often employed in repetitive jobs because they have greater dexterity skills and able to maintain concentration better than a man is. . . . A man has a tendency to become rather fumble fingered after forty or fifty minutes; whereas, a woman can do that on average seven hours a day." Other than his speculation of observations of female workers, he did not have any solid evidence about this

I also found that women handled more of the household responsibilities than the men did. For example, Kathy told me that she handled the household responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, and child care because her husband worked from nine o'clock a.m. to eight o'clock p.m. When I asked Abby about home responsibilities and who does the cleaning, washing, cooking, she laughed when she told me, "That does not change. If anyone in the family needs me, I am still have to be there for them." When I asked Florance, the youngest participant, about how housework was handled between her and her boyfriend, she told me, "Right now I probably do 90% because it is summer, and he is working, but during college, I do about 75% and he helps with the rest. He's pretty good about it. If I say hey, 'Will you help me?' He will come help me."

When I asked Barry about changes in his relationship at home and his wife's reaction to college, Barry told me that he and his wife own rental properties so, "We are always remodeling something or repairing something. And working on rental properties – repairing stuff. Since I have been attending college, not a whole lot of that has been

done.” Barry said, “Women don’t understand that – no offence. They get kinda testy over it when you are not doing all the stuff around the house you should.” When I asked Barry how his wife handled this, he told me, “She usually complains.” His response to her complaining, “I ask her if she wants me to fail at college or go do that. If it is something that has to be done, then I do it. But if it is something that she just wants done, I kinda put that off. I do what is necessary.”

Abby told me, “My husband gets up at 4:30 in the morning. Of course, I get up with him.” From her comment, I concluded that she thought of a wife's duty was to assist her husband in the morning. When I asked Abby about the household duties, she told me,

He helps me hang out the clothes; he helps me clean up messes. But there are times when he can make a heck of a mess because we are doing the outside of our house. Sometimes he helps out a lot and sometimes he doesn't. I usually like my house being clean.

Now, because of the demands of course work, she told me, “When I get to it, I get to it.”

Greg told me that “a lot more has been dumped on her [his wife]. I still help out when I can, when I’m asked, and when I have the time. [But] a lot more [household duties] have been dumped in her lap because I just don’t have enough time with all my school work.”

According to Lips (2009), men and women are conditioned by societal pressures to act differently in leadership roles. Leadership in industry has mainly been dominated by men. Once a female is put into a leadership position, social pressures come into play when women try to be powerful. Social structures have forced females to lead with

compassion. In Lips' (2009) views on woman in leadership, "A woman leader stimulates a different reaction than a male leader because of learned expectations, shaped and supported by the surrounding social structure, that invalidate and undercut women's attempts to be effective, influential, powerful." Caligiuri and Tung (1999) found that American women were less likely to hold management positions in the corporate world because they tend to have more nurturing qualities and communicate indirectly. Even though Lips (2009) and Caligiuri and Tung (1999) found that societal pressures have forced women to lead with compassion, Irene did not fall into that mold because she soared above the negative comments that the male workers made to her as they tried to get her to back down from the job that should have been held by a male. However, a contradiction did surface. Irene told me, ironically, even though the men in the paint department were eager for her to leave, she received e-mails from them after her employment terminated because they did not where to find things, how to do things, or how to handle things.

I found that males held more supervisory positions than females. Four males held supervisory positions and the two other males experienced routine factory work. Unlike the participants in the group who had routine factory line jobs, Curt had multiple responsibilities throughout his years of employment. He learned things about leadership and supervision in his youth, "I've always liked supervision. When I was a teenager, I was involved in civil air patrol, which was an auxiliary of the U. S. Air Force." He told me when he first started at the plant, he was an assistant supervisor. After that, he worked in a laboratory, testing the quality of raw materials coming into the plant. After that, he informed me, "I took over the lab, and then I also did some quality control

functions. And that would have been over the first thirteen years that I was there." Curt was a purchasing manager and supervised twenty-five employees. Curt explained, "Anything that came into the company was my responsibility. And being in charge of the warehouse, everything going out was my responsibility. Between the plant manager and I, we were in charge of what was going on in production." Henry was a group leader for his department in a unionized shop. Henry expressed, "I actually got paid above the max union scale because I had responsibilities that were considered salary responsibilities in addition to what I had to do for work." He told me that there was not a foreman on his shift so he was asked by the plant manager to take care of management and supervisory.

Greg told me, "I had fifteen years there. I worked myself up in to a cell coordinator. I had about ten to twelve guys working in the cell [who I supervised]." Once he was promoted, he worked with "engineering, sales, and various levels of management." This gave him a challenge to focus on and added some variety to his working days. During the interview, Greg emphasized that as a leader of a group of men, he would not ask them to do something that he was not willing to do: "I think that's a good thought to always keep back in your head when you're in a position of authority."

When I asked Barry about his job responsibilities, he told me that he was a supervisor. Yet he also stated, "I was in charge of building maintenance." However, from further conversations with Barry, he said, "Today I could be working on light bulbs and tomorrow working on AC [air conditioning] units. Every day was different depending on what happened." This statement led me to believe that he may have been given the title of a supervisor, but he really was only a maintenance person. He did not talk about leading or supervising other employees.

Even though Edward did not have supervisory title, his skills were highly represented and respected in the corporate world. Edward expressed his importance on the job when he stated, "I am one of the few recognized experts in W&D Modules. It's a specialty type of machine that's \$3 million dollars' worth of machinery . . . and there's very few people here in the United States that actually know these things, and I pretty much can take one apart and put it back together blindfolded."

### **Conclusions**

The themes that emerged represent the struggles and obstacles that TAA participants had to overcome. These participants had little occasions to express their concerns and celebrate their accomplishments beyond their family context. When given the opportunity to communicate their successes and challenges, these participants attempted to figure out how to turn their educational experiences and circumstances into successful ways of obtain college degrees. The literature related to the TAA program provided a conceptual understanding of the inherent idiosyncrasies associated with the policies and procedures of the federal program that they had to follow. Even though motivation incorporates other human traits, a key factor that stood out was their determination to overcome the obstacles to continue in their programs.

## **Chapter 5: RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS, CONTEXTUAL REALITY, AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

### **Introduction**

Throughout history motivation, in one form or another, has been thought of as important. In the mid 1800's Alexander Graham Bell stated, "What this power is I cannot say; all I know is that it exists, and it becomes available only when a man is in that state of mind in which he knows exactly what he wants and is fully determined not to quit until he finds it" (Alexander Graham Bell Quotes, 2012). Although Bell was not referring to the drive that TAA participants seemed to have, his words demonstrate the power associated with human drive and desire. As a result, conclusions from this study may provide a better understanding of successful TAA participants. Further research could provide improved ways for understand the complexities of motivation associated with TAA participants.

### **Looking Back at the Literature**

When I began my literature search into motivation, I thought that I would be able to find a straightforward way of considering how and why motivation interplays in the lives of people. Unfortunately, the more I searched the more complex I found the topic to be. In popular literature, motivation is used as a term that appears as an everyday word that is uncomplicated to understand. However, in the theoretical and empirical literature, motivation becomes intertwined with other human elements and underneath this complicated term lays factors related to cognition, affection, and conation.

This study shed some light related to motivation based on the theoretical framework established by Elliot and McGregor (2001). The four categories in the 2 X 2 model of achievement motivation proved to be more flexibility than dividing questionnaire results into either mastery-goals or performance-goals. However, the scale was still confining because of characterizing educational tasks into four categories is still limiting.

I found that TAA participants' ways of dealing with success may be somewhat understood by looking at Elliot's (1999) mastery-approach goal which explains one's desire to demonstrate competence and learn the material. The 2 X 2 model of achievement motivation has been used with empirical research of achievement motivation. Elliot and McGregor's (2001) 2 X 2 model of achievement motivation has mainly been tested using forced-choice questionnaires by using a seven-point Likert-scale items such as "not at all true of me"; "strongly disagree"; "strongly agree"; "very true of me" and asking students (high school and college) to respond to such questions as: "It is important for me to do better than other students." "I worry that I may not learn all that I possibly could in this class." "I want to learn as much as possible from this class." "I just want to avoid doing poorly in this class" (Elliot & McGregor, 2001, p. 502).

Drawing upon the theoretical descriptors of Elliot and McGregor's (2001) mastery approach of the 2 X 2 model, participants in this study simply wanted to demonstrate competence in order to complete the degrees. They did not mention anything about the value of learning – only to accomplish the task in the course and move forward to their goals of college degrees. The performance-approach goal is presented in the literature as a way to compete with others and come out on top. It is a way to compare one's

performance to another's performance. However, throughout the interviews in my study, participants did not disclose anything about doing better than others. They simply wanted to do well and move forward with their lives. Also, TAA participants did not communicate anything about avoiding tasks because of looking incompetent in comparison to others, another difference from the 2 X 2 model. Perhaps, maturity had given them a perspective on life that can only be realized by life experiences.

Although I did not use a forced-choice questionnaire with the TAA participants, I was able to gather information about how they stayed motivated and what they did to overcome obstacles. I had to infer from their words filtered through my perceptions as I interpreted what I thought to be elements of motivation. I did not try to categorize participants into similar and different categories. I interviewed eleven participants from a particular location in Pennsylvania to capture a group picture of their experiences from job displacement to their second year of college. I can conclude that the eleven participants will most likely successfully finish their college degrees because they told me that they wanted to achieve degrees. As a result, keeping their eyes on the culmination of degrees appeared to keep them motivated to continue with their course work because all participants told me that they wanted to eventually attain their college degrees and profit from "good jobs." It appeared that the "want to" in people actually gave insight into motivation. When individuals want something, they are willing to complete the tasks related to their goals. For example, a short term goal would be to learn mathematics and pass the course as a task related to the goal of obtaining a college degree.

The only place in the literature that seemed to relate to the idea of the “want to” was Helm’s (2001) discussion on the “will.” He emphasized that a connection exists between decisions and actions. When working toward goals, it seemed important that people take actions in order to accomplish these goals. We might cognitively think about the path we want to accomplish, but if we do not put thoughts in to action, we will not accomplish things. Helm (2001) also emphasized that emotions complicate situations. Emotions compound how we feel about doing certain tasks. Therefore, if we do not like a task, there could be a tendency to avoid the activity.

Human characteristics are multi-faceted that drawing firm conclusions related to motivation is complicated. Even though motivation was the interpretation of their reported situations, the statement made by Vivina Gussin Paley reflects my understanding of motivation. She stated that motivation can be summarized in this way: "None of us are to be found in sets of tasks or lists of attributes; we can be known only in the unfolding of our unique stories with the context of everyday events" (cited in Wlodowski, 2008, p. 1).

Drawing on the findings of (Corno, 2004; Hilgard, 1980; Mayer, Chabot, & Carlsmith, 1997; O'Neil & Drillings, 1994; Snow & Farr, 1987; Snow & Jackson, 1997; Swezey & Meltzer, 1994), characteristics of cognitive, affective, and conative factors are related to the achievement motivation theory that impact human behavior. These items [cognition, affection, and conation] are intertwined, interactive elements that work together in a complex, dynamic process that can be better understood, although challenging to interpret, by qualitative research rather than compartmentalizing human characteristics into sets of categories. However, conclusions can only be made by their perceptions of their achievements and my interpretations of their reported actions.

When theorists (Snow, Jackson, & Corn, 1996; Snow & Jackson 1993, 1997) discussed the three items – cognition, affection, and conation, TAA participants had to acquire cognitive skills; their emotional circumstances were contingent on the affective outlook; and their desires and motivations were fueled the conative aspects – the part that actually turns cognition into action to accomplish things. There are no simple ways to separate these interacting elements. One builds upon another while one impacts the other, and so on.

All of the TAA participants in this study appeared to believe that education was the answer to better jobs. It seemed to me that they saw college as a kind of “magical wand” for fairy tale endings – that something wonderful was going to happen to them because they would have the piece of paper that indicated they earned degrees. However, it is much more complex than magical thinking. Evidence from approximately ten years of research indicated that it is important for displaced workers to be trained because their jobs have been eliminated, and they will not be called back (Auto, Katz, & Krueger, 1998; Baicker & Rehavi, 2004; Clark, 2007; Fallick, 1996, Huitt, 1999; Marcal, 2001; Robinson, 2002). Even though some research does suggest that a strong connection between education and job security (National Commission of Adult Literacy, 2008), the research on earnings after completing TAA training programs showed some dismal results related to earnings (Decker & Corson, 1995; Department of Labor, 2011; Fallick, 1996; Marcal, 2001). Perhaps, the TAA program is important in providing assistance for living expenses and educational benefits in order to instill a sense of worth because many displaced workers are in their 40s and 50s. The program may quite likely provide some stability to help alleviate the shock of starting over later in life.

At the end of the completed TAA training programs, participants would not be “setting the world on fire” with fairy tale endings. The research confirmed that displaced workers earn less money than at the jobs where they had been displaced. Since the displacement is permanent, TAA participants are forced into situations where they must gain skills to obtain a lower paying job than the job from which they were displaced (Couch, 1997; Decker & Corson, 1995; Fallick, 1996). Annual average earnings for TAA participants for the third and fourth quarters of reemployment for the fiscal year 2010 in the U.S. was \$29,392.42 and the average for Pennsylvania was \$30,077.58 (Employment and Training Administration, 2011: updated April 25, 2011). According to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Pennsylvania’s minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, effective July 24, 2009 for 40 hours of work (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2011) calculates to gross weekly wages of \$290 which comes to gross annual wages of \$15,080. As a result of training, TAA participants are on the average able to make only about twice as much as the 2009 minimum wage. Edward indicated that he was making approximately \$56,000 when his job ended. That is \$26,000 more than the \$30,000 that the average Pennsylvania TAA worker made after the TAA training. Florance indicated that in her union job she would be maxed out around \$16 per hour, which calculated as gross annual wages of \$33,280. Florance was making approximately \$3,000 more at the job where she became unemployed than the average for Pennsylvania workers after going through the TAA training.

This study also found inconsistencies in the federal government's reporting of data. This study shed some light on Lafer's (2002) investigation that classified advertisements were the evidence that the government used to speculate that the job

situation in America was due to lack of training. If people were trained to do jobs, the unemployment situation would be alleviated. The government did not use empirical evidence to determine the differences between jobs needed and jobs available (Lafer, 2002). Unfortunately, policy makers without concrete data appear to agree that training is the answer to the unemployment and poverty threshold (Lafer, 2002; National Commission on Adult Literacy, 2008; Spencer & Kiel, 2003). Even though the demand for jobs exceeded the availability of jobs was five to one (Lafer, 2002, p. 3), the consensus among lawmakers was that training is the key to solving the poverty levels in the U. S. Rather than gather evidence for the job ratio, the federal employment policy has used the help-wanted advertisements in newspapers to determine that there are jobs available and that people are not qualified to fill them.

However, this is only part of the story. As a result, this has been an underlying assumption during the Reagan and Bush administrations: In twenty years, the government has spent more than "\$85 billion on job training" (Lafer, 2002, p. 19) despite a lack of evidence. As a result, \$85 billion has been spent on a program that is not successfully addressing a major problem in the United States; we are only talking about twenty years of spending. The TAA program was reassessed in 2011 and will continue into 2013. It also appears to appeal to the general population that programs like this are helping the "American People." As discussed further below, the federal government funding training programs might be better understood as stop-gap welfare programs that at least get some money into the hands of the unemployed.

On the other hand, Spence and Kiel (2003) argued that the federal government funded programs "have failed to keep pace with this increasing demand for skilled

workers" (p. 1) because of budget cuts. They also indicated that government has not systematically tracked the TAA program and other federally-funded programs. The inconsistency of reporting and tracking makes it quite challenging to piece the puzzle together. It is as though some pieces of the puzzle are missing, so I concluded that the whole puzzle will continue to have holes that data siphons and will most likely be lost in the ambiguous pile located at wonderland. Perhaps the federal government could use a funnel to catch and decipher the missing pieces and place them into the correct puzzles in the applicable programs. And again, the only way to resolve this would be with the magic wand. From this finding, I concluded that the complexities associated with jobs, skills, economic factors, and human factors were complicated to sort out. Depending on these factors, the federal programs may provide essential elements for success in the job market for some participants, but for others, the programs may only provide a brief insurance package to keep displaced workers doing something.

When I reviewed the literature related to experiences with education and retraining programs, I found that the classroom settings at this institution were mainly traditional students in classrooms with a mixture of traditional lecture instruction combined with hands-on learning. From Belzer's (2004) study, nontraditional students actually expected classroom instruction to resemble the instruction as when they were in high school. Even though the research points toward an increase in the number of nontraditional students seeking skill development and college degrees, many classes at this institution were filled with traditional-aged students. Although Belzer's finding emphasized instructional aspect in the classroom, the participants in this study were not concerned with the instructional methods. In fact, they commented about the supportive

environment at this institution. Following the research related to Jacobson, Lalonde, and Sullivan (2005), older displaced workers have the capacity to grow intellectually when they voluntarily enrolled in training programs. All participants made the decision to enroll in college rather than search for jobs. As a result of their successful accomplishments with college courses, they moved into their second year of college.

### **Motivation – A Concept in Disguise**

Understanding aspects related to motivations and behaviors have been under investigation since psychologists began looking at the impact of a person's actions related to voluntary, intentional behavior. Motivation has multiple meanings depending on the research, the theorist, and the study because of the inconsistencies related to different objectives that were used to make conclusions about motivation. One of the first psychologists to address motivation goes as far back as William James (1890) who discussed the relevance of voluntary behaviors as intended actions that are controlled by individual (quoted in Hershberger, 1989). In 1904, psychology began using the word motivation (*Online Etymology Dictionary*).

Even though drawbacks have been associated with Elliot and McGregor (2001) 2 X 2 framework, this theory has added to the extensive literature on motivation as a way to understand some of ambiguity surrounding motivation. Although limited in scope, the revised 2 X 2 framework that included the 2 (mastery vs. performance) x 2 (approach vs. avoidance) was not sufficient to understanding issues related to motivation. It did provide partial ways of categorizing goals into four imperfect different components. In this case, the framework had a narrow focus and was not sufficient to explain what kept TAA participants working toward their goals. Motivation's complexities are subjected to

interpretation. Although motivation remains an enigma that seems to have magical powers that explains how people accomplish tasks, overcome obstacles, and keep going in the agony of defeat, this really comes down to the action of the individuals and what they do to increase their skill levels and knowledge bases.

It seems that motivational labels and/or levels show how individuals resolve to attain higher levels of achievement. I concluded that the motivation label is really understood by what is accomplished by individuals through their actions. It is an outcome-based situation. But in reality, it is not that simple. Motivation is a multi-faceted concept that is subjected to interpretation of the research. One researcher might explain motivation in certain terms and another researcher might explain motivation related to his/her background of experiences. Therefore, it is important for researchers to define the terms associated with theories. Unfortunately, inconsistencies in definitions have resulted in some confusion related to motivation.

### **TAA – A Program in Disguise**

As I examined the TAA participants' situations and the training programs, it seemed that the government wanted a “quick fix” or a quick solution to the unemployment situation. Numerous researchers (Joint Economic Committee, 2011; Scott, 2001; U. S. Trade Deficit Review Commission, 2001) have noted that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) created the trade situation where factory workers lost their jobs permanently. It appeared that the TAA program was a way for the federal government to disguise a welfare program and maneuver displaced workers through the unemployment system. Connotations that surround the word "welfare" seem to give the impression of government handouts. When in reality, the TAA program

seems to be a way for government to carry out a welfare program and give unemployed workers the impressions that the government is helping them gain stability from the job crisis. Could the TAA program simply be a euphemism for welfare and public assistance?

At the training site, the tuition amounts to approximately \$7,545 per semester for a full-time student for the (2011-2012) college year taking fifteen credits per semester. TAA students take courses year around, not only during the spring and fall semester. In two years, they attend approximately six semesters, and this calculates to \$22,637 per year or \$45,270 for the entire training program to obtain the associate's degree. The TAA program has been utilized at the technical college for eighteen years. The program serves approximately 15-20 participants per year. With approximately \$45,000 per person for fifteen participants comes to \$675,000 per year in college tuition. When this is factored over the eighteen years that the TAA program has assisted workers at this institution, the college has benefitted by taking in approximately \$12,150,000 in tuition. This calculation was based on a conservative estimate and most likely the total is even higher. This total does not include tools, uniforms, transportation, or personal expenses, in addition, lab fees of \$36 per hour.

Training programs, such as the one at this institution, have reaped the rewards because twelve million dollars is a substantial amount of money in eighteen years. As a result, the TAA program may offer job incentives and job securities for educational institutions more so than for displaced workers because they employ faculty and staff who provide the services and opportunities to the TAA participants.

Training funded by the federal government is not something new. When looking at the 1990s during the Clinton administration, his stimulus package that addressed the problem of unemployment and training, approximately \$16.5 billion was appropriated for upgrading the skills of American workers. Heckman (1994) warned that the stimulus package for investment in human capital for job training actually calculated out to be approximately for every \$10 that the governments invests in a person, the return is about ten percent, or \$1. "The investment needed to reduce any wage gap is ten times the amount of the gap" (Heckman, 1994, p. 93). Not much has changed in the past twenty years. Reynolds and Palatucci (2008) used data collected by the Department of Labor and indicated that "there is little evidence that it helps displaced workers find new, *well-paying* (italicized in the original) employment opportunities" (p. 3). From their calculations, policy makers should be skeptical about expanding or continuing the TAA program. However, in October of 2011, President Obama extended the TAA program through December 31, 2013 (NELP National Employment Law Project, October 19, 2011). As the government continues to fund training programs, it may seem like ways to alleviate the unemployment situation, but the investment that the government makes has not corrected the problem for the last twenty years. At best, it provided people with an "income safety net" (Reynolds & Palatucci, 2008, p. 3) which is really only a welfare program for unemployed displaced workers.

Perhaps, the TAA program is a program for displaced workers to feel some dignity about their job losses because many workers have been employed for twenty to thirty years with the same company. If the program was not available for the displaced workers, it could be concluded that applying for welfare could be demeaning for senior

workers, and they could suffer from additional stress and depression already brought on by displacement (Brand, Levy, & Gallo, 2008; Mandal & Roe, 2008). When the lives of TAA participants turn upside-down because of job loss, it only seems natural that stress and depression become problematic as individuals conform to their new life styles. Conclusions could be made that the TAA program could incorporate additional counseling support and enhanced academic advising in the educational programs.

Compiling more qualitative research methods could assist in a better understanding of the TAA participants. Because much of the research on motivation was forced-items responses using quantitative type of research, it appears apparent that opening lines of communication with displaced workers and assessing through qualitative means could provide some of the unanswered questions about what keeps people going despite adverse situations. This research method should manifest an extended view of their concerns and how to better serve displaced workers.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

One of the major limitations is that this study only examined successful TAA students; students who have made it into the second years of the program. This study does not have any information as those individuals who did not make it into the second year. It would be important to discover what prevented them from continuing and whether it was a "lack of motivation," other factors, or a combination of various individual and structural factors that resulted in the TAA students dropping of the program. Such studies might add to our understanding of what constitutes motivation among displaced workers.

Since little is known about the emotional states of displaced workers and the impact that displacement created, (Brand, Levy, & Gallo, 2008; Mandal & Roe, 2008), TAA recipients and other unemployed workers could possibly benefit from research focused on the mental health of workers. The integration of wellness programs into the workforce could possibly provide emotional safety nets as workers experience changes in job descriptions, layoffs, retirement, and any other major life-changing events.

Further investigation to discover other benefits derived from the TAA program should be addressed because much of the research points toward a tremendous misuse of resources. The federal government's gathering and reporting on factors related to the TAA program have been incomplete and difficult to follow. However, eliminating the TAA program is really not the answer to the situation. A rigorous reporting system and more accountability by the federal government could result in money being spent in a more economical way.

## REFERENCES

- Alexander Graham Bell Quotes. (2012). *Brainy Quote*. Retrieved from [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/alexander\\_graham\\_bell.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/alexander_graham_bell.html)
- Alpher, V. S. (1988, October). Comment on Skinner. *American Psychologist*, *43*(10), 824-825.
- Ames, C. (1984, June). Achievement attributions and self-instructions under competitive and individualistic goal structures. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *76*(3), 478-487.
- Ames, C. (1992). Classrooms: Goals, structures, and student motivation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *84*, 261–271.
- Anderman, E. M., & C. Wolters. (2006). Goals, values, and affect: Influences on student motivation. In P. A. Alexander and P. H. Winne (Eds.). *Handbook of educational psychology* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.
- Angrosino, M. V. (2005). Recontextualizing observation. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln. (Eds.), *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.), (pp. 729-745). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Anonymous. (2009, February 17). Pennsylvania commission for community colleges; governor's budget gives community colleges new tools to help students and unemployed workers; builds PA economy. *Science Letter*, 3915. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Research Library.
- Atkinson, J. W. (1957). Motivational determinants of risk taking behavior. *Psychological Review*, *64*, 359–372.

- Auto, D. H., Katz L. F., & Krueger, A. B. (1998, November). Computer inequality: Have computers changes the labor market? *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 113(4), 1169-1213.
- Baicker, K., & Rehavi, M. M. (2004, Spring). Policy watch: Trade adjustment assistance. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 18(2), 239-255. Retrieved September 10, 2010 from JSTRO.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Belzer, A. (November, 2004). "It's not like normal school": The role of prior learning contexts in adult learning. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 55(1), 41-59.
- Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2008). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A roadmap from beginning to end*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Boggiano, A. K., & Pittman, T. S. (1992). *Achievement and motivation: A social-developmental analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Boudreau, C.A., & Kromrey, J. D. (1994). A longitudinal study of retention and academic performance of participants in freshman orientation course. *Journal of Student Development*, 45, 444-449.
- Brand, J. E., Levy, B. R., and Gallo, W. T. (2008, November). Effects of layoffs and plant closings on subsequent depression among older workers. *Research on Aging*, 30.6, 701-721. Retrieved from dio: 10.1177/0164027508322574
- Caligiuri P. M.,& Tung, R. L. (1999, October). Comparing the success of male and female expatriates from a US-based multinational company, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10(5), 762-782.
- Campbell, C. (1999). Action as will power. *The Sociological Review*, 47(1), 48-61.

- Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation. (n. d.). Retrieved from (<http://www.cpwdc.org/>)
- Clark, K. (2007, Nov. 5). Heading back to college: Universities and doing more than ever to attract older students. *U. S. News & World Report*, 143(16). 68. Retrieved February 5, 2010, from Research Library.
- Coll, J.E., & Draves, P. (2009, Spring). Traditional age students: Worldviews and satisfaction with advising; a Homogeneous study of student and advisors. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 27(2), 215-223. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Research Library.
- Corno, L., & Kanfer, R. (1993). The role of volition in learning and performance. *Review of Research in Education*, 301-341.
- Corno, L. (2004). Work habits and study styles: Volition in education.. *Educational Researcher*, 22, 14-22.
- Couch, K. A., Jolly, N. A., & Placzek, D. W. (2009). Earnings losses of older displaced workers. *Research on Aging*. 31(1), 17-40.
- Couch, K. A. (1997). Late life job displacement. *Maxwell Center for Demography and Economics of Aging*. Syracuse, NY: National Institute on Aging.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Darnon, C., Butera, F., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2007). Achievement goals in social interactions: Learning within a mastery vs. performance goals. *Motivation and Emotion*, 31, 61-70.

- Decker, P. T. & Corson, W. (1995). International trade and worker displacement: Evaluation of the trade adjustment assistance program. *Industrial & Labor Relations Review*, 48(4), 758. Retrieved September 10, 2010, from Research Library.
- Denzin, N. K. & Yvonna S. Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The sage handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dervarics, C. (2009, Jan. 22). Job training issues to get great visibility. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 25(25), 6.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986, Oct.). Motivational processes affecting learning. *American Psychologist*, 41(10), 1040-1048. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.41.10.1040
- Dweck, C. S. (1990). Self-theories and goals: Their role in motivation, personality, and development. In R. Dienstbier (Ed). *Nebraska symposium on motivation*. (Vol. 38, pp. 199-235). Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- Dweck, C. S., & Leggett, E. L. (1988). A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality. *Psychological Review*, 95, 256-273.
- Elliot, A. J. (1997). Integrating the “classic” and “contemporary” approaches to achievement motivation: A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance motivation. In M. Maehr & P. Pintrich (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement* (Vol. 10, pp. 143-179). Greenwich, CT: JAI.
- Elliot, A. J. (1999). Approach and avoidance motivation and achievement goals. *Educational Psychologist*, 34, 169–189.

- Elliot, A. J. & Church, M. (1997). A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 218-232.
- Elliott, A. J., & Dweck, C. S. (1988). Goals: An approach to motivation and achievement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 5-12.
- Elliot, A. J., & Dweck, C. S. (Eds.) (2005). *Handbook of competence and motivation*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Elliot, A. J., & McGregor, H. (2001). A 2 x 2 achievement goal framework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 501–509.
- Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Employment and Training Administration. (2010, Dec.). *Trade adjustment assistance: Report to the committee on finance of the senate and committee on ways and means of the house of representatives*. Retrieved from the United States Department of Labor <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/docs/AnnualReport10.pdf>
- Employment and Training Administration. (2011, Jan. 27). *Training adjustment assistance for workers,*” *Report to the committee on finance, U.S. senate, and committee on ways and means, U.S. house of representatives*, Retrieved from the United States Department of Labor December 4, 2011 from <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/docs/AnnualReport10.pdf>
- Employment and Training Administration. (2011, March 11). *Trade act program: Performance reports*. Retrieved from United States Department of Labor [http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa\\_reports/performance\\_reports.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa_reports/performance_reports.cfm)

- Fallick, B. C. (1996, Oct.). A review of the recent empirical literature on displaced workers. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 50(1), 5-16. Retrieved September 10, 2010 from JSTRO.
- Faux, J. (2001, April). Economic Policy Institute: Briefing Paper. Retrieved on October 10, 2011 from <http://www.ratical.com/co-globalize/NAFTA@7/us.html>
- Fetterman, D.M. (2010). *Ethnography: Step by step* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Garrett-Peters, G. (2009). "If I don't have to work anymore, who am I?": Job loss and collaborative self-concept repair. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 38: 547. doi: 10.1177/0891241609342104
- Gholar, C. R., & Riggs, E. G. (2004). *Connecting with students' will to succeed: The power of conation*. Glenview, Illinois: Pearson Professional Development.
- Gordon, E. E. (2005). *The 2010 meltdown: Solving the Impending jobs crisis*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Gordon, E. E. (2009, Sept.). The future of jobs and careers. *Economic Recovery and Growth*, 29-31. Retrieved from [http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications\\_and\\_E-Media/files/files-techniques-2009/Theme\\_4\(3\).pdf](http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications_and_E-Media/files/files-techniques-2009/Theme_4(3).pdf)
- Greenberg, D. H., Michalopoulos, C., & Robins, P. K. (2004, Winter). What happens to the effects of government funded training programs over time? *The Journal of Human Resources*, 39(1), 277-293. Retrieved September 10, 2010 from JSTRO.
- Haenfler, R. (2004). Rethinking subcultural resistance: Core values of the straight edge movement. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 33, 406-436.

- Harackiewicz, J. M., Barron, K., & Elliot, A. J. (1998). Rethinking achievement goals: When are they adaptive for college students and why? *Educational Psychologist*, 33, 1-21.
- Heckman, J. (1994). Is job training oversold? *The Public Interest*, 115, 91-115.
- Helm, B. W. (2001). *Emotional reason: deliberation, motivation, and the nature of value*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hershberger, W. A. (1989). The synergy of voluntary and involuntary action. In W. A. Hershberger (Ed.), *Volitional action advances in psychology*. New York: Elsevier Science Publishers.
- Hilgard, E. R. (1980). The trilogy of mind: Cognition, affection, and conation. *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences*, 16, 107-117.
- Huitt, W. (1999). Conation as an important factor of mind. *Educational Psychology Interactive*. Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University. Retrieved July 10, 2009 from <http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/col/regsys/conation.html>
- Jacobson, L., Lalonde, R. J., & Sullivan, D. (2005, April). The impact of community college retraining on older displaced workers: Should we teach old dogs new tricks? *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 58(3), 398-415. Retrieved September 10, 2010 from JSTRO.
- Jagacinski, C. M., & Nicholls, J. G. (1987, June). Competence and affect in task involvement and ego involvement: The impact of social comparison information. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 79(2), 107-114. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.79.2.107

- Joint Economic Committee. (2011, Sept. 19). Training programs are critical for mitigating the harmful effects of trade. *The Importance of Trade Adjustment Assistance for America's Workers*. Retrieved from [www.jec.senate.gov](http://www.jec.senate.gov)
- Karabenick, S. A. (2003). Seeking help in large college classes: A person centered approach. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 28, 37-58.
- Kletzer, L. G. (1998, Winter). Job displacement. *The Journal of Economic Perspective*, 12(1), 115-136. Retrieved October 10, 2010 from JSTRO.
- Kletzer, L. G., & Fairlie, R. W. (2003, July). The long-term costs of job placement for young adult workers. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 56(4), 682-698.
- Lafer, G. (2002). *The job training charade*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca, NY.
- Levy, I., Kaplan, A., & Patrick, H. (2004). Early adolescents' achievement goals, social status, and attitudes towards cooperation with peers. *Social Psychology of Education*, 7, 127-159.
- Lewin, K. (1935) *A dynamic theory of personality*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1986). But is it rigorous and authenticity in naturalistic education. In D. D. Williams (Ed.), *Naturalistic Evaluation: New Directions for Program Evaluation* (pp. 73-84). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lippmann, S., & Rosenthal, J. E. (2008, June). Do displaced workers lose occupational prestige? *Social Science Research*, 37(2), 642-656.

- Lips, H. (2009, April 02). Women and leadership: Delicate balancing act. *Woman's Media*, 20.16. Retrieved from <http://www.womensmedia.com/lead/88-women-and-leadership-delicate-balancing-act.html>
- Longfellow, H. W. (1878). *Keramos and other poems*. Boston, MA: Houghton, Osgood & Co.
- Mandal, B., & Roe, B. (2008, Dec.) Job loss, retirement and the mental health of older Americans. *Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics*, 11(4), Dec 2008, 167-176.
- Marcal, L. E. (2001). Does trade adjustment assistance help trade-displaced workers? *Contemporary Economic Policy*, 19(1), 59-72. Retrieved September 10, 2010, from Research Library.
- Mayer, J. D., Chabot, H. F., & Carlsmith, K. M. (1997). Conation, affect, and cognition in personality. In G. Matthews (Ed.). *Cognitive science perspective on personality and emotion* (pp. 31-63). New York: Elsevier.
- McClelland, D. (1951). *Personality*. Chicago, IL: Dryden.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study application in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Misak, C. (ed.). (2004). *The Cambridge Companion to Peirce*. Cambridge University Press Cambridge: New York, NY.
- motivation. (2012). *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved from [http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed\\_in\\_frame=0&search=motivation&searchmode=none](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=motivation&searchmode=none)

- National Commission on Adult Literacy. (2008, June). Reach higher, America overcoming crisis in the U. S. workforce. *Report of the National Commission on Adult literacy.*
- National Skills Coalition. (2011, May). *Training policy in brief: Trade adjustment assistance.* Retrieved from [http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/reports/tpib/nsc\\_tpib\\_taa.pdf](http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/reports/tpib/nsc_tpib_taa.pdf)
- Nicholls, J. G. (1984). Achievement motivation: Conceptions of ability, subjective experience, task choice, and performance. *Psychological Review, 91*, 328-346.
- Nicholls J. G. (1989). *The Competitive Ethos and Democratic Education.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Office of the United States Trade Representative. (2011, June). *State specific benefits: Pennsylvania.* Retrieved from Executive Offices of the President <http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/benefits-trade/state-specific-benefits>
- Office of the United States Trade Representative. (2011, Oct.). *Benefits of trade.* Retrieved from Executive Offices of the President <http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/benefits-trade>
- Office of the United States Trade Representative. (2011). *President Obama signs trade agreements and trade adjustment assistance.* Retrieved from Executive Offices of the President <http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/benefits-trade>
- O'Gara, L., Karp, M., & Hughes, K. (2009). Student success courses in the community college: An exploratory study of student perspectives. *Community College Review, 36*(3), 195-218. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Research Library.

- O'Neil, H. F. & Drillings, M. (Eds.). (1994). *Motivation: Theory and research*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Overview of 2011 trade adjustment assistance reauthorization. (2011, October 19). *NELP National Employment Law Project*. Retrieved from [http://www.nelp.org/page/-/EDI/2011/TAA\\_2011\\_Leg\\_Update\\_FINAL.pdf?nocdn=1](http://www.nelp.org/page/-/EDI/2011/TAA_2011_Leg_Update_FINAL.pdf?nocdn=1)
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). Chapter 5: Designing qualitative studies. In *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). (pp. 209-257). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Reskin, B., and Padavic, I. (1988). Supervisors as gatekeepers: Male supervisors' response to women's integration in plant jobs. *Social Problems* 35: 401-15.
- Reynolds, K. M., & Palatucci, J. S. (2008, August). Does trade assistance make a difference? *American University, Washington, D. C.* Retrieved from [http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/ca/econ/working\\_papers/workpap.htm](http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/ca/econ/working_papers/workpap.htm)
- Robinson, B. (2002, Nov. 20). New TAA reform act helps displaced workers. *New Pittsburgh Courier*. A7.
- Rodrguez, D. & Zavondny, M. (2003, April). Changes in the age and education profile of displaced workers. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 56(3), 498-510.
- Rosen, J. (2011 Dec. 14). The 2012 budget surplus that disappeared. *National Review Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/285773/2012-budget-surplus-disappeared-jeff-rosen>

- Schulz, J. H. (2000). "The full monty" and life-long learning in the 21st century. *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 11(2-3), 71-82. Retrieved September 10, 2010 from Research Library.
- Scott, R. E. (2001, April). NAFTA's hidden costs: Trade agreement results in job losses, growing inequality, and wage suppression for the United States. *Economic Policy Institute*. Retrieved from <http://www.ratical.org/co-globalize/NAFTA@7/us.html>
- skill. (2012). *The Free On-line Dictionary of Computing*. Retrieved February 02, 2012 from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/skill>
- Smith, P., & Ragan, T.J. (1999). *Instructional design*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Snow, R. E., & Farr, M. J. (1987). Cognitive-conative-affective processes in aptitude, learning, and instruction: An introduction. In R. E, Snow & M. J. Farr (Eds.), *Aptitude, learning, and instruction volume 3: Conative and affective process analysis*. (pp. 1-10). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Snow, R. E., & Jackson, D. N. (1993). *Assesment of conative constructs for educational research and evaluation: A catalogue (CSE Tech. Rep. No. 354)*. Los Angeles, University of California: National Center of Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing.
- Snow, R. E., & Jackson, D. N. (1997, Oct.). Individual differences in conation: Selected constructs and measures. *National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing*. Los Angeles: University of California.
- Snow, R. E., Jackson, D., & Corno, L. (1996). Individual differences in affective and conative functions. In *Handbook of educational psychology*, (pp. 243-310). New York: MacMillan.

- Spence, R., and Kiel, B. (2003). *Skilling the American Workforce "On the Cheap": Ongoing Shortfalls in Federal Funding for Workforce Development*. Washington DC: The Workforce Alliance.
- Stake, R. E (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.), (pp. 442-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- Svinicki, M. D. (2005). Student goal orientation, motivation and learning. *The IDEA Center*. Retrieved July 2, 2010 from <http://www.theideacenter.org>.
- Swezey, R. W., & Meltzer, A. L. (1994). Some Issues involved in motivating teams. In H. F. O'Neil & M. Drillings (Eds.). *Motivation: Theory and research*, (pp. 141-169). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Thrash, T.M., & Elliot, A. J. (2001). Delimiting and integrating the goal and motive constructs in achievement motivation. In A. Efklides, J.Kuhl, & R. Sorrentino (Eds.), *Trends and prospects in motivation research* (pp. 3–21). Amsterdam: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Topoleski, J. J. (2010, Sept. 24). Congressional Research Service. *Trade adjustment assistance for workers (TAA) and reemployment trade adjustment assistance (RTAA)*. Retrieved from <http://aging.senate.gov/crs/aging6.pdf>
- United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). *Back to college*, Washington, D. C. Retrieved Nov. 19, 2010 from <http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2010/college/>
- United States Department of Labor. (2010). *Trade adjustment assistance for workers*. Retrieved October, 15, 2011 from <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/docs/>

AnnualReport10.pdf

United States Department of Labor. (2011). *Employment and training*. Retrieved from <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/factsheet.cfm>.

United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2011). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2010* (NCES 2011-015), Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=98>

United States Department of Labor. (2011). *Trade adjustment assistance for workers*. Retrieved February 28, 2012 from <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/docs/AnnualReport10.pdf>

United States Department of Labor. (n. d.). Employment and Training Administration. *Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance State Profile Sheet: Pennsylvania*. Retrieved from <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/pdf/PA.pdf>

United States Trade Deficit Review Commission. (2000, Nov. 14). *The U.S. Trade Deficit: Causes, Consequences and Recommendation for Action*. Retrieved from [http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/tdrc/reports/tdrc\\_toc.pdf](http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/tdrc/reports/tdrc_toc.pdf)

United States Trade Deficit Review Commission. (2001, Dec. 13) *The U.S. trade deficit: Causes, consequences and recommendations for action*. Retrieved from <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/tdrc/reports/finalrept-contents.html>

Urdan, T. C., & Maehr, M. L. (1995, Fall). Beyond a two-goal theory of motivation and achievement: A case for social goals. *Review of Educational Research, 65*(3 ) 213-243. doi: 10.3102/00346543065003213

- Wentzel, K. R. (1989). Adolescent classroom goals, standards for performance, and academic achievement: An interactionist perspective. *Educational Psychology*, 81: 131-142.
- Wentzel, K. R. (1993). Social and academic goals at school: Motivation and achievement in early adolescence. *Early Adolescence*, 13: 4-20.
- Wlodkowski, R. J. (2008). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn: a comprehensive guide for teaching all adults* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1999). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*, (4th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2010). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

**APPENDICES**

## Appendix A: Invitational Letter

To: TAA Participants  
 From: Sandra Karnes  
 Date: May 25, 2011  
 Re: Educational Experiences in the TAA program

For a research project at Penn State University, I am seeking participants to volunteer for my study. I have worked with ----- with this project because I am interested in investigating the TAA program at ----- . As TAA students, you have taken college courses as a result of the sudden turn in your lives when your jobs were eliminated. I am interested in your educational experiences in the TAA program and finding out what you do to overcome obstacles.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project to discover how TAA students stay motivated as they strive toward completion of their degrees at ----- . I realize that your lives are filled with coursework and family responsibilities. Therefore, I am only requesting approximately an hour or two of your time to discuss your experiences. For my research study, I will be interviewing participants privately and observing them during class time. All information will be kept confidential. This study will be conducted during the summer of 2011 and will fulfill part of my dissertation requirement for the Adult Education doctoral program at Penn State.

As a participant, you could gain a better understanding of your college experience and reflect on your venture as a student. This research study could provide a better understanding of how TAA students view their college experiences. This research study could enhance ways to better serve the TAA participants at ----- .

Take a moment to accept my invitation to participate by contacting me so that you can arrange a convenient time to meet with me and plan for the interview and the observation. Your participation will be appreciated.

## Contact information:

Email: slkarnes@pct.edu  
 Home Phone: 570-356-2176  
 Cell Phone: 570-764-3664

## Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

**Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research  
The Pennsylvania State University**

**Title of Project:** Motivational Factors of Displaced Workers  
on the Path to College Degrees

**Principle Investigator:** Sandra Lee Karnes, Graduate Student

**Advisor:** Dr. Fred Schied  
305E Keller Building, University Park, PA 16801  
814-863-3499; fms3@psu.edu

ORP OFFICE USE ONLY:  
**DO NOT REMOVE OR MODIFY**  
**IRB#36884 Doc. #1001**  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Institutional Review Board  
Office for Research Protections  
Approval Date: 05/19/2011 DWM  
Expiration Date: 05/16/2012 DWM

1. **Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this research study is to investigate how adult learners in the TAA program at ----- describe their experiences that keep them focused on their goals in order to obtain associate college degrees despite the obstacles that surface during the process.
2. **Procedures:** You will be asked to participate in two interviews. The first interview will gather background information, information about your college experiences, and information about mixing domestic responsibilities with college responsibilities. The second interview will be used to clarify and confirm the information collected at the first interview. The first interview will last approximately one hour, and the second interview will be approximately one hour. Information from the interviews will be audio recorded. In addition to the interviews, classroom observations will be conducted for selected courses that participants are enrolled in. Classroom observations will last for approximately one hour.
3. **Benefits:** Participants could gain a better understanding of their college experience and reflect on their new venture as students. Research could provide a better understanding of how TAA participants view their college experience. Therefore, a better understanding will be gained on how the TAA participants are impacted by unemployment and their return to higher education for skill enhancement. This research study could enhance ways to better serve the TAA participants at Penn College.
4. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Your participation in this research is confidential. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Only the principal investigator will have access to the recordings, and the recording will be destroyed by 2015, following the completion of the doctoral research at Penn State. No personally identifiable information will be shared. According to the Office for Research Protections at Penn State, The following may review and copy records related to this research: The Office of Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Penn State University's Institutional Review Board, and Penn State University's Office for Research Protections.
5. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Sandra Karnes at 570-356-2176 (home) or 570-764-3664 (cell phone) with questions, complaints or concerns about this research. You can also call this number if you feel this study has harmed you. If you have any questions, concerns, problems about your rights as a research participant or would like to offer input, please contact The Pennsylvania State University's Office for Research Protections (ORP) at (814)

865-1775. The ORP cannot answer questions about research procedures. All questions about research procedures can only be answered by the principal investigator.

6. **Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.
7. **Future Use of Voice Records:** May the researcher retain your voice records for future use, education, or presentation? Please choose **two** options
  1. I agree that segments of the recordings made of my participation in this research may be used for conference presentations.
  2. I do not want segments of the recordings made of my participation in this research to be used for conference presentations. Recordings will be destroyed by 2015.
  3. I agree that segments of the recordings made of my participation in this research may be used for education and training of future researchers/practitioners.
  4. I do not want segments of the recordings made of my participation in this research to be used for education and training of future researchers/practitioners. Recordings will be destroyed by 2015.
8. **Signature:** You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Signature	Date
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	Date

## Appendix C: Semi-structured Interview Questions

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions

#### Background information

##### **Tell me about your job that you were laid off from . . .**

- How would you describe your job to someone who did not work there?
- What were your responsibilities on the job?
- What was a typical day like?
- How long were you employed with this employer?
- Before this job, what did you do?
- Were you promoted or did your job responsibilities change throughout your employment days?
- What hours did your work?
- What did you like about that job?
- What did you dislike about that job?
- When did you find out that your job was being eliminated?
- What was it like to go to work when you knew that the end was near?
- What were your last days of employment like?

#### TAA Program

##### **Tell me about the TAA program . . .**

- How did you find out about the TAA program?
- How is the TAA program funded?
- What do you know about displaced workers?
- How would you describe a displaced worker?
- How would you describe being unemployed?
- What do you expect to gain from the TAA program?

#### College Experience

##### **Tell me about your college experience . . .**

- Did you have any college experience before taking the job that you were laid off from?
- How did you find out about Penn College?
- What did you think that college would be like?
- What was your first encounter at the college like?
- How did you select a major or an area to concentrate on?
- How did the first day of classes go?
- What was it like attending classes?
- How many credits do you take during a semester?
- Did you take fewer credits when you first started taking classes than you do now?
- What is it like being in classes with traditional-aged college students?
- How did you go about making friends/meeting people at the college?
- What classes seemed to fit in with your natural ability?
- What classes seemed to challenge your natural ability?
- How did you handle frustrating situations?
- How did you handle successful situations?
- Do you visit professors during office hours?
- What types of discussion do you have with professors outside of class?

What were some of your goals when you started college?  
 How have goals kept you motivated?  
 Are your goals different now than when you first entered the program?  
 How have your educational/vocational goals changed?  
 What results do you expect from your college experience?  
 What do you wish someone would have told you before you started college classes?  
 How would you describe your best days related to college courses?  
     What made these your best days?  
 How would you describe your worst experiences related to college experiences?  
     How did you overcome these experiences/setbacks?  
 What were your strengths when you first started taking college courses?  
 What were you find challenging when you started taking college courses?  
 What are your strengths now?  
     How did you gain these strengths?  
 How have you grown throughout your college experience?  
     What were the contributing factors that lead to your growth?

### **Mixing Domestic Responsibilities with college Responsibilities**

#### **Tell me about your family . . .**

How did you tell your family that you were going to begin taking courses at Penn College?  
 What did your family say about college?  
     son, daughter, husband, mother, father  
 Did family members encourage or resist your new venture to go to college?  
     How did you know? Did they tell you directly or did they show subtle signs?  
 How has your relationship with others in family changed because of going to college?  
 What home responsibilities did you have before taking courses that someone else in your family does now?  
 Does this person mind this/these new responsibility(ies)?  
 Does anyone in your family have a college degree?  
     If so, what type of degree, where did they get the degree, when did they get the degree?  
     What did he/she tell you about college?  
     Did you find the information helpful?  
 How long is your commute to college?  
 Do you drive, ride bus, or car pool?  
 Does college interfere with your home responsibilities?  
     How do you handle these situations?  
 Did you ever have a situation that interfered with your time to complete projects on time for your courses?  
 How did you handle that situation?

## Appendix D: Classroom Observation Inventory

**CLASSROOM OBSERVATION INVENTORY**

**Focus question: What is it like being in a college classroom with mainly traditional-aged (19-24) students?**

Course name:

Course description:

Class time:

Classroom arrangement and setting:

Mode of instruction: (lecture or lab)

Interactions and activities:

Equipment used:

## MEANING UNITS to CODES to CATEGORIES to THEMES

MEANING UNITS	CODES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• career link would come up and teach these people what to do to get certified (Joe)</li> <li>• eligible for TAA the information Career Link and told us what we had to do (Daneen)</li> <li>• end up with my Bachelor's and I'm not settling for anything less (Irene)</li> <li>• TAA program would pay for two years of training (Kathy)</li> <li>• certified for the TAA program (Curt)</li> <li>• thankful that I have this opportunity to go to school (Daneen)</li> </ul>	<p><b>TAA program</b></p>	<p><b>Educational Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 1: Gaining Opportunities</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have my Bachelor's. I'll have the biggest degree it in my family (Florance)</li> <li>• sacrifice now to make a better life later (Irene)</li> <li>• embarking like on this whole new adventure (Irene)</li> <li>• background to run a business (Abby)</li> <li>• preferred a two year degree in machining (Henry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Expectations of college degree</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• getting laid off was tough (Joe) (Greg)</li> <li>• When it comes time for a job, I think it is going to bother me. I was a supervisor. Now, I will have to listen to someone else tell me (Joe)</li> <li>• wasn't prepared to go back to school, I just prefer working (Edward)</li> <li>• Since I've lost my job, the last couple of years, financially it's been hectic (Irene)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Economic survival</b></p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tremendous support for everybody and especially for the TAA students (Joe)</li> <li>• the instructors tell you exactly what to do. (Curt)</li> <li>• to the professor’s office – the tutoring center – Project Success my first semester (Daneen)</li> </ul>	<p><b>professor/ faculty/ staff</b></p>	<p><b>Support</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 2: Support Environments</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COBRA so you know that was at least a relief (Greg)</li> <li>• challenging relationship with her husband (Kathy)</li> <li>• my husband said you are not going to quit. He said you can succeed. He tells me every day you can do er. (Abby)</li> <li>• <i>What wife said about grades</i> The other day the dean’s list thing was in the paper (Curt)</li> <li>• you’ve supported me through all of my education, you’ve supported everybody in our family - time for you to actually go to school and get a degree (Edward)</li> <li>• wife was the one who encouraged me to go back to school (Greg)</li> <li>• excellent relationship in every respect. I know what she’s very good at and she knows what I’m very good at (Edward)</li> <li>• she’s really proud of me but she doesn’t like to see me under the stress (Daneen)</li> <li>• Understand wife and family - 31 years got married right out of high school – daughter proud (Barry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Family support</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first day of college I was scared to death (Daneen)</li> <li>• 12credits – was very overwhelmed (Abby)</li> <li>• Got good grades in all my electrical courses (Barry)</li> <li>• did not like math – approached this challenge with a positive attitude (Irene)</li> <li>• She was a good instructor. I followed her instructions, and I did everything she told me to do. (Irene)</li> <li>• technical school: "excellent tutoring," "compassionate instructors," and "support from TAA advisor and academic advisor (Henry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>College classroom</b></p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hard work paid off</li> <li>• first time I've been fully exposed to full time college life (Greg)</li> <li>• graduating and finding a job. That's really what I want. I want to find a job, get back to work (Daneen)</li> <li>• Pass the courses and get the degree. (Barry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Setting</b></p>	<p><b>Setting Educational Goals</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 3: Traveling in the Dark</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frustrating being in that class where I guess it was the younger people (Greg)</li> <li>• haven't missed a class yet (Daneen)</li> <li>• get more frustrated about the time factors and the time you have to put into this (Daneen)</li> <li>• computer networking information and combine it with 33 years of experience you have a lot more going for you to get a job (Curt)</li> <li>• I just know that if you do the work and you work hard, you will get good grades. (Curt)</li> <li>• My shock was that the instructors, on the first day, were going to have us read the first 2 chapters and be ready to discuss (Curt)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Academic Responsibilities</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• challenge trying to manage my time with my family and home (Greg)</li> <li>• being more organized. I was always able to multitask that was something (Greg)</li> <li>• my mother-in-law has bad health - she has Alzheimer's real bad (Greg)</li> <li>• My dad can't talk, he had a stroke. My mom shouldn't drive because she has double vision - You don't say no to mom, you can't. (Daneen)</li> <li>• my mother developed Alzheimer's Disease and it came up pretty quickly so one of the other things that I was doing was we had to put her in assisted living - she had 30 years worth of stuff in that house and towards the end what we found out was she was hiding things (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Responsibilities</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-read it and re-read it and ask the teacher to dumb it down for you (Abby)</li> <li>• I don't have that stage fright that I used to have when I had to write a 10 page or 20 page paper</li> <li>• Dean's list now twice - That feels good. Really good, it really does (Daneen)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning Skills</b></p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I never knew I was good with math until I came to college. I have a love for Algebra. I never knew I liked Algebra. (Daneen)</li> <li>• I lived and breathed text books and studying. I don't read very fast. Just to get back into things. It was difficult..the amount of time necessary to do well. Being a nontraditional student is to learn. (Curt)</li> <li>• Math gets a little complicated. Math is rough for me. I have to take 3 math courses. Actually four because I failed one (Barry)</li> </ul>		<p><b>Setting Educational Goals (cont.)</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 3: Traveling in the Dark (cont.)</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• few recognized experts in W&amp;D Modules (Edward)</li> <li>• Hands on and watching. Watching somebody else. Having somebody train me and then after that I was head honcho and trained everybody - everybody kind of trained everybody as you came in that way Daneen</li> <li>• Purchasing manager in charge of purchasing and the warehouse warehouse and distribution center and also the shipping of the orders (Curt)</li> <li>• in charge of 25 or so people in the warehouse distribution center (Curt)</li> </ul>	<p><b>responsibilities</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very strange because I have worked my whole life</li> <li>• the second to last person out the door. We were chaining up the doors (Edward)</li> <li>• 5 people that had lower seniority then me (Daneen)</li> <li>• You still worked. You had to get your job done. You went in and did what you were supposed to do.I was quite bitter, but I still did my job (Daneen)</li> <li>• At first I was worried about paying my bills, but so far, we have been ok (Barry)</li> <li>• We all accepted it. We knew it was going to happen - move on. We didn't push ourselves very hard and there was no reason to because there wasn't always a lot of work to do anyway. It was kind of a little sad knowing your out but the idea is that hopefully something's going to be out there for you to do. (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>ending job</b></p>	<p><b>Previous Job</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 4: Coming to Terms and Accepting Situations</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• severance package. Basically it was six months worth of income. I didn't know for sure where we were going to end up (Edward)</li> <li>• The union had to fight for the TAA Program (Daneen)</li> <li>• a lot of math and 33 years experience, they decided that I didn't need to take my math or my English courses. (Curt)</li> <li>• You are not giving 100% like you did before. Still do what I have to do but I do not do any extras. (Barry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>survival</b></p>	<p><b>Previous Job</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Theme 4: Coming to Terms and Accepting Situations</b> (cont.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lot of tension in the whole plant because everybody was afraid for their job. That they were going to lose their job next. So there was tension (Daneen)</li> <li>• I miss not working (Daneen)</li> <li>• strange because I have worked my whole life - paper route when I was 13 years old (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>insecurities</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average person when they closed the place up, the average person's age was 55 years old and there was people that were there for 45 years. (Daneen)</li> <li>• feel like not doing anything - You still worked - did what you were supposed to do.</li> <li>• No! I was quite bitter, but I still did my job. (Daneen)</li> <li>• It is depressing when I see the building (Barry)</li> <li>• moments when I was a little depressed by it, but nothing outrageous - tried to keep busy and focus on the future. (Joe)</li> <li>• now that a person of my age trying to find a job in this economy is going to be a daunting task (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>depression</b></p>	<p><b>Unemployment situation</b></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I've really improved as a person with her (Greg)</li> <li>• Benefits and going back to school and getting a degree - As I said I have a great many skills but I have no degree. I have a more than average intelligence level. I study, read constantly (Edward)</li> <li>• Like bottom of the barrel, because I lost my job. (Daneen)</li> <li>• I was concerned about grades and keeping up with the college work. (Barry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>self-esteem</b></p>	<p><b>Unemployment situation (cont.)</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 4: Coming to Terms and Accepting Situation (cont.)</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she's really proud of me but she doesn't like to see me under the stress (Daneen)</li> <li>• I never thought I'd do well as well as I am doing. (Daneen)</li> <li>• Depressing because I usually go to bed at 9:30 -10:00. - I still get up the same time in the morning like I always did 5:30 in the morning. (Barry)</li> <li>• decided that day I would take the courses - not out of anything - still unemployed so I will try it (Barry)</li> </ul>	<p><b>accepting situation</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• just keep everything going in that direction and keep busy with the things I could do.</li> <li>• I just couldn't see myself going back to school (Edward)</li> </ul>	<p><b>filling time</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• life is turned upside down in your 50s (Greg)</li> <li>• It was a big disappointment obviously and not knowing what I would do next or where I would go. That became an issue (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>depressed</b></p>	<p><b>Dislocated worker</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like bottom of the barrel, because I lost my job (Daneen)</li> </ul>	<p><b>worthless</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• twenty years ago that I was going back to college, I would have told them they was nuts because I hated school, but this is not so bad. I am going now because I want to, not because I have to. (Barry)</li> <li>• Never thought much about it (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>undisturbed</b></p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that her grades were a constant motivator (Kathy)</li> <li>• Got good grades in all my electrical courses. I seem to understand what is going (Barry)</li> <li>• So I came down to this open house and started talking to some of the people there and was like wow this seems like a really great program and it seems like a really good school and you know I'm going to give it a try (Joe)</li> </ul>	<p><b>easily controlled</b></p>	<p><b>Obstacles to overcome - challenges</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 5: Obstacles</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• challenging relationship with her husband (Kathy)</li> <li>• a little scary and a little intimidating and how am I going to do</li> <li>• she felt "lost" in the sense of fitting in</li> <li>• I THOUGH THAT KIDS WOULD MAKE FUN OF ME BECASUSE I WAS OLD. (Barry)</li> <li>• I have had to stay up at night and finish math so math has been a struggle (Barry)</li> <li>• It was a little scary and a little intimidating and how am I going to do. Do I still know the things that I thought I knew? Does the brain still work in that way? And of course the real fear was the technology, the computers really. Because while I was working in the factory all we did was data entry and I never bothered to learn computers other than to do email and that sort of thing. (Joe)</li> <li>• I lived and breathed text books and studying. I don't read very fast. Just to get back into things. It was difficult. The amount of time necessary to do well. Being a nontraditional student is to learn. (Curt)</li> </ul>	<p><b>difficult to control</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They send me a schedule through an email - I can't pick; it is set up for me. (Barry)</li> <li>• I get frustrated when project take longer so I try to stay up later and try to finish If it gets to the point that I</li> </ul>	<p><b>unable to control</b></p>		

<p>can't figure it out, (Barry)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'm not sure how I'm going to do on the computers. (Joe)</li> <li>• but their method of teaching it involved this online thing (Joe)</li> <li>• And even after you get the degree you don't have that. Its 5 years of apprenticeship or whatever you call it. Even after you come out, you don't just come out and get your license. (Joe)</li> <li>• I haven't had a class yet where there's a student older than me (Daneen)</li> </ul>	<p><b>unable to control</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Obstacles to overcome – challenges</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Theme 5: Obstacles</b> (cont.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all guys with old school thinking that women shouldn't be in the paint shop (Irene)</li> <li>• blunt boys and had no bones about it (Irene)</li> <li>• if you boys don't like it, then too bad (Irene)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Male/ Female Situations</b></p>	<p><b>Male and Female Differences</b></p>	<p><b>Theme 6: Gender Issues</b></p>

## Appendix F: Example of Data Summary Table

**Data Summary Table 3****Theme 3: Traveling in the Dark**

	Name	Goal Setting Finish college degree	Academic Responsibilities	Other Responsibilities	Learning New Skills	Math C = concern NC = no concern
1	Abby	X	X	X	X	C
2	Barry	X	X	X	X	C
3	Curt	X	X	X	X	NC
4	Daneen	X	X	X	X	NC
5	Edward	X	X	X	X	NC
6	Florance	X	X	X	X	NC
7	Greg	X	X	X	X	NC
8	Henry	X	X	X	X	NC
9	Irene	X	X	X	X	C
10	Joe	X	X	X	X	NC
11	Kathy	X	X	X	X	C

## Appendix G: Semesters with Courses Mapped Out

**Program: Legal Assistant/Paralegal**

## FALL 2011

FYE101 FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE  
 LAS100 INTRO/PARALEGAL STUDIES  
 LAS110 BUSINESS ORGANIZATNL LAW  
 CSC124 INFORMTN/TECHNLGY/SOCIETY  
 ENL111 ENGLISH COMPOSITION I  
 MTH151 STRUCTURES OF MATHEMATICS

## SPRING 2012

LAS150 LEGAL RESEARCH & WRITING  
 LAS160 CIVIL PRACT & PROCEDURES  
 LAS170 REAL PROPERTY LAW  
 MGT230 BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS  
 FITELC Fitness Elective

## SUMMER 2012

SPC101 FUNDAMENTALS OF SPEECH  
 HUMELC Humanities Elective  
 - OR -  
 SSEELC Social Science Elective

## FALL 2012

LAS210 CIVIL LITIGATION  
 LAS220 FAMILY LAW  
 LAS230 ESTATE & TRUST ADMIN  
 ACC113 INTRO/FINANCIAL ACCNTING  
 SCIELC Science Lecture Elective

## SPRING 2013

LAS250 CRIMINAL LAW & PROCEDURES  
 LAS260 BANKRUPTCY  
 - OR -  
 LAS270 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW  
 - OR -  
 LAS300 INTERVIEW/COUNS/NEGOT/ADR  
 - OR -  
 LAS360 ADV LEGAL WRITNG/ANALYSIS  
 - OR -  
 LAS371 LEGAL ETHICS  
 LAS291 LEGAL ASSISTNT INTERNSHIP  
 HUMELC Humanities Elective  
 - OR -  
 SSEELC Social Science Elective  
 - OR -  
 FORELC Foreign Language Elective  
 - OR -  
 ENL121 ENGLISH COMPOSITION II  
 - OR -  
 MTH153 TOPICS IN MATHEMATICS

**Program: Electromechanical Maintenance Tech (MT)**

<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
<b><u>SUMMER 2011:</u></b>		
MTH 005,	Elementary Algebra I,	3
ENL 111,	English Composition I,	3
		6
<b><u>FALL 2011:</u></b>		
ELT 111,	Direct Current Fundamentals,	5
CSC 124,	Information/Technology/Society,	3
ELT 116,	Const Lab I – Residential,	5
MTH 006,	Elementary Algebra II,	3
		16
<b><u>SPRING 2012:</u></b>		
ELT 122,	Alternating Current Fundamentals,	5
WEL 100,	Intro to Welding Process,	3
MTT 106,	Manufacturing Proc Survey,	2
ELT 128,	Electrical Drawing/Print Reading,	2
MTH 180,	College Algebra & Trig I,	3
		15
<b><u>SUMMER 2012:</u></b>		
ELE,	Hum/Soc Sci/Art/For Lang/Applied Arts/Intern Field,	3
OPE ELE,	Open Elective,	3
		6
<b><u>FALL 2012:</u></b>		
ELT 234,	Electrical Motor Control,	4
ELT 235,	Industrial Electronics,	6
PHS 114,	Physics w/Technology Application,	4
ELT 113,	Accident Prevention,	2
	OR	
SAF 110,	Occupational Health & Safety,	2
		16
<b><u>SPRING 2013:</u></b>		
IMT 221,	Comm/Ind Eqpt Instill/Trbl,	3
ELT 245,	Intro-Programmable Logic,	4
ELT 248,	Electrical Systems Analysis,	3
ENL 201,	Technical & Professional Communication,	3
FIT ELE,	Fitness Elective,	1
		14

**TOTAL CREDITS: 73**

# *SANDRA LEE KARNES*

## **Education**

---

### **The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, State College, PA**

- August 2012 D. Ed. in Adult Education GPA 3.83

### **Bloomsburg State University, Bloomsburg, PA**

- December 1999 M. A. in Communication Studies GPA 3.83
- December 1992 B. S. in Education Graduated Cum Laude 3.58

## **Teaching Experience**

---

### **College Instructor (Full-time)**

August 2007 (Fall 2007 Semester) to present

- English Composition I
- Fundamentals of Speech

### **English Teacher Public School**

August 2000 to June 2007

- English Department Head

### **Adjunct College Faculty**

Spring 2000 to Spring 2007

- Fundamentals of Speech
- Fundamentals of Writing

## **Accomplishments**

---

### **Dissertation – Completed May 2012**

- Surviving Job Loss: Motivation Among Second Year Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Students

### **High School English Course for a Home School Program copyright 2001**

#### **Curriculum Coordinator**

1998 to 1999

- Contracted to develop English Writing and Speaking Course
- Designed and coordinated curriculum into a 400+ page Support Guide

### **Honors Independent Research Study – Writing Methods, Completed May 1992**

- Completed 152-page thesis paper on major writing theorists on writing pedagogy