The group from Tuck School of Business that help Martha Mott, Director of Work Ready NH at River Valley Community College, in September 2015. Front row: Claire Cao of China, Martha Mott and Shreya Majumder of India. Back row: Sam Courtney of Washington, Colin Tasi of Vermont, Alex Likovich of New York and Matt McDonnell of Colorado. — COURTESY

CLAREMONT — When Martha Mott, director of the Work Ready NH program at River Valley Community College (RVCC), needed to learn how to use social media to promote the school's work readiness program, she turned to the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College in Hanover.

Their advice has helped Mott learn what she needed to know without having to spend a lot of money or time that she didn’t have available to her.

The Work Ready NH program serves both the needs of employers in the region and employees. The program was created following a study of the needs of businesses across New Hampshire and is funded by grants from the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). It is free and open to anyone in the community who would like to improve these skills.

The 60-hour program helps employees learn how to apply for jobs and create a resume, then works on the soft skills, such as improving problem solving, working in a team environment, goal setting and time management. The program also offers help with math, reading and critical thinking skills. This, in turn, helps employers to have access to potential employees with the skills they need to have to be successful on the job.

“[Tuck School of Business’] help has allowed me to be on the cutting edge of social media and data,” said Mott.

While visiting Dartmouth College for a Leadership Upper Valley event, Mott met the Dean from the Tuck School of Business and learned about the community service programs the Master of Business Administration (MBA) students participate in every year — Tuck Allwin Community Outreach Day and Tuck Student Consulting Services (TSCS).
“Tuck has MBA students from all over the world,” said Mott. “On the community day, they offer their skills to 20 to 25 nonprofit organizations and small businesses and give them advice on small issues.”

During the outreach day, students meet with groups during two three-hour sessions. Mott asked for help on social media, especially with Facebook and Twitter — two areas that were completely new to her.

“The students are from all over the world. They offer me a new perspective and provide a lot of information. They give me ideas I never would have had,” said Mott. “I don’t have a lot of funds to use on training, and training takes a lot of hours. At the community day, we give them a quick little ‘what’s going on.’ They come back to us with ideas.”

Mott has also utilized the TSCS program, which allows a group of students to work with larger problems. Organizations and small businesses attend a pitch night and each one has three minutes to explain what their needs are. The groups decide who they want to work with. For Mott, the need was figuring out what to do with all the data she had.

“We started in October and they’ve been sifting through the data,” Mott said. “They give real life results. For example, the data showed we have the highest vet registration. Now I can try to figure out how we can serve them better.”

RVCC President Dr. Alicia Harvey Smith is pleased to see connections like these happening.

“These types of institutional partnerships are valuable to strategically reposition River Valley Community College to better serve the region,” she said. “Work Ready NH is an excellent example of responding to the needs of employers.”