

MATERIALS SUBMITTED BY OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Kelley, Margit

From: Ray Allen <rallen@ulgm.org>
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 12:51 PM
To: Lauer, Ethan
Cc: Kelley, Margit; Koss, Thomas
Subject: RE: Wisconsin Legislative Council: Interim Research Report on the Organization of Wisconsin's Workforce Development System

Dear Mr. Lauer:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some thoughts relative to your upcoming report on the Wisconsin's Workforce Development System.

As you are aware workforce development continues to be a key component in maintaining Wisconsin's economic success. The commitment to improving Wisconsin's economic climate through workforce development programs that provide educational opportunities and career experience remains key.

While all the workforce programs are too numerous to address in a single paper, several specific programs deserve mention:

Youth Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship

While a number of priorities established in 2015 continue to guide the Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, one of the outcomes of that goal setting was connecting the administration of two apprenticeship programs which had previously existed separately and within different parts of the Department of Workforce Development with little or no coordination. The linkage between the very successful Youth Apprenticeship Program with the longstanding Registered Apprenticeship program, has created a seamless pipeline for Wisconsin's young people to move into traditional and new apprenticable industries. The Youth Apprenticeship Program would be enhanced if it better connected to DPI activities and educational tracts within the K12 school districts.

As an example: New Jersey passed legislation which required its commissioners of education and labor and workforce development to collaborate on developing and promulgating guidelines to encourage high school students to participate in apprenticeship programs.

Federal Funding

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides funding for state and local workforce programs. WIOA requires states to allocate 15% of the governor's reserve fund for statewide innovations.

In most cases this funding is provided to the local Workforce Boards to pass on to their approved list of providers. However in many cases the Workforce Board utilizes the same providers year after year, which provides limited opportunity for new or innovative local workforce providers to compete for funding. The Governors Reserve funding usage should be reviewed and perhaps dedicated to multiple sources of program delivery (not just automatically going to the Workforce Boards) particularly to those organizations at a regional level who are focused on in-demand job training programs.

Wisconsin Fast Forward

The Wisconsin Fast Forward program was created to be an innovative talent development solution driven by Wisconsin business to train and retain highly skilled workers. While the program has come under some legislative and concerns the concept and intent remain valid. The program provides a unique partnership between the private sector and government to “skill in and upskill” the Wisconsin workforce.

The program also provides funding to local workforce providers who were innovative and focused on “in demand job training”. These providers have been, and continue to be, in some part ignored by the local Workforce Boards. Coordination of the Wisconsin Fast Forward grants with local economic development activities and economic development grants would be a plus.

WEDC

As the WEDC continues its important economic development activities a strong coordination with the Department of Workforce Development would enhance the accountability and monitoring of the grant objectives and goals. As an example, during my tenure as Secretary of DWD, we worked with WEDC on several grants/tax credit agreements to assist with the job creation monitoring. Using the Unemployment Insurance records we could track the new employees of a company (job creation) or the upskilling of employees(wage rate increases). An enhanced relationship between the two departments would increase public accountability.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

While SNAP lacks the work requirements that were incorporated in TANF, I believe both programs would benefit from coordination with existing work force training programs. Because TANF’s goals are broad, states have used there funding for a variety of supports, including income assistance, childcare, and job transportation. On a local level, job training organizations provide case management of individuals in order to maximize program supports and assist individuals in their job placement efforts. On a state level these program remain siloed and not coordinated in a manner to maximize the public support to individuals.

WisConnect

Many studies accurately highlight the value of internship programs to allow students to gain career experience and to see if they are interested in various career fields. The creation of the WisConnect program was an attempt to create a pipeline for internships within our higher educational system. The program met resistance from the higher educational institutions as each campus wanted to have their own program. While respecting their desires, a program that provided each campus with a more centrally coordinated effort would bring about equal intern availability to all students no matter where they choose to attend school. While full implementation of WisConnect as a means to link students to career experience and explore interest in various careers isn’t without challenges, continued focus on programs like this and giving programs of this kind priority attention is important to the future.

System Tracking

Various departments involved in the workforce have their own tracking and informational system. Unfortunately these systems do not talk to one another and departments have resisted having connectivity. Because the systems are not connected it is very difficult, if not impossible, to track duplication of service or to leverage program participation and to timely track outcomes.

Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)

The WETAP program is directed out of the Wisconsin Transportation Department. Funding from this program is utilized in the Commute to Careers program administrated by DWD. Commute to Careers provides transportation support to

organizations who transport individuals to jobs. Structurally integrating the programs into a single program administered by one department should be reviewed.

Again my thanks for allowing me to share my thoughts on this important program area.

Sincerely

Ray Allen
Former Secretary DWD



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October 15, 2020

Mr. Ethan Lauer, Staff Attorney
Wisconsin Legislative Council
One east Main Street, Suite 401
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mr. Lauer:

Thank you for your interest in the AGC of Wisconsin's opinions regarding Wisconsin's Workforce Development System; and thank you and your colleagues' for your time to discuss our thoughts.

The Wisconsin Policy Forum report raises many areas of concern regarding our future workforce needs, and the many State agencies involved in workforce development activities. As mentioned during our call, AGC has been involved in workforce development efforts at the K-12 level since 2005 through our Architecture Construction Engineering (ACE) Academies.

This has involved public private partnerships (PPP) with AGC, our contractor members, K-12 education and technical colleges. AGC's ACE Academy has been a great success in providing students with opportunities to explore career options, and bring relevance to their learning experiences.

The myriad of State Agencies and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) involved in workforce development is staggering and confusing for industry to navigate. Consolidation and coordination of efforts would be helpful, and a challenging endeavor based on our experiences.

AGC's efforts have mostly relied on PPPs as it allows us to move quickly with workforce development efforts, and funding has been primarily through our Construction Education Foundation in partnership with school districts and technical colleges.

Our main suggestion would be the utilization of PPPs and technical colleges to solve a big piece of the workforce development puzzle. We have had a partnership with Gateway Technical College for many years, and their ability to deliver vocational training is impeccable and efficient.

Thank you again for the opportunity. Good luck with your effort, and please let us know if we may be of assistance.

Sincerely,
AGC of Wisconsin

Robert L. Barker
Executive Vice President

Skill • Integrity • Responsibility

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October 6, 2020

Ms. Margit Kelley
Senior Staff Attorney, Wisconsin Legislative Council
One East Main Street, Suite 401, Madison, WI 53703

Dear Ms. Kelley:

Thank you for offering Competitive Wisconsin, Inc. (CWI) an opportunity to share our extensive research, findings and thoughts with you as you pursue the Wisconsin Legislative Council's current and timely work on the organization of the state's workforce development system.

As you may know, CWI has examined Wisconsin's workforce challenges from a variety of different perspectives over the past ten years, including: [\[PLEASE NOTE: UNDERLINED ITEMS ARE LINKED TO REFERENCED ITEMS/ISSUES.\]](#)

- a [2010 examination](#) of Wisconsin's comparative economic competitiveness undertaken with Deloitte that flagged workforce supply and skill issues;
- a [2012 CWI-Manpower report](#) that focused more specifically on workforce skill gaps and training needs; and
- 2017 analyses of Wisconsin's [health care](#) and [food manufacturing clusters](#) that revealed strategically important workforce challenges and opportunities in both major employment sectors.

We have spent the past two years examining the growing threat to Wisconsin's economic and social wellbeing now being driven by Wisconsin's structural workforce shortages; the adverse impacts of a tight job market on state and local tax bases and public services; and an intensified national and global competition for talent. Our findings in these areas are, we believe, relevant to the Wisconsin Legislative Council's work on the organization of the state's workforce development system.

We believe, for example, that **Wisconsin's contemporary workforce development efforts must take greater notice of the nature of Wisconsin's workforce shortages and prioritize as equally important the need to address the causes as well as the symptoms.**

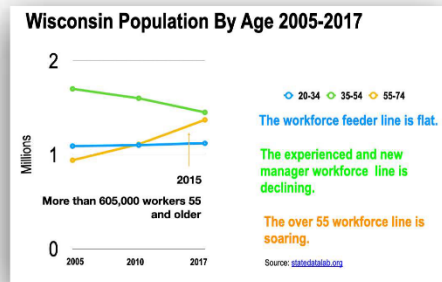
The [2013 WDOA projections](#) cited in the [Wisconsin Policy Forum 2018 report](#) provide an important example of the need to concentrate on the details. The chart draws attention to the size and projected size of the "working age population," and visually offers two conclusions. First, the "actual" data indicates a leveling off of the numeric size of the workforce. Second, the "working age population projections" suggests that the WDOA believes that the reduced number of workers will be the norm for some time to come (i.e., 2020 to 2040). Combined, the two conclusions highlight the need for a workforce development strategy dedicated to increasing workforce participation rates and workplace productivity, which in turn underscores the importance of education, training, and workplace learning opportunities.



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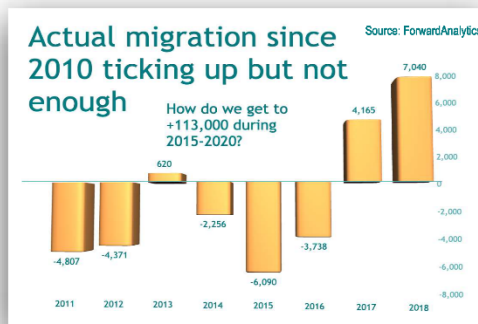
The details of the actual situation are, unfortunately, less tidy and more threatening to Wisconsin's wellbeing. When one looks at the composition of the workforce by age, for example, it is clear that the challenge facing the state is not that the size of its workforce is leveling off, but rather that the size of its workforce is eroding structurally. More specifically,

while the 20 to 34 "feeder" population has leveled off, the percentage of the workforce over 55 (i.e., potential retirees) is growing and the percentage of 35 to 54 year olds (i.e., the experienced and new management age group) is actually shrinking.

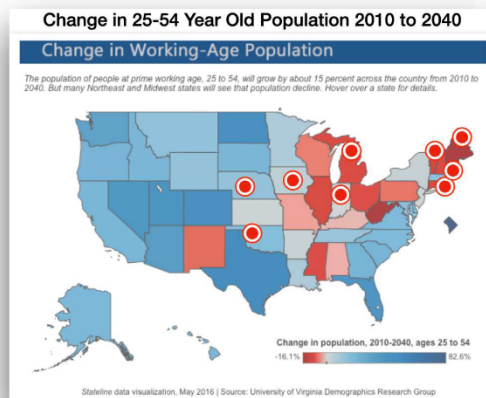


Seen in this light, the 2013 WDOA projections are more appropriately seen as population goals that have to be achieved in order to avoid significant declines in

talent availability and tax base revenues. And, since Wisconsin's birthrates had been declining for more than 50 years, the only way to reach those goals would be to achieve much higher in-migration rates than Wisconsin had experienced for decades. Forward Analytics research on this topic did not produce encouraging news, finding instead that while there had been a slight increase in in-migration in 2017 and 2018, Wisconsin was running more than 170,000 people short of the WDOA projected growth/need for 2020.



These population and migration dynamics produced historically low unemployment rates; workforce shortages in high demand job categories that regularly exceeded 60,000 a year; and pressure on funding for public services. They also made it clear from CWI's point of view that *protecting Wisconsin's wellbeing requires making workforce recruitment and retention at least as much a priority as workforce preparation.*



The second observation CWI would make is that workforce recruitment and retention - always a competitive endeavor - is in today's world increasingly strategic and more financially competitive. *Wisconsin can only achieve its necessary workforce population goals if it can compete successfully in this more strategic and financially challenging environment.*

As a part of our current BE BOLD research, CWI retained Deloitte to identify and examine a variety of workforce recruitment initiatives across the country. Deloitte's work revealed local, regional, and state initiatives strategically targeting younger workers with financial incentives relevant to

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their individual situational needs and desires - primarily debt management, housing and child development and care issues. New Haven, Connecticut, for example, offers prospective residents \$10,000 in downpayment assistance to buy a house and free tuition to graduates of the New Haven public school system who go to a public community college or four year school in the state. Ohio has a Grants for Grads program that, "...includes 2.5% or 5% down payment assistance. Down payment assistance is forgiven after five years as long as [grant recipients] remain in the state of Ohio."

Wisconsin brings marketable strengths to the current recruitment competition. Unlike many states, Wisconsin has *multiple residential hubs*, nearly all of which have at least one major employer; a mature educational infrastructure with PreK-12 schools, universities and technical colleges; access to major transportation and distribution systems; and a marketable quality of life environment. Wisconsin also benefits from a lengthy roster of employers and a well-developed regional and local economic, community and workforce development infrastructure well versed in the needs and capabilities of these employment hubs and the areas that surround them.

Wisconsin needs to augment its existing strengths with a more competitive, effective and sustainable workforce recruitment and retention strategy. More specifically, Wisconsin needs to:

1. encourage employers competing for high-demand workers to develop and/or expand existing recruitment initiatives focused on recruiting talent from outside Wisconsin and on retaining that talent as residential workers;
2. enhance the ability of employers to achieve success with their recruitment and retention initiatives by making Wisconsin's debt management, housing, child development and quality of life workforce recruitment and retention incentives significantly more attractive and competitive;
3. encourage universities and technical colleges to strengthen and expand their efforts to recruit and retain out-of-state students pursuing high-demand careers;
4. enhance the ability of the educational infrastructure to achieve success with their recruitment and retention efforts by making Wisconsin a significantly more attractive and competitive place for gaining the knowledge and credentials required in a high-demand career ; and
5. **identify new public revenues and new private revenues generated by the recruitment and retention that could be used in support of the recommended activities that is sustainable and does not require creating new, or increasing existing, taxes.**

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THE OPPORTUNITY

CWI HAS IDENTIFIED A ROBUST STRATEGIC APPROACH TO THE CHALLENGE AND A REVENUE STREAM TO FUND IT THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE RAISING EXISTING OR CREATING NEW TAXES.

1

ITS NOT ABOUT CREATING JOBS...ITS ABOUT FILLING EXISTING JOB OPENINGS

2

COMPETITIVE INCENTIVES ARE FUNDED ONLY FROM THE **NEW** PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REVENUES GENERATED ONCE THE JOB IS FILLED.

3

FILLING A HIGH-DEMAND JOB PRODUCES SIGNIFICANTLY MORE NEW PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REVENUE THAN IT COSTS TO FUND THE COMPETITIVE INCENTIVES.

[CLICK HERE](#)

3 THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

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CWI's research, experience, and engagement with population and workforce development challenges and opportunities over the past decade all confirm the critical relationship between the availability of talent and Wisconsin's economic prosperity and social wellbeing. Given that correlation and the additional strains the COVID 19 pandemic is putting on the competition for workers, it is clear that Wisconsin, like many other states is at an "all hands on deck" moment, a time when it needs its employers; workers; workforce, economic and community development professionals; educators; policy-makers and elected officials working together on repopulating, building and strengthening its workforce and its middle-class.

Wisconsin's existing workforce development infrastructure must play a role in this collaboration. In this context, it seems appropriate to suggest that the question facing the Wisconsin Legislative Council - and all the rest of us - is what might we do to enhance the ability of the workforce development infrastructure to energize, focus and support efforts dedicated to "repopulating, building and strengthening [Wisconsin's] workforce and its middle-class"? **As suggested throughout this requested response, CWI believes that an essential part of the answer to this question involves the workforce development infrastructure embracing a greater emphasis on the development of a more strategic, sustainable and effective recruitment and retention effort.**

In addition, CWI acknowledges and applauds the fact that people and organizations across the state are already "on the job." We look forward to working with them to address the needs and seize the opportunities in their region, area and community. CWI also appreciates and applauds the research and analytical contributions of organizations such as the Wisconsin Policy Institute and Forward Analytics - and would encourage those working on these issues to revisit the 2012 report, [The Road Ahead: Restoring Wisconsin's Workforce Development](#) by Tim Sullivan, former Chairman of both the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment and the College and Workforce Readiness Council.

Thank you for including us in your important work. We would be happy to provide additional information and/or talk about these issues further.

Sincerely,

Mark O'Connell
Executive Director, Wisconsin Counties Association
Vice-Chair, Competitive Wisconsin, Inc.

James B. Wood
Chair, Wood Communications Group
Strategic Counsel, Competitive Wisconsin, Inc.



2020
**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE
INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**



2020

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

October 9, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
115 East Capitol Drive #1
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers,

The Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) is tasked with aligning Wisconsin's workforce needs with its economic development goals and strategies and advising the Governor in this regard. This Council exists to help Wisconsin employers find the skilled talent that they need while providing resources, training, and reskilling for workers to access in-demand careers necessary to obtain family-supporting jobs and help move Wisconsin's economy forward.

With those goals in mind, the CWI and its three working groups – Growing Workforce Opportunities, WIOA, and Employment Training Infrastructure – built on the foundational work done in their 2018-2022 Strategic Plan. Throughout the course of 2019-2020, the working groups and the Council met across the state and discussed, researched, and collaborated with partners on the workforce development needs and best practices of their areas. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the working groups shifted to a virtual meeting format. They also shifted their initial priorities and recommendation focus to both reflect and account for the changed world that COVID-19 has brought and the challenges that it has exposed going forward.

The result of that work and those discussions are contained here. It is our hope and desire that these recommendations receive your attention and reflection as you head into your biennial budget cycle.

On behalf of the CWI, I am pleased to present to you these four recommendations, and I believe that these recommendations reflect the time, input, and introspection of a diverse cross-section of Wisconsinites who are active in the workforce development space, engaged in their communities, and excited at the opportunity to help shape, prepare, and provide for the post-COVID world of workforce here in our state.

Best Regards,



S. Mark Tyler, Chair
Governor's Council on Workforce Investment

Executive Summary

Employment Training Infrastructure Working Group

Academic/Career Pathways Program: On behalf of the Employment Training Infrastructure Working Group, the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) recommends to the Governor that he request an annual GPR allocation of \$3.14M for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to expand a proven youth talent development system statewide between employers, public agencies, and its K12 staff, students, and families.

Tools of the Trade: On behalf of the Employment Training Infrastructure Working Group, the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) recommends to the Governor that he support programs to assist students in paying for materials associated with the apprenticeship program.

Growing Workforce Opportunities Working Group

Flexible Job Training Support: On behalf of the Growing Workforce Opportunities Working Group, the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) recommends to the Governor that he support flexible job training options along with employment-related support to maximize efficient use of resources to meet customers' employment needs.

WIOA Working Group

Broadband Expansion: On behalf of the WIOA Working Group, the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) recommends to the Governor that he direct DWD to coordinate with the Wisconsin Broadband Office (WBO) to focus resources on improving broadband expansion access in rural and underserved areas of Wisconsin to promote workforce development and effective labor market participation.



Employment Training Infrastructure Working Group

ACADEMIC/CAREER PATHWAYS (ACP) PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

The Governor request an annual GPR allocation of \$3.14M for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to expand a proven youth talent development system statewide between employers, public agencies, and its K12 staff, students, and families.

Wisconsin K12 Career Readiness and Connections to a State Talent Development System

Executive Summary – ACP

The Governor’s Council on Workforce Investment is requesting an annual GPR allocation of \$3.14M to expand a proven youth talent development system statewide between employers, public agencies, and its K12 staff, students, and families.

Several challenges highlight the need for ongoing coordination. First, workforce and talent development for youth is currently delivered through several, sometimes disconnected, programs, agencies, and initiatives beholden to different federal and state legislative requirements. In addition, growth in the working-age population is expected to slow through 2040. Together, these factors make it critical to ensure that training and educational opportunities are consistent with the types of jobs that will become available. A strong collaboration among the many stakeholders is needed.



The Model

State and Regionally Coordinated Career Pathways (regional career pathways) have delivered the unified effort of a successful youth talent development system. This model has been field-tested under a pilot program funded by J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation's New Skills for Youth grant. The pilot demonstrated the following:

- ◆ No one group can “own” career pathways, especially an educational or public agency. To be successful, **regional career pathways must be structured as a true collaboration with employers leading the efforts and not just in an advisory role.**
- ◆ There is a need for long-term, sustainable coordination of youth talent development through an employer-driven career pathways model that provides information to:
 - Education (K12, technical colleges, universities)
 - Training centers (apprenticeships)
 - Workforce development (boards, job centers, training centers, transitions)
 - Economic development (talent development, retention, attraction)

This model is co-owned, collaboratively led by all partners and is accountable to the state for talent development.

The model's successful structure is based on regional teams co-managed by two groups:

- ◆ **Regional Economic Development Organizations** coordinate representation by employers in high-demand and growing industries, workforce development, chambers of commerce, schools, higher education, employer associations, and community leading for K12 career and talent development. Note: Employers continually report that they are “burnt out” by requests from numerous educational and public agency partners without any coordination.
- ◆ **Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs)** provide permanent state-level coordination between public agencies, K12 schools, and higher education partners on youth workforce and talent development initiatives: one representing employer and workforce interests (at WEDC) and one representing K12 and higher educational interests (at DPI)—both reportable and accountable to the DWD Council on Workforce Investment.



Annual Budget Request: \$3.14M

The New Skills for Youth grant ended in December 2019. Bridge funding from the federal career and technical education (CTE) programs is temporarily extending the pilot work statewide beginning in the 2020-21 academic year. However, this is not a sustainable source as it reduces the overall allocation to individual school CTE programs.

Concerns exist that unless the independent, regional economic development organizations and partner CESAs obtain funding for dedicated staffing, support for development, implementation, and access to Wisconsin's quality high-skill high-demand career pathways is unlikely to continue beyond the Perkins Reserve period.

District Career Advising	\$120,000 salary and fringe (1 FTE/CESA) for a dedicated career and workforce education coordinator in each of 12 regional CESAs. This would align district K12 Academic and Career Planning (ACP) services to regional and local career pathways, immersive career development training to school staff, workforce education, business development outreach, and coordination between businesses and school boards of districts with a focus on reducing barriers to equitable access, participation, and completion.	\$1,440,000
Support of State and Regional Collaboratives: Sustainability	<p>\$120,000 salary and fringe (1 FTE State + 1 FTE/REDO)</p> <p>a. Provide for a state K12 talent development coordinator to coordinate, support, and implement statewide K12 Career Ready Wisconsin talent initiatives among nine regional economic regions.</p> <p>b. Provide a staff person at each of nine regional economic groups to recruit, train, and support employer mentors and coaches to partner, offer, and implement K12 career-based learning experiences, including support of Inspire. The results from these efforts have the potential to support the adult workforce as well.</p>	\$1,200,000
Increase ACP Budget Request	Increase the current DPI-ACP annual allocation to allow for increases in subscription rates for the business-education software tool, and continued support of ACP identification of best practices, student outcomes, and district support.	\$500,000

The proposal would advance the Council on Workforce Investment's mission and meets many of the stated aims of the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) Foundation's February 2019 policy paper, Wisconsin Workforce Competitiveness Evaluation. See the full, detailed report here: https://www.wmc.org/wp-content/uploads/Future-WI-Report_FINAL.pdf

TOOLS OF THE TRADE RECOMMENDATION:

The Governor support programs to assist students in paying for materials associated with the apprenticeship program.

Connection to CWI's Mission:

The Employment Training Infrastructure Working Group has, as one of its two strategic priority areas, recommended in the CWI's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan (http://wi-cwi.org/pdf/cwi_2018_strategic_plan.pdf) a goal to increase awareness and support and expand worker training programs and apprenticeships throughout Wisconsin. The Tools of the Trade Apprentice Scholarship program has been identified as a way to support apprenticeships that CWI supports funding and expanding statewide.

Background:

Wisconsin employers continue to seek workers in the trades and apprenticeships have been successful in helping meet that demand. However, some apprentices may struggle to afford certain program and material costs associated with an apprenticeship that are not covered by their sponsors. The Tools of the Trade Scholarship program seeks to support construction and industrial trade apprentices attending a Wisconsin Technical College System college by awarding 230 apprentices with financial needs up to \$1,000 to help cover the costs of equipment, uniforms, unique tools, and other equipment associated with their apprenticeship. The existing Tools of the Trade program is currently privately funded for the system by the Ascendum Education Philanthropy (formerly Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation) and annually dispenses approximately \$200,000 in grants.

Legislation that creates a grant program to technical college students for apprenticeship expenses has received bipartisan support. (See 2019 Senate Bill 44.)

As Wisconsinites work to restart their economy, it is critical that they are provided the support, training, and, in some, cases reskilling that they need to return to work. Apprenticeships help meet the needs of both employer and employee, providing the former with a trained labor force and the latter with reliable, family-supporting jobs. With that in mind, the CWI recommends to the Governor that he support programming to assist students in paying for materials associated with the apprenticeship program, thereby helping to remove some of the financial barriers of entry that some Wisconsin apprentices face.



Growing Workforce Opportunities Working Group

FLEXIBLE JOB TRAINING SUPPORT RECOMMENDATION:

The Governor support flexible job training options along with employment-related support to maximize efficient use of resources to meet customers' employment needs.

The Governor's Council on Workforce Investment is recommending the Governor support flexible job training options along with employment-related support to maximize efficient use of resources to meet customers' employment needs.

The Growing Workforce Opportunities Working Group is shifting focus and strategies while COVID realities continue. Unemployment rates are high. Wisconsin residents are challenged financially and searching for new job opportunities can be challenging. This new focus pivots this committee towards short-, medium-, long-term priorities with the highest priority on job training along with employment related support. This group will make recommendations to the workforce partners in support of flexible training options and efficient use of resources to meet customer needs and asks the Governor to support these recommendations once they are made.

Federal Pell Grants are not always available for workers. A focus on career pathways to provide just-in-time training is critical, and demonstrating an expectation that key Workforce agencies work closely to maximize both their training and support financial resources to increase the probability of positive training/employment outcomes for participants is essential. "Outside of the box" approaches to providing training through proven strategic such as short-term boot camps and customized training options will need support.

Guiding this are key principles that the expanded WIOA partnership is focused on at the current time. Those principles are:

- ◆ Focus on traditionally marginalized populations
- ◆ Family-centered employment approaches in workforce development
- ◆ Inclusivity
- ◆ Ongoing research and collaboration
- ◆ Evidence-based practice and decision making



The Growing Workforce Opportunities Working Group asks for the Governor's support in these short-, medium-, and long-term approaches to address current workforce needs in Wisconsin.

Short- and Medium-Term

- ◆ Encourage and endorse training efforts focused on supporting adults and dislocated workers now unemployed/underemployed in the state, whether working through DWD, Technical Colleges, the University of Wisconsin system, etc. These training efforts will focus on providing the necessary reskilling and upskilling needed for the Wisconsin labor force. These trainings will include both traditional postsecondary trainings and apprenticeship services.
- ◆ Support DWD (and other agencies) efforts to bring new resources to the state to address worker and employer needs. These include federal DOL COVID/Emergency grant opportunities and exploration of other state/federal/private funds that could support the work group's worker training goals.
- ◆ Expand partnerships with key community groups that connect with customers that need more assistance. These groups include Boys and Girls Club, Urban League, and other organizations. Many current and future workforce participants face challenges, including their home situation and lack of relevant work experience. Community groups provide valuable resources and support; partnering with these groups will grow the workforce. Creative community outreach strategies combined with use of work experience programs can be beneficial.
- ◆ Provide support for new and innovative approaches to match employers and job seekers, including virtual job fair strategies, drive through job fairs, or other efforts during COVID restrictions. Focus more efforts on IT solutions that will provide more positive impact while virtual services are still on the forefront.
- ◆ Demonstrate expectations that partners in the WIOA state plan (DWD, DCF, DHS, DOC, WTCS) and other agencies work closely together to maximize coordination and effectiveness, not only for the purpose of stretching valuable resources, but with a goal of removing barriers for participants that limit their overall training and employment efforts.
- ◆ Have close collaboration with the Bureau of Workforce Information, to ensure real time Labor Market data is always at the forefront when considering the in-demand occupations, related training requirements, and re-tooling needs of workers to ensure the right training is made available for the right jobs.

Long Term:

- ◆ Investigate efficient strategies to capture relevant agency asset mapping resource information in a way that is informative and current. ASSET mapping is complicated and can quickly become dated. However, by exploring internet-based options that will stay up-to-date, a more meaningful engagement with participants in need of services can be provided.



WIOA Working Group

BROADBAND EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Governor direct DWD to coordinate with the Wisconsin Broadband Office (WBO) to focus resources on improving broadband expansion access in rural and underserved areas of Wisconsin to promote workforce development and effective labor market participation.

Context

Among the significant and wide-ranging impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on American life, it has turned the labor market upside down. Only a short time ago, the unemployment rate in Wisconsin reached an all-time low of 3.1% and CEOs consistently cited the difficulty of recruiting employees as their top concern. Indeed, the work of the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) had until now focused on how to reach untapped corners of the labor market to help alleviate the labor shortage. Currently, the challenges of this labor market are quite different after the state's unemployment rate has increased; topping out at a staggering 14.1% and currently sitting at 7%.

Helping unemployed Americans get back to work is obviously the main challenge of today's labor market. It is arguably the main challenge the nation faces. Considering how much the labor market has deteriorated, the WIOA Working Group met to reassess the group's recommendations to CWI. Although the work had previously focused on strategies for outreach to dislocated labor market participants, it was decided to change the focus to policy ideas that will help unemployed Wisconsinites get through this crisis and re-engage with the labor market.

A key aspect of the mandate for CWI is to encourage collaboration between the DWD and various state agencies. The spirit behind the legislation that led to the creation of CWI – the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) – was to foster closer intra-governmental cooperation around workforce development and job creation.

Among other aims, DWD is tasked with providing resources for Wisconsin workers to empower them to pursue in-demand careers. In this moment, and for years to come, it is hard to think of a more important resource than broadband access. Broadband access at home will be the lifeline that connects Wisconsinites to the labor market of the information age.

The Permanent Shift to Remote Working

Amid lockdowns and stay-at-home measures, the pandemic has rapidly accelerated the shift to remote work. A study (https://john-joseph-horton.com/papers/remote_work.pdf) by economists at MIT estimated that as much as half of the US workforce had started working remotely during the past several months. More conservative estimates (<https://bfi.uchicago.edu/working-paper/how-many-jobs-can-be-done-at-home/>) of the prevalence of remote working still suggest the percentage is above one-third. The idea that the pandemic may have set off a permanent shift towards working remotely has gained widespread acceptance. At the very least, the pandemic seems to have accelerated a trend that was already well underway.

Companies like Facebook and Twitter have publicly announced policies to promote remote working. Facebook estimates that 50% of employees will eventually work remotely, and Twitter said that all employees can choose to work from home permanently. Anecdotal evidence suggests that moves like this are widespread beyond Silicon Valley – even “old line” industrial companies like Ford and GM have encouraged employees not directly involved in manufacturing activities to remain working from home.

Broadband Access – Lifeline to The New Labor Market

Working from home requires internet access at home and that access typically needs to be high speed. Currently, the most effective and economical way to enable high speed delivery of digital telecommunications is through wireline broadband technology, which refers generally to providing a direct physical connection through digital subscriber lines (DSL), cable, or fiber optic lines from a household to a communications network.

Over the past two decades, high speed internet access at home has become a gateway to some of the most exciting and entertaining aspects of social life in America. In a post-pandemic America, broadband internet at home will become a pressing economic necessity (if not already). Without it, many Americans will be left without access not just to the internet, but also to the job market.

Conversely, those who do have access will have literally a world of new opportunities available to them – especially as advanced economies across the globe shift more towards “knowledge work” and rely less on manufacturing jobs. In making their announcement about permanent work from home, executives at Twitter noted that this will be a boon for their employees because of increased work-life flexibility, and they also noted that the company will be able to access pools of labor far behind their offices in Silicon Valley and other tech hubs like Austin and Denver. Armed with a good internet connection, Americans can theoretically live anywhere and participate seamlessly in the national labor market.

It should come as no surprise that countries, states, economic sectors, and demographic groups where workers quickly converted from commuting to work to working from home experienced sharply lower rates of unemployment during the pandemic crisis. For instance, one month into the crisis the unemployment rate in “computer occupations” fell to 2.8% while all other occupations skyrocketed to 15.0% (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2020/06/11/unemployment-rate-for-computer-occupations-fell-in-may/#23ddd88d16ad>). Access to broadband internet is quickly becoming the next fault line of economic inequality in America and in the world. As former Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission Tom Wheeler observed, (<https://www.brookings.edu/research/5-steps-to-get-the-internet-to-all-americans/the>) “digital divide” will soon become the “digital chasm.”

Broadband in Wisconsin

Access to broadband technology in Wisconsin consistently ranks among the bottom half of US states. The challenge in Wisconsin is one of access, affordability, and quality. According to data from the FCC and other sources, (<https://broadbandnow.com/Wisconsin>) almost 200,000 Wisconsinites have no access to any wired internet providers. Roughly 1 in every 10 Wisconsinites have no access to broadband internet. An additional 2 of every 10 have access to only one provider, leaving no options to switch. Even among areas where high speed internet is available, there is significant disparity. For instance, Racine boasts an average download speed of 114 megabytes per second (MBPS), whereas Wisconsin’s third largest city Green Bay has average speeds less than half of that at 51 MBPS.

Given the nature of broadband technology where physical connections are required to individual households, higher population density clearly reduces the cost per capita to install access. Rural areas consistently have lower rates of broadband penetration as compared to urban areas. Wisconsin’s urbanization rate at round 70% is well below the US average at 81% and even the Midwest at 76%.

Recognizing the challenges of improving broadband access in a state like Wisconsin with a significant rural population, the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) created the Wisconsin Broadband Office (WBO) in 2009 with the aim of making “Wisconsin more competitive through advancing the availability, adoption, and use of broadband technologies.” Among other activities, WBO administers grants to facilitate the expansion of broadband to rural and high-cost areas and keeps track of data related to broadband access. Governor Evers has made it a top priority to improve broadband access in the state: Over the next biennium, WBO has access to nearly \$50 million in funding to accomplish its work,

(<https://psc.wi.gov/Documents/broadband/Wisconsin%20Broadband%20Plan%202019.pdf>) which represents 20% more funding than the previous period. WBO's end goal is to enable high speed internet access for every Wisconsinite by the end of the year 2025.

Policy Recommendations for CWI

In light of CWI's mandate and the mission of DWD, the WIOA Working Group recommends that DWD focus more effort and resources on coordinating with WBO on improving broadband access in rural and underserved areas of Wisconsin. Specifically, DWD should work with WBO to focus on those aspects of broadband access that are most critical to effective labor market participation:

Speed: WBO stated in its 2019 plan that, "The Governor has proposed a speed goal of 25 megabits per second download and 3 megabits per second upload (25/3 speed) for all Wisconsin homes and businesses by 2025." When the 25 MBPS standard was first introduced by the FCC in 2015, it was thought to be the necessary speed to allow for video streaming and multi-device connectedness. That standard is now antiquated compared to the demands of work-at-home today. Most of America already exceeds the 25 MBPS standard: 90% of Americans have 100 MBPS speed at home, and 85% have 250 MPBS. Spending government money to build sub-standard infrastructure will do little to close the digital divide for Wisconsinites. The standard must be revised up to 100 MBPS.

Affordability: WBO helps defray the cost of broadband installation through grants but is not currently subsidizing on-going service. A study by the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society estimated that low-income families can afford to pay only \$10/month for internet, compared to the average cost of high-speed internet service of \$60/month. This disparity becomes especially acute considering that those who need internet access the most right now to re-engage with the remote labor market are those who have become unemployed. DWD and WBO should explore how they can bring together their resources and money to bear on the challenges of affordability. – e.g. how can Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients and adults in job trainings get access to service and device discounts? Just as public transportation helps many who cannot afford private transportation to physically get to work, public subsidy of high-speed internet connections at home will be necessary to help people get to work – virtually.

Digital literacy: Providing the pipeline to the internet is a major part of the challenge faced in Wisconsin, but the work cannot end there. Workers will require computer and internet skills. The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas observed that more than 80% of "middle-skilled jobs" (e.g. jobs that require a bachelor's degree and pay above \$15/hr) are digital-intensive. Not coincidentally, this is also the sector of the labor market that has grown the fastest in the post-Great Recession recovery. Non digital-intensive middle-skilled jobs have grown even slower than low-skilled work. Improving digital literacy among Wisconsinites, especially among those who do not have access to broadband, will require a wide partnership of public schools, private employers, state agencies, and non-profit groups. It is an admittedly broad challenge, but one where DWD and WBO are especially well-positioned to take a lead.

Conclusion

The pandemic has given us all new awareness of the workers who are essential to keep life going. It has also given us new awareness of the essential infrastructure that can keep Americans working. Access to broadband internet has moved far beyond a quality-of-life factor. Its extensive impact on all aspects of life in America – and particularly on an individual's access to the new labor market where remote working has become a norm – has made it a key determinant of overall life outcomes. Having access to broadband at home is not just about being able to watch Netflix. It is about being able to educate children at home, seek treatment from health professionals without traveling to a clinic, and crucially, about being able to work in a 21st century post-pandemic America.



October 14, 2020

Ethan Lauer
Staff Attorney
One East Main Street, Suite 401
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Robin Vos
Assembly Speaker
Wisconsin
President, NCSL

Martha R. Wigton
Director
House Budget & Research
Office
Georgia
Staff Chair, NCSL

Tim Storey
Executive Director

Dear Wisconsin Legislative Council:

Workforce development activities exist at all levels of government. At the federal level, [WIOA, or the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#), lays out the roles and responsibilities for states in the workforce space, disseminates funding, and provides big-picture guidance and rules to the states.

State workforce agencies then serve as the intermediary between federal and local workforce activities. States partner with diverse stakeholders, including private sector companies, organized labor, post-secondary education, career and technical education, and economic development providers, to create wholesale workforce development processes and programs. States also have the power to serve as connectors and convenors of other workforce development providers at the local level to ensure these providers are working together and aligning, instead of duplicating, efforts.

Local workforce boards coordinate with a wide range of other publicly funded programs outside the workforce space to ensure workforce customers have the essential tools they need. This includes connecting them to child care, housing resources, career and technical education, and other necessary services at the local level. Local workforce boards are also most often responsible for the direct provision of services and resources to individuals.

Prior to 2014 and Congress' passage of WIOA, each state approached workforce development differently and a lack of coordination among programs and service providers within state systems was common. WIOA changed this by requiring state governments to create and maintain a [WIOA-compliant state workforce development board](#) to oversee the transition to the new WIOA model mandated by Congress. Generally, WIOA still gives states latitude to make the workforce decisions that make the most sense in their specific contexts, but WIOA does standardize many of the structures and systems related to federal investment in skill development in the states.

One main component of the standardization of state structures includes the requirement that states create WIOA-compliant state workforce development board. [Guidance](#) from the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration aims to standardize these workforce boards across the states. Aside from listing the responsibilities of each state board, the guidance sets out criteria for selecting and appointing state board members, representation term limits for members, recommendations on staffing, and sunshine requirements for the boards' operations. The guidelines set out requirements for local workforce boards as well, so states can help ensure that they are WIOA-compliant.

WIOA-compliant state workforce boards are required to:

Denver 7700 East First Place, Denver CO 80230 | 303-364-7700 Washington D.C. 444 North Capitol Street, N.W. Suite 515, Washington, D.C. 20001 | 202-624-5400
nctl.org | info@nctl.org

- Have diverse representation (individuals, businesses, organizations).
- Manage the state's one-stop system for both job seekers and employers.
- Align federal investment in job training, integrating service delivery across program and ensuring that the workforce system is job-driven.
- Convene and connect regional and local workforce providers.

While WIOA led to major restructuring of state workforce development systems as they pertain to providing federal programs and resources, many states have continued their efforts to standardize and streamline their state-level programs in recent years. One result of these efforts includes the creation of a centralized governing body with overarching authority on state-level workforce programs. Referred to as boards, cabinets or commissions, these entities are responsible for bringing together the many different stakeholders involved in workforce policy and increasing coordination and collaboration across state programs. In some states, these entities may also be responsible for coordinating WIOA programs, while other states may have separate governing bodies responsible for WIOA resources. Although the WIOA guidance provides a baseline of minimum requirements states must meet with their workforce development boards, they are free to go above and beyond and assign additional responsibilities to these bodies. Examples from recent legislative sessions include the following:

- In 2019, [Alabama passed legislation](#) creating the Lieutenant Governor's Commission on 21st Century Workforce. The commission, which will be comprised of six members of the legislature and the lieutenant governor, is charged with studying and making recommendations to the legislature on state-level workforce development programs and coordinating those programs across state government.
- In 2019, [Arkansas passed legislation](#) creating a comprehensive, statewide workforce development system and helping coordinate existing workforce programs. The legislation established a workforce development board composed of members from diverse industries in the state to study the current workforce resources available and develop a strategic plan and road map for meeting current and future workforce demands. The workforce development board is also tasked with making recommendations to the legislature and the governor on how best to streamline and improve the workforce development system in the state.
- In 2019, [Connecticut passed SB 356](#), which requires the state's labor commissioner and commissioner of education to partner and establish a committee to coordinate and modernize apprenticeship training programs in the state. The legislation requires the commissioner of education to identify potential pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs that can be integrated and leverage funding of career and technical education (CTE) programs with high schools and higher education intuitions for careers in various industries. The committee is directed to report its analysis and recommendations on the state's current apprenticeship training programs, as well as any improvements that could be made, to the General Assembly.
- In 2018, [Vermont passed legislation](#) to make changes to its system to improve coordination and collaboration. The legislation refers to the state's existing structure as a "series of fragmented workforce development programs, but not a unified workforce development system." The legislation created the State Workforce Development Board to commit to a three-year process led by the commissioner of labor, with the ultimate goal of redesigning Vermont's workforce development system. The process, involving key stakeholders such as those from labor, education, training, business and government, is set to align these stakeholders and create a new framework for the state's system. The Workforce Development Board will be responsible for presenting any recommendations from this process to the legislature for action.
- In 2018, [Indiana passed legislation](#) creating the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, intended to help bring the many different existing workforce development efforts together in the state. The Cabinet consists of 21 members made up of all key stakeholders in the state's workforce development system. These include individuals from economic development, higher education, community colleges, apprenticeship organizations, and individuals representing minority, women and veteran-owned businesses. The cabinet is tasked with meeting regularly throughout the year and advising the governor on the coordination of workforce development services, as well

as its use of state workforce-related funds and the coordination and use of any federal resources. The cabinet is also required to perform a number of additional functions, including monitoring and directing implementation of programs and evaluating them for their effectiveness.

Sincerely,

Iris Hentze
Policy Specialist

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
BELOIT COLLEGE
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
CARROLL UNIVERSITY
CARTHAGE COLLEGE
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
HERZING UNIVERSITY
LAKELAND UNIVERSITY
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
MARIAN UNIVERSITY



WISCONSIN'S PRIVATE, NONPROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
WORKING TOGETHER FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN
MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY
NASHOTAH HOUSE
NORTHLAND COLLEGE
RIPON COLLEGE
ST. NORBERT COLLEGE
VITERBO UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

Informational Memorandum

Date: November 6, 2020

To: Wisconsin Legislative Council

From: Dr. Rolf Wegenke, President
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Subject: Legislative Interim Research Report on the Organization of Wisconsin's Workforce Development System

The Wisconsin Legislative Council is preparing a report on the scope and status of Wisconsin's current workforce development system. This memorandum summarizes contributions of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) to Wisconsin's workforce. My hope is that the information included in this memorandum will assist in your efforts to create a comprehensive picture of Wisconsin's workforce development system. This memorandum is intended to provide a high-level overview of the many areas WAICU is involved and contributions to the state's workforce development.

WAICU's Contributions to the Workforce—Critical Occupations

In the 2017-18 academic year, WAICU-member colleges and universities produced 23 percent of all bachelor's degrees and 35 percent of all advanced degrees in the state.¹ They also produce disproportionately high numbers of graduates in critical occupations.

High-demand occupations – undergraduate degrees

- 26% of business graduates
- 27% of engineering graduates
- 36% of health professions graduates
- 46% of nursing (BSN) graduates

¹ IPEDS Completions Survey, Fall 2018.

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President

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High-demand occupations – graduate degrees

- 41% of pharmacists
- 46% of education graduates
- 45% of business graduates
- 53% of physician assistants
- 54% of medical doctors
- 100% of dentists

Of the 2017-18 graduates, post-baccalaureate surveys show that 72 percent are employed while 15 percent went on to attend graduate school. Of those employed, 65 percent stayed in Wisconsin to begin their career.²

The WAICU Career Directors have hosted 29 annual WorkForce Fairs for students and recent graduates of Wisconsin’s private, nonprofit colleges to learn about jobs, internships, and graduate school opportunities. Over 3,500 students have participated over the past five years and approximately 150 employers and graduate schools host exhibitor booths each year. The 2021 fair will be utilizing a virtual format. In addition, considering these extraordinary times, WAICU has decided to open the WorkForce Fair to students and graduates from the University of Wisconsin System and Wisconsin Technical College System. This is an experiment, but it also is a demonstration of our commitment to cross-sector collaboration.

WAICU also has partnered with WTCS and the UW System on a voluntary initiative to increase the proportion of working-age adults with an education credential beyond high school. Fifty-three percent of adults (ages 25 to 64) currently in Wisconsin’s workforce hold a postsecondary credential (degree or certificate). Wisconsin’s population is aging. With a wave of retirements and fewer high school graduates, the state faces an urgent and growing need for talent. To meet that need, many more people must earn a degree or high-quality credential beyond high school. A higher “attainment rate”—the proportion of those aged 25 to 64 with an education credential beyond high school—is tied to greater labor force participation and increased earnings. When the higher education partners began evolving the state’s attainment goal, only 47 percent of our population held such education. Since then the educational attainment of Wisconsinites has increased to 53 percent in 2020. Working together, we are making great progress. More on this initiative can be found at <https://www.60forward.org/> and at <https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/2020/#state/WI>

WAICU’s Contributions to the Workforce—Jobs of the Future

According to a Georgetown University report, “Of the 7.2 million jobs lost in the [2008] recession, 5.6 million were jobs for workers with a high school diploma or less. These workers have recovered only [one] percent of those job losses over the past six years. This group [with a high school diploma or less] also saw no growth among well-paying jobs with benefits.”³ United States Census Bureau data showed

² 2020 WAICU Institutional Survey.

³ Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, *America’s Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots*, 2016.

that 99 percent of the jobs added after the Great Recession went to workers with some college experience.⁴ Jobs are important, but a quality higher education includes more than preparation for a career. The 21st century learning skills are often called the “5 Cs”: critical reasoning, creative thinking, communicating, collaborating, and character. These skills are vital to success in college and beyond.

WAICU’s Contributions to the Workforce—Community Development

Higher education provides a ladder of economic opportunity for students while also building a globally competitive workforce. Colleges and universities are pillars of their communities partnering with business and the state to address workforce needs, employing thousands of individuals across our state and in searching for scientific solutions to some of society’s greatest challenges. For example, WAICU members are intellectual leaders, receiving support from both public and private sponsors to study artificial intelligence, spinal cord regeneration, and water desalination. In some cases, particularly more rural parts of the state, WAICU institutions are a main economic driver within their community.

WAICU’s Contributions to the Workforce—Leadership

WAICU serves on many economic development related boards and councils, representing the voice of Wisconsin’s private, nonprofit colleges and universities. Below is a listing of a few relevant boards and councils.

- Governor’s Council on Workforce Investment
- Wisconsin Distance Learning Authorization Board, Chair
- Wisconsin Educational Communications Board, Chair
- Wisconsin Public Broadcasting Foundation Board, Chair
- Wisconsin Technology Council, Executive Committee
 - Human Capital Committee, Chair
 - Personnel Committee, Chair
- Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce
 - Talent Development Advisory Committee
 - Competitiveness Advisory Committee of “Future Wisconsin”
- Midwest Higher Education Compact, Commissioner and Executive Committee

WAICU’s Contributions to the Workforce—Innovation

Wisconsin’s private colleges serve a broad range of students and meet the needs of today’s workforce. Wisconsin’s private colleges were among the first to offer evening and online courses to accommodate nontraditional students who have full-time jobs and families. Another example is the creation of business partnerships and co-ops to achieve a “win-win” for students looking for valuable work

⁴ Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the study estimated that 11.5 million of the 11.6 million jobs added after the recession went to workers with some college experience.

experience and local employers eager for talent. Private, nonprofit colleges and universities were founded to achieve a mission for the betterment of all peoples, to be responsive to students and employers. With over 65 percent of the workforce requiring some form of college experience, our economy and civic and cultural life depend, more than ever, on colleges and universities and on a flourishing private sector. Additional innovative approaches to career readiness include:

- Adult and accelerated learning programs
- Veteran and service member support, including credit for military training; the Yellow Ribbon Program; and dedicated points of contact for support services for veterans, military servicemembers, and their families
- Credit for life experiences
- Continuing professional education in fields such as dentistry, education, law, medicine, physical therapy, and social work.
- Cooperative learning models that incorporate professional work experience and academic learning
- Dual credit & Advanced Placement (AP) credit

WAICU's Contribution to the Workforce—Education Partners

In July Dr. Rolf Wegenke, president of WAICU, and Dr. Morna K. Foy, president of WTCS, signed the WAICU-WTCS Credit Course Transfer Agreement (CCTA).

Fifteen WAICU-member colleges and universities and all of Wisconsin's technical colleges agreed to be part of the first cohort who will accept transfer credit for 14 WTCS courses within the subject areas of social and behavioral sciences, communications, natural sciences, and quantitative reasoning. For students who begin their college education at one of 16 Wisconsin Technical Colleges and wish to pursue a four-year degree at a Wisconsin private, nonprofit college or university, the CCTA will make the path smoother. This agreement complements existing partnerships that many Wisconsin technical colleges and Wisconsin private nonprofit colleges already had in place.

Thanks to the willing partners at the WTC system office and an advisory task force of WAICU campus leaders, WAICU developed the agreement to help decrease students' time to degree completion. WAICU and WTCS also negotiated course equivalencies that provide great value to transfer students by reducing or eliminating the need to spend extra time and money retaking courses. Dr. Foy stated:

Wisconsin's private colleges and universities have long been leaders in recognizing the rigor of a technical college education, and the value of creating transfer opportunities for our students. This agreement sets a strong foundation for the future by allowing all of our institutions – in both sectors – to make lifelong learning opportunities even clearer for students.

Under the agreement, the participating WAICU-member colleges and universities will accept any or all the specified 14 WTCS courses, when offered, for direct transfer credit, not elective credit. The credit

can count toward requirements for a bachelor's degree provided the student earned a grade of "C" or better within the last ten years. Technical college students must also meet the admissions requirements of the private college. Dr. Wegenke stated:

Streamlining the process to transfer credits from a technical college to a four-year private college opens doors for more students to earn bachelor's degrees in Wisconsin. Our private colleges have longstanding relationships with the technical colleges, and this new agreement will make a difference as the state strives to increase the level of educational attainment and improve our position in the competitive knowledge economy.

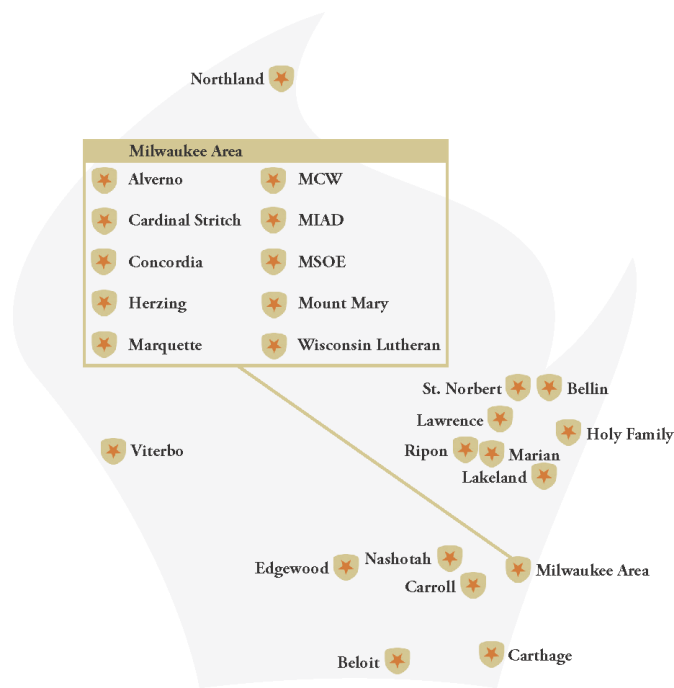
WAICU also has a long-standing partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to support the PK–20 continuum of education. As mentioned earlier, WAICU institutions educate and graduate 46 percent of Wisconsin's graduate degrees in education. Additionally, WAICU staff served on an Academic and Career Planning (ACP) advisory council convened by DPI, WTCS, workforce organizations, business, and industry. Districts are instructed to design and implement ACP as part of their continuous improvement efforts. While there is no prescriptive list of required activities, schools must demonstrate a sustained and systematic approach "to personalize education for each student." WAICU has engaged school counselors at workshops, college nights, and at the Wisconsin Education Fairs to learn more about how they are addressing these new expectations and how WAICU can help.

In addition, at the request of DPI, WAICU compiled a list of ACP contacts from our members, one contact in admissions and one in career services from each institution, to be available to answer questions or provide support to middle and high school teachers as they implement their ACP plans. The WAICU ACP designated contacts are invited to attend ACP trainings organized by DPI to learn how middle and high schools are implementing their ACP plans, and how staff at our member colleges and universities can support those efforts.



2020 WAICU-pedia

Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)



Our mission:

Working together for educational opportunity

The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) is the official organization of the twenty-four private (or independent), nonprofit institutions of higher learning in Wisconsin and their more than 56,000 students. Over 60 percent of undergraduate students are from Wisconsin. All of WAICU's programs and services support educational opportunity.

What we do

We **ADVANCE THE ACCESSIBILITY** and affordability of private, nonprofit colleges in Wisconsin.

We **ORGANIZE COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS** to save members time and money.

We **ADVOCATE POLICIES** that support student opportunity.

WAICU in state law

WAICU is recognized in state statutes (§§ 15.185(5)(c), 15.377, 15.67, 15.675(1)(c), 16.979, 36.31(2m)(a)3, 39.285, 39.30, 39.41, 39.435, 39.437(4)(a), 115.297, 118.19(1c)(a), 118.55, 440.52(11)(d)) and 2011 Governor's Executive Order #37, 2012 Governor's Executive Order #59, 2013 Governor's Executive Order #97, 2015 Governor's Executive Order #147, 2018 Governor's Executive Order #270, and 2019 Governor's Executive Order #37 as the official organization of Wisconsin's 24 nonprofit, private (or independent) colleges and universities.

A word from the president. . .

Countless industries have faced disruption in recent years. Think of the example of paper mills in the digital age. While the demand for paper has decreased, skyrocketing demands for shipping boxes from online retailers have presented new opportunities to utilize the assets paper mills already had. In much the same way, higher education is seizing opportunities to serve a broader range of students and meet the needs of the modern workforce. One example is that Wisconsin's private colleges were among the first to offer evening and online courses to accommodate nontraditional students who have full-time jobs and families. Another example is the creation of business partnerships and co-ops to achieve a "win-win" for students looking for valuable work experience and local employers eager for talent. In addition, WAICU institutions have for many years participated in the WAICU Collaboration Project; savings are directed to the benefit of students.

Colleges and universities are steadfast and resilient, and private, nonprofit institutions, in particular, are by their very existence designed to be responsive to students and employers. Now more than ever, we need to be supportive of these institutions and their mission to prepare our next generation of citizens and of the workforce. With over 65 percent of jobs requiring a postsecondary credential, our economy and civic and cultural life depend on it.



Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D.
WAICU President

WAICU cost-saving collaborations

- In 2018, **WAICU saved its members \$22,194,632** through more than 40 collaborative, cost-saving programs.
- The **cumulative savings** from the lifetime of the programs (since WAICU began reporting) now total **\$181,738,882**.
- The WAICU Collaboration Project, in helping to control college costs, is in keeping with WAICU's long-standing mission to expand educational opportunity.

60 Forward



- **The challenge:** Wisconsin's population is aging. With a wave of retirements and fewer high school graduates, the state faces an urgent and growing need for talent. To meet that need, many more people must earn a degree or high-quality credential beyond high school.
- **Why it matters:** A higher "attainment rate" — the proportion of those aged 25-64 with an education credential beyond high school — is tied to greater labor force participation and increased earnings. The Lumina Foundation reports that Wisconsin's attainment rate was 50.5 percent in 2017.
- **Where we're going:** In 2017, WAICU, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and the UW System received a grant from the Lumina Foundation to establish a goal of a 60 percent attainment rate for Wisconsin by 2027.

The way to achieve 60 Forward

In order to achieve Wisconsin's goal of a 60 percent attainment rate by 2027, it is essential to provide opportunities to underrepresented populations. Wisconsin Grants serve as a much-needed leg up to low-income students who may not otherwise be able to pursue higher education.

Return on investment



The **ROI of a college education is nearly 14 percent**, far exceeding investment benchmarks such as the long-term return on stocks (7 percent) or bonds (3 percent).¹

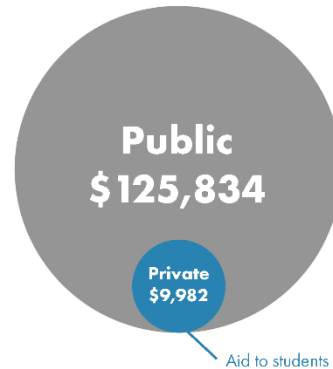
A bargain for taxpayers

Return on investment to state taxpayers

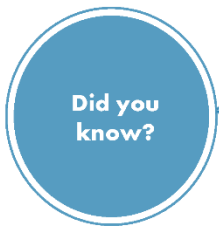
Over four years, the cost to state taxpayers per degree at UW-System institutions is **\$125,834** compared to only **\$9,982** at WAICU-member institutions.²

WAICU members do not receive direct taxpayer support; low-income Wisconsin students receive financial aid in the form of the Wisconsin Grant.

Cost of a degree to state taxpayers



Affordability



Ninety-seven percent of WAICU undergraduate students **receive financial aid**.³

The **average financial aid package** at WAICU members is **73 percent grants and scholarships**.⁴ These types of aid are gifts that do not need to be paid back.

Ninety-one percent of undergraduates receive grant/scholarship aid (including institutional aid) at WAICU members compared to 46 percent at public four-year institutions in Wisconsin.⁵

Privately-raised investment in students

In part because of decreases in state and federal aid, private, nonprofit colleges have worked hard to increase grant aid to students. For every **\$1 in state grants**, students at WAICU members receive **\$20 in institutional grants**.⁶



Sources: [1] Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2019 [2] HEAB, Legislative Fiscal Bureau, and IPEDS; 2017-18 [3] Full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates, WAICU Institutional Survey, 2017-18 [4] Ibid. [5] IPEDS 2017-18 [6] WAICU Institutional Survey, 2017-18

What is the tuition breakdown for WAICU-member institutions?¹

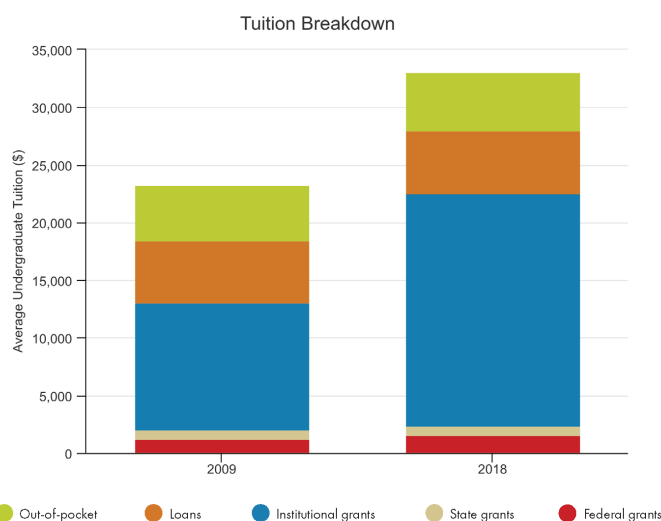
Out-of-pocket

For the eleventh year in a row at WAICU members, the **average out-of-pocket tuition** has been **at or under \$5,500**. Here's the math:

Average tuition and fees (sticker price) \$33,034

Average freshman financial aid package - \$28,010

Average out-of-pocket tuition \$5,024



Loans

Student loans may be issued by the federal government (the largest provider) or private lenders.

Institutional grants

Institutional aid includes both merit-based and need-based scholarships and grants from funds privately raised by the college or university. WAICU members have “skin in the game” - institutional aid has increased every year since at least the year 2000. Unlike loans, grants and scholarships do not need to be paid back.

The **average institutional aid award is \$20,274 per year** for first-time, full-time undergraduates at WAICU members. This institutional aid represents the significant difference in the advertised tuition “sticker price” and the amount the average student actually pays.

State grants

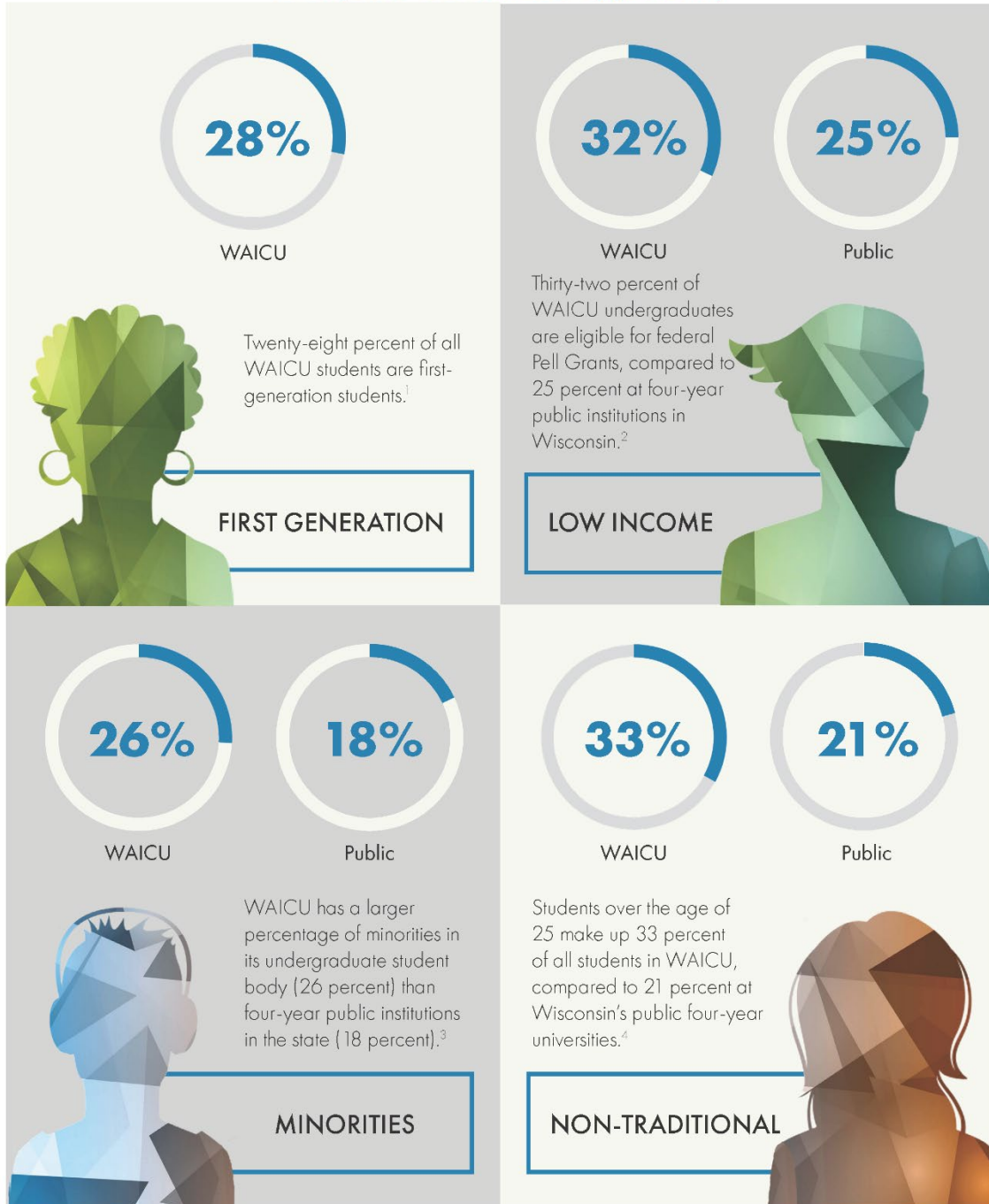
At the state level, the most notable aid program is the Wisconsin Grants program. Visit Wisconsin-Grants.org for details on this critical support for students with financial need.

Federal grants

Federal aid includes need-based Pell Grants as well as other programs, such as Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Department of Veterans Affairs grants, and the federal portion of the College Work Study Program (FWS).

Source: [1] Tuition breakdown for first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates. IPEDS, 2017-18 and WAICU Institutional Surveys

Private colleges are making a difference to expand educational opportunity



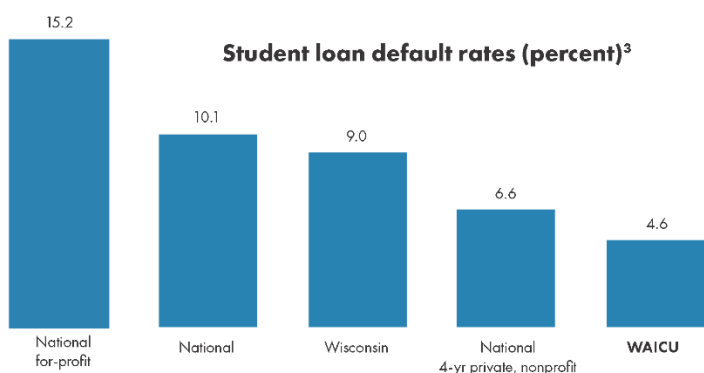
Advantages for students

At WAICU colleges and universities, the **average class size is 16 students**.¹ WAICU academic advisors work closely with students to keep them on track to graduate on time.

Students' chances of graduating in four years are 63 percent higher at WAICU members than at public four-year institutions in Wisconsin.² This reduces the cost of college and enables students to start earning sooner.



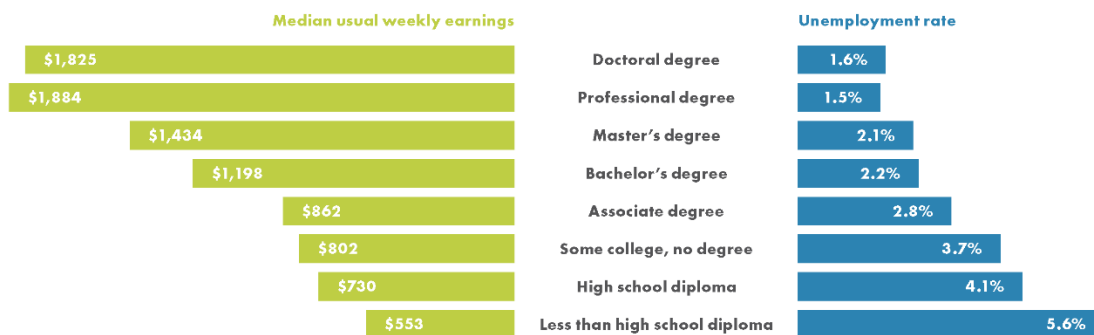
Manageable debt



Students who graduate are less likely to default on their loans. Students who attend WAICU institutions are considerably less likely to default on their student loans than other students from Wisconsin and nationwide.

The payback

College graduates on average earn more money and are less likely to be unemployed than those without a degree.⁴ This puts them in a stronger position to pay back student loans they may have and contribute to the health of the economy.



Sources: [1] WAICU Institutional Survey, 2018-19 [2] IPEDS, 2018 [3] U.S. Department of Education, 2016 [4] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018

From college to career

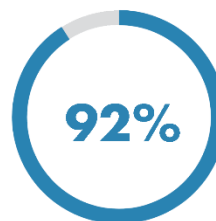
Career services

The career services offices at WAICU-member institutions provide a wide array of services to students as they begin their professional careers.

- Career exploration and counseling
- Résumé assistance and critique
- Mock interviews
- Internship placement support
- Networking and educational events
- Mentorship
- Professional resources for alumni/ae

Innovative approaches to career readiness

- Adult and accelerated learning programs
- Veteran and servicemember support, including: credit for military training; the Yellow Ribbon Program; and dedicated points of contact for support services for veterans, military servicemembers, and their families.
- Credit for life experiences
- Continuing professional education in fields such as dentistry, education, law, medicine, physical therapy, and social work.
- Cooperative learning models that incorporate professional work experience and academic learning
- Dual credit & Advanced Placement (AP) credit



An estimated **92 percent of graduates from private, nonprofit colleges are employed or in graduate school** within six months of graduation.¹

WorkForce Fair:

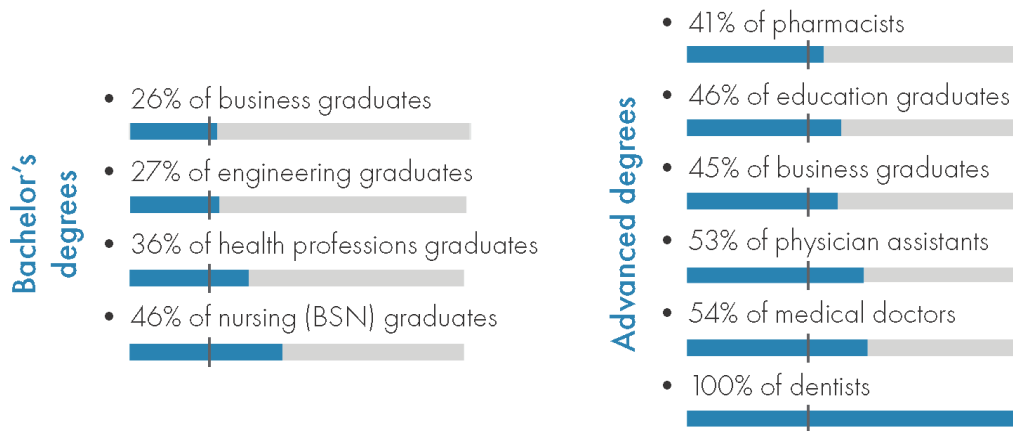
Jobs, Internships, and Graduate Schools

More than **900 students and alumni/ae and 185 employers and graduate schools** participate in the annual WorkForce Fair, organized by the Career Services Directors at WAICU members. The event—now in its 29th year—is held in February at the Wisconsin State Fair Park Exposition Center and draws a wide variety of top employers. The fair is open to students and alumni/ae in all majors.

Source: [1] NACE First Destination Survey, 2018

High-demand occupations

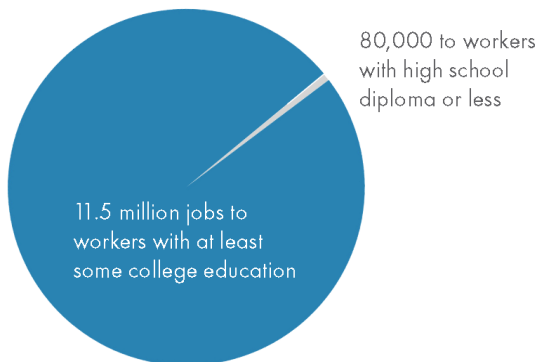
WAICU members produce **23 percent of all bachelor's degrees** and **35 percent of all advanced degrees** in the state.¹ They also produce disproportionately high numbers of graduates in critical occupations.



Good jobs for graduates

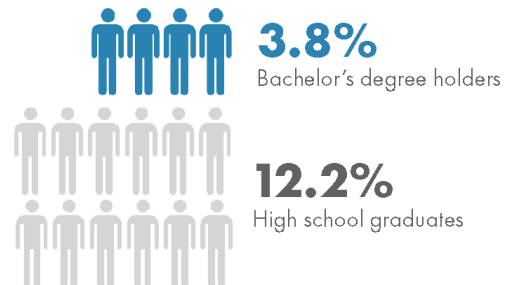
Job recovery after the recent recession²

11.6 million jobs



Unemployment rate among millennials³

(people ages 25 to 32)



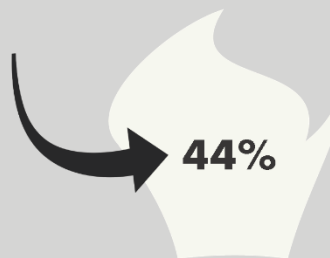
Sources: [1] IPEDS, 2017-18 [2] Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, "America's Divided Recovery," 2016 [3] Pew Research Center, "The Rising Cost of Not Going to College," 2014, data tabulated from 2013 March Current Population Survey (CPS)

A wide variety of entry points to WAICU colleges and universities



There are a wide range of entry points to private, nonprofit colleges and universities. WAICU members offer flexible options for adults in the workforce to complete their degrees including accelerated degree programs, online programs, transfer services, veteran support, and more.

Students from all corners of the globe attend WAICU institutions, and many remain in Wisconsin and contribute to our state's "brain gain." **WAICU members enroll 44 percent of their first-time undergraduate students from out of state.** In contrast, public universities in Wisconsin enroll 24 percent of their first-time undergraduates from out of state.¹



Nationally, **41 percent of students earning an associate degree pursue a bachelor's degree** within six years.²



A recent report from the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) showed that nearly 20 percent of students transferring credits from WTCS transferred them to a WAICU member. Over the last five academic years, nearly 10,000 students have transferred from WTCS to WAICU. All 16 technical colleges have program-specific articulation agreements with WAICU members, which streamline the transfer process.

Wisconsin Grants: an investment in Wisconsin's future



The Wisconsin Tuition Grant, now known as Wisconsin Grants, was enacted in 1965 to help qualified Wisconsin citizens to succeed. Wisconsin Grants are the primary state-funded, **need-based financial aid program for Wisconsin students** attending institutions of higher education in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Grants funding has received **bipartisan support**.

The Wisconsin Grant Program:

- Targets Wisconsin families with financial need
- Requires that students are academically qualified
- Helps close affordability and attainment gaps
- Enables students to attend their best-fit college
- Holds down student debt
- Incentivizes students to stay in state and builds Wisconsin's future workforce

63,567 students from across the state receive a Wisconsin Grant.¹ They attend all kinds of institutions:

Four-year | Private | Public | Two-year

Learn more at www.Wisconsin-Grants.org

Combating disparity in opportunity

Nationally, 77 percent of adults from families in the top income quartile earned at least a bachelor's degree by the time they turned 24. But only nine percent of people from the lowest income quartile did the same.²

Need-based student aid pays for itself

It is estimated that any increases in financial aid targeted at students below the 45th percentile of parental income will be self-financing in terms of future tax revenue.³

Sources: [1] Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB), 2017-18 [2] University of Pennsylvania's Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy and the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity and Higher Education, Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States, 2015 [3] Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis' Opportunity & Inclusive Growth Institute, "Optimal Need-Based Financial Aid," 2018



Alverno College
Milwaukee, WI
www.alverno.edu



Concordia University
Mequon, WI
www.cuw.edu



Marian University
Fond du Lac, WI
www.marianuniversity.edu



Nashotah House
Nashotah, WI
www.nashotah.edu



Bellin College
Green Bay, WI
www.bellincollege.edu



Edgewood College
Madison, WI
www.edgewood.edu



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Northland College
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Herzing University
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Medical College of Wisconsin
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www.mcw.edu



Ripon College
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www.ripon.edu



Cardinal Stritch University
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Holy Family College
Manitowoc, WI
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Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design
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St. Norbert College
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Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)





October 20, 2020

Margit Kelley
Senior Staff Attorney
Wisconsin Legislative Council
Delivered via Electronic Mail: margit.kelley@legis.wisconsin.gov

RE: Interim Research Report on the Organization of Wisconsin's Workforce Development System

Dear Margit:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer feedback as the Wisconsin Legislative Council concludes your Interim Research Report on the Organization of Wisconsin's Workforce development System. The issue of workforce remains of top concern for our member employers from throughout Wisconsin, and we appreciate the attention this report will give to the state's efforts.

Specifically you asked for recommendations on policy changes to improve the structural framework and opportunities to increase coordination between workforce development programs. This is indeed an area ripe for improvement, and we look forward to seeing the final report. As a membership-driven organization, we reached out to our members to gather their input for you. These comments are a result of the feedback we received from our members. Some of these comments are specific to the request, while some will simply highlight the areas that our members find of great value so that the Legislative Council, when finalizing the Interim Report and making recommendations, will be able to offer ways to improve the systems around those high value programs.

Streamlining

The biggest item we heard was that streamlining is necessary, leading to less "red tape" and quicker access to programs and funds to help employers hire, develop and retain workers. Employers find the programming diffused and uncoordinated. They also identified a need for a single point of contact and a centralized resource to help employers navigate the multitude of programs and departments, while also creating a statewide awareness of the programs with an emphasis on outcomes. Some thought that it would be beneficial to have all workforce programs brought under the umbrella of a centralized bureau with an advisory board to coordinate efforts.

Apprenticeship

Our members that use the apprenticeship-training model know the strong value it provides, be it the youth apprenticeship model or registered apprenticeship. Those employers believe the state should double down on efforts to increase apprenticeship training by encouraging unemployed individuals to consider careers that start with apprenticeship training. They would like to see additional focus on building the bridge between the youth apprenticeship program and opportunities in the registered apprenticeship program.

501 East Washington Avenue, Madison, WI 53703-2914

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Founded in 1911, WMC is Wisconsin's chamber of commerce and largest business trade association.

Incarcerated Individuals

Likewise, the more the state can integrate the apprenticeship model in our state prison system the better, as it would help incarcerated individuals learn needed career skills while connecting them with employers. To that end, the state should better integrate employers with the job training that is taking place inside prisons so that those individuals will have the promise of a job upon release.

Full Employment

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many parts of the state were at full employment. We heard a desire that the state workforce programs be able to transition between helping unemployed workers and helping employers with training as the unemployment level changes. In other words, as unemployment improves, the state focus should shift more to programs like Fast Forward. As unemployment increases, efforts to help displaced workers directly makes more sense.

Flexible Funding

Our members identified being able to move funding between programs to meet demand as an important need. If a program has more demand than it has funding, they would like to see funding from programs with less demand shifted to the high-demand areas. An example of an area that would benefit from this funding reallocation would be FabLab deployments. This flexibility would also identify those programs that are perhaps stagnant and no longer as needed.

Connect with K-12

Wisconsin is a national leader in Career Pathways and Academic and Career Planning. K-12 schools and Technical Colleges have led this effort. By expanding to additional careers, they have created a real sense of possibility and excitement for those careers in young children. Still, the state needs to make a better connection between these pathways and the needs of the economy. One way might be to create a suite of supportive materials for K-12 teachers to help highlight for them the career pathways needed to support the state's economy.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment is growing in Wisconsin and has been most successful in K-12 and our Technical Colleges. The most advanced programs are creating paths for students to complete their High School Diploma and the Technical College Degree at the same time allowing the student to enter the workforce immediately after their high school graduation with a post-secondary credential. All high schools should allow dual enrollment.

Credit Transfer

Institutions of higher education have made progress in the area of accepting credit from other institutions, often as a requirement placed on them by lawmakers. Credit transfer between institutions should be easier, with the default being that credits do transfer unless a specific course is deemed not worthy of acceptance.

Talent Attraction

Beyond traditional workforce development, employers need the state to focus on talent attraction. Such efforts, like what WEDC undertook in 2018 to draw UW graduates, Chicago area residents, and veterans into our state, should continue and be integrated with traditional workforce development efforts.

Other items that our members identified that are of high importance but perhaps outside the scope of this report include the shortage of market rate housing, high healthcare costs, and lack of affordable childcare options.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on behalf of our members. I hope that you will find them useful as you conclude the Interim Report on the Organization of Wisconsin's Workforce Development System. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Reader". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Reader
Senior Director of Workforce and Employment Policy
Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce