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THE PROMISE & CHALLENGE of Dual Credit

We live in an information age, dominated by global economic pressures and ever-evolving workplaces of unprecedented connectivity and complexity. Lifelong learning is no longer optional. It is a given in Wisconsin that educators must strive to prepare students to be college- and career-ready, meaning that students are challenged to master critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Students should be armed with academic knowledge, but also be nimble and adaptable learners with the skills to communicate, collaborate and apply that knowledge.

At the same time, Wisconsin is grappling with the workforce challenges posed by two colliding

demographic trends — decades of lower birth rates and an outsized baby-boom generation on the cusp of retirement. Economists leave no doubt that we must educate as many of our citizens as we can — as well as we can and as quickly as we can — if we want to maintain our quality of life and economic vitality in the future.

In partnership with K-12 schools and future-minded employers, technical colleges are working to show young students that college is possible, and that challenging, high-paying careers are waiting for them right here in Wisconsin. Today's K-12 students are fortunate to be served by a variety of strong educational partnerships that are tearing down silos in order to

better serve students with relevant technology, rigorous instruction and critical-thinking skills. One critical component of those partnerships is dual credit, which brings together high





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schools and technical colleges to increase academic and economic opportunities for students. Despite its promise, a critical pillar of dual credit is under threat.

With more than 51,000 students enrolled at over 400 high schools last year, many people are familiar with dual-credit programs offered by Wisconsin's technical colleges through a variety of models, including transcribed credit, Start College Now and special contracted services. Most courses are provided through transcribed credit, which is a revenue-neutral program taught by high school teachers and provides tech college curriculum. Families pay no tuition and students can transfer the college credits after graduation. Thousands of college-bound students use these courses each year to get a head start on the general education classes required for any associate or bachelor's degree, saving themselves both tuition and time.

What the general public may not know is that the proven benefits for students go well beyond saving millions in tuition dollars each year. Dual enrollment also helps ease the transition from high school to college academics. University of Wisconsin-Madison Professor

Emeritus L. Allen Phelps led a study of Fox Valley Technical College's dual-enrollment programs under a 2014 grant from the National Science Foundation. He found that students who had taken dual-enrollment courses in high school had higher rates of successful course completion their first year in college, demonstrated higher rates of persistence in their second year of college, and had higher college graduation rates compared to students who did not take dual-credit courses.

Of course, not all students enroll in college right out of high school. Dual credit can also serve those students' needs. In 2018, Milwaukee Area Technical College partnered with Milwaukee Public Schools and Harley-Davidson to create a pilot program that provided a class of Bradley Tech High School students with an innovative early college/youth apprenticeship opportunity. Students went to high school, earned dual-college credits and then worked as paid toolmaking and industrial electrician youth apprentices. Students also explored other careers available at Harley-Davidson.

The pilot was so successful that the program rapidly expanded to provide 150 high school students similar experiences the following year. Following completion of the yearlong youth apprenticeship, students can choose to continue as registered apprentices after graduation. At Harley-Davidson, the new apprentices are earning \$28 per hour right out of high school, with higher wages available once they complete the apprenticeship. The college credits these students earned in high school also count toward the classroom instruction required under the registered apprenticeship.

In the opposite corner of the state, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College partners with 47 school districts — nearly all of them small and rural — to reinvigorate career and technical education programs and expand the available curriculum, including college-level general education courses. Despite a territory spanning 10,500 square miles and with relatively poor broadband penetration, WITC has been able to combine contracted services, transcribed credit and creative logistical strategies to make dual credit available to high school students throughout the region.

Programs are as varied as construction essentials, welding, certified



nursing assistant, financial services and automotive maintenance. Every program not only qualifies students to go to work right out of high school, but also ladders seamlessly into programs leading to higher credentials at the college. For example, the CNA credential counts toward requirements to earn an associate degree in nursing, which in turn transfers into any of the state's bachelor's of science in nursing degree programs.



The first class of Harley-Davidson's youth apprentices (seated) were joined on their 2018 signing day by (back row, left to right) Erica Case, Milwaukee Area Technical College board member and director of human resources for Harley-Davidson's Wisconsin Operations; MATC President Dr. Vicki J. Martin, chair of the Bradley Tech Commission; and Milwaukee Public Schools Interim Superintendent Dr. Keith Posley.

Despite the benefits, dual enrollment in Wisconsin is threatened by a change in enforcement of required teacher qualifications coming in 2022. The Higher Learning Commission is the nation's largest regional accreditor, setting standards for colleges and universities in 19 central-region states. It accredits all public and private nonprofit institutions in Wisconsin, which qualifies them for federal financial aid programs, such as Pell Grants. HLC policy requires that high school teachers delivering college-level curriculum must have the same credentials as college-level faculty. For most non-occupational courses, that means a master's degree in the content area being taught, or a master's degree in another field plus at least 18 graduate credits in the content area being taught. Wisconsin's technical colleges requested a delay in implementation of these requirements, but that waiver expires in 2022.

Based on survey information, these credential requirements will severely reduce the number of teachers considered qualified to teach technical college transcribed credit courses. Combined with tight budgets for all types of dual credit, fewer transcribed credit courses will mean fewer opportunities for students, and likely increased costs to provide other types of dual-credit courses instead. It is incumbent on

all of us to increase the number of qualified teachers across the state and to ensure that dual-credit classes are available to all students,

regardless of where they live and go to school.

Technical colleges hope to partner with K-12 leaders and local





School districts are subject to legal requirements and have some local policy-making responsibilities related to academic and career planning, education for employment, career and technical education, and dual-enrollment programs such as the Start College Now Program (technical college program) and Early College Credit Program. **Additional information on these topics is available from WASB Policy Services as follows:**

- Information on academic and career planning is available in the March 2017 issue of WASB's subscription policy publication, *The FOCUS*.
- Background information on the Start College Now Program and Early College Credit Program is available in the WASB Policy Resource Guide along with sample model policies/procedures on these programs, education for employment and career and technical education.
- Sample policies from other Wisconsin school districts are available upon request from WASB's Policy Service Assistant Teresa Kimball (tkimball@wasb.org).

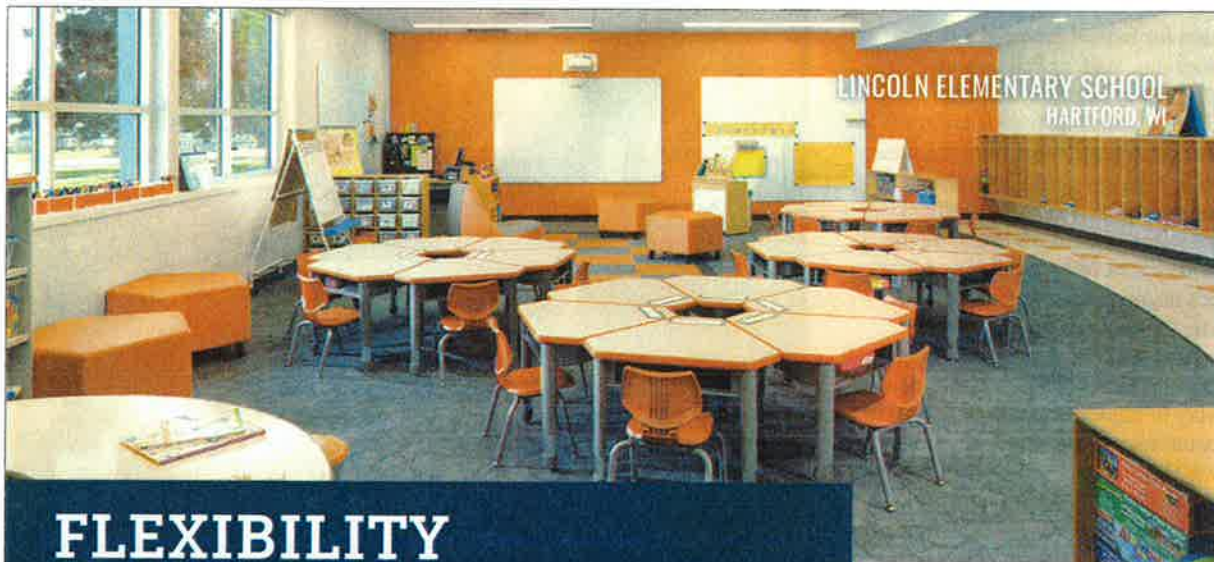
stakeholders to identify policy solutions that make sense to school boards and teachers, as well as state-level policymakers. While the state Legislature provided some funding to cover graduate school tuition, not enough teachers are taking advantage of those dollars. Additional incentives are needed. One proposal, advanced by the

Northeast Wisconsin Educational Resource Alliance based in Green Bay, would provide state funding for stipends for teachers who pursue graduate credits in order to teach dual credit. This could incentivize teachers for whom the old "lanes and steps" models no longer apply.

Local school districts may have their own strategies to address the

issue, but time is of the essence. We hope you will join us in the effort to increase the supply of qualified dual-credit teachers and preserve opportunities in the coming years. ■

Layla Merrifield is the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association.



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Ag Lab Ribbon-Cutting Dec. 3

November 25, 2019

Blackhawk Technical College will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 3 at the Blackhawk Monroe Campus to celebrate the construction of a 3,200 sq. ft. lab facility for its Agribusiness degree program. The \$650,000 project provides a new home for the program giving students space and opportunity to have important hands-on training regardless of weather conditions. The building opened for students earlier this fall.

The project is the culmination of years of work to rebuild and expand the agricultural program at Blackhawk. To support agricultural education at Blackhawk, a new fund has been established with the Blackhawk Technical College Foundation called the Future of Agriculture Fund. Two families who were instrumental in starting the Jim and Therese Gratz and Fran and Sandy Donny will be recognized at the ribbon-cutting event.

“The fund will support scholarships as well as program activities. We were very excited to be able to sign the official documents this fall for the creation of the fund, at the site where the initial conversation started over one year ago, in the field own by the Donny’s and operated by the Gratz’s,” said Blackhawk Agribusiness Instructor Dustin Williams. “We are excited about the opportunities that will provide for future generations of agriculture students at Blackhawk Technical College.”

The Agriculture Program at Blackhawk offers a Technical Diploma ([Agribusiness Specialist](#)) as well as an Associates of Applied Science Degree ([Agribusiness/Science Technology](#)). Blackhawk students benefit from a new 3,200 square foot Ag Lab that features cutting edge technology and a greenhouse. The Ag Lab officially opened for the fall 2019 semester on the Blackhawk Monroe Campus.

For more information about the Future of Agriculture Fund or the Agribusiness Program at Blackhawk Technical College, contact Dustin Williams at [\(608\) 329-8210](tel:6083298210) or dwilliams61@blackhawk.edu.

Apprenticeship opportunities open students' eyes



Contributed photo

Russell Boos, a journeyman steamfitter from Mondovi, shows a group of area high school students a side of the Pablo Center that few people see. During Apprenticeship Exploration Day, Boos took them to rooms containing the inner electric, plumbing, heating and ventilation infrastructure and talked about the role of the skilled trades in building the center.

BY CVTC COMMUNICATIONS

Spencer Wagner, a student at the Chippewa Falls school district's Alternative School, has been thinking about college, but he had never been a big fan of lectures and having to learn things that seemed to him to have no practical value.

Now he may have found an alternative.

"I learned how easy it is to get an apprenticeship and be successful," Wagner said after spending a morning last week at an Apprenticeship Exploration Day hosted by Chippewa Valley Technical College and the Pablo Center at the Confluence.

Apprenticeships have been around for centuries, but in recent years have often been an overlooked way for people to obtain the training and experience they need to enter a skilled trade. With the Chippewa Valley experiencing a labor shortage in many occupations, driven by a skills gap, new efforts are underway to recruit people into apprenticeship programs.

At Apprenticeship Exploration Day, students from eight Chippewa Valley high schools learned of what apprenticeships are and descriptions of programs in the electrician, plumbing and steamfitter, and sheet metal trades. They also toured the inner workings of the Pablo Center, seeing the boiler room, heating, electrical and ventilation infrastructure built by people in skilled trades.

Wagner said the experience changed his outlook. "I kind of thought apprenticeships were low-end jobs or careers, but I learned how awesome it is, being paid to go to school," he said.

School is only a small part of apprenticeships, in which 90 percent of learning takes place on the job, according to Jeff Sullivan, dean of apprenticeships, engineering, manufacturing and IT at CVTC. An apprenticeship starts with being hired for a job, with the apprentice paid while learning on the job. Additional classroom instruction is often taken through CVTC.

"We have 13 apprenticeship programs

at CVTC, from data analytics to electrical power distribution," Sullivan said.

Wagner's initial misunderstanding of apprenticeships is not uncommon. Long Vang of the state Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards during an opening presentation told the students he knew little about apprenticeships when he was in school.

"When I went to high school, none of my teachers or counselors talked to me about apprenticeships," Vang said, adding it was the same when he was in college. "When I found out about apprenticeships later, I realized what an opportunity I missed."

Some of the students were already familiar with apprenticeships and locked in on securing one for themselves, mostly due to family influence.

"I'm in a youth apprenticeship program at Pelke Plumbing, our family business," said Lucas Pelke of Durand. "I have an older brother who did it too and is now an indentured apprentice plumber with the business."

SEE CVTC PAGE 4A

Students examine career alternatives

» CVTC

FROM PAGE 3A

Pelke envisioned he and his brother taking over the family business someday.

However, most students came to explore an option they had heard little about.

"I am currently in a

metals class, and I'm exploring all my career options," said Katie Feuker, a senior at Elmwood High School. "I wanted to see what an apprenticeship would be like. I really enjoy welding, but I know there is so much more out there."

Feuker said she had always thought about a

four-year college, because that's what people in her family had done. "But there's an increase in people taking the technical college and apprenticeship approach," she said.

Others, like Wagner, felt drawn to the on-the-job nature of the learning, not relishing the

idea of years of more classroom learning after high school.

"I don't want to go to college for four years," said Josh Willmarth, a senior at Lake Holcombe High School. "I'm more hands-on. I'm thinking military or an apprenticeship."



FOX VALLEY AREA REGIONAL NEWS: Calumet County, Fond du Lac County, Outagamie County, Winnebago County

FOX VALLEY REGIONAL NEWS

High schoolers, community members check out apprenticeship opportunities at FVTC



by: Erinn Taylor

Posted: Dec 5, 2019 | 06:48 PM CST | Updated: Dec 5, 2019 | 06:48 PM CST

APPLETON, Wis. (WFRV) — More than 500 high school students visited Fox Valley Technical College Thursday morning to learn about apprenticeship opportunities available through the school.

Later that same day, community members were invited to attend an open house-style expo.

The expo featured hands-on activities for both groups, giving them the chance to experience what being an apprentice would be like.

"It's a career immersion event," Mike Merdach, Apprenticeship Adviser at Fox Valley Tech explained, "and it's to simulate being on-boarded by a company and to do tasks. Instead of talking about it, these kids need to do it to get interested."

He said many participants discovered they had a natural talent for one trade or another.

"The companies saw a lot of kids today with just a knack," Merdach explained.

To learn more about apprenticeship opportunities available through the school, [click here](#).

From McDonald's to Foxconn: How one woman sought a change and found it

RICARDO TORRES LEE ENTERPRISES Dec 1, 2019

MOUNT PLEASANT — Tasha Ratliff was treading water financially and needed a new job.

As an employee at a McDonald's just off of Interstate 94, she was only making about \$9 an hour. It wasn't her dream job, and for sure it wasn't enough to support her and her four children.

“I couldn't find a job for what I went to school for,” Ratliff said. “So I had to go back to find something that I could get paid money for to take care of my children.”

Ratliff had another issue — because she had some unpaid traffic tickets, she didn't have a valid driver's license.

Using ridesharing apps like Uber and Lyft added up quick, but it was necessary to get to and from work.

During one ride to an interview, Ratliff was chatting with her Uber driver about her situation, and the driver suggested she check out the Fast Forward program administered by Racine County with the help of a grant worth more than \$300,000 from the state Department of Workforce Development.

Gateway Technical College and Racine County helped provide free training opportunities for different careers.

At the time, Ratliff said she wasn't interested in a training program — she needed a new job.

But after talking with close friends, she decided to go through the program and pick up extra shifts at McDonald's to help make ends meet.

Training opportunities

She signed up for the computer numerical control training, which was going to take about seven months to complete.

Ratliff's new schedule took a lot of time away from her kids.

"On the weekend, I worked, and during the week, I'm at school," Ratliff said. "It was just all work, school, work, school, and I never really had time for them. So Grandma had to step up and do stuff."

Ratliff said her kids ate a lot of meals prepared in a crock pot, microwave meals and McDonald's. A lot of McDonald's.

"I knew there was a light at the end of the tunnel," Ratliff said. "I knew at the end, we would be in a better situation ... it was the start of something. It was the start of my life in a different way, on a different path, so I can provide for them."

To save money, Ratliff also enlisted in the Commute to Careers program through the Department of Workforce Development and Racine County, which provides transportation to jobs for \$1-\$2.

Getting a job at Foxconn

With reliable transportation, Ratliff said she was able to dive into the CNC training in a way she had not done with other things in her life.

"This is the first time I took something like this very seriously in my life," Ratliff

said. "I got out what I put into the program, and I put my all in it because I've got my children and I figured out I got to do something different."

Ratliff learned how to read blueprints and operate advanced manufacturing machinery.

"It was kind of difficult at first," Ratliff said. "Working at McDonald's and then going to CNC (training), it's like a whole different field. So I had to learn a lot of techniques and a lot of different things that wasn't in the field that I was in."

After completing the training program, she interviewed with Foxconn Technology Group. She received the job and now works at the Foxconn multipurpose building in Mount Pleasant.

"I'm in a better place than I was eight months ago," Ratliff said. "Eight months ago I didn't have a good job. And I was working at McDonald's making \$9 an hour. Now I have a job at Foxconn making almost \$18 an hour where I can take better care of my kids. I can pay those tickets off. I can look forward to buying a home instead of renting."

Ratliff works as a surface mount technology operator at Foxconn, putting together the electrical boards for products that are likely to be produced at the Foxconn facility once it becomes fully operational.

With the 12-hour days behind her, at least for now, Ratliff said she has been making up for lost time with her kids.

"We've been doing stuff since I graduated from school," Ratliff said. "We went to the movies and saw 'Harriet Tubman,' and I took them to see that the first day it came out."

Ratliff told her story to the Racine County Board in November and many board members were impressed with her tenacity and her story.

Racine County Executive Jonathan Delagrave brought Ratliff to the meeting to share her story, along with Nicole Urquhart, who has a contract with the county for its Commute to Careers program.

Delagrave wanted the County Board, which approved of the programming, to understand the real-world impact their votes have.

Delagrave did not want to “declare victory,” he said. But he wanted to let the board know that their decisions are having a positive effect.

“Don’t think that when you walk away from your County Board meetings that you’re not making a difference, because you all are,” Delagrave said. “You guys, as elected officials, are making a difference.”

In her message to the board, Ratliff told them, “The programs worked.”

“All of the programs that you all allowed to go through, it helped me,” Ratliff told the board. “Please don’t take these programs away, there’s other people out here that need these programs that are just like me, trying to get to (jobs or training) so they can make changes.”

Manitowoc sheriff Dan Hartwig wins Wisconsin Technical College Distinguished Alumni Award

USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 1:29 p.m. CT Nov. 6, 2019

Manitowoc sheriff wins Wisconsin Tech College Distinguished Alumni Award

Manitowoc County Sheriff Dan Hartwig, a Lakeshore Technical College alumnus, has been selected by the Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association as a 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award winner. He was honored at an awards banquet Nov. 1 in Waukesha.

Hartwig is the first LTC graduate to be honored at the state level since the District Boards Association started recognizing alumni 21 years ago. Earlier this year, he was selected by LTC as the college's Alumnus of the Year.

Hartwig, a Manitowoc County native, graduated from LTC in 1998 with an associate degree in police science, a program now known as criminal justice-law enforcement. He says he chose LTC because he would be able to work in law enforcement sooner than those who attended four-year colleges, and graduate with less debt. He was confident that with a great start at LTC, he would be able to fulfill his dream of getting elected sheriff of his home county.



Celebrating Dan Hartwig's Distinguished Alumni Award are, from left, LTC Dean of Public Safety and Energy Ryan Skabroud, LTC District Board Vice Chair Lois Vasquez, LTC President Dr. Paul Carlsen, Dan Hartwig, Tressie Hartwig and LTC District Board Member John Lukas. (Photo: Provided)

Upon graduating from LTC, Hartwig began as a deputy sheriff with the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Office. He fulfilled his goal to be sheriff in January of this year when he was elected sheriff of Manitowoc County.

Hartwig is active in the community. He is a Two Rivers High School football coach, a volunteer board member for The Haven of Manitowoc County homeless shelter for men, and a Kiwanis International member. He is a top fundraiser in Wisconsin for the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run benefiting Special Olympics.

LTC opens new Sheboygan location

November 8, 2019

Lakeshore Technical College has opened its new Sheboygan location in the heart of the city, at 1320 Niagara Ave. The former Central Tool House building, and most recently Boat Doctors Warehouse, was completely restored to maintain its unique character while providing a modern, high-tech learning environment.

The 8,600-square-foot facility includes six classrooms, a dedicated computer lab, an online testing center, and a conference room in addition to college advising and faculty office spaces. Technology is integrated throughout the satellite college location with video conferencing technology and convertible desks where students can opt between a flat workspace and a personal computer workstation.

LTC officials said the new location is significantly more convenient than its previous location. "At this campus, we are right in the heart of our community, on the second-most traveled street in Sheboygan," LTC President Paul Carlsen said in a news release. "We are within walking distance, or a very quick bike ride, to the majority of students we serve in Sheboygan."

According to Carlsen, enrollment has also increased 20% since classes started at the new location in September. The site is serving a variety of community learning needs ranging from credit-bearing general education courses to community education classes for personal or professional enrichment.



Lakeshore Technical College recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate its new Sheboygan location at 1320 Niagara Ave. (Photo: Provided)

DIGGING DEEPER: Tech schools work to fill skilled trades job openings

November 11, 2019 10:20 pm Rebecca Ribley

MADISON (WKOW) — From construction to electrical work, the skilled trades industry is struggling to fill positions.

A new study done by the [National Association of Home Builders](#) shines a light on that, showing nearly 70 percent of its members were experiencing delays in completing construction projects on time due to a shortage of qualified workers. While the industry is struggling, Madison Area Technical College is seeing a boost in students, hoping to capitalize on the shortage.

At 35-years-old, Willis Russell is back in class. Since high school, he's worked odd jobs in factories and doing handy work, but he's hoping construction will offer him more stability.

"I know there's always a job in that," he commented.

Right now construction companies are searching for workers. Just checking in with ten locations in the Madison area showed all of them have at least one opening.

Madison College Instructor Allie Berenyi said there are a few reasons for that shortage.

The recession in 2008 caused a lot of people in the industry to lose their jobs. While the housing market continues to rebound, many people who did keep their jobs are starting to reach retirement age.

Madison College is putting an emphasis on educating younger people about the opportunities a skilled trade can offer by holding high school visits and summer camps for girls. Now, more students are coming to study there.

"We have seen an increase in growth in electricians, plumbers and HVAC techs representing about 45 percent increase since 2016," said Dr. Denise Reimer, Madison College Associate Vice President.

With so many job options for students right now, companies are having to get creative with what they are offering employees.

"We're seeing tuition reimbursements, really flexible hours," said Reimer.

Students graduating from Madison College's Construction program can start out making close to \$50,000. Apprenticeship completers can make more than \$71,000.

The demand for skilled trades workers isn't going anywhere. According to a report commissioned by Madison College, the need for these workers is set to grow more than 16 percent by 2029.

Madison College, UW-Platteville increase degree flexibility with remote study, transfer deal

By [Yvonne Kim](#) Nov 22, 2019



Uw-Platteville Chancellor Dennis Shields and Madison College President Jack Daniels finalize academic agreements between the two schools at a signing ceremony Thursday morning.
Madison Area Technical College

Madison Area Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville formalized three agreements at a signing ceremony Thursday that will offer new, flexible options for engineering, biotechnology and veterinary technician students to earn four-year degrees.

Through an engineering agreement effective immediately, Madison College is now recognized as one of four sites in the UW-Platteville

Engineering Partnerships program, which allows students to complete a bachelor's degree remotely through online and evening classes.

“(Our students) are working part-time, they’re single parents. Picking up and moving their life to Platteville to do an on-campus bachelor’s is not reality for them,” Madison College Provost Turina Bakken said. “It’s a win for Platteville, it’s a win for us. But mainly it’s a huge opportunity for our students to gain a bachelor’s credential in a much more flexible, innovative way

The biotechnology and veterinary technician agreements will allow Madison College students to transfer to the biology and animal science majors at UW-Platteville, respectively. Students must still meet admission requirements, but the agreement allows for a seamless transfer of Madison College coursework.

The changes opens up new pathways for potentially hundreds of Madison College students.

Of about 600 students and graduates in the school’s technical and transfer programs, 394 indicated they were “very interested,” “interested” or “somewhat interested” in earning a bachelor’s degree, according to a May 2018 survey. 461 of them said it was important for them to stay in the Madison area to earn that degree.

Conversely, UW-Platteville animal science majors can attend Madison College’s Veterinary Technician Program to receive an associate’s degree.

UW-Platteville Chancellor Dennis Shields said in a press release that the partnership furthers the schools' 2019-24 Strategic Plan to "foster transformational education, which includes expanding the delivery of our programs in collaborative methods."

Bakken said the agreements, which have been finalized after about one year, is a step to "serve our communities and serve the high demand needs of the workforce."

"The way we can't do that is to be redundant, to have us trying to do what other schools are doing," she said. "The best way to add new value to the marketplace and to students in an effective manner is to truly partner."

News of the deal comes after a report last month that enrollment is down at 21 of 26 UW System campuses. Platteville reported a decrease of over 500 students, or 6%, from last year.

Workforce development discussion held in Stevens Point

Tuesday, December 03, 2019 5:46 p.m. CST by Michael Leischner

STEVENS POINT, WI (WSAU) -- Dozens of employers and stakeholders met at Mid-State Technical College in Stevens Point to speak with State Representative Katrina Shankland and Department of Workforce Development Secretary-Designee Caleb Frostman about the challenges of retaining and recruiting employees in the region.

"It was a diverse set of stakeholders," said Frostman. "We covered labor issues, workforce shortage, training programs, and how the state can be helpful going forward."

He says the state is particularly aware of what officials have called a "Silver tsunami" of baby boomers that are reaching retirement age, saying every time someone retires another worker needs to take their place.

"It almost always comes up in these roundtables. Things like immigration and how we can get more bodies here to fill these jobs. Some companies are being creative as to where they are looking [both] within the US and outside the US. But acknowledging that demographic shift, that silver tsunami, gives a real sense of urgency to fill some of those positions."

He's encouraged by the region's commitment to apprenticeships and other training programs.

Shankland says she believes that the region can help itself simply by promoting itself better. "We have so many institutions that are 'best-kept secrets,' world-class chefs locally, our lakes, rivers, and streams, we are really lucky to have so many assets and resources here in Central Wisconsin.

"We just need to do a better job of talking about the many industries, our diverse economy, and the incredible people that we have here as well as our outdoor and natural resources," she said.

Shankland said one of the big talking points in the group was community engagement. Most employers have observed that employees are more likely to stay if they feel engaged in the community or see an effort to develop assets and resources.

Frostman says he's held similar discussions in other areas such as Racine and Door County since being appointed by Governor Tony Evers.

Your Town: Mid-State Technical College celebrates milestone at Point campus

By [Dale Ryman](#) | Posted: Fri 10:20 PM, Dec 13, 2019



For 5 years now, Mid-State Technical College has been in their current location in downtown Stevens Point. Occupying what was once JC Penney.

"When we first moved here from our old location we had already expanded twice and we needed to expand capacity again," said Gail, dean of the Stevens Point campus.

Expand they did, nearly double. From 30,000 to 56,000 square feet.

"The students have more places to be, students have more places to use equipment, to find a nice comfortable place to study," said Bob Smith, an accounting instructor at the college.

"Numbers have been good here in the Stevens Point campus particularly," said Gaul. "We do approximately 700 different people coming through this building every week."

That's part-time and full-time students. That foot traffic has been a big boom to the downtown economy, to the tune of 50-million dollars. The college is part of the downtown alliance committee with other businesses.

"What I like most is in between classes, my classmates and I, we can easily walk to a restaurant," said Colette Stoflet, a student at the school.

"I can't say that Mid-State gets all the credit for that. Kudos to those businesses," said Gaul. "I think us bringing those 700 students down here a week, bringing all those external organizations in really helps."

So it goes without saying, if the first 5 years is any indication, the future looks bright.

"Our programs are constantly changing to meet the needs of local employers," added Gaul. "So when a student graduates from Mid-State and finds that first job, they can hit the ground running."

Local program helps inmates learn tech skills so they can get a job after incarceration

Posted: 5:55 PM, Dec 10, 2019 Updated: 6:22 PM, Dec 10, 2019



By: [Lauren Linder](#)



MILWAUKEE — Finding a job after incarceration can be challenging, but a local organization is working to change that through a program where inmates get the chance to learn tech skills in great demand.

- [Pay Raises For Wisconsin State Workers Up For Approval](#)

Benita Washington has spent months looking for a job, but in the process one thing has gotten in the way - a conviction for battery.

“I’ve gotten turned down by a lot of people, by a lot of great jobs,” Washington said. “I have a seven-year-old, trying to take care of her,

losing my job, losing my place, so it's very frustrating having to start all over again.”

A judge sentenced her to probation in the spring, which she'll remain on for another year, though a job may be in her future sooner than she expected.

Washington enrolled in a special training class under UMOS' federally-funded TechHire program.

It started about a year and a half ago through a partnership with Milwaukee Area Technical College, where inmates or those on probation like her can learn advanced manufacturing skills.

“I feel like it's a great opportunity,” Washington said.

The inmates go to MATC five days a week for six months, and by the end of the class they'll have skills that are in high demand.

Guillermo Diaz is one of the instructors.

“Giving them the skills to change their life is great you know, and it will be a trickle down as far as them and then their kids you know hopefully they can break out of that cycle,” Diaz said.

So far 27 people have gone through the program and were released from incarceration with internships or jobs waiting for them, paying about \$22 an hour.

UMOS TechHire Director Joni Theobald said employers are eager to fill positions.

“There's definitely a bidding process happening within the employers themselves,” Theobald said.

UMOS also helps the students with challenges typically faced by former inmates in hopes to prevent them from going back to jail or prison.

“We try to look at what are the top barriers, housing, transportation, job,” Theobald said.

It’s support that’s greatly appreciated by Washington who is now hopeful about her future.

“Just because you have something on your background whether it’s a felony, misdemeanor, it’s not over,” Washington said.

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MATC trying to tap into growing Latino population in Milwaukee

Devi Shastri, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel | Published 6:12 p.m. CT Nov. 19, 2019 | Updated 6:48 p.m. CT Nov. 19, 2019



Milwaukee Area Technical College President Vicki Martin announces that the college is seeking to be named a Hispanic Serving Institution Wednesday, Feb. 27, 2019, at the MATC Education Center at Walker Square, 816 W. National Ave., Milwaukee. (Photo: Mar

The Milwaukee Area Technical College continues to close in on its goal of recruiting more Latino students and attain a coveted federal designation that would unlock thousands for dollars in grant and scholarship support for those students.

Since the 2017-18 school year, MATC's Latino population has grown from 16% of the student body to 19% as of fall 2019. In order to qualify as a Hispanic Serving Institution, MATC will need to hit 25%.

Campus leaders say educating more Latino students is crucial to meeting the needs of Milwaukee's workforce. It also would position MATC to better meet the needs of the students that make up a growing portion of the city's population: Since 2000, Hispanics have, by far, become the fastest-growing ethnic group in Milwaukee, according to a [May 2019 report by the Wisconsin Policy Forum](#).

Despite that, Hispanic students are enrolled in college at lower rates than African American, Asian and white students. When they do enroll, the report found, Hispanic students have lower graduation rates. Out in the workforce, the forum found Hispanic workers were also underrepresented in high-wage jobs.

"Those are statistics that we're really looking to overcome, together," MATC President Vicki Martin said. "We have a ways to go and we think this is one way to really accelerate that."

MATC would be the second college in Wisconsin to be named a Hispanic Serving Institution, following Alverno College. And the college is trying to get there in some unexpected ways.

On Tuesday, MATC announced a partnership with the Consulate of Mexico to create a "Ventanilla de Oportunidades Educativas," essentially a place where Mexican citizens can learn about a range of educational resources, from early education to English as a second language programs to GED preparation classes.

With a nearly \$10,700 investment from the Mexican government, MATC staff will work in the consulate from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, helping Mexicans navigate educational opportunities offered by Mexico and the U.S. The station is the 27th of its kind.

In addition to supporting Mexicans in Milwaukee, many of whom may still be learning English or be new to the city, Martin said she hopes the effort will reach parts of the Latino community through word of mouth.

"We really want them to understand that we're supportive," Martin said.

In the past year, the college hired two bilingual recruiters to work with high schoolers, recruitment manager Marwill Santiago said.

MATC is working to spread its name at community cultural events and is even planning a bilingual ad campaign.

Wilma Bonaparte, executive director of MATC's Mequon campus, said the school has long been a trailblazer in supporting Latino students. MATC was the first, and remains the only, college in Wisconsin to offer bilingual academic programs, from a barber apprenticeship to an associate's degree program in early childhood education.

Language barriers can keep people in the dark about the opportunities that are available, she said. Bonaparte moved to Milwaukee nearly 30 years ago and enrolled in English as a second language classes at MATC.

"When I came to Milwaukee, not knowing the language, I was lost," she said. "So having a person who can connect to all of the services and open the windows ... it's a great opportunity."

Contact Devi Shastri at 414-224-2193 or DAShastri@jrm.com. Follow her on Twitter at [@DeviShastri](https://twitter.com/DeviShastri).

Moraine Park Technical College expands debt-free education programs

TERRI PEDERSON tpederson@wiscnews.com Dec 6, 2019
Beaver Dam Daily Citizen reporter



Lisa Manuell, who volunteers as a mentor for the new Promise Program at Moraine Park Technical College, goes over some paperwork with Moraine Park student development manager Kim Schwamn. Promising Futures is the second debt-free tuition program developed at Moraine Park Technical College.

A new program at Moraine Park Technical College can help some adults afford getting a degree at the school.

Promising Futures is the second debt-free tuition program developed at Moraine Park Technical College.

The Promise Program for current high school students began in the fall of 2018. The program offers the opportunity for five consecutive semesters of debt-free college tuition, as well as additional services to individuals who otherwise may not consider college.

Moraine Park Technical College student development manager Kim Schwann said the new program is for adults between the ages of 24 and 64 who have not earned either a technical or bachelor's degree.

In addition, they must be eligible for a federal Pell Grant and have either a cumulative grade point average of 2.25, an ACT of 15 or higher or pass Moraine Park's Accuplacer testing. They then must enroll in one of the eligible programs as determined by the Department of Workforce Development. Currently, there are 21 associate degree and 12 technical diploma programs that are part of the Promising Futures program.

"A lot of our students are adults," Schwann said. "Many are returning to college for credits on degrees that they didn't complete, or they have jobs where they need additional education. Others left the workplace to raise families and now it is their time."

Moraine Park Promising Futures program provides up to 10 consecutive semesters (not including summer) of debt-free tuition, as well as additional services including mentoring, tutoring, assistance with financial aid filing, and other support services.

"What I think is important is to have the additional service including a personal mentor," Schwann said. "Many adults returning want help with coping with classes and how to do math. Your mentor is your guide in addition to your academic advisor."

There are many staff members trained to be mentors and available throughout the Moraine Park Technical System, Schwann said.

For some students, grants will cover a portion of tuition, but the Promise program will pay any remaining tuition, Schwann said.

Anyone who is interested in the program is encouraged to apply, and the school does the outreach to students who qualify for the program, Schwann said.

Individuals interested in participating in the program should apply to attend Moraine Park Technical College at morainepark.edu/apply and complete the free application for Federal Student Aid at studentaid.ed.gov by April 15.

For more information on the Promising Futures program and a full listing of eligible programs, visit morainepark.edu/promising-futures. Anyone who would like more information about the program can also contact Bradley Mitchell at 262-335-5879.

MORAINE PARK EARNS SPOT ON MILITARY BEST COLLEGES 2020



Moraine Park Technical College has earned the eleventh spot on the “Military Times Best: Colleges 2020” rankings. This honor recognizes career and technical colleges for their commitment to educating and providing opportunities to America’s veterans.

Moraine Park has made this list for the last five years and serves as the only technical college in Wisconsin to earn a place on this list. The Military Times surveys colleges and universities on an annual basis requesting documentation on services, special rules, accommodations, financial incentives, and student services that are offered to veterans and their families. There were nearly 500 survey entries for the Military Times Best College’s ranking, and less than half earned a spot on this list.

“The College is committed to making sure every veteran who steps onto our campuses are provided everything they need to be successful,” Steve Pepper, student veteran specialist said. “I truly believe having someone our veteran students can turn to who can speak their language or understand some of their frustrations is important to their college experience and overall success.”

Moraine Park offers many programs that qualify under Veteran Administration (VA) benefits, with flexible scheduling options. The College is continuously working to maintain a culture that supports the challenges that veterans may encounter.

“This recognition validates the proactive work that Moraine Park has been doing,” Lt. Col. Scott Lieburn, U.S. Air Force, and dean of students at Moraine Park said. “As a veteran myself, I am proud of Moraine Park for making it a priority to educate and provide opportunities to our local veterans, service members, and their families.”

The “Military Times Best” ranking is published in the Military Times magazine and is available to subscribers, as well as online at **MilitaryTimes.com** and other affiliated websites.

For more information about Moraine Park's Veterans Services, visit morainepark.edu/veterans.

Nicolet College News Release

For immediate release

Thursday, Nov. 21, 2019

Media contact: Terry Rutlin (715) 365-4681

Nicolet College Criminal Justice program first in state to have zero student textbook costs

Every college student knows textbooks can get expensive – and fast.

But that's not an issue any more for students in Nicolet College's Criminal Justice program. Starting in January, students can complete the entire two-year program with exactly zero textbook costs.

Nineteen-year-old Brielle Tauer is paying her own way through the Criminal Justice program at Nicolet.

"I can't tell you how huge this is. Money is definitely tight and not having to purchase textbooks, it's like almost shocking in a very good way. It frees up money for other things, simple things, like decent food."

With this move the Criminal Justice program at Nicolet becomes the first academic program in the 16-college Wisconsin Technical College System to bring textbook costs down to zero.

"This is exciting for students and will certainly be a huge help for them financially as they work their way to becoming college graduates," said Jason Goeldner, associate dean of Public Safety at Nicolet. "The cost of college is a concern for many students and for some it even prevents them from earning that credential that paves the way for a better life. By eliminating textbook costs, it opens the door wider for more students to become college graduates."

The 66-credit Criminal Justice associate's degree now has the distinction of being a Z degree, for zero textbook costs. The change is expected to save each student at least \$1,300.

Cindy Domaika, manager of Open and Instructional Resources at Nicolet, has been the chief architect at the college to reduce – and in this case eliminate - textbook costs for students in all academic programs at Nicolet.

"It's absolutely crazy what some textbooks cost and how the prices keep rising so dramatically," said Domaika, who used to run the bookstore at Nicolet. "There were times in the past when I've seen students literally in tears walking out of the bookstore. I knew that there had to be a better way."

Domaika worked closely with Nicolet Criminal Justice instructors to assemble a myriad of free instructional materials. These include materials from sources such as the Wisconsin Department of Justice, and oercommons.org, a vast, content-rich website where professional educators from across the globe openly share a wide variety of instructional material that is available at no cost. Materials range from electronic textbooks to videos and PowerPoint presentations to a wide variety of other content that is available entirely in an electronic format. All resources are also hand-picked and vetted to make sure they meet high academic standards.

Tauer, who recently moved to the Northwoods from Milwaukee, is now in her second year of the Criminal Justice program. She said she looked at nearly a half dozen other college's before selecting Nicolet.

"Cost, quality, and small class sizes were the biggest factors I was looking at, and Nicolet came out on top," said Tauer, who someday would like to be a detective. "Not having to spend a ton of money on textbooks was a big part of that."

Along with full-time Nicolet faculty instruction, the free materials Tauer and her classmates use are supplemented with guest lectures by law enforcement professionals in the Northwoods with specific areas of expertise.

"You put all of that together and I'd say the overall quality is better than what you would receive with just textbooks," she said. "There's just so much real world experience coming into our classes, along with all of our scenario training, you just can't beat it."

Nicolet first incorporated free Open Educational Resources materials in classes in the Fall of 2017. Twenty-three classes launched the initiative. Today, that's increased more than five-fold with 121 classes using free materials.

To date Domaika estimates the move has saved students about \$434,000. "Next semester we'll easily top half a million dollars in savings for students, which is fantastic," she said.

Domaika and faculty are now working to make other programs Z degrees with zero textbook costs.

“The students love it,” she said. “They don’t have to lug around heavy textbooks, all of the material is right on their devices, and they’re saving all kinds of money.”

For more information about the Criminal Justice program and the many other academic programs at Nicolet, visit nicoletcollege.edu or call the college at (715) 365-4493, 1-800-544-3039; TTY 1-800-947-3529.

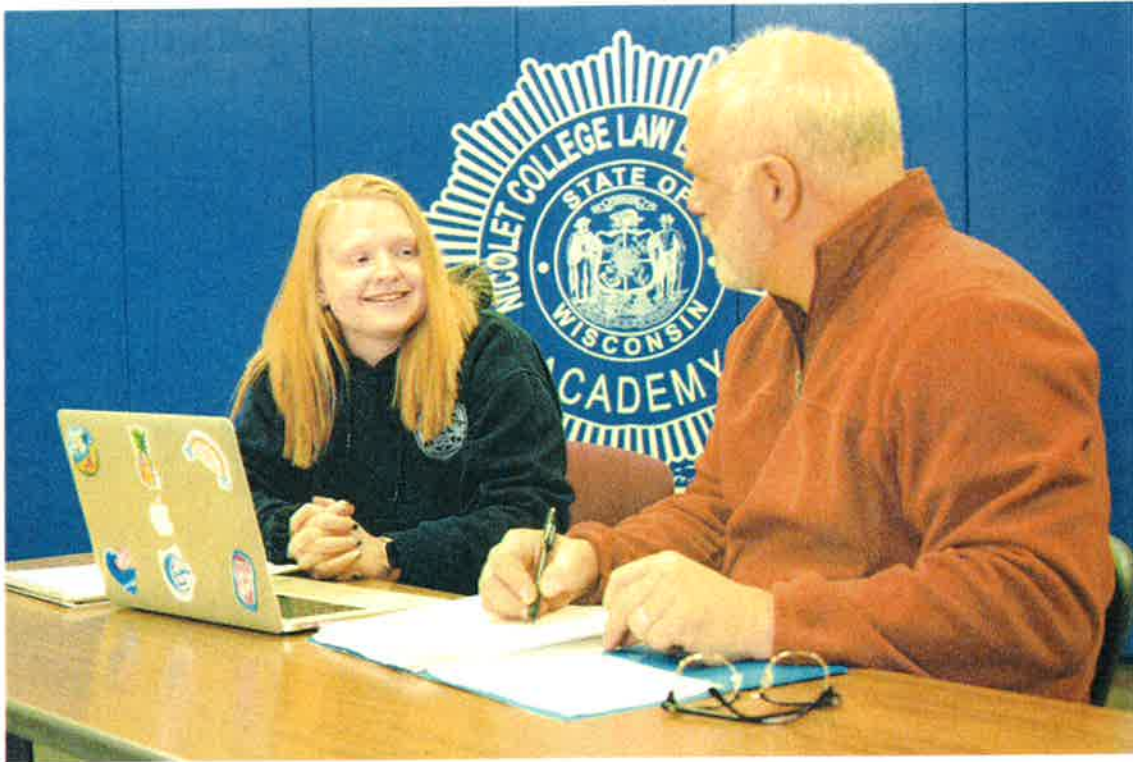


Photo cutline: Nicolet’s Criminal Justice program has the distinction of being the first college academic program in the state with zero textbook costs. Student Brielle Tauer, left, said she’s “absolutely thrilled” with the development. She’s pictured here with Criminal Justice Instructor Phil Schmidt, who was instrumental in getting the program to Z degree status.

Student graduates Northcentral Technical College ready to make a difference

By Stella Porter

Posted: Sat 4:23 PM, Dec 14, 2019

WAUSAU, Wis. (WSAW) -- Saturday is graduation day for students at Northcentral Technical College. Hundreds of graduates were honored this morning at the commencement ceremony held at Wausau's Grand Theater.

"We've worked so hard to get to this point, and for it to finally come here at the Grand Theater, it's such a great feeling," said fall 2019 graduate Thomas Nienow.

More than 400 Northcentral Technical College graduates walked across the stage Saturday, and among them was Nienow, who will walk off the stage and start saving lives as an RN at Aspirus Hospital's cardiac unit.

"I'm graduating with my Associate's Degree in nursing, and right after this I'm going to be starting my job at Aspirus in their cardiac telemetry unit," he said.

He'll be earning his Bachelor's Degree with Purdue University online at the same time, but he's eager to start helping others right away.

"I'm going to be taking care of them at the bedside, so talking with them, maybe they've just come out of surgery, educating them on what those next steps are to helping them get back to the best that they can be," he said.

He found his love for nursing after a traditional four-year program was no longer exciting him.

"I stopped being interested in the topic I was studying in a four-year college setting. I knew I wanted to go to NTC, but I didn't know for what," said the Wausau area native.

"I dove right into the nursing program and I've fallen in love with it ever since," Nienow said.

At NTC, he already has hands-on experience in the field from simulations, clinicals and an internship.

"Just take one class and see where it leads you. If you're interested in healthcare, maybe take just a science class and see if you like it," he said, explaining how he found his passion.

"I had a goal, and it's so good to accomplish that goal, and have the rewards follow after," he said.

NWTC student research to be featured at Lambeau Field

Soil from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College or University of Wisconsin-Green Bay could be the answer to solving the diminishing supply of antibiotics.

About 140 students from NWTC along with students across Wisconsin and around the world are analyzing soil samples to develop new antibiotics. The Centers for Disease Control says, the world is facing a crisis of antibiotic resistance— meaning the germs are not killed and growth is not stopped.

“If we don’t find new antibiotics soon, people will once again be dying of infections like strep throat,” NWTC Microbiology instructor Dr. Angelo Kolokithas said. “Our students are excited that their work could potentially change the world and save millions of lives.”

This year, area College students are testing soil samples from around the community and comparing the results. Soil comparisons from for example: different waterways, NWTC vs UW-Green Bay, Walmart vs Costco, Green Bay vs Appleton.

“This project is an unbelievable opportunity for students to be engaged in the science community and be their own scientist,” said Kolokithas.

The students from Northeast Wisconsin will present soil research they've conducted over the last several months at the Tiny Earth in Tiletown event on Friday, December 6, 2019. From 5-7:30 p.m. in the Lambeau Field Atrium.

Tiny Earth is an innovative program spanning 45 states and 15 countries that inspires and retains students in the sciences while addressing one of the most pressing global health challenges of our century: the diminishing supply of effective antibiotics. Tiny Earth centers around an introductory biology course in which students perform hands-on field and laboratory research on soil in the hunt for new antibiotics.

At the end of this semester, students will enter their data into an international database at the University of Wisconsin- Madison which is supported by Small World Imitative (SWI). That data makes candidates available for further testing and development by drug companies or other entities.

SWI is innovative project that allows students to engaged in authentic research to address a real-world problem and encourage students to pursue careers in science.

Expansion in Marinette County means more access to NWTC degrees

The Northwoods Regional Technical Academy at Wausaukee High School (location is at Wausaukee, also includes Pembine, Crivitz and Coleman Schools) is growing and giving area high school students more opportunities to earn a degree from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College.

For the past 10 years, students in the Welding and Automotive Maintenance Technician programs have shared one lab space at the Northwoods Regional Technical Training Academy. Not anymore, each program will now have separate lab space. On December 2, 2019, NWTC joined Wausaukee, Pembine, Crivitz and Coleman Schools in celebrating the separation of the two labs with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

This expansion has also made it possible for students to receive a college degree while in still in high school. This year for the first year ever, juniors are able to start and finish the Automotive Maintenance Technician and Welding technical diplomas by the time they graduate from high school.

About the Northwoods Regional Technical Academy

The Northwoods Regional Technical Academy is a collaborative partnership between Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and the School Districts of Crivitz, Pembine, and Wausaukee.

High school juniors and seniors take college courses for dual credit - which enables them to complete their degrees at NWTC after graduation in less time and for less money.

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Date: November 5, 2019

Aspen Institute names Southwest Tech a Top 150 Community College

WASHINGTON, D.C. –



The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program today named Southwest Wisconsin Technical College as one of 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges. Based on strong and improving in

student outcomes—including in learning, completion rates, employment rates and earnings, and equity—15 percent of community colleges nationwide have been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize.

"To be recognized by the Aspen Institute is certainly an honor," said Dr. Jason Wood, president of Southwest Tech. "We pride ourselves on serving our students every single day in hopes that they will grow as people, students and pillars in their communities."



The 150 community colleges named today as eligible to compete for the 2021 Aspen Prize were selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 public two-year colleges nationwide using publicly available data on student outcomes. Located in 39 states in urban, rural, and suburban areas, serving as few as 500 students and as many as 75,000 students, these colleges represent the diversity and depth of the community college sector.

Data show that over the last two years, student retention, graduation rates, and degree completion have improved at the top tier of 150 Aspen Prize-eligible colleges.

"Community colleges play a vital role in developing talent and enabling social mobility across the country, and it's critical for them to get better at what they do," said Josh Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. "We're pleased to see evidence that these institutions are improving, that more are delivering on their promise. We're also pleased to play a role in honoring outstanding community colleges and sharing what works to ensure great outcomes for students—through graduation and beyond."

The top ten finalists for the 2021 Aspen Prize will be named in May 2020. The Aspen Institute will then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data, including employment and earnings data. A distinguished jury will make award decisions in spring 2021.

Previous winners of the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence are: Miami Dade College (FL) and Indian River State College (FL), 2019; Lake Area Technical College (SD), 2017; Santa Fe College (FL), 2015; Santa Barbara City College (CA) and Walla Walla Community College (WA), 2013; Valencia College (FL), 2011.

For a full list of the top 150 eligible institutions and to read more on the selection process, visit www.highered.aspeninstitute.org/aspen-prize.

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The Aspen Prize is generously funded by ECMC Foundation, Joyce Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, and Siemens Foundation.

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership that significantly improve student outcomes, especially for the growing population of low-income students and students of color on American campuses. For more information, visit <http://highered.aspeninstitute.org/> and www.linkedin.com/showcase/aspenhighered and follow [@AspenHigherEd](https://twitter.com/AspenHigherEd) on Twitter.

The Aspen Institute is a community-serving organization with global reach whose vision is a free, just, and equitable society. For 70 years, the Institute has driven change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the world's greatest challenges. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Institute has offices in Aspen, Colorado, and New York City, and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

Regional Education Leaders Form Alliance to Address College Completion, Workforce Development in Southeastern Wisconsin

Together, HERA's higher education institutions and partner organizations are committed to leveraging their collective strengths and resources.

By [Higher Education Regional Alliance](#) - Oct 23rd, 2019 10:53 am



MILWAUKEE (October 23, 2019) – Southeastern Wisconsin higher education, business and community leaders came together last week at [We Energies](#) to formally launch an unprecedented collaborative called the [Higher Education Regional Alliance](#) (HERA). Through the collective force of 18 southeastern Wisconsin public and private, two- and four-year colleges and universities and a network of partner organizations, HERA is dedicated to educating students today to become an innovative and nimble workforce that meets the needs of the region's industries tomorrow.

The region is at a crossroads. The number of individuals with employer ready degrees and certificates must increase to meet current and future talent needs. Consequently, Wisconsin is facing a very real skills and talent gap that is not going away.

“We realized that our region’s colleges and universities were already having numerous and coinciding conversations about how to address this challenge. So, rather than individually creating new policies and procedures, we developed HERA to implement best practices at scale and serve as a unified, collaborative voice connecting businesses to talent,” said Dr. **Mark Mone**, chair of HERA and chancellor of UW-Milwaukee

Together, HERA’s higher education institutions and partner organizations are committed to leveraging their collective strengths and resources. This work focuses on three pillars: addressing college completion, especially in STEM specific fields; aligning, evolving and innovating educational programming; and serving as an essential conduit between regional businesses and talent. Work on these goals is already underway, including:

- **College completion** – Recently, HERA and the M7 region were selected as one of three (out of 45 nominees) recipients of a \$500,000 grant from Complete College America, a national nonprofit that aims to increase the graduation number and rate of college students. As part of the grant, Complete College America will work with HERA to scale a core set of evidence-based strategies proven to close equity gaps and generate significant gains in college completion rates.
- **Align, evolve and innovate** – To better meet the needs of a rapidly changing economy, one driven by innovation and in which current supply and demand for talent are mismatched, HERA has made it a priority to align and evolve its educational programs. Efforts to graduate more students are often hampered by not knowing if previous credits will apply toward a program of study at a different institution. For an early win, all HERA institutions now have access to a new technology platform, called “Transferology” that provides information to prospective students on how previously completed courses will transfer to a different institution. Transferology will allow the nearly 629,000 Wisconsin adults aged 25 or older, who have completed some college but have no graduate credential, to determine the best route to a degree where job demand is high. It will also assist those who wish to advance their educational attainment or those seeking career changes to find a pathway to degree completion that is more transparent and efficient. Other strategies in development are increasing the number of stackable credentials (credits for shorter-term courses that lead to an associate or bachelor’s degree) available in high need industries.
- **Expand talent bridges** – HERA is working to connect businesses with talent and promote the value of living and working in southeastern Wisconsin. Unfortunately, only 22% of students in the region are participating in networking and professional development programming. Impacting factors can be location of these opportunities, time required to participate and a lack of resources that limits participation. To help expand talent bridges, HERA recently connected and is promoting two new resources for employers and students – *Handshake* and *Purple Briefcase*. These tools, now accessible for employers on the HERA website, will quickly match students with internships, career fairs and job opportunities based on their majors and interests.

“HERA represents more than 150,000 students in southeastern Wisconsin. These students, along with those who have some college but never completed, and those who need retooling, are the key to driving our economy,” said Todd McLees, HERA steering committee member and founder of Pendio Group. “HERA’s strength lies in its

understanding of needing to reimagine the higher education ecosystem, and work hand-in-hand with non-profits and businesses to prepare graduates to fill the most difficult-to-fill job openings in the state. While much more work lies ahead, these accomplishments to date are paramount to addressing these critical issues for our region's future."

HERA institutions include: Alverno College, Bryant & Stratton College, Cardinal Stritch University, Carroll University, Carthage College, Concordia University, Gateway Technical College, Herzing University, Marquette University, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Mount Mary University, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Waukesha County Technical College and Wisconsin Lutheran College. The alliance's partner organizations and employer consortiums also include: ElevAsian, Employ Milwaukee, Greater Milwaukee Committee, Higher Expectations of Racine, Hispanic Collaborative Network, Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee, Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Development Partnership, Milwaukee Succeeds, Milwaukee Urban League, Pendio Group and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

Employers can learn more about recruiting initiatives here. For more information about HERA in general, or to learn how to get involved, please visit <https://www.herawisconsin.org/>.

About HERA

The Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA) is a talent producing collaboration with 18 southeastern Wisconsin public and private, two- and four-year colleges and universities and a network of partner organizations. We are dedicated to closing achievement gaps and educating students today to become an innovative and nimble workforce that meets the needs of the region's industries tomorrow. This challenge is too large for any one university or college to solve alone, so we are working together. We know that education impacts more than individual lives; it can change the trajectory of our entire region. For more information, please visit <https://www.herawisconsin.org/>.

Western Technical College and Viterbo University make co-admission agreement official

By: Tyler Job Posted: Dec 04, 2019 04:28 PM CST

"More to do out there," Tarr said. "More opportunities for human services and stuff like that. And I like helping people out, too."

Now, things just got easier for students like Tarr.

"Western is our top transfer partner," Viterbo president Glenna Temple said. "So we've been waiting to see how can we build degrees together? How can we work in partnership to make sure more students graduate?"

Officials from Western and Viterbo signed a co-admission agreement that gives an easier transition for students going from Western to Viterbo.

"It's kinda like truth in advertising or promotion," Western president Roger Stanford said. "You say this is what you get and this is what you're promised for your two to five-year journey."

The agreement also allows students to be enrolled at Western and Viterbo at once.

"That relationship (between Western and Viterbo) has always been good," Stanford said. "It's now better because they get all of their credits counted towards their baccalaureate degree, with no loss. I think it's a win-win-win."

Some credits that can be transferred over include business, engineering and education majors, and even Tarr's very own human services.

"Having more students from Western would be wonderful to have on our campus as well," Temple said.

Whether Tarr decides to transfer or not, he just wants to make his family proud of him.

"I'm the first child to go to college out of my family," Tarr said. "So, I'm pretty much doing it for my family, really."

Western Technical college helping fill the worker shortage

WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE Nov 24, 2019

It's a problem most are aware of by now — the region's talent gap and worker shortage continue to grow.

“The amount of people entering the trades are not keeping up with retirements,” said Carl Newman, apprenticeship instructor at Western Technical College. “Furthermore, the economy is strong, driving the need for skilled labor.”

As a result of this shift, colleges, organizations and businesses are frequently turning to apprenticeship programs to fill worker needs.

Apprenticeships are post-secondary education with a big distinction: students learn in the classroom while working on the job with an employer, learning the full scope of the trade.

“From Day 1, students earn a paycheck guaranteed to increase over time as you learn the skills of the new career,” Newman said.

Western offers several apprenticeship options, including construction electrician, industrial electrician, maintenance mechanic/millwright, maintenance technician, metal fabrication, plumbing, steam fitting, tool and die/machinist and injection mold set-up.

Once completed, an apprentice can earn a large salary. According to figures from the Wisconsin Technical College System, the median salary for a

plumber is \$76,140. Construction electricians can earn \$72,252, and tool-and-die apprentices earn \$66,945.

Typical apprenticeship programs last three to five years. Students attend class one day every other week.

The remaining time is spent on the job learning the trade from industry professionals.

“Upon completion, each student receives a nationally recognized completion certification, which can be used anywhere in the U.S.,” Newman said.

Newman said apprenticeship programs are seeing growth in the U.S. The growing talent gap is the biggest reason for the trend.

“These students are getting hands-on training while earning college credit that is paid by their employer,” Newman said. “Apprentices are a different approach to the problem, because it allows employers to have a person on the job right away, filling that labor gap.”

Last week, Western celebrated National Apprenticeship Week by hosting The Apprenticeship Experience, an open house event located at the college’s Welding and Apprenticeship Facility. The event was a chance to highlight the benefits of the apprenticeship program, including the career prospects and starting salaries.

“It’s such a great way to earn money while in college,” Newman said. “We encourage everyone interested in a career in the trades to look at this option.”

EDUCATION

Superior District introduces in-class tool to support students undergoing mental health crisis

The resource is similar to posters outlining emergency procedures for evacuations and lockdowns.

Written By: Maria Lockwood | Dec 13th 2019 - 8am.

The Superior School District is expanding its emergency preparedness. Teachers and staff will soon have a new tool for supporting students experiencing a mental health crisis. The resource, a sheet of information which identifies signs of a mental health crisis, suicide risk factors, warning signs for suicide and steps staff can take when they see the signs, will soon be posted in Superior classrooms.

“We put a lot of emphasis on emergency procedures for evacuations, fire drills, active shooters. And the likelihood those things will happen are really low,” District Administrator Amy Starzecki told School Board members at the Dec. 9 board meeting. “However, something our teachers face I would say daily in some of our classrooms and weekly in some of our classrooms is students experiencing a mental health crisis.”

The new tool looks very similar to class resources that outline emergency procedures for evacuations and lockdowns.

“Our hope is it goes right next to that poster,” Starzecki said.

Guidance counselors and school psychologists have been working on the new resource poster since spring. It fills a need.

“One of the things teachers are asking for is ‘How do we better support students?’ ‘What are some of the actions we can take?’” Starzecki said. “It can’t all fall on the shoulders of our guidance counselors.”

Board members appreciated the focus on student mental health needs, as well as the conversation starters that will be included in the information.

Starzecki said the resource will be shared with teachers and staff at meetings over the next few months before being implemented. Based on feedback, some tweaks may be made. She also planned to speak this month with the Superior High School student council about putting together a list of mental health crisis resources, both local and national, they can share with peers.

In other action Dec. 9

- The Superior School Board approved a 2020-21 academic calendar that will build in four potential snow days. The current school year has three days built in, made possible by adding minutes to the school day. According to the calendar, the 2020-21 school year will begin before Labor Day on Sept. 1. Christmas break will run from Dec. 24-Jan. 1 and spring break will take place March 15-19. The last day of classes would be June 4.
- The board voted to add 20 new courses at Superior High School, including English courses like public speaking and literary arts: from graphic novel to film, 11 new special education courses and a three-course construction academy partnership with Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. No additional personnel would be needed, and only five of the courses have any material costs.

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