



# Community college students are changing — it's time for financial policies to change too

BY GLENN DUBOIS, MORNA FOY AND MONTY SULLIVAN, OPINION CONTRIBUTORS — 06/13/19 05:15 PM EDT  
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

Just In...

**EPA employee protests union contract while receiving award from Admin. Wheeler**

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT  
— 3M 21S AGO

**Arizona Democrat joins call for Trump impeachment**

HOUSE — 6M 6S AGO

**Former Navy officer, teacher enters race to unseat GOP senator in Montana**

CAMPAIGN — 11M 32S AGO

**Watch live: Trump speaks at presidential social media event**

ADMINISTRATION — 11M 48S AGO

**Senate panel eyes Tuesday hearing for Defense secretary nominee**

DEFENSE — 11M 52S AGO

**Andrew Yang raises \$2.8 million in second quarter**

CAMPAIGN — 13M 14S AGO

**Fed chairman warns of 'unthinkable' harm if debt ceiling isn't raised**

FINANCE — 17M 7S AGO

**Amash misses deeper problem afflicting Congress: unwillingness to compromise**

OPINION — 18M 15S AGO

VIEW ALL

74 SHARES



© Getty Images

Go ask **ALICE** about [Operation Varsity Blues](#), and you won't get much of a reaction. That's because while highly selective schools grab lots of ink, including the not-so-good ink from the high-profile admissions scandal, it's the open-access institutions in our community college sector who serve a plurality of U.S. postsecondary students, [38 percent of undergraduates](#) according to the most recent available data.

No longer can we pretend that postsecondary students are 18-to-24-year-olds who enter and finish a degree at one institution. Instead, and increasingly, these students are adult learners who are disproportionately African American and Latino, women and first-generation college students. They are *ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained and Employed*.

Despite having jobs, many ALICE students who pursue traditional academic degrees within community colleges are older than their university counterparts and have a hard time affording the basic cost of living. ALICE students are too busy to worry about Operation Varsity Blues.

The truth about ALICE students is that very few of them will enroll in a traditional college degree program, let alone the kinds of selective school programs caught up in the scandal. They take too long to complete; they are too expensive to pursue; and they require a sense of academic confidence these students haven't felt in a long time, if ever.

## Related News

by



Florida couple wins right to plant vegetables in...



The Best Lawyers in Madison. See The List

Sponsored | Attorneys | Sponsored Listings



Obama congratulates US women's soccer...



Inslee suggests climate 'collab' with Lil Nas X

Community college students are changing — it's time for financial aid policies to change too | TheHill

Nevertheless, it's vital that ALICE students have access to higher education in order to participate in the increasingly competitive global economy. And access to higher education comes down to dollars and sense. Common sense reveals that the demographics of community college students are changing. That's why it's time for the policies around a key source of dollars – Federal financial aid – to change, too.

Now you might be thinking that ALICE students benefit from Pell Grants, but alarmingly the rate of Pell receipt for community college students has fallen in recent years from 38 percent in 2011-12 to 33.5 percent in 2015-16. Even though community colleges have a much higher proportion of low-income students than other higher education sectors, the rate of Pell receipt for students in our sector is lower than at public four-year colleges and at private nonprofit four-year colleges. We believe the Pell Grant program needs to be modernized to better serve today's non-traditional, low-income students and incentivize completion.

Indeed, we believe it's essential that the Pell Grant program responds to those looking to get a foothold in the workforce. There are numerous short-term credentials that lead directly to employment for which Pell grants are not eligible. That's why we support "Workforce Pell" – expanding Pell eligibility to these programs that lead directly to jobs.

Though certificates now aren't counted in many measures of postsecondary attainment, they often provide the outcome that degree-seeking students are looking for: meaningful employment. Short-term credentials can also serve as the first rung on the ladder to a college degree or as training for workers with degrees engaged in the process of lifelong learning and career advancement

The rapid growth of short-term credentials over the past 30 years is a promising signal that students, institutions and industry are recognizing their value at an increasing rate. Most research finds that having a short-term credential is associated with higher earnings; the effect is especially strong for certificates in health fields. In addition, short-term credentials raise the probability that the person is employed and that the job is in an industry related to their skills.

Today, low-income students can use Pell grants to pay for bachelor's degrees, associate degrees and non-degree programs that last at least 15 weeks. The fact is that meaningful programs leading to an enhanced career pathway can take as few as six weeks. Our community and technical college systems can play an even bigger role in unleashing a powerful engine of economic mobility if Congress expands the usage of Pell grants to include short-term credentials.

For tens of millions of Americans, the pathway to achievement starts in their local community college. And for ALICE students, individuals of limited means, with demanding responsibilities and difficult personal schedules, and who may be the first in their family to pursue higher education, we offer what might be their only chance.

For the same reasons that the federal government invests in those pursuing traditional academic degrees, we should also invest in those pursuing high-quality, stackable, short-term workforce credentials. Congress should recognize this reality: community college students are changing, and it's time for financial aid policies to change, too. Go ask **ALICE**, and we think you'll learn that Workforce Pell is a great place to start.

*Dr. Glenn DuBois is Chancellor of Virginia's Community Colleges, Dr. Morna K. Foy is President of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), and Dr. Monty Sullivan is System President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS). Dr. DuBois, Dr. Foy, and Dr. Sullivan are*

## Blackhawk Technical College breaks ground on new ag facility

By Brooke Bechen Regional Editor | [brooke.bechen@ecpc.com](mailto:brooke.bechen@ecpc.com) Apr 29, 2019



Dusty Williams, agribusiness and farm management instructor at Blackhawk Technical College, addressed those gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking. Williams was an integral voice during the planning of the new facility but credited many others for the successes of the project as well.

Photo by Brooke Bechen

**MONROE** — It was a long time coming, a project described by those involved in its planning as one that went back as many as eight years. And it finally became reality on April 25 as students, past and present, staff and community members alike celebrated the official groundbreaking of Blackhawk Technical College's new agriculture lab facility at its Monroe location.

For the college's district board, it's been at least three years that they've been considering plans for the new facility. But for agribusiness and farm management instructor Dusty Williams, it's been a lot longer.

This June, Williams will celebrate 10 completed years as an instructor at Blackhawk Technical College. Since coming on board in 2008, Williams has rebuilt the college's agricultural program from scratch after it was discontinued in the 1990s, acquiring a \$340,000 grant several years ago to invest in the reintroduction of a two-year program for an agricultural associate degree. With the grant, Williams was able to purchase equipment and fund adjunct instructors, with the first graduate of that program also included in the groundbreaking festivities.

“Good things come to those who wait, and we’re really excited to have the opportunity to have the new building,” Williams said.

The college has hired Keller Design for architectural design and construction management services. An approximately 4,000-square-foot building will be constructed on the south end of the Monroe campus and include a large garage shop area with two large overhead doors to support agriculture equipment maintenance and storage, a laboratory classroom and a tool storage crib. An adjoining 750-square-foot greenhouse will also be accessible from the lab.

The company is proud to serve as the architect and construction manager for the project, with Keller’s Michael Quoeff commenting that it was a great day for education in south-central Wisconsin; he added that Keller Design sees its involvement as an example of how they can play a small part in helping students become more prepared for life after graduation.

As Williams’ award-winning agricultural program transitions into its new facility, the college’s food science program will shift into his old space, with administrators and instructors hoping this expansion will provide growth in two areas within Green County.

“I’ve been involved with agriculture all my life,” said Arthur Carter, Green County board chairman. “It’s very important that we have a facility like this and we need to keep training new people to meet our demands in agriculture. If we don’t train people, agriculture in the county will suffer.”

For the Green County Board of Supervisors, the new facility is a welcome addition to the county, Carter added.

“We’ve done a good job and this is only the beginning,” said Dr. Tracy Pierner, president of Blackhawk Technical College. “The agricultural building is just one step in ‘growing Green County.’ ”

With this ‘theme’ in mind, a special activity was planned to conclude the groundbreaking ceremony April 24. Williams, who had been dedicated since December to growing a beard for the first time and not removing it until the groundbreaking, stepped up to a makeshift barber’s chair for a celebratory shave. He had help from the first graduate of his two-year agricultural associate program, Mike Raab, and Jennifer Thompson, marketing and communications manager for Blackhawk Technical College.

“I truly believe if you’re not green and growing, you’re ripe and rotting,” he said with a smile, explaining how he considered shaving his beard off as a symbol for a fresh start for something new for the future of Blackhawk Technical College.

Williams was sure to thank a handful of organizations, businesses and individuals for their support of his agricultural program over the years, from seed dealers who donate seed to farmers who rent the land for the purpose of hands-on student learning. He also thanked college administration and his family, who were present for the event and subsequent beard shaving.

“Agriculture is the best industry there is, and to me, could be the only industry there is,” he said. “Without food, people couldn’t do anything else.”

Brooke Bechen





# CVTC STUDENT-BUILT HOME VOTED ONE OF THE BEST IN PARADE OF HOMES

June 27, 2019



The Chippewa Valley Technical College Residential Construction program student-built home was voted a People's Choice award winner at the 2019 Chippewa Valley Parade of Homes. The home at 2355 McKinley Road in the Highclere Estates development took first place in the \$300,000-\$370,000 price range.

More than 5,200 people attended the Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association's annual flagship event held June 8-15. People who attended had the opportunity to vote for their favorite homes, with winners announced in four price range categories and one remodeling project category.

Students constructed the 2,770 sq. ft. home under the supervision of program director Brian Barth. Students performed the framing, insulating, roofing, siding, and interior trim installation, taking care to meet or exceed industry standards. The home features a large, open-concept kitchen/living/dining room with 9-ft. ceilings, natural gas fireplace surrounded by natural stone, and a large deck accessed through French doors. Other features include custom maple cabinets, master suite with tray ceiling, transom windows, a three-car attached garage, a half-acre lot, walkout basement, wet bar in lower level, and a large stamped-concrete patio with access to backyard fire pit.

The home is for sale, with proceeds going back into the Residential Construction program to fund construction of another home by a new class of students beginning with the fall semester.



# Appleton-born National Criminal Justice Training Center is now a leader in missing-persons cases

Hibah Ansari, Appleton Post-Crescent Published 6:30 a.m. CT May 31, 2019



APPLETON - A small grant-funded program in Appleton that started over 25 years ago has grown into a nationally recognized facility that's trained more than 250,000 people in crime-fighting techniques in every U.S. state and territory.

Fox Valley Technical College's National Criminal Justice Training Center has served as a hub for criminal justice training — especially on how to find missing people and investigate those cases, according to the center's director, Brad Russ.

"When people hear about our affiliation with (the technical college), they're a bit surprised because many people have never heard of the college," Russ said. "They often are surprised by the fact that we have responsibility for some of the nation's ... high-priority areas."

The center provides training in the Amber Alert system, human trafficking, missing persons response and preventative tactics, and Internet Crimes Against Children —a program protected by [law](#) that helps develop responses to online predators who target minors.

Russ was one of the country's first 10 Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force commanders.

"We're considered national leaders in a number of different areas. Missing children is one of them but Internet Crimes Against Children is another," Russ said. "There are so many crimes that are committed involving the internet — for us to be the training provider for the nation's task forces is a pretty big deal."

The web, social media and other digital communication platforms have made matters worse — especially when it comes to missing children and child exploitation, Russ said.

An average of 24 children a day are reported missing to police throughout Wisconsin, according to an Amber Alert study. Alerts are broadcast when a missing child is believed to have been abducted and in danger, among other criteria. The average age of a child for which an Amber Alert was issued is 7 years old.

The National Criminal Justice Training Center provides training in the use of Amber Alerts, which are credited with helping to recover at least 957 children in the U.S. since the program started in 1996.

While the center is run by FVTC in Appleton, its staff members operate from Washington, D.C., where they advocate for the development and funding of national training programs.

The center got its start through a grant from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in 1993.

"They had the vision to pursue these opportunities. And then once they were able to win their first award, they demonstrated their capabilities," Russ said about his predecessors at the center. "The most important reason behind our success has been the college's commitment to these programs."

The center works with federal lawmakers and advocacy groups to garner support for the training programs.

Not only does the center train police, but Russ said the organization is proudest of its ability to train communities by collaborating with nonprofit organizations, social service workers and schools.

As a former police chief who has been involved in law enforcement for over 35 years, Russ said "it doesn't work" if the focus is on one agency or issue. Criminal justice training requires "coordinated strategy."

"We've grown from one grant over 25 years ago to over 20," Russ said. "It's the diversity and the fact that we have grants from every Department of Justice agency that provides ... trust and respect."

The center now provides training in every state and U.S. territory. Its staff has also presented before the State Department, World Health Organization and police agencies in foreign countries.

The center is now focusing its efforts with rural and under-served populations such as the Native American community.

Gerald Hill from the Oneida Nation Judiciary went to a conference the center hosted to receive training when he became a judge. He said the training was useful and that the center does a good job conducting outreach to Native American communities.

Hill said the center has done well in keeping up with current issues involving Native Americans to better inform their training.

"They do pretty good as far as staying in tune with new developments and new information as well as incidents that go on around the country," Hill said. "They've been very diligent in giving a lot of notice to different communities including ours."

Russ said it is not his goal to just educate and increase awareness. Training programs are meant to effect large-scale change that can withstand the political shifts that come with elections.

"The only way that happens is if you put a system in place that is going to continue to achieve the objectives that we have in all of these areas for many years to come."



[https://journaltimes.com/business/local/national-group-selects-gateway-for-summit-on-advanced-manufacturing/article\\_f5cd9e0d-d319-5b48-8388-2d03a2cf6d46.html](https://journaltimes.com/business/local/national-group-selects-gateway-for-summit-on-advanced-manufacturing/article_f5cd9e0d-d319-5b48-8388-2d03a2cf6d46.html)

## National group selects Gateway for summit on advanced manufacturing

For The Journal Times Jun 4, 2019

\$3 FOR 13 WKS - SUBSCRIBE NOW!



Albrecht

RACINE — Gateway Technical College's leadership in the area of advanced manufacturing and Industry 4.0 curriculum and training has led to it being selected as co-host for the national Manufacturing Skill Standards Council and Leadership Summit, which runs through Wednesday, June 5, at its Racine Campus.

The summit is focusing on economic development and pending workforce challenges Foxconn has brought to southeastern Wisconsin.

"Advancing the dialogue around the need for advanced technical training is imperative to sustain local economies," said Gateway Technical College President and CEO Bryan Albrecht. "This meeting will highlight the best practices employers are using to partner with education and training providers."

Albrecht is the chairman of the training consortium. The event includes corporate, government and educational leaders discussing the nationwide worker shortage in advanced manufacturing.

“There is no greater American imperative than up-skilling our workforce to keep pace with technological change,” said Nick Pinchuk, chairman and CEO of Snap-on Incorporated.

Leo Reddy, MSSC chairman, said the group selected Racine as the site for our annual leadership meeting to “view firsthand how Gateway has partnered with some of America’s leading corporations in workforce training. Foxconn, Snap-on, Ashley Furniture and SC Johnson are global giants in the manufacturing sector and we can all learn from their efforts.”

Featured throughout the meeting will be Gateway’s new Industry 4.0 training and certification pathway. This next-generation skill set includes artificial intelligence, additive manufacturing, cyber security, robotics and digitization technologies.

Jay Lee, senior vice chairman for Foxconn’s Industrial Internet, is scheduled address the meeting on Wednesday.

“The future of industrial artificial intelligence will shape the workplace and redefine the knowledge and skills required in the global competition for jobs,” said Lee. “Gateway and Foxconn are partnering to provide career paths that support an advanced manufacturing ecosystem.”

MSSC is a non-profit, industry-led training, assessment and certification system focused on the core skills and knowledge needed by the nation’s front-line production and material handling workers.



# LTC downtown Manitowoc location expands access to education for better job prospects

Published 7:55 a.m. CT July 10, 2019

On June 27, Lakeshore Technical College dedicated its new, downtown Manitowoc location in the former Holy Family Memorial women's clinic on York Street. After a floor-to-ceiling renovation, the site serves as a convenient destination for those who want to prepare for jobs or for college.

Providing services in the heart of downtown Manitowoc represents an important commitment from LTC's Board of Trustees, who want to ensure college access is available to anyone who seeks better job prospects through education. The site will serve as a starting point for adult learners who are ready to take the next step, and we will meet them where they need to begin, whether or not they finished high school or have been out of school for many years. We call this job- and college-readiness bundle of services LiftUp Lakeshore, because we know the power education has to lift individuals up to a better life.



LTC President Dr. Paul Carlsen leads the ribbon cutting in front of the new Lakeshore Technical College Manitowoc campus at 600 York Street. (Photo: Alisa M. Schafer/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)

LiftUp Lakeshore services are delivered without admissions requirements and are tuition-free. Services also include English Language Learning (ELL) for those committed to language development skills for work, or to assimilate into the community. LiftUp Lakeshore is supported through federal and state grants.

LTC-Downtown Manitowoc services, however, extend beyond LiftUp Lakeshore. The site is outfitted with the latest higher education technology, including a testing center. As the college offers more and more of its college courses and programs online, students may need to take exams in a proctored environment. Rather than traveling to the main campus in Cleveland, testing can be completed in Manitowoc.

The center also provides testing for students to gain credit for prior learning. Students come to LTC with previous college courses or work experiences, which may be covered in course material. Rather than repeating learning the student has already accomplished, competency can be proven through testing, saving time and money for them when pursuing their LTC degree.



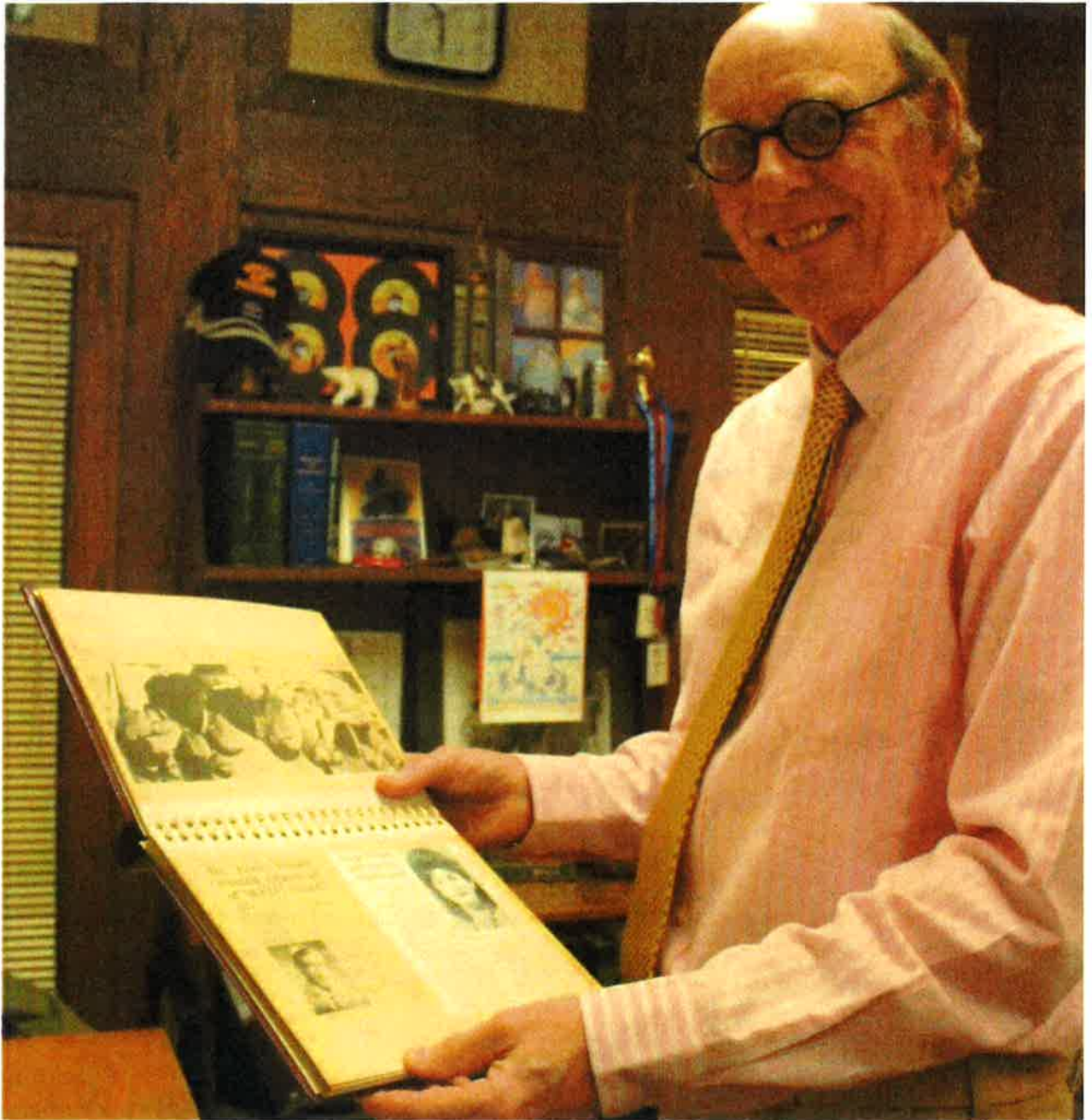
**Paul Carlsen, Lakeshore Technical College president** *(Photo: Provided)*

A video conferencing classroom brings courses originating from other LTC locations to the downtown Manitowoc site. Students see and communicate with their instructor and classmates through multiple flat screens. Many of these courses are also ideal for high school students looking to get a head start on college coursework.

A number of non-credit, community education courses will also be offered in downtown Manitowoc for personal and professional enrichment, as well as business-targeted seminars for those who need continuing education as part of their profession.

*Dr. Paul Carlsen is president of Lakeshore Technical College.*





Joe Hasler shows newspaper clippings from when his father, James B. Hasler, was on the Madison College District Board.

ERICA DYNES/Times-Press

Joe Hasler keeps a box full of memories on his desk from his time serving as one of the trustees of the Madison College District Board at his office at LaRowe, Gerlach and Taggart LLP, the law firm he founded in Reedsburg.

Those memories include agendas from board meetings, programs from ceremonies and other mementos. Buried at the bottom of the box is a book of newspaper clippings and photos from when his father, James B. Hasler, served on the Madison College District Board in the 1970s and 1980s.

“It’s got sentimental value,” Hasler said of why he keeps the items. “I don’t know if you understand it, but you are going until you know where you’ve been.”





Hasler, a lifelong Reedsburg resident, said his father served on the Madison College District Board of the college's campus was being constructed in Madison. He said his father's time on the board the reasons he decided to apply for a position when a spot was open the Madison College Board

"I've always been interested in technical education," Hasler said, adding he sees a lot of people in the Reedsburg area taking advantage of Madison College and the classes it offers. "What Madison has is a track record of providing family supporting jobs for men and women across south central Wisconsin."

He was appointed to the board as a district board trustee in 2013, serving as its chairman for a term in 2017. He was recently reappointed to the board by the Madison College's Board Appointment Committee for terms beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2022. Two new members were also announced for appointments to the Madison College Board, Ananda Mirilli of Madison and Melanie Lichtfeld of Watertown. The appointments are contingent upon approval by the Wisconsin Technical College System Board at its next meeting.

Madison College's Board Appointment Committee is comprised of county board chairs for each of the counties that are part of Madison College's 12-county district, according to an April 9 press release from Madison College. The committee meets annually to fill three vacancies.

Hasler said he enjoys serving on the board, making decisions affecting communities involving each of the areas Madison College serves. Madison College campuses include locations in the Madison area, including Fort Atkinson, Portage and Watertown.

He is a “pretty firm believer” educational decisions for rural communities, like Reedsburg, can be made on college’s campuses in Madison, he said. Madison College President Dr. Jack E. Daniels III sees the connections between the rural and urban areas.

“He always draws the relationship between what would ever happen in Dane County and what is in Sauk County as well as what happens in Sauk (County) has an impact on what happens in Dar said. “He keeps that at the fore front.”

Daniels said Hasler is a pleasant person to work with on the board.

“He asks key questions, he is concerned about students, he’s concerned about the integrity of the Daniels said. “He has fostered an environment of one that is concerned, but at the same time tren supportive, of what the college does.”

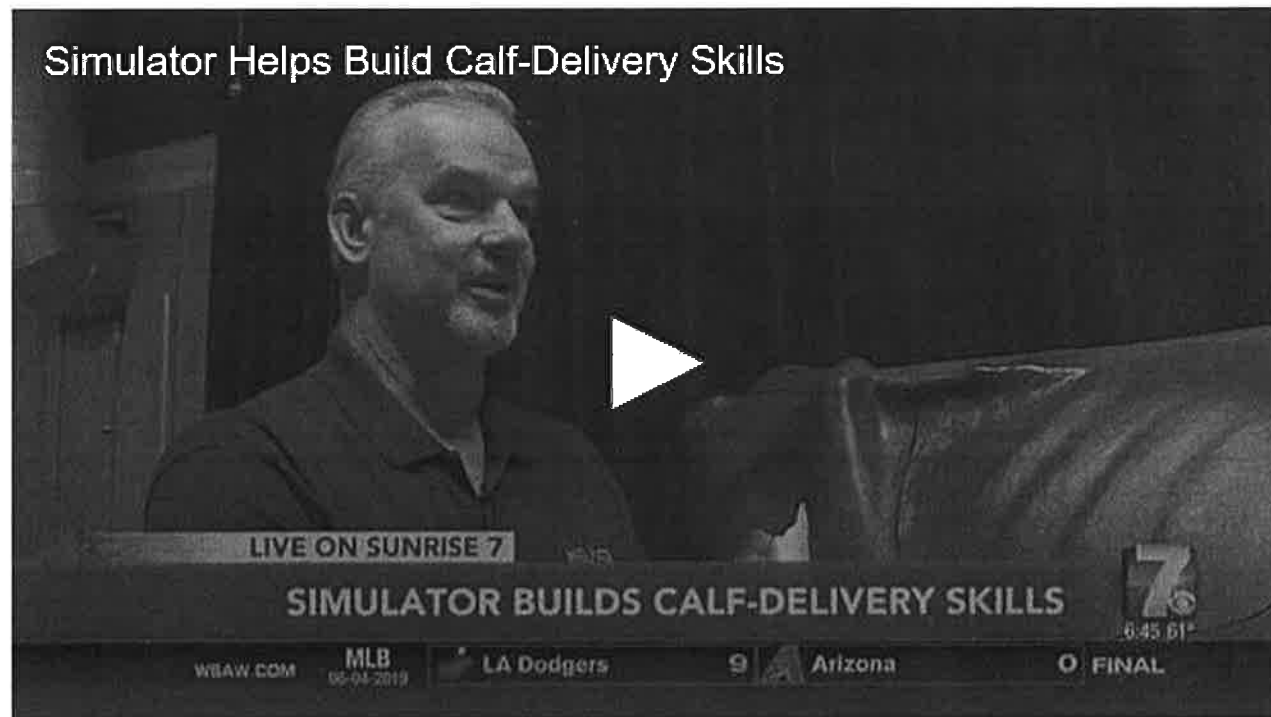
Daniels said Hasler’s “insight and advocacy” helped Madison College meet its goals—including justifiable, accountable budgets, creating an excellent facility masters plan and assisting in the bc decisions building the Goodman South Campus. The 75,000 square foot, \$23 million building is open in September 2019 in Madison, according to the Madison College website. When complete building will have about 20 classrooms, a library, three computer labs, four science labs and a di Some of those classrooms will be turned into “community rooms” for parts of the day based on t scheduling.

*Wisconsin State Journal reporter Kelly Meyerhoffer contributed to this report.*

Follow Erica Dynes on Twitter @EDynes\_CapNews or contact her at 608-393-5346.

MORE INFORMATION

## Students gain delivery skills with new cow birthing simulator



By WSAW Staff | Posted: Wed 8:21 AM, Jun 05, 2019 | Updated: Wed 9:07 AM, Jun 05, 2019



**Wausau, Wis., (WSAW)** Agriculture students at mid-state technical college are will gain new confidence thanks to a new tool nearly six feet tall.

To demonstrate how the new cow birthing simulator will help future farmers and veterinarians Sunrise 7 was joined by Ron Zillmer, Dean of the School of Transportation, Agriculture, Natural Resource, and Construction at Mid-State Technical College.

Mid-State found that central Wisconsin is in need of more large animal veterinarians. But no classroom is better than hand-on experience.

The lifelike birth cow simulator arrived at Mid-State's Marshfield campus in March and will be used for training students to protect both mother and calf in 12 different common cattle birth scenarios.



"This allows us to train technicians in a controlled environment and give them reputations that are not possible with live cows and not healthy for live mothers and calves," explained Zillmer.

Zillmer says the simulator will put Mid State students at an advantage above others in the field. "We learned that producers have been forced to perform more deliveries on their own due to fewer large animal vets in the region, and that has required them to be more certain of births that truly require a vet's assistance."

To learn more about Mid-State's agriculture programs visit [mstc.edu/programs](http://mstc.edu/programs)

**LOUD AND PROUD:** Students from Moraine Park Technical College found a patriotic way to display their industry pride, and wore matching navy hoodies or T-shirts with a flag and some HVAC flair.

behind it. I can go anywhere in the U.S., anywhere in the world, even, and find a job."

Heiser is in her second year attending VisionTECH. A graduate as of April 20, she's looking to move back to Madison and find a job there, and she liked the opportunity to connect with someone from that area.

"[My school] was newly renovated, so we had a whole lab of equipment to work on," she said. "It was a lot of hands-on, which is exactly what I wanted to do."

VisionTECH also held its seventh consecutive year of interviews-to-hire sessions, giving high school students the opportunity to interview for real jobs. Contractors/dealers had a chance to talk to some of the best, brightest, and most motivated students coming up on the HVAC scene. Since the program started, 72 students have been hired.

## COMPETITIONS

Some friendly rivalry was on order, too, as the event featured both education and competitions. On Tuesday morning, the lot outside the conference area was lined with vans for the service vehicle competition. Winners earned trophies, marketing funds, and (of course) bragging rights that their design stood out from the rest.

The event culminated with the 2019 TechWarZ competition, a Jeopardy-style battle of the minds. Attendees packed the big conference room, where teams had 30 seconds to come up with the right answer to a multiple-choice question, sourced from the workshops and sessions that conference guests had just attended. Dealers competed with other dealers and colleges with colleges to win prizes for each person on the first-, second-, and third-place teams. The "Jeopardy" theme song played across the loudspeakers until one champion remained in each group: Western Technical College in the schools category, and Kowalski Heating & Cooling, McMurray, Pennsylvania, in the dealers section.

Don Dyer is a Lennox district manager and attended the Wisconsin event, traveling from Charlotte, North Carolina. He's been with Lennox for 11 years; he started off getting an associate degree in electronics and working as an installer at an air conditioning company, then moved into sales and operations.



**THIS IS JEOPARDY:** Attendees compete in the TechWarZ competition, a Jeopardy-style tournament (yes, it includes the "Jeopardy" theme song) that covers all things HVAC.



**DAY OF LEARNING:** A young technician watches the speakers at the second day of the Lennox VisionTECH conference.

Sheree Dyer said she wants to pull from other labor markets and job search organizations, in addition to colleges, to fill the ranks.

"We've got to break the mold and create awareness that the trades are an acceptable career," she said.

Publication date: 6/3/2019

"I knew I didn't want to sit down for the rest of my life and work at a desk, so I decided it would be a good idea to go to a field where you're up, around, moving," she said. "Next year, there are going to be 115,000 [HVAC] jobs in the U.S. that are going to be needed. I know there's good job security

"Coming here and seeing some of the hands-on things that the college students are doing, and seeing the looks on their faces, like they're so engaged, and they're having fun with it ... Some of them may come away from here saying, 'that makes sense to me, that's something I can be part of,'" he said. "What Dave is doing here is so much bigger than just trying to sell air conditioners. This is about giving people opportunity. It's about inspiring somebody."

Don Dyer and his wife, Sheree, plan on bringing VisionTECH to Charlotte in the future.

"We plan on bringing the best scalable model we can bring back ... and still be a realistic investment," he said. "We need to attract people to the industry. Our customers are dying on the vine for lack of [employees to do the work that's needed]."

# Metal Mania: Mid-State offers free summer classes

BY TAYLOR J. HALE  
REPORTER

STEVENS POINT/WISCONSIN RAPIDS — High school students, working adults and those seeking employment will have a chance to learn life skills and earn transferable college credits with the Metal Mania program offered by Mid-State Technical College this summer.

The free program started in 2018 to give learners a chance to gain valuable experience in the growing machining field.

"Industry has really been a driver for starting this summer program," said Wisconsin Rapids Mid-State Director of Marketing Kolina Stieber.

The program is funded by the Central Wisconsin

Metal Manufacturers Alliance (CWIMMA) to allow students to participate in the courses at no cost. CWIMMA members also offer student tours and aid throughout Metal Mania and into the following

See MANIA page 4

**PORTAGE**  
**Gaz**

Patrick J. Wo  
Mike Hollihan ~

Kris Leonhardt, Senior Editor....  
Joe Bachman, Editor.....  
John Kemmeter, Sports Editor ...  
Taylor J. Hale, Reporter.....  
Amy McKenzie, Office Mgr./Class  
Bev Derezinski, Reception.....  
General News Inbox .....

MANIA  
from page 3

academic years to encourage learners to continue growing.

"Students can earn eight credits in the Metal Mania program, (the) estimated value of tuition and books is \$1,580, and seven credits in the Advanced Metal Mania program. The estimated value of tuition and books is \$1,256," Stieber said.

The advanced portion of the program is new this year and allows students with prior experience to enroll in second-year machine tool classes.

"Advanced Metal Mania is geared for students that have experience through a related youth apprenticeship, work experience in machining, or have taken a dual credit class in high school relating to machining," Stieber explained.

Each of the programs

has three classes catered to the experience level of the students. The Metal Mania programs expect to serve roughly 24 students in total this summer. Many students who complete the courses are anticipated to enroll in Mid-State's machine tool technician program. Stieber sees the free classes as a way to better the central Wisconsin community.

"Mid-State is honored to provide instruction to close the employment gap," she said.

The registration deadline for Metal Mania is May 31. Classes start on June 17.

For more information, contact Jackie Esselman at 715-422-5413 or jackie.esselman@mstc.edu.

Contact Taylor J. Hale at [thale@mmclocal.com](mailto:thale@mmclocal.com) with Portage County news and information.

## Mid-State Technical College Graduates 2019 Class Sunday

*Midwest Communications Inc.*

Friday, May 17, 2019 8:38 p.m. CDT by

STEVENS POINT, WI (WSAU) -- Its graduation season and Mid-State Technical College will be holding its graduation this Sunday.

The ceremony will be held at SentryWorld in Stevens Point at 1:30 p.m. and will combine all Mid-State campuses, 2019 graduate class. Student life coordinator Natasha Miller describes this year's graduating class.

"We have about 248 people that are going to be walking across the stage. And of those, we have 5 schools that are going to be represented. The biggest one is going to be our business and technology school. We have a lot of students that are graduating from business management, marketing, IT. Overall there's going to be 383 people that are graduating."

This year's ceremony is a first as it combines all four Mid-State campuses. Miller explains the reasoning behind that decision.

"The thought is we are one college. And although we have these different locations we really are all part of one college. And in the past we had different campuses have their graduation ceremony on the same night. And so we weren't really all able to celebrate together. But now it's really great because we can all be together. We can all celebrate our students together and really be that one college."

With having a combined ceremony, SentryWorld is at capacity for graduation according to Miller.

"So every person that is going to be attending the graduation in person needs to have a ticket and those have all been dispersed. And then for anybody else that can't make it in person or doesn't have a ticket, we are live streaming the event. The link is going to be up on our website and also on our Facebook. So on our website, if you go to [mstc.edu/graduation](http://mstc.edu/graduation) we have links to the live stream."

The graduation ceremony will begin at 1:30 p.m. and will be followed by a reception with refreshments and photo opportunities. Along with the live stream, you can also follow the event on Twitter with the hashtag #MidStateClass19.



# Free tuition programs aimed at providing opportunity, addressing workforce shortages

## Special report: Higher education & research

by [Lauren Anderson](#)

June 24, 2019, 3:12 AM

As worker shortages and college affordability remain persistent challenges in southeastern Wisconsin, more than 1,200 students have enrolled at Milwaukee Area Technical College through a free tuition program aimed at tackling both of those issues.

In the fall of 2015, the college was the first in the state to launch a Promise program, which provides free tuition to qualifying low-income high school graduates from the college's service district.

When MATC leaders decided to roll out the program, it was driven by a sense of urgency, said Vicki Martin, president of MATC.

"People came together and said, 'We're going to do this,'" Martin said. "We didn't want to lose another senior class in high school who could take advantage of this because what we've found is that so many students who are low-income, first-generation, historically underserved students didn't believe they could afford to go to college."

The MATC Promise program covers tuition and fees for program courses for up to 75 credits.

Across MATC's district – which includes all of Milwaukee County and portions of Ozaukee and Washington counties – there are more than 75,000 low-income students, Martin said. Since the program launched, 514 qualified students have enrolled at the college through the program, which is publicly and privately funded.

Meanwhile, 135,000 people in Milwaukee County have completed some college but don't have a degree. MATC expanded the Promise program in 2018 in an effort to help returning college students receive credentials.

The MATC Promise for Adults program extends free tuition to students 24 years and older who are living in the college district and have already completed some college credits. It provides up to 75 credits toward an associate degree that is tied to a top 50 in-demand career in Wisconsin. Those degree programs include STEM fields, construction, health care, manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, among others.

Both programs are last-dollar scholarships, meaning they cover the gap after other aids and scholarships are applied. MATC also assists returning students in getting out of student loan default.

Nearly 3,330 prospective students expressed interest in the MATC Promise for Adults for 2018-'19. About 1,000 of those students enrolled, including 689 who met all qualifications.

"The MATC Promise for Adults generated a tremendous amount of interest last year," Martin said. "We are excited to offer the program for additional students for the next academic year."

The program is particularly focused on training workers to fill so-called "middle-skill" jobs: those that require more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree.

For students, the program provides a significant opportunity, Martin said.

"They're adults; they've already been there before," she said. "They've come back and now they're determined. We've gotten them out of default, and now they can get on track to pay it off and be eligible again for Pell. We work with them on internships and other things they can do to make sure they're on the right path and in a career they're interested in."

Between the two Promise programs, more than 1,200 students have enrolled at MATC, earning a cumulative 20,000 college credits.

The MATC Foundation Inc. has received more than \$2 million from more than 230 donors to support its Promise programs. The largest donor, Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele, personally gave \$250,000 for the MATC Promise for New High School Graduates and an additional \$500,000 for the MATC Promise for Adults.

Gateway Technical College in Kenosha also launched a Promise program in 2015 for qualifying high school graduates. The program has seen traction among students, with more than 300 currently participating.

Gateway Promise provides three years of free tuition to eligible students in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties. The college recently reported that nearly nine out of 10 Promise students remained in college after their first semester, compared to a national average of five of every 10.

The GTC Foundation recently surpassed its initial fundraising target by nearly \$1 million to support the program, raising \$3.93 million for the program.

Lakeland University in Sheboygan County recently announced it would build off of MATC's program by offering free tuition to qualifying students seeking their bachelor's degree.

Lakeland has established a scholarship fund to extend the opportunity to graduating MATC Promise students who go on to attend the university full-time. For many of the students, the scholarship will cover all tuition after federal and state financial grant aid has been applied.

David Black, president of Lakeland University, said MATC and Lakeland serve similar student populations.

“We’re a lot alike, not in just those whom we educate, but in how we see the world,” Black said. “So when (MATC leaders) talked about the Promise program, my gosh, the very spirit was exciting to us.”

It also builds on other efforts by Lakeland to minimize debt among its graduates. The university recently rolled out a cooperative education model that allows students to gain 12 to 18 months of professional work experience with area companies, while earning an estimated \$100,000 in wages and scholarships over four years to defray tuition costs.

“When there’s \$1.6 trillion of student debt (nationally), shame on us,” Black said. “We all need to work to do something about this.”



## MORaine PARK TO OFFER TEST DRIVE EVENT FOR WELDING AND CNC

June 27, 2019

Moraine Park Technical College is offering a unique opportunity to “Test Drive” and learn about the welding and computerized numerical control (CNC) machining careers.

The Test Drive event will offer the opportunity to explore these respective careers, meet potential employers, and receive valuable real-world opportunities. A two-day event will be at the Fond du Lac campus on Tuesday, July 16 and Thursday, July 18, and there will be a one-day event at the Beaver Dam campus on Tuesday, July 23. Both events will include a free, hands-on workshop.

Participants who attend the Test Drive event will also learn about Moraine Park’s Manufacturing Skills Academy boot camp program. These expedited 13- to 15-week sessions are offered for free, and they allow individuals the opportunity to learn a skilled trade. The boot camp program was created to help address the manufacturing industry need for skilled workers.

CNC machining and welding boot camps are scheduled to begin in September 2019, with applications currently being accepted.

“Past participants have really appreciated these events,” JoAnn Hall, dean of economic and workforce development at Moraine Park said. “They offer a glimpse directly into the career path and allow individuals the opportunity to see if it will be a good fit.”

Individuals interested in participating in one of the boot camp programs are required to attend either a Test Drive event or an Information and Testing session as a first step in the application process.

Information and Testing sessions will be in Fond du Lac on Tuesday, July 2 and Thursday, July 25; Beaver Dam on Thursday, July 11; West Bend on Monday, July 22.

The boot camp programs are free to participating students thanks to employment opportunities and financial support provided by area businesses including Amerequip, Apache Stainless, Integrity Saw & Tool, Inc., Miba, Midstates Aluminum Corporation, Signicast, and Wabash National. Individuals interested in applying for the program are required to pay the \$30 program registration fee.

Space is limited for the Test Drive events, and pre-registration is required. For more details or to register, visit [morainepark.edu/bootcamp](http://morainepark.edu/bootcamp), or call Nikki Dahlke at (920) 924-3334.



# NWTC president credits focus on students for lifetime achievement award



By Sarah Thomsen | Posted: Wed 4:18 PM, Jun 19, 2019 | Updated: Wed 5:43 PM, Jun 19, 2019

**GREEN BAY, Wis. (WBAY)** - A prestigious award has been granted to the president of Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. Dr. Jeff Rafn was honored with a lifetime achievement award for helping students succeed.

"I have this very strong belief that every person needs some education after high school in order to get the kind of job that will help them sustain a family or do what they need," Rafn says.

Rafn has made it his mission to ensure every student who enrolls at NWTC leaves with a degree.

"That's probably the thing I'm the most proud about is our focus on all that student success," Rafn says.

Rafn has led the college for the past 22 years. Student struggles have inspired him to take action.

"We had one student say, she was talking to our foundation and she said, 'I would get to the end of the month and all I would have left would be crackers. So I would eat crackers.' And I thought, how can you go to school on crackers?"

NWTC started a food pantry. It's stocked by donations from employees.

Down the hall is a clothes closet for people who need to look their best for job interviews.

Rafn says while enrollment and staff sizes have grown, he's been careful to make sure no student or staff member is left out.

"I believe they can be successful, and the question we'll ask ourselves when a student does leave us is, what could



we have done differently? Not what did the student do? How did the student screw up? The student wasn't ready for college," Rafn says. "The whole question is were we ready for them?"

During Rafn's tenure, he's taken pride in creating what he calls a culture of teamwork and transparency. He communicates through blogs and asks for student and staff input.

"The fact that there's a lot of support here for students who are going through difficult times, there's always support and you can always get help from there," says Kao Khang, NWTC student.

Students are not the only ones to take note. Rafn was awarded a lifetime achievement award by Vistage Worldwide. It's an international leadership organization.

NWTC is also one of a handful of universities recognized by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as a leader in transformational change for student success.

"Getting this award is great, but you don't get that award unless you have the people behind you," Rafn says. "Not even behind you, with you."

Get the latest Breaking News from wbay.com delivered to your browser

**SUBSCRIBE TO WBAY BROWSER ALERTS**



Hover for Circular



Hover for Circular



Hover for Circular

Powered by

# Northwoods Employers Invited To Learn About Hiring

By KEN KRALL • MAY 1, 2019

Employers needing workers is the focus of the next Nicolet College Hire Up event this Friday.

Attracting and retaining top talent is becoming increasingly challenging for virtually all businesses across the Northwoods...says Jodi Fox-Engleman who works in economic and community development for the college.

She says three experts will speak to the innovative strategies businesses can use to build the workforce they need...

*"...It takes more than just decent pay to bring people to an area to work. It takes more than pay to continue having them living here. It means adding opportunities in the community for us to work, stay and live..."*

The speakers include Jeremy Fojut consults and creates talent retention and attraction projects across the country for municipalities, chambers, organizations, and companies. Christian Schock is director of Planning, Community and Economic Development for the City of Wausau. Rebecca Deschane serves as talent initiative director for both the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the University of Wisconsin System.

Fox-Engleman says workers coming here want what she calls 'the whole package'...

*"...They want affordable housing. Housing is a shortage in really all of our area. They want things to do besides going to work...."*

Employers or others are invited to the HireUp event Friday, May 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Northwoods Center. More information is available and registration at Nicolet College's main number.





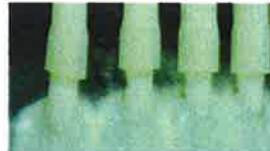
[Main](#): [General News](#): [Local News](#)

### NTC's June Dairy Breakfast event showcases robotic milker

Submitted: 06/02/2019

**Wausau** - Thousands gathered for the June Dairy Breakfast Sunday in Marathon County. After the scrambled eggs and cheese curds, people got to see NTC's dairy farm in action.

Over 500 gallons of milk comes from Northcentral Technical College's 57 cows, without any hand-milking. They all walk through Northcentral Technical College's robotic milker two or three times a day.



"Once the cows are ready to milk they go into the robotic milker and they then attach and milk themselves," said NTC President Lori Weyers.

The cows go up in the first place because they crave the treat that waits for them after milking. The robo-milker recognizes each cow from its collar and uses lasers to find the udders.

"We have a computer system that actually tracks how much milk each cow gives," said Weyers.

It's one of 115 measurements the machine makes, many of which monitor the cow's fitness. NTC Agricultural Sciences Development Manager Kate Van Der Geest said clean cows mean healthy cows.

"Between each cow it washes the brushes and steams those inflations because we don't want to transfer any bacteria between cows," said Van Der Geest.

And healthy cows mean healthy milk.

"These brushes here will swing underneath the cow and it will clean her udder off so no debris can get into our milking system," said Van Der Geest.

Once through the system, the milk is sent to Mullins Cheese in Mosinee to become cheese.

Northcentral Technical College has had their robotic milker since 2014, and will be getting a new model next year.

Written By: Dan Hagen

**Text Size:** [+ Increase](#) | [Decrease -](#)



Main: [General News](#): [Local News](#)

## Antigo works to retain Merit Gear employees after Rexnord announces plant closure

Submitted: 05/21/2019

**Antigo** - Close to 100 people in Antigo will soon decide if they want to move to Milwaukee and stay employed or lose their current jobs and look for new ones closer to home. That decision comes after Merit Gear's parent company announced Friday it will close its Antigo location and move those jobs by March 2020.



City officials, like Mayor Bill Brandt, say they're working hard to keep those people and their skills in the area.

Brandt ran Antigo's police department as Chief of Police before he decided to run for mayor in 2009. He says he sought the position because he wanted to make Antigo a better place to live.

"I was born and raised in Antigo so, you know, I had a genuine concern for the city so I gave it a shot," said Brandt.

The year before Brandt was elected, the city was in the spotlight when then Governor Jim Doyle mentioned Merit Gear at the 2008 Democratic National Convention.

"Just this month I was at a small town facility in northern Wisconsin called Merit Gear which has a long history of making gear boxes," said Doyle. "Most of them used to go in cars and trucks, but now they're largest and most highly engineered gears are turning inside the generators of windmills and they say business is booming."

When Milwaukee based Rexnord purchased Merit Gear in 2013, Brandt said that acquisition was viewed positively.

"We felt that it was a good fit for the community," said Brandt.

After Rexnord announced it was closing its Antigo location and moving all gear manufacturing to Milwaukee, Brandt says he was shocked.

"It was just as much of a surprise to us as it was to the employees at Merit Gear," said Brandt.

The employees he's spoken to found the move upsetting and abrupt.

"I'm hoping that all 80 find work back in our community here," said Brandt.

According to the Langlade County Economic Development Corporation, convincing the Merit Gear workers to stay in Antigo may be easier said than done. Executive Director Angie Close says North Central Wisconsin already has a problem keeping workers in the area.

"It's going to continue to be a challenge if we're not able to bring people to our area, not just Langlade county but our region," said Brandt.

She says a community response team composed of state, county and city stakeholders will provide those workers with the help they need to find new jobs if they want them.

North Central Technical College and Wisconsin based workforce development organizations are among those the city is in talks with to provide that assistance.

"Our number one priority is making sure there are resources available for any affected workers that are in any kind of industry," said Brandt.

Those resources range from writing assistance to new skills training and some sort of unemployment benefit. Brandt hopes it will be enough to connect Merit Gear workers with new employers in Antigo.

"I think the other manufacturers in town see it as an opportunity for them to get some very good employees," said Brandt.

Written By: Stephen Goin

Text Size: [+ Increase](#) | [Decrease -](#)





## News Release

### For Immediate Release

**Contact:** Katie Glass, Marketing Manager and Public Information Officer  
**Phone:** 608.822.2411  
**Email:** kglass@swtc.edu  
**Mail:** 1800 Bronson Blvd., Fennimore, WI 53809  
**Date:** May 1, 2019

## Thiele's gift launches Southwest Tech Educational Pledge (STEP) Program in Boscobel

Fennimore -

Boscobel – A gift from a 1968 graduate will relieve a significant amount of the financial burden for Boscobel High School students who want to attend Southwest Tech.

A \$600,000 gift from Patrick Thiele funded the Southwest Tech Educational Pledge (STEP) Program for BHS students. The gift was formally announced during an assembly for students, grades 7-12, in the Boscobel High School gym on Wednesday, May 1.

This initial endowment gift creates a program where recipients earn accelerated scholarship monies as they progress through the programs at Southwest Tech. For instance, once a student earns 15 credits, that student receives a \$500 scholarship to be applied to costs for the following semester. Once a student earns 30 credits, another \$1,000 is awarded and an additional \$1,500 is added once a student earns 45 credits.

"Patrick Thiele's gift is the second largest in the history of Southwest Tech. We are honored he chose the college as a beneficiary of his philanthropy," said Southwest Tech President Jason Wood. "We are

### Press Releases

#### Graduation speakers selected

Tuesday, May 14,  
2019 - Fennimore

#### Your neighbor, our graduate: Bob Biba

Sunday, May 12,  
2019 - Fennimore

#### Hill recognized along with fellow college ambassadors

Wednesday, May 8,  
2019 - Wisconsin  
Dells

#### Steffel Recognized as 2019 Innovation of the Year Award Recipient

#### Three Southwest Tech employees receive Wood Family Employee Excellence Award

#### Thiele's gift launches Southwest Tech Educational Pledge (STEP) Program in Boscobel

#### SWTC team earns prestigious DMI award for improved risk management system

#### Southwest Tech Foundation

honored to have earned this catalytic gift and we will steward these funds to help Boscobel High School students. What an honor to receive this scholarship!"

Each BHS alumnus has the potential to earn up to \$3,000 from the Jim and Grace Thiele Scholarship, named for Patrick's parents. It doesn't matter whether the student is fresh from high school, non-traditional, full-time, part-time or someone who hasn't completely finished a program. All BHS graduates are eligible for this support.

In the spring semester 2019, a total of 42 Boscobel High School graduates are attending Southwest Tech. "As you can tell, this fund will have an amazing amount of positive impact for Boscobel High School graduates," said Holly Clendenen, executive director of the Southwest Tech Foundation.

Patrick Thiele continues to support southwest Wisconsin, as well as his hometown. He and wife, Jane, helped secure the family's legacy with a shelter naming for his parents in Fireman's Park in Boscobel. In addition, Patrick has supported the Gundersen Boscobel Area Hospital and Clinics Foundation, as well as the Boscobel Education Foundation. Patrick is also a director of the UW Foundation and Alumni Association.

James Thiele owned and operated the Blaine Theatre, and Grace taught at Boscobel Elementary School for 22 years. The Thieles were active in their community in a variety of groups and activities.

In addition to this scholarship, Patrick also has supported the Charger Dream Fund and the Charger Scholarship Fund at Southwest Tech.

Philanthropy, as Patrick knows so well, is an important catalyst for positive change, especially in financially-challenged areas like Boscobel and southwest Wisconsin. He has challenged Southwest Tech President Jason Wood to "think big" about ways to leverage future financial support. The creation of the Boscobel STEP Program helps the college get this new program started in a meaningful way.

Thiele believes Southwest Tech can play a key role in the stabilization and re-development of the counties and communities in its district. Patrick said, "Southwest Tech does a great job educating its students who, in turn, help build strong, vibrant communities."

When it comes to education, Thiele focuses heavily on the net cost to students, which is a Southwest Tech strength. And if anyone knows the value of scholarships in helping aspiring students realize their academic

awarded \$3000 from the  
United Fund of Iowa County

Southwest Tech students  
raise funds to support their  
peers

Southwest Tech alumna  
ascends to key healthcare  
role

Alumna credits Southwest  
Tech for belief in paying it  
forward

Southwest Tech alum earns  
Customer Service Employee  
of Year Award at Wilderness  
Resort

Barry puts community and  
financial resiliency first

dreams, it's Patrick Thiele.

After all, it was a scholarship named after another successful Boscobel family that was the key catalyst for Patrick attending UW-Madison. Patrick was the recipient of the Kronshage Scholarship. Theodore Kronshage, Sr., was a pioneer Boscobel merchant. One of his sons, Theodore Kronshage, Jr., became one of the State of Wisconsin's most prominent attorneys and left a bequest of more than \$300,000 for scholarships to deserving Boscobel students.

Thiele received \$500/year from the Kronshage Scholarship. With tuition costing just \$175 a semester then, Patrick had the financial support he needed to go to college. Patrick earned a bachelor of science and master of science in finance degrees from UW-Madison. That education was the foundation for a successful career in investments and insurance.

Patrick and Jane now live in Stillwater, Minn., and Santa Barbara, Calif. Their two daughters and five grandchildren live in the Twin Cities while their son is an attorney in Los Angeles.

When Patrick retired, he became determined to reconnect with his hometown. "I had three goals when I retired: One, to catch up with people I had lost over the years; two, make sure I didn't have health problems and three, give back to the people and communities that mean so much to me," he said.

By funding the Southwest Tech Educational Pledge for Boscobel High School graduates, Patrick Thiele has helped both schools take important steps forward with a common goal of helping BHS graduates succeed in their respective educational careers following graduation.





# **Western Technical College officials discuss partnership with Chinese university**

Kyle Farris La Crosse Tribune  
July 5, 2019

Education officials from western Wisconsin met with counterparts from northeast China this week to lay the foundation for a partnership, including student and faculty exchanges, between the two regions.

The meetings culminated Wednesday in La Crosse, with officials from Western Technical College leading a delegation from Harbin University in the Heilongjiang province of China on a tour of the college's Integrated Technology Center.

Representatives from the Wisconsin Technical College System and the UW System rounded out the group, which discussed the offerings at both Western and Harbin, and areas where the two schools could collaborate.

"We're focused on opportunities where institutions can help students be more capable globally, be more successful and contribute to the global economy," said Mark Tyler, president of the Technical College System board. Similar to the U.S., Tyler said, China has a shortage of skilled trade workers.

"Today, universities in China focus on theoretical teaching, so there's a need for that applied education," he said. "They realize that our tech schools in the U.S. really drive home that applied knowledge."

Tyler said the two sides are working to develop pilot programs in which Western and other Wisconsin colleges, both tech schools and universities, exchange faculty and students with Harbin.

Tyler said it's becoming increasingly important for U.S. workers to either speak Chinese or be familiar with manufacturing there, since many companies are adding locations in China.

Educators say it's key for students to get a headstart, to become familiar with other languages and cultures long before college.

An arrangement to send two Chinese instructors to the School District of River Falls, where they will work with elementary students this fall, is intended to do exactly that.

If the pilot is successful, officials say, the School District of La Crosse is likely to host a group of instructors during the 2020-21 school year.

"As this program expands and we get more connections (in China), we'll be able to grow the things we can do," said Carolyn Brady, who works in the international partnership and outreach program at UW-River Falls. "We're very excited, because there appears to be a lot of areas for cooperation and collaboration."

The partnership with Harbin is part of a larger effort by Western — and by colleges across Wisconsin — to branch out internationally.

Michael Poellinger, associate dean of integrated technology at Western, said the college is working to arrange a similar delegation from Germany.

Western also has sent its own delegations of students and faculty members to other countries, including Thailand, where two Western instructors are spending part of the summer.



[https://www.apg-wi.com/spooner\\_advocate/free/trucking-classes-offered-to-support-growing-industry/article\\_dcc423bc-93a5-11e9-92a2-bf8e84bde806.html](https://www.apg-wi.com/spooner_advocate/free/trucking-classes-offered-to-support-growing-industry/article_dcc423bc-93a5-11e9-92a2-bf8e84bde806.html)

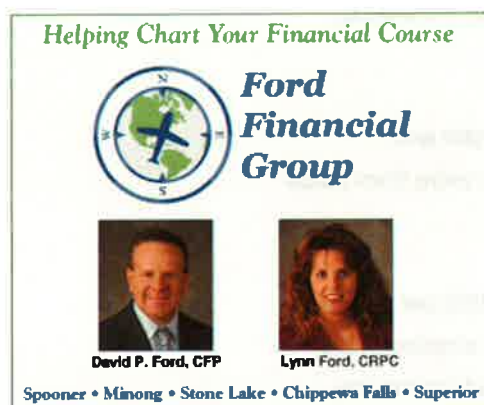
## Trucking classes offered to support growing industry

Jun 26, 2019

Commercial truck drivers transport more than 175 million tons of goods originating in Wisconsin, according to the Wisconsin Transportation Center, and those goods are not moving themselves. More than 31,000 individuals in Wisconsin work as truck drivers, yet that is not enough to fill the growing need for workers in the industry.

The need in the industry is two-fold: Wisconsin has a shortage of not only the truck drivers who are delivering goods, but also the skilled diesel technicians who can repair commercial vehicles, including agricultural commercial vehicles.

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College recently launched two programs to address those labor shortages. Diesel equipment technician and truck driving are now accepting students for upcoming classes.



The two-year diesel equipment technician technical diploma is available at the New Richmond campus for the first year. Students will spend their second year of the program getting hands-on training at Hammond Truck and Trailer repair, a division of Russ Davis Wholesale.

"There are more trucks on the road every year," said Mark Wiese, manager at Hammond Truck and Trailer. "Everything you eat, wear, and use gets delivered on a truck, adding more trucks on the road and a demand for more mechanics."

The diesel equipment technician program will prepare students to service and repair diesel trucks and diesel-powered agricultural and industrial equipment. The majority of classes will be conducted in the shop where students will gain hands-on experience with diagnosing, repairing, and analyzing diesel equipment.



Upon successful completion of the program, graduates can expect to get careers in a variety of positions such as diesel equipment technician, fleet maintenance technician, equipment mechanic, and more, the college said.

“It is important for mechanics to attend school to learn the theories of operation for all components that make up a truck,” said Wiese. “It is vitally important for technicians to understand how each component works, what it does, and how it works with the other components in order to diagnose and make repairs to properly keep trucks moving across the country while being safe on the road.”

WITC also is expanding the truck driving program to be offered at both Rice Lake and New Richmond campuses through a 10-week program that will prepare students to earn a Class A and B Commercial Driver’s License.

The next section for truck driving will be offered in September. Classes are taught through classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction, and students will get driving experience in both rural and urban settings.

Mary Beth Raddatz of New Richmond graduated from WITC-Rice Lake’s 10-week truck driving program in March, and she passed her Class A Commercial Driver’s License test before even completing the program. Within weeks Raddatz owned a truck and had a career hauling for local agriculture producers.

“I really had no idea there were so many options available for careers in trucking,” said Raddatz. “I have received so many employment offers.”

A high demand for both of the programs exists in Northwest Wisconsin and nationwide, and that demand is expected to grow as baby boomers retire from those industries, the college said.

For truck drivers, entry-level salaries are generally in excess of \$40,000 per year with potential to earn more than \$60,000 per year with experience. Most employers also offer health, vacation, and retirement benefits. Diesel technicians and mechanics earn a median of \$47,000 per year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the job outlook is expected to increase by 9% between 2016 and 2026.

“A truck driver’s livelihood is dependent on a mechanic’s livelihood,” said Wiese. “It is hard to teach a mechanic on the job that has not had schooling, and those mechanics usually end up doing routine service work and repairs. There are plenty of those candidates to choose from on the market, but good technical mechanics are very hard to find.”

### **More info**

To learn more about the diesel equipment technician or truck driving program: [witc.edu](http://witc.edu) or 800.243.9482.

# Renovation brings major changes to WITC Superior campus

The castle-like towers that frame the atrium windows on the northwest side of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College are taking on a new look as phase two of a renovation is underway.

Written By: Shelley Nelson | Apr 30th 2019 - 6am.



The castle-like towers that frame the atrium windows on the northwest side of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College are taking on a new look as phase two of a renovation is underway.

Concrete's already been laid behind the mounds of mud being excavated to finish patio that will grace the facility that first opened in 1978. A bridge covers the span between the two towers.

"What will happen in this phase is the atrium glass wall facing Catlin Avenue will become our new entrance," said Stephanie Erdman, vice president of academic affairs and Superior campus administrator. "This new entrance will be off Catlin and it will bring students and visitors into our newly remodeled atrium. At this front entrance, the bookstore, student services, our cafeteria and our student life will all be there."

During the first phase of the project, preliminary construction was done in preparation for the new entrance. Additional projects included relocating the student life office, installing new plumbing throughout the building and renovating bathrooms on the second and third floors.

Last year's projects included remodeling and retooling technology and industry programs, and creating a pharmacy lab complete with shelves, sinks, a fume hood and tools pharmacy technician students would use in a real-world working a pharmacy.

"We're really trying to provide that hands-on, real-life experience so that when students get out into the work world, there's not a transition from the classroom to industry," Erdman said.

Outside of the classrooms, work is underway on the new entrance and the parking lot that will accommodate a new pattern of travel into the Superior campus.

"The other exciting thing about this new front entrance is we'll have an outdoor patio with new sidewalks, and the sidewalks will support an iron-like sculptural piece that we're calling a colonnade (made by welding students). And this colonnade is replicating the bridge between the Twin Ports. In addition, all the other entrances will have kind of smaller versions of this colonnade."

All of the current entrances will remain, but the former main entrance will be designated as the accessible entrance to the building, Erdman said.

A new parking lot on the north side of the building will run between Catlin Avenue and Mortorelli Drive, and the building and property owned by the University of Wisconsin-Superior, providing students, staff and visitors with plenty of places to park, Erdman said. The parking lot will include two bioswales - landscape elements designed to remove silt and pollution from surface water runoff.

"It was quite interesting to learn about," Erdman said. "I think the neighbors and those in the community will be pleased to hear of these bioswales."

She said in this phase of the project 26 trees will be planted in the parking lot area to replace trees removed in the first phase.

Erdman said lighted signage will be installed at the entrances of the parking lot on Catlin and Mortorelli, and on the colonnade, and there will be some lighted pylons as well on Catlin and Mortorelli.

Even as work continues on the two-year renovation, plans are in the works for next year's work.

"We're slated for the summer of 2020 to start on our third floor classrooms, and updating those classrooms with lighting and technology, and changing them to become next-generation classrooms basically." She said that's been a goal across the WITC system to create a space where distance learning is possible.

"We're kind of excited by the new plan," Erdman said.