

# STATE OF WISCONSIN

## 2011-13 BIENNIAL REPORT

October 2013



Wisconsin Technical College System Board

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## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

### **Mission and Purpose**

Chapter 38, *Wis. Stats.*, provides that the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Board is responsible for the initiation, development, maintenance, and supervision of programs with specific occupational orientation below the baccalaureate level, including associate degrees, training of apprentices and adult education below the postsecondary level. The principal purposes of the System are to provide occupational education and training and retraining programs, and to provide customized training and technical assistance to business and industry in order to foster economic development and expansion of employment opportunities. Additional purposes are to cooperate and contract with secondary schools; provide collegiate transfer programs; basic skills education; community services and self-enrichment activities; and address barriers created by stereotyping and discrimination.

### **Partner Agencies**

WTCS maintains close working relationships with:

- the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to offer employment services, related instruction for registered apprenticeships, labor market information, and other programs;
- the Wisconsin Higher Education Aids Board (HEAB) to administer financial aid programs that benefit WTCS students;
- the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to develop technical and adult education opportunities for all people in the state, and to facilitate articulation between secondary and postsecondary programs;
- the University of Wisconsin (UW) System to serve state residents by increasing opportunities for postsecondary education and training; and
- the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to identify and develop strategies that strengthen Wisconsin's workforce and business and industry.

### **WTCS Board**

The WTCS Board, as the WTCS governing body, is structured to reflect its mission and diverse responsibilities. The Board consists of 13 members, including 3 ex-officio and 10 non-salaried members appointed by the Governor. The three ex-officio members, as established in Chapter 38, *Wis. Stats.*, are: the DWD Secretary (or designee); the UW Board of Regents President (or designee); and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (or designee).

Of the ten appointed board members, one represents employers, one represents employees, one represents farmers, one represents students, and six represent the public as at-large members. Appointed board members serve six-year, staggered terms, with the exception of the student representative, who serves a two-year term.

The WTCS Board is empowered to determine the organization, plans, scope and development of postsecondary technical and adult education; appoint a System President; approve qualifications of district educational personnel and courses of study; establish system-wide policies; and approve district proposals for facilities development and land acquisition. The Board establishes procedures and criteria for the determining course credit, state aid, and uniform accounting for financial programs and other data required of the colleges.

During the 2011-13 biennium, the following individuals served on the WTCS Board:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Residence</b>
Philip Baranowski	Public	Green Lake
Natalie Cruz	Students	Hartland
Mary Quinnette Cuene	Public	Green Bay
Stan Davis Vice President 2011-13	Public	Sun Prairie
Terry Erickson	Employers	La Crosse
Ann Greenheck	Farmers	Lone Rock
Becky Lezvow	Farmers	Rio
Phil Neuenfeldt	Employees	Milwaukee
Drew Petersen	Public	Verona
John Schwantes	Public	Elkhart Lake
Brent Smith	Public	La Crosse
S. Mark Tyler President 2011-2013	Public	Woodville
Stephen Willett	Employer	Phillips

The following ex-officio members served on the Board during the 2009-11 biennium:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Tony Evers	State Superintendent of Public Instruction
José Vasquez Judith Crain	UW Board of Regents Designee
Scott Baumbach Reggie Newson (appointed 2011)	Secretary, Department of Workforce Development

### **System Office**

The WTC System Office ended the biennium with 63.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) authorized positions, including 6.5 FTE authorized positions at the Educational Approval Board (EAB), which was attached to the System Office for administrative purposes

through the 2005-07 State Budget. A System President, who serves at the pleasure of the WTCS State Board, leads the WTC System Office. Major staff responsibilities are divided between:

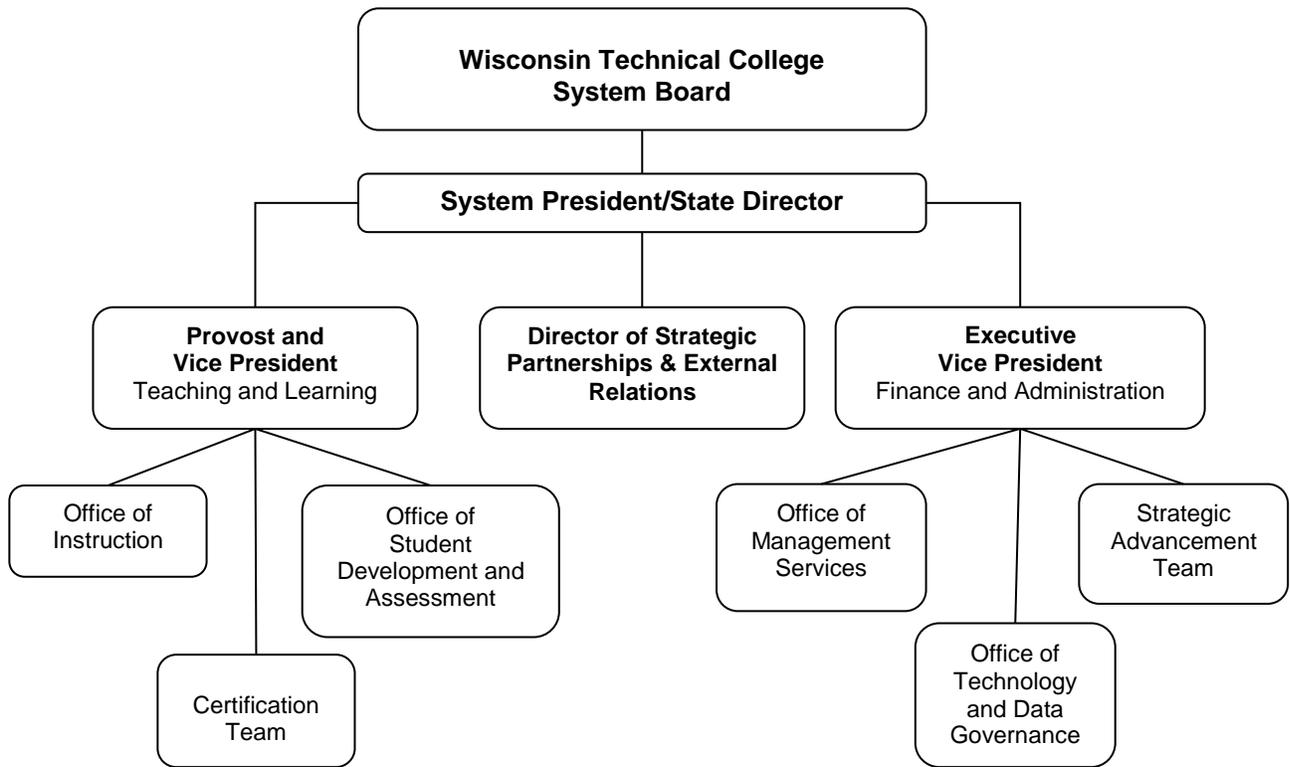
- The Strategic Advancement Team provides leadership for systemwide policy analysis and development, public outreach, and federal and state government relations. It is responsible for coordination of systemwide budgeting and planning, research, and labor market information.
- The Offices of Management Services and Technology and Data Governance have oversight responsibility for internal operations including accounting, budgeting, procurement, payroll, human resources, facilities, and information technology. In addition, the division provides guidance to the technical colleges in developing financial policies and standards, distributes state aid, and assists the board in determining student fees and tuition rates and approving district facility development projects. The offices are also responsible for management information and oversight of district budgets and enrollments.
- The Office of instruction is responsible for program definition, approval, evaluation, and review. It focuses on programs in agriculture, office services, marketing, home economics (including family and consumer education), health occupations, trade and industry (including apprenticeship, fire service, law enforcement, safety, and technical and vocational training), general education, personnel certification, and environmental education. It also serves as the liaison to secondary schools.
- The Office of Student Development and Assessment is responsible for coordination of state and federal grant programs, student financial aid, federal projects for the disabled and disadvantaged, adult and continuing education outreach, adult basic education and English language learning, and Workforce Investment Act projects. It serves as liaison to business and industry.
- The Director of Strategic Partnerships and External Relations serves as a members of the agency's leadership team, is the WTCS Public Information Officer, and functions as the liaison between WTCS and a wide variety of internal and external partners, among other duties.

### **Alternative Work Patterns**

WTC System Office policies have permitted alternative work patterns since 1976. In 2005, the WTC System Office adopted a revised policy that permits any employee of the agency to request an alternative work pattern.

Alternatives include, but are not limited to, part-time, shared-time, and flex-time schedules. Employee and agency work needs are accommodated through the use of non-standard work weeks and straight shift work. During the 2011-13 biennium, more than 50 employees participated in some type of alternative work pattern.

## Organizational Structure



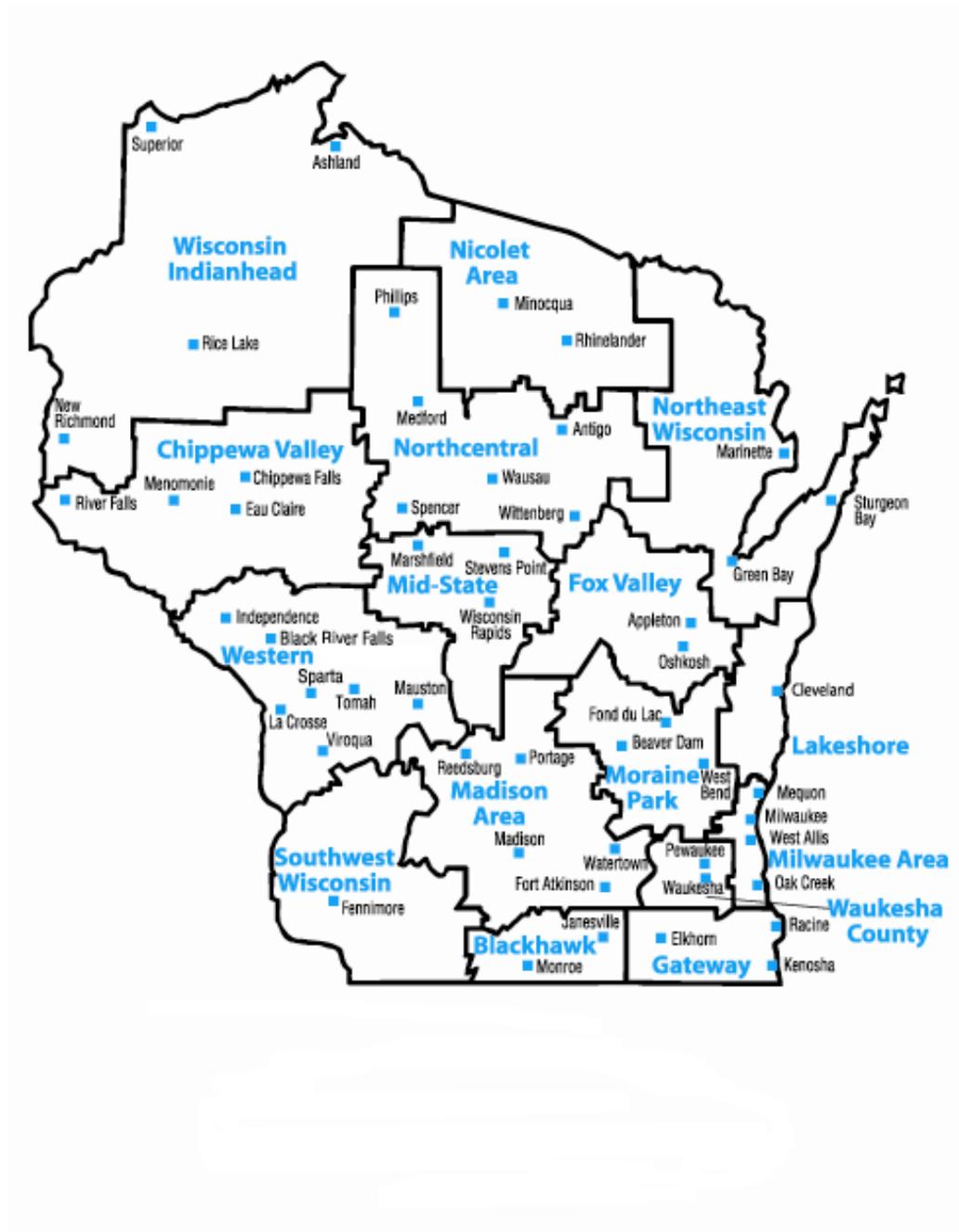
## WTCS College Districts

The 16 WTCS colleges, currently with 50 campuses, deliver career and technical education that meets the needs, interests and abilities of students and the demands of the labor market. To further these purposes, WTC System Office staff provide colleges with consultation, technical assistance, coordination of activities, and support services.

Each WTCS college has unique demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics. Programs are tailored to meet local needs within the uniform program standards established by the WTCS Board. Each technical college is governed by a district board appointed by local elected officials and, as with the WTCS Board, district board membership is intended to reflect the diversity of WTCS stakeholders. Excluding the Milwaukee Area district board, membership includes the following: two members represent employers, two represent employees, one is a local K-12 school administrator, one is a state or local elected official, and three are at-large members. For Milwaukee, seven of the nine district board members must be residents of Milwaukee County. Five members must represent employers, three of whom must represent employers with 15 or more employees, and two of whom must represent employers with 100 or more employees. In addition, at least two members must represent employers who are manufacturing businesses. Finally, the Milwaukee board must include one school district administrator, one state or local elected official, and two

additional members. District boards are empowered to levy taxes on property, provide facilities and equipment, contract for instructional services, and appoint a college president who serves as chief executive officer for the district. (Map on next page.)

## WTCS College Districts and Campuses



## ***Major Program Goals and Objectives***

### **Expand the pool of skilled workers in the State's labor force**

The WTCS Board continues to approve demand-driven, cutting-edge career and technical education and training programs developed by Wisconsin's technical colleges in collaboration with Wisconsin's businesses and industry, labor, and other partners. In just the past few years, the colleges have developed state-of-the-art programs in emerging industries like nanoscience, biotechnology, manufacturing robotics, and renewable energy. At the same time, the colleges continue to deliver graduates that meet ongoing demand in core programs that produce construction, information technology, public safety, and health care professionals, among many others. To accomplish this and operate with the highest degree of efficiency, the WTCS Board discontinues about the same number of programs as it approves each year.

The WTCS Employer Follow-up Survey – which has been measuring employer satisfaction with the skills and abilities of WTCS graduates every four years since 1980 – consistently shows that WTCS graduates meet or exceed employer expectations when compared to other new employees, in both occupational abilities and other core skills. For example, 2010 survey results showed that employers overwhelmingly reported that WTCS graduates met or exceeded expectations in:

- mastery of knowledge in the field;
- ability to perform technical skills;
- ability to communicate effectively;
- relevance of skills and knowledge;
- mastery of “STEM” (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics);
- overall preparedness for employment; and
- overall technical education.

The complete Employer Satisfaction survey results are available electronically at: <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/employer/index.htm>

### **Career Pathways**

WTCS is continuing its work with a wide variety of internal and external partners to develop pathways “to and through” postsecondary education that seamlessly link education and work throughout an individual's career. For middle and high school students, career pathways increase awareness of the academic preparation needed for postsecondary education. In addition, high school students can earn technical college credits that also fulfill graduation requirements – “dual credit”—at no cost to the student.

At the postsecondary level, WTCS is working in partnership with employers to “stack” technical college credentials – short-term certificates, technical diplomas and associate

degrees – in a way that supports career advancement based on employer-identified needs and an individual’s career goals and timeline.

### **Increase Postsecondary Educational Opportunities**

The WTCS used a variety of methods to increase postsecondary educational opportunities over the 2011-13 biennium. For example, WTCS colleges continued to focus on the needs of dislocated workers, due to lingering elevated unemployment levels following the economic downturn, as well as providing training opportunities for incumbent workers, and developing career pathways that address skills shortages and offer low-income adults clear and reliable courses of action to progress in their careers.

Employer-specific worker training will be a critical component in meeting the needs of new and expanding businesses in Wisconsin. In the 2011-13 biennium, WTCS colleges continued to serve nearly 100,000 students annually through customized instruction contracts, under which the colleges design and deliver customized instruction on-site or on-campus.

Beginning in 2011-12, training contracts began to grow, after slowing in response to the national 2007/08 economic recession. Despite the lingering effects of the economic downturn, employers and workers continue to place a high value on incumbent worker training, and WTCS developed a survey instrument to gauge the economic and other impacts of the training. Results indicate that most respondents believe WTCS contract training meets or exceeds their expectations, allowing them to improve productivity, achieve cost savings, retain or create jobs, or increase sales.

Within a career pathway, bridge instructional programming helps adults with basic skills or English Language Learning (ELL) needs take the first step onto career pathway learning and work. Bridge programs explicitly link adult basic education (ABE) and ELL instruction with preparation for postsecondary education and occupational skill attainment.

### **Closing the Achievement Gap**

The enrollment of students of color, as a proportion of the overall student body, continues to climb, increasing from 14.1% in 2005-06 to 17.1% in 2011-12. This representation is greater than people of color as a proportion of Wisconsin’s total population, which was about 13.8% in the last census. Moreover, increases in the number of program graduates of color outpaced growth in white program graduates by nearly 2 to 1 over the past 10 years. Finally, the number of students of color transferring to UW institutions, as well as their proportion of all transfers, have increased.

Despite this progress, significant work remains to ensure that students of color have every opportunity to succeed in college. For example, the proportion of all graduates who are students of color – 13.6% in 2011-12 – is not representative of enrollment proportions as a whole. In addition, students of color are significantly over-represented in Adult Basic Education enrollments.

To address persistent concerns about the achievement gap for students of color, the System Board made funding for proven programs a priority in recent biennial budget requests. Unfortunately, these requests went largely unfunded.

## **2011-13 BUDGET AND POLICY ACTION**

### **2011-13 Biennial Budget**

Prior to deliberation and passage of the 2011-13 Biennial Budget Act, the Legislature passed a 2009-11 budget repair bill, 2011 Wisconsin Act 10. This bill reduced collective bargaining rights for public employees and required new pension and minimum health care premium contributions of college and System employees.

The 2011-13 Biennial Budget Act (2011 Wisconsin Act 32) was signed by the Governor on June 26, 2011. The Governor proposed, and the Legislature approved, a \$35.8 million annual reduction in State General Aid, resulting in annual General Aid funding of \$83.5 million. Categorical Aid appropriations – including grant programs in areas such as health care education, new and expanding occupations, and workforce advancement training – retained base-level funding. Most state operations appropriations received across-the-board reductions, excluding salary and fringe benefits lines.

Act 32 also resulted in several statutory changes affecting WTCS, including a freeze on district tax levies in 2011 and 2012 at the greater of: (a) the district's 2010 tax levy; or (b) the amount generated using the district's 2010 mill rate. A district's mill rate could exceed this limit upon approval through a public referendum. However, the rate could not exceed 1.5 mills.

Act 32 included a provision to exclude student residence facilities that are financed with student housing payments from the referendum requirement for capital project expenditures in excess of \$1.5 million. Such facilities are exempt from the limit if the district board uses no property tax, state aid, or tuition revenue to finance the project.

The 2011-13 budget also made changes to the fee remission program for eligible Wisconsin veterans and their qualifying spouse and dependents. The changes provided that participating individuals using certain federal education benefits would not be counted toward the 128 credit or eight semester limit for remissions. Also, in case the federal benefits covered less than 100% of resident tuition and fees, the proportion of tuition and fees that were remitted by the institution would be counted against the 128 credit or eight semester limit.

### **State Board Policies**

The WTCS Board has the authority to establish system-wide policies. Policy options are developed by the WTC System Office in consultation with various stakeholders. The WTCS State Board uses a two-step process to consider possible changes and ensure the opportunity for Board input. Policies approved by the WTCS State Board are

published in its policy manual, which is available electronically at:  
[http://www.wtcsystem.edu/board/pdf/policy\\_manual.pdf](http://www.wtcsystem.edu/board/pdf/policy_manual.pdf)

## **REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONS**

Wisconsin's technical colleges strive to provide graduates with the education and training that provides skills to compete in today's competitive job market. The WTCS regularly publishes data on enrollment, costs, and graduate outcomes, which are available at <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports.htm>

### **Operational Costs**

In order to provide the instruction, services and activities necessary to carry out their mission and achieve their goals, WTCS colleges rely on a combination of federal, state and local revenues. In fiscal year (FY) 2011-12, the latest year for which complete financial information is available, WTCS colleges enrolled 362,619 individuals at an operational cost of \$1.04 billion.

Actual 2011-12 cost allocation data show that 67.3% of operational costs were for instruction while the next highest amounts were for general institutional (12.7%), student services (10.0%), and physical plant (7.7%). Instructional resources accounted for the remaining 2.3% of operational costs. Data on college costs is published annually, with the most recent year of complete data available at [http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/cost\\_alloc/index.htm](http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/cost_alloc/index.htm).

### **Enrollment**

As shown in Table 1, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled annually decreased from 82,365 in FY 2010-11 to 78,228 in FY 2011-12, or -5.0%. Table 1 also shows FTE enrollment by instructional category and the percentage of all FTEs that are included in each category for the two most recent years of complete data. Data on enrollment is published annually, with the most recent year of complete data available at <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/factbook/index.htm>.

**TABLE 1: Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollments  
by Instructional Category**

	2010-11		2011-12	
	Enrollments	Percentage of Enrollments	Enrollments	Percentage of Enrollments
<b>Postsecondary</b>				
Associate Degree	55,260	67.1%	52,477	67.1%
Technical Diploma	8,781	10.7	8,430	10.8
Collegiate Transfer	8,402	10.2	8,310	10.6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>72,443</b>	<b>88.0%</b>	<b>69,217</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
<b>Non-Postsecondary</b>				
Basic Education, Hearing Impaired Program (HIP), and Visually Impaired Program (VIP)	6,857	8.3%	5,975	7.6%
<b>Continuing Education</b>				
Vocational-Adult	2,837	3.4%	2,797	3.6%
Community Services	228	0.3	240	0.3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,065</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>3,037</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82,365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>78,229</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: WTCS Fact Book (2011-12).

### By Gender

In 2011-12, WTCS colleges reported enrolling 180,725 men and 179,092 women, while gender was not reported for 0.8% of enrollees. Of the men enrolled, 47.8% were enrolled in degree or diploma program courses, while 16.0% were enrolled in non-postsecondary courses and 53.8% were in Continuing Education courses. Of the women enrolled, 60.1% were enrolled in degree or diploma program courses, 20.1% in non-postsecondary, and 45.6% in Continuing Education courses. Because students taking courses in more than one area are counted in each, percentages add to more than 100.0 percent.

### Services for Students with Special Needs

WTCS provides specialized services for:

- students with physical or mental disabilities; and
- students who are disadvantaged, including academically or economically disadvantaged individuals, and those with limited English proficiency.

In 2011-12, 15,137 students with disabilities received specialized services. These services were supported with funds from GPR, WTCS districts, the federal Perkins Act,

and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) within DWD. These services enable students with disabilities to enroll and succeed in technical education programs and courses. Services include specialized guidance and counseling, needs assessment and evaluation, support services, remedial instruction, career development, adaptive equipment, and career placement.

In 2011-12, the WTCS colleges provided services to 116,193 disadvantaged students (unduplicated), of whom 67,598 were academically disadvantaged, 80,627 were economically disadvantaged, and 11,808 had limited English proficiency. Services provided to disadvantaged students – including academically or economically disadvantaged individuals, and those with limited English proficiency – are supported with funds from WTCS general state aid, local funds, targeted state GPR funds, and federal funds provided through Perkins Act and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Services provided include remediation services such as specialized reading and mathematics laboratories, note taking instruction, and staff and peer tutors.

The colleges also served other students defined as having special education and support service needs, including in 2011-12: 4,501 displaced homemakers, 28,817 single parents, 6,681 incarcerated individuals, and 12,018 students enrolled in programs for non-traditional occupations.

### **Graduate Outcomes**

WTCS colleges annually survey the previous year's program graduates. The latest survey results for 2011-12 graduates were available in July 2013. Of the 27,313 graduates, 18,450 (68%) responded to the survey.

Among the respondents:

- 97% were satisfied or very satisfied with their WTCS training.
- 88% of those in the labor force were employed.
- 84% of employed graduates are working in Wisconsin.
- 73% of employed graduates were working in a job related to their WTCS training.
- The median salary for all 2012 WTCS graduates was \$32,600, ranging from a median of \$25,500 for short-term technical diploma graduates to \$36,400 for associate degree graduates.
- The median salary for graduates in 33 programs were between \$40,000 and \$50,000, while the median for graduates in 11 programs – Logistics, Gas Utility Construction and Service, Automated Packaging Systems Technician, Industrial Automation, Controls, and Networking, Instrumentation & Controls Engineering Technology, Manufacturing Management, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Nuclear Technology, Technical Studies-Journey Worker, Cardiovascular Technology, and Diagnostic Medical Sonography – was \$50,000 or more.

Technical college graduates' success is sustained even during difficult economic times.

## **Grant Programs**

WTCS provides a number of grants to individual technical colleges using funds received from state General Purpose Revenues (GPR), the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

These programs are intended to assist WTCS districts in providing educational and economic development services to individuals and high priority industry sectors. Grants also help promote innovative or successful practices related to priorities identified by the WTCS Board, such as:

- strengthening career and technical education programs through multi-college collaborative efforts to develop measures of technical skill attainment; and
- promoting and supporting high school-to-college transitions for career and technical education students through multi-college collaborative efforts to develop programs of study.

A summary of 2011-12 grant programs and awards is available electronically at: [http://systematic.wtcsystem.edu/grants/Summary\\_of\\_Grant\\_Programs\\_11-12.pdf](http://systematic.wtcsystem.edu/grants/Summary_of_Grant_Programs_11-12.pdf)

## **Programs and Initiatives**

### **Veteran Tuition Remissions**

Beginning in 2007-08, Wisconsin GI Bill tuition remissions for eligible veterans increased to 100%. In 2012-13, approximately 4,600 veterans and dependents benefited from \$6.0 million in WTCS tuition remissions.

### **STEM**

WTCS has been collaborating with education and industry partners to increase participation in courses and programs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The Career Clusters framework – established under the National Career Technical Education Foundation – is a widely used tool that promotes seamless transition from education to careers. Within this framework exist 16 separate Career Clusters, including one that is specifically designated for STEM.

As currently defined, six of the remaining 15 Career Clusters are STEM-related. Combined, WTCS colleges offer about 300 degree and diploma programs, of which approximately one-third are either in the STEM Career Cluster or are in one of six STEM-related Career Clusters:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources;
- Architecture and Construction;
- Health Sciences;
- Information Technology;
- Manufacturing; and
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.

## **Engagement and Partnerships**

The WTCS Board and System Office are committed to working with internal and external partners to improve the quality, availability, and cost-effectiveness of WTCS education and training programs.

The WTC System Office and individual colleges participate in a variety of cross-agency projects with the goals of:

- improving college transfer opportunities;
- enhancing college access and affordability; and
- developing career clusters and pathways.

Each of these projects involves external funding, which demonstrates that collaboration can result in new resources that expand Wisconsin higher education opportunities. Partner agencies involved in these projects include the Wisconsin Departments of Workforce Development and Public Instruction, the UW System, the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation. Additional information about WTCS initiatives is available on the WTCS website at <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/index.htm>.

## **2013-15 BIENNIAL BUDGET AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

### **2013-15 Biennial Budget**

Significant policy and budget changes to WTCS programs were made under the 2013-15 budget act, including the largest increase in general state aid in many years.

### **Performance Based Funding**

Under 2013 Act 20 (the 2013-15 Biennial Budget approved by the Wisconsin Legislature and signed by the Governor) significant changes were made to the general aid distribution mechanism. The 2013-15 Biennial Budget Act increased base funding for General State Aid by \$5 million in the second year and required the creation of a new formula for allocating general state aid to technical colleges based on each college's performance. Under the performance-based funding provisions:

- The System Board is required to submit a plan for making allocations pursuant to a new performance based funding formula to the Joint Committee on Finance under a passive review process, no later than March 31, 2014. Upon approval, or modification and approval, by the Committee, the Board is required to administer the plan;
- The percentage of general aids distributed under the performance based formula would be 10% in 2014-15, 20% in 2015-16, and 30% in 2016-17, after which, due to a veto, no aid would be based on performance (barring further action by the Legislature);

- Each district board may choose any seven of the nine criteria on which to be measured for the purposes of receiving performance based funding; and
- Three fiscal years of data will be used for the formula factors.

### **Consolidated Grant Program**

Under Act 20, all 17 existing GPR categorical aid appropriations were consolidated into one \$21.9 million appropriation, beginning in the second year of the biennium. The total amount of funds available for categorical aid remains unchanged under the consolidation. The System Board is responsible for identifying priorities for how these funds will be awarded and for providing an annual report on the consolidated grant program. Under these provisions:

- Current law grant minimums for certain purposes under the incentive grant and WAT grant programs are deleted;
- Current law was modified to specify that the net costs and FTEs related the Nicolet Area Technical College collegiate transfer program are aidable for the purposes of general aid beginning in 2014-15;
- The System Board may choose to make grant awards for the purpose of apprenticeship curriculum development. In addition, the purposes specified under the current law grant programs would be permissible for consolidated grant awards;
- The System Board is required to submit its annual report on the consolidated grant program to the Joint Committee on Finance, the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature, and the Secretary of Administration; and
- The System Board is required to ensure, to the extent practicable, that the grants are awarded to each geographic region of the state represented by the technical college districts.

### **Levy Limits**

Act 20 also made changes to provisions governing property tax authority granted to technical college district boards. The budget eliminated both the 1.5 mill rate limit on operational tax levies, and the levy freeze limiting the amount of the levy to its 2010 level. Beginning with the 2013 levy, technical colleges are permitted to adjust the levy to reflect increased property values attributable to net new construction in the district. The Department of Revenue (DOR) will determine the value of net new construction in municipalities, or portions of municipalities, located in each district. DOR is required to apportion the value of net new construction in a split municipality proportionately between the affected districts, based on the percentage of the municipality's equalized value located within each district. Technical colleges may carry over prior year unused levy authority, up to a maximum of 0.5 percent of prior year actual levy, if the district board approves the measure by a three-fourths vote. Colleges are still permitted to increase operational levies beyond the limit with approval via public referendum. Act 20 specifies that, for purposes of the limit on operating levies, operating levy would include payments on promissory notes issued after the bill's effective date, unless the note would be issued to finance assets or projects with a useful life in excess of one year.

For capital expenditures, the \$1.5 million threshold for referendum approval is increased to \$2.5 million for certain projects. The higher \$2.5 million limit would apply only for

those projects for which the district board would receive an equal amount of federal matching funds. Use of the additional amount in any two-year period must be offset by an equal reduction in the amount available for capital expenditures in the next two-year period.

### **Core Credit Transfer**

The budget required the University of Wisconsin System (UWS) Board of Regents and the WTCS Board to enter into and implement an agreement that identifies core general education courses totaling not fewer than 30 credits that will be transferable between and within each institution participating in the agreement.

The agreement must be in place before the 2014-15 academic year and ensure that the credits can be transferred that would satisfy general education requirements at the receiving institution. The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) and governing boards of tribal colleges also may participate in the agreement. Both UWS and the WTCS are required to submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature that describes the agreement and summarizes implementation of the agreement.

### **WHEG**

Act 20 increased funding by \$2 million for WTCS WHEG financial aid awards. The increased funding is only available for the 2013-14 academic year.

### **Veterans Remissions**

Act 20 modified participation requirements for the WI GI Bill Veterans Tuition Remission. Under prior law, veterans were required to have been residents of Wisconsin when they entered service. Under Act 20, a veteran who has been a Wisconsin resident for five consecutive years immediately preceding enrollment would be eligible for the program. This change applies only to veterans, not the spouse or children of veterans. Spouses and children of veterans may only qualify for tuition remission under the WI GI Bill if the veteran was a Wisconsin resident at time of entry into service.

Act 20 also required those receiving WI GI Bill tuition remissions (both veterans and eligible spouses and children) to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 to maintain eligibility for the tuition remission. WI GI Bill participants who fall below a 2.0 cumulative GPA lose their WI GI Bill eligibility for future courses until their cumulative GPA rises to at least 2.0. The new cumulative GPA requirements take effect in the first semester beginning after January 1, 2014.

### **WTCS Strategic Directions**

In July 2012, the WTCS Board adopted the following strategic directions and action steps for 2012-15:

***Deliver high-quality, affordable postsecondary opportunities.***

**Goals:**

- Design industry-driven, flexible academic programs and services
  - *Measures:* Increase the number of programs with industry-validated “Technical Skills Attainment” assessments.
- Limit the effect of tuition costs on WTCS students.

*Measures:* Reduce the average unmet need of students completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- Expand Wisconsin’s skilled workforce:

*Measures:* Increase the number of degrees and certificates awarded.

Increase the percentage of high school students enrolling in technical college within three years of graduation

***Serve as a key component in individual, community, and economic development.***

**Goals:**

- Establish the System as a priority for resource allocations based on its vital role in economic development.
  - *Measures:* State General and Categorical Aid appropriations
  - Competitive federal grant funding
- Promote WTCS as an essential economic development engine
  - *Measure:* Increase media citations and Web analytics
- Foster robust collaborations benefiting learners and partners
  - *Measure:* Development of Wisconsin Career Pathways

***Ensure student success.***

**Goals:**

- Expand adult career pathway opportunities.
  - *Measures:* Increase the number of Adult Career Pathway Bridges and embedded credentials
  - Increase the percentage of ABE/ELL students completing postsecondary courses
- Improve completion opportunities for all students.
  - *Measure:* Fall to Spring retention of program students
- Improve quality outcomes for all students.
  - *Measures:* Program students graduating in 3 or 5 years
  - Job placement rates for WTCS graduates



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The Wisconsin Technical College System Board is in full compliance with state and federal equal opportunity non-discrimination laws and regulations including Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Equal Pay Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Wisconsin Fair Employment Law, Wisconsin Civil Service Law and Executive Orders, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Workforce Investment Act, the Office of Civil Rights Guidelines for the Elimination of Discrimination in Vocational Education, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and/or other applicable state or federal legislation. It is the policy of the WTCSB not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, arrest record, conviction record, political affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, and membership in the National Guard, state defense force or any other reserve component of the military forces of the United States, or this state. Inquiries regarding equal opportunity may be directed to the Wisconsin Technical College System, 4622 University Avenue, P.O. Box 7874, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7874, telephone (608) 266-1766 or Telephone Typewriter (TTY) (608) 267-2483.

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