



The Trustee

WACCT To Host Community College Summit

Event to Focus on Workforce Development, Completion, Performance



Inside this issue:

Study on Colleges' Economic Impact	2
WACCT Weighs In On Potential Pell Cuts	2
WACCT Schedules Fall Educational Series	3
WCCC Approves \$85M CapCon Request	3
Notes From the Director's Desk	4

Did you know?

- Wyoming community college students realize a 19.3% rate of return on their investment in their education.

A challenge from the President of the United States to re-establish the country as the world's nonpareil leader in higher education.

Growing industries that demand more skilled employees than the system can currently provide.

An unacceptably high number of students who are unprepared for college, and who, therefore, may struggle to complete their college education.

These critical issues will frame a day-long discussion of challenges facing higher education at the first Wyoming Summit on Community Colleges.

The first-ever Summit is set for Nov. 2 at Little America in Cheyenne. It is sponsored by the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees.

Gov. Matt Mead will deliver a lunchtime keynote address at the Summit, which will bring together legislators, leaders

from the community colleges, the K12 system, the University of Wyoming, key stakeholders in state agencies, industry, and philanthropic partners.

"We greatly appreciate the Governor's support of our community colleges, and we are thrilled that he is planning to participate in our first summit," said Steve Bahmer, executive director of the WACCT.

The primary goals of the Summit will be to identify key challenges the community colleges face in preparing students for the workforce, or to transfer to four-year universities—and to identify solutions for those challenges.

In its structure and purpose, the Wyoming Summit will be modeled after the White House Summit on Community Colleges, which Wyoming community college leaders attended in April.

Importantly, however, the

November event will focus on Wyoming's specific challenges and opportunities.

"Our colleges are doing a terrific job of meeting students where they are and providing a top-notch education," Bahmer said.

"When we take a long view, it's clear that there is still a great deal of work for us and our partners to do to ensure that we can continue to develop a highly skilled, highly educated workforce."

The Summit is intended to start a conversation among all stakeholders about the work that remains to be done and the roles that each must play.

Invitations to the Wyoming Summit on Community Colleges will be mailed soon. In the meantime, mark your calendars for Nov. 2, and contact Steve Bahmer at steve@wacct.org with any questions.

WACCT Conference, Legislative Reception Set

The annual WACCT Conference and Legislative Reception are scheduled for Feb. 23, 2012, in Cheyenne.

The 2012 Conference will feature a half-day of educa-

tional programming, focused on effective governance models.

The annual WACCT Awards Banquet will be held at Little America from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. That event will be follow-

ed by a reception for legislators and the statewide elected officials from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Contact Steve Bahmer at steve@wacct.org with questions.

Study Quantifies Colleges' Economic Impact

Total Statewide Economic Impact Estimated at \$866 Million



Wyoming Community Colleges Economic Impact

- For every dollar students invest in Wyoming's community colleges, they receive a cumulative **\$5.60 in higher future income** over the course of their working careers.
- Wyoming benefits from improved health and reduced welfare, unemployment and crime, **saving the public some \$4.3 million per year.**
- **Wyoming taxpayers see a 5.2% rate of return** on their investment in Wyoming's community colleges.

*From The Economic Contribution of Wyoming's Community Colleges.

Wyoming's spending on its community colleges is a very sound investment, according to a study commissioned by the Wyoming Community College Commission.

The seven community colleges generate \$866 million annually, according to Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.

That estimate includes college operations, student spending, and student impact on the labor market.

For every dollar that state and local governments spent on Wyoming's community colleges in 2009-2010, \$1.40 is estimated to be returned to taxpayers in the form of higher tax receipts and savings in social services over the course of students' working careers, according to the study.

The higher incomes of community college graduates expand the state's tax base by about \$128.3 million each year.

Wyoming service agencies also benefit from lower costs

associated with the graduates' better health, as well as reduced spending on crime, welfare, and unemployment.

These reduced costs result in an estimated savings of \$4.3 million per year.

In addition to the economic impact of students from Wyoming, out-of-state students generate about \$29.8 million in added income each year.

Out-of-state students make up about 12 percent of the total student population.

"We have always believed that Wyoming's community colleges are a terrific investment, for the state, and for the students" said Steve Bahmer, executive director of the WACCT.

"We're very pleased to now have dollars and cents data to illustrate that."

Though the state clearly benefits from its investment in community colleges, the students themselves benefit as well.

The average income for a

graduate at the midpoint of their career is \$44,100, or 35 percent more than a student with just a high school diploma.

For every dollar spent on their community college education, graduates receive a cumulative \$5.60 in return over their working careers.

Jim Rose, executive director of the Wyoming Community College Commission, told the Casper Star-Tribune that the statewide study supports the colleges' mission to promote the economic interests of the state.

"It's a fairly telling report in terms of the importance and the impact of funding provided to colleges," he said. "The number of times those dollars are turned over and multiplied is information people should know."

The analysis was based largely on the 2009-2010 reporting year, when Wyoming's community colleges served 37,667 credit and 22,702 non-credit students.

WACCT Weighs in on Potential Pell Cuts



In June, the WACCT reached out to Wyoming's Congressional delegation, arguing for the preservation of current maximum Pell Grant levels.

In letters to Sens. Mike Enzi and John Barrasso and Rep. Cynthia Lummis, the WACCT urged the delegation to protect the current \$5,550 maximum award from cuts proposed dur-

ing the next budget cycle.

In April, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a budget resolution that would roll the maximum award back to fiscal year 2008 levels.

More than 5,000 Wyoming community college students benefited from Pell Grants in 2009-2010, with grants totaling more than \$17 million.

"In short, Pell Grants make it possible for thousands of students to enroll in Wyoming's community colleges and earn college degrees," the WACCT stated in its letter.



WACCT Launches Fall Educational Series

Providing valuable trustee education is a core element of the WACCT's vision.

To realize that vision, the WACCT has schedule three new educational opportunities, in addition to its annual winter conference.

Building on the success of the WACCT's first-ever Interactive Video Institute in April, all three of the additional sessions will be delivered via videoconference.

Using that technology, more trustees will be able to attend and participate, while minimizing travel and other expenses.

The fall educational series will launch on September 15 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. with a presentation by Northwest College Trustee Rick LaPlante.

Trustee LaPlante developed his presentation, "Preparing Students for 2018 and Beyond," following his attendance at the regional White House Summit on Community Colleges in San Diego in April.

The session will outline the challenges Wyoming faces in preparing students to transfer and to enter the workforce, and the bold thinking necessary to meet those challenges.

The second session in the fall educational series will be held in October, and will feature a discussion of the Wyoming Open Meetings Law.

The fall series will wrap up in November with a session focused on the fiduciary responsibility of boards.

This final session was developed as a follow-up to a similar session presented at the 2011 WACCT Conference.

Dates and times for the October and November sessions will be available soon. Contact Steve Bahmer at steve@wacct.org with questions.

WACCT Fall Educational Series

September 15, 2011

Preparing Students for 2018 and Beyond

4 p.m.—6 p.m.

NWC Trustee Rick LaPlante

October 2011

Wyoming's Open Meetings Law

November 2011

Fiduciary Responsibility of Boards

WCCC Approves \$85 Million CapCon Request

The Wyoming Community College Commission approved a request at its August meeting for more than \$85 million in state funding for community college capital construction projects.

The funding request would support 14 college projects for the 2013-2014 biennium.

It is the first such request to use a model that ranks each project based on 15 factors. The model was required by a bill that passed in the 2009 legislative session.

Earlier in the commission meeting, which was held at Northern Wyoming Community College District in Sheridan, the colleges had presented a reprioritized list.

The reprioritization adjusted three of the model's results to produce a prioritized list that

the colleges believed was more equitable .

Dr. Karla Leach, President of Western Wyoming Community College and Chair of the Presidents' Council, told commissioners that all seven college presidents supported the reprioritized list.

The WACCT Governing Board had also voted unanimously to support the president's recommendation.

WACCT Chair and Eastern Wyoming College Trustee Sherri Lovercheck reported the trustees' unanimous vote to the commissioners.

Though some commissioners said the model could use adjustment, they also said it provides the kind of data the Legislature has been asking for with capital construction requests.

"What the Legislature has been demanding, and demanding more strongly last session, is they want data," said Commissioner Wendy Sweeny.

"There are some things I would change in this. However, we do not have a database to show them as to why a determination was made."

Though the list passed by the commission did not reflect the Presidents' recommendation, it does provide initial approval for significant funding for all 14 projects.

The WACCT and the Presidents have follow-up meetings scheduled to talk about the capital construction projects and other key elements of the 2012 legislative agenda.

For more information, contact Steve Bahmer at steve@wacct.org.

CapCon Projects List

1. Ag/Rodeo Complex—CC
2. Equine Center—CWC
3. Wellness/Athletic/Math & Science Expansion—WWCC
4. Academic Space Improvement—CWC
5. Sheridan Student Center Remodel/Expansion—NWCCD
6. Center for Higher Ed and Community Learning—LCCC
7. Gillette College Student Center—NWCCD
8. Western Education Center—WWCC
9. Academic Space Improvement/Lander—CWC
10. Douglas Outreach Center—EWC
11. Academic/Workforce Training Building—NWC
12. Residence Hall Addition—EWC
13. Large Animal and Ag Facility—EWC
14. Academic Space Improvement/Sinks Canyon—CWC



**WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES**

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Mission

The mission of the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees, a collaborative organization of Wyoming community college trustees with college presidents, is to promote the continued quality, strength, vitality and effectiveness of its members.

Vision

The Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees will be the leading information source and advocate for Wyoming’s community colleges, shaping public policy that strengthens community college education, and providing trustee development to ensure effective governing boards.

Notes From the Director’s Desk

-By Steve Bahmer



Your Thoughts

The Trustee is one of many tools we’ll be using to communicate more effectively with you about community college issues and the work of the WACCT.

To be effective, though, it has to meet your needs and provide information you find useful and valuable.

So let me hear from you. If you have story ideas, subjects that need attention, or if you would like to contribute, please email me at: steve@wacct.org.

It’s tough to get a broad group of people thinking and talking about the future when times are relatively good.

As I’ve met with my colleagues from other states, few want to hear about the challenges we face in Wyoming—since ours hardly rate as challenges at all, from their perspective.

So granted, times are relatively good for Wyoming’s community colleges.

We’ve continued to deliver excellent educational opportunities to more than 25,000 students a year, even in the face of 28 percent enrollment growth over the last seven years.

We’ve continued to work with our partners in industry to develop programs that address

the needs of Wyoming’s employers.

And we’ve improved our own operations, working closely together with the Legislature on a shared set of principles and priorities.

But as NWC Trustee Rick LaPlante points out in his presentation, “Preparing Students for 2018 and Beyond,” there is still much work to do.

At our current postsecondary completion rates, we will fall short of producing the required, educated workforce we’ll need for the jobs we anticipate in 2018.

Indeed, to meet the needs of our workforce and our students, and to restore the U.S. as the world’s leader in postsecondary attainment, we will need to

increase our degree and certificate completion rates nearly 50 percent by 2020.

Though these are macro-level figures, they apply in Wyoming as well.

That’s why we are working hard on the first-ever Wyoming Summit on Community Colleges, to be held Nov. 2 in Cheyenne.

Community colleges are keys to economic recovery, to meeting workforce needs, and to preparing students for even higher educational achievement.

We look forward to starting this important conversation, and we hope to see you at the Summit in Cheyenne.