

The Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees

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**2016 Budget Session a Success for
Wyoming's Community Colleges**



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Wyoming's Community Colleges Enjoy Continued Investment from the State Legislature

Heading into a budget session as the new Executive Director for WACCT was somewhat of a daunting experience. Although I have years of experience tracking the budget and great relationships with the legislators, you never know what the session will feel like working for an established association. The age old friends named doubt and worry were on my shoulders.

"Would I be able to carry on the good work for the Association?" "Will I be able to answer legislators' questions?" The community colleges have come so far, "will I drop the ball?"

When you represent the community colleges, you don't just show up to the Education Committee and go home. The interest of the colleges spreads far and wide - from student

assessment, to data privacy; from guns to appropriations. Committee meetings left and right! I quickly took a step back and applied my tried and true methods of lobbying and representing my people:

- Take the time to visit with each and every legislator about your issues. You never know what angle from which they see the issue. Who knows, they might change your mind!
- Try to visit about something other than work every now and then. It is from these conversations you will learn a little tidbit about their personal lives, and they will see you as a mother, or spouse, or artist - and soon you are two real people just doing your job to make Wyoming a better place to live.
- Make it a point to be at the capitol most of the time. The legislators are there all day working, so why shouldn't I be as well? Let me tell you, it makes a difference when you are in the building. So I pack my snacks and work at the Jonah (the fake capitol, as my kids call it) all day long.
- I tried to communicate as much as possible - weekly updates, conference calls, calls to action. Please let me know if it was too much, too little, or just right.

From this work plan and my countless conversations about the colleges, I quickly realized that support for the community colleges runs deep within the Wyoming Legislature. No matter if a legislator has a campus in his or her county, they see the results of the college programming in their local communities. They know the impact on people's lives. They appreciate the hard work it takes to both hold down a job and go to school - especially if it someone they know and love.

And so you see their commitment to Wyoming's community colleges through legislative efforts. You see their commitment to helping the colleges build the facilities they need to deliver the demanded course work. You see their commitment to ensure a stable source of funding so the colleges can plan for the future. You see their commitment to developing Wyoming's number one economic development tool.

I am honored to work with such wonderful people who represent Wyoming's community colleges - both within the WACCT world and in the legislative world. You bet, it took a lot of hard work and preparation to make sure I didn't "drop the ball", and I hope all would say that I was able to continue the good work - the year's worth of work to shine a light on the community colleges and the impact the colleges have on the good State of Wyoming.



Governor Matt Mead signing HB80 into law. March 4, 2016
Representatives Freeman, Greear, Northrup (Astrid Northrup) Kasperik, Larsen, Berger, Kinner, Senator
Wasserburger, and Erin Taylor, WACCT Executive Director

This is the last legislative briefing for the 2016 Budget Session, and I would like to close by thanking everyone for their first hand support. When called, trustees and Presidents jumped and asked "how high". When asked for information, the colleges and the WCCC sent it in record time. Your efforts to reach out to legislators and support your Executive Director was top notch and I greatly appreciate it. We can do more together than one of us can do alone.

With a grateful heart
~ Erin

ACCT National Leadership Summit - Washington DC



Pictured with US Senator John Barrasso: Mark Westerhold, Mickey Douglas, Heather Christensen, Carlton Underwood, Dr. Chris Valdez, Walt Wragge, Bob Leibrich, Dr. Susan Bigelow, Carol Barcia, Deneese Stone, Austin Asay, Dr. Darren Divine, and Matthew Loucks

Wyoming was represented well at the 2016 ACCT National Leadership Summit in Washington DC in early February. Participants met with Congressman Cynthia Lummis, Senator Mike Enzi and Senator John Barrasso to discuss issues relevant to Wyoming's community colleges at the federal level and at home.

2016 WACCT Awards Recipients

Congratulations to all of the 2016 WACCT Awards recipients and nominees!

A special thank you to the staff at Northern Wyoming Community College District for all of their time and effort to make the 2016 awards and legislative reception a beautiful event!

[Please be sure to check out the new WACCT Awards page of the website!](#)

Foundation Board Member

Barbara and Anthony

Andrikopoulos

Laramie County Community College

Classified Employee

Elaine Pridgeon

Northern Wyoming Community College District

Professional Employee

Mai Lee Olsen

Eastern Wyoming College

Faculty

Troy Miller

Northern Wyoming Community College District

Student

Jordan Gill

Casper College

Trustee Leadership

John Patrick

Eastern Wyoming College

Final Legislative Summary and Bill Tracking

[Please click here to read the last legislative update for the 2016 Budget Session.](#)

[Click here for the bill tracking information.](#)



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.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make the 2016 legislative session a success for the colleges!

Warm wishes,

Erin Taylor
Executive Director
Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees

As always, please help me say thank you to our sponsors...

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