

THE TRUSTEE



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Did you know?

- **95% of businesses and organizations that employ community college graduates recommend community college workforce education and training programs.**

WACCT To Host 2nd Annual Summit on Community Colleges

Continuing the conversation it started last December, the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees (WACCT) has scheduled its 2nd Annual Wyoming Summit on Community Colleges for Sept. 18 at Casper College.

The WACCT hosted the first such summit last year to launch a statewide conversation about the role the colleges, lawmakers, the K12 system, the University of Wyoming and industry must play to ensure that Wyoming's students are prepared to compete in a changing, global economy. The 2nd annual summit will focus on a specific topic that each of those entities must help improve in order to meet that goal: college completion.

"Completion rates have risen slightly across the country recently, but we are still not where we need to be in terms of effectively preparing our students," said Steve Bahmer, executive director of the WACCT. "It isn't enough to get students into college. We have to keep them there, and we have to get them through the system with a certificate or degree."

Nationally, about 39 percent of students ages 25 to 34 had earned an associate's, bachelor's or graduate degree in 2010. In Wyoming, about 34 percent of young adults in the same age range currently hold a

college degree. Those figures are particularly important because of the changing nature of the job market.

By 2018, 63% of jobs nationally will require some form of postsecondary degree or certificate. About 62% of all jobs in Wyoming will require some postsecondary training by 2018. At current postsecondary completion rates, both Wyoming and the nation will struggle to provide the educated workforce that is necessary to fill those jobs, Bahmer said.

The completion issue is exacerbated by a number of factors, among them the need for nearly 50 percent of Wyoming freshman seeking an associate's degree to take remedial education courses. Typically, only about three in 10 of those students graduate in three years.

"Students who come to college unprepared for college-level work take longer to get their degrees, and most who require remedial courses never graduate," Bahmer said. "Our second annual summit will provide a forum for a discussion about how to ensure students are prepared for college when they arrive and are prepared to be competitive when they leave."

The Summit will be held in the Gateway Building at Casper College. Register online by visiting www.wacct.org/about-wacct/ and clicking on the 'E' icon.

"It isn't enough to get students into college. We have to keep them there, and we have to get them through the system with a certificate or degree."



President, John Kaiser, Laramie County Community College
Vice President, Jim Roth, Wester Wyoming Community College
Treasurer, Norleen Healy, Northern Wyoming College
Secretary, Carolyn Danko, Northwest College

WACCT Board Approves Participation in Complete College America

The WACCT Board voted at its August meeting to encourage Gov. Matt Mead to accept an invitation from Complete College America (CCA) to join its Alliance of States.

The WACCT Board then sent that decision back to the seven community colleges' boards for ratification.

Ultimately, the decision about whether Wyoming will participate as an Alliance State is the Governor's. As a result, the WACCT, the college presidents, and the Wyoming Community College Commission have been asked to send the Governor letters indicating whether they each support participation in CCA.

Given the WACCT Board's vote, WACCT Executive Director Steve Bahmer has written a letter to the Governor, asking him to accept the CCA invitation. The letter can be downloaded from the WACCT website at www.wacct.org/docs-info.

Participation as a CCA Alliance State is intended to help improve completion rates at community colleges and universities. CCA's approach includes three primary components:

- **Set Completion Goals:** Establish annual state and campus-specific degree and credential completion goals

through 2020.

- **Develop Action Plans and Move Key Policy Levers:** Develop and implement aggressive state and campus-level action plans for meeting the state's completion goals, including strategies to ensure all students are ready to start and succeed in freshman credit courses; redesign remediation efforts to substantially improve success; increase the number of students completing on time, and others.
- **Collect and Report Common Measures of Progress:** Use consistent data and progression measures to create a culture that

values completion.

Currently, 30 states participate with CCA as Alliance States. Participation offers those states technical assistance from CCA in developing and implementing their completion plans. Participating states are also invited to attend a meeting of all Alliance States to discuss efforts and best practices in improving completion.

CCA is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the Lumina Foundation for Education, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and USA Funds.

For more information about CCA, visit <http://www.completecollege.org/>.

JAC Approves Proposed Cuts to Colleges

During its July meetings in Cheyenne, the Joint Appropriations Committee approved a series of proposed cuts to the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) budget.

The proposed cuts amount to about 8 percent of the Commission's standard budget, and the biggest portion would impact state aid to the community colleges.

Gov. Matt Mead has asked all state agencies to suggest 8 percent cuts to their standard budgets in anticipation of declining state revenues.

In May, the WCCC submitted a memo to the Governor's office outlining proposed cuts. Since the majority of the WCCC's general fund appropriation is distributed to the community colleges as operating revenue, the bulk of the proposed cuts would come from that amount.

As a result, of the projected total cut of slightly more than \$9.9 million, about 92 percent, or slightly more than \$9.1 million, would come from state aid to the colleges.

That figure was further broken down into two components: about \$7.5 million in operational funding, and just over \$1.5 million that is earmarked for college employee benefit funding.

The JAC approved the proposed operational funding cut.

But because appropriations for

employee benefits tend to be high because of unfilled positions and attrition, among other reasons, committee members suggested that some portion of the \$1.5 million would revert to the general fund anyway, and therefore did not represent an actual cut.

Dollars saved as a result of actual reductions in force could be credited to the colleges' 8 percent cut amount.

College presidents told the committee that the funding reductions would likely result in lost positions, as well as the potential reduction of course sections and course offerings.

Other programs that would realize reductions in operating revenues under the proposal include the Family Literacy program, Adult Basic Education, and Wyoming Public Television. Student aid for the Wyoming Investment in Nursing Program and the Veterans Tuition Waiver Program would also be reduced.

The remaining cuts would come from the WCCC's administrative operations, with the largest portion coming from funding for statewide radio and television ads for the colleges.

The JAC will continue to hear budget presentations throughout the interim in preparation for the 2013 General Session of the Legislature, which begins Jan. 8, 2013.



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.

CWC Named Finalist for National Diversity Award



Central Wyoming College has been chosen as the recipient of the Association of Community College Trustees 2012 Diversity Award

The award makes Central the sole nominee from the western region for the prestigious Charles Kennedy Equity Award.

CWC and four other regional award recipients will be recognized at the ACCT Annual Leadership Congress that takes place in Boston, Mass., Oct. 10-13. At the Annual Awards Gala on Friday, Oct. 12, the national award recipient is announced.

This award recognizes commitment

by a community, technical, or junior college governing board and its chief executive officer to achieve equity in the college's education programs and services and in the administration and delivery of those programs and services.

CWC Board Chair Caroline Mills was notified of the award by the national ACCT office. CWC Diversity Committee Chair Coralina Daly submitted the nomination, arguing CWC has the highest percentage of minority students of any community college in Wyoming.

The nomination summarized the high value CWC places on diversity, including making the appreciation of individual and cultural differences one of CWC's five student attributes.

The award honors the late Charles Kennedy, a trustee of Joliet Junior College in Illinois, who was a founder of the ACCT Minority Affairs Assembly, which became the ACCT Diversity Committee.



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.

Demand Rises at LCCC for Certificate Programs

As the nation continues its slow economic recovery, young people have been showing increasing interest in programs that can get them into the workforce and earning money quickly.

So it's no small wonder that Laramie County Community College has seen a steady flow of students into its 24 certificate programs. Each is designed to equip students with practical skills that can translate into a job.

Two programs - automotive and diesel technology - are among the college's most sought-after certificates.

According to program director Doug Cook, both have seen full enrollment throughout the past decade, prompting the college to look at ways of expanding them.

"Those programs are wait-listed, meaning we have more demand than we have space to bring people in," Cook said. "Every semester (they) have been wait-listed."

Due to the demands of the classes,

Cook said the diesel and auto tech programs typically host only about 16-18 students per semester. He said LCCC plans to construct a new building to expand its enrollment over the next several years.

"One of the things we just concluded is a master plan that includes what is called a 'flex-tech' building," he said. "That has been recommended on our master plan of needs of things that need to be built to accommodate the growth of our technical programs here at LCCC."

Jim Haller, president of LCCC's auto and diesel tech advisory board, said the demand for skilled technicians has been so great that some students are dropping out of the program once they get the skills rather than finishing the certificate.

"The problem is, come February, March or April of their last year, they're getting jobs and their employers don't care if they have their certificate; they're

going to work," Haller said. "There's a certain amount of desperation in this industry for new people."

He added that LCCC has made moves to fix that problem, restructuring the programs to ensure students meet general education requirements in addition to learning technical skills they need for work.

Despite the rising demand for certifications, Cook said the actual number awarded at LCCC is fairly stable. In part that is due to class size restrictions in some of the most popular programs.

He did note a spike in the 2009-2010 school year when the college awarded 175 certificates.

"That would've been about the time when Wyoming was starting to see the impact of the recession," he said. "My suspicions are we had a lot of career-changers in that time period."

From the Wyoming Tribune Eagle

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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_bahmer@yahoo.com.

Notes From the Director's Desk

By Steve Bahmer

When we launched our first Wyoming Summit on Community Colleges last year, the WACCT committed that it would not simply be a one-day affair: a single conference that initiated an important conversation but was never revisited.

Instead, we wanted to create a forum to keep the conversation going, and to continually drill down into the issues that we and our partners must resolve in order to make sure our students are prepared to compete in a changing, and increasingly global work environment.

Well, we're back.

On September 18, we'll host the 2nd Annual Wyoming Summit on Community Colleges at the Gateway Building at Casper College.

This time, rather than a broad introductory discussion about the ways in which the colleges, the K12 system, the University of Wyoming, legislators, and industry must work together to prepare students, we'll focus all of those groups on a single, critical topic: college completion.

As our feature article in this edition of *The Trustee* mentions, it isn't enough to get students

into college. We must also remain focused on doing everything we can to ensure that our students are prepared for college when they arrive, and that they are prepared to be productive employees and entrepreneurs when the leave.

It's a tall order, and one that any number of groups has been working on for some time.

The WACCT is proud to bring those groups together through our Summit to work collaboratively on developing concrete steps that will result in measurable improvement.

The current need for remediation is too high. The time-to-degree is too long. And too many students get discouraged, delay their degrees or certificates, or drop out along the way.

We can do better. We must do better if we are to meet the needs of employers across Wyoming.

What's more, strong family incomes and a healthy state economy depend on more of our students succeeding in college.

We hope you will join us in Casper for this second important installment in our ongoing conversation. Visit our web site at www.wacct.org/about-wacct/ to register today.