
HB 30 – WYOMING’S TOMORROW SCHOLARSHIP AMENDMENTS

TALKING POINTS – JANUARY 16, 2023

- HB 30 funds the Wyoming’s Tomorrow Scholarship program that was passed in HB 31 last year. HB 31 appropriated \$10M toward the \$50M needed to fully fund the endowment (the endowment must be fully funded and earning interest in order to grant any student scholarships.)
- It is an adult training and retraining funding program that is set up to engage the over 212,000 adults in Wyoming who do not have any further training or certification past high school.
- Wyoming’s Tomorrow is the result of 2 ½ years’ work studying other states and meeting with stakeholders across Wyoming, including the Dept. of Workforce Services, the Higher Education Attainment Council, our Community Colleges, and our University. Recall, the Legislatively appointed Wyoming’s Tomorrow Task Force also worked for two interims on this topic (2019 and 2020).
- States across the country have shifted their focus as a pragmatic move to keep their states competitive. We modeled our program after looking at several states. Given our shifting energy economy this is more important than ever. Remember, this is not a new idea. Wyoming is just one of the last states to make this investment in their future.

WHO MAY UTILIZE THIS BILL?

- The over 212,000 adults in Wyoming who do not have any further training or certification past high school.
- May be used at the University of Wyoming or a community college
- Wyoming residency for 1 year
- Aged 24 years or older
- Student has completed a filed a free application for federal student aid to determine unmet financial aid
- Student registered with the Department of Workforce Services for applicable training assistance
- Cannot receive if:
 - Currently receiving Hathaway scholarship
 - Is not a US citizen
 - Owes on other financial aid programs
 - Is incarcerated
 - Previously received the scholarship for 4 academic terms (up to \$7,200)
- Tailored to allow for:
 - Military service – flexibility for service members
 - Mission services
 - Former felony – to help reduce recidivism

HOW IS THE BILL FUNDED?

- This bill contains two transfers from the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA): 1) \$90 million to the Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship Endowment Fund (Endowment Fund); and 2) \$15 million to the Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship Expenditure Account (Expenditure Account).
- The \$90 million transfer to the Endowment Fund, when combined with the \$10 million transfer from the LSRA pursuant to 2022 HB 31, amounts to \$100 million from the LSRA to the Endowment Fund.
- This bill also increases the limit of the Expenditure Account from 9 percent to 21 percent of the five-year average market value of the Endowment Fund, which increases the maximum amount from an estimated \$9 million to \$21 million, based upon the \$100 million transferred from the LSRA to the Endowment Fund.
- In accordance with W.S. 21-16-1902(b), Wyoming's tomorrow scholarships awarded from the Expenditure Account for the first academic year shall not exceed 2.5 percent, and 5 percent each academic year thereafter of the applicable fiscal year's average market value of the Endowment Fund.

WHY DOES WYOMING NEED THIS BILL?

- **This is an investment in our people and future!** UW, the Wyoming Community College Commission, ENDOW and by executive order, the State of Wyoming, have formally adopted higher education attainment goals. Higher education attainment levels are directly correlated to economic productivity and will be even more important in shaping the economic future of the state.
- If Wyoming high schools graduated every senior in the state, and if Wyoming had the highest college-going rate in the nation, and those students graduated college at a higher rate than other states, the numbers would still not be sufficient to reach the higher education attainment goals. Therefore, Wyoming must re-engage working adults already committed to living here and encourage them to earn a post-secondary credential.
- According to the US Census Bureau, Wyoming has 112,000 working-aged adults with just a higher school diploma and 100,000 with some college, but no credential. Wyoming could meet the attainment goal if the colleges could help just 40% of these individuals earn a post-secondary credential.
- We put a lot of effort into our 6,000 high school graduates each year with the Hathaway Scholarship. Wyoming's Tomorrow is focused on those **212,000 adult citizens** living in Wyoming today who need further training to develop our workforce and improve their employment and income. In addition to engagement, encouragement and guidance, **this program, can permanently fund programs like Wyoming Works and other adult training programs in the future.**
- It is difficult for working adults to leave the labor force to pursue higher education because of life commitments and financial obligations.
- Wyoming's attainment rate is well below its 60% attainment goal and Wyoming's attainment rate of 51.6% is roughly equal to the national average of 51.9%.
- Wyoming's attainment rate is farthest below the national average in bachelor's degrees and graduate or professional degrees.
- Of our 6 neighboring states, Wyoming's attainment rate is 5th highest (i.e., 5th of 7).
- Wyoming's Bachelor's degree attainment is, by far, the lowest in the region. Wyoming's graduate or professional degree attainment is tied for last with Idaho and South Dakota.

- With Hathaway scholarships focused on merit and traditional-age students, the addition of an adult-focused, need-based scholarship program is a natural counterpart to serve all Wyomingites' pursuit of higher education.

HOW DOES THIS PROGRAM FILL A GAP WITH ALL THE WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS WE HAVE IN WYOMING?

- Wyoming's Tomorrow fills a need by supporting the working adults who are tied to their community through their jobs and families.
- It complements the work of the Department of Workforce Services (that provides primarily wrap-around services to support training) and that of high demand programs like Wyoming Works which focus on CTE and non-credit programs and provides both student scholarships and programmatic development dollars.
- It includes CTE focused programs like Wyoming Works so Wyoming's Tomorrow can also be used by students to cover those programs well into the future.

WHY IS WORKFORCE SUPPORTING THIS BILL?

- Industries from all over Wyoming are supporting this bill and supported it last year when HB 31 worked its way through the process – they need a trained workforce more than anything else right now. This bill can help do that.
- The bill includes language from the Wyoming Works statutes that places a priority on workforce shortages and economic development needs of our communities, regions and the state.
- Rules have been promulgated at the Wyoming Community College Commission in consultation with UW, the Department of Workforce Services, the Wyoming Business Council and other industry stakeholders and the WCCC is ready to formally adopt those rules at their February 17th meeting.
- **Building workforce development is a key component to community resiliency.**
- Here is the list of industries – and many spoke to the committee last year and in the House Education Committee:
 - Wyoming's Electric Cooperatives
 - American Clean Power
 - Wyoming Trucking Association
 - AGC of Wyoming
 - Wyoming Business Alliance
 - Wyoming Economic Development Association
 - Wyoming Association for CTE
 - Southwest Manufacturing Partnership
 - Wyoming Higher Education Council
 - Wyoming Mining Association
 - Wyoming Nursing Association
 - Wyoming Stockgrowers Association
 - Wyoming Telecommunications Association
 - AFL CIO
 - Alliance of Wyoming Manufacturers
 - Petroleum Association of Wyoming

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WYOMING'S TOMORROW WILL WORK?

- It's proven itself already.
- Wyoming is one of the last states to establish an adult grant scholarship for working adults. Other states such as Tennessee have seen significant positive results from establishing an adult grant.
- Further, LCCC tested the effort with the LCCC Rediscover program with very successful outcomes.
- Finally, the Ellbogen Foundation awarded each Wyoming community college with funding for adult grants called the Ellbogen Opportunity Scholarship for the current academic year while the legislature worked through the Wyoming's Tomorrow legislation.
- The results affirm what other states have found – it is worth the investment! **See the data at the end of this document.**

WYOMING'S TOMORROW PROVIDES FUNDING FOR WYOMING WORKS LONG-TERM

- The Wyoming's Tomorrow scholarship program would complement the existing Wyoming Works grant program in terms of scope, sustainability, and expanded economic impact.
- While both Wyoming's Tomorrow (WT) and Wyoming Works (WW) focus on providing cost of attendance support for adults pursuing post-secondary education, WT allows students to pursue any post-secondary certificate or degree up to the bachelor's level. Wyoming Works only applies to programs formally approved by the Commission as meeting specific, pressing industry needs in the CTE area. It does not provide for bachelor's level nor does it provide for associate degree holders to pursue a next level Bachelor's degree.
- The wider range of programs that fall under WT would significantly increase the number of working adults that could benefit, and the inclusion of bachelor's level coursework allows for more upskilling options.
- WT's endowment ensures that WT is sustainable in the long-term, but also provides sustainable funding for WW, which is funded via General Fund appropriations and subject to budget cuts as occurred in the Step 2 and Step 3 cuts in 2020-2021. In short, WT provides for sustainability of the very successful WW program while also encouraging completion in a larger scope of programs including bachelor's degrees.
- It is important to note that students MAY NOT be overfunded with these programs.

WYOMING WORKS IS A SIGNIFICANT COMPONENT OF WYOMING'S TOMORROW

Does Wyoming Works still need to be in existence if WT is funded? Yes, absolutely. WW is used in the eligibility list of programs that will qualify for WT funding including specific non-credit industry credentials such as CDL. WT also does not apply to WW students age 18 to 24 years old.

WYOMING WORKS PROGRAMS AND WYOMING TOMORROW ELIGIBLE SCHOLARSHIPS

- Wyoming Works Programs examples limited to certificates and associate degrees: Welding, non-credit and credit CDL, Powerline Technology, Industrial Maintenance, Ag Production Tech, Data Analytics Systems Administrator, non-credit Certified Fiber Optics Specialist
- Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship examples including WW eligible credit and non-credit: All WW approved programs, BAS programs, pre-med, Nursing, Data Scientist, Early Childhood Education, Healthcare Administration, Business-Industrial Mgmt., Finance, Mathematics, Chemistry, Engineering, Pre-Law, Wildlife and Fisheries Biology, etc. Here are some examples.

Wyoming Works Program	Additional Program Covered by Wyoming's Tomorrow
Agriculture	
Precision Agriculture	Agriculture Communication/Journalism, AS
Agriculture Business	Farm and Ranch Management, Cert
Agriculture Animal Science	Range Science Management, AS
Agriculture Production	Aquaculture, Cert
Agritourism	Equine Studies, AS, AAS, Cert
	Livestock Management, AS
	Range and Science Management, AS
Safety and Criminal Justice	
Criminal Justice, AAS	Fire Science, AAS
Criminal Justice, AA, AAS	Corrections Admin, AA
Corrections Administration, AA	
Criminal Justice, AAS	
Business	
Accounting, AAS	Organizational Management and Leadership BAS
Accounting, Cert	Applied Management BAS
Management, AAS	Mgmt. and Leadership BAS
Marketing AAS	
Business AAS	

WYOMING'S TOMORROW SUPPORTS EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS FOR ECONOMIC IMPACT

- The addition of WT to the existing set of state-funded student grants and scholarships directly addresses the priorities established by the Educational Attainment Executive Council and its Educational Attainment goals.
- Further, it is a foundational effort to support the Wyoming Innovations Partnership (WIP). Increasing Wyoming's rate of post-secondary attainment is directly related to increased economic vitality and potential for growth. Given Wyoming's demographics, it has been established that meeting the attainment goals will require a large and significant increase in adult students, for whom cost of attendance is one of the primary barriers.
- WT directly addresses this population, and by reducing the cost barrier, will likely increase the number of adult learners who enroll in programs that provide them the skills to gain employment, obtain the skills they need in their current roles, and increase the overall skill level of Wyoming's workforce.

WHAT IS SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)?

- This is spelled out in the bill for clarity, and it concurs with the required SAP at the colleges and university. SAP is a **term of art** in higher education similar to terminology like PELL grant, credit hour, etc. SAP is federal compliance requirement that can be found on the Federal Student Aid US Department of Education website. Each post-secondary institution must have SAP in its policies and must conduct the review at the end of each semester to meet federal law. A student **MUST** meet SAP in order to continue to receive any financial aid. **SAP is something that is used in many programs**

administered by the Wyoming Community College Commission. <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/staying-eligible>

WHAT IS CONSIDERED COST OF ATTENDANCE?

- The costs described as Total Cost of Attendance (TCA) and sometimes referred to as Cost of Attendance (COA) is a **term of art** in postsecondary education and is prescribed by US Department of Education and Federal Student Aid. The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) legally defines what costs are allowed to be included in the COA. The TCA includes tuition, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, fees, dependent care, disability or study-abroad expenses, and other miscellaneous costs. It also sets a limit on the total amount of aid a student can receive. If the total amount of financial aid assistance exceeds the TCA, federal law requires the institution to reduce the student's financial aid to eliminate the overage. **This is a term that is used in many other programs administered by the Wyoming Community College Commission.**

WE ARE HEARING CONCERNS ABOUT INCREASED TUITION. WHAT'S THE REAL STORY?

It is true that tuition for Wyoming's institutions of higher education have indeed been on the increase – however you must also consider the environment of state aid and the severe budget cuts our institutions have experienced over the last 10 years. In fact, budget erosion since 2010 amounts to \$94 million:

- General Fund appropriations funding loss as of January 2020: \$61.3 million – Due to lack of external cost adjustments and prior cuts.
- 2020 budget reduction Step 2 and Step 3 equals \$32.7 million cut
- History of State Aid Appropriations to the Community Colleges:
 - BFY11 - \$191.9 million
 - BFY13 - \$188.9 million
 - BFY15 - \$193.3 million
 - BFY17 –\$176.8 million (\$14.2 million reduction penny plan and Governor's budget cut)
 - BFY19 - \$176.2 million (\$0.6 million reduction retiree health insurance)
 - BFY21 - \$156.2 million (\$27.5 million Step 2 and Step 3 reductions)
 - BFY23 - \$147.0 million (\$4.9 million biennialization of Step 3 and \$4.3 million recalibration)
- **Wyoming's community college tuition has nearly doubled in the last twenty years because they have had to "help themselves" by increasing the only part of their revenues that they can control.**
 - The community colleges are funded from a three-part model – state aid (approximately 51%, local mil levies (22%) and student tuition (27%)
 - In fact, all seven accredited community colleges were recently notified by the US Department of Education (USDE) that they would need to complete the College Affordability and Transparency Explanation Form (CATEF). Completion of this form is required by the top 5% of institutions, by institution type, in terms of greatest increase in tuition and fees.

WHAT ABOUT TRANSFER OF CREDITS?

Credit transfer is a real concern. Legislative actions over the last several years have done a good job of pushing UW and the community colleges to work together to develop a transfer process. The 2+2 articulation agreements have paved the way toward greater transfer and the recently announced **WyoTransfer** portal website. No doubt there is more work to be done to make this process better.

EXAMPLES OF WYOMING'S TOMORROW SIMILAR ADULT GRANTS:

Tennessee Reconnect Adult Grant

(<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thec/bureau/research/reconnect/TNReconnectReport2020.pdf>):

- Women make up a larger share of grant recipients relative to both overall and adult student populations at Reconnect eligible institutions at 71%
- Reconnectors overwhelmingly identified finances as their number one anticipated challenge in pursuing a degree or credential. Participants also cited family responsibilities, work demands, time management, and academic preparation as anticipated challenges. *This matches the Education and Workforce survey of Wyoming.*
- 58% of Reconnect grant recipients reported having dependents
- 95.4% of grant recipients already had some college experience. Most of these students had prior experience with Tennessee community colleges.
- The first year of the program saw a success rate of 61%, with over 2,000 students completing a certificate or degree, 248 of whom maintained enrollment in pursuit of another credential.

Laramie County Community College Rediscover Program

(LCCC IR Office | JUNE 18, 2021)

- More likely to be first-generation students than non-Rediscover students
- Disproportionately female, and particularly disproportionately female compared to non-rediscover LCCC students in eligible programs
- Median age of a Rediscover student is over 30 years old, and the average age is 34, compared to low twenties for other degree-seeking students
- Higher Fall-Spring persistence rate than other students, while students in eligible programs have higher persistence rates than those in other programs. 84% compared to 76%
- More likely to earn a credential during the study period than non-Rediscover students. 46% compared to 24%.
- The three most common credentials earned by Rediscover students are in the healthcare field, with business and IT programs right below.

Western Wyoming Community College Ellbogen Opportunity Adult Scholarship

(WWCC | February 2022)

- 101 Qualified Applicants with 13 Students Awarded (14%)—need far exceeded available funds
- Average age 35 with 24 the youngest and 59 the oldest
- Disproportionately female with 62% of participants
- 70% maintained eligibility from fall to spring
- All participants are from the Western service area
- Programs ranged across workforce needs including nursing, Plant Operations, Welding, Business & Information Systems, Automotive, Diesel & Heavy Equipment, and Electrical & Instrumentation