



HAWAII & WICHE

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WICHE



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Western Interstate
Commission for Higher
Education

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Since 1953 Hawaii has been a member of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), a 15-state commission working to boost access to higher education for students in the West and, as importantly, to ensure their success.

In the five-plus decades since Hawaii joined the commission, the state has benefitted in a number of essential ways.

- ▶ Tens of thousands of students from Hawaii have attended undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in other Western states through WICHE's Student Exchange Program, saving millions of dollars, thanks to reduced tuition rates. In just one of the programs, the Western Undergraduate Exchange, **Hawaii students and their families have saved \$148 million** since 1988 when the program was founded. (See "Doing the Math," below, for Hawaii's return on investment.)
- ▶ Hawaii has received funding to be part of numerous WICHE policy initiatives, including those focused on financing and financial aid, workforce policy, and other areas.
- ▶ Hawaii has participated in WICHE initiatives related to distance education, workforce development, and behavioral health.

WICHE and Hawaii have shared a remarkably fruitful history. But their prospects for the future are even more exciting.

WICHE's Student Exchange

Hawaii is active in all three WICHE Student Exchange Programs: the Western Undergraduate Exchange, the Professional Student Exchange Program, and the Western Regional Graduate Program. In 2011-12 Hawaii's students and families almost **\$14 million**. Hawaii saved money, too, through not having to establish and maintain costly programs in a number of areas, including some in healthcare.

Western Undergraduate Exchange. Hawaii students have enrolled in undergraduate programs on the mainland through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) since 1988, **saving on 22,479 annual**

Doing the Math: Hawaii's Return on Investment

In 2011-12 Hawaii, its institutions, and its students saved or brought in some **\$14 million** through WICHE and spent \$125,000 for membership in the commission, yielding a **110-fold return on investment**.

In the last 5 years, Hawaii savings from WUE alone have topped **\$60.1 million**, yielding a **97-fold return** on the state's investment in WICHE.

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“I am currently enrolled in the occupational therapy program at Pacific University in Oregon. My home state does not have such a program. I wouldn’t be able to afford the schooling costs without WICHE’s PSEP; it reduced my student loan debt significantly. In addition, I am able to focus on my studies rather than holding a job to support myself. I am looking forward to returning to Hawaii after graduation, so that I can give back to the community.”

– Man Wa, Hawaii resident, Class of 2013, Pacific University, Occupational Therapy

tuition bills. In 2011-12, 1,596 students from Hawaii are enrolled in out-of-state programs at reduced rates (150 percent of resident tuition), saving almost \$13 million in tuition and fees – the average student savings amounted to \$7,985. In the last dozen years, students have saved nearly **\$123 million**.

Hawaii benefits from WUE in another way: by receiving students from out of state. Hawaii’s institutions can choose how many out-of-state slots to offer and in which areas, allowing them to make the best use of their resources by accepting students in underenrolled programs. There’s a workforce benefit for the state, too, as students often stay in Hawaii after graduating. In 2011-12 Hawaii received 2,253 students through WUE.

Professional Student Exchange Program. Hawaii has sent **1,220 students** to professional programs through the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), with students studying in a host of critical fields, including dentistry, occupational therapy, optometry, physical therapy, and veterinary medicine.

Western Regional Graduate Program. Hawaii’s postgraduates also participate in graduate programs through the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), which offers access to over 250 high-quality, distinctive programs (“distinctive” meaning that they’re offered at only four or fewer institutions in the WICHE region) at 47 institutions in all WICHE states. WRGP programs run the gamut, but emerging social, environmental, and resource-management fields are particular strengths, as are

innovative interdisciplinary programs. In 2011-12 Hawaii sent 17 students to out-of-state institutions, while receiving 49.

Internet Course Exchange (ICE). WICHE’s newest exchange, ICE, is an alliance of member institutions and systems with a set of policies, procedures, and support systems for sharing distance-delivered courses among two- and four-year institutions in the 15-state WICHE region.

Hawaii is one of five partner states participating in the **Interstate Passport Initiative**, which seeks to improve graduation rates, shorten time to degree, and save students money by addressing the two-year to four-year institution transfer problem at an interstate level. The two-year pilot project will focus on forging general education core transfer agreements based on learning outcomes between 28 institutions, including Leeward Community College and University of Hawaii West Oahu.

WICHE’s Added Value

Hawaii gains added value from WICHE’s programs in policy, workforce development, technology, mental health, and other areas.

Policy & Workforce Development. Hawaii has participated in projects supporting better-informed decision making at the state level. WICHE initiatives have been sponsored by the Ford Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education, the U.S. Department of Education, and others. In addition, WICHE policy experts often visit the state to present or consult on a number of vital issues, including the state’s workforce needs and balancing the financial aid portfolio between grants, loans, and scholarships, as well as between merit- and need-based aid.

WICHE continues to offer its assistance in Hawaii’s planning around **tuition-setting and financial aid** policy at the University of Hawaii (UH) system. WICHE staff discussed options and shared ideas from other states.

Hawaii was one of four states chosen to participate in the Gates-funded *Facilitating Development of a Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange* pilot project, which attempts to enable a more comprehensive regional view of the creation of **human capital** and its flow among multiple states by exchanging data across K-12 education, postsecondary education, and the workforce. Hawaii is receiving customized technical assistance, including a Hawaii-specific report, to aid the state in its examination of the data governance in place for each of those sectors,

Figure 1. Hawaii Savings & Revenues through WICHE, 2011

Student Savings	
WUE	\$12,744,691
PSEP	\$979,983
WRGP	\$227,565
Total Student Savings	\$13,952,239

WORKING TOGETHER *for* OVER a HALF CENTURY

“I’m enrolled at California Maritime Academy as a Hawaii resident. Without WUE I’d have had to delay my college aspirations for one year to gain in-state residency. Out-of-state tuition rates are astronomical, and I’m grateful to have received reduced tuition through WUE. Getting a college education is just too important to put on hold, and WUE made it affordable now!”

**– Drew, Hawaii resident,
Class of 2012, California Maritime Academy, Maritime Transportation**

how data governance might be improved, and how the state can advance its efforts in developing its statewide longitudinal data system to meet state needs and fulfill commitments it made to the federal government as part of its successful Race to the Top application.

The state also participated in a Gates-funded meeting in 2008, which brought together the stewards of the data systems in 14 of the WICHE states for discussions around linking data internally and with other states. A central topic of conversation was how to address the challenges to **data sharing** presented by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Another meeting was the **Western Summit on Workforce Certification and Higher Education** for policymakers in the West, held in response to the national demand for more highly skilled workers in a host of fields, from healthcare to high tech. Participants explored how states might use a workforce certification system – which would allow business and higher education to communicate with a common language about workforce demand and supply – to improve their ability to prepare individuals for productive careers and enhance the health of their economies.

WICHE President David Longanecker has worked with the Governor’s Office and Senate Higher Education Committee to help them develop a **state authorization process** to certify nonpublic institutions to operate in Hawaii. In addition, Hawaii was also selected in 2006 as one of six states to participate in a Ford Foundation-funded project called *Escalating Engagement: State Policy to Protect Access to Higher Education*, which engaged state officials and business community members in an attempt to strengthen the alignment of state investments in postsecondary education and **state workforce needs**.

WICHE’s Lumina-funded project *Getting What You Pay For: Understanding Higher Education Appropriations, Tuition,*

“The University of Utah’s College of Social Work has access to resources not available in my home state of Hawaii. Thanks to WICHE’s WRGP, I can attend the school of my choice and earn an advanced degree in my field with an emphasis that is not currently available in my home state.”

**– Paula, Hawaii resident, Class of 2014,
University of Utah, Ph.D. in Social Work**

and Financial Aid promoted informed decision making and the alignment of higher education **appropriations, tuition, and financial aid** policy by state legislators, to improve student access and success. WICHE sent copies of the project’s eight policy briefs to all members of the Hawaii Legislature. Hawaii also participated in another Lumina project, *Best Practices in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems*, which seeks to develop a deeper understanding of how states coordinate their **articulation and transfer** programs for students who move from two-year to four-year institutions.

Additionally, Hawaii has participated in the **Western Academic Leadership Forum**, whose members address regional higher education issues and engage in resource sharing. A new WICHE initiative, the **Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders**, will bring academic leaders of community colleges and technical schools and systems together with state governing and coordinating boards associated with two-year institutions to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. The University of Hawai`i System, Hawai`i Community College, Leeward Community College, and Honolulu Community College are members.

WICHE held its 2011 fall meeting in Hawaii, drawing commissioners from 15 Western states. Brigham Young University-Hawaii in Laie was the site of the meeting.

Technology. Several Hawaii colleges and universities are active participants in the **WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)**, a membership cooperative that accelerates the adoption of effective practices and policies to advance excellence in technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education. Hae Okimoto, director of academic technologies for the University of Hawaii System, serves as chair of WCET’s Steering Committee, ensuring its programs and services are relevant to the higher education community at large. In addition, Okimoto and her colleague, University of Hawaii CIO David Lassner, both have received WCET’s highest honor, the Richard Jonsen Award, for their contributions to educational technology developments in higher education.

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WCET members have access to trusted information on emerging trends, policies, and exemplars of successful learning technology innovation in practice. WCET provides access to peers, colleagues, common interest groups, experts, and decision makers; communications tools that enable members to stay informed about developments affecting technology-enabled teaching and learning; and information about key developments affecting e-learning providers, such as new federal rules pertaining to distance education. WCET also manages multi-institutional projects, one aimed at adult online learners and another on large-scale student data aggregation and predictive analytics to improve student outcomes.

Mental Health. A nucleus for researching mental health policy and a provider of technical assistance in such areas as service innovation, system reform, workforce development, program evaluation, and other areas, WICHE's **Mental Health Program** is another well-used resource. Program staff recently wrote a successful application to receive funding through the Health Resources and Services Administration Network Development Planning Grant to develop a rural psychology internship consortium in Hawaii. WICHE staff will lead the planning phase with local partners.

Other Initiatives. The **Master Property Program (MPP)**, helps institutions in the West reduce their insurance premiums and improve their coverage. Created by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact in 1994 and expanded to the WICHE region in 2004, the MPP includes 50 member institutions with total insured values of \$78.9 billion. It has generated some \$65.4 million in savings for the participating institutions while expanding their insurance coverage.

Hawaii & WICHE's Leadership

Roy T. Ogawa, attorney, Ogawa, Lau, Nakamura, & Jew, Honolulu, chaired the **WICHE Commission** in 2008, whose members mold the organization's mission and set its priorities. Hawaii's other commissioner is: Steven Wheelwright, president, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, Laie.



Roy Ogawa



Steven Wheelwright

WICHE also seeks assistance and advice from policymakers, educators, administrators and legislators. WICHE's **Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC)**, composed of legislator-members from each state – including Representative Scott Nishimoto and Senator Jill Tokuda, both of Honolulu – has been crucial in this regard. The LAC works to keep the commission's Executive Committee and staff current on significant legislative issues related to higher education, provides input on WICHE initiatives, and advises staff on a host of issues. WICHE staff also serves the LAC, by informing its members about emerging policy issues in the West.

WICHE Commission & Staff

The **WICHE Commission** includes 45 members from 15 Western states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

WICHE and its staff are headquartered in Boulder, CO, and operate out of the State Higher Education Policy Center, which WICHE owns with the State Higher Education Executive Officers association and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

Staff leadership includes:

David Longanecker, president

Margo Colalancia, director, Student Exchange Program

Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis

Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services

Dennis Mohatt, director, Mental Health Program, and vice president, behavioral health

Brian Prescott, director of policy research

Pat Shea, director, Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders, WICHE ICE, and Western Academic Leadership Forum

Ellen Wagner, executive director, WCET

How can I find out more about WICHE?

Visit our website at www.wiche.edu or contact President David Longanecker at 303.541.0201.

March 2012



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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