



WASHINGTON & WICHE

Working Together for Over a Half Century

WICHE

ALASKA

ARIZONA

CALIFORNIA

COLORADO

HAWAII

IDAHO

MONTANA

NEVADA

NEW MEXICO

NORTH DAKOTA

OREGON

SOUTH DAKOTA

UTAH

WASHINGTON

WYOMING

Western Interstate
Commission for Higher
Education

www.wiche.edu

Since 1955 Washington 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 Washington joined the commission, the state has benefitted in a number of essential ways.

- ▶ Tens of thousands of students from Washington 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, **Washington students and their families have saved \$243 million** since 1997, when the state started participating. (See "Doing the Math," below, for Washington's return on investment.)
- ▶ Washington has received funding to be part of numerous WICHE policy initiatives, including those focused on financing and financial aid, workforce policy, and other areas.
- ▶ Washington has participated in WICHE initiatives related to distance education, workforce development, and behavioral health.

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

WICHE's Student Exchange

Washington 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 Washington's students and families saved nearly **\$35 million**. Washington saved money, too, through not having to establish and maintain costly programs in a number of areas, including some in healthcare.

Western Undergraduate Exchange. Washington students have enrolled in undergraduate programs beyond Washington's borders through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) since 1997, **saving on over 34,565 annual tuition bills**. In 2011-12, 3,848 students from Washington are enrolled in out-of-state programs at reduced rates (150 percent of

Doing the Math: Washington's Return on Investment

In 2011-12 Washington, its institutions, and its students saved or brought in over **\$37 million** through WICHE and spent \$125,000 for membership in the commission, yielding a **296-fold return on investment**.

In the last 5 years, Washington students' savings from WUE alone have amounted to **\$150 million**, yielding a **244-fold return** on the state's investment in WICHE.

WASHINGTON *and* WICHE

resident tuition), saving more than \$33.4 million in tuition and fees – the average student savings amounted to \$8,688. In the last dozen years, students have saved **over \$239 million**.

Washington benefits from WUE in another way: by receiving students from out of state. Washington’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 Washington after graduating. In 2011-12 Washington received 1,124 students through WUE.

Professional Student Exchange Program. Washington has sent some **240 students** to professional programs through the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), with students studying in optometry and osteopathic medicine. Historically, some 70 percent of PSEP students return to Washington to pursue their professional careers.

Western Regional Graduate Program. Washington’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 Washington sent 92 students to out-of-state institutions, while receiving 71.

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 WICHE states.

“WICHE’s Professional Student Exchange Program has offered a fabulous opportunity to several out-of-state students to enroll in our doctor of pharmacy program – students who otherwise may not have been able to attend. Because our nation’s economy is so bleak and our students come to us from a diversity of economic circumstances, we continually strive to find ways to enable students to pursue their dreams. We are so thankful for the WICHE program; it has been a tremendous help to our students.”

– Marian McDonnell Horton, Pharmacy Student Services, Washington State University’s College of Pharmacy

WICHE’s Added Value

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

Policy & Workforce Development. Washington is one of four states chosen to participate in WICHE’s *Facilitating Development of a Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange* pilot project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The initiative 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**. In addition, the state participated in a Gates-funded meeting in 2008 that brought together the stewards of the data systems in 14 WICHE states for discussions around linking data internally and with other states.

Washington participates in WICHE’s **College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Network**, a federally funded formula grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who enroll and succeed in college. The network provides a forum for developing, implementing, and maintaining state CACG efforts, with states sharing best practices and lessons learned and receiving current evidence-based research. WICHE-related services to the consortium states include grant development and management, program implementation and evaluation, and ongoing expert consultation and guidance.

WICHE provided technical assistance to Washington as part of a project funded by a Ford Foundation grant. The project involved substantial data collection and interviews and culminated in a statewide roundtable meeting. In addition, WICHE President David Longanecker worked with the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) on the **state master plan**; with the Governor’s Office on new

Figure 1. Washington Savings & Revenues through WICHE, 2011

Student Savings	
WUE	\$33,432,864
PSEP	\$71,000
WRGP	\$1,231,529
Total Student Savings	\$34,735,393
Revenue to WA Institutions (PSEP)	
TOTAL	\$2,472,935
TOTAL	\$37,208,328

WORKING TOGETHER *for* OVER a HALF CENTURY

“Serving as a cadet at California Maritime Academy has been life changing. My peers drive me to always ‘do better,’ and I’ve gained hands-on experience, cruising through the Pacific Ocean on the school’s 500-foot training ship, The Golden Bear. Now in my senior year, I’m in charge of the Housing and Resident Life Program, serve as a leader in the Corps of Cadets, participate in the Gold Medal Leadership Program, and am president of the student body association. I am grateful to WICHE; WUE has helped me reach my full potential and be more than prepared for life beyond college.”

– Sean, Washington resident, Class of 2011,
California Maritime Academy, Global Studies and Maritime Affairs

governance options; and with the newly created **STEM-related financial aid initiative** on how to organize and manage the program. WICHE Director of Policy Research Brian Prescott gave a talk to the NW Gear Up Association at the invitation of the HECB staff. WICHE has also consulted with Washington policymakers on accountability and finance issues.

Washington was one of six states chosen for the Ford Foundation-funded project *Escalating Engagement: State Policy to Protect Access to Higher Education*, which engaged state officials and business community members to strengthen the alignment of state investments in **postsecondary education and state workforce needs**. The project culminated in a statewide roundtable meeting in 2007 on how to build a labor force ready to fill high-skill/high-wage positions.

WICHE’s Lumina-funded *Getting What You Pay For: Understanding Higher Education Appropriations, Tuition, and Financial Aid* project 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 Washington Legislature. As an extension of this project, in October 2009, WICHE President Longanecker testified to the House Higher Education Committee about **accountability and performance** in higher education with a focus on the baccalaureate level.

Washington is also participating 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, focusing on strategies that increase access to and success in higher education.

Additionally, Eastern Washington University, Central Washington University, Washington State University, and University of Washington Educational Outreach belong to the **Western Academic Leadership Forum**, whose members address regional higher education issues and

engage in cooperative resource sharing. A new WICHE initiative, the **Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders**, brings 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.

Technology. Washington has been very active in the **WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)**, a membership organization that advances access and excellence in higher education through the innovative use of technology. 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.

The University of Washington’s Catalyst program won the WCET Outstanding Work (WOW) award, which recognizes effective and innovative uses of technology to address specific needs in higher education. Muriel Oaks, retired dean of the Center for Distance and Professional Education at Washington State University, has served in leadership positions for WCET for several years; in 2002 she was recognized for her contributions to the field of technology in higher education with WCET’s Richard Jonsen award. WashingtonOnline is a member in WCET’s eLearning Consortia. WCET’s associate director, Russ Poulin, testified before a Washington legislative committee on **online learning trends**. In addition, the WICHE has worked with the state on pursuing grants from the national Broadband

WASHINGTON *and* WICHE

Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) and other programs.

Mental Health. WICHE's Mental Health Program has worked on a number of Washington initiatives. Program staff has collaborated with the University of Washington's Institute for Mental Health Research and Training to explore the application of evidence-based practices in rural settings. Mental Health Director Dennis Mohatt was a plenary speaker at the Washington Association of Community Mental Health Programs' annual conference, discussing **rural mental health workforce development**.

Other Initiatives. Washington was chosen to participate in the WICHE-managed **State Scholars Initiative (SSI)**, a national business/education partnership effort working to increase the number of students who take a rigorous curriculum in high school; its program was funded by a grant of \$300,000 from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

Seattle Pacific University participates in another initiative, the **Master Property Program (MPP)**, which 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. The MPP has generated some \$65.4 million in savings for its members while expanding their insurance coverage.

Washington & WICHE's Leadership

The WICHE Commission, with three commissioners from each member state, molds the organization's mission and set its priorities. Washington's commissioners are: Don Bennett, executive director, Higher Education Coordinating Board, Olympia; Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, state representative, Seattle; and Jeanne Kohl-Welles, state senator, Seattle.

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 Washington's Sen. Kohl-Welles, Sen. Derek Kilmer, Gig Harbor, and Rep. Kenney – 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 it 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.

February 2012



Don Bennett



Phyllis Gutierrez
Kenney



Jeanne
Kohl-Welles



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

3035 Center Green Drive, Suite 200, Boulder, CO 80301-2204