



# WICHE & NEVADA

## Partnering for Six Decades

WICHE



ACCESS • COLLABORATION • INNOVATION

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a 16-member commission working to boost access to higher education for students in the West and, as importantly, to ensure their success. Nevada has been a member of WICHE since 1959.

### Benefits to Nevada

- ▶ Tens of thousands of students from Nevada have attended undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in other Western states through WICHE's Student Access Programs, saving millions of dollars, thanks to reduced tuition rates. In just one of the programs, the Western Undergraduate Exchange, Nevada students and their families have saved \$158 million since 1988, when the program was founded.
- ▶ Nevada has received funding to be part of numerous WICHE policy initiatives, including those focused on financing and financial aid, workforce policy, and other areas.
- ▶ Nevada has participated in WICHE initiatives related to distance education, workforce development, and behavioral health.

### Doing the Math: Nevada's Return on Investment

- ▶ In 2018-19 Nevada, its institutions, and its students saved **\$16.7 million** through WICHE and spent \$153,000 for membership in the commission, yielding a **10,921 percent return on investment**.
- ▶ In the last five years, Nevada students' savings from WUE alone have added up to **\$66.1 million**.

### WICHE's Student Access & Related Programs

Nevada is active in all three WICHE Student Access Programs: the Western Undergraduate Exchange, the Professional Student Exchange Program, and the Western Regional Graduate Program. In 2018-19 Nevada's students and families saved more than **\$16.7 million**. Nevada saved money, too, through not having to establish and maintain costly programs in a number of areas, including some in healthcare.

**Western Undergraduate Exchange.** Nevada students have enrolled in undergraduate programs beyond Nevada's borders through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) since 1988. In 2018-19, 1,730 students from Nevada were enrolled in out-of-state programs at reduced rates (150 percent of resident tuition), saving \$15.1 million in tuition and fees – the average student savings amounted to \$8,700. In the last 10 years, students have saved **\$110.5 million**.

Nevada benefits from WUE in another way: by receiving students from out of state. Nevada'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 Nevada after graduating. In 2018-19 Nevada received 3,774 students through WUE.

**Professional Student Exchange Program.** Nevada has sent **1,512 students** to professional programs through the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), with 44 students currently studying in a host of critical fields, including optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and veterinary medicine. Nevada received 36 PSEP students from other states in 2018-19, along with \$607,298 in support fees. Historically, 86 percent of PSEP students return to Nevada to pursue their professional careers.

**Western Regional Graduate Program.** Nevada's postgraduates also enroll in degree and certificate programs through the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), which offers access to more than 700 high-quality programs at some 60 institutions in all WICHE states. WRGP programs run the gamut, but emerging social, environmental, resource-management, and healthcare fields are particular strengths, as are innovative interdisciplinary programs. In 2018-19 Nevada sent 52 students to out-of-state institutions, while receiving seven.

**Interstate Passport<sup>®</sup>** is a program that facilitates block transfer of lower-division general education based on learning outcomes and proficiency criteria. It includes learning

outcomes for nine knowledge and skill areas developed by faculty at institutions in multiple states as well as an academic progress tracking system for Passport transfer students designed by registrars and institutional researchers. The goal of the Interstate Passport is to eliminate transfer students' unnecessary repetition of learning previously achieved.

### WICHE's Added Value

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

WICHE's 9th edition of *Knocking at the College Door* high school graduate projections, released in December 2016 (and updated in September 2017 with additional data), describes how the nation and many states have entered a decade of stabilization in the number of high school graduates through about 2025—with substantial contraction in the number of White high school graduates and rapid increases of non-White populations—before entering a period of fewer high school graduates related to a recent “baby bust.” The WICHE region will generally track the national trend, but less so based on trends with White youth and more due to a projected 20 percent increase of Hispanic high school graduates through 2024 and then decrease by about the same amount between 2025 and 2032.

There is an abundance of information on [knocking.wiche.edu](http://knocking.wiche.edu), including projections of high school graduates for Alaska and a state profile, which indicates that:

- ▶ Nevada is projected to produce 24,700 high school graduates per year, on average, between school years 2012 and 2032. The number of high school graduates in Nevada will increase about 20% by 2025—about 3,300 more graduates—and then decline about 12% by 2032.
- ▶ Non-White public high school graduates are currently about 52% of Nevada's public high school graduates and will increase to 60% of the total by 2032.

**Figure 1. Nevada Savings and Revenues through WICHE Programs in 2018**

<b>Student Savings</b>	
WUE	\$15,060,373
PSEP	\$850,672
WRGP	\$797,420
<b>Total Student Savings</b>	<b>\$16,708,465</b>
<b>Revenue to NV Institutions (PSEP)</b>	
	\$607,298
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,315,763</b>



“I’m a Nevada resident and there’s no public pharmacy school in my home state. I’m the first person in my family to attend professional school and a first-generation college graduate. Thanks to WICHE’s PSEP, I was able to enroll in Washington State University’s (WSU) College of Pharmacy and pay reduced tuition. Thank you to the State of Nevada for their participation in WICHE’s PSEP, and for the opportunity to receive a great education at WSU! Washington has some innovative health care initiatives, and I look forward to bringing back what I learned to Nevada’s public health system, to help those who are in need.”

– Pierce, Nevada resident,  
Washington State University, School of Pharmacy

**Policy & Workforce Development.** Nevada has participated in projects supporting better-informed decision-making at the state level. WICHE initiatives have been sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Helmsley Charitable Trusts, the Ford Foundation, 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 staff has worked with the Nevada System of Higher Education on funding formulas and accountability systems and has produced targeted documents for the state, including a customized table from our annual Tuition and Fees report for NSHE staff usage.

**Regional Academic Leadership Initiatives.** Nevada State College, the Nevada System of Higher Education, University of Nevada, Reno, and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas are members of the **Western Academic Leadership Forum** (the Forum). Their official representatives are the chief academic leaders of the four-year institutions and their related system and state agencies, who address regional higher education issues, and engage in resource-sharing. The **Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders** (the Alliance) 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. Great Basin College, Truckee Meadows Community College, and Western Nevada College are members.

**Technology.** Several Nevada colleges and universities are active participants in the **WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)**, the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. WCET is widely recognized as one of the most informative, reliable, and forward-thinking organizations regarding the

"WUE has made paying for school easier. I am pursuing my degree in anthropology, which is something I have wanted to do for my whole life!"

– Rose, Nevada resident,  
Idaho State University, Anthropology

role of technology and innovation in higher education. Our growing membership includes more than 350 institutions, state and system-wide higher education agencies, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in nearly all U.S. states and many Canadian provinces. WCET members have access to trusted information on emerging trends, policies, and exemplars of successful learning technology innovation in practice. Key WCET activities include an annual meeting, leadership summits, national webcasts, and email list-based discussions among members. Major topics of interest to the WCET membership include student success, managing e-learning, faculty success, emerging technologies, and evolving policy issues.

**Behavioral Health.** Over the past decade, WICHE has worked collaboratively with both the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) and the State of Nevada WICHE to better understand behavioral health workforce issues. From this engagement has evolved the development of the Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium, which matriculated its first cohort of interns the summer of 2015. This is a unique partnership between WICHE BHP, Nevada WICHE, and DPBH. Nevada WICHE has committed funds for internship stipends, while the DPBH has funded WICHE to develop the internship and technical assistance support for gaining accreditation.

**State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).** SARA is a voluntary, nationwide initiative of states that makes distance education courses more accessible to students across state lines and makes it easier for states to regulate and institutions to participate in interstate distance education. The effort initially was funded by \$3.2 million in grants from Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and is now supported by fees paid by institutions. The initiative is administered by the country's four regional higher education compacts – the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) – and overseen by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). States and institutions that choose to participate agree to operate under common standards and procedures, providing a more uniform and less costly regulatory environment for institutions, more focused oversight responsibilities for states, and better resolution of student complaints. Nevada was among the first WICHE states to become a member of W-SARA in this reciprocal relationship.

**Other Initiatives.** The **Master Property Program (MPP)** helps institutions 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 more than 160 campuses with total insured values of over \$93.4 billion. The 10 institutions in the Nevada System of Higher Education are insured through the MPP and collectively have saved several million dollars on their insurance costs. WICHE is also partnering with MHEC to offer **MHECare**, a health program providing vetted, competitively priced medical benefits for students. Underwritten by UnitedHealthcare StudentResources, MHECare offers a variety of plans. Sierra Nevada College participates in MHECare. In a third collaboration with MHEC, WICHE extends the benefits of **MHECtech** to colleges and universities in the West, enabling them to purchase from competitively bid purchasing agreements to reduce costs on a range of hardware and software products and services.

## Nevada & WICHE's Leadership

**The WICHE Commission**, with three commissioners from each member state, molds the organization's mission and set its priorities. Nevada's commissioners are: Gillian Barclay, Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development, Las Vegas; Chester (Chet) Burton, chief financial officer, Nevada System of Higher Education, Reno; and Fred Lokken, professor, Truckee Meadows Community College, Reno.



Gillian Barclay



Chet Burton



Fred Lokken

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, has been crucial in this regard. Sen. Joseph Hardy and Assembly Member Amber Joiner are the legislators currently serving on the committee from Nevada. The LAC

"WICHE's PSEP program helps attract many high-quality applicants to our Doctor of Physical Therapy program. As the "ninth island," Las Vegas is a great option for students from Hawaii to have access to wonderful educational opportunities and still maintain a close connection to home. Thank you for helping our program to be a part of the professional development of many fine students from Alaska, Hawaii, and Wyoming as they pursue their doctor of physical therapy degree."

– Keoni Kins, Administrative Clinical Coordinator,  
Doctor of Physical Therapy program,  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada

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 serve the LAC by informing members about emerging policy issues in the West.

## WICHE Commission & Staff

The WICHE Commission includes three gubernatorial selected representatives from each member: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, the U.S. Pacific territories and freely associated states, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Members work collaboratively to provide educational access and excellence for all citizens.

WICHE and its staff are headquartered in Boulder, Colo., 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:

**Demarée Michelau**, president

**Michael Abbiatti**, vice president for educational technologies and executive director, WCET

**Patrick Lane**, vice president, policy analysis and research

**Jere Mock**, vice president, programs and services

**Dennis Mohatt**, vice president, behavioral health

## How can I find out more about WICHE?

Visit our website at [wiche.edu](http://wiche.edu) or contact 303.541.0200.

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Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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

[wiche.edu](http://wiche.edu)