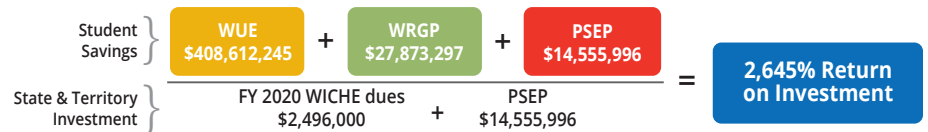


# Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

A trusted partner fostering and promoting high-quality, affordable postsecondary education since 1953

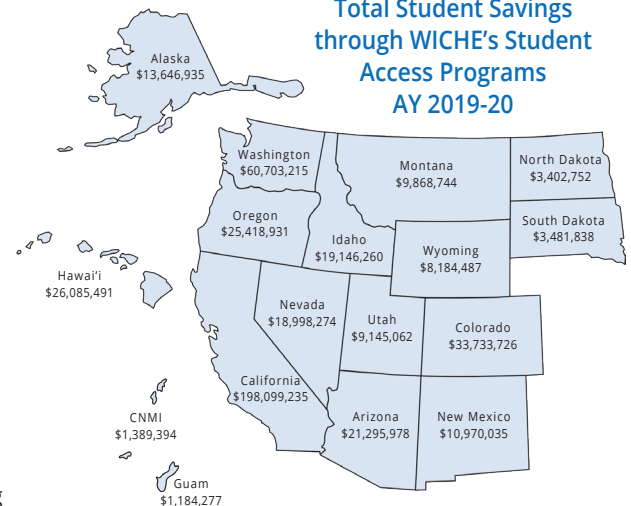


## WICHE ...

### Provides strong return on investment

- More than 45,000 Western students saved \$451 million in academic year 2019-20 through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), and Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). These WICHE programs provide significant student savings on nonresident tuition at 160+ Western U.S. public colleges and universities and select private healthcare programs.
- WICHE's Student Access Programs provided the region a **2,645% return on investment**, relative to annual WICHE dues and PSEP support fee investment.

### Total Student Savings through WICHE's Student Access Programs AY 2019-20



### Bolsters the Western health workforce

- Through PSEP, students from Western states and territories pursuing careers in 10 health fields, can enroll in participating programs in another state while receiving substantial tuition support from their home state or territory. With fields ranging from dentistry to occupational therapy to veterinary medicine at 60 institutions, PSEP can save a student between \$32,600 and \$130,600 on tuition over the lifespan of a program, depending on the field of study. By participating in PSEP, Western states and territories benefit by inspiring, and in some states requiring, professionals to return home to practice and bolster their communities' professional health care.
- WICHE's **Behavioral Health Program** initiated and administers psychology internship programs in five Western states (Alaska, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, and Utah) that help doctoral-level students find placements in rural and underserved communities. More than 60 percent of graduates from the internships continue their professional work in the states in which they completed their work.
- WICHE, partnering with the University of North Dakota, administers the **Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)**. The Mountain Plains MHTTC serves the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming by establishing a collaborative network that strengthens the capacity of different systems, organizations, and treatment practitioners involved in the delivery of mental health services.

### Increases higher education access and affordability

- WICHE's **Interstate Passport®** enables block transfer of lower-division general education, reducing frustrating barriers to transfer of credits that students may encounter when transferring out of state. Currently, 32 institutions in 14 states are members of the program.
- WICHE is building an alliance of **Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs)** to improve postsecondary attainment. Through convening an annual summit including Native American students; developing policy studies; and creating a formal network of NASNTIs, the initiative is strengthening and sustaining campus efforts to support Native students in order to improve their college and career success.

### Fosters idea sharing

- The **Legislative Advisory Committee** improves state-level policymaking in the West by providing a forum for legislative leaders to share valuable insights on trends and promising practices and build partnerships throughout the region.
- WICHE's **Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance)** and **Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum)** are active peer networks of academic leaders at two-year and four-year institutions and systems throughout the West, providing a venue for chief academic officers to connect and learn to better serve students and stakeholders.

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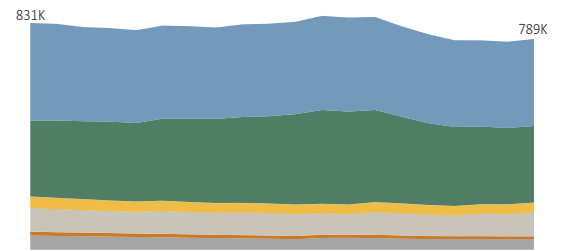


- WCET, the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies, is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. WCET's growing membership includes almost 400 institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. Through its *Frontiers* blog, convenings, and active online discussions, WCET keeps members informed of the latest in policy change, regulations, and trends in educational technology. And WCET is offering a host of resources related to educational technology and faculty support, including advice and guidance for institutions on how to transition their face-to-face offerings to emergency online alternatives and how to increase quality in these courses over time.
- The **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)** is a voluntary, state-led initiative designed to establish comparable standards for U.S. states and territories regulating postsecondary distance education. With its reciprocity provisions, the agreement enables institutions to gain approval from their "home state" to offer distance education in participating states without having to individually apply to each state for such approval. SARA expands postsecondary educational opportunities while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red-tape for institutions. SARA also provides a platform for information sharing and peer learning among member states and promotes distance education program quality for all participants. As one of the four regional compacts, WICHE is responsible for coordinating the participation of SARA member states in the Western region through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA).
- WCET's **State Authorization Network (SAN)** helps institutions navigate state regulations processes more efficiently than working on their own. The leader for guidance and support for understanding regulatory compliance of out-of-state activities for postsecondary institutions, SAN provides their members access to experts, networking among others seeking to comply, and other collaborative resources that ensure institutions are properly managing compliance requirements.
- WCET is the intermediary organization for **Every Learner Everywhere**, a network-centric approach to strengthening digital learning in postsecondary institutions with a particular focus on improved outcomes for vulnerable populations. Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Every Learner's network is made up of 12 partners actively engaged in the development of a number of products and services in the digital learning space.

### Helps states and territories allocate resources efficiently

- Through WICHE research, policy analysis, and technical assistance, stakeholders in the West gain insight and context on demographics, tuition and fees, and other factors affecting higher education to improve higher education policymaking.
- WICHE publications like *Knocking at the College Door*, a quadrennial report on high school graduation projections, and *WICHE Insights*, a comprehensive gathering of higher education-related policy research, help state and territorial institutions plan for recruitment, capital, and other major expenses.

WICHE Projected High School Graduation Rates  
2013-14 to 2031-32



Public School Graduates  
White Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander Black American Indian/Alaska Native  
Private School Graduates

Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates, 9th Edition.  
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2016.

### Responds to urgent priorities

- To address the growing issue of veteran suicide, especially in rural areas, **Together With Veterans (TWV)** was created. Following well-researched models that have been shown to effectively reduce suicide, TWV works with community partners to provide a unique suicide prevention action plan. The veteran-driven program is a collaboration between WICHE and the Rocky Mountain Mental Illness, Research, Education and Clinical Center for Suicide Prevention, and is funded by the Veterans Administration Office of Rural Health.
- WICHE is prepared to respond to a crisis and be a valuable resource for our partners. At the outset of the recent outbreak of **COVID-19**, WICHE has quickly reacted, shifting to remote work, but continuing to advance our mission. WICHE is facilitating peer-to-peer videoconferences for higher education leaders to connect and identify solutions to common challenges; following legislation recently passed in response to the crisis; and identifying how emergency funding for students and higher education institutions, as well as block grants to states, can be best used to support education in the West. The Behavioral Health unit is hosting webinars that offer guidance to institutional leaders looking for ways to support the mental wellbeing of their students. And WCET is offering a host of resources related to educational technology, including advice and guidance for institutions on how to transition from face-to-face to online learning.

April 2020

### About WICHE and the WICHE Commission

For more than 65 years, WICHE has served as a trusted partner for states and territories in the Western region in order to address some of society's most pressing needs. From promoting high-quality, affordable postsecondary education to helping states get the most from their technology investments and addressing behavioral health challenges, WICHE improves lives across the West through innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy.

The WICHE Commission oversees the development of WICHE programs and assures that the Western Regional Compact is carried out for the benefit of the citizens of the West. WICHE's 48 commissioners, who are appointed by the governors of the 15 Western states and the US Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States, are leaders in higher education; they include state higher education executive officers, college and university presidents, legislators, business and community leaders, and other key partners. Camille Preus from Oregon is the 2020 chair of the Commission.