

# Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Since 2012 the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (the CNMI) has partnered with and benefited from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) through regional collaboration, resource-sharing, sound public policy, and innovation.

## Commissioners



**Frankie M. Eliptico**  
Interim President,  
Northern Marianas  
College



**Jude Hofschneider**  
Senator,  
Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth  
Legislature

## Legislative Advisory Committee



**Jude Hofschneider**  
Senator,  
Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth  
Legislature



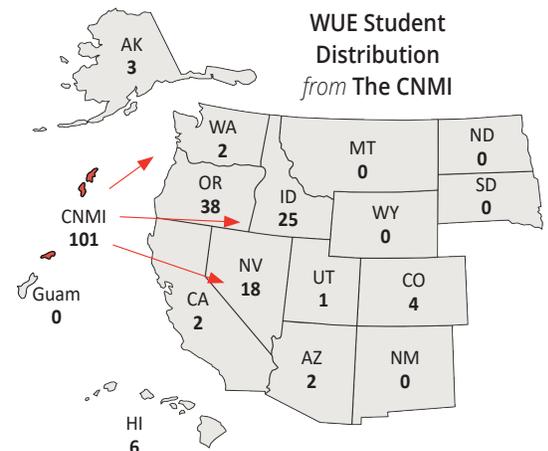
**Ralph N. Yumul**  
Representative,  
Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth  
Legislature

In 2012, the CNMI joined WICHE and became the first member of the US Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States membership. Guam joined in 2016. American Samoa, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau are also eligible to join WICHE under the same membership.

## WICHE ...

### Provides strong return on investment

- 104 CNMI residents of saved \$1.3 million in 2019-20 through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) and the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP). These WICHE programs provide significant student savings on nonresident tuition at 170+ Western U.S. public colleges and universities.
- In 2019-20 WICHE Student Access Programs provided the CNMI a **735 percent return on investment**, relative to the state's annual WICHE dues.
- CNMI students and their families **have saved \$3.5 million** since beginning to participating in WUE.
- The **Master Property Program (MPP)** helps institutions reduce their insurance premiums and improve their coverage. The MPP includes more than 170 campuses with total insured values of over \$100 billion.



### Bolsters the CNMI's health workforce

- WICHE's Behavioral Health Program (BHP) is exploring the feasibility of developing a partnership with Guam and the CNMI to offer a psychology internship consortium.
- BHP worked with Northern Marianas College (NMC) and the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) to establish a **2+2 partnership** to offer a pathway to a baccalaureate degree in social work (BSW). The first CNMI student matriculated in AY 2019-20. Two more students will matriculate in AY 2020-21. This partnership enables students to complete their general education core at NMC and complete their BSW through UAF.
- Through the **Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)**, students from the CNMI can enroll in participating programs in the WICHE region while receiving substantial tuition support. Currently, the CNMI supports students in the fields of dentistry, medicine (allopathic), occupational therapy, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and veterinary medicine.

## Helps the CNMI allocate resources efficiently with data and policy analysis

- WICHE offers various data and policy resources to support better-informed decision-making. WICHE's research projects and collaborations cover postsecondary completion, closing attainment gaps, adult learners, and multistate data-sharing to support educational planning and workforce development. WICHE staff serve as expert resources and provide technical assistance on finance, financial aid, articulation and transfer, strategic planning, student demographics, and more. WICHE's website features [Benchmarks](#), an interactive dashboard featuring the most recent data available on the West's progress in improving access to, success in, and the financing of higher education, as well as other useful resources.
- WICHE's quadrennial *Knocking at the College Door* report is the foremost US resource for projections of college-ready students. There is an abundance of information on [knocking.wiche.edu](http://knocking.wiche.edu), including the publication and other reports, projections data, interactive data dashboards, recorded webinars and presentations, and state profiles.

## Fosters idea sharing

- WICHE's **Legislative Advisory Committee** provides valuable insights on trends and promising practices to CNMI's legislative leaders as they build partnerships with leaders in other Western states.
- **Northern Marianas College** is a member of **WCET (WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies)**, 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 US 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 offers 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.
- At the outset of the recent outbreak of **COVID-19**, WICHE quickly reacted, shifted to remote work, and continues 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 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 Program is hosting webinars that offer guidance to support the mental wellbeing of their students, and WCET is providing updates and resources to help institutions address issues that arise due to the COVID-19 outbreak.



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## 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.*