

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-26

\$16.5M

TOTAL SAVED

by Montana students through WICHE's Student Access Programs.

\$12.2M

SAVED
through WUE

\$1.5M

SAVED
through WRGP

\$2.8M

SAVED
through PSEP

WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE



WUE

Saves **UNDERGRADUATE** students on out-of-state tuition. They pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at partner institutions across the West.

Top Montana WUE schools for out-of-state undergraduate students:

- ▶ Montana State University, Bozeman (1,519)
- ▶ University of Montana (634)
- ▶ University of Montana Western (262)

Top out-of-state WUE schools for Montana undergraduate students:

- ▶ Dickinson State University, ND (267)
- ▶ Sheridan College, WY (106)
- ▶ University of Utah (95)

WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM



WRGP

Saves **GRADUATE** students on out-of-state certificate, master's, and doctoral programs. They pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at partner institutions across the West.

Top Montana WRGP schools for out-of-state graduate students:

- ▶ University of Montana (52)
- ▶ Montana State University, Bozeman (29)
- ▶ Montana State University Billings (7)

Top out-of-state WRGP schools for Montana graduate students:

- ▶ University of Idaho (16)
- ▶ Minot State University, ND (8)
- ▶ North Dakota State University (7)

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM



PSEP

Helps students pursuing careers in **10 HEALTH FIELDS**. They can enroll in programs in the WICHE region and receive substantial tuition support from their home state/territory.

90 Montana students paid reduced tuition for health care studies not offered by public institutions in their home state.

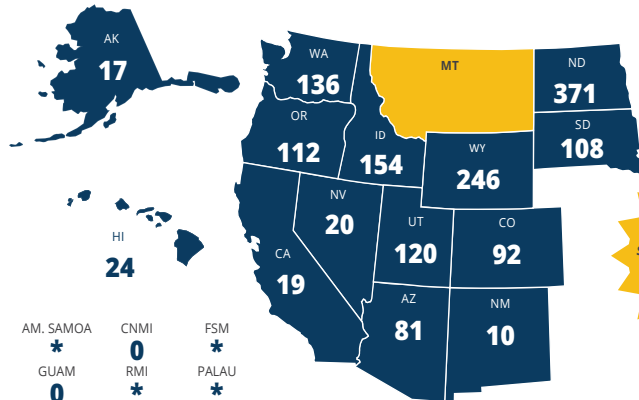
59% of Montana's PSEP graduates returned home to practice (2012-16 for physicians, 2012-21 for all other fields). Students are not contractually required to return.

Montana's institutions and their local economies benefit, too. This year, four PSEP students enrolled in programs located in Montana. Institutions received \$80,650 in support fees to reduce the students' tuition costs.

550% ROI Gained on Montana's WICHE annual dues (\$174,500/FY 2026)

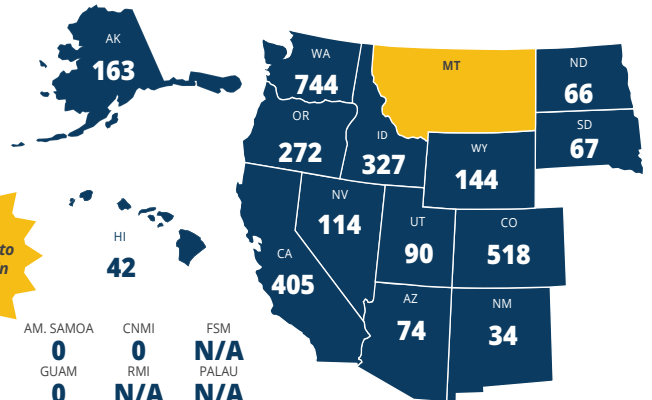
WUE

WUE STUDENTS FROM MONTANA: **1,510**



3,060 WUE students chose to attend school in Montana

WUE STUDENTS TO MONTANA: **3,060**

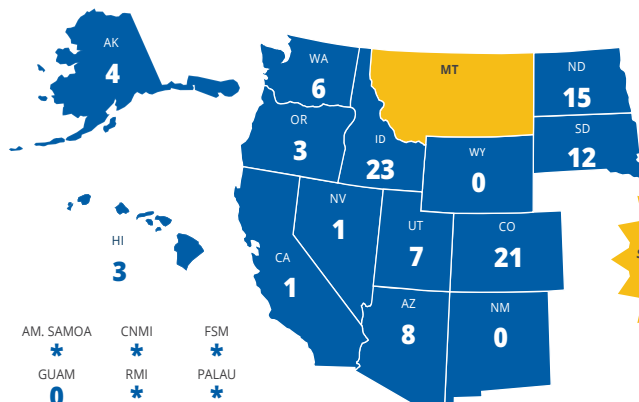


* Currently do not have any participating WUE schools.

Note: Students from Montana are eligible for the South Dakota Advantage Program and are assessed resident on-campus tuition rates. These students are also reported as WUE students.

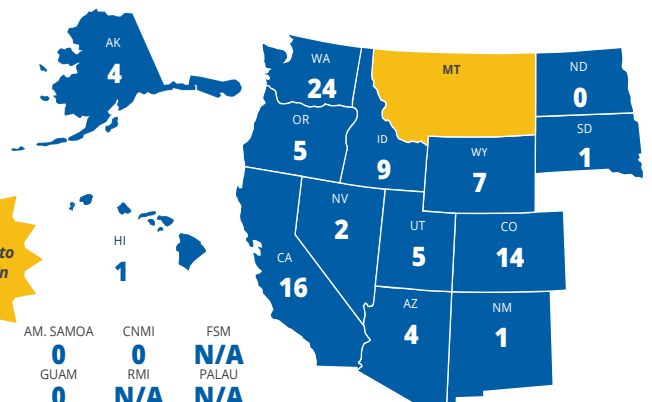
WRGP

WRGP STUDENTS FROM MONTANA: **104**



93 WRGP students chose to attend school in Montana

WRGP STUDENTS TO MONTANA: **93**



* Currently do not have any participating WRGP schools.

PSEP

FIELD	STUDENTS	FEES PAID
Dentistry	16	\$509,600
Medicine (Allopathic)	31	\$1,136,125
Occupational Therapy	6	\$141,268
Optometry	6	\$128,850
Osteopathic Medicine	12	\$320,700
Veterinary Medicine	19	\$591,200
TOTAL	90	\$2,827,743

PSEP students from Montana saved \$2,827,743 in tuition

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING



“PSEP significantly reduces my tuition, allowing me to pursue veterinary medicine without the pressure of unmanageable debt. This support makes it possible for me to follow my passion for wildlife or shelter medicine — fields with modest salaries — while staying fully focused on my training.”

EMMA, Montana resident, Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University

STRENGTHENING MONTANA AND THE WEST

WICHE brings together senior leaders and partners to foster dialogue about issues facing institutions and states through its leadership and professional development networks.

WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS – 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

- ▶ Bitterroot College
- ▶ City College at MSU Billings
- ▶ Dawson Community College
- ▶ Flathead Valley Community College
- ▶ Gallatin College
- ▶ Great Falls College MSU
- ▶ Helena College
- ▶ Highlands College
- ▶ Miles Community College
- ▶ Missoula College UM
- ▶ Montana University System
- ▶ Montana State University – Northern
- ▶ University of Montana Western

Angela DeWolf King, Montana University System, serves on the Alliance executive committee.

WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM – 4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

- ▶ Montana State University Billings
- ▶ Montana State University Bozeman
- ▶ Montana Technological University
- ▶ Montana University System

Joe Thiel, Montana University System, serves on the Forum executive committee.

WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY is a yearlong professional development program for academic leaders aspiring to become chief academic officers in the WICHE region. Seventeen cohort members from Montana institutions have participated in the Academy since its inception in 2015. Jennifer Brown, Montana State University - Northern, serves as a primary faculty member for the Academy.

WICHE convenes the **OERWEST NETWORK** as part of a national effort to expand free course materials and other open educational resources (OER) that reduce textbook costs and support student success. WICHE is also conducting a regional landscape analysis examining how textbook price transparency and affordability policies are being implemented across the West.

The WICHE's Behavioral Health Program (BHP) provides consultation and technical assistance to the Montana Department of Health and Human Services, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Division regarding implementation of its **PROGRAM**

Created by the WICHE Commission in 1995, the **LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LAC)** works to strengthen state-level postsecondary policymaking across the West. Members are state legislators appointed by the WICHE Commissioners in the region to explore emerging policy issues and develop strategies for interstate collaboration.

- ▶ **Representative David Bedey**
- ▶ **Representative Llew Jones** (*Commissioner*)
- ▶ **Representative Paul Tuss**

FOR ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT (PACT). The BHP's Fidelity Review team also conducts fidelity assessments of PACT programs in Montana using a modified tool that is based on the SAMHSA evidence-based practice of Assertive Community Treatment (ACT).

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (MP ROTAC) develops and shares resources, training, and technical assistance focused on opioid and stimulant misuse in rural areas in Region 8. This is funded through a multiyear grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM (RCORP) is a multiyear initiative supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to identify treatment barriers and best practices for preventing and treating substance use disorder. In Montana, the RCORP program supports three grantees.

WCET – THE WICHE COOPERATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced digital learning in higher education. Its growing membership includes institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. Montana State University – Billings, Montana State University – Bozeman, Montana University System, and University of Montana are WCET members.

STATE AUTHORIZATION NETWORK (SAN) guides institutions through state regulations around online courses and programs.

Montana Commissioners



Maryrose Beasley

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Homestead Veterinary Clinic



Clayton Christian

Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System



Lew Jones

Representative, Montana State Legislature

Distance Education Reciprocity

Montana institutions save money on out-of-state authorization fees by participating in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) through WICHE. This voluntary agreement provides reciprocity for the state authorization of distance education, while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red-tape for institutions.

\$1.2M MONTANA ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVINGS

Cost-savings Partnerships

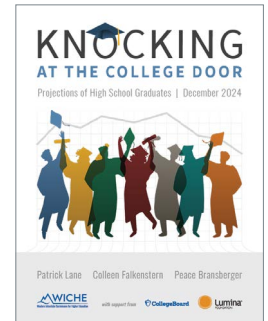
WICHE offers pre-negotiated student health and technology contracts to colleges and universities, K-12 school districts, state and local governments, and education-related nonprofits through a cost-savings program with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC). Last year, participating entities saved an average of 9% compared with other purchasing options.

\$118.3k MONTANA ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVINGS

Data and Policy Resources for Montana

Policymakers and campus leaders in Montana can explore WICHE's data and policy resources to better understand what's happening at home and across the West. These resources provide reliable state-level and regional insights to help make informed, strategic decisions that strengthen postsecondary education and workforce outcomes.

- ▶ **Knocking at the College Door** is the leading U.S. resource for projections of high school graduates. Visit wiche.edu/knocking to access reports, interactive dashboards, webinars, presentations, as well as state-level data.
- ▶ **Tuition and Fees in the West** includes tuition, fees, and enrollment data about 350+ public institutions in the West.
- ▶ **Benchmarks: WICHE Region** presents information on the West's progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education.
- ▶ Data on over 35 indicators in WICHE's **Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West**.
- ▶ With support from the ECMC Foundation, WICHE equips state leaders with analysis and resources on **Completion Strategies in the West** to increase credential completion and improve student success across states.



Our data experts provide research, analysis, and peer collaboration opportunities on key higher education issues, including workforce development, state finance, transfer, student success strategies, and more, to help decision-makers develop evidence-based, effective policy solutions.

About WICHE

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a regional interstate higher education compact of 15 Western states and the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States. Since 1953, WICHE has focused on its mission of expanding educational access and excellence for all residents of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life. Visit wiche.edu.