



STATE OF WISCONSIN

2007-09
BIENNIAL REPORT



Daniel Clancy, President



October 15, 2009

The Honorable James Doyle
Governor of Wisconsin
and
Members of the Legislature

In accordance with section 15.04(1)(d), *Wis. Stats.*, and on behalf of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board, I am pleased to submit a report on our major activities during the 2007-09 biennium.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Clancy".

Daniel Clancy
President

STATE OF WISCONSIN
2007-09 BIENNIAL REPORT

October 2009



Wisconsin Technical College System Board

4622 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53705
(608) 266-1207
<http://www.wtcsystem.edu>

Daniel Clancy, President

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal	
Table of Contents	
AGENCY OVERVIEW	1
Mission and Purpose	1
Partner Agencies	1
WTCS Board	1
System Office	3
Alternative Work Patterns	3
WTCS Colleges	4
Major Program Goals and Objectives	6
Expand the Pool of Skilled Workers in the State's Labor Force	6
Increase Postsecondary Educational Opportunities	6
Increase Minority Student Participation and Success	8
2007-09 BUDGET AND POLICY ACTION	8
2007-09 Biennial Budget	8
State Board Policies	9
REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONS	10
Operational Costs	10
Enrollment	10
By Age and Gender	11
Services for Students with Special Needs	12
Graduate Outcomes	12
Grant Programs	13
Programs and Initiatives	13
Veteran's Tuition Remission	13
Regional Industry Skills Education (RISE) Project	14
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)	14
Engagement and Partnerships	15
2009-11 BIENNIAL BUDGET AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	15
2009-11 Biennial Budget	15
WTCS 2009-2011 Strategic Directions	17

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Mission and Purpose

Chapter 38, *Wis. Stats.*, provides that the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Board is responsible for the initiation, development, maintenance, and supervision of programs with specific occupational orientation below the baccalaureate level, including associate degrees, training of apprentices and adult education below the postsecondary level. The principal purposes of the System are to provide occupational education and training and retraining programs, and to provide customized training and technical assistance to business and industry in order to foster economic development and expansion of employment opportunities. Additional purposes are to cooperate and contract with secondary schools; provide collegiate transfer programs; basic skills education; community services and self-enrichment activities; and address barriers created by stereotyping and discrimination.

Partner Agencies

WTCS maintains close working relationships with:

- the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to offer employment services, related instruction for registered apprenticeships, labor market information, and other programs;
- the Wisconsin Higher Education Aids Board to administer financial aid programs that benefit WTCS students;
- the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to develop technical and adult education opportunities for all people in the state, and to facilitate articulation between secondary and postsecondary programs;
- the University of Wisconsin (UW) System to serve state residents by increasing opportunities for postsecondary education and training; and
- the Department of Commerce to identify and develop strategies that strengthen Wisconsin's workforce and business and industry.

WTCS Board

The WTCS Board, as the WTCS governing body, is structured to reflect its mission and diverse responsibilities. The Board consists of 13 members, including 3 ex-officio and 10 non-salaried members appointed by the Governor. The three ex-officio members, as established in Chapter 38, *Wis. Stats.*, are: the DWD Secretary (or designee); the UW Board of Regents President (or designee); and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (or designee).

Of the ten appointed board members, one represents employers, one represents employees, one represents farmers, one represents students, and six represent the public as at-large members. Appointed board members serve six-year, staggered terms, with the exception of the student representative, who serves a two-year term.

The WTCS Board is empowered to determine the organization, plans, scope and development of postsecondary technical and adult education; appoint a System President; approve qualifications of district educational personnel and courses of study; establish system-wide policies; and approve district proposals for facilities development and land acquisition. The Board establishes procedures and criteria for the determining course credit, state aid, and uniform accounting for financial programs and other data required of the colleges.

During the 2007-09 biennium, the following individuals served on the WTCS Board:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Residence</u>
Mary Quinnette Cuene President 2007-08	Public	Green Bay
Stan Davis Vice President 2008-09 (Appt. March 2008)	Public	Sun Prairie
Terry Erickson (Appt. March 2008)	Employers	La Crosse
John Geenen (Appt. March 2008) (Resigned April 2009)	Public	Kaukauna
Ann Greenheck	Farmers	Lone Rock
Allan Kehl Vice President 2007-08 (Resigned February 2008)	Employers	Kenosha
Phil Neuenfeldt	Employees	Milwaukee
Vanessa Pickar	Students	La Crosse
Michael Rosen	Public	Milwaukee
Brent Smith President 2008-09	Public	La Crosse
Mark Tyler	Public	Woodville
José Vásquez (Resigned April 2008)	Public	Wauwatosa

The following ex-officio members served on the Board during the 2007-09 biennium:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Elizabeth Burmaster	State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Peggy Rosenzweig (Served until June 2008)	UW Board of Regents Designee
José Vásquez (Appt. June 2008)	UW Board of Regents Designee
Roberta Gassman Secretary 2007-08 and 2008-09	Secretary, Dept. of Workforce Development

System Office

The WTC System Office ended the biennium with 82.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) authorized positions, including 5.0 FTE authorized positions at the Educational Approval Board (EAB), which was attached to the System Office for administrative purposes through the 2005-07 State Budget. A System President who serves at the pleasure of the WTCS State Board leads the WTC System Office. Major staff responsibilities are divided between:

- The Division of Teaching and Learning, which oversees occupational education and collegiate transfer programs; serves as the liaison with business and industry for economic development activities; coordinates professional development and student services, including support services for people with special needs and federal and state grant coordination; provides curriculum resources; evaluates educational programs; and coordinates WTCS offerings with other educational systems.
- The Division of Finance and Administration, which is responsible for audit and fiscal services, facility approval and oversight, staff support services, management information systems, instructor certification, and personnel.
- The Office of Policy and Government Relations, which is responsible for budget development, economic analysis, policy studies, and federal and state legislative relations.

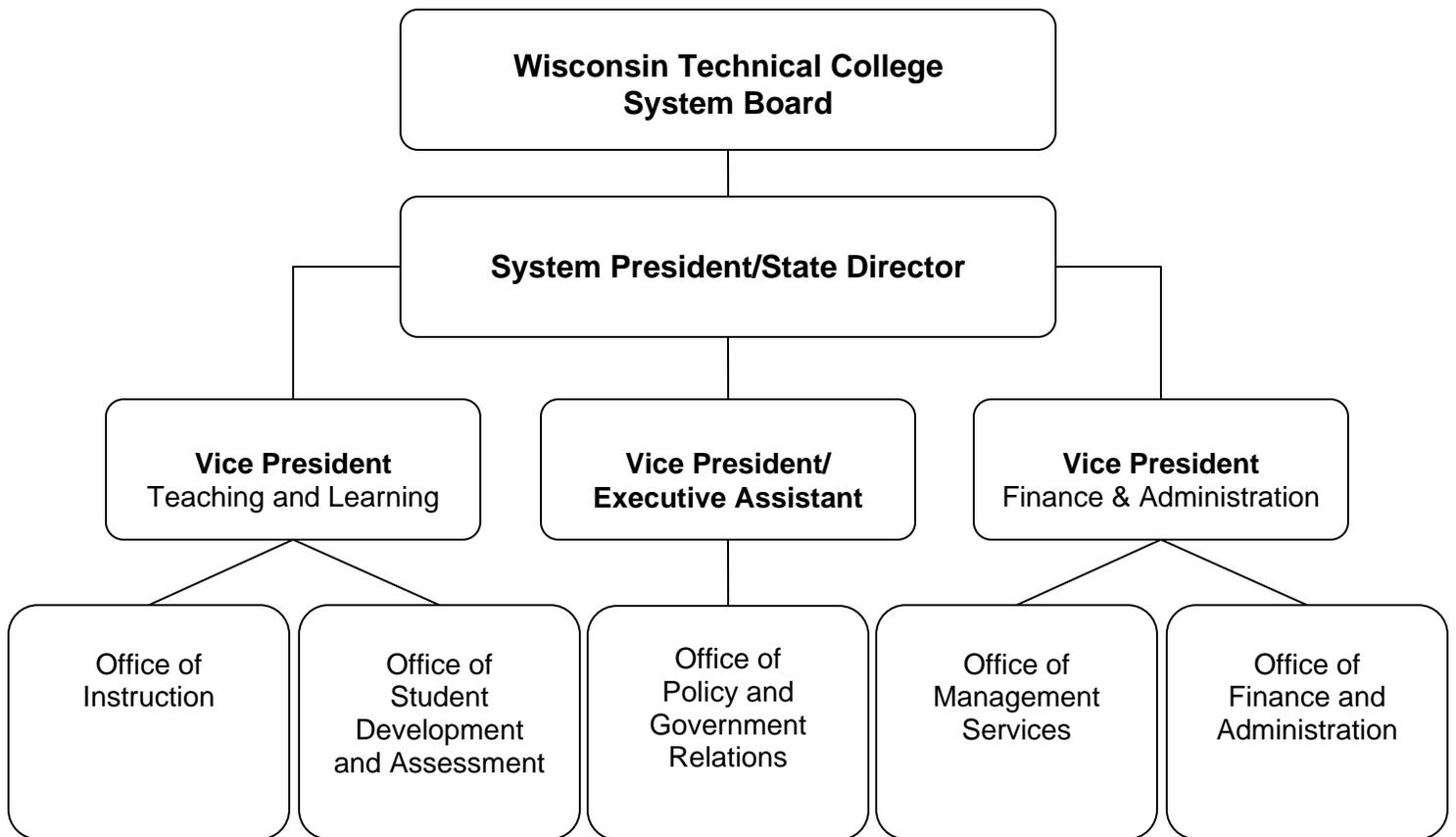
Alternative Work Patterns

WTC System Office policies have permitted alternative work patterns since 1976. In 2005, the WTC System Office adopted a revised policy that permits any employee of the agency to request an alternative work pattern.

Alternatives include, but are not limited to, part-time, shared-time, and flex-time schedules. Employee and agency work needs are accommodated through the use of non-standard work weeks and straight shift work. During the 2007-09 biennium, 60 employees participated in some type of alternative work pattern.

Figure 1

Organizational Structure



WTCS Colleges

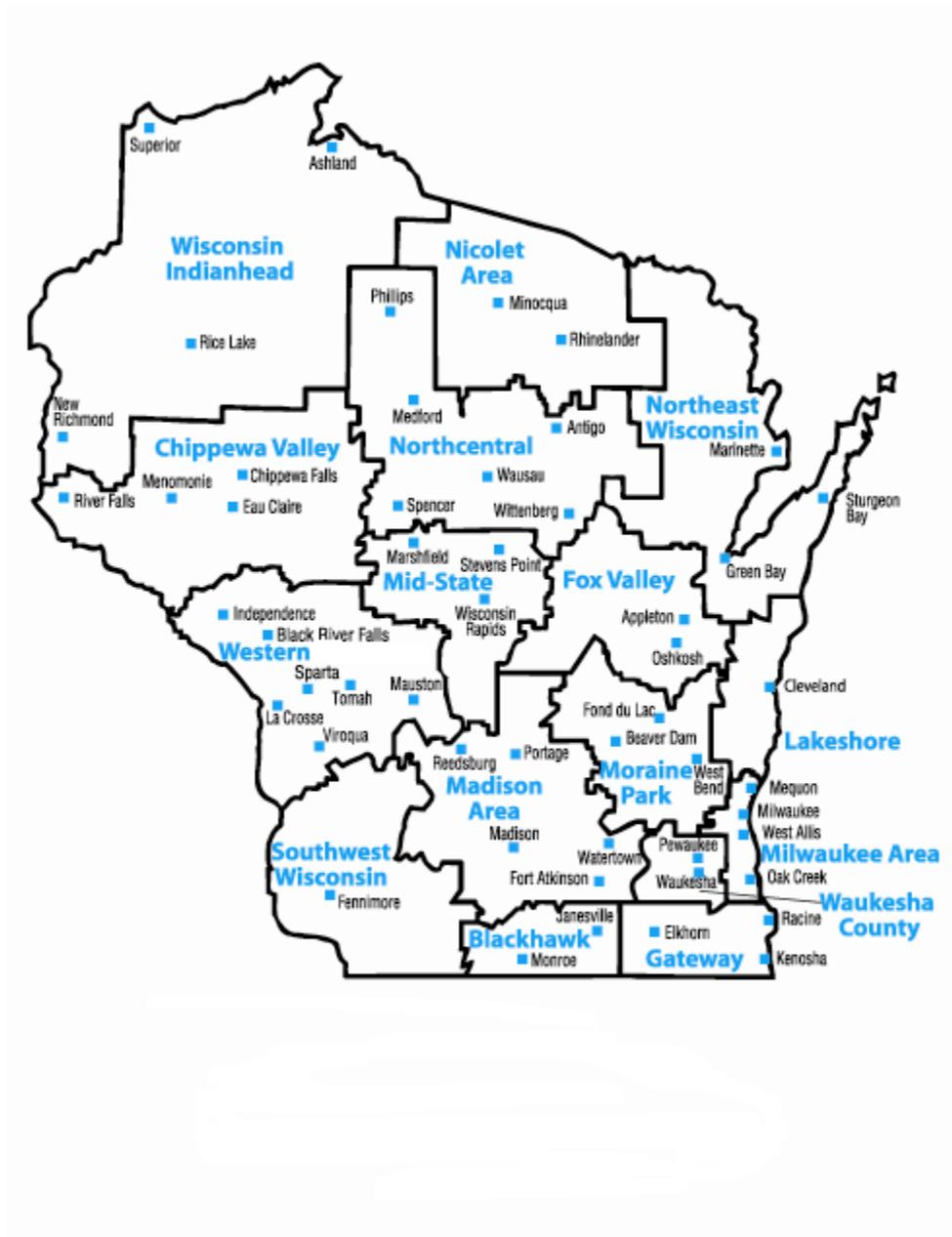
The 16 WTCS colleges, currently with 48 campuses, deliver career and technical education that meets the needs, interests and abilities of students and the demands of the labor market. To further these purposes, WTC System Office staff provide colleges with consultation, technical assistance, coordination of activities, and support services.

Each WTCS college has unique demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics. Programs are tailored to meet local needs within the uniform program standards established by the WTCS Board. Each technical college is governed by a district board appointed by local elected officials. As with the WTCS Board, district

board membership is intended to reflect the diversity of WTCS stakeholders: two members represent employers, two represent employees, one is a local K-12 school administrator, one is a state or local elected official, and three are at-large members. District boards are empowered to levy taxes on property, provide facilities and equipment, contract for instructional services, and appoint a college president who serves as chief executive officer for the district.

Figure 2

WTCS Districts and Campuses



Major Program Goals and Objectives

Expand the pool of skilled workers in the State's labor force

The WTCS Board continues to approve demand-driven, cutting-edge career and technical education and training programs developed by Wisconsin's technical colleges in collaboration with Wisconsin's businesses and industry, labor, and other partners. In just the past few years, the colleges have developed state-of-the-art programs in emerging industries like nanoscience, biotechnology, manufacturing robotics, and renewable energy. At the same time, the colleges continue to deliver graduates that meet ongoing demand in core programs that produce construction, information technology, public safety, and health care professionals, among many others. To accomplish this and operate with the highest degree of efficiency, the WTCS Board discontinues about the same number of programs as it approves each year.

The WTCS Employer Follow-up Survey—which has been measuring employer satisfaction with the skills and abilities of WTCS graduates every four years since 1980—consistently shows that WTCS graduates meet or exceed employer expectations when compared to other new employees, in both occupational abilities and other core skills. For example, 2006 survey results showed that among WTCS graduates:

- over 90% met or exceeded expectations for:
 - entry-level workers' occupational knowledge;
 - ability to apply occupational knowledge in their job;
 - reading and writing skills; and
 - ability to complete work according to appropriate quality standard
- over 80% met or exceeded expectations for:
 - problem solving;
 - organizational skills, such as prioritizing, planning and goal setting; and
 - on-the-job math skills.

The complete Employer Satisfaction survey results are available electronically at: <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/employer/index.htm>

Increase Postsecondary Educational Opportunities

The WTCS used a variety of methods to increase postsecondary educational opportunities over the 2007-09 biennium. For example, WTCS colleges emphasized responding to the needs of dislocated workers resulting from the economic downturn, continuing to providing training opportunities for incumbent workers, and developing career pathways that address skills shortages and offer low-income adults clear and reliable courses of action to progress in their careers.

Over the last two years, WTCS colleges rapidly responded to the needs of dislocated workers, providing critical services and expanding enrollment options. The colleges implemented a number of strategies to rapidly deliver dislocated worker outreach and support services, and to expand enrollment options, including:

- adding course sections;
- offering flexible course delivery, including evenings and weekend offerings;
- working with faculty to relax enrollment limits and deadlines;
- creating dedicated Web pages with information specific to dislocated workers;
- waiving application and other fees;
- establishing computer literacy workshops;
- expanding tutoring options and other academic and student supports;
- offering “cohort” basic skills courses, so that dislocated workers can transition together;
- offering special assistance to streamline the admissions process and completion of financial aid applications;
- creating support groups and other approaches to simplify the enrollment process and offer added support in the transition to school;
- designing “FAQ” (Frequently Asked Questions) resources to assist dislocated workers and the agencies and staff with whom they interact;
- adding temporary faculty and other staff to meet demand, including reducing or eliminating wait-lists; and
- leasing additional space and equipment to expand capacity.

Many believe incumbent worker training will be a critical component in addressing skills shortages and supporting Wisconsin’s transition to a 21st century economy. WTCS colleges continue to serve an increasing number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students through customized instruction contracts, under which the colleges design instruction for specific employers or industries and often deliver the training on-site.

The number of students served under such contracts increased from 2,548 FTEs in 2006-07 to 2,621 FTEs in 2007-08 (2.9%), and has increased 15.6% over the past 10 years. At the same time, contract revenues increased to \$23.5 million in 2007-08, growth of 9.4% over the previous year and 35.0% over the past 10 years. Given this increased activity and the high value that employers and workers place on incumbent worker training, WTCS developed a survey instrument to gauge the economic and other impacts of the training. While the instrument is still being refined, early results indicate that most respondents believe WTCS contract training meets or exceeds their expectations, allowing them to improve productivity, achieve cost savings, retain or create jobs, or increase sales.

The career pathway is a new way of organizing a postsecondary program as a sequence of modules that lead learners in steps toward a degree or technical diploma. Each step increases skills and improves the learner’s career and earning opportunities. Industry sectors most appropriate for pathway development are those that are willing to identify sets of work competencies required to advance.

Within a career pathway, bridge instructional programming helps adults with basic skills or English Language Learning needs take the first step onto career pathway learning and work. Bridge programs explicitly link adult basic education (ABE) and ELL instruction with preparation for postsecondary education and occupational skill attainment.

The WTCS, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and other partners successfully competed for nearly \$1.5 million in grants from the Joyce Foundation under the Shifting Gears initiative. With these funds, the Regional Industry Skills Education (“RISE”) partners have provided grants to local partnerships for curriculum development and employer engagement to begin developing career pathways. The Wisconsin Technical College System Office and DWD are now implementing policy or procedural changes intended to provide incentives and remove barriers to career pathway development in critical sectors across the state with the goal of having students enrolled in at least two pilot career pathways by Fall 2009.

Increase Minority Student Participation and Success

WTCS minority enrollment is increasing, overall and within each individual category, and students of color represent an increasing percentage of the total WTCS enrollment, continuing trends that began in the early 1990s. For example, while students of color accounted for 9.4% of WTCS enrollments in 1997-98, that proportion had grown to 14.8% by 2007-08 (higher representation than the 11.7% in the general population of Wisconsin).

During the 2007-08 school year, 57,766 minority students were enrolled in WTCS colleges, including 33,349 (58.0% of minority students) who were enrolled in Collegiate Transfer or occupational program courses. Minority enrollments are increasing in all colleges; African Americans were the single largest group among students of color with 23,027 students enrolled in 2007-08. In addition, 20,333 students identifying themselves as Hispanic were enrolled in 2007-08.

In addition to growing enrollment, some key indicators demonstrate WTCS success in serving students of color. For example, the number of minority program graduates more than doubled from 1998-1999 to 2007-08. During this same period, white program graduates increased 48.7%.

2007-09 BUDGET AND POLICY ACTION

2007-09 Biennial Budget

Work on the 2007-09 continued well after the beginning of the 2007-08 fiscal year on July 1, 2007, with the biennial budget bill not signed by the Governor until October 26, 2007. Through the Governor’s veto in the final bill, the WTCS was

exempted from a legislative proposal that would have further limited the ability of WTCS colleges to levy taxes that support college operations.

While the 2007-09 Biennial Budget required a \$1 million lapse of existing WTCS state funding, it also tripled funding provided for Workforce Advancement Training (WAT) grants from \$1 million to \$3 million over the biennium. These grants help business access high-quality training provided by the WTCS. (The 2009 Budget Adjustment Bill provided an additional \$1 million in one-time general purpose revenue for WAT grant-funded projects.)

The 2007-09 Biennial Budget provided funding to support the cost of remissions for eligible Wisconsin veterans and their qualifying spouse and dependents. While this state funding is vital to help offset the costs of these remissions, the available funding only covers approximately 22% of the costs, meaning that the remaining costs must be covered through tuition charged to other students and property tax levies.

Finally, the 2007-09 included some increases in student financial aid, including: \$1.25 million increase over the biennium in the WTCS Wisconsin Higher Education Grant and \$57,000 increase over the biennium in WTCS Minority Undergraduate Retention Grants. While any increase in student financial aid is vital for WTCS students, the 2007-09 increases did not keep pace with the continuing and growing unmet financial need of WTCS students, which exceeds the unmet need of all other postsecondary sectors in Wisconsin.

State Board Policies

The WTCS Board has the authority to establish system-wide policies. Policy options are developed by the WTC System Office in consultation with various stakeholders. The WTCS State Board uses a two-step process to consider possible changes and ensure the opportunity for Board input. Policies approved by the WTCS State Board are published in its policy manual, which is available electronically at:

http://www.wtcsystem.edu/board/pdf/policy_manual.pdf

REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONS

Wisconsin's technical colleges strive to provide graduates with the education and training that provides skills to compete in today's competitive job market. The WTCS regularly publishes extensive amounts of data on enrollment, costs, and graduate outcomes, which are available at <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports.htm>

Operational Costs

In order to provide the instruction, services and activities necessary to carry out their mission and achieve their goals, WTCS colleges rely on a combination of federal, state and local revenues. In fiscal year (FY) 2007-08, the latest year for which complete financial information is available, WTCS colleges enrolled 390,272 individuals at an operational cost of \$948.8 million.

Actual 2007-08 cost allocation data show that 67.2% of operational costs were for instruction while the next highest amounts were for general institutional (12.6%), student services (9.6%), and physical plant (7.9%). Instructional resources accounted for the remaining 2.7% of operational costs. Data on college costs is published annually, with the most recent year of complete data available at http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/cost_alloc/index.htm.

Enrollment

As shown in Table 1, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled annually increased from 68,358 in FY 2006-07 to 69,632 in FY 2007-08, or 1.9%. Table 1 also shows FTE enrollment by instructional category and the percentage of all FTEs that are included in each category for the two most recent years of complete data. Data on enrollment is published annually, with the most recent year of complete data available at <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/factbook/index.htm>.

Table 1
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollments
 by Instructional Category

	2006-07		2007-08	
	Enrollment	Percentage	Enrollment	Percentage
Postsecondary				
Associate Degree	42,185	61.7%	43,244	62.1%
Technical Diploma	8,720	12.8	8,771	12.6
Collegiate Transfer	6,308	9.2	6,705	9.6
Subtotal	57,213	83.4%	58,700	84.3%
Non-Postsecondary				
Basic Education and HIP/VIP ¹	7,273	10.6	7,194	10.3
Continuing Education				
Vocational-Adult	3,671	5.4	3,537	5.1
Community Services	201	0.3	181	0.3
Subtotal	3,872	5.7%	3,718	5.3%
Total	68,358	100.0%	69,632	100.0%

Source: WTCS Fact Book (2007-08); September 2007-08 Cost Allocation

¹Hearing Impaired Program (HIP) and Visually Impaired Program (VIP).

By Age and Gender

The average age for all students enrolled by WTCS colleges in 2007-2008 was 34.8 years. In addition, of all students enrolled in 2007-08:

- 49.3% were age 25 to 49;
- 32.7% were less than age 25; and
- 18.0% were age 50 and over.

Students in degree or diploma programs tend to be younger on average than the total student body, which includes a significant number of older adults taking vocational or occupational courses in order to maintain or upgrade their job skills. The average age of degree and diploma students was 25.0 years in 2007-08, with 64.9% of these students less than 25 years of age.

In 2007-2008, WTCS colleges reported enrolling 193,868 men and 194,918 women, while gender was not reported for less than one percent of enrollees. Of the men enrolled, 38.2% were enrolled in degree or diploma program courses, while 22.7% were enrolled in non-postsecondary courses and 58.0% were in Vocational-Adult courses. Of the women enrolled, 49.8% were enrolled in degree or diploma program courses, 29.4% in non-postsecondary, and 48.9% in Vocational-Adult courses. Because students taking courses in more than one area are counted in each, percentages add to more than 100.0 percent.

Services for Students with Special Needs

WTCS provides specialized services for:

- students with physical or mental disabilities; and
- students who are disadvantaged, including academically or economically disadvantaged individuals, and those with limited English proficiency.

In 2007-08, 14,973 students with disabilities received specialized services. These services were supported with funds from GPR, WTCS districts, the federal Perkins Act, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) within DWD. These services enable students with disabilities to enroll and succeed in technical education programs and courses, include specialized guidance and counseling, needs assessment and evaluation, support services, remedial instruction, career development, adaptive equipment, and career placement.

In 2007-08, the WTCS colleges provided services to 104,321 disadvantaged students (unduplicated), of whom 72,156 were academically disadvantaged, 58,922 were economically disadvantaged, and 14,086 had limited English proficiency. Services provided to disadvantaged students—including academically or economically disadvantaged individuals, and those with limited English proficiency—are supported with funds from WTCS general state aid, local funds, targeted state GPR funds, and federal funds provided through Perkins Act and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Services provided include remediation services such as specialized reading and mathematics laboratories, note taking instruction, and staff and peer tutors.

The colleges also served other students defined as having special education and support service needs, including in 2007-08: 4,565 displaced homemakers, 25,866 single parents, 7,553 incarcerated individuals, and 7,603 students enrolled in programs for non-traditional occupations.

Graduate Outcomes

WTCS colleges annually survey the previous year's program graduates. The latest survey results for 2007-08 graduates were available in April 2009. Of the 23,085 graduates, 16,574 (72%) responded to the survey.

Among the respondents:

- 97% were satisfied or very satisfied with their WTCS training.
- 91% of those in the labor force were employed.
- 81% of employed graduates are working in Wisconsin.
- 77% of employed graduates were working in a job related to their WTCS training.
- The median salary for all 2008 WTCS graduates was \$32,000, ranging from a median of \$29,208 for short-term technical diploma graduates to \$36,192 for associate degree graduates.
- The median salary for graduates in 36 programs was between \$40,000 and \$50,000, while the median for graduates in 6 programs -- Automated Packaging Systems Technician, Information Systems Security Specialist,

Technical Studies-Journey Worker, Dental Hygienist, Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Cardiovascular Technology -- was \$50,000 or more.

Technical college graduates' success is sustained even during difficult economic times. Between 2003 and 2008, the growth in earnings by WTCS graduates averaged 8.2 percent annually, nearly twice the rate of inflation.

Grant Programs

WTCS provides a number of grants to individual technical colleges using funds received from state General purpose Revenues (GPR), the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

These programs are intended to assist WTCS districts in providing educational and economic development services to individuals and high priority industry sectors. Grants also help promote innovative or successful practices related to priorities identified by the WTCS State Board, such as:

- strengthening career and technical education programs through multi-college collaborative efforts to develop measures of technical skill attainment and
- promoting and supporting high school-to-college transitions for career and technical education students through multi-college collaborative efforts to develop programs of study.

A summary of 2008-09 grant programs and awards is available electronically at: <http://systemattic.wtcsystem.edu/Grants/Summary%20of%20Grant%20Program%2008-09%20Final.pdf>

Programs and Initiatives

Veteran's Tuition Remission

Beginning in the 2007-08, Wisconsin GI Bill tuition remissions for eligible veterans increased to 100%. During 2007-08, nearly 950 veterans or their dependents benefited from almost \$800,000 in WTCS tuition remission, with the vast majority of remissions granted to veterans enrolled part-time. The annual cost of the veterans' tuition remission program increased significantly during the 2007-09 biennium, due to both the expanded tuition remission and increases in the enrollment of eligible veterans and their qualifying dependents.

WTCS strongly supports the veteran tuition remission program. However, while some state funding is available to reimbursement WTCS and UWS institutions for the costs of veterans remission, state funds have only covered approximately 20% of the annual; costs of tuition remissions provided by local WTCS colleges. As a result, other students paid higher tuition to ensure that WTCS colleges complied with statutory tuition cost

recovery rates. As Wisconsin's technical colleges face ever-more challenging fiscal issues, increasing state funding to support the local costs of veterans' tuition remissions was a WTCS legislative priority for the 2009-2011 biennium and seems likely to continue as a WTCS legislative priority for the foreseeable future.

Regional Industry Skills Education (RISE) Project

In 2006, WTCS worked in partnership with DWD to create a new statewide effort known as the Regional Industry Skills Education (RISE) project. In November 2006, Wisconsin was one of three states that received a \$1.0 million grant award from the Joyce Foundation to fund the RISE project. In April 2009, Wisconsin received another \$500,000 grant award.

The RISE project supports the development of career pathway programs for low-income families by linking education and job training with employer needs in critical industry sectors. State-level program and policy changes will ensure the expansion of career pathways by combining regional successes with local, state and national expertise. Key RISE components include:

- For workers: higher skills, better job, and more accessible and navigable training and career advancement system;
- For employers: a reliable supply of workers whose skills are geared to industry needs; and
- For workforce training and education programs: more effective engagement with industry and more efficient targeting of resources.

STEM

The WTCS has been collaborating with education and industry partners to increase participation in courses and programs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The Career Clusters framework—established under the National Career Technical Education Foundation—is a widely used tool that promotes seamless transition from education to careers. Within this framework exists 16 separate Career Clusters, including one that is specifically designated for STEM.

As currently defined, only 6 of the other 15 Career Clusters are considered STEM-related. Combined, WTCS colleges offer about 3,000 degree and diploma programs, of which approximately one-third are either in the STEM Career Cluster or one of the six STEM-related Career Clusters:

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources;
Architecture and Construction;
Health Sciences;
Information Technology;
Manufacturing; and
Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.

As a proportion of all WTCS postsecondary enrollments, enrollments in WTCS programs within the STEM Career Cluster make up only about 3% of total enrollments, whether measuring by headcount or full-time equivalent. However, when enrollments in STEM-related Career Clusters are included, the proportion of total enrollments increases to about 30%.

Next steps include refining the identification of STEM courses and programs within the WTCS, collaborating to expand existing efforts to promote participation in these courses and programs, and increasing the STEM participation of women and people of color. The STEM Equity project is off to a promising start, with WTCS joining a number of partners on a statewide PK-16 and industry team that is leading an effort to identify and remove barriers to STEM participation, including funding a pilot project at Lakeshore Technical College.

Engagement and Partnerships

The WTC System Board and System Office are committed to working within the System and with other partners to improve the quality, availability, and cost-effectiveness of WTCS education and training programs.

The WTC System Office and individual colleges participate in a variety of cross-agency projects with the goals of:

- improving college transfer opportunities (transfer equity study);
- enhancing college access and affordability (Know How 2 Go and Making Opportunity Affordable); and
- developing career clusters and pathways (RISE).

Each of these projects involves external funding, which also demonstrates how collaboration can result in new resources that expand Wisconsin higher education opportunities. Partner agencies involved in these projects include the Wisconsin Departments of Workforce Development and Public Instruction, the UW System, the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation. Additional information about many WTCS initiatives is available on the WTCS website at <http://www.wtcsystem.edu/index.htm>.

2009-11 BIENNIAL BUDGET AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

2009-11 Biennial Budget

The WTCS State Board collaborates with key stakeholders in developing the WTCS biennial budget request. Stakeholders who were involved in developing the 2009-11 request include WTCS State Board members, WTCS college presidents, local WTCS college board trustees, WTCS faculty bargaining unit representatives, representatives of the Wisconsin Association for Career and Technical Education, representatives of Wisconsin Student Government, and WTC System Office leadership.

The WTCS State Board-approved 2009-11 biennial budget sent to the Wisconsin Department of Administration included several fiscal items:

- **Next Generation Workforce:** a targeted investment in Wisconsin's economic future that would use \$13.3 million to generate 4,671 new skilled workers
- **Minority Student Participation and Retention Grants:** an increase of \$1.2 million over the biennium to help WTCS colleges close performance gaps by providing additional college support to help minority students succeed.
- **Fire Service Training:** a funding increase of \$382,000 in program revenue over the biennium to address increasing costs and training demand.

The budget request also included several non-fiscal requests intended to support improved college operations and services:

- **Workforce Advancement Training Grants** changes to increase flexibility in when the funds are used and simplify access to the grants for small businesses.
- **Sustainable Capital Projects** statutory changes to provide technical colleges with authority to spend up to \$1.5 million (rather than \$1 million) without requiring a public referendum.
- **Expanding Wisconsin's Workforce** statutory changes so that nonresident program fees equal 150% of resident program fees with the goal of attracting more nonresident students into educational program with high employer demand but low enrollment.

Also as part of budget development, the WTCS State Board asked that the Higher Education Aids Board to seek increases in student financial aid programs that benefit WTCS students, including a \$14.3 million increase in WTCS Wisconsin Higher Education Grants (WHEG), a \$246,400 increase in Minority Undergraduate Retention Grants and a \$10.2 million in funding to reimburse WTCS colleges for tuition remissions provided to eligible veterans and their qualifying spouse and dependents.

The 2009-11 Biennial Budget approved by the Wisconsin Legislature and signed by the Governor included the requested non-fiscal changes to the Workforce Advancement Training Grants, Sustainable Capital Projects, and Expanding Wisconsin's Workforce. Although the budget did not provide the fiscal items as requested, new funds were provided for general aid and for student financial aid. Specifically, the budget included:

- an additional \$1.84 million general state aid over the biennium; and
- an additional 3.5% in annual funding for WHEG grants.

The increase in general state aid is the first increase since 2000. Considering the State's challenging economic situation, this increase is particularly notable recognition of the Technical College System's vital role in helping Wisconsin's economic recovery.

WTCS 2009-2011 Strategic Directions

In September 2008, the WTCS Board adopted the following strategic directions and action steps:

Promote pathways to address Wisconsin's need for a qualified workforce.

Action Steps:

- Expand flexible education and training options that:
 - meet the demands of business, industry, and labor in existing and emerging industries and occupations; and
 - adapt to changing economic conditions by supporting business expansion or responding to the needs of dislocated workers.
- Enhance the transferability of occupational credits and credentials that support career advancement.
- Encourage transitions from basic education into occupational programs and alignment of education and training options with industry sectors and K-12 career clusters to address skill shortages and support high-skill, high-wage jobs.
- Simplify access to workforce education and training for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Support academic success for all students.

Action Steps:

- Implement instructional and student support strategies that support the Prepared Learner Initiative, including innovative outreach practices targeting middle and high school students and private sector partners.
- Encourage participation in programs and courses related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- Promote student access by maintaining technical college affordability and increasing public awareness of financial resources available to support WTCS education and training.
- Close the achievement gap between WTCS minority and non-minority students.

Promote effectiveness and efficiency measures that help maintain affordability.

Action Steps:

- Support the innovative and strategic use of information and technology to support instruction and improve college operations.
- Increase data quality and accessibility for use in organizational and programmatic decision-making.
- Strengthen data security to ensure the protection of academic, personal, and medical information of students and staff and minimize potential costs of security breaches.
- Support “green” facilities construction and management practices that enhance sustainability.

Foster systemwide and regional collaboration.

Action Steps:

- Encourage the development of public-private partnerships to deliver shared workforce education and training that benefit industry sectors in multiple WTCS districts.
- Create systemwide promotional materials that reinforce the vital role WTCS plays in economic and career development.
- Promote state, federal, and private funding opportunities that improve affordability for students and accountability to taxpayers.
- Implement and promote mechanisms for sharing best practices in learning, administration, and operations.

In June 2009, the WTCS Board received its first progress report on these directions. The progress report is available electronically on the WTCS website at:

http://www.wtcsystem.edu/board/pdf/strategic_directions09_11_progress_report.pdf

The Wisconsin Technical College System Board is in full compliance with state and federal equal opportunity non-discrimination laws and regulations including Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Equal Pay Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Wisconsin Fair Employment Law, Wisconsin Civil Service Law and Executive Orders, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Workforce Investment Act, the Office of Civil Rights Guidelines for the Elimination of Discrimination in Vocational Education, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and/or other applicable state or federal legislation. It is the policy of the WTCSB not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, arrest record, conviction record, political affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, and membership in the National Guard, state defense force or any other reserve component of the military forces of the United States, or this state. Inquiries regarding equal opportunity may be directed to the Wisconsin Technical College System, 4622 University Avenue, P.O. Box 7874, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7874, telephone (608) 266-1766 or Telephone Typewriter (TTY) (608) 267-2483.
