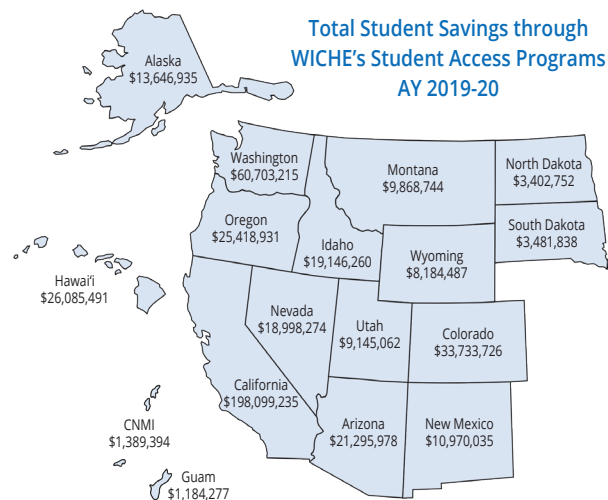
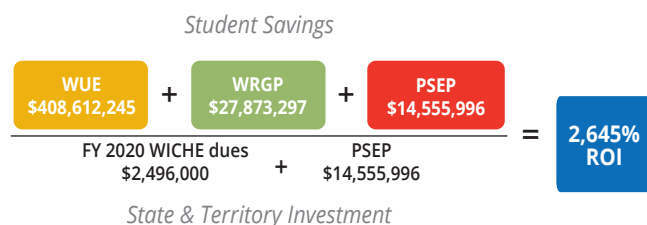


# Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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

## 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 collectively provide the region:



## Bolsters the Western healthcare workforce

- Through PSEP, students from Western states and territories pursuing careers in 10 health fields—ranging from optometry to dentistry to veterinary medicine—can enroll in participating programs in another state while receiving substantial tuition support from their home state or territory. 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 at 60 different institutions. 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** partners with states to develop psychology internship programs and currently supports those in Alaska, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. These internships provide an avenue for states to build their behavioral health workforce—providing training for advanced graduate students and recruiting them to remain in the state. On average, 60 percent of graduates from the internships continue their professional work in the states in which they completed their training.
- 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

- Currently, with approximately 60 institutions in 17 different states, the **Interstate Passport®** network enables block transfer of lower-division general education—reducing frustrating barriers to transfer of credits that students may encounter when transferring across state lines.
- WICHE supports an alliance of **Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs)** to improve postsecondary attainment. By convening an annual summit that includes 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- and four-year institutions and systems, providing a venue for chief academic officers to connect and explore ways to better serve students and stakeholders.

## About WICHE

Since 1953, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been strengthening higher education, workforce development, and behavioral health throughout the region. As an interstate compact, WICHE partners with states, territories, and postsecondary institutions to share knowledge, create resources, and develop innovative solutions that address some of our 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.

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WYOMING

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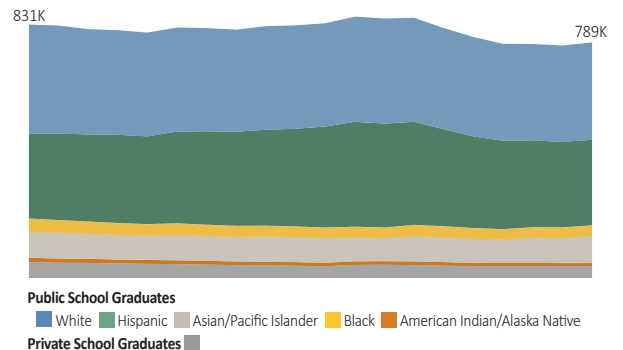


- WCET, the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies, is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. Its growing membership includes institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. WCET is widely recognized as one of the most informative, reliable, and forward-thinking organizations focused on the role of technology and innovation in higher education.
- WCET's State Authorization Network (SAN) is 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 collaborative resources that ensure institutions are properly managing compliance requirements.
- WCET is the intermediary organization for **Every Learner Everywhere**, a network centered on the transformation of digital learning in postsecondary institutions to advance equity in higher education and improve student outcomes for Black, Latinx, Indigenous students, low-income students, and first-generation students. Every Learner's network is made up of 12 partners actively engaged in evaluating, implementing, scaling, and measuring various products and services in the digital learning space.
- The **OER Initiative** at WCET is focused on reducing the cost of higher education and improving student outcomes through the implementation of open educational resources (OER). Unique in the OER community, WCET works with the regional compacts (WICHE, NEBHE, MHEC, SREB), state agencies and higher education systems to conduct research, design grant programs and initiatives, and provide guidance on regional and statewide OER policy and project implementation. The OER Initiative brings together OER leaders, champions, legislators, state higher education systems, and educational technologists with the goal of sharing, developing, and promoting promising practices and policies on the adoption, implementation, scalability, and sustainability of OER and zero-cost curricula.
- 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. 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. WICHE is responsible for coordinating the participation of SARA member states in the Western region through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA).

### Helps states and territories allocate resources efficiently

- 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. Our 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 Projected High School Graduation Rates  
2013-14 to 2031-32



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 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 partnering closely with our states, institutions, and partners to respond and be proactive during the COVID-19 pandemic. WICHE hosts webinars that offer guidance to state and institutional leaders on a variety of issues related to responding to the pandemic and working toward innovative solutions. Issues include following legislation passed that impacts policies, regulations, and funding, as well as supporting the technological needs and mental wellbeing of institutional students, faculty, and staff.

### About the WICHE Commission

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 U.S. 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.