

Since 1953 Montana has partnered with and benefited from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) through regional collaboration, resource-sharing, sound public policy, and innovation.

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Montana State
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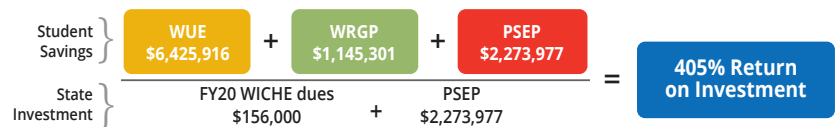


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WICHE ...

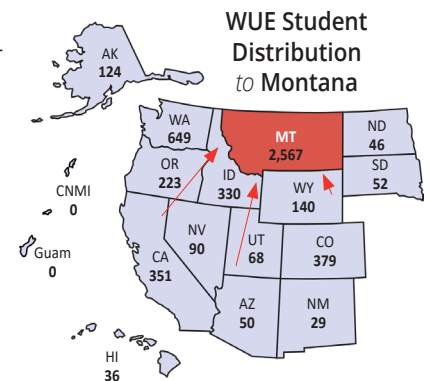
Provides strong return on investment

- 1,114 Montana residents saved \$7.57 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 Montana a 405 percent return on investment, relative to the state's annual WICHE dues.
- Montana students and their families have saved over \$730 million since the state first began 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.



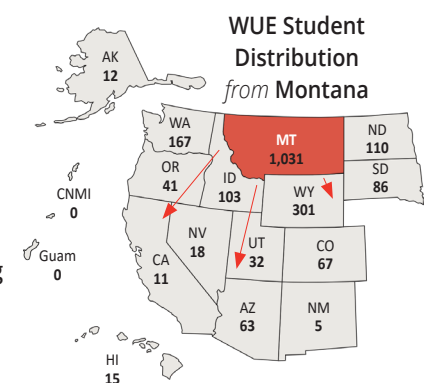
Helps Montana attract students from other states

- WUE and WRGP incentivized 2,639 students this year to invest their tuition dollars in Montana.



Bolsters Montana's health workforce

- WICHE's Behavioral Health Program (BHP) is working with Montana State Hospital to strengthen patient care and unit operation.
- The WICHE BHP is modifying and delivering suicide prevention training to native-serving primary care clinics, primarily located on reservations.
- Funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Rural Health, **Together With Veterans (TWV)** is a partnership of the BHP, the VA Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC), and local organizations that are run by or serve veterans. In Montana, the BHP has two established community sites. These rural communities are working, with the guidance of TWV, to enlist rural veterans and their local partners to join forces to reduce veteran suicide in their communities.



Helps Montana 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.

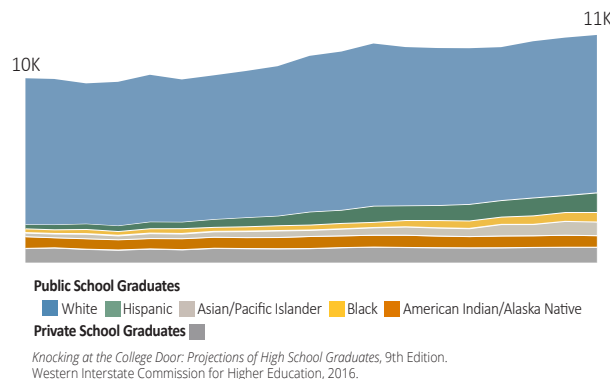
- WICHE's quadrennial *Knocking at the College Door* report is the foremost U.S. resource for projections of college-ready students. There is an abundance of information on knocking.wiche.edu, including the publication and other reports, projections data, interactive data dashboards, recorded webinars and presentations, and Montana's state profile.

Fosters idea sharing

- WICHE's **Legislative Advisory Committee** provides valuable insights on trends and promising practices to Montana's legislative leaders as they build partnerships with leaders in other Western states.
- Six Montana institutions are members of the **Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum)**, a consortium of academic officers at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral institutions and chief executives and chief academic officers for systems and state governing boards. Montana members include *Montana Technological University, Montana State University (MSU) – Bozeman, Montana State University – Billings, Montana University System, University of Montana, and University of Montana, Western*. Academic leaders at community colleges (cc) and technical schools and at systems and state governing and coordinating boards associated with two-year institutions are members of the **Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance)**. The Montana members of the Alliance are *Bitterroot College, City College at MSU – Billings, Dawson CC, Flathead Valley CC, Gallatin College, Great Falls College MSU, Helena College, Highlands College, Miles CC, Missoula College UM, Montana University System, MSU Northern, and University of Montana Western*. Both the Forum and the Alliance exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. Brock Tessman, Deputy Commissioner of the Montana University System, serves on the Forum and Alliance executive committees.

- *Montana State University – Billings, Montana State University – Bozeman, and University of Montana* are all members 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 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 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.
- The **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)** is a voluntary, state-led initiative designed to establish comparable standards for US states and territories regulating postsecondary distance education. SARA expands access to postsecondary educational opportunities, while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red-tape for institutions. WICHE is responsible for coordinating the membership of SARA states in the West through the **WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)**.
- 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.

Montana Projected High School Graduates, 2013-14 to 2031-32, Public by Race/Ethnicity, and Private



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.