

WICHE



Western Interstate Commission
for Higher Education



INTERSTATE PASSPORT® ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



Concordia University, St. Paul

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***Interstate Passport®** is a program that enables block transfer of lower-division general education based on learning outcomes and proficiency criteria rather than on specific courses and credits. Students who complete a Passport at one Network institution will be recognized as having completed all lower-division general education requirements at any other Network institution. Its overarching goal is simple: to eliminate unnecessary repetition of academic work after students transfer. Faculty, registrars, institutional researchers, and academic advisors at institutions across the country designed all aspects of the program.*

WELCOME FRIENDS AND PARTNERS



In October 2021, I enthusiastically joined the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) as the Vice President, Programs and Services. When asked about my new work, I explain that 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. We make educational, professional, and economic dreams come true by bringing people together. Our power to convene members across the West is extraordinary and leads to outstanding outcomes for students, institutions, and systems. We are a community that works as one for the good of students in our region and beyond.

As I think about the Interstate Passport® program, which originated at WICHE in 2011, I see similarities to philanthropic enterprises. In philanthropy, leaders foster communities that bring people together who wish to give time, talent, and treasure to achieve one goal, to arrive at one common destination. In a well-designed, successful campaign, the end is the beginning. You reached the goal that will allow you to support the work financially. The future you dreamed about is now.

The destination that Interstate Passport's designers imagined is now and will continue well into the future. The curricular design support we receive from you, your faculty, and staff has kept us moving toward our goal to revolutionize transfer. As we started this work in 2011, we received financial support from the

Carnegie Corporation of New York, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Education. Currently, we are thankful to the ECMC Foundation for its financial support and leadership in developing the Catalyzing Transfer Initiative. Thanks to the National Science Foundation, we are also thrilled to be working on a STEM Passport.

This annual report demonstrates that students, institutions, and states need us more than ever as postsecondary education transforms itself. Many of you sat in leadership meetings over the last two years, reflecting on your why.

- Why do we do what we do? What does it mean to serve the public good?
- Who are our students? What do they need to succeed in today's world?
- How might we capitalize on our academic strengths to better serve our students?

I imagine these are some of the same questions Interstate Passport's designers asked. As we look towards the future, let's continue asking these questions and bringing more people, institutions, and states into this conversation. Roughly 70,000 students have earned a Passport since 2016. Now, imagine when we will say 500,000 students earned a Passport. It feels great to know we are working together in developing, supporting, and growing Interstate Passport!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Burgman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

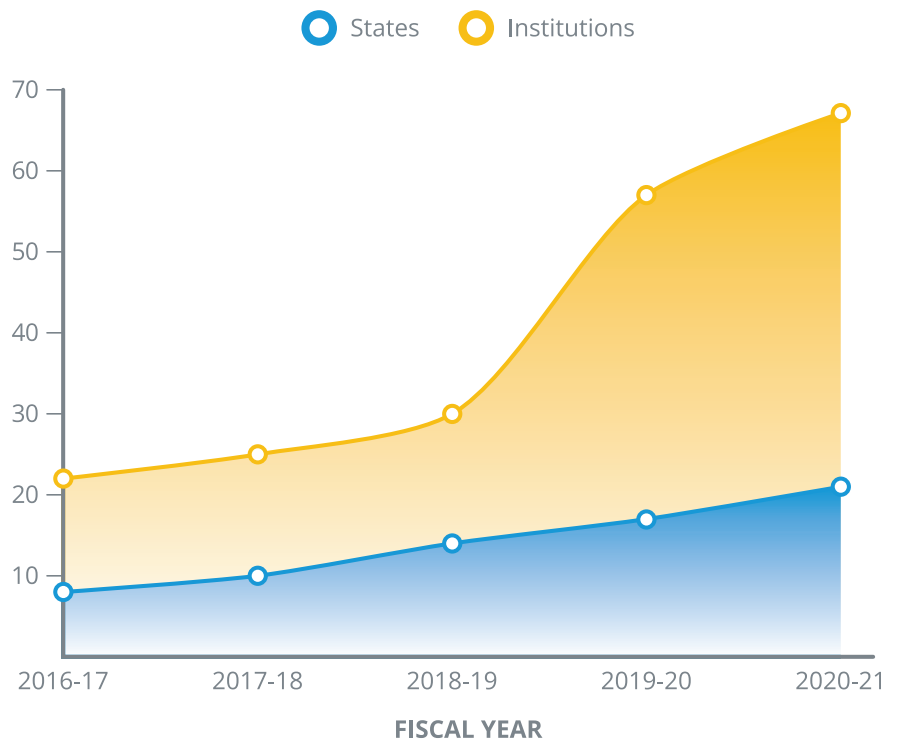
Raymonda "Ray" Burgman, Ph.D.
Vice President, Programs and Services

MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT

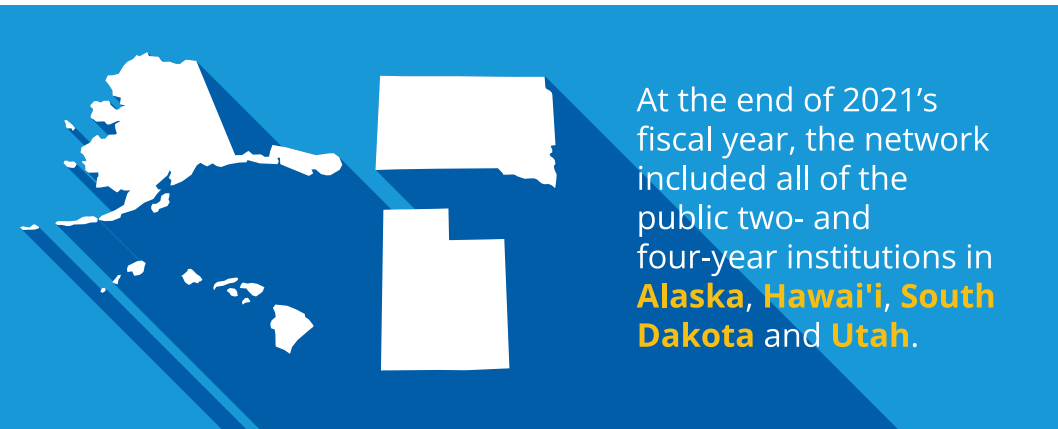
This national network of institutions enables block transfer of students' lower-division general education attainment based on learning outcomes. Interstate Passport benefits students by simplifying transfer and reducing repetition of learning already achieved, thus saving students time and money, and fostering successful degree completion. In its fifth year of full implementation, Interstate Passport has seen tremendous growth; here you can see the profile of its current membership.

At the end of fiscal year 2021, the network was comprised of 67¹ institutions spanning 21 states, including all the public two- and four-year institutions in four of those states. To date, just under 70,000 students have earned a Passport.

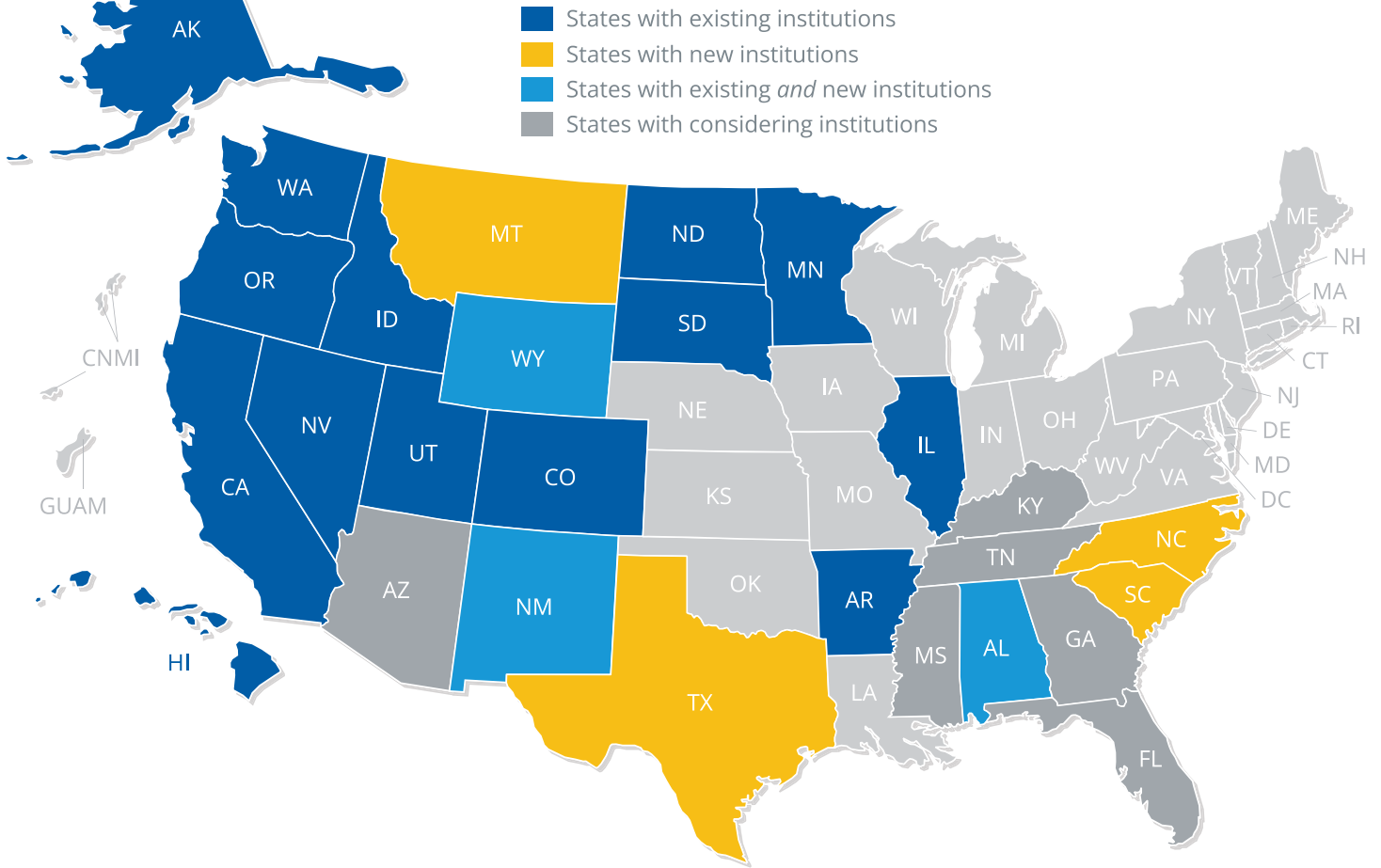
GROWTH OF THE INTERSTATE PASSPORT NETWORK



¹ Five additional institutions have joined the Network since October 1, 2021, but are not included because they fall outside this annual report's fiscal year.

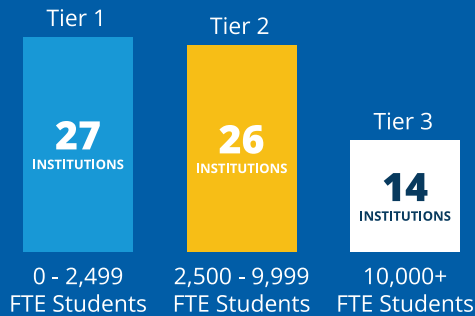


EXPANSION OF THE INTERSTATE PASSPORT NETWORK



Due to the network expansion over the past two years, by fiscal year 2021, 31 institutions (46%) of the Passport members were **Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)**.

Membership Tiers



Institution Levels



* Special focus are SD Mines and Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Student-Focused

The Interstate Passport program was developed with the student at the center of the transfer experience. Traditional transfer costs students dearly in time, money, and motivation. By guaranteeing a block-transfer of lower-division general education credits, students can focus on their long-term goals without the burden of navigating multiple schools' requirements.

Faculty-Driven

The 63 Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that make up a student's passport are negotiated and agreed upon by interstate faculty teams. Rather than prescribing Interstate Passport requirements, faculty at Passport institutions have determined that their school's lower-division general education learning outcomes are consistent with the goals of the agreed-upon PLOs. Interstate Passport relies on faculty governance and assessments to establish methods for students to demonstrate proficiency in the desired learning outcomes.



“Working on Passport was such an affirming experience. With all the diversity on the faculty teams, in terms of experience and levels of teaching, it became evident we all shared common goals, such as what we considered proficiency in the different areas, and spent most of our time exchanging ideas as how to best convey the outcomes to others.”

– Teresa Tande, professor emerita, Lake Region State College, North Dakota,
Chair of the Interstate Passport Written Communication Team



Institutional Autonomy

The Interstate Passport program is unique in its ability to honor the distinct methods and values of different institutions and their ability to produce standardized learning outcomes. Rather than demanding standardization, Interstate Passport acknowledges that the curriculum and academic programs vary among institutions. This does not compromise the desired outcomes for students across all institutions, nor does Interstate Passport require the member institutions to change the language or goals of their existing general education requirements.

Quality Assurance

An essential component of Interstate Passport is the data collection and tracking process designed to provide information on the academic performance of Passport earners for use in continuous improvement efforts by member institutions and for evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the program. Registrars and institutional researchers have been key players in designing and implementing this process, as well as the process to utilize the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) as the central data repository for the program.



“From my perspective, Passport academic progress tracking (APT) is well designed. By tracking student grades and credits immediately post-transfer and seeing how they compare to non-Passport transfers and non-transfer students, we have gained a much greater degree of confidence that **the transfer students we get through the program have been adequately prepared for success in their majors.”**

– Michael Torrens, director of institutional research, Utah State University



IMPACT

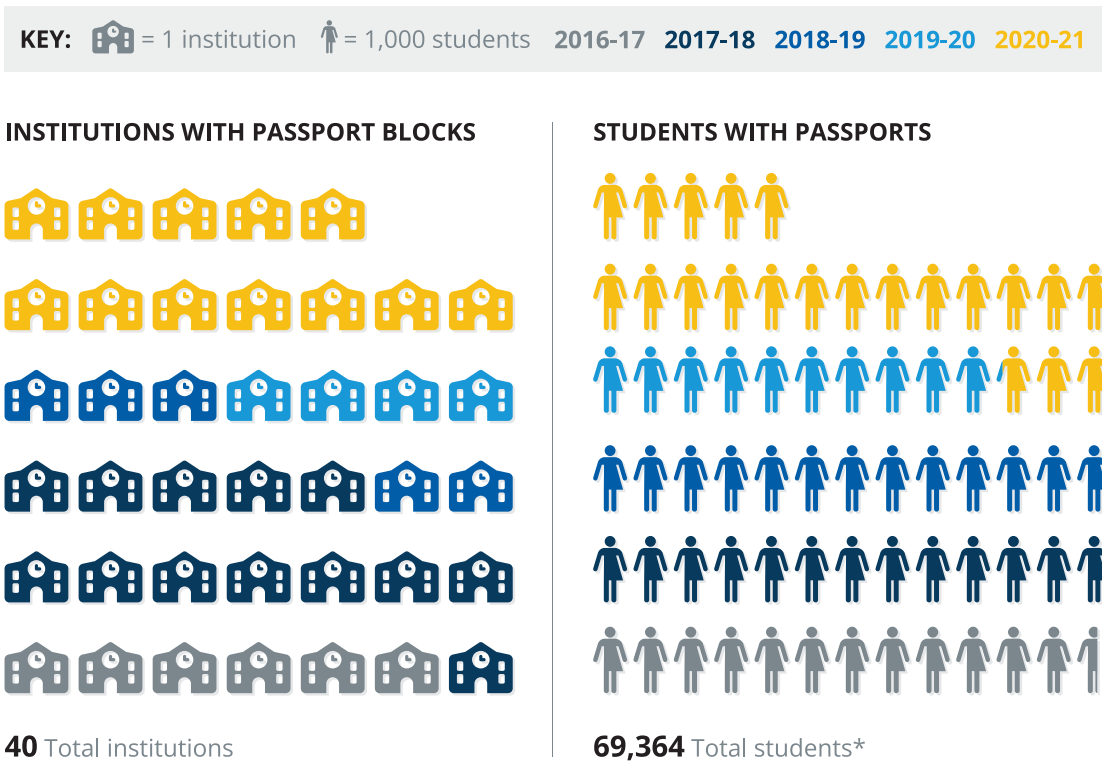
20,823 students were reported as having earned Passports in academic year (AY) 2020-21 (June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021), more than double the number reported in AY 2019-20 and a 65% increase from AY 2016-17. Almost 70,000 students from 10 states have earned Passports since Passports first became available (prior to May 31, 2021).

But likely more students received Passports in AY 2020-21. The data available only represent 22 of the 40 institutions, from seven states, that had Passport blocks available in AY 2020-21, as data reporting by Interstate Passport members continues to be impacted by COVID-19 disruptions (among other possible factors). The 22 institutions that reported for AY 2020-21 is an increase from the 16 institutions that

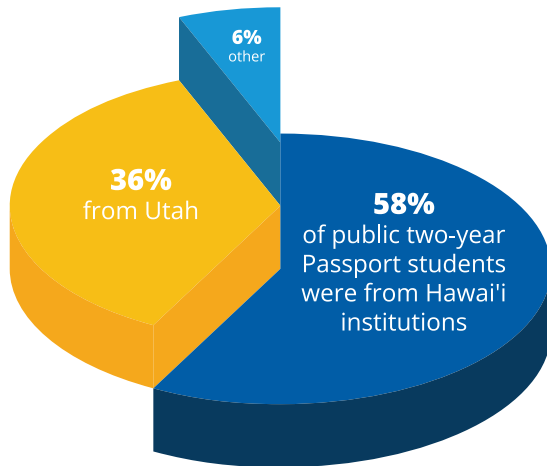
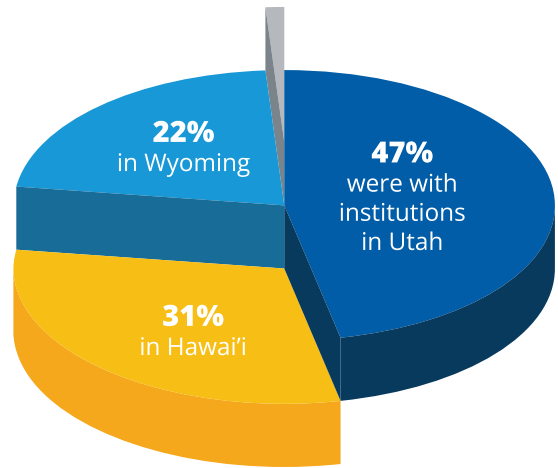
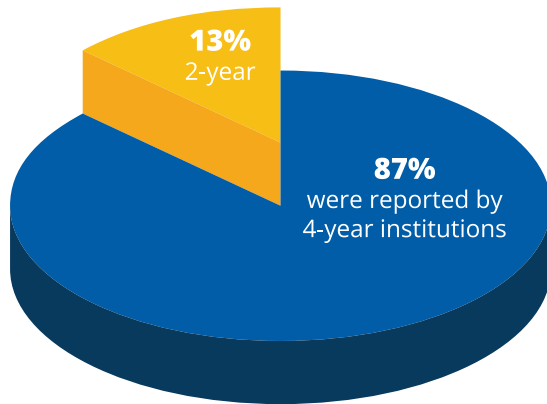
TECHNICAL DETAILS: The numbers of students who received Passports comes from data that members report annually to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) under an addendum to their institutional agreement with the NSC, and includes some students from previously active members. The NSC aggregates the student-level data into a summarized form that is provided to WICHE for this annual reporting and quality monitoring. NSC also provides institution-level reports directly to member institutions.

reported in AY 2019-20. In fact, the 20,823 Passports reported for AY 2020-21 include 10 more institutions that had not previously reported (primarily, institutions in Hawai'i and the University of Wyoming). However, this does not include nine institutions that reported in previous years (primarily, institutions from South Dakota).

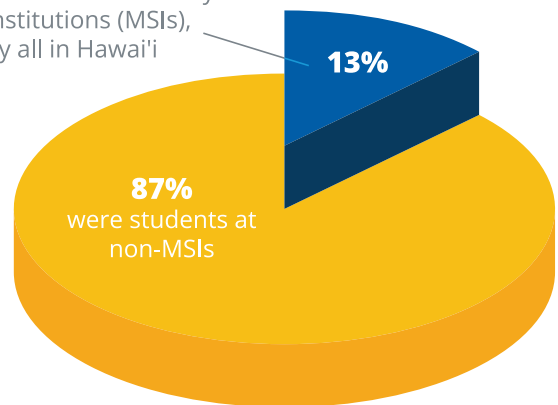
IMPACT THROUGH ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21



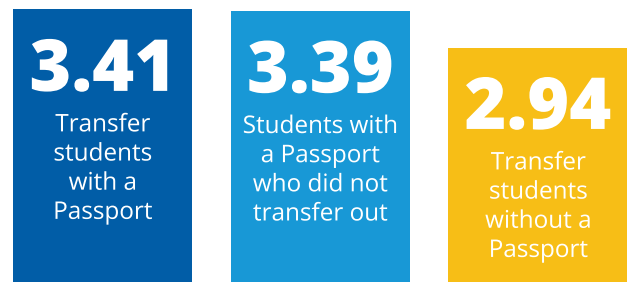
AMONG STUDENTS REPORTED TO HAVE RECEIVED A PASSPORT IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21:



13% were students at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), virtually all in Hawai'i



**AVERAGE GPAs IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21
FIRST TWO TERMS POST-TRANSFER**



Members also report two terms of academic performance data, to help evaluate how students with a Passport compare to peer students. In their first two terms post-transfer, transfer students with a Passport from AY 2020-21 had consistently higher average GPAs than peers and earned somewhat more credit hours. This year's averages and patterns are like previous years, reiterating the quality and soundness of the Interstate Passport Network and block transfer process.²

² Reported differences are statistically significant. To date, academic progress has been tracked for almost 1,000 transfer students with an Interstate Passport. Note: in AY 2020-21, there were too few students for demographic analysis and the results heavily represent students attending Utah public 4-year institutions.


PARTNERSHIPS

Between October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021, Interstate Passport program partnered with internal and external stakeholders to deepen the impact and expand the reach of the program.

WICHE received funding from two sources to support Interstate Passport:

- ECMC Foundation, as part of its [Catalyzing Transfer Initiative](#), provided a two-year \$500,000 grant to enable WICHE staff to recruit and enroll 20 additional member institutions in the Interstate Passport program – including at least 10 Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) – by offering a two-year waiver of membership fees.

- The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded [WICHE and New Mexico State University](#), in collaboration with its branch community colleges, a one-year \$300,000 grant aimed at bringing more undergraduate transfer students majoring in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to graduation and, ultimately, the job market. The project includes testing the feasibility of using sets of lower-division student learning outcomes as the basis of block transfer into undergraduate engineering programs.



The opportunity to lead the Interstate Passport program at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education over the last year has been immensely gratifying. I've so enjoyed working alongside our staff and consultants, and the leaders, staff, and faculty at our member and prospective member institutions who are committed to improving the transfer opportunities and pathways for students, especially for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.

ECMC Foundation's Catalyzing Transfer Initiative has been such a unique funding opportunity for us. Not only have we had the opportunity to grow our network by 18%

because of their financial support, but we have had the chance to learn from other national organizations who are shifting the transfer paradigm at the state and institution levels. We have met on a quarterly basis with our colleagues at the American Association of Community Colleges, Education Commission of the States, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, and State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, to share updates, lessons learned, and best practices with each other. This collaborative grant opportunity has strengthened the Interstate Passport program.

– Sarah Leibrandt, Director of Academic Leadership Initiatives, WICHE



The Passport Review Board met for its annual meeting in February 2021.

- At its annual meeting, board members discussed several items including the growth of the membership from 30 to 57 member institutions and the AY 2019-20 academic data reported by member institutions. Board members also reviewed and approved policy documents and proposed revisions to the memorandum of agreement and bylaws. Future funding and membership growth opportunities were discussed. Paul Disney, adjunct professor of business management and leadership at Western Oregon University, and Kari Brown-Herbst, interim vice president, academic affairs, at Laramie County Community College, were re-elected as co-chairs for another one-year term.

Interstate Passport staff hosted multiple professional development opportunities for leaders and staff at member institutions.

- Institution liaisons were invited to attend a [webinar hosted by WICHE](#) on student transfer featuring national- and state-level experts from National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), Maricopa Community Colleges, California Community Colleges, and the University of Colorado Denver. These experts shared the latest transfer data and trends, what strategies states and institutions are implementing to better serve current and future transfer students, and how to improve transfer pathways to increase student success.
- Registrars and institutional research staff at member institutions participated in a training in July 2021 to hear from representatives of the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and registrars at Laramie

County Community College in Wyoming, Salt Lake Community College in Utah, and the University of Utah on best practices for reporting data to the NSC. To view: Passport Data Reports Presentation [slides](#) and NSC Reporting Resources and Q&A [slides](#).

- Military and veteran affairs staff at member institutions were invited to attend a special presentation by Vantage Point on the American Council on Education's (ACE) updated Military Guide. The meeting was recorded and is viewable [here](#).

Interstate Passport staff hosted virtual roundtable discussions for member institutions.

- Institutional leaders and staff at member campuses participated in state-specific calls from March-June 2021 to share best practices related to implementation and building awareness on campus. In response to the pandemic, North Idaho College [produced a video](#) and social media campaign geared toward students returning home to finish up the academic school year.

The Interstate Passport program was featured in the research journal, *New Directions for Community Colleges*.

- Researchers at the Education and Employment Research Center in the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, presented an implementation case study of Interstate Passport at a rural community college and the implications of this program for the college and its students. The authors concluded with thoughts and recommendations for community college leaders on transfer policy and practice. You can read the article [here](#).





Laramie County
Community College



Celebrating 10 Years of Involvement with Interstate Passport

Interstate Passport was of interest at Laramie County Community College (LCCC) from the very beginning because there was general agreement that student transfer was going to happen, that it would occur both within Wyoming and outside, and that current practices and policies could be improved. We felt it was in the institution's best interest and its students to make it as "friction-free" as possible, which for LCCC meant adopting this innovation. Our president was involved in conversations with the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education as Interstate Passport was in the planning phases in 2011-2013. In 2014, faculty from the college joined other faculty nationally to develop the PLOs. Our staff began awarding passports in 2016.

Shortly after joining the Passport Network, LCCC began redesigning its general education core as part of its guided pathways initiative. Because we had already gone through creating

the passport learning outcomes and designing its passport block, redesigning the general education core was done with Interstate Passport in mind. Whereas the college's general education core was previously large and created confusion among students, it now mirrors the schools' passport block and focuses on learning outcomes. Effectively, this means any student completing their general education core at LCCC will also earn a passport if they receive a "C" grade or higher in their general education courses.

I am proud of the work that my institution has done over the past decade to help design the Interstate Passport program, implement it on our campus, and bring it to other institutions in our state.

– Kari Brown-Herbst, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Laramie County Community College
Co-chair of the Passport Review Board, 2020-22



MEMBER INSTITUTIONS (AS OF SEPT. 30, 2021)

KEY:

- Minority Serving Institution
- New member institution
- Minority Serving Institution and new member institution

Alabama

2-Year

- Air University

4-Year

- Stillman College

Alaska

4-Year

- University of Alaska Anchorage
- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- University of Alaska Southeast

Arkansas

2-Year

- University of Arkansas
Community College at Batesville

California

2-Year

- Cerritos College
- College of the Siskiyous
- East Los Angeles College
- Los Angeles City College
- Los Angeles Harbor College
- Los Angeles Mission College
- Los Angeles Pierce College
- Los Angeles Southwest College
- Los Angeles Trade-Tech College
- Los Angeles Valley College
- West Los Angeles College

Colorado

4-Year

- Adams State University

Hawai'i

2-Year

- Hawai'i Community College
- Honolulu Community College
- Kapi'olani Community College
- Kaua'i Community College
- Leeward Community College
- University of Hawai'i Maui College

- Windward Community College

4-Year

- Chaminade University of Honolulu
- University of Hawai'i at Hilo
- University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
- University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu

Idaho

2-Year

- North Idaho College
- College of Eastern Idaho

Illinois

4-Year

- The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Minnesota

4-Year

- Concordia University, St. Paul

Montana

2-Year

- Miles Community College

New Mexico

2-Year

- Doña Ana Community College
- San Juan College

4-Year

- New Mexico Highlands University
- New Mexico State University

North Carolina

4-Year

- North Carolina A&T State University

North Dakota

2-Year

- Lake Region State College
- North Dakota State College of Science

Nevada

2-Year

- Truckee Meadows Community College

4-Year

- Nevada State College
- University of Nevada Reno

Oregon

4-Year

- Western Oregon University

South Carolina

2-Year

- Greenville Technical College

South Dakota

4-Year

- Black Hills State University
- Dakota State University
- Northern State University
- South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
- South Dakota State University
- University of South Dakota

Texas

2-Year

- Dallas College

4-Year

- Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Utah

2-Year

- Salt Lake Community College
- Snow College

4-Year

- Dixie State University
- Southern Utah University
- University of Utah
- Utah State University
- Utah Valley University
- Weber State University

Washington

4-Year

- Washington State University

Wyoming

2-Year

- Casper College
- Laramie County Community College
- Western Wyoming Community College

4-Year

- University of Wyoming

What's Next for Interstate Passport?

INCREASE THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM ON STUDENTS

- Increase the number of students who earn an Interstate Passport.
- Conduct robust training sessions for new and current member institutions on the awarding and reporting process.
- Conduct listening sessions with current transfer students.

INCREASE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

- Collaborate with WICHE to implement a social media strategy to highlight member institutions and their students.
- Host state listening tours with institutional leaders to gather best practices and provide support regarding program implementation.
- Organize stakeholder webinars and training for current member institutions in partnership with faculty teams and committees.

INCREASE SIZE OF THE NETWORK

- Conduct targeted outreach to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) in Passport member states to expand on the Passport's equity mission.
- Utilize the knowledge and connections of Passport stakeholders to engage prospective member institutions.
- Design and conduct regular information sessions regarding joining the Interstate Passport Network to larger groups of prospective member institutions.

BRING CLARITY TO THE STRUCTURE OF INTERSTATE PASSPORT

- Simplify the governance structure of the Interstate Passport program.
- Involve staff from current member institutions in subcommittees for recruitment and marketing, member engagement, and sustainability.
- Streamline the process of joining the Interstate Passport Network for institutions.

“Registrars have the unique opportunity to engage with students even before they finalize their decision to enroll in our institutions! With today's technology assets, those of us who love our rural settings find that we can reach far beyond what was possible just a few years ago. Students are not so confined by location as they may have once been and earning a Passport is another tool to help urge them forward to realize their potential.”

– Kathy Callies, registrar, Dakota State University, South Dakota

OUR PEOPLE

Interstate Passport Review Board



ALABAMA

R. JOEL FARRELL

Chief, Innovation and Planning,
Air University/Community College
of the Air Force



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DAN KLINE

Professor of English,
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(through June 30, 2021)



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Leeward Community College



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Registrar,
Concordia University, St. Paul



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Montana University System



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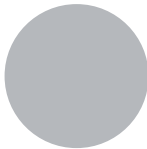
Director of Transfer Pathways,
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SOUTH CAROLINA

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South Dakota Board of Regents



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Senior Research Analyst

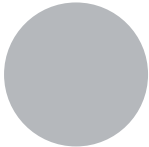


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System Expert (PeopleSoft)



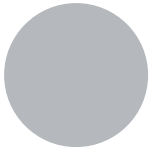
DAN KLINE
Senior Advisor, Consultant
(beginning July 1, 2021)



LADAWN MIERA
Assistant Registrar, Salt Lake
Community College, Interstate
Passport Registrar Expert



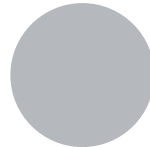
MICHAEL TORRENS
Director of Analysis, Assessment and
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Interstate Passport Institutional
Researcher Expert



OLOGA LOPU
Registrar, Salt Lake Community College,
Interstate Passport Student Information
System Expert (Banner)



PATRICIA SHEA
Senior Advisor, Consultant



STACY MAESTAS
Registrar, Laramie County Community
College, Interstate Passport Student
Information System Expert (Colleague)

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK the many institution leaders, staff, and faculty who work tirelessly to implement Interstate Passport on campus. Each campus has a campus team that includes an institution liaison who serves as Interstate Passport staff's primary contact and takes the lead in organizing campus staff to apply for membership and coordinate policies and procedures for participation. The name of each member's institution liaison can be found on its [member profile page](#) on the Interstate Passport website. Other members of the campus team include faculty and representatives from the office of the registrar, institutional research, campus marketing, academic advising, and military and veteran affairs.

WICHE would also like to thank the following former staff and consultants for their contributions to Interstate Passport between October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021: Cherie Curtin, Diane Dorgan, Julie Esterline, Anna Galas, Jane Sherman, and Kate Springsteen.

Finally, the Interstate Passport program wouldn't where it is today without the steadfast leadership of Jere Mock, WICHE's former Vice President, Programs and Services. Jere retired on September 30, 2021, after spending 33 years at WICHE working to improve access to education for students in the West. Her impact on the organization and the region cannot be overstated. We are grateful for her inspiration and dedication to the development and growth of the Interstate Passport program.