



# WICHE & HAWAI'I

## Partnering for Over Five Decades

WICHE



ACCESS • COLLABORATION • INNOVATION

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a 16-member commission working to boost access to higher education for students in the West and, as importantly, to ensure their success. Hawai'i has been a member of WICHE since 1959.

### Benefits to Hawai'i

- ▶ Tens of thousands of students from Hawai'i have attended undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in other Western states through WICHE's Student Exchange Program, saving millions of dollars, thanks to reduced tuition rates. In just one of the programs, the Western Undergraduate Exchange, Hawai'i students and their families have saved \$205.9 million since 1988 when the program was founded.
- ▶ Hawai'i has received funding to be part of numerous WICHE policy initiatives, including those focused on financing and financial aid, workforce policy, and other areas.
- ▶ Hawai'i has participated in WICHE initiatives related to distance education, workforce development, and behavioral health.

### Doing the Math:

#### Hawai'i's Return on Investment

- ▶ In 2015-16 Hawai'i, its institutions, and its students saved or brought in **\$17.3 million** through WICHE and spent \$141,000 for membership in the commission, yielding a **122-fold return on investment**.
- ▶ In the last five years, Hawai'i students' savings from WUE alone have totaled **\$70.9 million**, yielding a **108-fold return** on the state's investment in WICHE.

### WICHE's Student Exchange & Related Programs

**State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).** SARA is a voluntary, nationwide initiative of states that will make distance education courses more accessible to students across state lines and make it easier for states to regulate and institutions to participate in interstate distance education. The effort initially was funded by \$3.2 million in grants from Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and is

now supported by fees paid by institutions. The initiative is administered by the country's four regional higher education compacts – the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) – and overseen by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). States and institutions that choose to participate agree to operate under common standards and procedures, providing a more uniform and less costly regulatory environment for institutions, more focused oversight responsibilities for states, and better resolution of student complaints. Hawai'i has submitted its application to become a member of W-SARA.

Hawai'i is active in all three WICHE **Student Exchange Programs**: the Western Undergraduate Exchange, the Professional Student Exchange Program, and the Western Regional Graduate Program. In 2015-16 Hawai'i's students and families saved **\$17.2 million** in tuition. Hawai'i saved money, too, through not having to establish and maintain costly programs in a number of areas, including some in healthcare.

**Western Undergraduate Exchange.** Hawai'i students have enrolled in undergraduate programs on the mainland through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) since 1988. In 2015-16, 1,861 students from Hawai'i were enrolled in out-of-state programs at reduced rates (150 percent of resident tuition), saving \$16 million in tuition and fees – the average student savings amounted to \$8,605. In the last 10 years, students have saved **\$128.4 million**.

Hawai'i benefits from WUE in another way: by receiving students from out of state. Hawai'i's institutions can choose how many out-of-state slots to offer and in which areas, allowing them to make the best use of their resources by accepting students in underenrolled programs. There's a workforce benefit for the state, too, as students often stay in Hawai'i after graduating. In 2015-16 Hawai'i received 2,672 students through WUE.

**Professional Student Exchange Program.** Hawai'i has sent **1,280**

**students** to professional programs through the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), with students studying in a host of critical fields, including dentistry, occupational therapy, optometry, physical therapy, and veterinary medicine. Historically, some 67 percent of PSEP students return to Hawai'i to pursue their professional careers. In addition, in 2015-16 the state received one student and \$32,070 in support fees from other Western states.

**Western Regional Graduate Program.** Hawai'i's postgraduates also participate in graduate programs through the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), which offers access to over 380 high-quality, distinctive programs ("distinctive" meaning that they're offered at only four or fewer institutions in the WICHE region) at 60 institutions in all WICHE states. WRGP programs run the gamut, but emerging social, environmental, and resource-management fields are particular strengths, as are innovative interdisciplinary programs. In 2015-16 Hawai'i sent 21 students to out-of-state institutions, receiving 37.

The **Interstate Passport** is an outcomes-based framework for block transfer of lower division general education. Developed by faculty, registrars, institutional researchers, and academic advisors at two- and four-year institutions in seven states (CA, HI, ND, OR, SD, UT, and WY), the framework addresses barriers to degree completion posed by uneven transfer policies and practices across states. Institutions in four other WICHE states (CO, ID, MT, and NM) and additional states outside the region are involved in its Phase III expansion and scaling efforts to build a nationwide infrastructure supporting friction-free transfer for Passport students. By earning a Passport, students who transfer to another Passport institution will have their learning recognized regardless of differences in course titles and credits, and will not be required to repeat courses to meet general education requirements.

The **Consortium for Healthcare Education Online** (CHEO), funded (2012-16) with a \$14.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, is making use of the North American Network of Science Labs Online (NANSLO). With WICHE as its hub, NANSLO is an international network of web-based science labs using robotic software to allow students to conduct science experiments over the Internet.

**Figure 1. Hawaii Savings and Revenues through WICHE Programs in 2015**

**Student Savings**

WUE	\$16,013,041
PSEP	\$913,743
WRGP	\$307,377
<b>Total Student Savings</b>	<b>\$17,234,161</b>

**Revenue to HI**

<b>Institutions (PSEP)</b>	<b>\$32,070</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,266,231</b>

"WUE is much more than just an affordable college experience. WUE challenges me academically by setting guidelines to keep my discounted tuition. It also keeps me on track to graduate within four years. The higher academic standards required of WUE students motivate us to reach our goals."

– Camden, Hawai'i resident, Class of 2015,  
University of Colorado Denver,  
Pre-Med (Biology and Public Health)

**WICHE's Added Value**

Hawai'i gains added value from WICHE's programs in policy, workforce development, technology, mental health, and other areas.

**Policy & Workforce Development.** Hawai'i has participated in projects supporting better-informed decision making at the state level. WICHE initiatives have been sponsored by the Ford Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education, the U.S. Department of Education, and others. In addition, WICHE policy experts often visit the state to present or consult on a number of vital issues, including the state's workforce needs and balancing the financial aid portfolio between grants, loans, and scholarships, as well as between merit- and need-based aid.

Hawai'i was one of four original states chosen to participate in the Gates-funded Facilitating Development of a Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange pilot project (the others were Idaho, Oregon, and Washington). The project attempts to enable a more comprehensive regional view of the creation of human capital and its flow among multiple states by exchanging data across K-12 education, postsecondary education, and the workforce. Hawai'i is receiving customized technical assistance, including a Hawai'i-specific report, to aid the state in its examination of the data governance in place for each of those sectors, how data governance might be improved, and how the state can advance its efforts in developing its statewide longitudinal data system to meet state needs and fulfill commitments it made to the federal government as part of its successful Race to the Top application. The success of that pilot led Gates to fund a second phase in which the MLDE project will expand to other states.

The implementation of the Common Core Standards (CCSS) or other similar academic standards is well underway in most states, and the corresponding assessment systems went live this academic year. As implementation continues, there are a variety of challenges that K-12 and higher education leaders will face in the coming years related to student movement across state lines. To begin the conversation about these challenges, WICHE, with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, convened higher education and K-12 leaders from the Western region and additional bordering states in October 2014. Hawai'i was one of 17 states along with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to participate.

The Adult College Completion (ACC) Network, funded by Lumina Foundation, is a 750-member learning network that

unites organizations and agencies working to increase college completion by adults with prior college credits but no degree. Activities include an annual workshop, a webinar series, publications, a listserv, and other resources. The ACC Network and WICHE have become national leaders in the area of adult learners and continue to be an important resource to those who strive to better serve non-traditional students.

The State Higher Education Policy Database (SHEPD) is WICHE's online searchable database. It provides state and national policymakers, education leaders, practitioners, and education consumers with an inventory of state-level policies and resources in key issue areas related to access and success in higher education. It contains a blog and an electronic SHEPD alert distribution list to keep subscribers current on important updates. A related resource is the Policy Publications Clearinghouse, a depository of publications, reports, and briefs related to higher education.

The state also participated in a Gates-funded meeting that brought together the stewards of the data systems in 14 of the WICHE states for discussions around linking data internally and with other states. A central topic of conversation was how to address the challenges to data sharing presented by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

WICHE President David Longanecker has worked with the Governor's Office and Senate Higher Education Committee to help them develop a state authorization process to certify nonpublic institutions to operate in Hawai'i.

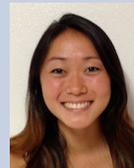
In January 2015, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents sought to explore and analyze the current structure of the University of Hawai'i system. Specifically, they wanted to address whether the Board of Regents should reconsider the 2001 separation of roles of the president of the University of Hawai'i system and the chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa or seek other changes in the management and leadership structure of the system in order to better serve the state and its citizens. To accomplish this, the Board of Regents engaged the services of Dr. David Longanecker, president of WICHE, and Dr. Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis for WICHE, to lead a research effort that included reviewing historical documentation; reviewing relevant literature and research; and conducting interviews with past and present stakeholders, national experts on leadership and governance, and leaders in other state higher education systems similar to that of Hawai'i. In April 2015, WICHE produced a report that outlined the findings and recommendations of that research effort. The report can be found on the WICHE website at [www.wiche.edu](http://www.wiche.edu). In May, WICHE presented its findings to the Hawai'i Board of Regents.

Additionally, Hawai'i has participated in the **Western Academic Leadership Forum** (the Forum), whose members address regional higher education issues and engage in resource sharing. The **Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders** (the Alliance) brings academic leaders of community colleges and technical schools and systems together with state governing and coordinating boards associated with two-year institutions to exchange ideas and

information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. Hawai'i Community College, Honolulu Community College, Kapiolani Community College, Kauai Community College, Leeward Community College, University of Hawai'i Maui College, University of Hawai'i System, and Windward Community College are members.

**Technology.** Several Hawai'i colleges and universities are active participants in the **WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)**, the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. WCET is widely recognized as one of the most informative, reliable, and forward-thinking organizations regarding the role of technology and innovation in higher education. Our growing membership includes more than 350 institutions, state and system-wide higher education agencies, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in nearly all U.S. states and many Canadian provinces. WCET member institutions actively serve more than 4 million college students taking all or part of their academic programs via technology. WCET members have access to trusted information on emerging trends, policies, and exemplars of successful learning technology innovation in practice. Key WCET activities include an annual meeting, leadership summits, national webcasts, and email list-based discussions among members. Major topics of interest to the WCET membership include student success, managing e-learning, faculty success, emerging technologies, adaptive learning and its innovative pilots across the nation, the implications of accessibility across campus, interesting statewide technology collaborations, evolving policy issues, and the high-school-to-higher-education transition.

**Mental Health.** WICHE has been very active in Hawai'i, focusing on issues of behavioral health workforce development. In FY15, the Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium graduated its first cohort, and matriculated its second cohort of doctoral psychology clinical interns. This very successful partnership between WICHE, the Hawai'i Children's Mental Health Division, Hawai'i Department of Education, and Hawai'i Public Safety Department also achieved contingency accreditation by the American Psychological Association in FY15. WICHE provides administrative support, technical assistance, and data collection to HI-PIC. During FY15, WICHE and the Hawai'i Department of Education launched a partnership to recruit a range of behavioral health professionals to fill vacancies across the public school system in Hawai'i.



"I am so blessed to have the opportunity to study occupational therapy at Pacific University, thanks to Hawai'i's generosity through WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program. It will be an honor to return to Hawaii and give back to the community, in gratitude for the affordable and quality education my home state helped me receive. Thank you, WICHE!"

– Laurie, Hawai'i resident, Class of 2016,  
Pacific University, Occupational Therapy



“I have been blessed as a WICHE PSEP recipient by having a huge financial burden lifted off of my shoulders. I’m currently a first-year student. Instead of working to support myself, I was able to volunteer extensively in both the local community and abroad. WICHE has given me the opportunity to make the most of my time in California, truly focusing on my education and clinical experiences. I can’t wait to share my skills and knowledge as an optometrist upon my return home to Hawai’i!”

– Ashley, Hawai’i resident, Class of 2016, Southern California College of Optometry

**Other Initiatives.** The **Master Property Program (MPP)**, helps institutions reduce their insurance premiums and improve their coverage. Created by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) and expanded to the WICHE region, the MPP includes more than 160 campuses with total insured values of over \$103 billion. WICHE is also partnering with MHEC to offer **MHECare**, a new health program providing vetted, competitively priced medical benefits for students. Underwritten by UnitedHealthcare StudentResources, MHECare offers a variety of plans. In a third collaboration with MHEC, WICHE extends the benefits of **MHECtech** to colleges and universities in the West, enabling them to purchase off competitively bid purchasing agreements to reduce costs on a range of hardware and software products and services.

### Colorado & WICHE’s Leadership

The **WICHE Commission**, with three commissioners from each state, molds the organization’s mission and set its priorities. Hawai’i’s commissioners are David Lassner, president, University of Hawai’i System, Honolulu; and Carol Mon Lee, attorney, retired associate dean, University of Hawai’i Richardson School of Law, and former member, Hawai’i State Board of Education, Honolulu; and Colleen Sathre, vice president emeritus, planning and policy, University of Hawai’i, Honolulu.



David Lassner



Carol Mon Lee



Colleen Sathre

WICHE also seeks assistance and advice from policymakers, educators, administrators and legislators. WICHE’s **Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC)**, composed of legislator-members from each state – including Rep. Isaac Choy and Sen. Brian Taniguchi – has been crucial in this regard. The LAC works to keep the commission’s Executive Committee and staff current on significant legislative issues related to higher education, provides input on WICHE initiatives, and advises staff on a host of issues. WICHE staff also serves the LAC by informing its members about emerging policy issues in the West.

### WICHE Commission & Staff

The WICHE Commission’s 16 members include representatives from 15 Western states – Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai’i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (the first of the U.S. Pacific territories and freely associated states to participate). Members work collaboratively to provide educational access and excellence for all citizens.

WICHE and its staff are headquartered in Boulder, CO, and operate out of the State Higher Education Policy Center, which WICHE owns with the State Higher Education Executive Officers association and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

Staff leadership includes:

**David Longanecker**, president

**Michael Abbiatti**, vice president for educational technologies and executive director, WCET

**John Lopez**, director, W-SARA

**Demarée Michelau**, director of policy analysis

**Jere Mock**, vice president, programs and services

**Dennis Mohatt**, vice president, behavioral health

### How can I find out more about WICHE?

Visit our website at [www.wiche.edu](http://www.wiche.edu) or contact President David Longanecker at 303.541.0201.

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Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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