



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

August 9, 2023 | 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (PST) | Meeting No. 263

This is a remote meeting – please register for access to the Zoom link [here](#).

Per RCW 42.30.030 – Public access available at the agency office,
128 10th Avenue SW, Olympia, WA, 98501 on the 5th Floor.

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| 9:00 a.m. | Call to Order
Welcome and Introductions | |
| 9:05 a.m. | Chairs Report
Consent Agenda (Action) <ol style="list-style-type: none">Minutes from March 23, 2023, Board MeetingExecutive Director's Report | Tab 1 |
| 9:10 a.m. | TAP Planning Process
Brief Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ben Robinson & Lindsey Phillips, First Rule GroupQ&A from Pre-Meeting Video re: TAP Planning Updates | Tab 2 |
| 9:30 a.m. | Overview of TAP Opening Chapters <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dave Wallace, Coral Garey, Chris Dula, Workforce Board | Tab 3 |
| 10:10 a.m. | Legislative Proposals for Governor and Legislature (potential ACTION) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Nova Gattman & Project Leads, Workforce BoardWAVE Scholarship & Funding RequestDigital Literacy & IT Career EquityLong-Term Care Registered Apprenticeship ContinuationWorkforce Board Program FundingJob Skills ProgramCredential Transparency | Tab 4 |
| 12:00 p.m. | Adjourn | |

Tab 1

Consent Agenda

PRESENTED BY: Co-Chairs Brown and Chandler

CHECK ONE:

☒ Action Item

☐ Possible Action

☐ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

This consent agenda allows the Board to approve all of these items together without discussion or individual motions. If any Board member believes an item does not belong on the consent agenda, you may at any time request the item be removed and considered for an individual discussion and vote.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Materials included in Tab 1 of your Board meeting packet:

1. Minutes from the March 23, 2023 Board meeting
2. Executive Director's report
3. WAVE Media and Thank You Summary, 2023

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Please review the materials following this cover sheet to be prepared to approve the consent agenda.



MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 262
March 23, 2023

Board Members Present:

Larry Brown, Co-Chair
Gary Chandler, Co-Chair
Wade Larson, Representing Business
Todd Mitchell, Representing Labor
Kairie Pierce, Representing Labor
Commissioner Cami Feek, Employment Security Department (ESD)
Terry Redmond for Secretary Jilma Meneses, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)
Rebecca Wallace for Superintendent Chris Reykdal, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
Marie Bruin for Paul Francis, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)
Carolyn Busch for Acting Secretary Kendrick Stewart, Department of Commerce
Mark Mattke, Spokane Workforce Council, Representing Local Government
Yolanda King-Lowe for Jane Hopkins, Representing Labor

Call to Order

Co-Chair Gary Chandler called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. on a hybrid meeting using Zoom for remote attendees. In-person attendees convened at the Raad Building, 128 10th Avenue SW, Olympia, WA, 98501.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes from February 23, 2023, Board Meeting
2. Executive Director's Report

Employment Security Department (ESD) Update – Results Washington

Commissioner Feek, ESD, spoke about the skilled workforce presentation at Results Washington, which included an overview of the state's economy. Major contributors to workforce participation were discussed including the increasing deficit of labor force participants and the impact of that deficit. Commissioner Feek noted that the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission highlighted the licensed practical nurse registered apprenticeship, currently in implementation by Workforce Board staff, in collaboration with NCQAC and Labor and Industries, and there were many points of alignment with Workforce Board planning.

Peer Learning Group – Evaluation Discussion

Dave Wallace, Workforce Board, discussed the Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort created for the purpose of working toward cross-system workforce evaluation, per WIOA Guidance on Evaluations – 116 (e).

The presentation included peers Olga Kondratjeva from the Employment Security Department, and Joy Emory from Workforce Snohomish. The evaluation timeline, strategies, and next steps were discussed for feedback from the Board. Impact evaluation was discussed, as well as challenges of comparing persons within a program against a person who did not receive the program. Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) pros and cons were discussed following the presentation.

MOTION-2023-262-02

Kairie Pierce moved to ask the Peer Learning Group to develop a set of system-wide priorities and questions to consider at the Board Retreat in May, as well as a survey of the Board members to help inform the Board member discussion. Commissioner Feek seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

An Orientation to Registered Apprenticeship

Part 2: Building Trades Apprenticeship

Panelists for this discussion were Peter Guzman from Department of Labor & Industries, Mark L. Riker of Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council, PJ Moss and Heather Winfrey of Seattle Area Pipe Trades Apprenticeship, Erin Frasier from Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council, and Mike Bridges of Longview/Kelso Building and Construction Trades Council. Lowell Glodowski from Masonry Trades was featured via video: [Masonry: Pathways to Apprenticeship](#).

Presentations centered around various building trades apprenticeships, including requirements, timeline, participation numbers, apprenticeship program standards, training programs, and demographics. Presenters from Seattle Area Pipe Trades presented information showcasing their workforce, access, partnerships, and retention. Pathway improvements and apprentice utilization on public works programs were also discussed. Ideas for how the Workforce Board can help with retention and success were shared.

National Governors Association (NGA) – An Overview of Federal Legislation Impacting Workforce

Presenters Tim Carlton and Rachel Stephens Parker of the National Governors Association provided a brief presentation on federal updates from Washington, D.C. as they relate to workforce development.

Topics covered included Department of Labor and Workforce Programs, including Trade Adjustment Assistance, major legislation passed in the 117th Congress (American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, and Inflation Reduction Act).



The Legislative Agenda for the 118th Congress topics was highlighted to inform the Board of upcoming proposals that may affect workforce development, including the potential of a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reauthorization.

Workforce Board – Workforce System Policies

One-Stop System Dispute Resolution & Appeals Process

Drew Cassidy, Workforce Board, led a discussion on the dispute resolution process as it pertains to WIOA law (Sec. 181 (c)) and WIOA Rule (20 CFR683.600). Under Policy 1025, the State Workforce Board is now responsible for state-level disputes involving the full system. Required elements of the proposed outline were presented, as well as appeals options and procedural steps.

MOTION-2023-262-03

Kairie Pierce moved to adopt Potential Action: Option Two: The Workforce Board may establish a business and labor subcommittee, to include the co-chairs, to conduct an informal hearing for disputes. Todd Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention from Wade Larson.

Workforce System Policies

One-Stop Hours of Operation

Drew Cassidy, Workforce Board, Ismaila Maidadi, ESD, Amy Martinez, South Central Workforce, and Miriam Halliday, Workforce Southwest Washington presented on WIOA Guidance and Policy 1016 with a specific focus on comprehensive centers. 20 CFR 678.305(c) was noted for evaluating hours of access to service as part of the evaluation of effectiveness in the one-stop certification process. A [WorkSource Overview](#) video was shared with the Board. Established partners and services were noted.

Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Directors shared a snapshot of local partnerships at one-stop centers in Yakima and Clark counties. WorkSource Vancouver highlighted a hybrid model which has been intentionally tracked for effectiveness since the pandemic. Data for different service delivery approaches and customer engagement was shared with the Board. South Central Workforce shared record high foot traffic and how they are serving the same number of customers with half the staff due to teleworking. Data was shared from the 12 LWDBs on the in-person vs. remote hourly breakdown. LWDB Directors recommended allowing for flexibility in their approach to meeting the needs of their individual communities including consideration of hybrid work locations with a focus on partnership accountability. Ismaila Maidadi noted that services are consumed differently in different parts of the state.

After a robust discussion, Co-Chair Gary Chandler requested access to the data shared during the presentation. Workforce Southwest CEO Miriam Halliday noted their region uses

TablesReady, and that the WDCs would share the data they collected for the presentation. South Central Workforce CEO Amy Martinez mentioned that an important approach is also meeting the customers where they are - in the community, joining events to make connections outside of the office, which might impact hours of operation.

Co-Chair Larry Brown stated that no specific determination would be addressed today and that the Board will continue to evaluate this topic throughout the TAP planning process. Commissioner Feek requested that when the Board discusses hours of operation again, draft language should be prepared for the Board's response.

Workforce Board – 2023 Legislative Session Update

Nova Gattman, Workforce Board, provided an update on the 2023 Legislative Session. She included information on the Senate budget, and highlights from the Workforce Board Legislative Priorities were discussed, which included Career Bridge and Integrated Data Sharing.

Focus on partner agency budget items were noted, such as Youth Services for under 14, WIT replacement, AmeriCorps living stipend, backlog of Unemployment Insurance appeals, and the Economic Security for All expansion request from partners Employment Security Department and Washington Workforce Association.

Select bills of interest shared included HB 1009 – Military Spouse Employment, HB 1013 – Regional Apprenticeship Programs, HB 1176 – Climate-Ready Communities, HB 1503 – Healthcare Licenses, HB 1658 – High School Credit for Work Experience, HB 1724 – Behavioral Health Workforce, SB 5243 – High School and Beyond Plans, SB 5582 – Reducing Barriers to Nursing Supply and SB 5711 – Washington College Grant Eligibility.

The meeting adjourned at 3:58 pm.

Executive Director's Report

Workforce Board Meeting

August 9, 2023

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Media and public outreach updates

Media shares WAVE story across Washington

The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) made headlines across the state this June. Scholarship winners shared their stories and were honored for their accomplishments in local newspapers, television, and online news outlets. These stories were also amplified on agency and partner social media accounts.

A total of 10 news stories featured students studying to become commercial pilots, nurses, sign language interpreters, manufacturing leaders and other in-demand careers.

"I decided that I wanted to become a teacher of the deaf after working with the deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the program there," student Jesus Chavez Lara [told KNDU recently](#). "It just increased my passion."

Student Victoire Wilondja grew up in a Ugandan refugee camp after his family fled war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo. Victoire, now a student at Big Bend Community College, [shared his story](#) with the Columbia Basin Herald. The story was later picked up by Yahoo News and shared across the country.

For a complete roundup of this summer's media coverage, take a look at the WAVE 2023 attachment following this report or [read more here](#).

WAVE winners, educators say thank you

Fourteen WAVE scholarship winners and teachers have sent thank you notes to the Workforce Board after this year's award cycle. The full list of thank you notes is included in the attachment following this report.

Conferences

JFF Horizons Conference in New Orleans—June 13-15

Marina Parr, Director of Workforce System Advancement, attended the Jobs for the Future (JFF) Horizons Workforce Summit in New Orleans where there was a focus on employer hiring challenges and new openness to hiring people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Models and techniques were presented and active discussion on how to best support our workforce, especially those from underrepresented groups, to move into those open positions employers want to fill. A plenary session on generative AI and Large Language Models such as ChatGPT drew a lot of interest from conference participants who listened to experts talk about how these tools are already re-shaping the knowledge economy. Marina co-presented with Laura Ward of Merit on several pilot projects the Workforce Board is taking a lead on in our state using digital wallets to help both employers and workers identify and

verify needed skills in a portable, learner-focused package. Merit is partnering with the Workforce Board and other organizations on several projects that involve digital wallets, including the Workforce Board's Long-Term Care LPN registered apprenticeship project that is training and advancing frontline long-term workers into Licensed Practical Nurse positions. Read the blog post about Marina's session at:

<https://bit.ly/3OkrD5g>

Unlocking Pathways Summit—July 25

Joe Wilcox, the Workforce Board's Career Pathways Manager, Paulette Beadling, Career Pathways Policy Associate, and Marina Parr attended this one-day conference held at Renton Technical College and put on by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The conference pulled participants from a broad cross section of states, with sessions on dual credit, work-based learning, and career advising and navigation. Joe and Marina co-presented, along with the states of South Dakota and Oregon, on Perkins and WIOA planning at two separate sessions. The session had very good turnout and the presenters learned how our partner panelist states are handling these two federal investments in our nation's career and technical education (CTE) and workforce development systems.

OCTAE Perkins monitoring visit

The Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) conducted a monitoring visit for Washington's Carl D. Perkins program that helps fund career and technical education (CTE) programs for the state's youth and adults. The primary purpose of this (virtual) visit was to assess compliance with the provisions of Perkins V, and Washington was one of four states selected for 2023. The Workforce Board, OSPI, and SBCTC worked together with OCTAE throughout the process, which was carried out June 12-16 and evaluated four components of the Perkins program: state administration, local applications, fiscal, and accountability. OCTAE will deliver the final evaluation report within 60 days of completion of the monitoring visit. While the state is not expecting any official non-compliance findings, the report will include suggested strategies for improvement as well as highlighting areas where the state performed well.

Workforce Board part of legislative work session on AI and Future of Work

Workforce Board staff helped develop and participated in a panel discussion in June that featured futurists, journalists, and higher education leaders from the University of Washington's Continuum College at a House Postsecondary Education and Workforce legislative work session focused on artificial intelligence and the future of work. The conversation included the rise of ChatGPT and Large Language Models, and a live demo that showed how quickly this new AI tool could answer topical questions and even write legislation. Panelists, including the Workforce Board's Joe Wilcox, noted how rapidly these new technologies have been incorporated into business and education, and their impact on our workforce in potentially displacing people, but also augmenting how we do our jobs. View on TVW:

<https://bit.ly/3NT71lq>

Career Bridge Modernization feasibility study complete

A year-long project to create a road map for improving the Workforce Board's public facing career and education exploration portal Career Bridge successfully concluded at the end of June. The Workforce Board was allocated \$465,000 from the Legislature in 2022 to do this work, which included hiring a project manager and quality assurance advisor, along with contracting with a vendor to fully detail the site's current state and make recommendations for future steps to keep the site fresh, user-friendly, and accessible to students and jobseekers throughout the state.

Randy Smith, the agency's IT and Research Specialist, and Marina Parr, were the leads on this project. Resource Data, Inc., was selected as the vendor for the first phase of a multi-year project to improve Career Bridge. The Legislature in 2023 awarded another \$1.4 million to make improvements to the site over the next two years, including making it mobile friendly, building a digital portfolio feature to save career and education searches, and more closely aligning it with High School and Beyond Planning, among other features. Randy and Marina are leading this effort and will be looking to hire a Career Bridge project manager, using legislative funds set aside for this two-year position. Also included is funding to hire a project-based IT lead to help carry out this two-year effort.

Health Workforce Council meeting

The [Health Workforce Council](#) (HWC) held its first in-person meeting since 2019 on June 22 in Port Angeles. The Council was hosted at Peninsula College by President Dr. Suzy Ames, who serves as vice-chair of the HWC. The overall goal of the meeting was for stakeholders and partners to collaboratively analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Council and narrow down a list of potential strategic priority areas.

Ahead of the meeting, Renee Fullerton, the Workforce Board's Health and Social Policy Associate, held multiple virtual stakeholder calls and solicited information electronically about what Council members and other interested parties view as key areas for Council attention in the next five years. An initial 11 potential priority areas were identified. At the Port Angeles meeting, the attendees voted and narrowed down the list to the following five:

- DATA FOR PLANNING/POLICY: Increase collection, ensure reasonable access, and provide resources for ongoing analysis of health workforce data across multiple data sources (both qualitative and quantitative).
- RURAL STRATEGIES: Generate rural-specific health workforce strategies that account for the unique needs in those communities and support the adoption of those strategies.
- SIMPLIFY THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT: Systematically work to identify laws or rules that don't have a quantifiable impact on patient safety but impede individuals' ability to enter the health workforce or move between different healthcare settings.
- INCREASE COLLABORATION: Use the position of the Council to drive focused policymaking that targets specific silos between the health, government, and education sectors. (Potential areas of work could include supporting government and private entities focused on K-12 pathways; creating collaboration opportunities for government staff focused on health workforce development, among others.)

- **CLARIFY CAREER PATHWAYS:** Use the position of the Council to advocate for expansion of interconnected, progression-based career pathways in health professions, including both traditional education models and “earn while you learn” models.

As not all Council members were able to send representatives to Port Angeles, the five priorities that rose to the top at the meeting will be rank ordered via an email survey in preparation for further discussion at the Council’s September 21 meeting. The Council will also begin considering recommendations to include in its 2023 annual report to the Legislature at that meeting. Final approval will occur at the November 30 Council meeting.

**Washington Award for Vocational Excellence Media and
Thank You Summary
Workforce Board Meeting No. 263
August 9, 2023**

This year's WAVE winners were featured in 10 news stories across the state. Students shared their challenges and inspirations with local communities in the Tri-Cities, Moses Lake, Monroe, Yakima and more. A complete list follows.

1. [Ridgefield graduate receives Workforce Board scholarship | The Reflector \(June 26, 2023\)](#)

The Reflector

The Newspaper With Integrity Since 1909

Ridgefield graduate receives Workforce Board scholarship



Cade Barker / cade@thereflector.com

Madelyn Winter, a recent graduate from Ridgefield High School, was among 78 high school seniors, who received scholarships for up to \$5,200 per year for two years from the Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Along with the seniors, 30 community and technical college students also received the scholarships, which totaled \$1.1 million.

Winter will go to Clark College for two years to obtain her prerequisites for a degree in psychology.

"I just graduated about a week ago and I also went to Cascadia Tech, where I was a part of the hospitality and tourism program for two years," Winter said.

After two years at Clark College, Winter plans to transfer to another higher education institution. Her goal is to become an addiction counselor.

Winter was in the National Honor Society and was a varsity athlete on the track and field team while at Ridgefield High School. She was also a member of the International Thespian Society and performed in school plays.

"I'm just really grateful for it and I really appreciate it. The scholarship will help me just pay for my education," Winter said. "I won't have to worry about too much, the financial situation through community college for the first two years."

In the fall, she plans to take general psychology, some electives and plans to finish some of her prerequisites.

"The first two years, I should have my associate's degree, and then the way that I met up with my advisor, they scheduled my classes so that it would be easy to transfer to another college in Washington state," Winter said.

Once she has her associate's degree, she plans to transfer with a junior standing to another school to complete her bachelor's degree, followed by a few more years to secure her master's degree in psychology.

With her focus on addiction studies, Winter hopes to bring back her skills and launch her career in Clark County.

"I was actually in foster care for about three years due to my biological parents' addiction issues," Winter said. "I have a lot of personal connections with it and I just am really passionate about helping other people that have experienced having family members with addiction or just helping people with addiction themselves."

Winter said she has seen a big need for addiction counselors in Southwest Washington.

"I think drug addiction has risen so much in the past few years, especially in the Portland area, the Vancouver area, so I think there's definitely some job opportunities here and I really want to help out in my community," Winter said.

Andrew Lenderman, with the Workforce Board, said the scholarships are a “win-win” because “it helps students advance their careers and also addresses our ongoing skilled labor shortage.”

Lenderman said the scholarships aim to ease one of the top concerns employers have expressed in surveys over the past several years, which is the lack of qualified workers.

The lack of qualified workers has limited the ability of a business to expand as the state population grows, he said. If businesses are unable to grow due to a lack of qualified workers, the ability to build-up and educate qualified workers becomes harder.

“These things directly impact our economy and quality of life, so investing in the workforce is a win-win all around and some great examples from this year, we’ve also managed to talk to a student from the Moses Lake area studying to become a commercial pilot,” Lenderman said. “There is a student studying to become a nurse to address the nursing shortage in the area. We met a wonderful person who’s studying to be an early childhood education teacher and to study American Sign Language over in the Tri-Cities.”

Lenderman said the application process for the Workforce Board scholarships will open next year, likely around March. For updates and more information, go online to wtb.wa.gov/wave.

The scholarship was established by the Washington State Legislature in 1984 to recognize and highlight the achievements of the state’s best career and technical education students, according to Lenderman.

2. [Yakima Valley students training for hard-to-fill jobs receive WAVE scholarships \(June 19, 2023\)](#)

YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

JOEL DONOFRIO Yakima Herald-Republic



1 Ashley Curtin/Courtesy photo

One organization of business, labor and government officials is doing more than just bemoaning a lack of employees for many jobs across the state. They’re providing scholarships to help train the next generation of Washington’s labor force.

Five Yakima Valley residents are among more than

100 high school seniors and community college students who have been awarded the 2023 Washington Award for Vocational Excellence.

This merit-based scholarships, administered by [Washington's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board](#), honor Washington's top career and technical education students.

"The WAVE scholarship is definitely a win-win," said Andrew Lenderman, communications manager for Washington Workforce Board. "It directly impacts the workforce shortage and it helps students succeed.

"The workforce shortage is consistently ranked by Washington employers as one of their top challenges, along with supply chain issues and inflation," he added.

Lenderman noted that this year's WAVE scholarship recipients include students seeking careers as commercial pilots, early childhood educators and nurses. The latter group includes Ashley Curtin of Yakima, who is entering the fifth quarter of the six-quarter nursing program at Yakima Valley College.

Inspired to become a nurse

A nontraditional student who returned to school after previously working as a dental assistant, Curtin's decision to become a nurse was a personal and emotional one.

"I chose nursing when my mother became sick with lung cancer," she said. "I was watching her health care be not exactly what a family would want for their mother."

Curtin became a certified nursing assistant to help with her mother's oncology care, and said several other members of the oncology team suggested she should pursue a career in nursing. Her mom also encouraged her to pursue a nursing career, and it became a promise Curtin was determined to keep after her mother died.

As a single mother raising her daughters in Yakima, Curtin said she has had to work throughout her classes at YVC.

"There were times I just didn't know how I was going to become a nurse," she added. "I've worked throughout my coursework, and the WAVE scholarship will help tremendously."

After working as a CNA, Curtin was hired as a nurse technician at **Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital**. Nurse techs are usually nursing students who are allowed to practice and perform skills in which they have been trained and certified, she said.

Many of these duties involve assisting patients with basic personal care and mobility needs, such as bathing, eating, personal grooming, and help with standing and moving. Nurse techs also perform some not-too-glamorous duties such as collecting bodily fluids for lab tests, emptying bedpans and changing bed linens.

Now working as a licensed practical nurse at the Terraces at Summitview in Yakima, Curtin said both the COVID pandemic's pressures and high nurse-to-patient ratios have caused some health care workers to leave the field.

"I have seen all the shortages of nurses throughout my experiences. I've seen them leave due to the stress during COVID, due to the stress of having too many patients," she added. "The decline in care was noticeable — and it just drives me more toward nursing."

Her career goals including becoming a registered nurse upon completion of her YVC coursework and eventually pursuing a job as a nurse practitioner.

"Long-term care, that is a hard field to work in, and there certainly are (employee) shortages," Curtin said. "It is difficult but it can be very rewarding when you're helping someone — often, you are the highlight of their day."

WAVE scholarship criteria

A committee of business, labor and education leaders selected 108 WAVE scholarship winners through a highly competitive process, the Washington Workforce Board stated in a news release issued Thursday, June 15.

This year's award pays about \$5,200 per year, for up to two years. Awards vary depending on student financial situations and tuition at the college they attend. Funded by the Legislature, the 2023 WAVE program awarded \$1.1 million in scholarships.

Many awardees have focused on industries facing labor shortages, including advanced manufacturing, automotive technology, agriculture, carpentry and web development, Workforce board co-chairs Larry Brown and Gary Chandler said in the news release.

"The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence removes barriers to education and living-wage jobs," Brown added. "Our winners were selected through an open and equitable review process. The WAVE program is an outstanding public investment in middle-class jobs and Washington's future."

"This is a great program that directly impacts the many Washington employers facing labor shortages," Chandler said. "We look forward to working with the Legislature to increase next year's funding."

This year's WAVE scholarship winners represent 78 graduating high school seniors and 30 community and technical college students from 63 different high schools and 16 different colleges. Recipients come from urban and rural communities in 24 Washington counties and 45 legislative districts.

Career and technical education students from Washington high schools and public community and technical colleges are eligible to apply for the program, which helps pay for tuition and other costs at Washington colleges, universities and private career schools.

The scholarship is administered by Washington's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, which serves as the state's policy lead on how career and technical education is delivered across the state. The [Washington Student Achievement Council](#) manages distribution of the WAVE scholarship.

Local scholarship winners

The following Yakima Valley students earned Washington Award for Vocational Excellence, or WAVE, scholarships from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board for 2023. Also listed are their school and program of study.

- **Ashley Curtin**, Yakima Valley College, health services/nursing.
- **Angel Garcia**, Davis High School, business and marketing.
- **Abigael Marquez**, Yakima Valley College, information technology/computer systems networking.
- **Isabella Martinez**, Prosser High School, business and marketing.
- **Chaeli Williams**, Selah High School, health sciences.

3. [A recent Chiawana High School graduate receives the WAVE scholarship, going to school to become a teacher | News | nbcrightnow.com \(June 15, 2023\)](#)

Dan Hanson NonStop Local Reporter



Each year three students, two high school students and one technical community college student in each legislative district. This year several students from our area won this scholarship.

PASCO, Wash. - In 1984 the [Washington State legislature](#) created the Washington Award for Vocational Excellence, or the [WAVE Scholarship](#). The aim was to show the importance of career and technical education for our state and this scholarship is still helping students to this day. Each year three students, two high school students and one technical community college student in each legislative district. This year several students from our area won this scholarship. One of those students is recent [Chiawana High School](#) graduate Jesus Chavez-Lara. Chavez-Lara is deaf, but that's not stopping him.

"I didn't expect to win any scholarship," Chavez-Lara signed to me through an interpreter. " This is the first time I've won a scholarship and it was moving."

Chavez-Lara has spent the last year interning at an [early childhood education](#) program and says this just made his decision easier.

"I decided that I wanted to become a teacher of the deaf after working with the deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the program there," he says. "It just increased my passion."

He will be attending [Central Washington University](#) in the fall. He says he's read it has a good American Sign Language program.

[Larry Brown](#) is a Co-Chair of the [Washington Workforce Board](#). Brown says early childhood education sets kids up for a successful K-12 experience.

"It's very important for the whole economy that we have both early child care, skilled child care and licensed child care as well as early childhood education," Brown says.

According to the [Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families](#), Benton County has 173 early childhood educators, they need 484. Franklin County only has 81 and is in need of 237.

[Gary Chandler](#) is another Co-Chair for the Washington Workforce board.

He says child care is difficult, especially in rural areas.

"It gets harder," Chandler says. "Child care is a major impediment right now from parents being able to work because they can't get child care."

Chandler tells me despite the challenges Chavez-Lara has, he's a great person for wanting to be in the early childhood education field. He hopes this will inspire others to take the same path.

Chavez-Lara tells me being deaf hasn't stopped him before and it's not going to stop him now.

"Deaf can do anything," Chavez-Lara says. "My goal is to share that with the world. I played violin for several years and not being able to hear doesn't mean you can't."

According to Chandler and Brown, there were over 200 applicants for the scholarship. Only 108 students from around the state were selected and over one million dollars in scholarships were handed out.

The money from the scholarships will go towards tuition, books, room and board and anything else they may need.

They said they plan to go to the legislature in 2024 to ask for more funds. They might even take a few of the WAVE winners with them for testimony.

Applications for the WAVE Scholarship open in early February and close in March.

4. [Learning to fly: Former refugee earns scholarship for Big Bend flight training | yahoo.com \(June 14, 2023\)](#)



Charles H. Featherstone, Columbia Basin Herald, Moses Lake, Wash.

MOSES LAKE — Victoire Wilondja is learning to fly because he wants to do something big with his life.

"The freedom of dreaming big," said Wilondja as he sat in the Flight Training Center at Big Bend Community College. "Something that I never thought I could do."

A native of Goma, a city in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Lake Kivu along the Congo-Rwanda border, the 23-year-old Wilondja said his family fled civil war in the DRC. They then lived for years in a refugee camp in Uganda's capital of Kampala. Growing up in that camp, he barely saw automobiles, much less airplanes.

In fact, he said, as a child he dreamt of learning to drive and then being to paid to be a truck driver.

"That was my goal," he said.

Being granted refugee status in the United States, and a long series of airplane rides that eventually landed the family in Spokane, changed all that, Wilondja said.

"I just remember the way it was, how amazing it was, like my first time in a plane coming here," he said. "So, I want to be a pilot. I think I want to travel more. I think I want to do something big."

Wilondja is doing something big. He just completed his first solo flight at BBCC. He's also one of 108 recipients at high schools and colleges statewide of the Washington Workforce Training & Education Coordination Board's Washington Award for Vocation Excellence (WAVE) scholarship for 2023.

According to Gary Chandler, vice president of strategic development for the Association of Washington Business, a member of the BBCC Board of Directors, co-chair of the Washington State Workforce Board and a BBCC graduate himself, the scholarship provides up to \$5,200 per year for as many as two years for students and young people pursuing technical and vocational education, whether it be in advanced manufacturing, automotive repair, nursing, aircraft maintenance or even pilot training.

Wilondja is one of three recipients locally of this year's WAVE scholarships, along with Moses Lake High School graduate Kyia Hunter-Kanoff and Ephrata High School graduate Noah Sandberg.

"One of the things about this scholarship is it's the best-kept secret. Not a lot of people know about it," Chandler said. "The Workforce Board is trying to promote the scholarship more."

This year, the board handed out \$1.1 million in scholarships, Chandler said, though the board is seeking more money from the state legislature to award more scholarships in the future. Because the need for skilled technical workers is critical, especially in aerospace, which is so important to the state's economy.

"We need pilots. Pilots are in big demand," Chandler said.

BBCC offers two-year degree programs in aircraft maintenance and technology and commercial aircraft piloting, as well as a drone certification program. Chandler said the program is well-known for producing skilled and qualified pilots.

"So I'm glad Victoire found Big Bend," Chandler said.

Wilondja, who sat with his flight log book, said the program at BBCC has been tough but it was well worth it the first time he flew solo.

"I was crying. I cried, really, because it was so amazing. I was so proud of myself, knowing how I came here," he said.

When prompted about that big thing he wants to do, Wilondja said he wants to become an airline pilot, see more of the world himself and help others — perhaps other refugees — be able to see more of the world and even dream their own big dreams.

"I feel like if I become a pilot, I'll be able to help other people too," he said.

"And I'm going to follow you now. I want to make sure you make it up there," Chandler said.

Charles H. Featherstone can be reached at cfeatherstone@columbiabasinherald.com.

5. [Monroe gets high marks in vocational excellence awards | HeraldNet.com \(June 14, 2023\)](#)



Since 1984, the state-funded scholarship has helped hundreds of students with college and technical school.

By [Janice Podsada](#)

MONROE — The Monroe School District took the top honors in this year's vocational excellence awards.

The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) is a merit-based scholarship honoring the state's top career and technical students. More than 250 high school seniors and community college students applied this year; 108 were selected. Among the winners were five Monroe

students, the most from any area this year, according to the Workforce Board, which administers the award.

Recipients can receive up to \$5,200 a year, for a maximum of two years. The grant can be used to cover tuition and other expenses at Washington colleges, universities and private career schools.

In all, \$1.1 million in scholarships were awarded.

Scholarship winner Calvin Cha, who graduated this month from Monroe High School, plans to attend Western Washington University this fall and study engineering.



Winners discuss their accomplishments with the school board and district staff. (Photo credit Monroe School District)

He will receive between \$4,200 and \$5,200 a year, funds that will help him cover college costs, he said.

"It definitely helps," said Cha, 18.

Cha studied aerospace manufacturing at Monroe High School. The hands-on program engaged his creative and technical skills, he said.

This summer he plans to work and prepare for college in the fall.

A committee of business, labor and education leaders select the winners.

"For too long our country ignored the needs of businesses that are engaged in manufacturing," said Larry Brown, co-chair of the Workforce Board.



Workforce Board Co-Chair Larry Brown congratulates 2023 WAVE winners from Monroe. (Photo credit Monroe School District)

The award "removes barriers to education and living wage jobs," Brown said. "The WAVE program is an outstanding public investment in middle class jobs and Washington's future."

"I think it's a smart move by the state Legislature to fund these WAVE scholarships," Brown said.

The WAVE award was established by the Legislature in 1984 to help emphasize the importance of career and technical education. The award was suspended in 2010 due to budget cuts during the Great Recession but was revived last year by the Legislature.

"The Workforce Board is proud to support the many outstanding opportunities offered by career and technical education," Workforce Board Co-Chair Gary Chandler said in a statement. "This is a great program that directly impacts the many Washington employers facing labor shortages. We look forward to working with the Legislature to increase next year's funding."

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is a partnership of business, labor and government helping Washington residents succeed in family-wage jobs and helping meet employer needs for skilled workers.

To view this year's winners, go to <https://tinyurl.com/mr3trnry>



Back row, from left, Larry Brown, Co-Chair, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Shannon Tarrach, Director of College and Career Readiness, Monroe High School. Front row of students, from left, Boramy Sam, Calvin Cha and Amor Ayala Luna. (Photo credit Monroe School District)

Local Winners:

Arlington High School: Isabella Hassa

Everett Community College: Kylie Aschenbrenner, Robert Abbett

Kamiak High School: Nathan Pao

Marysville Getchell High School: Dante Rieger

Monroe High School: Amor Ayala Luna, Calvin Cha, Boramy Sam, Abigail Van Hook, Patrick Vigus

Mountlake Terrace High School: Olivia Campanario

Shoreline Community College: Nathaniel Blood, Svitlana Kryshchanovska, Christian Mariano

Stanwood High School: Audrey Miller, Aidan Munson, Darlena Schmitt

Janice Podsada: 425-339-3097; jpodsada@heraldnet.com; Twitter: [@JanicePods](https://twitter.com/JanicePods).

6. [Learning to fly: Former refugee earns scholarship for Big Bend flight training | Columbia Basin Herald \(June 13, 2023\)](#)



Victoire Wilondja stands next to a Beechcraft Sport 150 used by Big Bend Community College for pilot training. A refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Wilondja is one of 108 recipients of the Washington Award for Vocational Excellence this year to help them pursue skilled technical education.

CHARLES H. FEATHERSTONE/COLUMBIA BASIN HERALD

By CHARLES H. FEATHERSTONE

Staff Writer | June 13, 2023 5:02 PM

MOSES LAKE — Victoire Wilondja is learning to fly because he wants to do something big with his life.

"The freedom of dreaming big," said Wilondja as he sat in the Flight Training Center at Big Bend Community College. "Something that I never thought I could do."

A native of Goma, a city in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Lake Kivu along the Congo-Rwanda border, the 23-year-old Wilondja said his family fled civil war in the DRC. They

then lived for years in a refugee camp in Uganda's capital of Kampala. Growing up in that camp, he barely saw automobiles, much less airplanes.

In fact, he said, as a child he dreamt of learning to drive and then being paid to be a truck driver.

"That was my goal," he said.

Being granted refugee status in the United States, and a long series of airplane rides that eventually landed the family in Spokane, changed all that, Wilondja said.

"I just remember the way it was, how amazing it was, like my first time in a plane coming here," he said. "So, I want to be a pilot. I think I want to travel more. I think I want to do something big."

Wilondja is doing something big. He just completed his first solo flight at BBCC. He's also one of 108 recipients at high schools and colleges statewide of the Washington Workforce Training & Education Coordination Board's Washington Award for Vocation Excellence (WAVE) scholarship for 2023.

According to Gary Chandler, vice president of strategic development for the Association of Washington Business, a member of the BBCC Board of Directors, co-chair of the Washington State Workforce Board and a BBCC graduate himself, the scholarship provides up to \$5,200 per year for as many as two years for students and young people pursuing technical and vocational education, whether it be in advanced manufacturing, automotive repair, nursing, aircraft maintenance or even pilot training.

Wilondja is one of three recipients locally of this year's WAVE scholarships, along with Moses Lake High School graduate Kyia Hunter-Kanoff and Ephrata High School graduate Noah Sandberg.

"One of the things about this scholarship is it's the best-kept secret. Not a lot of people know about it," Chandler said. "The Workforce Board is trying to promote the scholarship more."

This year, the board handed out \$1.1 million in scholarships, Chandler said, though the board is seeking more money from the state legislature to award more scholarships in the future. Because the need for skilled technical workers is critical, especially in aerospace, which is so important to the state's economy.

"We need pilots. Pilots are in big demand," Chandler said.

BBCC offers two-year degree programs in aircraft maintenance and technology and commercial aircraft piloting, as well as a drone certification program. Chandler said the program is well-known for producing skilled and qualified pilots.

"So I'm glad Victoire found Big Bend," Chandler said.

Wilondja, who sat with his flight log book, said the program at BBCC has been tough but it was well worth it the first time he flew solo.

"I was crying. I cried, really, because it was so amazing. I was so proud of myself, knowing how I came here," he said.

When prompted about that big thing he wants to do, Wilondja said he wants to become an airline pilot, see more of the world himself and help others — perhaps other refugees — be able to see more of the world and even dream their own big dreams.

"I feel like if I become a pilot, I'll be able to help other people too," he said.

"And I'm going to follow you now. I want to make sure you make it up there," Chandler said.

Charles H. Featherstone can be reached at cfeatherstone@columbiabasinherald.com.

7. [Local students awarded vocational excellence scholarships | Fox 11 Tri Cities Fox 41 Yakima \(June 8, 2023\)](#)



by [Michael LeCompte Digital Content Producer](#) | June 8, 2023 12:53 pm



OLYMPIA, Wash.- Over 100 high school seniors and community college students across Washington, including several from the Mid-Columbia have been awarded [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence \(WAVE\) scholarships](#).

"The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence removes barriers to education and living wage jobs," said Workforce board co-chair Larry Brown.

According to a [Workforce Board](#) press release announcing the scholarships the WAVE is a merit-based award that helps undergraduate students pay for tuition and other costs at Washington colleges, universities and private career schools.

Regional WAVE scholarship award winners:

Jesus Chavez Lara, Chiawana High School. Annalysa Vaughn-Villa, Yakima Valley College. Ashley Curtin, Yakima Valley College. Abigail Marquez, Yakima Valley College. Noah Sandberg, Ephrata

High School. Maxwell Steele, Southridge High School. Chaeli Williams, Selah High School. Olivia Rodriguez-Elizondo, Pasco High School. Nathan Pao, Kamiakin High School. Isabella Martinez, Prosser High School. Marcus Klem, Walla Walla Community College. Angel Garcia, Davis High School.

8. [Local students awarded vocational excellence scholarships | News | nbcrightnow.com \(June 8, 2023\)](https://www.nbcrighnow.com/news/local-students-awarded-vocational-excellence-scholarships)



Michael LeCompte, Digital Content Producer



OLYMPIA, Wash.- Over 100 high school seniors and community college students across Washington, including several from the Mid-Columbia have been awarded Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) scholarships.

"The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence removes barriers to education and living wage jobs," said Workforce board co-chair Larry Brown.

According to a Workforce Board press release announcing the scholarships the WAVE is a merit-based award that helps undergraduate students pay for tuition and other costs at Washington colleges, universities and private career schools.

Regional WAVE scholarship award winners:

- Jesus Chavez Lara. Chiawana High School.
- Annalysa Vaughn-Villa. Yakima Valley College.

- Ashley Curtin. Yakima Valley College.
- Abigail Marquez. Yakima Valley College.
- Noah Sandberg. Ephrata High School.
- Maxwell Steele. Southridge High School.
- Chaeli Williams. Selah High School.
- Olivia Rodriguez-Elizondo. Pasco High School.
- Nathan Pao. Kamiakin High School.
- Isabella Martinez. Prosser High School.
- Marcus Klem. Walla Walla Community College.
- Angel Garcia. Davis High School.

9. [Recent Clarkston High School Graduate Sophie Henderson Selected as Recipient of 2023 WAVE Scholarship | Local | bigcountrynewsconnection.com \(June 8, 2023\)](#)



Sophie Henderson (Clarkston High School)

CLARKSTON, WA - Sophie Henderson, who graduated from Clarkston High School during a commencement ceremony held last weekend, has been selected as a recipient of the 2023 Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) scholarship.

During her time at CHS Henderson served as the area 11 state DECA President and qualified for the International DECA competition during her sophomore, junior and senior years.

In total, 108 high school seniors and community college students received 2023 WAVE scholarships. This year's award pays about \$5,200 per year, for up to two years. Awards vary depending on student financial situations and tuition at the college they attend.

The WAVE is a merit-based award that helps undergraduate students pay for tuition and other costs at Washington colleges, universities, and private career schools. Career and technical education students from Washington high schools and public community and technical colleges are eligible to apply.

The program is funded by the Washington Legislature. The scholarship is administered by Washington's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, which serves as the state's policy lead on how career and technical education is delivered across the state. The Washington Student Achievement Council manages distribution of the WAVE scholarship.

10. Nearly \$600,000 in scholarships and awards presented | Okanogan Valley Gazette-Tribune (June 7, 2023)

OKANOGAN VALLEY
GAZETTE-TRIBUNE

By [Laura Knowlton](#)



Tonasket Graduates prepare to move their tassels to the other side of their mortarboards at their commencement ceremony held at the Tonasket High School gym on Saturday, June 3. Kelly Denison/submitted photo

TONASKET — Ninety-six students graduated from Tonasket High School (THS) during commencement Saturday, June 3, held in the Tonasket High School Gym. The ceremony marked a major milestone and the beginning of a whole new world for these young adults.



Valedictorian Madeline Ashmore addressed her class during Tonasket High School's graduation.

The two hour ceremony was a packed house, with over 1,000 people in attendance. The event was mostly student-led. This year's event location was voted on by the students, who decided to hold graduation indoors, for the first time since COVID.

"I'm so proud of our graduation ceremony. For me, it was the first ceremony held indoors since COVID. It was phenomenal. I was so proud of the ceremony we provided for our students and our community," said Trisha Roach, Tonasket High School Principal.

The event opened with the National Anthem, sung by 2023 THS graduate Gracia Ellis. Next, "The Citizens," of Omak, a family drumming group, played the Honor Song.

"The Tonasket School District honors native people and land on which the Tonasket High School is located, in Okanogan County. We acknowledge the Colville Confederated Tribes," said Roach.

Special music was provided on the guitar by Alexis Sanchez-Escobar, who sang in both Spanish and English.

Xander Batton received the Perseverance Award. Roach said a highlight during the ceremony was when the entire class erupted when Enrique Pio received his diploma.

"They're celebrating for and with him, it literally brought me to tears," said Roach.

Roach said this year's ceremony felt like the most inclusive graduation she has ever attended.

"I've been to a lot of graduations. It was exactly what we are about, family. Every one of the students are a part of the family. That felt really good," said Roach.

Students received speeches from Valedictorian Madeline Ashmore and Salutatorian Carol Manglona.

There wasn't a dry eye in the place when Katie Walker, High School Counselor, gave her farewell address to the class. The students both laughed and cried as Walker addressed them.

"I have so many memories of you all," said Walker.

Roach said Walker's speech was one of the best she's ever heard.

"She touched on something that connected with every single kid that was on that stage," said Roach.

At least \$570,586 in scholarships were awarded during the ceremony.

"It was incredible how many people came out to support these kids. We have such an incredible staff in our district, as far as making this happen. I felt the tremendous pride of our community while in that gym. It was a pretty awesome feeling," said Roach.

Scholarships and Awards

Madeline Ashmore: Gonzaga University, \$208,000.00; Washington State Honors Award, Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class, \$208,000.00,

Ameron Bretz: Tonasket Athletic Booster Club, \$750.00; Masonic Lodge #201, 1,000.

Kendra Castrejon: Edwin E. McKeen Sr, \$5,000.00; American Legion Brict, Smith, Schmeling Post 82, \$1,000.00; Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class, \$6,000.00.

Ella Cordova: Beyers Market, \$500.00; North Central WA Chapter of the ICC, Leland & Helen McDaniel; Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund, \$900.00.

Jacie Deebach: Brady Freeman Memorial, \$500.00; Aurora Masonic Lodge #201, \$1,000.00; Centralia College Athletic Scholarship, \$4,830.00; Youth Foundation, \$1,000.00; American Legion Unit 82 Mildred Marchesseau Memorial, \$500.00; American Legion Unit 82 Vocational Scholarship, \$500.00; Pacific Calcium, THS Alumni-Susan Williams Memorial, North Central WA Chapter of the ICC; Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund, \$1,000.00; Tonasket Civic League, \$305.00; American Legion Brict, Smith, Schmeling Post 82, \$1,000.00; Ole Drew Scholar Athlete, \$500.00; Tonasket Athletic Booster Club, \$750.00; **Washington Award for Vocational Excellence, \$10,400.00;** Bishop Fleet Foundation, \$10,000.00; Holmdahl Family Scholarship, \$5,000.00; Jim Clarkson Memorial, \$500.00; Washington CPA Foundation, \$2,000.00; Bonaparte Snowmobile & ATV Club, \$750.00.

Gracia Ellis: American Legion Auxiliary Department Gift, \$400.00; Beyers Market, \$500.00; Hamilton Youth Foundation, \$1,000.00; Pacific Aquaculture, \$2,500.00; Sons of American Legion Post 82 Career and Tech, \$500.00; Smith-n-Nelson, Tonasket Pizza Co, Wahl Dental Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund, \$2,150.00; Tonasket Civic League, \$305.00; US Armed Forces Legacy, \$1,000.00; American Legion Brict, Smith, Schmeling Post 82, \$1,000.00; Tonasket Education Association, \$500.00; George Washington Foundation, \$2,100.00; Fraternal Order of Eagles #3002; \$1,000.00; Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class, \$12,955.00.

Emily Mendez-Garcia: Michael Pyatt Fund, \$1,100.00; WAEF-Delmar Smith, \$2,250.00; Beyers Market, \$500.00; Grants Market

Yesica Glijon-Soriano: Hickman's Body Shop, North Central WA Chapter of the ICC, Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund, \$1,400.00; Beyers Market, \$500.00.

Miriam Gutierrez: Walt Kelly Memorial, \$1,100.00; Aeneas Valley Community Association, \$500.00.

Daniel Keane: Beyers Market, \$500.00; American Legion Unit 82 Mildred Marchesseau Memorial, \$500.00; Okanogan County Ecology Scholarship, \$500.00; Okanogan Valley Bass Fishing Club, \$1,500.00; Pacific Aquaculture, \$2,500.00; Sons of American Legion Post 82 Career and Tech, \$500.00; North Central WA Chapter of the ICC; THS Alumni Association, Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund, \$650.00; Tonasket Civic League, \$305.00; Tonasket Fire Dept, \$500.00; US Armed Forces Legacy, \$1,000.00; American Legion Brict, Smith, Schmeling Post 82, \$1,000.00; Tonasket Gun Club, \$500.00.

Carol Lee Ann Manglona: Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class.

Erik Martin: Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class; Walter Brattain, \$1,000.00; Wenatchee Valley College Foundations Scholarship, \$1,550.00; Linfield Presidential Scholarship, \$29,000.00; Linfield Recognition Award, \$6,680.00.

Heriberto Martinez-Regis: WAEF-Schlect Family Scholarship, \$1,000.00.

Diane Mendoza: Beyers Market, \$500.00; Gonzaga, \$216,000.00

Kara Reverente: Joan Inlow Hylton Memorial, \$500.00.

Alexis Rodriguez-Smith: THS Alumni Association, Bob & Jane Thompson, North Central WA Chapter of the ICC, Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund, \$1,100.00; Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class, \$1,100.00; Boeing STEM Scholarship, TBA.

Abigail Steinshouer: George Washington Foundation, \$2,100.00; Hamilton Youth Foundation, \$1,000.00; Al & Peggy Seccomb; Kiwanis Club of Tonasket, Tonasket Community Scholarship General Fund;\$1,400.00; Kettle Range Conservation Group, \$1,000.00; P1FCU Scholarship, \$1,000.00; Steiner Foundation, \$3,500.00; Washington State Opportunity Baccalaureate Scholarship, \$2,500.00; WWU WA College Grant,\$1,906.00; WWU Tuition waiver, \$2,100.00; AMB Achievement Award, \$2,500.00.

Logan Sutton: Alumni Hamilton Youth Foundation, \$1,000.00.

Joseph Thornton: Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class.

Maria Timm: Washington State Honors Award: Top 10% of WA State HS graduating class.

Grace Wilson: Beyers Market, \$500.00; Hamilton Youth Foundation, \$1,000.00; American Legion Unit 82 Mildred Marchesseau Memorial, \$500.00; Skagit Farmers, \$1,500.00; Tonasket Civic League, \$305.00; Window Rock Ranch, \$750.00; Bonaparte Snowmobile & ATV Club,\$750.00.

Grand total: \$571,086.00.

WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

128 Tenth Avenue S.W.

PO BOX 43105

Olympia, WA 98504

11 July 2023

Eleni Papadakis

Executive Director

To the of Washington and the Members of the Board,

It is difficult to find the words to express what the WAVE award means to me. You are not just investing in me. You are propelling me forward into a better future and changing my present into a platform that gives me the tools to achieve all that I have dreamed of but never believed possible until now. College was always a hope, but never a reality. I was raised by a single mom, a teacher, who understood the true importance and value that an education provides, not only for an individual, but for community as a whole. It took everything we had together to survive. It was a hard life but one I would not trade for another, easier path. My mother and our struggle made me the determined and grateful individual I am today. She always impressed upon me that I could do anything I put my mind to. I am determined to prove her right and make her proud, as I undertake this journey.

Your support of my education enables me to move forward, to achieve my dreams, and with gratitude in my heart, know that I am closer to a future where I can someday positively give back the support our community has so incredibly bestowed upon me. Thank you for your faith in me. Please know that I carry it with me, always, as I step toward my future. I am forever grateful.

Sincerely,

Desiree A. Gibbons



no. XLVHLL



Designed Artfully. Made Thoughtfully.



Designed in USA. Printed in China with soy inks on chlorine-free paper.
This product is recyclable. © Compendium, Inc. All rights reserved. green-inspired.com

I am truly honored to be chosen as a recipient for the 2023 WAVE scholarship. I am super excited to attend Western Washington University's Honors College in the fall, and look forward to a career in a computer science related field.

Your scholarship is a huge help in making a 4-year college less of a financial burden & make obtaining a master's degree possible. I truly appreciate the help, and am extremely thankful for being selected for this award.

Thank you,

-Hai Wallis

— Kristina Van Hook —

To all on the Workforce training
& Education Coordinating Board,

Thank you so much for selecting
me to be a recipient for the
WAVE Scholarship. CTE has
taught me a lot, and I'm so
glad that my School's program
will be recognized because of
it.

I'm so excited to be able to use
the scholarship money to help
fund my education. Going into
grad school won't be cheap, so
saving as much as I can with
my Bachelor's is important to
me.

As well as this, our Sports medicine
Program is phenomenal, I've learned
so much from my teachers and
athletic trainer, so I wouldn't be
where I am today without them.
They encourage me to pursue a
career in physical therapy.

Thank you all again so much,
Hbrigail Van Hook



www.monroe.wednet.edu

T 360.804.2500

Monroe, WA 98272

14692 - 179th Ave SE



MONROE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Larry-

Thank you so much for coming
out to our school board
meeting to celebrate our WAVE
scholarship winners. We were
honored & excited to have you
there. I hope we can
continue our conversation about
how to support CTE/trades programs
in the future! @ShannonArach



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MONROE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 31, 2023

Dear Scholarship Selection Committee and Sponsors

Washington Award for Vocational Excellence

Thank you so much for awarding me a scholarship. I am so thankful for this opportunity.

A few months ago, my college costs were so high that I feared I would not be able to attend college this year. I am now proud to say that my dreams are becoming more tangible, and I owe a large portion of that to you.

Pursuing a Bachelor's degree at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) in general business with a minor in nonprofit organization leadership is my plan. My goal is to be a four-year member of PLU's International Honors Program while maintaining a 3.5 GPA or higher. To foster conversation with industry professionals and develop connections with international nonprofits outside the United States, I strive to be a competitive applicant for the IHON-Oxford semester away program.

Thank you again so much for helping to make the above goals possible. No words can express how grateful I am for you believing in me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marissa Jackman", written in a cursive style.

Marissa Jackman
South Kitsap High School

Andrew -
Thank you so much for all your
help + support in honoring our
WAVE Scholarship award
student recipients. We
really appreciate all you did
to recognize these amazing
students. Shannon
Tarrach



Dear WAVE Scholarship Committee,

I wanted to write to you today to extend my utmost gratitude for being selected as a recipient of one of your scholarships this year! Your generosity is extremely meaningful to me and I am honored to have been chosen by you all. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Delayne Hanson, Elma High School c/o 2023:

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: Tayla Eliason
Sent: Thursday, June 1, 2023 7:12 PM
To: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Subject: Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

External Email

Greetings Eleni,

Thank you so much for selecting me as a scholarship recipient! This really means a lot and I will put it to good use as I continue to develop my abilities in computer science at Eastern Washington University.

Once again, thank you so, so much for this scholarship and the opportunities it will provide!

Sincerely,
Tayla Eliason

On Fri, May 26, 2023 at 2:28 PM Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:



May 26, 2023

Tayla Ann Eliason

Dear Tayla:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence](#) (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

We will also notify your school's career and technical education instructor or administrator about your award. Expect a formal letter and award certificate sent to your mailing address in the near future.

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: emzzhura <emzzhura@wtb.wa.gov>
Sent: > Wednesday, May 31, 2023 4:14 PM
To: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Subject: Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

External Email

Wow this email was hiding in my spam inbox!

Thank you so much for the opportunity, this scholarship is going to help me so much and I'm so grateful for this award.

Emily Zhuravel

On Fri, May 26, 2023 at 2:31 PM Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:



May 26, 2023

Emily Zhuravel

Dear Emily:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence](#) (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

We will also notify your school's career and technical education instructor or administrator about your award. Expect a formal letter and award certificate sent to your mailing address in the near future.

The Washington Student Achievement Council will contact you by email to share more details about the award and how to access it in the coming weeks. Please be sure to check your email's spam folder for messages from the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC).

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: Adriana Gongora <adriana.gongora@wtb.wa.gov>
Sent: > Wednesday, May 31, 2023 11:35 AM
To: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Subject: Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

External Email

Eleni,

Oh my gosh, that is so exciting!!!!
Thank you so much!!!
I am so very grateful!!!

Let me know anything else you need from me.

Thank you ten times and over again,
Adriana Gongora

On Fri, May 26, 2023 at 11:29 PM Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:



May 26, 2023

Adriana Nicole Gongora

Dear Adriana:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence](#) (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

We will also notify your school's career and technical education instructor or administrator about your award. Expect a formal letter and award certificate sent to your mailing address in the near future.

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: Jacob Smith <jacob.smith@wtb.wa.gov>
Sent: > Wednesday, May 31, 2023 10:46 AM
To: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Subject: Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

External Email

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for awarding me the scholarship! I am really honored to receive this scholarship.

-Jacob Smith

On May 26, 2023, at 2:30 PM, Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:

<image001.png>

May 26, 2023

Jacob E. Smith

Dear Jacob:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence](#) (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

We will also notify your school's career and technical education instructor or administrator about your award. Expect a formal letter and award certificate sent to your mailing address in the near future.

The Washington Student Achievement Council will contact you by email to share more details about the award and how to access it in the coming weeks. Please be sure to check your email's spam folder for messages from the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC).

Again, congratulations on receiving a 2023 WAVE award. We appreciate your dedication to career and technical education and hope this will help you move forward with your goals.

Sincerely,

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: Kevin Nguyen <
Sent: > Wednesday, May 31, 2023 10:34 AM
To: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Subject: Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

Follow Up Flag:
Flag Status: Follow up
Flagged

External Email

Hello!

Thank you so much for your time and consideration of me and my application. This scholarship will help me a lot in funding my education and gives me the encouragement and opportunity to further my education in Computer Science and Engineering!

Thank you,
Kevin Nguyen

On Fri, May 26, 2023 at 2:30 PM Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:



May 26, 2023

Kevin Nguyen

Dear Kevin:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence](#) (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: Grace Smith <grace.smith@wtb.wa.gov>
Sent: > Sunday, May 28, 2023 6:26 PM
To: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Subject: Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

External Email

Dear Washington Workforce Board,

Thank you so much for this incredible opportunity and scholarship! I am so honored that I was chosen, and I really appreciate it! This means so much to me!!!
Thank you again, I can't wait to hear back for more information!

Sincerely,
Grace T. Smith

On Fri, May 26, 2023 at 2:30 PM Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:

May 26, 2023

Grace Turner Smith

Dear Grace:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

We will also notify your school's career and technical education instructor or administrator about your award. Expect a formal letter and award certificate sent to your mailing address in the near future.

Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)

From: Rene Martinez <
Sent:
To: > Friday, May 26, 2023 3:12 PM
Subject: Lenderman, Andrew (WTB)
Re: 2023 WAVE Scholarship: Congratulations!

Follow Up Flag:
Flag Status: Follow up
Flagged

External Email

This is so exciting! Thank you so much. What is the proper mailing address for a thank you note for the WAVE Scholarship?

Isabella Martinez

God is GOOD!

On May 26, 2023, at 2:30 PM, Lenderman, Andrew (WTB) <andrew.lenderman@wtb.wa.gov> wrote:

<image001.png>

May 26, 2023

Isabella Eleanor Martinez

Dear Isabella:

Congratulations! Washington's Workforce Board is pleased to let you know that you have been awarded a [Washington Award for Vocational Excellence](#) (WAVE) in recognition of your outstanding achievement and commitment to career and technical education.

This award aims to help Washington's top career and technical education students reach their education and career goals. Based on current state funding, this award will pay, roughly, as much as \$5,200 per year for up to two years. These funds can be used to pay tuition, room and board, and more.

Please note, the amount you receive may be less than the full award amount if the school you attend charges less in tuition and fees.

We will also notify your school's career and technical education instructor or administrator about your award. Expect a formal letter and award certificate sent to your mailing address in the near future.

The Washington Student Achievement Council will contact you by email to share more details about the award and how to access it in the coming weeks. Please be sure to check your email's spam folder for messages from the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC).

Again, congratulations on receiving a 2023 WAVE award. We appreciate your dedication to career and technical education and hope this will help you move forward with your goals.

Tab 2

Talent and Prosperity for All Plan Update

PRESENTED BY: Ben Robinson, FirstRule Group, on behalf of the Workforce Board

CHECK ONE:

☐ Action Item

☐ Possible Action

☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The Board will receive an overview on efforts to update the state's strategic workforce plan, Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP), focused on agency partner interviews and planning future community forums.

Please review the short video update on the [Board Meeting page](#) prior to the meeting in preparation for our discussion on August 9th.

BACKGROUND:

The TAP Plan is Washington's four-year strategic plan for the state workforce system. It serves as a coordinating document for the many partner agencies, and it is required both by state statute and by the federal government for continued federal money supporting workforce activities.

Early this year, the Board set Guiding Principles and Strategic Priorities for this new plan. Interviews conducted in the last two months helped identify actions and approaches already in motion that align with these Strategic Priorities.

The First Rule group has created a video update of the planning process and overview of next steps. Board members will be provided time to ask questions and provide additional direction to the project team at the August 9 meeting.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

For Discussion: In the accompanying video, we shared actions and approaches we heard during the interviews that align with each Strategic Priority. Do these actions and approaches align with your organization's strategic plans? Is there anything glaringly missing?

For Discussion: We have included a draft outreach list for our Community Forums work. Are there any additional organizations you recommend we add to the list? Would you recommend any changes to the structure of the meetings as we have described them?

Tab 3

Opening TAP Chapters Overview

PRESENTED BY: Dave Wallace and Coral Garey, Workforce Board

CHECK ONE:

☐ Action Item

☐ Possible Action

☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The first two chapters of Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP), the state's strategic plan for workforce development, set the stage for the planning process and the for the final elements of the final approved plan. These chapters provide important data and other background information on the current economy and workforce.

This will be a data-focused presentation highlighting proposed content for the first two chapters of the TAP Plan. The first chapter focuses on the state's recent economic performance – while showing good overall numbers, state labor markets are not providing economic opportunities equally. The second chapter (and second half of the presentation) will focus on demographic disparities.

The following data points will be covered:

- A general economic overview showing how the nation and state have fared since the Great Recession and the pandemic.
- Comparative regional earnings disaggregated demographically.
- How industry composition varies by areas and affects economic outcomes
- Earnings, unemployment, educational attainment by:
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Sex
 - Disability

BACKGROUND

Washington's economy has received positive attention in recent years for job creation, wage growth, and its overall performance. However, economic recovery after the pandemic remains uneven and significant disparities continue.

The Workforce Board's vision is that "Every Washington community is thriving, inclusive and economically resilient." This means all communities: urban and rural, communities of color, people with disabilities, low-income communities, immigrants and refugees, veterans and more.

The first two chapters of Washington's workforce development plan are meant to set the table for what is to follow. These two chapters will show that despite having a relatively robust economy, there are many being left behind and in need of services from the workforce development system. We will not be exploring data from the system (i.e., how many participants or employers served, outcomes and impact of programs, etc.), but instead will explore data about the overall economy and the general population, and through data visualization focus on who and which communities are not benefitting from Washington's economic successes.

This presentation sets the stage for participants in the TAP planning process to think more critically about the strategic priorities identified by the Board. The Board's priorities will encompass the comprehensive workforce development system, and how all components of the system can work together to affect positive change – better outcomes for our workers, our employers, and all our communities.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION

This item is for Board discussion only.

TAP's first two chapters should tell a compelling story about why our state's strategic plan for workforce development is needed and why particular priorities were chosen. It serves as a stage-setter for the identification of core approaches and tactics, goals, and objectives of the final plan.

Staff are seeking feedback and input on a presentation highlighting proposed content of the first two plan chapters, and if warranted, direction on new elements to be considered.

Tab 4

Legislative Proposals for Governor and Legislature

PRESENTED BY: Nova Gattman & Board Staff Leads

CHECK ONE:

☐ Action Item

☒ Possible Action

☐ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The Board will have the opportunity to review potential legislative requests to the Governor and Legislature and where consensus is reached, direct staff to develop and submit the formal proposal(s) through the formal agency request process (due September 13).

BACKGROUND:

At the May Workforce Board retreat, the Board discussed and agreed to move forward with further development of decision packages to the Governor and Legislature. Staff have prepared summaries of each funding request using a standard template following this coversheet, except where noted. A list of each item follows below:

WAVE Scholarship & Funding Request

The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence, or WAVE, is the state's career and technical education scholarship. This merit-based scholarship is a win-win for Washington: It helps students reach their career goals and builds a strong workforce to support our state's future economic success. The scholarship provides significant financial resources to help students pay for tuition, books, living expenses and other expenses while in an approved Washington school.

Workforce Board staff have identified the need for additional funding to adequately cover the cost of tuition and develop a scholarship interface that better serves students. For more information on the WAVE program, including a roundup of news on this year's awardees, please visit <https://wtb.wa.gov/wave/>.

IT Equity & Digital Literacy

Board staff began working with a broad coalition of stakeholders approximately four years ago on a proposal to bring entry ramps to IT career pathways to every community in Washington. The coalition emphasized the need for access to digital literacy and work-based

learning opportunities as core components of this proposal. The Workforce Board submitted a request for the 2022 and 2023 Legislative Sessions through the agency request process, but it was not funded. This is still a critical issue affecting marginalized and disadvantaged population groups. Board staff recommend that the Board continues to advocate for the necessary training and supports for digital literacy and IT career equity as we increase the usage of technology in every aspect of work and daily living.

Over the past couple years, there has been significant federal and state investment in closing the digital divide across Washington. The Department of Commerce has been a leader in these efforts and has established an Office of Digital Equity to continue their work. Staff have been meeting with Commerce and other stakeholders to understand how those investments have addressed the Board's priority issues, and where more effort and investment is still needed to close disparities. Board staff will continue to work closely with Commerce and with coalition partners to identify core components of a new proposal. The Board will not have a final proposal to react to on August 9th. Staff would like to have direction from the Board to continue proposal development with coalition partners.

Long-Term Care (LTC) Registered Apprenticeship Continuation

The Workforce Board, in collaboration with the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission and Department of Labor and Industries, has been implementing a 2022 legislative proviso focused on creating a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) registered apprenticeship program for frontline staff in LTC facilities. The project currently has 37 students going through their nursing program prerequisite courses. Three statewide employers are key partners in the project, along with Edmonds College as the education provider and Yakima Valley College as the grant lead for a federal HRSA appropriation.

The target date for the state Apprenticeship Council recognition is March of 2024, with students starting the LPN program as apprentices at Edmonds College in Fall of 2024. With state funding ending June 30, 2025, this leaves very little time to ensure sustainability of the program, and even to see the completion of the first cohort. This request is for an additional two years of program funding through June 30, 2027, to provide the necessary supports as the program scales and becomes financially sustainable.

Workforce Board Program Funding

This request would address gaps in the Workforce Board's portfolio of activities that have been prioritized by Board staff as high-level needs. This includes a state match for federal Perkins funding, which is dedicated to career and technical education, supporting the development of a digital wallet and participant ownership of their customer data as part of the Board's integrated service delivery collective impact initiative (also part of a National Governors Association project), and hiring a policy staff member focused on business engagement and the intersection of economic and workforce development.

****NOTE: The items below are not items where the Board would be putting forward any formal agency request in the Governor's budget process. However, these could be considered for potential action.****

Credential Transparency

The Workforce Board Retreat in May brought forward the topic of Credential Transparency as both a TAP strategic priority and also as a legislative action item in supporting Rep. Slatter's House Bill (HB) 1821, introduced in the 2023 Legislative Session. Rep. Slatter has indicated an interest in working with the Board on potential updates to the bill for the 2024 Legislative Session.

As a reminder HB 1821 was cited several times by participants as a potential vehicle to advance the Credential Transparency TAP strategic priority. HB 1821 focused on improving a credential-seeker's ability to make informed decisions about education and training options, especially in relation to career success and economic mobility. Central to HB 1821 is the creation of a Credential Transparency Work Group that would be staffed by the Workforce Board and include a wide variety of credentialing organizations, workforce development agencies, and others, to develop recommendations that build on best or promising practices, for a transparent and easily navigable credentialing system for Washington. It also proposed, with funding provided in the budget, the development of public-private sector pilot projects to test common descriptors of skills, competencies, and experiences within high-demand occupations.

The Board may decide at this meeting to move forward with supporting HB 1821 and providing updates to Rep. Slatter as the Credential Transparency discussion during TAP planning continues. Board staff will stay in touch with Rep. Slatter about this work and findings, especially about current promising practices, new ideas and potential barriers to success, as she explores follow-up legislation this session.

Job Skills Program (JSP)

After discussion with SBCTC, staff recommends that the original request for a \$25 million biennial budget for the JSP is held for a request in the 2025 Legislative Session, to allow for sufficient time for the development of a more robust proposal on incumbent working training, including JSP. The Board may choose to highlight JSP and incumbent worker training as an important priority on the legislative agenda while signaling interest in submitting a decision package for additional funding in 2025.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Potential Action: At the August 9 Board meeting, members will have the opportunity to discuss the requests and provide guidance to staff about moving forward with the requests for submission to the Governor in September.

If the Board is not yet ready to take action on any of the policy items up for potential inclusion in the Board's agency requests, Board staff will provide time to finalize the requests at a special Board meeting (TBD) to finalize any proposals before the Governor's office September 13, 2023, deadline for submission.

Legislative Agenda – Draft Project Summary

Project Title: Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) Scholarship Funding Request

Staff Lead: Andrew Lenderman

1. Short Project Description:

The Workforce Board requests \$3,728,000 to fully fund the Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE): bringing the appropriation for WAVE to \$3,528,000 per year (ongoing) to fund three scholarships in each of the state's 49 legislative districts, and \$200,000 in one-time funding to upgrade the scholarship application portal to current standards. The WAVE scholarship is an outstanding investment in our state's future: it highlights the importance of CTE as an educational pathway, helps students succeed and builds the skilled workforce critical to Washington's economy and quality of life.

The request seeks to better align award amounts with the costs of attending college (per WAVE statute RCW 28B.76.670, costs are based on tuition costs at state public, four-year institutions), helping Washington career and technical education (CTE) students fulfill their education and career ambitions at a wide range of qualifying institutions, both public and private. This request also seeks to upgrade to a more accessible scholarship portal so that more students have access to this excellent opportunity.

2. What is the project?

WAVE was created by the Legislature in 1984 to emphasize the importance of career and technical education, and the value of real-world, hands-on learning. WAVE reflects legislative commitment to maximize public awareness of the achievements of students enrolled in CTE programs across the state. WAVE recognizes high-performing CTE students—including graduating high school seniors who have completed (or are in process of completing) their second course in a single CTE program. Students attending one of Washington's 34 public community and technical colleges are also eligible, provided they are in the process of completing at least one year of a professional-technical program. Each of the state's 49 legislative districts may have up to three winners annually, including two high school seniors and one community and technical college student.

WAVE was designed to encourage CTE students to consider postsecondary pathways to career success. The legislation, by indexing awards levels to public 4-year college tuition rates, opened the prospects for CTE students to consider the full range of postsecondary options available. However, the rebooted WAVE was not funded sufficiently to meet this original objective. Based on the funding provided in the 2023 state budget, the 108 WAVE winners were awarded up to \$5,200 each year for two years. Current tuition at Washington public four-year universities is approaching \$12,000 a year. A biennial appropriation of \$7,056,000 will bring the current WAVE award into alignment with the original legislative intent.

Since this long-standing scholarship was relaunched in 2022—following a 10-year suspension that began with budget cuts during the Great Recession—there has been increasing interest in this merit-based scholarship and a corresponding rise in applicants from Washington high schools and community and technical colleges. However, many applicants have struggled to complete their submissions—starting the process but stopping short of completing it—due to technical challenges and limitations with the WAVE submission process. In 2023, approximately 700 students initiated a WAVE application through the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) WashBoard portal, but only 250 applicants successfully submitted a completed packet. Of those 250 applicants, 108 Washington high school and community and technical college students were awarded. Forty-five legislative districts, 24 counties, and 67 Washington cities were represented by this year's cohort. Far more students are expected to apply in 2024 as the WAVE story gains traction across the state.

The older state scholarship portal where WAVE currently is housed is not designed to accommodate the needs of this unique merit-based scholarship. We have initiated a review of a range of scholarship programs similar to WAVE across the country and have an estimated cost for a new platform that meets state IT security protocols and student, teacher, evaluator, and administrative functionality.

With additional funding, we can better serve applicants by providing increased individual award amounts that more fully covers their college costs, and build out a new comprehensive, user-friendly application portal that alleviates some of the known accessibility barriers.

3. Estimated Cost and FTE Needs

➤ **Modernize WAVE Scholarship Application and Review Portal - \$200,000**

The portal will include:

- Comprehensive and modernized application/review technology.
- Back-end database functions.
- Inclusion of current state standards for IT security.
- Dynamic user-friendly experience.
- Multiple tiers of permission and access predicated on classifications such as, administering staff, applicants, CTE teachers, those providing references, and application evaluators.

➤ **Award Funds - \$3,528,000, ongoing**

- The current annual appropriation for WAVE funding is just over \$1 million – this funding request would build on that existing investment to bring WAVE funding to approximately \$3.5 million per year.
- This total includes \$12,000 a year in tuition x 147 awardees x 2 years of award. The scholarship funding would be requested on behalf of WSAC, who administers the scholarship distribution to the students.
- For ongoing funds, the biennium total would include both first- and second-year cohorts (\$3,528,000 x 2 years = **\$7,056,000** award base).

WAVE cohorts each Biennium	Tuition estimate	Historical potential maximum number of Awardees (Two high school, one CTC awardee per year)	Number of years to receive WAVE award	Totals
1 st year WAVE Cohort A	\$12,000	147	2	\$3,528,000
2 nd year WAVE Cohort B	\$12,000	147	2	\$3,528,000

The 2021-23 biennium budget included approximately \$2.4 million to administer the program and provide scholarships. Students in the smaller 2022 cohort received up to \$12,000 per year, for up to two years, to help meet the costs attending college. By contrast, students in the 2023 cohort received up to \$5,200 per year, for up to two years. A fully funded WAVE program will allow future awardees to better meet the rising costs of attending college and to complete their training and education goals.

4. Potential Leveraged Resources

The Washington Award for Vocational Excellence is a unique partnership between two state agencies. The Workforce Board administers the program, and the Washington Student Achievement Council manages the scholarship distribution.

The WAVE program is also an outstanding example of community leaders working together to focus on a major challenge facing our state: A lack of skilled workers in critical industries. This year dozens of leaders from business, labor, education, state government and the broader community served on the scholarship review committee. These leaders

also play a critical role sharing news and updates about the scholarship to students and educators. Their efforts support student success and promote CTE pathways in every corner of Washington.

5. Responsible Entities

The Workforce Board will continue to oversee and manage the outreach, application, review, and winner announcement portion of the program. WSAC will continue to oversee the management and disbursement of scholarship funds.

6. Proposal format (proviso, statutory change, other)

This will be an ongoing budget proviso that includes one-time costs for the new WAVE portal to ensure the WAVE Scholarship program remains up-to-date and accessible across Washington.

7. Why is this Needed Now?

CTE pathways, especially those that are technology-based, or help build the pipeline for healthcare, child care, and the construction trades, continue to be necessary to fill the needs of Washington's economy and way of life. Access to financial resources for postsecondary education and training is more important than ever as tuition rises and fewer seek education after high school. We need to provide multiple, equitable pathways to high-wage, in-demand careers, and demonstrate that every pathway is valued and recognized. WAVE offers that opportunity by providing scholarship funds specifically to those students who have chosen the CTE path to economic success.

The need to upgrade and improve the application and reviewer system is an equity issue. This is especially true as families with limited resources struggle with complicated online systems such as financial aid applications. It is important that a modern and user-friendly platform is secured so that it can provide equitable access to these important scholarship funds to all Washington students and their families. Board staff have also struggled with ensuring that reviewers have easy access to review applications but also do not have any identifying information about this student. This has resulted in extensive, time-consuming staff work to redact information on every single applicant; a new portal that accounts for this in the customization is an important need for this program.

With an increase in scholarship funds and an improved application/review system in place, this merit-based CTE scholarship can serve more Washington students more effectively. The intent of the legislation was to cover the cost of two years of postsecondary education at the institution of the awardee's choosing, up to the cost of Washington's public 4-year universities. Current funding is inadequate to meet that goal. This program has the potential to make an even stronger impact with the right resources behind it.

From Moses Lake to Yakima, Monroe, the Tri-Cities and more, this year's WAVE award winners shared how the scholarship will help them achieve their goals. Students are working to become commercial pilots, nurses, sign language interpreters, manufacturing leaders and other skilled workers who are highly sought after by regional employers. The 2023 Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) is changing lives and making headlines throughout the state.

Legislative Agenda – Draft Project Summary

Project Title: LPN Apprenticeship Continuation Funding

Staff Lead: Donald Smith

1. Short Project Description:

The Workforce Board seeks continued funding to further develop Washington's first-ever Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Registered Apprenticeship Program for Home Care Aides (HCA) and Nursing Assistants-Certified (NAC) working in Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities. The Workforce Board was funded for a three-year budget proviso for this work in the 2022 State Budget. The project team is requesting an additional two years of state funding to see two full cohorts through the apprenticeship and allow the program to become fully sustainable.

The complexities and rigorous parameters for approval of both a state registered apprenticeship program and a new LPN education program created several unexpected hurdles for this project, but this is a brand-new program, and the partners are enthusiastic and committed to making a nursing apprenticeship a reality. The LPN program and curriculum has now been approved by the state Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC), and the apprenticeship program will be ready for submission to the state Apprenticeship Council in late winter or early spring. The project is fully underway with a committed group of employer, college, and agency partners. Already, this ground-breaking project to move frontline, long-term care (LTC) professionals into a career pathway that leads to an LPN certification is making significant progress (as bulleted below.) Additional funds are requested to provide continued support to meet project objectives, including a sustainable, scalable business model.

2. What is the Project?

The Workforce Board will be requesting funding for two additional years to continue the development of the LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program – extending funding through June 30, 2027. Current funding goes through June 30, 2025. Obtaining additional funding to keep this project securely financed and moving forward will ensure that Workforce Board staff and the entire project team can maintain this momentum, interest, and continued enrollment in this program before the full operational transition to the apprentice sponsor.

Additional funding will continue the development and implementation of the LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program. This effort builds on the previous legislative-funded work of NCQAC in 2021-22 that created a coalition, identified early adopters and program testers, and provided a draft plan for the development of the program. This project has made significant progress. One of the most tangible indicators of progress are the three cohorts of HCAs and NACs currently working on their prerequisite courses, many with the expectation of submitting their application to the LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program for Fall 2024. Because of the length of training required to become an LPN, this first group of apprentices is expected to complete the LPN Apprenticeship program in early 2026.

Under the guidance of the Workforce Board, NCQAC, and the state's Department of Labor & Industries (LNI), the stakeholders in the program's development continue to push towards a Fall 2024 launch date for the first apprentices in the LPN program. In addition to the three state agencies, three employers (Pennant, Hyatt Family Facilities - Landmark Care & Rehabilitation, and Brookdale) and two community colleges (Edmonds College and Yakima Valley College) have committed significant time and resources to this project.

Since the Workforce Board and project team helped launch the first cohort of future apprentices in January, agency staff have recorded the following milestones:

1. 37 HCAs/NACs are currently enrolled in prerequisite coursework, such as English and math, along with courses in anatomy, physiology, and psychology at three separate community and technical colleges—Edmonds College, Bates Technical College (Tacoma), and Yakima Valley College, with an anticipated registered apprenticeship program launch in Fall 2024.

2. Edmonds College has successfully led a group of nursing educators in the development of a hybrid LPN program, with an anticipated launch date of Fall 2023. This hybrid program will serve as the foundation for the apprenticeship coursework in 2024.
3. Two staff were hired as Apprenticeship Navigators to support and advocate for the HCAs and NACs that are currently enrolled in college prerequisites. Some of the NAC/HCAs have previous college experience, but for others this is the first-time attempting college. These navigators—Workforce Board staff members Erica Wollen and Rebecca Adams—have assisted the HCAs and NACs with wraparound services including FAFSA/WAFSA application, childcare, transportation, tutoring, etc. They will continue to provide that individualized support as students move through the apprenticeship program.
4. The Workforce Board has partnered with Merit, a digital badging company focused on education and workforce, to create a “digital wallet” and data management system. The wallet will provide apprenticeship participants a way to easily track and share information (with employers) about their academic and clinical progress and credentials as well as track apprenticeship hours.
5. A competitive solicitation process has identified an organization (Washington Health Care Association (WHCA)) to establish a multi-employer apprenticeship sponsor structure. The sponsor will begin work in early August to establish the structure and governance principles of the new organization and will manage the process for approval of the registered apprenticeship program.

The Workforce Board is also partnering with the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to develop an LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program in Washington’s DVA LTC facilities. They are beginning with development of a pilot in one home on the peninsula and exploring options for their required supplemental instruction partner. Over the past five months, with guidance and support of the Workforce Board, NCQAC, and LNI, DVA has recruited and hired a Program Navigator to lead an exploratory effort to examine establishing an LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program specifically for the public DVA system. DVA has already begun receiving inquiries from their staff about the program and appear enthusiastic about this opportunity.

3. Estimated Cost and FTE Needs

This funding continuation would support the ongoing development and implementation of the LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program, currently funded at \$1.2M per year. Project funding includes:

- Apprenticeship Sponsor operational support.
- HCA/NAC supplemental support.
- Program evaluation.
- FTE support for academic navigation at Edmonds College, the approved site for the apprenticeship related supplemental instruction.
- DVA program staff.
- Staff support for the Workforce Board.
- 2.0 FTE Apprenticeship Navigators.

4. Potential Leveraged Resources

NCQAC currently has also provided staff support for the project and is in the process of bringing on another Nurse Consultant who can focus on the curriculum design and other nursing-specific aspects of this project (expected hire date in October).

Yakima Valley College (YVC) received a federal appropriation (Murray/Newhouse) in 2022 for building nursing capacity, including supporting aspects of the apprenticeship development for LPN. YVC, in their role as the administrator of the HRSA grant, has submitted an extension request which will allow the project to utilize federal funding which remains in reserve. These funds will allow the state funding to stretch even further in the apprenticeship program development, including opportunities for hybrid lab facilities.

5. Responsible Entities

The Workforce Board will continue to oversee and manage the partners responsible for the program’s development and implementation, in close collaboration with NCQAC and LNI, as well as other members of the project team. Further, the Workforce Board will oversee the evaluation of the program, including data collection and analysis.

6. Proposal Format (Proviso, Statutory Change, Other)

Proviso—This would provide continuation funding through June 30, 2027, to ensure the LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program has sufficient resources and infrastructure to become fully operational, self-sustaining, and undergoes a comprehensive evaluation to establish the impact of the program.

7. Why is This Needed Now?

The demand for LTC is rapidly growing in step with an aging population. By 2030, the population of Washington is expected to grow by 5 percent, and by 25 percent by 2050. However, the number of residents over the age of 65 will grow by 30 percent in 2030, and by 64 percent in 2050. For those over 85, growth is expected to be 58 percent and 246 percent, respectively.

Washington's aging population growth highlights the tremendous challenges to recruit and retain a well-trained, professional LTC workforce. **The current available pool of workers is unable to keep pace with the growing demand for LTC services and supports.** This is further complicated by factors related to ongoing staffing challenges that have persisted for years in LTC. The LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program creates another career pathway for HCAs and NACs, who have already demonstrated a passion for working in LTC, into nursing opportunities with increased responsibility while earning a living wage. This is a training opportunity geared towards entry-level nursing staff who might not have been able to (or never thought they could be successful!) utilize the traditional education pathways towards LPN and beyond.

With the workforce challenges facing LTC and healthcare, the need for a consistent and reliable stream of new nursing professionals is more urgent than ever. At the federal, state, and local levels, apprenticeships are now regarded as an innovative way to train new workers while allowing the apprentices the opportunity to maintain their employment. For many of the paraprofessionals that are the focus of this effort, traditional pathways for training have not been seen as a viable option. Through this apprenticeship program, many qualified and engaged paraprofessionals can have the opportunity for a rewarding career in nursing.

The list of achievements of the developing LPN Registered Apprenticeship Program is indicative of its success. Moving towards the enrollment of the first cohort of apprentices in 2024, this is a unique opportunity to help supplement the LTC workforce. The need for LTC in the coming years is clear. This is an opportunity to impact workforce resources as one piece of a larger puzzle. Ultimately, those who will need LTC in Washington, their families, and staff looking to grow in their careers will benefit from this program.

Legislative Agenda – Draft Project Summary

Project Title: Workforce Board Funding

Staff Lead: Eleni Papadakis

1. Short Project Description

The Workforce Board seeks funding to focus on core activities that strengthen Washington's workforce programs, the state's economy, and our communities. This is a watershed moment for our workforce system as record-low unemployment makes it difficult for employers to fill critical positions, declining enrollment challenges our state's higher education institutions, and ongoing barriers, including high food and housing costs and a lack of affordable childcare, continue to disproportionately impact the state's disadvantaged, underrepresented populations searching for a path out of poverty into living-wage careers. This request has three main goals:

1. Ensure federal Perkins CTE money is fully leveraged—meeting state match requirements that enable Washington to keep (instead of turning away federal funding) needed investments for career and technical education (CTE).
2. Support research and demonstration projects to test new, cross-agency integrated service delivery models, such as the Board's collective impact initiative on helping more Washingtonians with barriers achieve economic self-sufficiency. This equity-centered project, ready for piloting, was originally developed with funding from the National Governors Association Workforce Innovation Network (NGA WIN). The project will test technology and staff supported mechanisms to streamline service integration so there is "no wrong door" for our state's marginalized populations in need of workforce services.
3. Hire a Business and Economic Development Manager, an expert collaborator who can pull together and encourage joint efforts between industry, workforce development, and economic development organizations, leveraging our system's strengths to build a best-in-class workforce development system and talent pipeline.

2. What is the project?

The Workforce Board is requesting program funding to support the following initiatives:

Perkins/ CTE: The Workforce Board serves as the administrative and oversight body for the federal "Perkins V: Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century" grant. WA invests state funds heavily in secondary and postsecondary CTE. Perkins funds are used to fill certain gaps in state funding, such as to create new programs, recruit and provide professional development for instructors, and to develop and pilot strategies to improve outcomes for rural and underserved populations.

While most of the grant funds (approximately \$26 million for 2023) are distributed to local CTE providers through the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Workforce Board retains a small portion, currently about 1.9 percent, to meet administrative requirements and to support the Board's role as the state CTE policy and oversight body. Funds available for administration across the three state agencies is inadequate to perform the work involved. The situation is further challenged by the federal requirement that administrative funds must be "matched" dollar-for-dollar by state funds. The Workforce Board does not have sufficient state funds to leverage all federal administrative funds available. Rather than retaining more funds that don't require state match from our partner agencies, this funding request will address the state-match shortfall to the federal administrative allocation, which is crucial for the Board to fulfill its responsibilities and ensure the success of the Perkins program.

Research and Demonstration (R&D): Washington's workforce development "system" is a network of state and local agencies and private providers, working towards common goals, aligned within a state strategic plan coordinated by the Workforce Board. The system serves individual jobseekers and employers and includes education, training, support services of many types, and career counseling, coaching, and case management which together, are designed to help individuals find access to the labor market at any point of economic transition in their lives, and to help employers meet their workforce needs. But the system, and more specifically, the policy frameworks that established the system are at least 70 years old, with only minimal tweaks since. Designed for a very different economy than today, the system must become more adaptable to industry and workforce needs as they emerge. The Board and its partners recognize that improving participant outcomes requires cross-agency and interagency strategies that streamline the customer experience, especially for those requiring multiple services to achieve economic self-sufficiency. But administrators of services must use their resources to "keep the trains running"—to continue to provide services as they are, while testing possible service improvements. They cannot, in most cases, make transformative service design changes without solid evidence of success. Additionally, fund sources, often siloed by federal statute, limit usage for research, development, and demonstration purposes to the fund's target population and service types.

Improving and expanding services for better outcomes for all customers requires that system partners work together, across program and funding silos, to identify system needs and possible solutions that can be sustained if proven successful. The system must also have more opportunities to survey and review research on the issues and/or implement new research when needed. Demonstration projects, designed for evaluation, are tremendous opportunities to pilot new ways of working and determine what may cost-effectively move forward for scaling and long-term sustainability, as well as lessons learned about what doesn't work. With a state investment in cross-agency research and demonstration projects, we aim to improve the state's workforce system by developing innovation solutions, promoting system alignment, accessibility and modernization, and measuring and reporting on the changing needs of customers.

One such R&D initiative, with innovations ready for piloting, was developed by the Board and its agency partners to advance service coordination and integration through improved data-sharing. Development was initially funded by the National Governors Association Workforce Innovation Network (NGA WIN). Washington's information-technology based service integration project aims to create a "no wrong door" approach that streamlines program intake, enhances customer counseling, and facilitates integrated service planning. With additional funding, we'll continue the development and implementation of the pilot and design study for a digital wallet, empowering customers with data ownership and enabling more effective data sharing among workforce agencies. Through effective collaboration and integration of technology, the project seeks to eliminate duplication, reduce barriers, and enhance service access, ultimately fostering economic self-sufficiency for all participants. Rigorous evaluation principles are incorporated into the pilot design.

The annual budget request in this proposal is derived from this sample project, which will be one of the first implemented if funds are granted. To date, project costs have included a .5 FTE Project Manager, .2 FTE researcher, .5 FTE administrative assistance, \$250,000 for contractor support, plus agency administration and overhead. Funds are now required to implement 4-5 cross-agency pilots, which will entail support from technology/data, staff training, evaluation and policy development support from a combination of contractors and in-house staff. This particular project is costly because of its complexity and the new technology that needs to be created. We anticipate going forward to implement two or more R&D projects based on identified issues and needs. R&D would be managed by a full-time program manager (MA5 1.0 FTE, ongoing), who will work closely with the research team (.5 research FTE ongoing) and will be supported by a .5 FTE Administrative Assistant 4. Flexible funds will be available to bring on contract support as needed and to provide funds for pilot project host sites.

Economic Advancement Initiative: Business and Economic Development Manager: The Business and Economic Development Manager will serve as a leader and a catalyst for economic growth by bridging the gaps between businesses, economic development organizations, and the workforce development community in Washington State. This position will oversee the business services component of the state strategic plan for workforce development, *Talent and Prosperity for All*, and will spearhead the design, implementation, and evaluation of transformative policies and initiatives that promote equitable economic prosperity while ensuring a skilled and competitive workforce. The Manager will collaborate with key stakeholders to build on effective work and promising practices and will develop

comprehensive strategies and policy recommendations that address the unique challenges faced by businesses in the state.

3. Estimated Cost & FTE Needs:

- Perkins/CTE – State Fund Match
 - \$ 484,352
- Research & Demonstration
 - \$1 million per year ongoing, including staff FTE and contract support.
- Business and Economic Development Manager
 - \$165,000 per year ongoing, including salary, benefits, and overhead.

4. Potential Leveraged Resources:

- Perkins administrative funds
- R&D funds and in-kind support from participating agency partners

5. Responsible Entities:

The Workforce Board will oversee and manage the program funding in partnership with state and local partners.

6. Proposal format (proviso, statutory change, other):

This will be an ongoing budget provision that includes funds to ensure continued matching of Perkins funding, continued work on research and demonstration projects to enhance the workforce system, continued support for CTE programs, and more, stronger, sector-based public-private partnership programs.

7. Why is this Needed Now? (Include any expected metrics, where measurable)

The “future of work” and “workplace of the future” were accelerated by the pandemic. While employers are clamoring for skilled workers, many Washingtonians are encountering barriers and hurdles to accessing high-demand, high-wage job opportunities. Many people, especially those historically and structurally marginalized from the economy, experience barriers even to initial points of access. Employers, desperate to find productivity solutions, are making decisions such as automation, AI, and outsourcing, that close even more employment doors for Washingtonians. The 70+ year old system must be able to respond to today’s needs and to support the Board’s and the state’s equity-centered “shared prosperity” agenda for our workers, employers, and communities.

The Workforce Board, as the state’s planning, policy, and oversight agent for public investments in Workforce Development, must also be responsive in its leadership role. Adequate staffing and new tools to understand system successes and service gaps, and to convene partners and stakeholders to identify issues and design new models for service delivery, as well as more resources to evaluate and analyze what is working and what isn’t will keep the Workforce Board effective as it fulfills its statutory obligation: *“The purpose of the board is to provide planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the state training system as a whole, and advice to the governor and legislature concerning the state training system, in cooperation with the state training system...”* (RCW 28C.18.030)

By investing in Perkins and CTE, we aim to provide increased access to CTE programs, higher completion rates, and improved employment outcomes in high-demand careers. Additionally, aligning with the NGA WIN initiative, our information-technology based service integration project seeks to enhance service delivery. With streamlined program intake and the implementation of a digital wallet, we anticipate greater efficiency and targeted support for jobseekers, ultimately fostering economic self-sufficiency and competitiveness for all in Washington state. The addition of an economic development and business manager will further drive prosperity by bridging the gap between businesses and workforce development. By investing in Perkins/CTE, research and demonstration, and economic development and

businesses, we can empower individuals with 21st-century skills, end economic disparities, strengthen our strategic economic advantage, and close the state's skills gap. Through these investments, we will be able to improve the quality of our labor force, enhance the coordination and effectiveness of economic development, education and workforce development systems, and provide learners with high-quality career development services.