

WAVE: Fulfilling the Promise



Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE)

The Workforce Board requests \$2.9 million in annual funding to establish predictable, guaranteed scholarships for Washington's top career and technical education students. As many as 147 students are selected for this prestigious scholarship each year, a strong investment in Washington's economy and quality of life. However, this scholarship has been significantly underfunded since relaunch in 2022.

The Workforce Board administers the scholarship and the Washington Student Achievement Council manages the financial distribution.

This investment includes:

- WAVE Scholarship Funding: Fully funds two-years of Washington college scholarships.
- WAVE Portal Administration: Maintains and staffs the application portal.

Fulfilling the Promise for CTE Students

WAVE Scholarship/FTE Admin Funding

- WAVE is significantly underfunded since the 2022 relaunch. Our students deserve better. WAVE celebrates top CTE students as college costs and skilled labor shortages increase. WAVE covers two years of tuition/expenses for 147 awardees/year—up to three awards for each Legislative District.

WAVE Portal Administration

- Funds full-time staffing and software costs, supporting a new and modern application portal with greater functionality and security. Supports equity, access, and timely awards.

Impact Highlights

WAVE Program Administration

- Improves student, teacher, evaluator access; increases successful submissions, security.

WAVE Funding

- Fully funds scholarship awards as Legislature intended; removes the uncertainty of the award amounts each year.
- Invests directly in a skilled workforce; shows that Washington values career and technical education.

Project Costs

\$2.9 million a year, or \$5.8 million over the biennium.

Details include:

- [WAVE Program and Portal Admin](#): \$165,000 a year, 0.75 FTE ongoing (in addition to existing \$109,000 appropriation.)
- [WAVE Scholarship Funding](#): Fully funding the WAVE scholarship at \$2.4 million a year ongoing.

"It was a big relief. Honestly, I was kind of worried about how I was going to pay for some of my expenses. So I was pretty happy winning it."

Karolyn Marquez Garcia, 2024 WAVE awardee from the 18th Legislative District. Marquez Garcia is studying to become a pilot.



Contact: Nova Gattman
Deputy Executive Director
(360) 709-4600
nova.gattman@wtb.wa.gov