

Workforce Education Investment Act

Update on Public Four-Year College and University Investments

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE



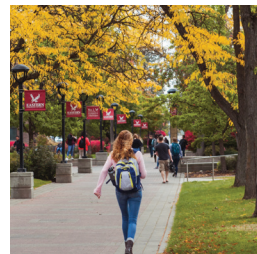
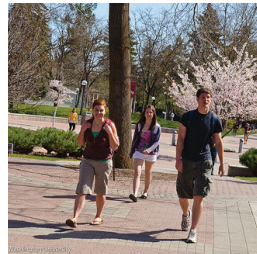
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Introduction

Washington's six public four-year universities and college continue to serve a catalyzing role in economic and workforce development in every one of our state's 39 counties. Statewide, there is a large supply-demand gap for jobs that require a bachelor's degree, and we know Washington employers want to hire local talent to fill these positions.

Earning a bachelor's degree is critical to meeting the needs of Washington employers and is the only and best predictor within a student's control for earning a good wage in Washington.¹ A bachelor's degree can narrow the racial income gap by up to 70%, outside of uncontrollable factors, and bachelor's degrees are more likely to interrupt intergenerational cycles of poverty and close income-based equity gaps than any other pathway.²

Washington's public baccalaureate institutions are the largest producer of bachelor's, graduate and professional degrees in our state. With a record of providing access to an affordable quality degree through completion, together we have the capacity to meet the needs of Washington employers and closing the equity gap among Washingtonians.

Each institution is profoundly committed to meeting the needs of a 21st century workforce with increasing credential requirements. The investments made in each institution through the Workforce Education Investment Account (WEIA) reflect this commitment and are critical in assisting Washington employers to fill the jobs of the future with qualified Washington students.

This report includes updates from each college or university on legislative investments through WEIA in a myriad of academic programs and student success initiatives that support access, retention, persistence, completion, and entry into the workforce. It builds upon the [Council of Presidents' prior WEIA reports](#) in addition to other regular updates, both to the legislature and to the [Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board \(WEIAOB\)](#).

1, 2 [Myths, Misinformation and Upward Movement Executive Summary](#), Washington STEM

Central Washington University

2023-2025

In the 2023-25 biennium, Central Washington University (CWU) received funding to implement Senate Bill 5048 related to College in the High School, funding for peer mentoring programs in the Learning Commons, funding for grow-your-own and dual language educator preparation programs, and funding for a benefits navigator.

College in the High School – For the 2023-25 biennium, CWU was appropriated \$8,060,000 of workforce education investment money for College in the High School (CiHS). The purpose of this fund is to support the CWU CiHS program in lieu of student fees. CWU offers more CiHS coursework than any other higher education institution. CWU is in high schools across Washington from Neah Bay to Washougal, and from Colville to College Place. This funding allows CWU to operate the CiHS program at its current level.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, CWU awarded over 64,000 credits to students across the state who participated in the program. That translates to over 7,700 unduplicated students participating in the program, with over 13,000 registrations processed, and 953 courses offered (911 courses for public schools and 42 courses running at private schools). For the fall of 2023, CWU has seen a 60% growth in the number of registrations processed compared to the fall of 2022. This growth shows the direct impact of the funding that replaced the prior fees.

Learning Commons – In the 2023-25 biennium, CWU was appropriated \$1,406,000 for student success initiatives in peer-assisted learning, tutoring, and academic success coaching. To date, CWU is in the program building and hiring phase of implementing these services. As of November 2023, the Learning Commons has hired an Assistant Director to oversee the tutoring areas, as well as key staff to support each initiative.

- ◆ **Peer Assisted Learning Sessions (PALs)** – CWU has hired 10 additional undergraduate student employees (averaging 10 hours per student employee) and two graduate students (averaging 17-20 hours) to support the expansion of PALs.
- ◆ **Academic Success Coaching** – CWU has hired an Academic Success Coaching Coordinator to supervise and support the team of 15 undergraduate student employees and three graduate student employees to provide academic success coaching services.
- ◆ **Discipline-Specific Tutoring** – CWU has hired the Discipline-Specific Tutoring Coordinator and is in the process of training and program building.

Educator Preparation – In the 2023-25 biennium, CWU has been appropriated \$967,000 for grow-your-own teacher residency programs in the high-need areas of elementary, bilingual, special education, and English language learners. This funding has been used to support student scholarships and to hire a faculty Program Coordinator for our existing teacher residency program. CWU also created a faculty, staff, and school district partner workgroup to learn together and then revise the program structure to better align with national best practices for teacher residency, as well as evolving state and P-12 school needs. Several members of this group also joined the Professional Educator Standard Board's statewide teacher residency workgroup. Over the next year, the University plans to finalize the updated program structure, recruit students, and hire faculty and staff support.

In addition, CWU was appropriated \$844,000 for dual language expansion programs in Yakima and Des Moines. To date, we have hired a staff Program Coordinator to support the implementation of this program in Yakima and utilized funding to support a faculty team to develop the curricular framework. Over the next year, CWU plans to finalize the curricular framework, work collaboratively with school districts in the areas of Yakima and Des Moines to build the program structure and partnerships, and recruit students. The University is also working to hire a staff Program Coordinator in Des Moines and a faculty member at each of our CWU Center campuses in Yakima and Des Moines.

The funding that supports the development and training of more K-12 teachers supports all WEIAOB performance metrics. By certifying more teachers for schools, the quality of K-12 education will improve and so should the student success metrics. These high-quality teachers should help prevent students from dropping out, thereby supporting statewide student enrollment in K-12 and the high school-to-postsecondary retention rate. The teachers should also help advise more students to complete FAFSA/WASFA applications and thereby increase the higher education enrollment of Washington College Grant-eligible students. The additional capacity for teacher candidates and the additional training for high school students should translate to higher retention in the programs, higher degree completion rates, and a shorter time to degree. Having highly qualified teachers in K-12 schools should produce a positive economic outcome as more students succeed in their education pathways.

Student Basic Needs – In the 2023-25 biennium, CWU was appropriated \$126,000 (\$63,000 per year) to hire and staff a minimum of one benefits navigator employed at a minimum 0.75 full-time equivalent to assist students in accessing public benefits, existing emergency assistance programs, and community resources. CWU plans to hire one full-time (1.0 FTE) staff using this two-year appropriation.

This hired 1.0 FTE benefits navigator (referenced at CWU as the Basic Needs Resource Coordinator) will work in partnership with our existing Office of Case Management staff, Financial Wellness Center, and our Wildcat Pantry staff to ensure holistic care and service to CWU students in need. CWU students currently funnel through Case Management and are connected with campus or community resources to ensure student success. The purpose of this position is to evaluate food pantry and campus policies that may create barriers and work to reduce them.

2022

In the 2022 supplemental budget and renewed thereafter, CWU was appropriated funds to develop a Jump Start orientation program, develop a Wildcat Academic Mentoring Program, and expand cybersecurity capacity by additional faculty resources in the Department of Computer Science.

Jump Start Program – In the 2022 supplemental session, CWU was appropriated \$143,000 for the creation of an extended orientation program to promote the retention of underserved students, known as Jump Start. The program reports to the Orientation and Transition Programs Office. In the fall of 2023, Jump Start was able to hire a full-time program coordinator and seven Jump Start student leaders (JSL). The week prior to the start of the fall quarter, Jump Start partnered with the CWU Cat Camp to offer a four-day, three-night leadership experience at Black Diamond Camp. This collaboration allowed 52 Jump Start students to attend camp with 74 other incoming new students (totaling 126 students). During camp, students experienced workshops led by faculty, team building, peer mentorship through our Jump Start student leaders, and peer-to-peer connections.

This program aligns with WEIAOB's goals and guiding principles, by providing students from underrepresented groups with a pre-orientation program to meet WEIAOB's goal of 70 percent of each high school cohort graduating from college. Developing this program supports equitable educational access for underserved students by providing an early orientation program to onboard them to Ellensburg and CWU.

Cybersecurity and Computer Science – In the 2022 supplemental legislative session, CWU was appropriated \$613,000 to expand cybersecurity capacity by adding additional faculty resources in the Department of Computer Science. The funding provides an opportunity to increase cybersecurity course offerings in computer science and funding for a physical lab. This directly supports the students who will graduate from a high demand field and provides them the capability to positively impact the Washington workforce. CWU upgraded the campus supercomputer, giving students and faculty the ability to better analyze large datasets, simulate cyber-attacks, perform cryptographic analysis, and detect threats in real-time. CWU also developed and outfitted a computer lab for cybersecurity coursework.

This program aligns with WEIAOB's goals and guiding principles by increasing cybersecurity courses to provide a needed specialization. The additional cybersecurity specialization provides access to this educational opportunity, which may not be otherwise available for systemically underserved students.

Wildcat Academic Mentoring – In the 2022 supplemental legislative session, CWU was appropriated \$293,000 to develop a peer mentoring program called the Wildcat Academic Mentoring program.

Under this funding, 10 undergraduate and four graduate students are employed, working an average of 15 hours a week. Two of the graduate students are specifically tasked with supporting student assessment and support for developmental coursework. These academic and wellness strategies will transition into the real world and provide students the skills to succeed when they go to work in Washington businesses and become part of the workforce post-graduation, aligning with WEIAOB's goals and guiding principles.

2019-2021

Educator Preparation - In the 2019-21 biennium and renewed thereafter, CWU was appropriated \$1,050,000 to increase the number of certified K-12 teachers. HB 2158 specified that \$800,000 be spent on grow-your-own (GYO) high school teacher academies and \$205,000 for expanding alternative route capacity. Regarding GYO high school teacher academies, CWU developed several additional partnerships over the last year. Over 250 high school students across 24 diverse high schools participated in CWU teacher academies over the 2022-2023 academic year, and the number of partner schools has increased to 30 for the start of the 2023-2024 academic year, with three more teacher academy schools currently in development. These numbers surpass the original legislative goal to engage 20 schools and 200 students in teacher academies with this funding.

Over 2022-2023, these activities supported hosted visits to CWU's campuses for 10 teacher academies, several presentations and visits to teacher academy schools by CWU advisors, faculty, and student ambassadors, professional development for teacher academy teachers, and the integration of high-impact co-learning activities between high school and university students in some of CWU's education courses. Furthermore, the University has begun the development of a student club and other support activities for teacher academy alumni who come to CWU and enroll in a teacher preparation program.

The alternative route program is a streamlined pathway for individuals who already have bachelor's degrees to become teachers. Students can obtain a [Master of Arts in Teaching](#) or have the option to end a quarter early and still become certified to teach. To date, the alternative route funding has supported CWU in increasing enrollment to approximately 60 students for 2023, maintaining two cohort start dates annually and increasing enrollment in the elementary education cohort. We have also improved how we support students in geographically remote placements, for example, by increasing in-person observations and visits to student/mentor teacher teams during the yearlong field placements.

Mental Health Counselors – In the 2019-21 biennium and renewed thereafter, CWU has been appropriated \$736,000 to hire additional mental health counselors. This funding was intended to address the overwhelming caseload of students requesting services. The \$736,000 biennium funding was applied to the costs of salary and benefits for two full-time equivalent (FTE) mental health counselor positions and increased four case manager staff positions from 11-month cyclic employees to 12-month FTE staff. The annual funds not dedicated to these staff positions were applied to the costs for CWU's virtual counseling services platform, which expanded access to students in need of services outside standard operating business hours and regardless of the location of the student; this expansion especially benefits CWU online and center students.

Eastern Washington University

Eastern Washington University (EWU) is a driving force for the culture, economy, workforce, and vitality of Washington state. Our graduates think critically and make meaningful contributions to both their career fields and their communities. EWU is the public university whose students, faculty, staff, and alumni make profound and significant contributions to the economic and social vitality of the region. The following investments EWU has received through the WEIA are mission critical in these endeavors.

Bachelor of Science Nursing Program - \$4.6 million

In the FY2022 supplemental operating budget, the Washington State Legislature approved funding to start the conversion of EWU's two-year pre-nursing program into the four-year Bachelor of Nursing (BSN) program. In the 2023 budget, the University received additional funding that has allowed EWU to secure and outfit a space with state-of-the-art equipment, learning spaces, and SIM labs in the historic SIEER building on Spokane's health peninsula. Eastern has also received Phase II approval from the Nursing Commission, made key hires, and secured clinical placement for our students. This critical funding also allowed EWU to fully fund faculty and staff needed to enroll our first cohort of 40 students in the fall of 2023. The University has over 160 qualified applicants for those 40 slots and will be enrolling our second cohort of 40 students in spring of 2024. When fully mature in 2025, EWU will be graduating 80 new nurses per year.

Computer Engineering Investment - \$1.3 million per year

EWU is continuing to build a program in Computer Engineering (CpE) with the additional staffing provided by the legislative appropriation under HB 2158. To support the CpE initiative, the Department of Computer Science merged with the Department of Electrical Engineering in FY21. The newly formed Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering received full approval to offer a bachelor of science degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering beginning in Academic Year 21-22.

Students –The original CpE proposal targeted three graduates by the end of Academic Year 21-22. As of fall 2022, the program has graduated exactly three students with a BS in Electrical & Computer Engineering, with 24 students currently enrolled in the program.

The following table includes EWU enrollment projection from the original legislative request and EWU current metrics:

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Projected CpE Graduates	3	7	12	22	28	38	42
Actual CpE Graduates	3						
Projected CpE Declared Majors (sophomore – senior)	15	19	36	49	89	116	133
Actual CpE Declared Majors (sophomore – senior)	26 *spring	24 *fall					

Center for Inclusive Excellence - \$150,000 per year

The Center for Inclusive Excellence is a unique model that offers a multicultural center for employees which ensures a space to educate, foster personal and professional development, and promote an inclusive culture on campus.

The space will be used for:

- ◆ Professional development workshops and trainings.
- ◆ Onboarding with a distinct focus on equity.
- ◆ Search Advocates Program.
- ◆ Library of resources, activities, books, and videos that can be utilized by employees for use in their units and/or for personal growth.
- ◆ Space offered for small meetings and gatherings relating to equity and inclusion (e.g., Inclusive Leadership, affinity groups, brown bag discussion space, reading groups.
- ◆ Space to invite community groups and advisory committees into University DEI space.
- ◆ Display space for relevant art and creative works of the campus community.

The Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) added a DEI Training and Development Consultant position to assist the Senior Director for Diversity and Inclusion in the completion of the space and implementation of the Center for Inclusive Excellence. The Consultant will coordinate activities in the Center, as well as assist the University with coordination, facilitation, and tracking of required campus-wide DEI and Anti-Racism training. This position will also help in the creation of offerings for a full training and development program offered to the campus, which will be provided in the Center.

The Center for Inclusive Excellence opened in fall 2022, culminating with a Grand Opening and Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month celebration on October 12, 2022. The Center is now fully furnished with couches, chairs, side tables, and lighting, as well as movable tables and chairs for meetings and trainings. There are additional

amenities such as lap desks to offer quiet space for working, connecting, or reading books from the University's borrowing library of over 200 DEI and Anti-Racism books. The Center houses trainings and meetings for up to 26 people in-person and offers audio/visual equipment for including the campus via Zoom. The Center walls are decorated with photographs from previous DEI events on campus, as well as student-designed artwork of social justice heroes throughout history. The Center is currently used for campus-wide quarterly DEI reading groups, DEI and Anti-Racism Training, the Search Advocates program, and DEI affinity groups. The Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion also holds meetings, hosts guests, and offers a variety of activities and events in the space to which all of campus is invited.

Cyber Security - \$2.8 million of one-time and permanent funding for 2023

EWU is on track to achieve or surpass all objectives outlined in the 2022 cybersecurity appropriation.

- ◆ **Curriculum** – The Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering received full approval to offer a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Cyber Operations and a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS) in Cyber Operations beginning fall 2022. The BS and BSCS degrees are currently active and accepting students into the program (see below). The department is currently finalizing the curriculum plan for the Professional Science Masters (PSM) in Cyber Operations and will submit the full PSM curriculum proposal for review this academic year. This is on pace with the timeline in EWU's Cybersecurity decision package.
- ◆ **Students** – The original proposal targeted 30 Computer Science graduates with a cybersecurity minor by the end of Academic Year 22-23. As of fall 2022, the program has graduated exactly 15 students with the cybersecurity minor and is projected to graduate five cybersecurity minor students at the end of winter quarter 2023, and 20 cybersecurity minor students at the end of spring quarter 2023. Although the proposal did not project enrolling any cybersecurity students until Academic Year 2024-25, the program currently has four declared majors, with three students expected to graduate in spring 2023.
- ◆ **Faculty/Staff Hiring** – The Cybersecurity allocation included funding for four tenure-track faculty, two lecturers, and two staff positions. The department successfully hired one new tenure-track faculty member in cybersecurity during spring 2022 and has an active ongoing search for additional faculty. The department is in the process of launching a search for staff support positions.
- ◆ **Facilities/Startup Expenses** – EWU is currently equipping three spaces to accommodate the research and teaching needs outlined in the decision package. These spaces will be equipped and ready for use during the current academic year.

Coordinated Care Network - \$1million per year

This item funds the implementation of Eagle Care, a robust and coordinated care network that is designed to coordinate and maximize various student support services. The wraparound care helps students navigate and overcome the social, financial, and/or health obstacles that can delay or prevent the successful completion of their degrees.

The Evergreen State College

The Evergreen State College (Evergreen) is a public liberal arts and sciences college located in Olympia and serves students from throughout the state. Evergreen's mission and activities contribute to goals set forth in Results Washington to achieve a world-class education, contribute to a prosperous economy, improve environmental sustainability, contribute to community health and safety, and be accountable and effective stewards of public resources; and to the Washington Student Achievement Council's (WSAC) ten-year roadmap to increase educational attainment in Washington state.

Within Washington state's baccalaureate system, Evergreen's distinctive model of education provides students and their families with unique options. Our students thrive in a model using narrative evaluations as opposed to traditional grades and immersive interdisciplinary programs instead of departments and majors. With structures differing from that of Evergreen's peer institutions, the way in which the College reports outcomes of initiatives is not side-by-side comparable with the universities. For example, for high-demand psychology, we do not provide data on majors, as another institution might. Nevertheless, the narrative below demonstrates that WEIA investments are producing outcomes in line with the principles set forth by the WEIA Board.

In fall of 2022, Evergreen saw the largest percentage increase over the prior year. This 17% enrollment increase in first-year students led to a slight overall increase in enrollment for the college. Partnerships with the state legislature, WEIA investments, and the dedicated efforts of Evergreen faculty and staff each played a role in this initial enrollment turnaround for the college.

Psychology

HB 2158 provided funding to expand psychology offerings to an additional 75 students. The funding has allowed for the hiring of new faculty and expanded curricular offerings. Since fall 2018, Evergreen's psychology offerings grew by 97 seats, from 293 seats to 394 seats. This is a slight drop from the 414 seats offered in fall 2021. This dip is accounted for by one faculty member being on sabbatical and Evergreen being in the process of hiring another as of September 30, 2022.

Evergreen has also created a new path in Psychology, Health, and Community. Paths are areas of the College's interdisciplinary curriculum where Evergreen is making a long-term commitment that allows students to progress from introductory to advanced levels. The funding allowed the hiring of two additional regular (tenure-track) faculty and two new long-term visiting faculty. The College is further expanding our psychology curriculum in Evergreen's new school for Professional Studies and Continuing Education, with plans to hire one additional full-time regular faculty in clinical psychology and behavioral health by fall 2023.

First-Year Experience (Student Success Class & Pre-College Immersion Program)

WEIA funds allowed Evergreen to build and expand upon intentional programming for first-year students with the aim to support students and build community so that students will persist to degree completion.

Greener Foundations

- ◆ Faculty and staff development of curriculum and assessment protocols
- ◆ Faculty and staff training
- ◆ Professional development for instructors teaching first-year students
- ◆ Delivery of a 4-credit student success course for new students

Greener Foundations is a 2-credit, 2-quarter (4 credits total) foundational course for first-time first-year students and transfer students with fewer than 40 credits. Students in Greener Foundations are introduced to the Evergreen student experience by dedicated faculty who have had training in supporting students through their first-year transition. Students learn what it is like to be part of a learning community and how to access campus resources available to them from the library, writing center, Quantitative & Symbolic Reasoning Center (QuaSR), financial aid, advising, and the Student Wellness Center. Students participate via cohorts of other first-year students and can build connections with faculty and staff who are not part of their regular course work, providing a space for students to problem solve and receive support when working through the college transition period. Specialty training for staff and faculty help them collect and integrate feedback from students year-over-year, continually improving the program for future students.

Greener Connections & Pre-Orientation Programs

- ◆ Waived program costs for Pell-eligible students
- ◆ Faculty and staff development of curriculum and assessment protocols

With the help of WEIA funding, Evergreen re-launched Greener Connections with a focus on critical thinking, civic engagement, and multicultural scholarship. This program allows students to jump start their Evergreen journey by connecting with faculty, staff, and peers, Evergreen's campus, and the Olympia community ahead of the beginning of the academic year. Building on Evergreen's history in community-based experiential learning, students can build a supportive network while exploring the South Sound region and learning about multicultural scholarship, civic engagement, and critical thinking.

Student athletes who had joined Evergreen since 2020 were invited to participate in a pre-orientation program that introduced them to campus resources, build up their sense of community via team-building activities, and engage with Olympia.

- ◆ Greener Foundations served 237 students in fall 2021 and 263 in fall 2022
- ◆ Pre-orientation programs including Greener Connections had 50 participants in fall 2021 and 187 participants in fall 2022.

Each of these programs is a data-driven approach to supporting students in a successful college transition. Generally, students who participated in these programs had higher success levels than those who did not.

Assessment by faculty within the Greener Foundations program reported the following:

- ◆ In fall of 2021, of the 271 Greener Foundations-eligible students, 58% participated in the program. Importantly, the College found that many traditionally underserved students did not participate at the same level as others. Specifically, while 62% of all first-time first-year students participated, just 55% of all low-income students, 48% of all students who are below poverty level, and 53% of all students of color participated in the program.
- ◆ When Evergreen examined who earned full credit during fall 2020, the College found that those who participated in Greener Foundations fared better than those who did not: 80% of students who engaged in Greener Foundations earned full credit; in contrast, only 42% of students who did not attend Greener Foundations earned full credit. Only 65% of all first-time first-year students earned full credit in fall 2020. These findings have been transformational in Evergreen's understanding of student behavior regarding the program and student success. The College is currently working on strategies to determine how to engage all future students in Greener Foundations.

- ◆ Of those who participated in Greener Foundations, 94% of students were retained from fall 2020 to spring 2021; in contrast, only 47% of students who did not participate in Greener Foundations continued to be enrolled at Evergreen through spring 2021.

Evergreen's assessment highlights the importance of connecting Greener Foundations to as many students as possible to better support them during their time at Evergreen. Likewise, there is a need to better support students in earning full credit (each quarter), especially first-year students, to improve their time to graduation.

WEIA Principles

Help achieve the goal that 70 percent of students in each cohort of Washington high school graduates complete a postsecondary credential by age 26.

- ◆ Expanded offerings in psychology courses is providing further educational access for systematically underserved students and creating more psychology professionals that represent their communities.
- ◆ Pre-college and first-year experience programming has been shown to be factors in retaining students at a higher level than peers who did not have that programming. This programming is especially important for first-year and first-generation students who experience higher barriers to enrolling and persisting to graduation. Investments in programs that retain students through a successful college transition are key to helping achieve the 70% credential attainment goal.

Provide support for equitable educational access and economic outcomes for systematically underserved students.

As of fall 2022, Evergreen serves an incredibly diverse student body:

- ◆ 47 % non-traditional age (24+ for undergraduates and 30+ for graduates)
- ◆ 61% female
- ◆ 20% first-generation students
- ◆ 35% low income
- ◆ 32% students of color

Evergreen knows students from systematically underserved backgrounds face unique barriers to accessing and persisting through postsecondary education. Providing pre-college and first-year experience programming helps break down those barriers and welcome students to the Evergreen experience.

Help Washington businesses fill the jobs of the future with qualified Washington students, including the current workforce.

- ◆ As of fall 2022, 85% of Evergreen students are Washington residents. Investments in programming that support student retention result in graduates entering, re-entering, or moving up in Washington's workforce.

Improve statewide systems and/or test innovative approaches that can be replicated across institutions.

- ◆ Evergreen's interdisciplinary model merges theory with practice, which gives students a broader view of the behavioral health field than a traditional psychology major. Evergreen's Health and Psychology Path and new offerings in the College's School of Professional and Continuing Education offer multiple, stackable means to a credential.

- ◆ Pre-college and first-year experience programming is based on current best practices to support student transitions. Understanding the campus, services available, and getting to know their faculty are important steps to student success. This programming helps students locate the library, health center, and learn how to access financial aid and advising help before the need arises. Students are immersed in seminar-style learning that they will experience throughout their Evergreen journey.

University of Washington

The University of Washington's (UW) WEIA funds, received in recent biennial budgets, are primarily allocated to enhance and create STEM degree programs, which continue to see unprecedented demand from Washington students, industry, and student support programs on all three campuses (Seattle, Bothell, and Tacoma). The funding stream adds enrollment slots at UW for Washington high school graduates and community and technical college transfers in engineering, computer science, and other STEM disciplines. In addition to STEM degree enrollments, UW received more than 20 additional WEIA funded provisos during the 2023 legislative session. These new provisos span a wide range of policy issues and are other state-driven priorities at the University. For the purposes of this report, UW has provided updates around STEM enrollment allocations and has listed the new provisos at the end of this report.

WEIA appropriations are expanding access to UW STEM degrees for in-state students and are creating a pipeline of future qualified talent for local businesses. Ultimately, UW's STEM degree graduates will see improved opportunity for economic prosperity post-graduation and local businesses will have skilled workers to fill in-demand jobs and further cutting-edge technology and research. Both outcomes fuel economic growth throughout Washington state.

The 2019-21 biennial budget WEIA investments in UW STEM degree program enrollment and completion ramp up until FY25. By FY25, the funding provided will support: (1) 466 enrollments and 133 graduates in engineering per year at UW Seattle; (2) 150 Washington State Academic RedShirt (STARS) program students per year at UW Seattle; (3) 210 enrollments and 70 graduates in STEM per year at UW Bothell, and (4) 180 enrollments and 90 graduates in mechanical and civil engineering per year at UW Tacoma.

UW is on track with the original 2019-21 budget requests with all three campuses expanding STEM degree program enrollment to first-time, first-year and junior level students. From FY20 to FY23, UW Seattle expanded undergraduate enrollment in these programs by 604, and UW Tacoma expanded by 92. UW Bothell experienced a slight (-0.1%) enrollment decline. UW Bothell's five-year enrollment trend remains strong and is recovering to pre-pandemic levels.

WEIA funds were also allocated in the 2019-21 budget to the [Washington State Academic RedShirt \(STARS\)](#) program at UW Seattle, which supports engineering and computer science students from low-income, first-generation, and underserved backgrounds in navigating the transition to college-level courses and the path toward a STEM degree. STARS is a two-year program with a specialized curriculum designed to build learning skills and strengthen academic preparation for core math and science prerequisites. STARS scholars are guaranteed placement into an engineering or computer science major. Since 2019, the program has enrolled 142 new students and continues improving access to STEM degrees and educational outcomes, including degree attainment, for traditionally underserved students.

In the 2021-23 biennial budget, UW received WEIA funds to increase degrees at the Paul G. Allen School of Computer Science & Engineering (CSE) by 100 per year by FY26, with a focus on students from traditionally underserved backgrounds. To date, CSE is on track with the enrollment and degree targets assumed in the 2021-23 budget. CSE expanded undergraduate enrollment by 262 from FY21 to FY23 and new CSE graduates are expected in FY24. Additionally, CSE has increased enrollments of students from traditionally underserved backgrounds and remains committed to a coordinated diversity, equity, inclusion, and access plan. Since FY21, the number of Pell-eligible undergraduate enrollments, one metric used to measure this goal, increased by 31.6% (93 students).

Temporary funding was also provided in the 2021-23 biennial budget to support more students in the CSE Startup program, which aims to increase retention by supporting incoming first-year, direct admittance students who have limited programming experience and/or are from low-income, first-generation, and underserved communities. UW has requested that the Startup funding be made permanent.

From AY20 to AY21, Pell-eligible undergraduate student enrollment increased by 16.8% (113 students) at UW Seattle College of Engineering. At UW Tacoma, 43% of undergraduate students enrolled in the School of Engineering & Technology are Pell-eligible and more than half are students of color. At UW Bothell, Pell-eligible students enrolled in STEM majors has remained steady at 30.1%. The average time to a bachelor's degree for UW students entering STEM degrees from high school is 4.2 years at UW Bothell, 4.1 years at UW Tacoma, and 3.71 years at UW Seattle. Retention rates after admission into a major remain very high.

In the 2023-25 biennial budget, UW received WEIA funds to again support additional enrollments in computer science and engineering disciplines. Each campus received funding, which is detailed below:

- ◆ UW Seattle, for the Allen School of Computer Science & Engineering: \$2 million in FY24 and \$4 million in ongoing funding starting in FY25. In addition, the Allen School received one-time funding of \$125,000 in each FY24 and FY25 to support the Startup program (student support program). UW is requesting that the Startup program funding be made permanent.
- ◆ UW Bothell, School of STEM and First-year and Pre-major Programs (FYPP): \$862,000 in FY24 and each year thereafter to create an equivalent to the STARS program.
- ◆ UW Tacoma, School of Engineering and STEM: \$854,000 in FY24 and \$2 million in ongoing funding starting in FY25 to expand engineering enrollments.

Other Select WEIA-Funded Provisos:

- ◆ Student Support Services (UW Tacoma): \$698,000 in FY24 and \$699,000 in FY25, at UW Tacoma for student support services.
- ◆ College in the High School Fees: \$1.64 million in each FY24 and FY25 for College in the High School courses as provided in Second Substitute Senate Bill 5048.
- ◆ Behavioral Health Support: \$96,000 in FY24 and \$61,000 in FY25 for the implementation of Substitute Senate Bill 5189 which establishes behavioral health support specialists.
- ◆ Center for Indigenous Health: \$500,000 in each FY24 and FY25 for the Center for Indigenous Health to increase the number of American Indian and Alaska Native physicians practicing in the state.

The legislature funded an additional 21 provisos out of WEIA, most of which were member driven. A list of these provisos can be provided upon request.

Washington State University

WEIA has enhanced Washington State University's (WSU) ability to produce graduates and recruit and retain faculty in several high demand sectors through key investments. The account provided a critical component of core funding used to operate and expand class sizes at the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine. In the 2022 legislative session, WEIA also provided funding for WSU to establish a baccalaureate program in Cybersecurity Operations offered through the Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture. In the 2023 legislative session, WEIA funded two new degree programs to address the demand for professionals in the behavioral health workforce needed throughout the state. This included a social work program offering four years of undergraduate programming and an additional fifth year for a Master's of Social Work degree, in addition to a baccalaureate program in Public Health with concentrations in behavioral health and infectious disease. Further, in 2023 the WEIA provided resources to enhance nursing faculty salaries.

At full maturation, the College of Medicine will produce 80 graduates annually. The Cybersecurity Operations program — offered at WSU campuses in Pullman, Tri-Cities, and Everett — added capacity to produce 80 graduates annually at full maturity. The undergraduate social work program at WSU Tri-Cities provides capacity to produce 50 graduates annually at the undergraduate level and 25 master's degrees, while the Public Health degree has the capacity to produce 200 graduates across WSU campuses in Pullman, Spokane, and Vancouver at full maturity.

These programs are meeting the WEIA principles in the following ways:

Help achieve the goal of 70% of students in each cohort of Washington high school graduates completing a postsecondary credential by age 26.

- ◆ The Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine aspires to recruit and sustain a broadly diverse student body from Washington, train them here, and build the likelihood that graduates will practice here. The College only admits students from Washington. Twenty three percent of the current student body grew up in a rural county, 31% are the first in their families to have obtained a bachelor's degree, 61.3% identify as women, 9.7% have served in the military, and 39.1% have low socioeconomic status. The University's current student body includes students from 28 counties and 96 individual Washington communities. Pathway programs have been established by the College to target traditionally underserved populations in Washington and those who align well with the College mission. While these pathways may not result in students pursuing a career that leads them to medical school, students may end up pursuing other health science disciplines, such as nursing. These pathway programs include:
 - ▶ The Dare to Dream Health Sciences Academy works with the state's Superintendent for Public Instruction and the Association for Washington State Principals to engage K-12 students in migrant populations.
 - ▶ Students of Medicine delivers hands-on experiences in a remote format as part of a 1 to 3-week curriculum for high school students from low socioeconomic backgrounds or prospective first-generation college students.
 - ▶ Reimagining Indians into Medicine (RISE) Summer Academy utilizes grant funding from the Indian Health Service's Indians into Medicine Program to provide programming for prospective American Indian and Alaskan Native students considering applying to medical within two admissions cycles.

- ▶ Wy'east Post-Baccalaureate Pathway includes partnering with Oregon Health Science University to send four college graduates who are enrolled members of federally recognized tribes to OHSU for programming that runs September through June each year. In fall of 2025, the Wy'east pathway will be further developed on the Spokane campus to host the four scholars and intentionally prepare them for success at the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine.
- ▶ WSU Honors College Pathway Program is a partnership with Pullman's program to select up to eight students who are aligned with the College mission in a 2-year pathway while they finish their undergraduate degrees before matriculating into the College.
- ◆ The Cybersecurity Operations program is located on WSU campuses in Pullman, Tri-Cities, and Everett. This was a deliberate decision intended to reach place-bound students. By having the program at three distinct locations, it provides an in-state option for high school graduates and degree-seekers who may have otherwise left the state or chosen to not pursue a cybersecurity degree at all. The funding provided is also being used to establish dedicated student support staff for this program to promote academic progress and completion for all.
- ◆ The Public Health degree is offered at WSU campuses in Pullman with a concentration on infectious disease, and Vancouver and Spokane with a concentration on behavioral health. The concentration offerings align with the academic and research strengths of the campuses where they are located. The degree equips students with an interdisciplinary degree that will have them in careers in state and local health departments, private and public research laboratories, and community health settings. This new program at WSU is working hand in hand with the Washington State Public Health Academic Learning Collaborative and the Department of Health. This group is organizing a webpage that serves as a centralized repository of resources to include scholarships, internships, and fellowships available for Washington State public health students, and resources for instructors.
- ◆ The Social Work program at WSU Tri-Cities plans to admit the first cohort of undergraduate students in fall 2024 with the first cohort of MSW students being eligible for admission in fall 2028. Upon enrolling students in the graduate program, it will become the only MSW program in Tri-Cities and will offer a pathway to education for those interested in the social work workforce without needing to leave town. Designed with a four-plus-one model, the program confers a bachelor of social work degree, which equips them for high demand careers as mental health assistants or family service specialists, while also offering a pathway to becoming a licensed social worker with an additional year in the master's program.
- ◆ The WSU College of Nursing is preparing nurses at five different locations throughout the state: Spokane, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, Yakima, and a hybrid RN-to-BSN program with coursework delivered primarily online. The funding allowed WSU to more adequately compensate high demand nurse educators, bringing salaries for such faculty to the 50th percentile. This has ensured that the pipeline of roughly 435 nursing degrees conferred annually at WSU remained undisturbed.

Provide support and improve educational and economic outcomes for systemically underserved students (e.g., first-generation college students; students from low-income backgrounds; and students of color, particularly Black, Hispanic, Latinx, and Native American students).

- ◆ The Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine deploys a holistic admissions process that only considers GPA and test scores as transparent pre-screening criteria to receive a secondary application. The Admissions Committee, screeners, or interviewers never see GPAs or MCAT scores when assessing eligible applicants' candidacy. This holistic admissions process focuses on mission-aligned experiences and attributes including connections to Washington and coming from or having served communities historically underserved or marginalized and rural. This has produced a diverse current student body of which 43% are students of color and 39% are from low-income backgrounds. Once enrolled, students engage in a curriculum that includes instruction on bias, racism and sexism in medicine, health literacy and language barriers, and health equity. Students also participate in individualized development plans focused on intercultural sensitivity. Additionally, students complete required curriculum to earn a leadership certificate through training that spans the four-year curriculum to help equip them with the tools to advocate for their patients, bring about positive change, and address health disparities prevalent in rural and underserved communities.
- ◆ The Cybersecurity Operations degree is offered at three WSU campuses. WSU is organized as a multi-campus system to meet students where they are and produce a student body that is representative of the state at large. In the first semester of the program, students who identified as a minority represented 42% of those enrolled in the program. In addition, the University anticipates significant numbers of transfers from community colleges, also homes to diverse populations of students. Finally, the inclusion of considerable advising resources reflects clear national evidence that expanded advising is especially impactful on underrepresented and first-generation students. Advisors are trained to meet the specific needs of these students.
- ◆ The Public Health degree will be offered at three WSU campuses, including the Vancouver and Spokane campuses, which serve populations of students underrepresented in higher education. That includes 44% first-generation students at WSU Vancouver and 37% students of color. Offering this program on these campuses continues to open college pathways for students from these and other underrepresented backgrounds. Funding will also support staff that will support outreach/marketing, recruitment, and partnerships that are focused on rural, remote, and underserved populations. WSU will leverage strong health sciences partnerships in Native American health on the Spokane campus to build the program.
- ◆ The Social Work program provides an educational pathway for students on the WSU Tri-Cities campus, which serves 50% students of color and 46% students who are first in their families to attend college. The addition of this program only enhances WSU's ability to produce a workforce that looks like the Tri-Cities and Washington.
- ◆ The College of Nursing continues to educate a greater population of students from underserved communities, with 39% BIPOC students and where 23.4% are first generation college students, and 18% identify as coming from a rural community. The funding to retain current faculty helps the College continue to serve this population of students and recruit new faculty from underrepresented backgrounds to help foster a sense of community and belonging for students. In addition, the funding investment helped the college to hire academic coaches and experiential learning staff on all campuses to provide additional resources necessary to ensure that all students are successful.

Help Washington businesses fill the jobs of the future with qualified, homegrown talent.

- ◆ The College of Medicine continues to admit only Washington students. Narrow exceptions are made primarily so as not to penalize Washingtonians who left the state to go to college or serve in the military. Applicants who fail to meet the residency requirement are automatically removed from the applicant pool. The College does not have a nonresident tuition rate. Today's student body hails from 96 different Washington communities in 28 counties.
- ◆ As mentioned, the Cybersecurity Operations, Public Health, and Social Work programs are strategically placed throughout the state of Washington to draw from local high school graduates and prospective students interested in the rapidly expanding cybersecurity and behavioral health field. In cybersecurity, Washington's existing capacity to produce the workforce needed is undersized in a field expected to grow 30% according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Furthermore, the inclusion of dedicated advisors and an internship coordinator will help facilitate pathways to Washington businesses to meet their demand for qualified graduates who have demonstrated experience. The Social Work program will look to bolster the state's high-demand mental health workforce particularly in rural, remote, and underserved communities where impacts from mental health challenges like the pandemic caused disproportionate harm.
- ◆ This year, 91% of students enrolled in the College of Nursing are Washington residents and the College remains one of the top producers of nurses in the state. Investments made in faculty salaries help ensure that the College can continue producing homegrown nurses without any disruptions.

Improve statewide systems and/or test innovative approaches that can be replicated across institutions.

- ◆ At the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, clinical training in the third year is conducted via longitudinal integrated clerkship. Here, students are trained in clinical settings in the core disciplines of family medicine, pediatrics, surgery, OB/GYN, internal medicine, and psychiatry. Rather than isolate all training in a single discipline into individual blocks of time, the longitudinal integrated clerkship allows a student to receive training in all disciplines simultaneously over a prolonged period, just as they will as professionals. This allows them to remain at a single training site or region and develop relationships with patients they see repeatedly. These 46-week clerkships help students retain empathy and improve learning retention as they apply knowledge in each discipline time and again.
- ◆ The Cybersecurity Operations degree is unique in that an internship coordinator and targeted advising capacity just for this academic program was built into the funding proposal. Additional advising capacity will be available at each campus, while all three will share a single internship coordinator.
- ◆ The Public Health degree, being offered across three campuses (Spokane, Vancouver, and Pullman) and three colleges (Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, and the College of Arts and Sciences), demonstrates interprofessional education that spans the state of Washington. This strategy capitalizes on WSU's healthcare professionals and researchers as they educate students in public health and meet the needs of Washington state in the areas of infectious disease and behavioral health, with practicum experiences in the local communities that they will be serving.
- ◆ The Public Health degree curriculum will include education in communication, leadership, human development, and more, which will further connections across disciplines and colleges at the University. After the initial launch, WSU hopes to develop microcredentials and certificates through its Global Campus that will permit the University's students to have the direct credentials necessary to be career-ready for Washington state jobs.

- ◆ The Social Work program utilizes a four-plus-one model, as previously mentioned. This is an innovative approach to expedite students who are already in the social work educational pipeline to not only equip them with an undergraduate degree that can be utilized in the workforce, but allows a student to spend one more year to earn their graduate degree, where other programs would typically require two years.

It is worth noting several outcomes to date:

- ◆ The College of Medicine's first three graduating classes matched to residency at a rate between 96.4% to 98.5%, exceeding national averages. Furthermore, they matched to residency programs in the Pacific Northwest at a rate between 39.7% to 53.6%. When including the full Western Region, 57.3% to 75% are training on this side of the country. All of these show promise for returning to Washington for practice.
- ◆ The College has developed three accredited residency programs so far at no cost to the state. They include an internal medicine residency program with Providence Regional Medical Center in Everett, which will at full maturity have 40 total residents. A second residency program with Pullman Regional Hospital focusing on family medicine took its first three residents in July 2023 and at full maturity will have nine total residents. A third residency program in pediatrics will begin taking residents in July 2024. The primary training location for this program will be at Providence Sacred Heart Children's Hospital, but residents will have outpatient experiences at local community pediatrics clinics. The program will take six residents per cohort for 18 total residents. Slots in these residency programs are not reserved for WSU students, just as WSU graduates are eligible for existing residency programs in Washington, but make valuable additions to the state's supply.
- ◆ The development of the medical school has spurred new research activity on the Spokane campus with important work being done on cancer, addiction and mental health, population health, autism, pharmacology, chronic disease, sleep and performance, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Research grants and awards at WSU Spokane, catalyzed by the emergence of the College of Medicine, totaled approximately \$34 million in FY 2022. The National Institutes of Health has been the leading funder.
- ◆ The Cybersecurity Operations degree program has enrolled 33 students as of its launch this fall 2023 across campuses. Currently, four faculty have been hired and searches continue for the remaining two faculty positions. More than 20 organizations were consulted regarding educational and research needs. A student club has also been formed in the WSU system, which includes students from other degree programs and competes in regional and national competitions, such as the National Cyber League and Spokane Mayor's Cup. The student club has achieved impressive accomplishments in these competitions, which represent significant experiential learning opportunities.
- ◆ The Public Health degree curriculum is finalized and is currently being reviewed through internal processes.
- ◆ Nursing salary enhancements have resulted in increased numbers of applicants and have helped to alleviate many areas of critical shortage. For the first time in over five years, WSU has a full faculty roster for the BSN program going into the spring 2024 semester and does not anticipate the need for last minute hires. In addition, WSU has several high-quality recruits for key leadership positions for our Doctor of Nursing Practice program.

Western Washington University

New and ongoing investments of WEIA funds have been appropriated to Western Washington University (WWU) for the purposes of:

- ◆ STEM degree programs - \$1.7 million
- ◆ Ethnic studies curriculum - \$508,000
- ◆ Cyber Range technical support positions - \$200,000
- ◆ Student support services - \$1.26 million
- ◆ Cities and counties planning studios - \$200,000 one-time
- ◆ 2+2 programs on the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas - \$3.2 million
- ◆ First-year retention - \$1.5 million
- ◆ Mental health first aid - \$100,000
- ◆ Master of social work - \$694,000
- ◆ Bilingual educators - \$2.5 million
- ◆ Peninsulas student support - \$1 million
- ◆ Human services state support - \$580,000

STEM Degrees

WWU currently graduates over 1,000 students per year in STEM fields. The vast majority of WWU STEM graduates are Washington residents, and around 25% are students of color or the first generation in their family to attend college.

Due to unprecedented enrollment growth in STEM majors over the last decade, WWU has had to significantly limit the number of students admitted into STEM degree majors in the years before the WEIA investment, particularly in the computer science, engineering, and pre-healthcare degree programs. By 2019, a large portion of qualified student applicants were denied admission into STEM majors due to capacity constraints. WEIA funding is being invested to hire new STEM faculty to address these capacity limitations and expand the number of career-ready STEM graduates at WWU.

- ◆ Electrical Engineering: 150% increase in graduates per year by 2025 (from 36 to over 90).
- ◆ Computer Science: 28% increase in graduates per year by 2023 (from 140 to over 180).
- ◆ Pre-Healthcare: have already seen an increase in pre-health majors (from 883 to 1006).
- ◆ Energy Science: New degree program started in fall 2019, currently supporting around 40 declared majors.

The funding has supported 14 new faculty hires in STEM subject areas and a new lab technician position.

Other outcomes of the WEIA investment in STEM degree expansion at WWU include:

- ◆ Development of a new Biochemistry degree program designed to expand access and reduce time to graduation for pre-health students intending to pursue health care graduate programs, such as Medical, Dental, Pharmacy and others. The new program includes a 2+2 pathway to the degree for students from community and technical colleges, thereby lowering barriers to pre-health programs for a wider range of students from a diverse set of backgrounds. Since its creation two years ago, the new Bachelor of Arts in Biochemistry degree program has been enrolling 8-12 new students annually.

- ◆ Development and launching of a new Data Science Bachelor of Science program that will create new career opportunities for students in the areas of analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence focused on data science and management. Currently, there are 34 students enrolled in this new degree program.
- ◆ Development of a new comprehensive program for first-year engineering students designed to increase retention and graduation rates in engineering and hiring a Program Director for First-Year Programs in Engineering and Design.
- ◆ Development of a groundbreaking new degree program Bachelor of Arts-Education degree in Computer Science that prepares the next generation of teachers with curriculum and practical experience integrating computer science practice and principles at all levels in K-12 education. The first students admitted into this program are expected in spring 2023.
- ◆ Expanded student access and applied student research opportunities in Computer Science and Electrical and Computer Engineering.
- ◆ The Institute for Energy Studies “campus as a living energy efficiency lab” initiative is fully operational, deploying newly hired faculty for the coursework development and implementation, and complemented by co-curricular activities funded by private donors.
- ◆ Increased partnerships with regional employers, resulting in increased research partnerships involving student researchers at the undergraduate and graduate levels, industry-supported professorships, internships and externships, and curriculum development. WWU’s industry partners include Microsoft, Boeing, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, PACCAR, Enersys, McKinstry, Puget Sound Energy, Snohomish County PUD, Seattle City Light, NW Labs, Northwest Pathology, the Whatcom Health Department, and Seagen.

Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Funding from the WEIA was appropriated to WWU in the 2021-23 biennial budget to establish an academic curriculum in Ethnic Studies as part of a broader strategy to improve the success of underrepresented students at WWU. To date, WWU has used the funding to deliver a number of ethnic studies courses while the new Ethnic Studies unit is developed and has funded course releases so that Ethnic Studies faculty could plan and create curriculum. Currently, the new Ethnic Studies academic department in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is going through academic review, along with a new Ethnic Studies major, both to be available to students in fall 2024. Hiring of tenure-track faculty positions is planned for the 2024-2025 academic year.

WWU anticipates an increase in student enrollments and graduation and retention rates, as a result of the investment, particularly among students of color and underrepresented groups. Through the hiring of faculty and staff working exclusively in the Ethnic Studies program and with its students, WWU will improve its working and studying climate for underrepresented groups, allowing students from such groups to feel more comfortable and safer at WWU. Coupled with robust support services and new first-year programs designed to support low-income, first-generation students, this will improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

Cybersecurity

At the heart of WWU's Cybersecurity program is the Cyber Range facility located at WWU's Poulsbo location, serving students from across the northwest region as well as partner institutions across the nation. WWU's Cyber Range functions as a tool to provide students with the opportunity for unique, 'hands-on' experiences with live cyber threats, real-time security against attacks, and experience with cyberwarfare.

The provided investment will allow the support of students from schools (K-12 and higher education) throughout the state to increase from 550 to 5000 students annually. This will increase access to students in remote areas, for example through West Sound STEM and Spokane STEM. The hands-on experiences provided by the range prepare students experienced and qualified for jobs that Washington businesses are seeking to fill.

In 2022-23 Cyber Range Poulsbo upgraded the systems supporting the cyber range. This upgrade will be fully completed in December 2023. As the new systems have come online, the range has been able to significantly increase the number of students the range can support. In 2021-22, the range supported a total of 550 students, including approximately 100 K-12 students. In 2022-23 the range supported 1322 students, including 513 K-12 students. In the first quarter of 2023-24, the range has supported 667 students, including 133 K-12 students. Given the growth trends, the expectation for the year is that the range will support more than 2,500 students, including over 1,000 K-12 students. With these trends, WWU expects to exceed 5,000 students supported by the 2025-26 school year.

Colleges and Universities supported include Western Washington University, Central Washington University, Highline College, St. Martin's University, Green River College, Olympic College, Bellevue College, Peninsula College, University of Washington - Bothell, Spokane Falls Community College, and The Evergreen State College.

The Cyber Range has also worked with the Cybersecurity Center of Excellence at Whatcom College to secure a \$100,000 grant, which is currently funding 12 community college instructors to develop cyber range exercises to support their programs.

K-12 Schools supported include Renton High School, Hazen High School, Clover Park High School, Almira Coulee Hartline (ACH) High School, Spokane Valley Tech, Hanford High School, Richland High School, and Civil Air Patrol Cyber Patriot.

Another 8 colleges and universities are working toward including use of Cyber Range Poulsbo in their curriculum, as well as an expanding number of school districts.

In addition to working with schools, Cyber Range Poulsbo has been expanding its partnerships with other organizations including Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Cyber.org, Washington Autonomous Vehicle Cluster (WAV-C), Public Infrastructure Security Cyber Education System (PISCES), Pacific Northwest National Laboratories, Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and other organizations. Several of these organizations in turn provide additional support for the Cyber Range. Funding from CISA and PISCES supports schools in 5 states including Colorado, Kentucky, Montana, Idaho, and Alabama, with others planning to become operational this year.

Student Supports

WWU requested funding to address critical staffing and programmatic needs aimed at ensuring underrepresented students receive the same opportunities for academic success as their peers. With the hiring of a recruitment specialist and a student success specialist with a focus on curriculum, WWU has bolstered student support services. WWU approaches student support in a collaborative life cycle model with faculty from recruitment to graduation. By fully supporting every diverse student that's admitted and enrolls, the state's initial investment in their education will be realized as they are retained to graduation and contribute as educated citizens.

This funding was utilized to further inclusive access, post-pandemic recruitment, financial aid counseling, and outreach. Positions hired include an enrollment and retention data analyst, an enrollment management data systems specialist, and financial aid specialists. Resources were also allocated to admissions resources in other languages and to support enrollment management initiatives.

On the programmatic side, in addition to funding to support the Western Success Scholars program, positions were hired aimed at retention, academic success, and targeted support for underserved student populations. Positions include an LGBTQ+ and multicultural student services program developer, an African American retention counselor, a Latinx retention counselor, and a former foster youth and homelessness youth program manager.

Enrollment management programmatic highlights:

- ◆ Improved processes in Slate CRM.
- ◆ Campus visit experience was enhanced, including deploying more “Viking Visits” during critical periods.
- ◆ Showcasing programs for select populations, such as luncheons for Honors College applicants, and panels with current students during Being BIPOC at Western events (in partnership with the Black Student Union and Afro-Caribbean Club).
- ◆ Targeting digital messaging efforts to markets with growth opportunities and supporting important outcomes such as Financial Aid FAFSA submission. Utilization of numerous college search sites and software.
- ◆ Continued review of the scholarship model and adapting to changing forces in the market.
- ◆ Sustaining the efforts in the Washington Guaranteed Admissions Program (WAGAP).
- ◆ Building the infrastructure to support the launch of College in the High School.

Overall Enrollment Recovery

Last year, WWU matriculated the largest class of new first-year students in its history, and although the small fall 2020 cohort is still cycling through and now in their fourth year, some recovery in retention and another year of new first-year numbers that exceeds anything WWU had experienced prior to the pandemic provides strong reason for optimism.

Average student credit hours are up from 13.55% to 13.63% fall to fall as of Week 1.

Retention

- ◆ All classes of students have been retained at higher rates than the previous fall-to-fall year, with the exception of Continuing Juniors at 81.0%, which was lower than 82.4% the previous year, but similar to two years prior.
- ◆ New First-Years were retained at 78.9% compared to 77.0% the prior year.
- ◆ New Transfers were retained at 83.2% compared to 80.5% the prior year.
- ◆ Continuing Freshmen were retained at 72.7% compared to 67.1% the prior year.
- ◆ Continuing Seniors were retained at 32.4% compared to 32.0% the prior year.

Cities and Counties Planning Studios

WWU is working with other institutions of higher education, state agencies, and municipalities to meet planning requirements. With a need for more qualified urban planners, there is a scarcity of professionals who can meet planning goals related to the growth management act, planning for climate change, and comprehensive planning. Through coordination, these studios will take place throughout the state matching programs and municipalities based on geography, specialties, and capacity.

2+2 Programs

In 2023, WWU was appropriated funding to expand 2+2 degree programs on the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas. New degree programs in industrial systems engineering, data science, and sociology are currently under development.

First-Year Retention

In December 2023, WWU delivered a program proposal to the legislature for a first-year orientation program specifically for Washington College Grant recipients. This program will launch in fall 2024, offering an early-start onboarding opportunity to incoming, first-year, first-generation, underserved students who are recipients of the Washington College Grant. The early start will lead to a year-long series of academic seminars and enhanced opportunities for community engagement, development of a sense of place, support for mental health needs, and scaffolding for academic success. The structure of the program is based on a cohort model that relies on peer support through the work of learning assistants who will be embedded in the seminar courses. A variety of high-impact experiences will be offered to students in the program, including direct contact with faculty, peer mentoring, access to early internships, and opportunities for field study and study abroad. Students completing the program will be invited to undergo training in peer mentorship and offered the opportunity for paid employment as learning assistants in future years of the program.

The twofold intended outcomes of the seminar series are:

- ◆ To close the observed gaps described above in how well the University is meeting the needs of first-generation, low-income students.
- ◆ To build leaders from within this student group who will serve as mentors for incoming students of the same population.

Student services support teams are integrated into the fall quarter classrooms by means of a short presentation visit so students can learn more about the variation of support systems. The integration of student services as support systems within the seminar classes calls for staff classroom visits from existing WWU resources for students, such as the Office of Student Life, the Academic Advising & Student Achievement Center, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. The student resource representative visits to the seminar classes will occur four times per quarter as a 30-minute presentation with Q&A. The visits serve as a reminder of services that support students' academic achievements while enrolled at WWU.

The classes will be led by faculty members who are program or department directors, as they bring their expertise to support students with the following:

- ◆ Math required course preparation
- ◆ Library curriculum practices
- ◆ English comprehension and readiness
- ◆ Mental health and well-being practices
- ◆ Peer engagement and leadership
- ◆ Community engagement and socialization skills

Students in this program will have the social support of the cohorts in their seminars and will also be part of the larger community of first-generation students in the whole cohort of participants who will be brought together for events at key points in their educational journey. We will actively support and encourage students to form, within this larger cohort, their own affinity groups based on specific interests. These interests might be represented by existing [WWU clubs](#) or they could be new interests that these first-generation students are bringing to the mix. The intention is for these affinity groups to collaborate on a project of their choosing, which will be presented to the larger cohort of students at a capstone presentation in the spring.

Mental Health First Aid

Faculty requested access to mental health first aid training, and in 2023 the legislature appropriated WEIA funding for this purpose. WWU is offering in-person and online trainings throughout fall 2023 and winter 2024. As of late November 2023, all in-person trainings are at capacity and nearly all online training spots are full. This demand points to a robust desire for this training.

Participants can expect to gain the following from this training:

- ◆ Increase their knowledge of signs, symptoms, and risk factors of mental health and substance use challenges.
- ◆ Ability to identify multiple types of professional and self-help resources for individuals with a mental health or substance use challenge.
- ◆ Show reduced stigma and increased empathy toward individuals with mental health challenges.
- ◆ Increase their confidence and likelihood to help an individual in distress.
- ◆ Benefit personally from the skills and information they learn to manage their own mental well-being.

Master of Social Work

In 2023, WWU received funding to launch a Master of Social Work (MSW) program. This programming will be available to students in Bellingham and on the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas. This program is intended to match up with the new sociology degree offering that is currently under development.

Bilingual Educators

Building upon previous state funding, in 2023 the legislature directed WWU to bolster the multilingual educator program operating in Renton and build upon this work with a new site in Everett. With this funding, the Woodring College of Education will utilize a residency model to prepare students who are currently employed in local school districts to complete their bachelor's or master's degree, including options for a focus in special education.

Human Services

In 2023, WEIA investments were provided to WWU to convert the human services program at Western on the Peninsulas from self-sustaining to state supported. This investment effectively lowered tuition rates for rural students utilizing a distance learning option on the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas to study human services.