WITC ranked 7th best 2-year college

As students return to the halls of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College’s four campuses, a recent study has proven they have made the right choice. WITC ranks seventh among two-year colleges nationwide, according to a study published in ‘Washington Monthly.’

Kevin Carey, a research and policy manager at Education Sector, an independent, nonpartisan think tank, completed the results for ‘Washington Monthly.’ According to Carey, “our methodology was designed to identify community/technical colleges that excel in using teaching methods that researchers have linked to increased student achievement. We also wanted to identify colleges that are successful in helping students earn degrees.”

According to WITC President Chuck Levine, 93 percent of last year’s graduates were employed six months after graduating.

Board announces finalists for president

The Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Board of Trustees has invited four finalists for the position of President of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College to visit the college and be interviewed.

The finalists represent college leaders from within Wisconsin, Minnesota and Kansas.

Members of the WITC Board of Trustees will interview the candidates. It is the intent to give faculty, staff, students and the community an opportunity to meet the candidates during open forums at WITC campuses in February.

“We are very fortunate to have such strong candidates and we are looking forward to everyone’s participation in the upcoming public forums,” said Hal Helwig, WITC Board Chair.

The finalists were selected from a group of candidates interviewed by the WITC screening committee and recommended to the Board of Trustees. The screening Committee was headed by Susan Wojtkiewicz, WITC board member, and included both college and community representatives.

“We are delighted with this excellent pool of candidates,” said Wojtkiewicz. “The college owes immense gratitude to the screening committee for all of their hard work.”

For more information about the candidates, visit witc.edu/presidentsearch/index.htm.
Criminal Justice - Law Enforcement now a two-year program

WITC has recently become the home for a two-year Criminal Justice - Law Enforcement program.

“The addition of the second year of the degree program allows our students to gain a full associate degree without having to take on the problems and expense of moving to another school for completion of their studies,” said Pat McNally, the Associate Dean of Criminal Justice at WITC. “It will allow the northwestern region of the state to provide a full associate degree program in criminal justice - law enforcement locally.”

Available at WITC’s Rice Lake campus, the Criminal Justice - Law Enforcement program will prepare the student for a position as a law enforcement officer (state, municipal, or county), correctional officer, or for positions in retail, commercial, industrial security, and private investigation agencies. The program provides the student with necessary skills to perform as a police officer at municipal, county, or state governmental levels. The program also offers the officer already in active service an opportunity to improve skills and earn the associate degree.

“The Wisconsin Technical College System has monitored our needs assessment and planning process and ultimately authorized WITC to proceed with the program expansion in order to meet the training needs of our area’s law enforcement agencies,” McNally said.

Three new certificates added to course offerings at WITC

Customer Service, Legal Office, and Cabling Technology, have been added to the 2007-08 offerings.

The Customer Service certificate will prepare students to serve a diverse customer base in business. Students may choose one of two areas of emphasis — service or marketing/sales. Students will be prepared to communicate with internal and external customers using phone, fax, e-mail, Internet, and e-business. Professional poise, conflict resolution, nonverbal communication, listening skills and respectful engagement in a multicultural, global business setting are additional areas of study.

The Legal Office certificate will prepare students for employment in a legal firm. Students will learn legal terminology, business law concepts, legal transcription and general office duties including, but not limited to, proofreading and using office technology.

Both certificates are offered at WITC’s Ashland, New Richmond, Rice Lake and Superior campuses.

The Cabling Technology certificate, available at New Richmond, gives students practical theory and applications necessary to enter a career in cabling equipment setup and operation.

The coursework is largely hands-on in an actual manufacturing setting. Areas of emphasis include operation of a cabler in the wire and cable industry.

Seminars and workshops

Seminars and workshops teach skills of all types — interpersonal, leadership, quality improvement, or computer technology skills. Others are industry specific, small business, health care, or telecommunications. WITC offers a wide variety of seminars and workshops for your continuing education. Be sure to visit www.witc.edu/coned/seminars for information about upcoming events.
February is Career and Technical Education Month

February has been designated Career and Technical Education Month by the Association for Career and Technical Education. The month will be dedicated to celebrating career and technical education across the country. According to ACTE, the idea behind CTE Month is to spend some time celebrating what career and technical education is, the benefits and opportunities it provides students, and the impact it has on the community.

Students were invited to create video public service announcements (PSAs) promoting technical education. ACTE sponsored its first annual CTE Month PSA Contest this year.

View some of the winners at www.witc.edu/news/2008/teched.htm

Upcoming Events

**February**

- February  Career and Technology Education Month, National Observance
- February 4 College and Financial Aid Night, Ashland
- February 11 College and Financial Aid Night, Superior
- February 12 Campus Exploration Day, New Richmond
- February 13 Health Fair/Bring a Friend to Campus Day, Ashland
- February 27 High School Career Day, Rice Lake

**March**

- March 4 Spring Open House, New Richmond
- March 5 Skills Competition, Ashland
- March 19 8th Grade Career Cluster Day, New Richmond
- March 27 Campus Exploration Day, Rice Lake

WITC begins new year with renewed AQIP status

Dr. Steven Crow, President of The Higher Learning Commission, notified WITC in writing that our new status of being an Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) college was effective Dec. 13, 2007.

The Academic Quality Improvement Program infuses the principles and benefits of continuous improvement into the culture of colleges and universities by providing an alternative process through which an already-accredited institution can maintain its accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission.

With AQIP, an institution demonstrates it meets accreditation standards and expectations through sequences of events that align with those ongoing activities that characterize organizations striving to improve their performance.
Technical colleges key to ‘Grow Wisconsin’ initiatives

MADISON – Wisconsin’s technical colleges will be instrumental in several key initiatives in Governor Jim Doyle’s “Grow Wisconsin” plan.

Highlights of that plan were presented Jan. 29 to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board by Board Member and Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development Roberta Gassman.

The Governor’s plan, the third in a series, focuses on continuing to expand Wisconsin’s economy by encouraging business innovation and expansion while developing the highly skilled and well-trained workforce needed to fuel that expansion. “The result will be continued movement toward a dynamic, innovative state economy that produces good-paying jobs,” Secretary Gassman said.

Highlights of the plan include creation of a $1.5 million grant program to provide tuition assistance to full-time, low-wage workers who can receive up to $1,000 per year for technical college training.

In addition, the Governor intends to target $640,000 to expand opportunities for transitioning from adult basic education into technical training, expand and create linkages between Youth and Adult apprenticeship programs, and expand funding for targeted training that supports vibrant and emerging industries.

“The system appreciates the Governor’s leadership in recognizing the critical role Wisconsin’s technical colleges play in strengthening the state’s economy,” stated Board President Mary Quinnette Cuene. “Once again, the Governor’s creativity and vision will lead efforts to leverage the state’s educational resources to grow Wisconsin.”

“The important partnership between the technical colleges and the Department of Workforce Development,” noted Board vice-president Allan Kehl, “is a critical resource for municipal, county, and regional economic development efforts.” He added, “It reinforces statewide efforts to match career and technical education with emerging industries in a way that is good for business, good for workers, and good for the economy.”

Governor Jim Doyle meets with workers at Cequent Trailer Products in Mosinee to discuss his plans to launch the next generation of Wisconsin industry Jan. 14. Governor Doyle recently released Grow Wisconsin – The Next Steps, his comprehensive plan to grow Wisconsin’s economy and seize opportunities to update Wisconsin’s bedrock industries and enter new markets.

The Wisconsin Technical College System has 16 technical college districts throughout Wisconsin, which offer more than 300 programs awarding two-year associate degrees, one and two-year technical diplomas and short-term technical diplomas. In addition, the System is the major provider of customized training and technical assistance to Wisconsin’s business and industry community. More than half of all adults in Wisconsin have accessed the technical colleges for education and training.

Find more about educational programs at www.witech-colleges.org.
Donations deliver power boost to WITC certificate program

Donations give intrinsic value to the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College New Richmond Campus’s Molding Setup Technician certificate. The more than $30,000 in press donations alone are a contributing factor to why the plastic injection molding program developed at this campus. Other donations from industry have also contributed to the program’s growth.

“Donations have allowed us to put together a very nice lab for students,” said Olaf Wick, Machine Tooling Technologies instructor.

Of recent note is the donation of two Cincinnati 33-ton molding machines from Phillips Plastics. The machines give students an opportunity to learn about and work with molds of differing types and sizes.

“Often our donated sampling molds are much larger than the ones we can produce in the lab, so students have the opportunity to expand their knowledge base,” Wick said. He also points out that donations are often more than equipment and materials. In this example, Phillips also donated the loading/unloading and shipping costs of the two molding machines.

“We have five plastic injection molding machines in our lab where students will have the opportunity to become experienced with four different controls,” Wick said. “We have also added a new one-ton jib crane to support molding equipment.

“Our students get to experience processing several different resins: we typically run TPE, TPR, ABS, ABS/PC, PC, PS, PP, PE, and nylons,” he said. “The students receive 128 hours of hands-on experience along with 32 hours of classroom instruction for $692. That’s a training cost of $4.33 per hour.”

According to the college’s research, the plastics industry is slated to be the industry with the greatest growth in the Midwest, and WITC is helping train workers to help meet the growing demand with its Plastic Injection Certificate. The top-notch lab expands the learning opportunities of students, preparing them more effectively for the workforce and future job demands.

“This year we are running one section each semester and have increased the class size to eight students due to the addition of equipment,” Wick said.

Wick said the typical people interested in the Injection Molding Setup Technician certificate are usually new employees who start as operators or materials handlers and they want to work into the setup phase. However, Wick has also seen engineers take the course because they get the opportunity to become more familiar with the controls. In a production environment, little time is available to explore a machine control.

“We’ve done a lot with a little money,” Wick explains, and specifically pegs the donations from industry as the primary reason for the comprehensive plastic injection lab at WITC New Richmond. “We’re an extremely affordable training option.”

The above article appeared in a recent issue of ‘Donation Matters,’ a newsletter about the Corporate Donation Program of the Wisconsin Technical College System Foundation.