THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF WESTERN NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SPRING 2019

RENOVATION UPDATE: HOWARD OLSEN STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER AND LEARNING COMMONS

WNCC MAKES ECONOMIC **IMPACT ON PANHANDLE**

PROGRAMS OF STUDY: EDUCATION

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM OFFERS FREE SUMMER CLASSES

GEORGE Faces of **Excellence:** ADASEOTES CHILDHOOD DREAM TAKES FLIGHT

IN NEW CAREER



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DR. TODD HOLCOMB

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The Extensive Impact of WNCC

magine the impact \$145 million could have on a region. With \$145 million, we could support one out of every 23 jobs in the Nebraska Panhandle. Or it would be the equivalent to 3.2 percent of the area's Gross Regional Product.

That \$145 million, in fact, is the impact Western Nebraska Community College has on its service area in one year, according to an Emsi report conducted for the Western Community College Area (WCCA) over the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

See, while WNCC prides itself on being a tremendous educational opportunity for people

of all ages, the associate degrees and certificates the College confers each year only tell half of our story. The other half is told by your neighbors and downtown businesses.

WNCC's impact on its communities is the College's MILO training simulators used by law enforcement and community members throughout the Panhandle. It's the added income to local companies through work being done on our renovations and additions on all three campuses. It's the access to a business incubator for the reviving community of Sidney. It's the opportunity for our students to take up to two courses free each summer through the SummerFree scholarship program. All of those, which you can read about in the following pages of this edition of WESTERN, show just a portion of WNCC's impact through its partnerships, its faculty and staff, its students, and its alumni. I invite you to read more about the recent Emsi report's results and WNCC's impact on the region throughout this magazine, along with the people that make it happen.

-Dr. Todd Holcomb, President

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GET SOCIAL WITH WNCC! **f v in b** Find the online edition of the western magazine at wncc.edu

WESTERN is published by Western Nebraska Community College to encourage residents in our 12½-county region to think seriously about the difference education can make in their lives and careers, to promote business and community education, and to inform the community about WNCC's programs of study.

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> OUR MISSION WNCC assures learning opportunities for all — enriching lives, invigorating communities, creating futures

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Built to Serve the Needs of Every Student

BY DR. TODD HOLCOMB, PRESIDENT

hen discussions began regarding the Scottsbluff Campus renovation, we knew any changes made had to be dramatic, and had to show WNCC's commitment to being a prominent institution in the region.

More importantly, however, we needed to ensure our students were at the heart of every change we made. So, we are pleased to be adding the Howard Olsen Student Success Center and Learning Commons, which will improve the college experience for our students.

Howard Olsen Student Success Center

Named after Howard P. Olsen, a former long-time WNCC Foundation Board President, the new student success center is aimed at creating a seamless experience for students. It will serve as a one-stopshop with financial aid, counseling, and advising all housed in the center.

Learning Commons

The newly created Learning Commons will provide students an area to gather, collaborate, study, and socialize. The space will include a bookstore and café, giving students a more robust college experience.







Construction on the WNCC Scottsbluff Campus renovation will continue through the summer with the Platte Valley Companies Performing Arts Center scheduled to be complete in May, and the Howard Olsen Student Success Center and the Learning Commons set to be finished in July.

WNCC Innovation & Entrepreneurship **Center Helping Build New Sidney**

BY PAULA ABBOTT, SIDNEY CAMPUS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



-Trent Santero, co-owner NexGen Outfitters Portions of the Sidney Campus have been emptied and renovated to house the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center, which includes offices, an open collaboration space, conference rooms, and a lounge.

idney resident Jeff Shoemaker knows Sidney isn't broken. It just needs a makeover.

"I don't think things need fixed," said Shoemaker, an attorney in Sidney. "Sidney has talent and is incredibly resilient. I think it's finding whatever the new Sidney is going to be."

Now, the Western Nebraska Community College Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center has been developed to help build the new Sidney. The I & E Center, which opened its doors to budding entrepreneurs in 2018, serves as an incubator on the WNCC Sidney Campus. Approved applicants receive two years of free rent and utilities, plus access to a wealth of business resources including financial, legal, and planning at no cost.

"I am so enthused watching the I & E Center take shape and am inspired by these entrepreneurs," WNCC Sidney Campus Executive Director Paula Abbott said. "We are seeing so many people rally together and bring some strong ideas forward, which gives me confidence in the future of our community."

The I & E Center has already provided assistance to three entrepreneurs, including NexGen Outfitters, Shoemaker Law, L.L.C., and Nichole Peralta, who opened Karuna Counseling after Panhandle Health Group closed.

"Having this space provided me with such an amazing opportunity that I can't even begin to say thank you to WNCC," Peralta said.

WNCC Adds \$145 Million to Area

BY DR. TODD HOLCOMB, PRESIDENT

"WNCC is truly a fantastic community partner and a valued asset in our area. The College is tremendously beneficial for our various operations in Western Nebraska."

> — Owen Palm CEO, 21st Century Equipment

estern Nebraska Community College added \$145.1 million of income to the region over the 2015-16 fiscal year according to a study conducted by Emsi, a national labor market firm.

Broken down, it showed WNCC added \$20.5 million to the region in operational spending, \$101.1 thousand in construction spending, \$8.2 million in student spending, and \$116.3 million from its alumni impact.

In all, that means WNCC's economic impact is equivalent to supporting 2,616 jobs in its service

area. And that means WNCC is a significant driving force in the regional economy.

"We are proud of the role WNCC plays in the Nebraska Panhandle and beyond," said WNCC President Dr. Todd Holcomb. "This study offers tremendous perspective on the magnitude of WNCC's reach in the area, and supports our efforts in fulfilling our vision to positively impact the education and well-being of every student, employer, and community member in the Nebraska Panhandle region."

Additionally, the report showed WNCC generated more tax dollars than it received, producing a

\$145.1 million total WNCC impact* \$20.5 million – Operations Spending

\$101.1 thousand – Construction Spending

\$8.2 million – Student Spending

\$116.3 million – Alumni Impact

*Over the 2015-16 fiscal year according to Emsi

1:4 cost-to-benefit ratio to taxpayers, meaning for every tax dollar paid to WNCC, \$1.40 was returned to the area.





"George was a great student and I knew he had ties to the Panhandle. Plus, his interest in general aviation made him an excellent choice as a partner for this business."

- Jon Leever, WNCC Aviation Maintenance Instructor & Co-Owner L & L Aviation

CHILDHOOD DREAM TAKES FLIGHT IN NEW CAREER

BY DR. CHARLIE GREGORY, DEAN OF INSTRUCTION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

George Lapaseotes was sitting behind a computer dreaming of a different life.

"I kept thinking, 'This isn't what I love or what I want to do every day," Lapaseotes said. "So I sat down and decided to do something with aviation."

Specifically, Lapaseotes, who would accompany his uncle on flying trips frequently as a kid, decided to enroll in the Western Nebraska Community College Aviation Maintenance program.

"The instructors made it fun," he said. "It wasn't just a sit in class all day and do a worksheet."

Following graduation in 2013, Lapaseotes took a job in Lincoln, but soon moved back closer to home

after earning a job as the Airport Manager at Sidney Municipal Airport. Plus, Lapaseotes and Jon Leever his former instructor and current WNCC Aviation Maintenance instructor—began operation of their joint venture L & L Aviation out of the airport, too.

Now, instead of working behind a computer, Lapaseotes doesn't know what his day will bring. Some days it's working in the shop. Other days it's fueling, checking, and storing airplanes. And sometimes, it's assisting customers during their stop in Sidney.

"It's a little of everything, which is kind of cool," he said.

"The SummerFree scholarship definitely helped me out. I highly recommend the scholarship to anyone who qualifies."

—Michayla Prante, Kimball, Nebraska Michayla Prante was one of more than 300 students that took advantage of WNCC's SummerFree scholarship program last summer.

Take Two Classes FREE This Summer!

BY SHEILA JOHNS, FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR

ithout the SummerFree scholarship, Michayla Prante would be a year behind and on a student loan payment schedule.

Instead, Prante used the scholarship to take two free classes and enter the Western Nebraska Community College Associate Degree Nursing program on time and debt-free.

"The SummerFree scholarship allowed me to go directly from the LPN program into the ADN program without having to take that extra year off and having to take out student loans just to finish up those prerequisite classes," Prante said.

WNCC has administered the scholarship since 2016, giving current or former WNCC students a chance to take two courses free in the summer. The scholarship covers tuition, fees, and \$200 toward textbooks. Since 2016, more than \$385,000 in scholarship money has been awarded to 640 recipients.

That's 640 students who are now ahead academically and financially.

Applications and information on the SummerFree Scholarship will be available April 8 on **wncc.edu/summerfree**.

MNCC A Partner With Regional Law Enforcement

DOUG MADER, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUPERVISO

The Chadron Police Department participates annually in staff training using the WNCC MILO simulator (shown below). The CPD often invites students, city council members, and the community to attend for educational and awareness purposes. Pictured on the left is Officer Craig Walton, and on the right is Police Chief Tim Lordino.

POLICE

CHADRON





Very November, the Chadron Police Department trains its staff in a variety of high-stress scenarios.

That annual training is possible through a partnership with Western Nebraska Community College. Law enforcement agencies throughout the Panhandle, including CPD, use WNCC's MILO simulator for training and education.

The simulator, which includes an interactive screen and surround-sound speakers, allow law enforcement to put staff into critical situations that would be difficult to duplicate otherwise, such as handling an active shooter or a suspect with a knife. "It's very interactive and I can throw different things at the staff," CPD Lieutenant Rick Hickstein said. "It's exceptionally valuable and fairly realistic."

Without the use of WNCC's equipment, CPD would need to request and be placed on a waiting list for the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center's equipment.

"So having it at WNCC makes it very convenient and it's an opportunity for us," Hickstein said.

"Doug Mader has been a partner to all the law enforcement agencies. He is very easy to work with and he's been a guy that has made this happen for us."

-Chadron Police Department Lieutenant Rick Hickstein

These WNCC Grads Have



"WNCC's Information Technology program gave me the knowledge, tools, and confidence to secure an IT title after graduation of the program."

- Christopher Armstrong, Instructional Technology Systems Specialist "Coming here and getting that basic foundation will set you apart from a lot of people that have even a bachelor's degree."

-Mark Davis, Information Security Specialist



"WNCC gave me the tools I needed to be successful in the workplace. The instructors helped to hone my computing skills, and prepared me for a great career in IT."

> -Neal Brady, Associate Systems Administrator



"Being able to know the troubleshooting steps and researching was really important for this field. I learned a lot from the instructors on how to do that research."

> — Ryan Anderson, Technical Support Specialist

What IT Takes BY ALETIA NORWOOD, WNCC BUSINESS INSTRUCTOR

estern Nebraska Community College believes in the education it's providing its students. Just ask Information Technology Director Joe Deer.

Deer, who earned an associate degree at WNCC, has hired four employees to the WNCC IT Department who earned their degrees at WNCC.

"I know graduates of WNCC's Information Technology program will have a good understanding of the basics," Deer said. "The program is a good starting point for a career in IT and will help them get specialized training that technicians need to perform their specific role within the IT department." Those four WNCC graduates—Associate Systems Administrator Neal Brady, Technical Support Specialist Ryan Anderson, Information Security Specialist Mark Davis, and Instructional Technology Systems Specialist Christopher Armstrong each possess a different specialty within the WNCC IT Department, yet each gained valuable training from WNCC instructors William Spurgeon and William Loring.

"All we can do is provide the opportunity," Loring said. "They took advantage of it, did the work, and learned the material to the point where Joe (Deer) trusts them to do things. We just provided the foundation and the opportunity." That opportunity afforded to the former and current—WNCC students in the program includes hands-on training across a variety of domains, including computers, hardware, servers, networks, programming, and other forms of technological support.

"It was nice because you were doing a little of this, a little of that," Davis said. "You weren't just focusing on one narrow area that you would at bigger institutions, you got a feel of everything, which is nice."

For more information on WNCC's IT program, contact Loring at **loringw@wncc.edu** or Spurgeon at **spurgeon@wncc.edu**.

A FEW MORE BUSINESSES OUR IT GRADS ARE IMPACTING

- NASA
- Bytes Computer & Network Solutions
- Vistabeam Internet
- Regional West Health Services
- State of Nebraska
- Scottsbluff Public Schools
- Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska
- Nebraska Educational Telecommunications
- UNMC College of Nursing
- Union Pacific
- Panhandle Cooperative Association
- Lincoln Electric System



Came for Volleyball, Stayed for Nursing



Martha Stricker, Executive Director of Regional Services at Regional West, can easily explain how WNCC won her over.

The community.

The Golden, Colorado, native was set to attend Colorado State when she met WNCC volleyball coach Cathy Schiller and was offered a scholarship. The thought of playing college volleyball and having her education paid for was too tempting to ignore.

So Stricker chose WNCC. Over the next two years, Stricker helped the Cougars win the program's first regional title, met her husband-to-be, and earned an associate degree in nursing.

"Everything came together for me here at WNCC," she said.

Stricker eventually earned her bachelor's degree in nursing at UNMC and was hired at Regional West. Now, she works with critical access hospitals in the region to provide specialist care for patients.

Helping design the Medical Assistant program at WNCC and serving on the WNCC Alumni Committee are just a couple of ways Stricker enjoys giving back to the College that brought her to this community.

Scholarship support for students is a priority of the WNCC Foundation. Equally as important is the programmatic support the Foundation provides to WNCC programs, such as nursing and athletics. To learn more about giving toward a WNCC program or serving as a volunteer with the Foundation, visit **wnccfoundation.org** or call **308.630.6550** to speak with Jennifer Reisig or Kristin Wiebe.



Martha Rogers Stricker (No. 8) and the 1988 WNCC volleyball team captured the first Region IX Title in program history.

"From the moment I got to town, I loved the idea of being here for my college years, and I signed that first day. It was just the way I was treated, and the great people I met that drew me here. It's why I'm still here."

-Martha Stricker





WNCC Alumni Invited Back to the Future

BY JENNIFER REISIG, WNCC FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ifty years ago, on January 31, 1969, Nebraska Western College (NWC) students loaded up classroom chairs and supplies by the truckload, helping faculty and staff move into a brand new building across town. This became the new home of then-NWC and remains the present location of Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff.

In May of 1969, approximately 10,000 community members joined in celebrating the new campus in a four-day open house extravaganza. That same energy and buzz of anticipation echoes today as WNCC prepares to celebrate its largest renovation since the opening of the current campus 50 years ago.

WNCC is excited to celebrate these new improvements with the community again with the grand reopening of the renovated Scottsbluff



Campus later this year. Cougar alum are invited to join in special alumni tours of the new space this coming fall throughout Homecoming week. To be included, email **alumni@wncc.edu** to verify we have your updated contact information.

Green Signs with Big Red

BY CORY FEHRINGER, WNCC MEN'S BASKETBALL HEAD COACH

ervay Green has built quite the resume. WNCC single-game scoring record-holder. More than 1,000 career points scored. And a future Husker.

"This is a dream come true; a blessing," Green said. "I have loved basketball my whole life, so this is unbelievable for me and my family. I love my teammates, coaches, and the fans at WNCC, but I can't wait to get to Lincoln."

Green, a Denver, Colorado, native, will become the third Cougar in program history to earn a spot on the Nebraska men's basketball roster. Green signed his letter of intent to the Cornhuskers in November 2018.

"Jervay is a beast," said Nebraska head coach Tim Miles. "I'm so thankful that he saw his future here because I think he is going to be a difference-maker for us. I believe what he can do on the junior college level is transferrable to our level and the Big Ten."



Cougar Athletics Fall Sports Rewind

BY RYAN BURGNER, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR



MEN'S SOCCER

Head coach Todd Rasnic was named the Region IX South coach of the year after guiding the Cougars to a 9-6 season. WNCC fell one game shy of playing in back-to-back Region IX semifinals with a 1-0 loss to Laramie County Community College in the quarterfinals.



WOMEN'S SOCCER

Led by All-Region picks Thais Nayara and Caroline Vieira, the WNCC women's soccer team proved to be a much improved team on the pitch last fall. Following a one-win season in 2017, the Cougars finished the 2018 campaign with a 4-8-2 record, which ended with a 3-1 loss to Western Wyoming Community College in the Region IX tournament.



VOLLEYBALL

Western Nebraska Community College's volleyball team put together another impressive season in 2018, tallying a total of 28 wins. WNCC was one match short of earning its 20th consecutive Region IX championship after falling to No. 18 Laramie County Community College.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WNCC







CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

- 4 Spring Job & Internship Fair, Scottsbluff
- 8 Summer & Fall Registration Opens Applied Technical Trades Open House, Scottsbluff
- 11 Student Awards Ceremony, Sidney Campus
- 12-14 The Shape of Things (Theatre Arts), Scottsbluff
- 13 ACT Test, Scottsbluff
- 18 High School District Music Contest. Scottsbluff
- 19 Good Friday – No Classes
- 23 Student Awards Ceremony, Alliance Campus
- 25 Student Awards Ceremony, Scottsbluff Campus
- 26 Arbor Day Tree Planting, Sidney
- 28 Spring Vocal Music Concert, Scottsbluff

MAY

- Jump, Jive & Swing (Instrumental Music), Scottsbluff
- 6-10 Finals
- 11 87th Annual Commencement, Scottsbluff
- 27 28 Memorial Day – College Closed
- Summer Classes Begin

JUNE

- 8-Week Summer Session Begins
- ACT Test. Scottsbluff
- 28 Finals – First Five-Week Session

JULY

- Second Five-Week Session Begins
- 4-5 Independence Day, College Closed
- ACT Test, Scottsbluff
- 26-29 Finals

AUGUST Finals

COUGAR ATHLETICS—FOR NEWS, SCHEDULES, AND MORE—WNCCATHLETICS.COM





Start Your Education in Education at WNCC

BY DR. KIM KUSTER DALE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

nterested in teaching in an elementary school? How about at the high school level? Or perhaps more specialized as a physical education or history teacher?

Western Nebraska Community College has the answer for any of those career ambitions.

Between of Surday O

The education field is extensive and wide-varying, but WNCC is the place to start no matter what path of education fits your interests. WNCC offers associate degree options in Early Childhood Education, Music Education, and Elementary and Secondary Education.

A degree in Early Childhood Education offers students the skills needed to work with children from birth through age eight. Through the program, students are required to complete a practicum, which presents invaluable real-life training. Students can start their early childhood education careers immediately after obtaining WNCC's associate degree in Early Childhood Education.

WNCC's Elementary Education, Secondary Education, and Music Education programs give students an opportunity to complete roughly half of their undergraduate coursework toward a bachelor's degree in education. WNCC's associate degrees in education will transfer to all public four-year institutions in Nebraska.

If you're interested in pursuing a career in education or looking for more information on WNCC's programs of study, contact the WNCC Admissions Department at **admissions@wncc.edu**.



Students enrolled at WNCC have the option to work toward a career in early childhood education, elementary education, music education, or secondary education.

2017-2018 **Average Annual Teaching Salary** at School Districts in the Panhandle*



*The Department of Education collects salary data using three compensation related figures for each teacher: Basic Salary, Additional Compensation, and Benefits. The figures above reflect 2017-2018 average teacher annual salary only includes Basic Salary.

DATA SOURCE: Nebraska Department of Education. Nebraska Student and Staff Record System. www.nep.education.ne.gov

WHAT COLOR IS YOUR FUTURE?

Our programs meet career pathways standards adopted by the Nebraska State Board of Education in conjunction with the National Career Clusters Framework. The color coding is designed to help you navigate your way to greater success in college and a future career.

AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The seed that turns into food fuels your interest in creating a sustainable ecosystem that provides for future generations.

Your dream is to create the next big app, have a team of producers make it better, and watch it being used by millions throughout the world.

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

You understand the world is just a click away. You desire for it to be closer, faster.

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

DEGREE PROGRAM Agriculture Science (Pre) AS • Applied Agriculture Technology C, D Auto Body Technology AOS, C, D Automotive Technology C, D, AAS Aviation Maintenance AOS, C Biology/Ecology AS • Biomedical Research (Pre) AS • Business Administration AA, AS - Accounting Option - Business Administration Option - Management Information Systems Option Business Technology AAS, C, D - Executive Assistant Option - General Business Option - Information Technology Support Option - Medical Office Management Option - Staff Accountant Option Chemistry AS • Chiropractic Medicine (Pre) AS • Coding Technician D • Computer Sciences (Pre) AS • Criminal Justice Studies AA, AAS • Dental Hygiene (Pre) AS • Dentistry (Pre) AS Dietetics AS • Education AA, AAS - Early Childhood - Elementary - Music - Secondary Dietetics AS • Emergency Medical Services Food Science (Pre) AS • Foreign Language (Spanish) AA • Forestry/Wildlife Management (Pre) AS General Studies AA, AS - Language and Arts - Math and Science - Social Sciences

HEALTH SCIENCES

The ability of the body to repair itself, and science to repair what the body can't, attracts you to this field. Your satisfaction in this area comes from helping others with their health.

HUMAN SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

You are active everyday and you love working with others. You are fascinated at the way the human body and mind can grow and absorb information like a sponge. Better yet, you want to pass this fascination on to others.

SKILLED AND TECHNICAL SCIENCES

You're the creator. Raw materials and a challenge present you with an opportunity to construct the things people use everyday.

E S	 Health Information Technology Health (Iburging) Education (AAS
5	 Health/Physical Education/ Coaching & Sports Administration 	AS
$\hat{\mathbf{b}}$	 Human Services 	AA, AAS
s	 Human Services Human Services Drug & Alcohol Counseling 	с С
2	 Information Technology 	AA
s	 Information Technology - 	1111
s	CyberSecurity Option	AA
s	 Mathematics 	AS
~	 Medical Laboratory Technician 	AAS
	 Medical Technology (Pre) 	AS
	 Medicine (Pre) 	AS
	• Nursing	AS, D
	- Associate Degree	110, 2
	- Practical	
	- Pre-Professional	
	Paramedicine	С
	• Pharmacy (Pre)	AS
s	• Physical Therapy (Pre)	AS
s	• Physics	AS
)	Powerline Construction &	
s	Maintenance Technology	AOS, C, D
s	 Psychology 	AA
s	 Radiologic Technology (Pre) 	AS
s	 Rangeland Management 	AS
S	 Social Work 	AA
s	 Surgical Technology 	AAS
	• Theatre Arts	AA
	 Veterinary/Comparative Medicine (Pre) 	AS
	Vocal Performance	AA
	Welding Technology	C, D, AAS
S		
-		
<u> </u>		

DEGREES

А А

А

A Associate of Arts	AOS Associate of
AAS Associate of Applied Science	Occupational Studies
AS Associate of Science	D Diploma
AD-N Associate Degree Nursing	C Certificate

Western Nebraska Community College 1601 East 27th Street Scottsbluff, NE 69361





STEP 1 Apply for Admission wncc.edu/admissions/apply



issions/apply wncc.edu/scholarships

STEP 2

Apply for Financial Assistance



Meet with an Advisor



STEP 4



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Attend a New Student Orientation

For more information, please contact:

ADMISSIONS OFFICE admissions@wncc.edu 308.635.6010

WNCC assures learning opportunities for all—enriching lives, invigorating communities, creating futures