

CTCs: Getting people back to work

“Weakness in the demand for goods and services is the principal restraint on hiring, but structural impediments in the labor market—such as a mismatch between the requirements of existing job openings and the characteristics of job seekers—appear to be hindering hiring as well.”

Douglas Elmendorf, Director, Congressional Budget Office, Sept. 13, 2011.

Washington employers have well-paying job openings right now and need well-trained workers to fill them. Your community and technical colleges work with industry leaders to develop and refine professional-technical training programs to prepare workers with the skills necessary to land those jobs. Despite budget cuts, in the past six months colleges have added programs in aerospace, alternative energy, business services, hospitality, healthcare, and sustainable agriculture—all critical areas of growth in Washington.

Job Placement – Nearly 20,000 students went to work in 2009-10 after completing a CTC professional-technical program. Even in the height of the recession, three out of every four CTC professional-technical graduates were employed within 6-9 months of finishing their training.

Worker Retraining Program – The state-funded Worker Retraining program supports laid-off and unemployed workers who seek to retrain and get back to work. Last year (2010-11), a record 19,600 students trained for new careers through the program. Worker Retraining continues to make a significant difference in participants' lives, with a 12 percent higher re-employment rate for completers and initial wages \$2,500 per year higher than workers that didn't go through the program.

I-BEST – Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) is Washington community and technical colleges' nationally recognized program that helps individuals who are below high-school-level literacy in areas such as math, reading, writing, speaking and listening. It pairs workforce training with Adult Basic Education or English as a Second Language courses so students learn literacy and workplace skills at the same time. This dramatically reduces the traditional time it takes these students to learn critical job skills.

Earlier this year, I-BEST was named a Bright Idea by Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Community College Research Center says I-BEST students are three times more likely than their peers to earn college credit and nine times more likely to earn a college credential. I-BEST enrollments have expanded to 155 programs with 3,200 students served in 2009-10, an increase of 53 percent in the last three years. All 34 colleges offer I-BEST in high demand job fields.

Opportunity Grants – The Legislature created Opportunity Grants to help low-income adults train for high-wage, high-demand careers. The grant covers tuition and helps pay for books, supplies and other assistance, such as child care and transportation. Last year, 5,174 students received workforce training with the help of Opportunity Grants.

The Value Proposition

Students and community members need only imagine what their town or city would be like without their local community or technical college to understand the important role they play for individuals and the local economy. As students, parents, taxpayers, employers and citizens of Washington State, we all benefit.

Overall economic impact

According to a recent study, Washington's 34 community and technical colleges and their former students add \$11 billion annually to the state's economy. Each year, thousands of former Washington CTC students generate more than \$10 billion in labor income for the state and the colleges themselves generate more than \$100 million in added tax revenues annually. For every state dollar invested in CTCs, \$1.70 in tax revenues is returned to the state.

The value to students and parents

Tuition – Despite recent tuition increases due to state budget cuts, Washington CTC tuition remains below the national average for two-year college prices. Students who start at a CTC and earn a transfer or professional-technical degree can save thousands on tuition.

Transfer – In 2009-10, 19,000 students transferred from a CTC to a public or private four year college or university, collectively saving more than \$100 million by choosing to start at a CTC. Starting at a CTC provides convenience and affordability for thousands of Washingtonians and the state's Direct Transfer Agreement—now in its 40th year—offers a smooth transfer path from CTCs to public and private four-year schools.

Running Start – In 2009-10, Washington families saved more than \$41 million when 18,800 high school juniors and seniors took Running Start courses, which count for both high school and college credit. Nearly 1,500 seniors graduated from high school with their associate's degree in hand, shaving two years' time and thousands of dollars off their path to a bachelor's degree. In all, 2,408 students transferred Running Start college credits to a public university or college.

Bachelor's degrees close to home – Many students cannot leave their jobs or families behind to pursue bachelor's degrees. Seven CTCs now offer eight different Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) programs—based on local demand—in areas such as nursing, radiology and imaging, management, applied design and behavioral science. In addition, bachelor's degree programs are available on nearly every CTC campus, through on-campus University Centers or other on-site partnerships with universities.

Innovations for Student Success

Student Achievement Initiative – The Washington CTC system’s Student Achievement Initiative has influenced the national discussion about community college performance measures and incentive funding. It was the first of its kind to measure and reward student progress at each of the key milestones essential to completing degrees and certificates. It improves public accountability and rewards colleges for increasing their students’ achievement levels. From 2006-07 through 2009-10, overall student achievement has increased 31 percent.

Hybrid classes – Faculty members are designing and delivering “hybrid” classes (a blend of online and face-to-face instruction), which provide more flexibility for students and allows colleges to stretch the use of high demand classroom space over multiple classes at the same time. Hybrid is the fastest growing mode of eLearning. In 2008-09 more than 5,200 full-time-equivalent students took hybrid courses and last year, that number jumped to 9,775— an increase of 88 percent in just two years.

Open Course Library – Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Washington Legislature, the OCL project will design and share 81 high-enrollment courses for in-classroom, hybrid or online delivery. The OCL’s overall goal to lower textbook costs to less than \$30, improve course completion rates, and provide online course resources for faculty, landed it a “Most Accessible” People’s Choice Award from Education-Portal.com. Faculty developers have piloted the first 41 courses, which will be released in October 2011. Work on the remaining 40 courses will begin in January 2012. All content developed through the grant will be freely available for use by any instructor or student in the world.

Consolidated, system-wide eLearning tools – Multiple tools have been implemented to provide greater consistency and ease of use for all students and faculty at a fraction of the cost of separate college purchases. Tools include, learning management software for online and hybrid classes, lecture capture, 24/7 help desk and library reference services, online tutoring, and web conferencing for all students, faculty and staff.

Achieving the Dream – Washington is one of 22 states participating in Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count, a national initiative to help more community and technical college students succeed, particularly low-income students and students of color. The nonprofit organization focuses on helping colleges gather and use data to inform resource allocation, implement effective student support programs and create quality teaching and learning experiences to improve student outcomes. Currently, 15 Washington CTCs are Achieving the Dream institutions and one (Yakima Valley CC) has been designated an Achieving the Dream “leader college.” Colleges receive grant funding from College Spark Washington to participate in this national initiative.

KEY FACTS:

State-Supported Enrollment:

Headcount:	330,608
FTES:	161,081

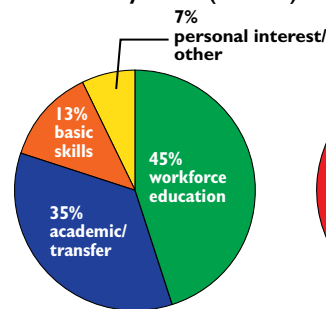
Enrollments for Selected Student Types (FTES):

eLearning:	38,002
I-BEST:	1,709
International Students:	9,837
Opportunity Grant:	3,766
Running Start:	12,684
Worker Retraining:	13,403

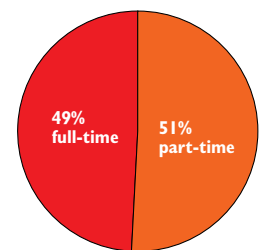
STUDENT PROFILE

(Fall 2010 unless otherwise noted)

Enrollment by intent (2010-11)



Attendance



Ethnicity

Asian/Pacific Islander	11%
African American	7%
Native American	3%
Hispanic	13%
Other, Multiracial	2%
White/Caucasian	67%

Gender

Female:	56%
Male:	44%

Median age

26.3

Family and Finances

Students receiving need-based financial aid (2010-11):	27%
Students who work:	44%
Students with children:	31%

Employment Rate (2008-09)

(within 9 months of program completion)	74%
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