

## 8 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGES

### 1. The state's largest system of higher education

For most Washingtonians, the road to higher education begins at a community or technical college. Our 34 community and technical colleges enroll nearly six out of every 10 full-time students in Washington public colleges and universities.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. A vital niche

With their mix of job training programs, degrees, and classes that transfer to four-year universities, community and technical colleges fill an important niche in higher education. Two-year colleges serve about 386,000 Washingtonians each year.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. A less expensive option

Washington's two-year colleges are a considerably less expensive option at \$3,852 per year for a full-time student. That's about one-third the tuition at research universities and nearly half the tuition at our comprehensive state colleges and universities.

### 4. A pathway to bachelor's degrees

Forty percent of public baccalaureate graduates in Washington start at a community or technical college. Students who transfer from two-year colleges to four-year universities do just as well as those who started as freshmen, with similar GPAs and credits earned. Transfer students make up 47 percent of business majors, 46 percent of health field majors, and 35 percent of majors in science, technology, engineering and math fields.<sup>3</sup>

### 5. In-demand job training

Community and technical colleges provide the job training students want and employers need. These "high demand" programs -- in fields like dental hygiene, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing -- move people into good jobs that are available right now and help us compete in the global economy.

### 6. Value-added

Community and technical colleges and their former students add \$11 billion to Washington's economy each year.<sup>4</sup>

### 7. A diverse student body

The median age of Washington community and technical college students is 26 years old. Forty-four percent work, 28 percent are parents, and 43 percent are students of color.<sup>5</sup>

### 8. A first step

Community and technical colleges provide adult basic education, high school completion programs, and precollege (or "remedial") education, providing that first, most important stepping stone to job training, certificates, and degrees.

#### Sources:

1. 59% per OFM 2014-15 Budget Driver Report, includes state-supported and Running Start students (2015-16 report unavailable at press time)
2. SBCTC 2014-15 Academic Year Report
3. SBCTC research report: The Role of Transfer in the Attainment of Baccalaureate Degrees at Washington's Public Bachelor's Degree Institutions, class of 2011, August 2013
4. Economic contribution of Washington's Community and Technical Colleges: Analysis of Investment Effectiveness and Economic Growth, January 2011 by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI)
5. SBCTC 2015 Fall Quarter Enrollment and Staffing Report

