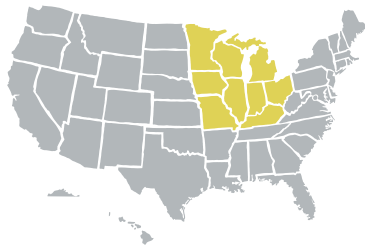


AROUND THE REGIONS

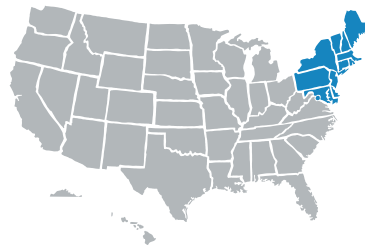


CENTRAL REGION

Noting that the majority of neurodivergent students begin higher education at community colleges, the **Illinois** Community College Trustees Association adopted a neurodiversity inclusion statement to serve as guidance for its member colleges and trustees around the state of Illinois. ICCTA is the first state education advocacy association to adopt such a statement to influence policy.

For the first time in more than a decade, **Iowa's** 15 community colleges saw a collective bump in credit-seeking students, with jointly enrolled high school students driving the gains. In 2021-22, 50,082 high school students enrolled in one or more community college courses — representing a 6 percent increase over the prior year and amounting to 43 percent of the campuses' total combined enrollment.

Enrollment across the **Wisconsin** Technical College System grew by more than 10 percent during the 2021-22 academic year. The increase follows a double-digit enrollment decline driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and marks the largest gains for the system in at least a decade. All of the state's 16 technical colleges saw enrollment gains during the 2021-22 school year.



NORTHEAST REGION

Maryland's dual enrollment program now has free tuition for students in the state looking to take classes at their local community colleges. An average of 7 percent of the state's high school students participate in dual enrollment programs.

Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey proposed a program called MassReconnect — modeled by Michigan and Tennessee — that would allow residents 25 and over who haven't yet gotten a college degree to pursue a community college certificate or degree for free. Senate leader Karen Spilka announced that the Senate will go further, introducing a plan to make community college free for all students, regardless of age.

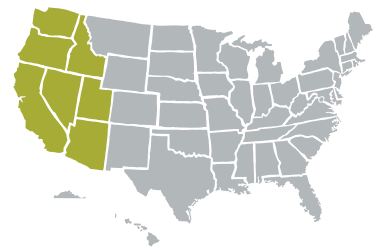
An expansion of the partnership between Manchester Community College and the **New Hampshire** Department of Health and Human Services will allow students who receive SNAP food assistance to take free courses for high-demand industries like cybersecurity, health care, and carpentry.

The **New Jersey** Council for the Humanities (NJCH) has received a \$339,000 grant from the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium to fund the development of a statewide grassroots journalism training program with community colleges around New Jersey.

Niagara County Community College hosted the first State University of **New York** Cannabis Conference on Jan. 10. The conference, co-organized by the SUNY, SUNY Erie and Genesee and Jamestown community colleges, covered an array of

topics from the “seed to sale” lifespan in the cannabis business.

Montgomery County Community College in **Pennsylvania** has joined Credential As You Go, an initiative to recognize skills through a nationally recognized incremental credentialing system. One of the initial microcredential badges the college is planning for this spring addresses financial literacy for students.



PACIFIC REGION

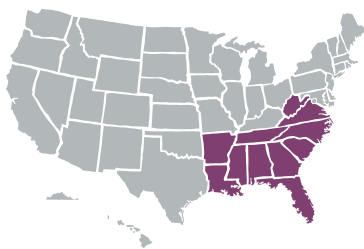
Funding for **California** schools and community colleges will fall next year for the first time in a decade, under the first pass at the 2023-24 state budget, which Gov. Gavin Newsom released in early January. Funding for Proposition 98 in 2023-24 would be \$1.5 billion less than appropriated last year.

Two pieces of legislation signed recently by California Gov. Gavin Newsom aim to increase graduation or transfer rates and cancel student debt for students at the state's community colleges. One is AB 1958, which allows colleges to use extra funds to offer debt cancellation to encourage students to enroll or re-enroll at community colleges. The other is AB 1705, which will require high school transcript data to be used as the primary means of determining the placement of students in transfer-level math and English courses instead of placement tests.

The first cohort of **Oregon** students has begun courses in Yakima Valley College's Bachelor of Applied Science in Agricultural Sciences program, which is designed for working adults with experience in industries

such as fruit production, hops farming, and wineries. Classes are either fully online or have lab sessions that meet once or twice a week in the evenings to accommodate work schedules.

Centralia College in **Washington** began offering four-year degrees 10 years ago and is nearing 500 graduates, the result of the 2005 passage of House Bill 1794 giving the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) authority over the first pilot programs offering baccalaureate pathways at community colleges. In 2012, SBCTC got full approval to oversee applied bachelor's degrees offered by a community and technical college.



SOUTHERN REGION

Every community or technical college in **Alabama** now offers at least one paid state-registered apprenticeship for students to explore careers in several different trades and industries, the result of a partnership between the state community college system and the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship.

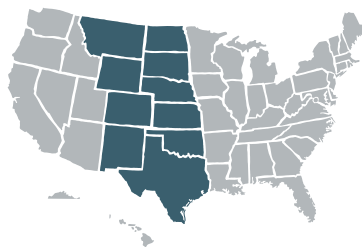
The **North Carolina** Board of Community Colleges has approved just over \$15 million in funding to support life science programs in ten schools. With growing numbers of biosciences companies locating to or expanding in the state, the funding from the federal Build Back Better Regional Challenge Grant will bolster the life sciences industry by preparing a talent pool from across the state while expanding opportunities for underserved communities.

The United States Golf Association

partnered with Sandhills Community College in North Carolina to create the USGA Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Program (GAP), a 12 month registered program offered through ApprenticeshipNC.

A study by the **Virginia** Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission recommends that community colleges and K-12 school divisions eliminate tuition and fees for dual enrollment courses provided on high school campuses. About 42% of school divisions charge their students tuition to take these courses.

The Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation awarded \$125,000 to the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education to help students obtain the resources they need as they continue their education through Single Stop. According to the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), Single Stop has already been used by over 9,700 community college students across the state, connecting them to over \$21 million in benefits.



WESTERN REGION

Colorado community colleges more than doubled their graduation rates from 2015 to 2020 by focusing on student support in and out of the classroom, according to a study. The Colorado Community College System's graduation rates rose to 31% from 15% five years earlier, according to the report by Complete College America.

Graduation rates improved among students from all backgrounds, including Black and Hispanic students.

Southeast Community College in **Nebraska** will more than double its sports offerings beginning next fall. SCC will add esports, women's golf, rodeo, trapshooting, men's and women's tennis, men's and women's track and field, men's volleyball, and men's and women's wrestling.

A performance-driven funding formula for **Texas** community college districts will be considered by the 88th Texas Legislature. Proposed by the Texas Commission on Community College Finance (TCCCF), the new formula would be the first time that the funding process has changed in almost 50 years if approved.

JPMorgan Chase committed \$3.3 million toward a disaster resilience and workforce collaborative led by Houston Community College (HCC) in Texas. The collaborative unites 17 local community partners to offer resiliency career training. HCC will lead the collaborative and provide the curriculum and offer new certificates and credentials in resiliency-related fields, including clean energy, disaster response, resilient jobs, utilities, trades, and manufacturing.

The **Wyoming** Community College Commission asked state lawmakers to fund the Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship Program. Gov. Mark Gordon recommended \$35 million go toward the program in his 2023-24 supplemental budget. Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship was signed into law by Gordon following the 2022 budget session, with a \$10 million appropriation to the endowment fund from the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account.

Around the Regions provides an opportunity to share what's happening in the states and around the regions. This section focuses on state legislative and budgetary issues, economic development, and finance. Please e-mail items from press releases or newsletters to ACCT at acctinfo@acct.org.