

## Wood Technology Center Site Visit

The Workforce Program Sustainability Taskforce hosted a site visit at the Wood Technology Center (WTC) at 23rd and Lane on September 23, 2022. Multiple Washington State Legislators, over 35 community and industry partners, and college employees met for a session aimed at generating sustainable funding solutions for workforce education at Seattle Central, as well as across the state.

Collectively legislators, industry, and college employees discussed:

- Strategies for student recruitment and community engagement, with a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Resources community and industry can bring to WTC programs
- Recommended legislative and policy changes that support workforce education
- Additional program specific strategies the college should consider pursuing for program sustainability

### Action Plan

Over the 2022-2023 academic year, WTC will develop an action plan that incorporates external funding, community and industry partnerships, and internal redesigns to create sustainable funding plans.

Below is a list of action items in draft form for the Wood Technology Center:

#### *Current work:*

- Create a short-, mid- and long-term business plan
- Increase awareness of programs and options for students at WTC (Guided Pathways, Promise, Foundation, etc)
- Increased transparency to address:
  - Intended use and administration of tuition and state funds for WTC program needs
  - Intended use and administration of funds raised specifically for WTC program development, advertising, outreach, etc.
    - » Seattle Colleges Foundation has policies in place around donor intent and program administration of program-specific funds
    - » Seattle Colleges Foundation has policies in place for scholarship donations and distribution
  - Program data to be used for decision-making
- Enhance student completion of educational plans and understanding of financial aid support

#### **High-Priority Legislative asks:**

- Identify WTC programs as “high demand”
- Legislative funding model that better supports unique Career and Technical Education (CTE) program needs
- Count “completion” differently. Can being employed in industry be counted? Is the certificate pertinent to industry?
- Allow more flexibility for financial aid for continuing education through more than one program at the same degree/certificate level (federal change)
- Provide funding for facility and equipment upgrades
- Funding availability for formalizing non-union members

## High Priority Industry asks/contributions:

- Industry directly funds WTC (possible through donations to the Seattle Colleges Foundation)
- Can industry provide an endowed faculty position? YES!
- Internships, including paying students to go to school and then providing them a job when completed
- Donation suggestions:
  - \$50k in material donations and tools, targeted to expand training
  - 200 hours tool maintenance
  - Sponsorship demos and donations
  - Equipment, including maintenance
  - Building maintenance

## Funding opportunities:

- Career Connect WA – program needs additional money for transformational change
- Grant opportunities

## Future work

WTC programs need funding for the following:

- Funding for specialized equipment (repair and maintenance) and facility needs
- Funding for specialized employees: recruitment, job placement, community partnerships, site director
- Funding for increased enrollment (*the WTC cannot increase enrollment to solve existing problems since the current funding model loses money for each graduate produced*)
- WTC cannot solve funding issues through entrepreneurial activities alone as this is not the primary mission of the college

Short-term Goals (1-2 years):

- Promote WTC opportunities with BIPOC communities (Pratt, CADA, AfricaTown)
- Increase student support at WTC
  - Inquiries, registration, enrolling in classes, and waitlists
  - Counseling, career planning, internships, etc
- Develop and grow industry connections and opportunities for student internships/employment
- Address morale and perceptions about the programs at WTC, reverse fear of imminent closure
- Develop more continuing education classes: e.g., framing, window installation, etc to further train current employees: journey upgrade skills/training classes
- Explore Master Builders Association (MBA) partnership/workforce development: MBA match employee donations

Long Term (3-7 years)

- Adequate staffing
- Clear pathways and support for students to go from Pre-Apprenticeship in Construction Trades (PACT) to AAS Carpentry degree
  - Scholarships for PACT graduates (industry is offering to fund 5 for now, thank you!)
- Collaborations with Community-Based Organizations/churches
- Explore more ways for students to enter the workforce while going through programs (part-time, evening, etc)\*

Solved:

- Social media engagement. The colleges currently use social media and other venues to promote programs
- Host job fairs (there is a wish to do more)
- Separate capital expenditures from operational expenditures - currently in place
  - Capital funding campaign through Foundation is happening now
- Demand that SCC cannot sell the facility; require they ask industry first (this is state-owned property; there are existing state policies and practices to follow if the building and land were to be sold)

Not going to do, for now. May change if funding is available:

- High School (HS) engagement<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Pay students to do outreach at high schools<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Community liaison/high school representative<sup>\*^</sup>
  - WTC graduates tour HS and talk with juniors/seniors<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Running Start students need to take classes at the college that meet high school graduation requirements, WTC classes do not meet all graduation requirements
- Marketing and Outreach<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Tours, field trips, more job fairs<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Host community building events with alumni and current students<sup>\*^+</sup>
  - Reader board/QR scanner<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Trade shows, reach out to non-union organizations/companies<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Speaker/education series: Students free, Industry can buy tickets (plus gather donations)<sup>\*^+</sup>
- Reboot the Cabinetry program (we will address the cabinetry skills needed for industry employment in existing programs and can expand Continuing Education opportunities)<sup>\*^</sup>
- More full-time faculty<sup>\*^</sup>
- Fund Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) board for Grant Writing, Lobbying, Marketing (the TAC is a volunteer body by state regulation, but we have abilities to do these tasks elsewhere in the college)
- Additional learning opportunities
  - Evening/summer apprentice classes<sup>\*^</sup>
  - Friday in industry work<sup>\*^+</sup>
  - Organized mentorship for students<sup>\*^+</sup>
- Tool swap<sup>\*^+</sup>
- Raise tuition/fees for students (preference to get more state funding rather than put the cost on students, tuition is mostly set by legislature)<sup>~</sup>
- Meet every industry request for training<sup>\*^</sup>
- Allow CTC's the ability to have funding from local levies (not currently possible given existing state law)
- WTC to become completely separate from SCC and become fully funded by community, industry, and taxes (would require new statute from legislature expressly authorizing this)

Areas needed a better understanding:

- Industry has shared a wide variety of needs and wishes. College is excited to work collaboratively to see what is possible in the near- and long-term
- Remove barriers for student council to engage with community
- Connection between programs -> cross-train or cross-educate graduates?

\*college must identify or receive funds to support additional costs; + requires industry partnerships; ^ added staffing requirement; ~ mission fulfillment? # MOU needed