BECAUSE OF COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING, I DEFINITELY PLAN ON ENGAGING MORE WITH THE COMMUNITY.”

- STUDENT
A NEW DIRECTION

Western Technical College has always been proud of our “hands-on” education. Over the last six years, we have furthered our efforts of bringing learning to life, specifically through community-based learning (CBL) experiences. These experiences cultivate civic-professionalism skills and help our community thrive. This method of teaching is critically important as it contextualizes learning for our students and gives them real experience. More importantly, CBL has dramatically impacted all aspects of student success. Community-based learning research shows that it has the power to keep students on track to graduate, to improve grades, and to establish meaningful connections to the institution, instructors, and peers.

As a crucial part of our visionary Experience 2025 Strategic Plan, Western embeds CBL experiences in every associate degree and technical diploma program. This is an opportunity for students to cultivate and discover their passion with teaching and learning that goes beyond the classroom. When engaged in concrete CBL experiences, students are collaborating, solving community problems, and reflecting on their power and capacity to make a difference while recognizing biases and inequities within our community. Therefore, Western’s Department of Community Engagement is now the Department of Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement with plans to further grow the love and support we provide to every student, every day.

We are committed to helping every student make connections, contextualize their education, learn skills to work across differences, mature their cultural competence, and increase self-awareness.

The data in this annual report reflects activities completed in the summer, fall, and spring terms during the 2018–2019 academic year. The information was gathered through online tracking tools and in partnerships with the departments.

In service,

Kari Reyburn
Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

4TH ANNUAL
FACULTY AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE-LEARNING

Deb Klug, Culinary Management instructor, was this year’s recipient. During Deb’s 42 years of service to Western, she has been very well-known for her creativity in the kitchen and also in the classroom. Her teaching has always been about growth, continuous improvement, and most importantly, compassion. In the program, students take a food sustainability course, run a restaurant called the Bistro, and get involved in community food projects like the La Crosse Community Thanksgiving Dinner.

DURING THE 2019 ACADEMIC YEAR, STUDENTS COMPLETED 1,150+ HOURS OF SERVICE.

Deb Klug
INSTRUCTOR  CULINARY MANAGEMENT
USA PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

The Corporation for National and Community Service, a government agency, provides recognition for individuals who complete at least 100 hours of volunteer service in a 12-month period. In 2015, Community Engagement became an awarding body. The following Western students applied and received the recognition in 2019.

- Raymond Stevens
  IT Computer Support Specialist and IT Web & Software Development programs
  **108 service hours**

- Gabrielle Krueger
  Human Services Associate program
  **127 service hours**

- Leila Holen
  Marketing Management program
  **109 service hours**

- Alex Strelow
  Foundations of Teacher Education program
  **108 service hours**

- Andrew Bolen
  IT Computer Support Specialist program
  **515 service hours**

- Jacob Bauer
  Graphic Design program
  **110 service hours**

- Mickey Clements
  Administrative Professional program
  **375 service hours**
"We’re focusing on more challenging and fun events that promote skill building in our youth."
A typical outing for Big Brothers Big Sisters Little Makayla, 10, and match Michelle Hansen involves sweets, shopping and cinema. But Saturday morning, the pair ventured out of their comfort zone and into a shower of sparks, trying their hands at a decidedly more electrifying endeavor.

Donning long coats, ear plugs and helmets, the duo were among 12 Bigs and Littles exploring the world of welding in the Western Integrated Technology Center, partnered with a half dozen Western students and supervised by welding instructor Art Karbowsk. The four-hour program was the first in Big Brothers Big Sisters 7 Rivers Region series of STEM events, part of the organizations REACH initiative and funded through a grant from the La Crosse Community Foundation.

REACH activities, centered on the core areas of Recreation, Education and Careers, Arts and Culture, Civic Engagement, and Health and Wellness, partner BBBS with area businesses, organizations and institutions to offer matches and educational opportunities.
“We’re focusing on more challenging and fun events that promote skill building in our youth,” said Jason Larsen, executive director BBBS 7 Rivers Region. “Having them take on challenges they can work through (with their adult match) is a big component in growing their resilience factor.”

With March designated as Women’s History Month, BBBS encouraged female matches to participate in the welding activity, during which Western students demonstrated the plasma machine, cutting out a large “B” logo for the BBBS 313 Fourth Street facility, before taking matches to separate stations for an introduction to welding. After lunch, students and matches worked together to complete two oversized dragonfly sculptures, one to remain with BBBS and the other to be auctioned at the organization’s upcoming Catered for Kids’ Sake fundraiser.

“I think it’s really important to get women in the trade,” said Western student John Gappa, 31, whose aunt is a professional welder. “With the dwindling workforce, there are less and less welders and more demand. We’re really going to need more welders in the future. I think it’s awesome to see young people excited about this trade. It’s still fun for me — it never gets old.”

“This is the kind of work that builds the entire world, and they don’t even realize it,” Karbowski said of introducing the young participants, who ranged in age from 6 to 12, to the world of welding, machinery and construction. “With the media, they’re inundated with sports and movie stars and action heroes. It’s good for them to see that real world activities can be just as cool.”
akayla was initially frightened by the flames involved in the activity — “I hope I don’t burn off a finger — I like my fingers” — but was quickly wowed by the possibilities when combining metal and heat. Hansen, who partnered with Makayla six months ago, her own children grown and looking to make a difference in the life of another youngster, was pleased to see BBBS integrate career shadowing opportunities through REACH.

Westby seventh-grader Serenity, 12, who aspires to either work in construction or become a doctor, had a leg up on the day’s activity, familiar with the machinery from her tech education class. While she and Anna Jahns, who were matched three years ago, usually spend their time together skating, baking, playing sports or doing art projects, both were keen to try something unconventional, particularly something in a male dominated realm.

“People think the guys are more able to do it because of like, their muscles,” Serenity said. “But females (who weld) are showing their strength and that they’re as important as men are.”

RAYONAH, 10, GETS GEARED UP TO LEARN HOW TO WELD AS THE BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS VISITED THE WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE WELDING PROGRAM.

ERIK DAILY, LA CROSSE TRIBUNE
MAKING A COMMUNITY IMPACT

$3,392,545
ECONOMIC VALUE OF STUDENTS’ SERVICE HOURS SINCE 2013

NATIONAL BENCHMARKING

Western Technical College
CBL Instructors: 50
Nationally, compared to 2-year colleges on average (2017)

CBL Courses: 101
Nationally, compared to 2-year colleges on average (2017)

OTHER 2-YEAR COLLEGES
CBL Instructors: 30
CBL Courses: 41

Business Education Division
47% Programs
24
MAKING A COMMUNITY IMPACT

$3,392,545
ECONOMIC VALUE OF STUDENTS’ SERVICE HOURS SINCE 2013

2018 - 2019

2,334 STUDENTS

GENERAL STUDIES DIVISION
HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION
INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

100% PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY 2025

INSTRUCTORS

0% PROGRAMS
48% PROGRAMS
25% PROGRAMS

3
13
10

Check list
first choice service
workforce and community engagement
equity, inclusion and support
employee engagement
EXPERIENCE 2025 STRATEGIC GOAL: INFUSE COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING IN 100% OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND TECHNICAL DIPLOMA PROGRAMS BY 2025.

CURRENTLY
56% OF
ASSOCIATE DEGREE
AND TECHNICAL DIPLOMA PROGRAMS HAVE A CBL COMPONENT

PROGRAMS CURRENTLY CONTAINING AT LEAST ONE CBL ACTIVITY

Accounting
Administrative Professional
Advanced EMT
Architectural Technology
Bio-Medical Electronics
Building Science & Energy Management
Business Management
Criminal Justice Academy
Culinary Management
Dental Assistant
Digital Marketing
Digital Media Production
Early Childhood Education
EMT Paramedic
Foundations of Teacher Education
Graphic Design
Hospitality Management
Human Services Associate
IT Computer Support Specialist
IT Network Systems Administration
IT Web and Software Developer
Landscape Horticulture Technician
Leadership Development
Manufacturing Systems Maintenance
Marketing Management
Medical Assistant
Nursing
Occupational Therapy Assistant
Paramedic Technician
Paralegal
Physical Therapist Assistant
Precision Machining & Programming
Sales Management
Welding & Fabrication
Wood Tech
COURSE EMBEDDED COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

Community-based learning often occurs through partnerships with courses where the teaching and learning are used to impact real community issues. In an effort to measure our impact, the curricular projects are categorized by the United Nations Development Programme Sustainable Development Goals. At Western, we define sustainability as the act of building – through our daily practices and educational programming – a thriving, resilient, and just community now and in the future. Western’s efforts do not exist in isolation. To learn more, go to www.undp.org.

CBL AS PROJECTS

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Comprehensive Design and Troubleshooting: Craig Kunce
Students completed a variety of projects for community and campus clients. The content of all graphic design projects focused on sustainability education.

Customer Service Management: Roxanne Smothers
Students developed a strategic marketing plan for a local business to use for building awareness of their sustainability efforts.

COMMUNITY WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Catering Practicum: Deb Klug
Students spent time either in preparation or direct-service for catering events at various locations in the community, including the Lunda Center.

Employee and Labor Relations: Mabel Gehrett
Students created an employee engagement survey, compiled the results, and created recommendations for the Couleecap team.

Interviewing Principals & Recordkeeping: Ann Lichliter
In conjunction with the Human Resource Management program project with Couleecap, students facilitated employee engagement focus groups. Additionally, they helped survey aging adults for the La Crosse Aging Unit.

IT Project Analysis: Ann Brice
Students worked with the La Crosse Symphony to revamp their website specific to their needs.

Marketing Management: Pam Culver
Students developed and presented a community client with a comprehensive marketing and promotion plan.

Personal Brand Management: Shelly Wetzsteon
This course assisted with the Suits for Success event to create and facilitate two career-building booths.

Principles of Project Management / Integrated Marketing Campaign: Pam Culver
Students developed digital marketing plans for a local event in the fall term; in the spring term, they helped the organization execute their plans.

Professional Profile Development: Mike McArdle
Students developed a career-building program for a community organization to put into practice. Students also completed ten hours of volunteering.

Web Design 1: Paul Casper
Students completed a website built for a small business.
GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Dental Chairside Advanced: Lisa Mikkelson
Students provided oral health education covering the importance of food choices, brushing, and flossing to pre-school and elementary school children. This activity required students to apply the skills and information they learned in the classroom.

Medical Assistant Clinical Procedures 1: Jody Howell
Students provided blood pressure screenings, healthy eating information, and chair yoga for residents in the La Crosse Housing Authority.

PTA Principles of Neuro Rehab: Shari Berry and Scott Ziolkowski
Students assisted with the UW-L Physical Therapy EXPAND program, an exercise program for adults with neurological disorders.

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Graphic Design Portfolio: Craig Kunce
Students created icons for programs in the Integrated Technology Division.

LIFE ON LAND

Customer Growth Strategies: Jennifer Solka
Students were tasked to find ways to repurpose sawdust created by Western’s busy Wood Tech Center.

Graphic Design & Marketing: Craig Kunce
Students completed a variety of projects for the Western Sustainability department and the community. They designed recycling tip signs and adapted materials for Western’s social media, and they also created brochures, posters, and other advertising materials for many community members.

Landscape Construction: David Lein
Students assisted La Crosse County’s Public Health Department in completely renovating their front landscaping beds. The students mitigated grading issues that caused water in the basement, installed a pollinator garden and a food forest, and built a 14’ x 15’ patio. The goal was to expose employees and visitors of the Public Health Department to the beauty and practicality of natural spaces.

Landscape Maintenance 1: David Lein
The students used and practiced their landscape maintenance skills by re-edging the border of the rain garden, thinning out the native golden rod plants, and removing debris.

Community Resources and Services: Keith Lease
Using the Plan Change Model taught in the program, students created community resource display boards and activities for the Coulee Region Tax Assistance events.

NO POVERTY

Project Management Principles: Shelly Wetzsteon
Students employed project management skills by helping a community organization with event planning.

Team Building & Problem Solving: Brad Dobbs / Gretchen Heilman
In small groups, students applied their skills in solving a problem identified by a local organization of their choice.

Web Design 2: Paul Casper
Students designed and built websites for many local clients using marketing and branding knowledge along with computer skills gained in the classroom.
PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Paralegal Internship/Field Study: Wendie Witzke
Students provided assistance with divorce forms and financials in the La Crosse County Family Law Information Center and helped at the La Crosse Veteran’s Legal Day.

QUALITY EDUCATION

Advanced Video Production: Mark Davini
Student teams worked with a local organization in need of a video. Throughout the term they worked with this client to film on-site, then interview, and finally produce a high-quality video that exceeds the client’s needs.

BioMed Codes/Standards/PM/QA: Lilly Kosir
Students checked, maintained, and repaired classroom medical equipment for various programs at Western Technical College and UW-La Crosse while working at the Health Science Center.

Children, Families and Groups: Keith Lease
Students facilitated psychoeducational groups for clients at an area nonprofit.

Customer Growth Strategies: Mike McArule / Ray Slattery
Students took what they learned about sale proposals and adapted it to organize a fundraising event for a new piece of equipment needed at Western. The completed proposals were given to the appropriate parties to raise needed funds.

Early Childhood Education
Family & Community Relations: Tracy Craker
Students planned and facilitated family-related events with diverse populations to raise awareness of the importance of early childhood education.

Guiding & Managing Behavior: Shelly Bauer
Students attended elementary classrooms weekly to work with small groups or in one-on-one situations to assist with academic or behavioral goals.

Principals of Inside Sales: Ray Slattery
Each student made approximately 50 calls thanking people for their donations to the Western Foundation.

Technical Reporting: Dan Rooney
Students developed and administered a survey and presented the findings for the Children’s Museum.

Techniques for Teaching Reading: Shelly Bauer
Students provided weekly classroom assistance with reading instruction.

Welding Fabrication 1: Art Karbowski / Kenric Sorenson
Students were required to complete at least one community engagement activity, either helping with welding lab tours, demonstrating the virtual welder at college open house events, or manufacturing light poles for Rotary Lights.

REDUCED INEQUALITY

Capstone Accounting: Jim Murray
Students developed fictitious businesses by applying cost accounting principles learned in class. They manufactured and sold a product, then donated a portion of the proceeds to nonprofits.

Interviewing Principles & Recordkeeping: Ann Lichliter
Students interviewed First Nations students about why they attend Western. The stories collected will be part of a visual project representing inclusion, community strength, and culture. The project will be displayed during the Fall 2019 term.

Web Design 2: Paul Casper
Students completed a website usability study and design critique for Great Rivers United Way’s existing website.
RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

IET Occupational Skills: Kevin Hoeltze
Several students opted to complete the 1-credit course by serving 72 hours during a two week rotation at the Dahl Family YMCA. Students performed preventive maintenance activities, completed a budget, and used the jobsite task management system.

Tooling and Work Holding for CNC Machining: Randy Christensen, Brian Marx
The class developed a method to produce special hinges for the First Robotics competition field. This project included material planning, jig building, and operation of the CNC milling machine.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Arch Drafting Residential, Structural Drafting: Pete Zirbel
Students collaborated with Habitat for Humanity to design family-friendly homes to fit potential building sites. Students created cost effective, sustainable home designs and received constructive feedback from Habitat For Humanity.

Design Fundamentals: Craig Kunce
Students designed logos for a variety of community organizations and infographic posters for Western’s General Studies courses.

Graphic Design-Advertising: Ken Hey
Students created advertising materials for area community partners.

Introduction to Gerontology: Ann Lichliter / Keith Lease
Students interviewed older adults in memory care units and put their stories into a tangible product that the interviewees could keep or give to their loved ones.

Precision Machining and Programming: Randy Christensen, Brian Marx
Students gained practical work experience by building elaborate light displays for the Rotary Lights festival.

Wood Tech. program: David Hahn
Students in the Wood Tech program built homes for the City of La Crosse’s housing rehab program.

ZERO HUNGER

Community Resources and Services: Keith Lease
Using the Plan Change Model taught in the program, students played an important role in the La Crosse iFeed project. Students organized a campus-wide food drive and encouraged other local businesses to conduct their own food drives.

English Composition/Intro to College Writing (Bundle Course): Sheila Allard
Students were encouraged to help elevate hunger in the community by volunteering at a local area food pantry.
IT OPENED MY EYES TO THE NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY AND THE PEOPLE WHO RELY ON THE FOOD PANTRY DUE TO VARIED INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND HARDSHIPS. I GAINED A NEW PERSPECTIVE AND SAW A HARSH REALITY THAT MANY PEOPLE FACE.”

– STUDENT

CBL AS SERVICE HOURS

For some programs, requiring a number of service hours in a course is a helpful way to introduce students to community-based learning (CBL). Usually, the first term of the program will include service hours and reflection, and the later term will have a large CBL project.

• Advanced Clinical Practice in Nursing program
• Business Procedures in Administrative Professional program
• Business Professionalism in Business Management program
• Criminal Justice Academy
• EMS programs
• HR Professionalism in Human Resource Management program
• Introduction to Human Services, Professional Practice in Human Services Associate program
• IT Professionalism & Exploration in all three IT programs

CBL AS COMMUNITY EVENTS

• Auto Skills USA Club: Phil Solberg
  Car Care Clinics

• Geriatric Practice: Lori Kramer
  Car-Fit Event

• Help Desk Management & IT Systems Support, Cindy Prindle
  Western Student Run Help Desk & E-Waste Collection

• Professional Profile Development, Shannon Corcoran
  Suits for Success Clothing Distribution Sustainapolza Event

• Professional Development in Accounting: Jenny Parker
  Coulee Region Tax Assistance

• Restaurant Operations and Dining Room Operations, Deb Klug & Margaret Ninneman
  Western Bistro

• Training Development: Cindy Prindle
  Technology Training Workshops

• Welding Fabrication 2 & 3: Art Karbowski
  Big Brothers Big Sisters STEM Reach Event Community Welding Basic Event
Western collaborates with many community organizations each year. This year we formed more than **105 different partnerships**. Some of our most valued partners include...

Aptiv, La Crosse  
Bethany on Cass, La Crosse  
Bethany Riverside, La Crosse  
Bethany St. Joe’s, La Crosse  
Boys and Girls Club, La Crosse, Sparta, Tomah  
Catholic Charities, La Crosse  
Children’s Museum, La Crosse  
The City of La Crosse Housing Rehab Program  
Consumer Credit Counseling Services, La Crosse  
Coulee Region Humane Society, La Crosse  
Crossing Rivers Health, Prairie du Chien  
Dahl Family YMCA, La Crosse  
Family Law Information Center, La Crosse  
Great Rivers United Way, La Crosse  
Habitat for Humanity, La Crosse  
Hamilton Early Learning Center, La Crosse  
Hillview Health Care Center, La Crosse  
Hillview Urban Agriculture Center, La Crosse  
Hixon House, La Crosse  
Housing Authority, La Crosse  
IFeed - Rotary Interact, La Crosse  
La Crosse County Health Dept  
La Crosse Public Library  
La Crosse Special Recreation  
Lakeview Health Center, West Salem  
Pine View Terrace, Black River Falls  
Rotary Lights, La Crosse  
Shrine of Our Lady Guadalupe  
The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection, La Crosse  
The Hunger Task Force, La Crosse  
The Parenting Place, La Crosse  
The Salvation Army, La Crosse  
Tomah VA Medical Center, Tomah  
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse  
Viterbo University, La Crosse  
WAFER, La Crosse
TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Western uses the term community engagement to define the mutually beneficial exchange of institutional resources (i.e. credit courses) in partnerships to address and solve community needs.

Western is committed to this kind of community engagement partnership because it allows us to grow our communities, provide collaborative experiences and relevant coursework, and develop students into civic-minded individuals—one of the founding purposes of higher education.

Community-Based Learning (CBL) is a fluid and purposeful approach to engagement designed to immerse students and faculty in an experience that develops student skills, enhances learning, and strengthens the communities they serve.

Civic-Minded Professional is “a person’s inclination or disposition to be knowledgeable of and involved in the community, and to have a commitment to act upon a sense of responsibility as a member of that community (Steinsberg, Bringle, & Hatcher, 2011).” Attributes include: voluntary and pro bono service, motivation to serve others in grace and passion, and a value of democracy.