



UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN SYSTEM



A GROWTH AGENDA FOR WISCONSIN

GROWING PEOPLE, JOBS, & COMMUNITIES

A MESSAGE FROM
THE UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN SYSTEM

The *Growth Agenda for Wisconsin* is the University of Wisconsin System's plan to improve our state's competitive edge, nationally and globally.

Developed with broad input, it is a three-pronged approach to enrich the state. It will develop the state's human potential, create new jobs, and strengthen local communities that sustain citizens and businesses alike.

The ultimate goal is an economically robust Wisconsin where our children and grandchildren will enjoy a high quality of life, and earn family-supporting wages.

We invite you to learn more, and appreciate your involvement and support.

— **Charles R. Pruitt**, President,
University of Wisconsin System
Board of Regents

— **Kevin P. Reilly**, President,
University of Wisconsin System

If per capita income in Wisconsin were raised to Minnesota's average, our residents would collectively take home \$29 billion more every year.

The UW Growth Agenda: A Plan for Wisconsin's Success

The Growth Agenda's three core goals reflect broad consensus. Contributing to the strategic planning process were leaders from business, government, and education; working groups consisting of leading experts in the university; and others across the state.

Why Now?

Wisconsin is at a crossroads. If current trends continue, the state will have an older, less educated, and smaller workforce. Younger workers will continue to leave for states that offer better job prospects. Compared with Minnesota, Wisconsin has already lost ground. Wisconsin is below the national average in degree holders (1 in 4 adults), while Minnesota is above the national average (about 1 in 3 adults). Each year, a typical Minnesota resident earns \$5,270 more than a Wisconsin resident, and that difference is growing.

The University's Commitment

The state can reverse these trends, and the UW System is ready to help lead that effort.

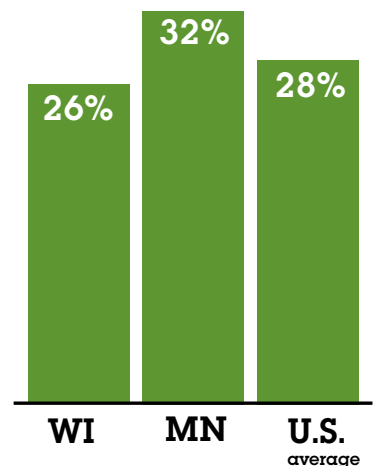
Broader access to higher education yields higher personal incomes, greater economic productivity, stronger communities, and a healthier democracy.

A wider tax base and a higher quality of life is good news for Wisconsin. The Growth Agenda is the university's plan – and commitment – to achieve Wisconsin's success.

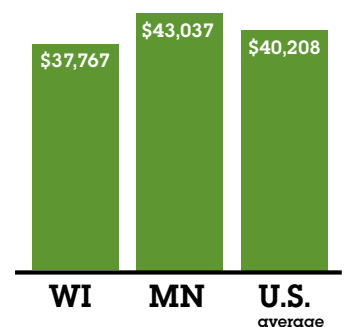
Factors Shaping Wisconsin's Labor Force and Income

- The population is aging and the high school graduate pool is shrinking
- Our percentage of four-year degree holders is below the national average
- The rate of business start-ups is slow
- Lower incomes mean a higher tax burden, fewer services, and poorer infrastructure

Percent of adults with a four-year degree*



Per capita income**



* Individuals 25 years and older (U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2008)

** U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2008



STRATEGIC GOAL 1

GROW PEOPLE:

Produce More Degree Holders

Wisconsin needs more skilled graduates to compete in today's knowledge economy. In Fall 2009, enrollment at UW campuses reached a record 178,900 students. The graduation rate rose to 65.9% systemwide – five points higher than the national average. Even so, Wisconsin ranks 29th in the nation in four-year degree holders. Increasing the number of college-educated workers goes hand-in-hand with raising Wisconsin's per capita income.

The UW System's strategies include:

- Boost by 80,000 the cumulative number of UW graduates:** The UW System's [More Graduates for Wisconsin](#) initiative plans to increase the cumulative number of graduates by 80,000 over the next 15 years.
- Create more seats in UW classrooms:** Students today are finishing their degrees faster with fewer credits, saving money and freeing up classroom space. Over the past 15 years, these efficiencies made room for 15,000 more students. Degrees awarded annually have grown 22% over the last decade.
- Enroll more working adults:** Wisconsin lags nationally in working adults with four-year degrees. The [Adult Student Initiative](#) is reaching out to this group by providing flexible, convenient learning opportunities, including accelerated, hybrid, online, and evening and weekend courses.
- Help young people prepare for college:** If trends continue, only three in 10 eighth graders will earn a two- or four-year degree. To raise these numbers, the university is working with local schools to improve college preparation, and is also a leader in [KnowHow2Go](#), a national campaign to raise college aspirations in young people and teach them how to get there.
- Expand transfer opportunities:** Students need choices and flexibility in their educational careers. Many programs exist to help students begin college at one UW campus and get their degree from another. The UW System's nationally recognized [Transfer Information System](#) (TIS) uses an interactive online "wizard" to guide students and create seamless cross-campus transfers statewide.

ACCESS:

UW System doors are open

- Each year, about one-third of Wisconsin high school graduates enroll the following fall at a UW campus, up from 25% in 1976.**
- In Fall 2009, 92% of new freshman applicants from Wisconsin were admitted to at least one UW System institution where they applied.**
- In 2008-09, over 16,000 students transferred to a UW System campus from another school.**
- Keep college education affordable for everyone:** Compared to other public universities, UW tuition is low, but aid to needy students lags. The UW System is partnering to grow new public and private investments in financial aid. These include the [Wisconsin Covenant](#), a program promising students who get good grades and are good citizens a spot in a Wisconsin college, and the [Fund for Wisconsin Scholars](#), a private endowment providing scholarships to lower-income UW and technical college students. A "hold harmless" tuition grant, effective for the 2009 and 2010 academic years, is offsetting tuition increases for UW resident undergraduates whose families earn up to the state's median family income of \$60,000 and have unmet financial need. UW Colleges tuition was frozen at 2006 levels through 2010-11.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

UW System is lean, efficient, responsive

- Over the past 10 years, state support for higher education in Wisconsin grew more slowly than in 43 other states, and did not keep pace with inflation.
- The UW System operates with fewer state positions today than it did in 1990, and has increased enrollment to a record high of 178,900 students.
- Comparing the amount of state tax dollars per student, the UW System ranks 38th in the nation, spending \$2,300 less than the national average and \$2,000 less than Minnesota. Thirty-seven states pay more for higher education, but few enjoy UW System's reputation for quality.

BY THE NUMBERS:

\$10 billion The UW System's annual impact on Wisconsin's economy, a tenfold return on the state's investment in the university.

33,000 The number of skilled professionals the UW System graduates each year prepared to enter the state's workforce.

\$545 million The increase to Wisconsin's annual income with every UW System graduating class.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

GROW JOBS:

Create More Well-Paying Jobs

In addition to producing a bigger supply of college-prepared workers, the university must do more to boost the creation of well-paying jobs. By supporting business development, linking academic programs to entrepreneurship, and expanding research, the UW will help make Wisconsin a better place to do business.

The UW System's strategies include:

- **Help businesses work better and grow:** The UW is improving its support of new and existing businesses through the [Small Business Development Centers](#), [Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network](#), and patent and trademark services. The new [Economic Development Portal](#), a searchable web-based resource, will link economic development and commerce initiatives statewide.
- **Tailor education programs to meet local business needs:** The university is developing more online, accelerated, and collaborative degree programs tailored to specific industries and workforce needs, including computer science, nanotechnology, biotechnology, nursing, and other high-growth, high-demand fields.
- **Transform research into well-paying, knowledge-based jobs:** Using recommendations from the UW System's [Research to Jobs](#) task force, the UW will step up efforts to connect academic research with the private sector to help existing businesses be more competitive and also create new businesses with jobs that will employ more Wisconsinites.



STRATEGIC GOAL 3

GROW COMMUNITIES:

Build Stronger Communities

Wisconsin's local communities share common challenges, such as addressing economic downturns, achieving affordable health care, improving education, and providing greater access to educational opportunity. The UW can work in stronger partnership with Wisconsin communities to address these challenges and reinvigorate the Wisconsin Idea for the 21st century.

The UW System's strategies include:

- **Help all Wisconsin gain access to education:**

The UW will continue its mission to support diversity, close the achievement gap, and provide educational access to all regions of the state. UW-Extension, which includes offices in each of Wisconsin's 72 counties and public television and radio stations, provides unmatched access for businesses, families, and community members of all ages. Outreach programs at all 26 campuses provide valuable, affordable learning opportunities tailored to their local communities.

- **Engage with the community:** The UW System must mobilize its resources to provide timely responses to communities facing challenges, especially in times of economic uncertainty. The university will equip students with skills that prepare them for civic involvement. UW public forums will bring together diverse parties to solve complex challenges that directly affect all Wisconsin residents.

- **Expand college offerings in high schools:** By better preparing students still in high school, the UW can help increase college graduation rates and decrease the time needed to earn a degree. The UW System will work to better align high school courses with UW admissions requirements and use the senior year as a transition to college.

AFFORDABILITY: UW System tuition is below peers

In 2009-10:

- UW System's 11 four-year comprehensive campuses had the 6th lowest average tuition among 35 peers.
- UW-Milwaukee had the 4th lowest tuition among 15 peers.
- UW-Madison had the 2nd lowest tuition among Big Ten peers.
- UW Colleges tuition was again frozen at 2006 levels.
- 67% of UW System undergraduates received some financial aid.
- UW System's four-year campuses ranked 2nd in overall affordability out of 12 Midwestern states.*

**Midwestern Higher Education Compact, September 2008*

UW Campuses



UNIVERSITIES



**FRESHMAN/SOPHOMORE
UW COLLEGES CAMPUSES**

UW FAST FACTS

178,900 students

8th largest enrollment of any U.S. public university system

13 four-year campuses

13 UW Colleges campuses

72 county UW-Extension offices

