

Western
Technical College

2022

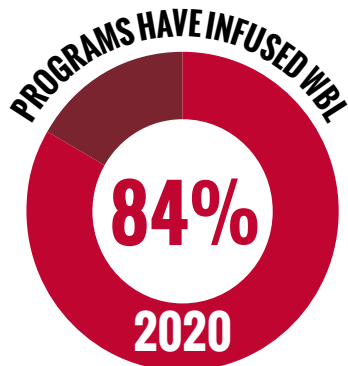


WESTERN
Engaged

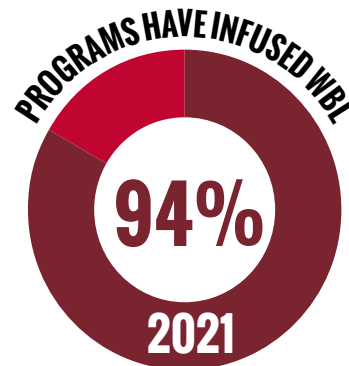
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ANNUAL REPORT

[WESTERNTC.EDU/ENGAGE](https://www.westerntc.edu/engage)

WORK-BASED LEARNING *Goal*



100%
of
PROGRAMS by
2025



CONNECTING STUDENTS TO EMPLOYERS

Students are here for a career, one they hope to love and value. Career Services is here to help them navigate the closing details of their education. Career Services helps instructors and students by integrating work-based learning opportunities into classrooms and curriculum. Working directly with employers, Career Services establishes internships, job shadows, and mentoring opportunities. Career Services also arranges company tours and presentations by employers and industry experts. Once a student participates in a work-based experience, Career Services helps them document that experience on their résumé and articulate it.

Reflecting on work-based learning levels

PREPARE

Students explore career pathways and resource options as they prepare résumés and cover letters, interviewing and networking practice, and LinkedIn tips.

DISCOVER

Instructors embed a job shadow requirement midway into the program. Students plan their job shadow and attend career fairs designed for their program.

ENGAGE

Toward the program's conclusion, students apply their program knowledge by participating in clinicals, field experience, or an internship.

INSTRUCTORS:

Connect with us to establish WBL in your classroom. Focus on teaching, and let the experiential learning expert do the rest!



Paul Bratsch

Career Services Specialist

608-789-6258
bratschp@westerntc.edu
he/him/his

Grace Janssen

Work-Based Learning Specialist

Certified Strengths Coach
608-789-4734
jansseng@westerntc.edu
she/her/hers



Community-Based Learning | Practical Good Works

THE ARTISTRY OF WORK, PURPOSE, AND MEANING

Second-year Digital Media Production students worked hard on their craft the past two years, and instructor Mark Davini put their skills to the test. The community-based learning initiative centered around the needs of The Salvation Army, La Crosse, this year's non-profit client. The Salvation Army works in 132 countries but responds to local needs in community-specific ways.

The assignment mimics an authentic work experience from start to finish. The students establish four work teams to simulate marketing agency work—each team

researches, collaborates, and communicates extensively to create a promotional video responsive with the right tone, message, and content, from concept to script to filming and editing.

The student work teams brainstormed with The Salvation Army staff to formalize each two-minute promotional video's needs, purpose, and strategy. The videos must highlight and promote The Salvation Army's many programs, from the food program to warming shelters to thrift stores and social services; and finally, how the holiday Red

Kettle Campaign funds their work on poverty elimination.

The video production class and The Salvation Army gathered together to watch and discuss the new videos. "They did a phenomenal job. It was cool to see the process behind what they were producing, and then to see the final project was really special," said The Salvation Army Community Relations Specialist Hope Hickman. The videos successfully educate, entertain, and are used to significant effect in a newly energized social media campaign.



Work-Based Learning | Employer Spotlights

BUILDING CAREER PIPELINES FOR STUDENTS

Western-hosted Employer Spotlights are a valuable work-based learning experience that benefits students and employers alike. Employers connect with a trained potential workforce. Students get a free lunch and an opportunity to learn about their respective industries, often from those working directly in the careers they are pursuing. The spotlights feature vetted local employers who offer jobs, internships, tuition reimbursements, and incentives for growth.

These Spotlights are a networking opportunity with time to connect with employers during and after the event. The conversation is lively and grounded in purpose. Western intentionally provides students with the often-overlooked "value-added skills" that add so much to the hands-on education employers look for: the ability

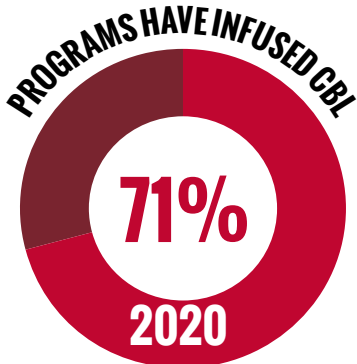
to articulate your expertise and combine real application with classroom learning. By creating networking opportunities that can yield on-the-spot internships and job interviews, students see first-hand that good things happen with thoughtful effort.

With ten Employer Spotlight events in the books, the fledgling program is growing into its second year and is producing meaningful results. Spotlight events occur monthly on average and feature many local heavy-hitters: Multistack, Inland Packaging, Mid-City Steel, Kwik Trip, Wieser Brothers, Chart Industries, Fastenal, Dahl Auto, and Cordell's Automotive. For example, after the Kwik Trip presentation, three Western students secured jobs in their maintenance division, and eight applied for apprenticeships. Another WBL approach

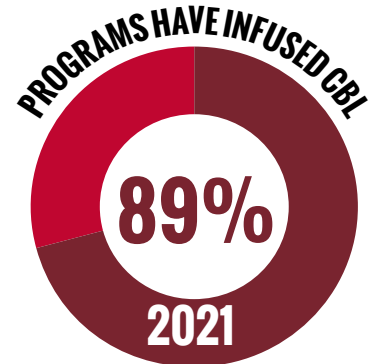
consisted of strategically held Spotlight events for the automotive students in the week leading up to the Auto-Diesel Career Fair. Students connecting with Dahl Auto and Cordell's Automotive learned a lot about the companies and even scheduled job interviews at the career fair. Two students expressed interest in job shadowing at Cary Heating after their presentation, Inland Printing got an intern, and four interested students filled out job applications for Chart!

Employers hire many Western students before they even graduate! It's profoundly gratifying to play a role in helping students venture into adulthood and stability; to offer these mutually beneficial work-based initiatives that can change futures over the lunch hour.

COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING *Goal*



100%
of
PROGRAMS by
2025



CONNECTING STUDENTS TO ENGAGEMENT

With a solid commitment to service learning and civic engagement, students find ways to serve and be an important part of their communities. In a scope beyond volunteerism, community-based learning engages students in a purposeful extension of their classroom-learned skills. Students are inspired to use the whole of their college experience out in the community, wherever they are needed most. This gives context to their career choice: reflection on the project as a whole is key for effective learning.

Reflecting on community-based learning levels

EXPLORER

Explores social justice issues related to career area to discover opportunities for involvement and growth, and volunteerism.

EDUCATOR

Raises awareness by educating about an important social issue to inspire others to join the cause.

BUILDER

Solves a problem or fulfills a need for one of our community partners by using their classroom-learned career skills: the pinnacle of CBL!

INSTRUCTORS:

Connect with us to establish CBL in your classroom. Focus on teaching, and let the experiential learning expert do the rest!



Julie Christensen
Community-Based Learning Specialist

Certified Strengths Coach
608-789-6191
christensenj@westerntc.edu
she/her/hers





EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



2022

Experiential Learning Annual Report

Western Technical College is proud of its hands-on education—a powerful learning method. Another way to increase student success is by adding work-based and community-based experiences, furthering our efforts to bring learning to life. These experiences cultivate civic professionalism and community generosity.

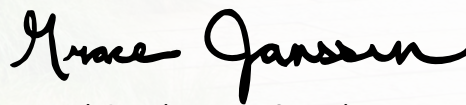
With this in mind, Western set the goal of embedding CBL and WBL in 100% of our associate and technical diploma programs by 2025. Students are collaborating, solving community problems, and volunteering while reflecting on their capacity to make a positive difference in their community.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Western uses the term **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING** to explain the process of learning by doing. By engaging Western students in community-based learning and work-based learning experiences and reflection activities, they are better prepared to accomplish their career goals and be active community members.

COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING (CBL) is a fluid and purposeful approach to engagement designed to immerse Western students and faculty in an experience that develops skills, enhances learning, and strengthens the communities they serve.

WORK-BASED LEARNING (WBL) allows Western students to apply the technical and employability skills learned in the classroom to the industry that corresponds with their program.



Work-Based Learning Specialist
Grace Janssen



Community-Based Learning Specialist
Julie Christensen



Career Services Specialist
Paul Bratsch

