



# WESTERN ENGAGED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT | 2019



A young man with short brown hair, wearing safety glasses and a green tank top, is focused on his work. He is using a red and black power drill to secure a wooden beam. The structure he is working on is made of light-colored wood and appears to be part of a larger outdoor project, possibly a deck or a raised garden bed. The background shows a clear blue sky and green foliage, suggesting a sunny day outdoors. The man's concentration is evident as he looks down at the drill bit.

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

**- STUDENT**

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Western Technical College is in full compliance with state and federal equal opportunity and affirmative action laws and regulations including Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1992, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, and Section 38.23 of the Wisconsin Statutes. It is the policy of the Board of the Western Technical College District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, age, disability, arrest or conviction record, political affiliation, union or non-union affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, family or medical leave, or membership of the National Guard, state defense force or any other reserve component of the military forces of the United States or Wisconsin, in employment, education programs, admissions and activities. Services, financial aid and other benefits of this College and those originating from the Wisconsin Technical College System Board are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis. Western is committed to the elimination of sex-role stereotyping. Coordination of Title IX and Section 504 have been assigned to the Employment Benefits and EEO Manager at Western Technical College, 400 Seventh Street North, Post Office Box C-0908, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54602-0908; telephone 608.785.9274.

## A NEW DIRECTION

**W**estern 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.**

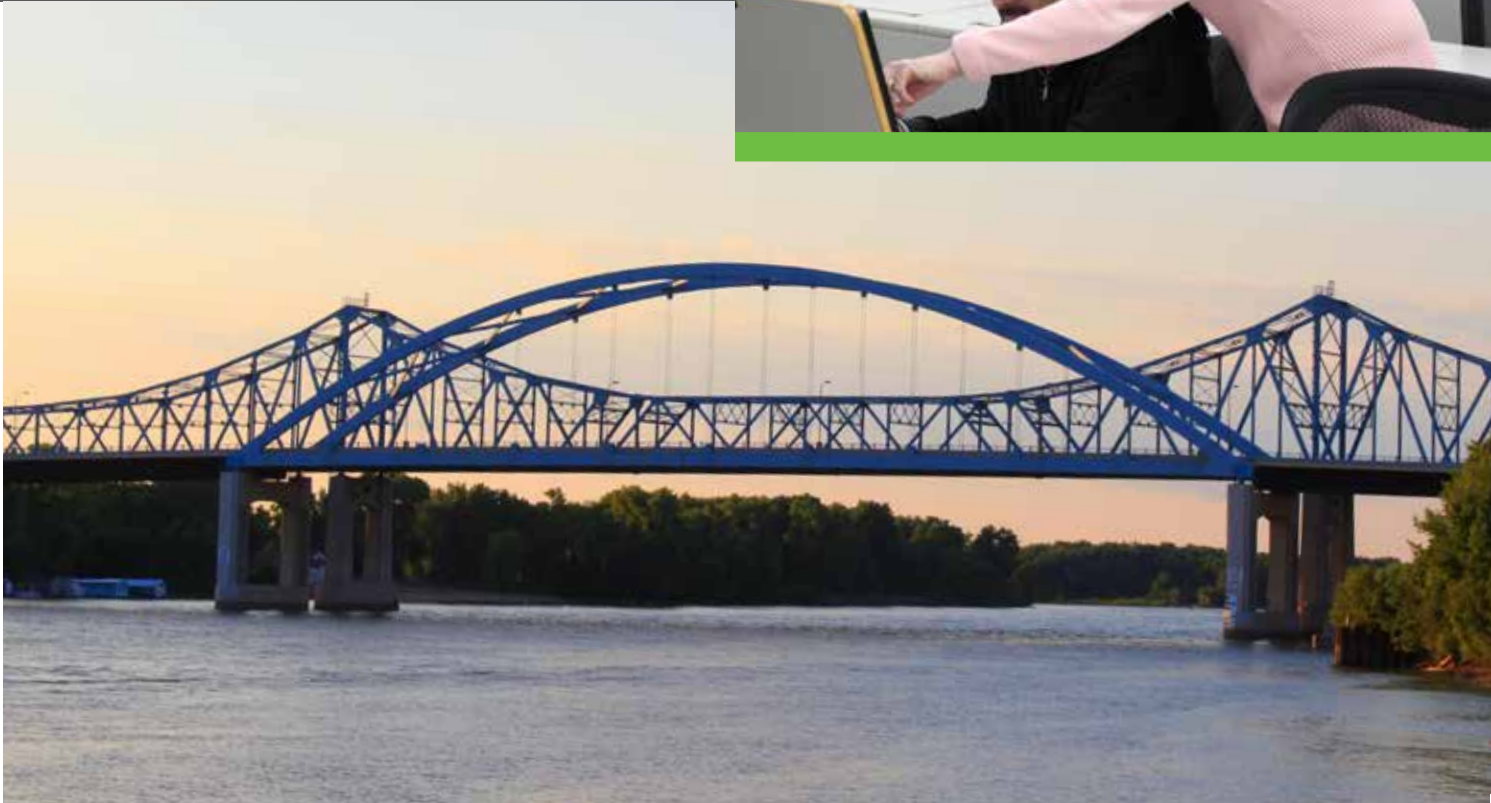
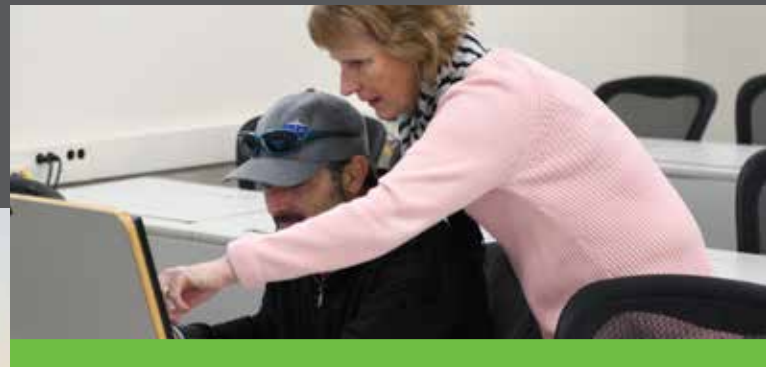
*Deb Klug*  
INSTRUCTOR CULINARY MANAGEMENT



## 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.”**



# WELDING WITH LITTLES

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS INTRODUCES STEM INITIATIVE WITH WELDING AT WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

THIS STORY WAS WRITTEN BY EMILY PYREK  
LA CROSSE TRIBUNE REPORTER.

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 Karbowski. 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.

WELDING STUDENT SAM BREUER, LEFT, SHOWS CAINEN, 10, HOW TO WELD AS THE BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS 7 RIVERS REGION VISITED WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

ERIK DAILY, LA CROSSE TRIBUNE



***“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.”





**M**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

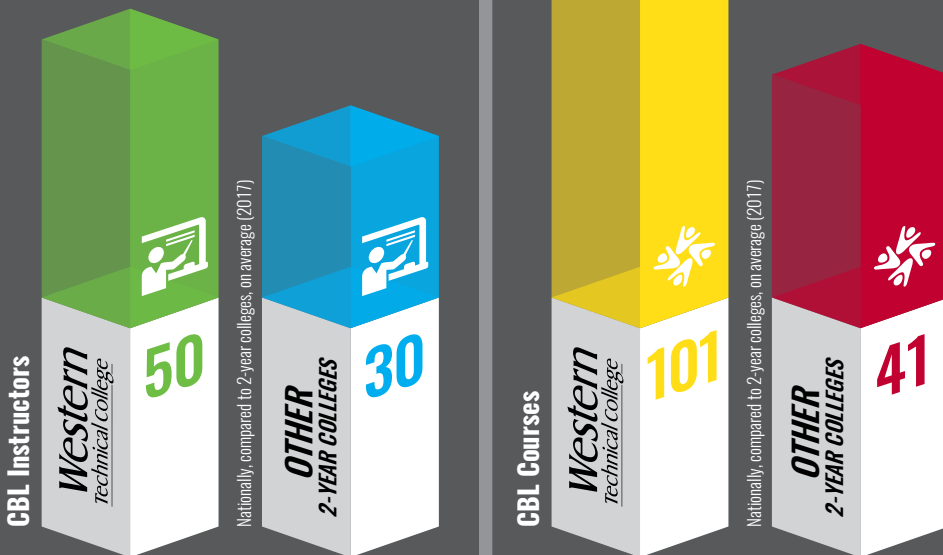
# \$3,39

ECONOMIC VALUE

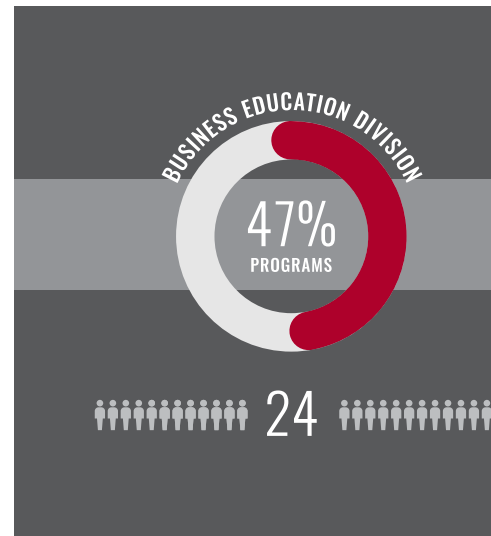
Community-Based Learning



## NATIONAL BENCHMARKING



Community-Based Learning (CBL)



# 2,545

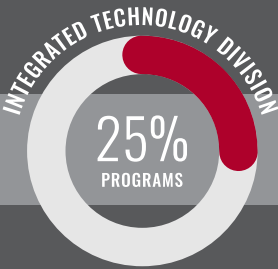
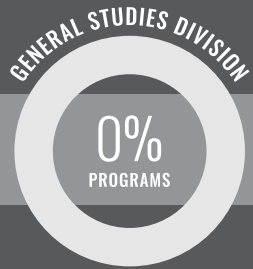
## NUMBER OF STUDENTS' SERVICE HOURS SINCE 2013

g (CBL)

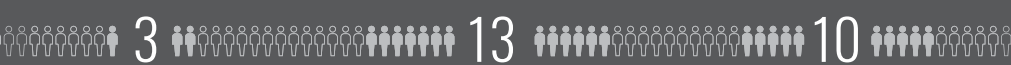
30,131 HOURS

### 2018 - 2019

# 2,334 STUDENTS



# 100% PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY 2025



INSTRUCTORS



first choice service



workforce and community engagement

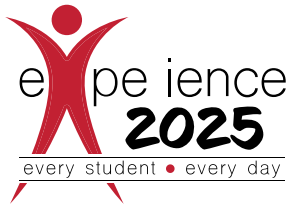


equity, inclusion and support



employee engagement





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

## EXPERIENCE 2025 STRATEGIC GOAL:

INFUSE COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING IN 100% OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND TECHNICAL DIPLOMA PROGRAMS BY 2025.

### 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](http://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 McArdle / 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 Hoeltzle*

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 Hahm*

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 alleviate hunger in the community by volunteering at a local area food pantry.





# 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

**“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**



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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  
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.



**Western**  
Technical College  
EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



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