



WTCS Systemwide Activity Update August 2025

Enrollment Update

WTCS FY24 apprenticeship enrollment is up 6% from FY23 and 14% from FY20. Enrollment is steady in industrial sector programs, increasing in construction programs, and significantly increasing in other sectors including agriculture, health, information technology, service, transportation and utility. Sectors with the most significant increase are service and health care sectors, with enrollment increases of 29% and 49% respectively. In the service sector, large increases in early childhood educator, cosmetology and barbering programs contributed to the growth. In the health sector, the launch of the associate degree nursing program and increased enrollment in pharmacy technician were significant growth factors.

WTCS Enrollments by Sector	Construction	Industrial	Other
FY20	5198	2022	396
FY21	5052	1849	394
FY22	5233	1867	428
FY23	5696	1968	510
FY24	6116	1954	600

New Program Highlights

- Community Health Worker – Milwaukee Area Technical College – approved 5/20/25
- Commercial Building Inspector – Milwaukee Area Technical College – approved 5/20/25
- Mechatronics Technician – Western Technical College – approved 6/13/25

Credit for Prior Learning and the Technical Studies Journeyworker Associate’s Degree (AAS)

WTCS is looking to expand opportunities for Registered Apprentices across the state to gain 39 occupational credits toward the Technical Studies Journeyworker AAS. Currently, only related instruction provided by WTCS colleges is eligible to be counted toward these credits. A proposed expansion will allow granting of this credit in instances where related instruction has been provided by an approved DWD-BAS provider of related instruction.

Tools of the Trade

The application window will soon open for the Ascendium Tools of the Trade scholarship program. This is a scholarship program which grants \$2,000 to eligible construction and industrial sector apprentices. Historically, approval rates for applicants for this scholarship have been very high, and funds can be used for anything which supports the apprentices’ ability to persist in their program, which could include expenses such as tuition, books, tools and PPE as well as things like housing, child care and transportation costs.

We are in the second year of a five-year evaluation for this program. The evaluation is a collaborative effort between Ascendium, Mathematica, WTCS, WTCS colleges and scholarship recipients. Several evaluation activities are underway, including applicant and recipient surveys and collection and review of DWD and WTCS data. This spring Ascendium support allowed us to enhance apprenticeship celebrations and recognition at each of the colleges. Colleges offered a variety of recognition events including apprenticeship banquets, celebratory cookouts and graduation ceremonies. Support was also provided to purchase or rent caps and gowns to encourage participation in college graduation ceremonies highlighting apprenticeship achievements across the college community.

Annual Joint BAS-WTCS Meeting

The annual joint meeting will be held in Stevens Point in September. A planning team comprised of apprenticeship training representatives, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards staff, college apprenticeship leaders and WTCS staff have been working to plan a meaningful agenda filled with opportunities to learn, collaborate and continuously improve our processes and relationships.

Apprenticeship Curriculum Review Cycle

The first five-year cycle of apprenticeship curriculum review has concluded. WTCS and WIDS staff have developed the cycle for FY26-FY30, maintaining previous sequencing where possible, but shifting some programs to align with TSA reviews for partner programs and grouping similar projects which will likely involve the participation of the same faculty. A few programs were removed from the review cycle due to being offered by a single college; these will be reevaluated as needed.

Programs and courses slated for curriculum work in FY26 include:

- Carpentry (ABC) Program
- Electrician (ABC) Program
- Industrial Manufacturing Technician Program
- Respiratory Therapist Program
- Transition to Trainer Course
- Preparing to Teach Transition to Trainer Course

There are two carryover projects from FY25 anticipated to be completed in FY26:

- Electricity (Construction) Program
- Plumbing Program

Apprenticeship Direct Instruction Support Grants

Colleges will soon be invited to apply for annual direct instruction support grants. A \$500,000 allocation is provided by WTCS each academic year to support curriculum development and instructional costs in apprenticeship. These funds are often used to support delivery of new programs as well as to support circumstances where enrollment is markedly higher or lower than anticipated during college budgeting processes.