PACIFIC
Research & Evaluation, LLC

Final Evaluation Report

Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant: Round 4

Casper Community College

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Executive Summary

The *Wyoming Energy Sector Training (*WEST) project at Casper College (CC) was funded through a $2.5 million, four-year Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Round 4 grant from the US Department of Labor (DOL). In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act amended the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize the TAACCCT Grant Program.

In December of 2015, CC partnered with Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) to design and conduct the third-party evaluation of the WEST project. PRE designed and executed a comprehensive plan for the implementation and impact evaluation components required by DOL and collected additional data to inform continuous program improvements throughout the life of the grant. PRE's evaluation methodology included an implementation evaluation to assess formative questions and a concurrent cohort comparison impact evaluation to assess the impact of the WEST courses and programs on participants in terms of key student outcomes. PRE conducted focus groups with project team members and students, and distributed surveys to staff members, students and industry partners. In addition, PRE worked with Casper College to gain access to student outcome data in order to perform an impact study.

The grant allowed enhancements to be made to the following programs: Diesel Power Technology, Electronics Technology, Geographic Information System (GIS), Geology, Extractive Resources Technology, Process Technology, Renewable Energy, and Welding Technology. Enhancements to the programs included purchasing new machines and technology, expanding program capacity (allowing them to admit more students), expanding training opportunities for students, and hiring more specialized staff.

Aside from the instructional development and enhancements made as part of the WEST program, a significant component of the TAACCCT grant is the student support services offered to advise students academically and to provide career guidance. This has included enrollment supports, tutoring, and the addition of soft skills training into the existing course structure. Overall, PRE's evaluation showed that the WEST program provided career guidance to students through informal guidance provided by instructors and regional employers.

Leveraging partnerships with local industry partners is something that the WEST program excelled at over the course of the grant. WEST engaged industry partners early in the grant process and consulted with them in deciding which courses or programs would be enhanced through the WEST program. The industry partners were an important driver of the soft skills training that was incorporated into the WEST training programs. Since all of the WEST programs were designed to meet a need in the local community, industry partners were engaged throughout the process, and they will be valuable in helping WEST implement its plan to sustain various programs after TAACCCT grant funding ends.

Student academic outcomes supported the success of the grant. In terms of credentials earned, 93.3% of Cohort 1 students and 46.8% of Cohort 2 students earned a credential of some type. Ninety percent (90.0%) of Cohort 1 students earned credits and 23.3% were enrolled in further education. Ninety-four percent (93.6%) of Cohort 2 students earned credits and 8.5% were enrolled in further education. The goal of the impact study is to see similarities in the participant and comparison groups. Similarities are seen for the outcomes of completion and rate of credit attainment. Noteworthy results from the impact analysis showed the percentage of Cohort 1 participants earning a credential was 93.3% compared to the

60.5% of comparison group students earning a credential. The Cohort 1 participants also showed a higher percentage of students retained in the program and a higher percentage of students enrolling in further education.

Evaluation Insights

Although TAACCCT grant funding for Casper College will conclude in September 2018, PRE would like to offer the following insights regarding the WEST programs that will be sustained. These insights are based solely on the data collected through the evaluation activities referenced in this report.

1. The grant has allowed WEST to expand curriculum delivery methods, including allowing students to engage in distance learning via online courses. While students appreciated the opportunity to do their coursework remotely, they also commented on certain barriers that came with learning online and off-campus that the program may be able to direct resources to overcome in the future. Distance learning students emphasized that they missed having ready access to instructors. Students who do not go to campus often or sit in classrooms with their instructors regularly do not have as many opportunities to reach out to their instructors for help. While students are able to email their professors, there is an element of face-to-face interactions that is missed. Facilitation of more interaction between professors and distance learning students (through in-person meetings, video calls, etc.) is encouraged.

2. The program may benefit from an increase in the ratio of instructors and lab assistants to students. Several students commented that they would like to be able to make better use of the time when they are in class. Students sometimes felt that time in class was wasted when the instructors did not have time to interact one-on-one or in a small group setting with each student in the class. If there were less students in each class, or more lab assistants to assist, students may benefit more from class time. Students also highlighted that they would feel more comfortable using the new equipment purchased by the grant in class if they had more instructor or lab assistant support. Students are sometimes uncomfortable using the expensive equipment without close guidance.

3. There may need to be a re-evaluation of the climate of the energy industry in Wyoming. While certain programs, such as Electronics Technology, appear to have no problem placing students in high-paying jobs after graduation, there is a strong perception among some staff that the energy industry in Wyoming is waning. Because of this, they are concerned about being able to successfully place all WEST graduates into appropriate jobs. Additionally, staff members believe that the downturn of the energy industry in Wyoming is decreasing industry partner engagement. It's possible that the college would better serve students if they facilitated a meeting between staff and industry partners in order to evaluate the climate of the energy industry and brainstorm ways to increase industry partner involvement and decrease the perception among staff that students will not be able to find jobs after graduation. A needs assessment could be an appropriate next step. Alternatively, if the state of demand for employment is low as staff evaluate it to be, perhaps funds should be directed towards programs such as Electronics Technology who have been extremely successful at placing students in jobs.

Introduction

The *Wyoming Energy Sector Training (*WEST) project at Casper College (CC) was funded through a $2.5 million, four-year Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Round 4 grant from the US Department of Labor (DOL). In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act amended the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize the TAACCCT Grant Program. On March 30, 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act, which included $2 billion over four years to fund the TAACCCT program.

TAACCCT provides community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program, and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations. Through these multi-year grants, the DOL is helping to ensure that our nation's institutions of higher education are helping adults succeed in acquiring the skills, degrees, and credentials needed for high-wage, high-skill employment while also meeting employers' needs for skilled workers. DOL is implementing the TAACCCT program in partnership with the Department of Education (ED). The WEST grant was awarded in October 2014 and supported services at CC through May 2017.

Casper College used their TAACCCT Round 4 grant to enhance the college's energy programs in an effort to better meet industry workforce needs. The TAACCCT funding has facilitated the alignment of Casper College's energy sector programs and allowed program innovation through equipment purchases, additional student supports, and strong industry engagement. The funding has allowed the WEST program to enable students to hone the technical and soft skills needed to acquire high-wage, high-demand employment while simultaneously meeting the need of employers for highly skilled workers.

In December of 2015, CC partnered with Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) to design and conduct the third-party evaluation of the WEST project. PRE designed and executed a comprehensive plan for the implementation and outcome evaluation components required by DOL and collected additional data to inform continuous program improvements throughout the life of the grant. The evaluation plan as performed is summarized below.

Research Plan

PRE's evaluation methodology included an implementation evaluation to assess formative questions and a quasi-experimental cohort study to assess the impact of the WEST courses and programs on participants in terms of key student outcomes.

Implementation Evaluation

The implementation evaluation included a two-step evaluation with a focus on the initial assessment of the program plan and curriculum as well as an ongoing assessment of how the program was implemented. The initial assessment was focused on collecting background data with regard to the development of the WEST project. Specifically, qualitative data were collected to learn more about how the project was designed as well as how curriculum were developed and selected for use in the TAACCCT programs. In order to gather this information, PRE conducted a focus group with the WEST project team in the winter of 2015.

The ongoing formative assessment focused on the operational strengths and weaknesses of the programs upon implementation. Formative data regarding staffing, delivery methods (assessment, recruitment, and career guidance), participation, and partner contributions were collected from CC staff, partner organizations, and students through staff and partner surveys and student focus groups throughout the grant period. The following table summarizes the methods used and timeline for addressing each of the formative evaluation questions.

Table 1. Evaluation Methods

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Method	Timeline
Analyze the steps taken by the institution to create and run the training program.	Project Team Focus Group	Year 2
Assess the operational strengths and weaknesses of the project after implementation.	Project Team Focus Group Staff Survey Student Focus Groups Industry Partner Survey	Year 2 Year 2, 3, 4 Year 2 & 3 Year 2 & 4
How was curriculum selected, used, or created?	Project Team Focus Group Staff Survey Industry Partner Survey	Year 2 Year 2, 3, 4 Year 2 & 4
How were programs and program design improved or expanded using grant funds?	Project Team Focus Group Staff Survey Student Focus Groups	Year 2 Year 2, 3, 4 Year 2 & 3
What delivery methods were offered?	Student Focus Groups Staff Survey	Year 2 & 3 Year 2, 3, 4
What was the program administrative structure?	Project Team Focus Group	Year 2
What support services and other services were offered?	Staff Survey Student Focus Groups	Year 2, 3, 4 Year 2 & 3
Did grantees conduct an in-depth assessment of participants' abilities, skills, and interests to select participants into the grant program?	Project Team Focus Group	Year 2
Were assessment results useful in determining the appropriate program and course sequence for participants?	Project Team Focus Group	Year 2
Was career guidance provided and if so, through what methods?	Staff Survey Student Focus Groups	Year 2, 3, 4 Year 2 & 3
What contributions did each of the partners make in terms of: • Program Design • Curriculum Development • Recruitment • Training • Placement • Program Management • Leveraging of Resources • Commitment to Program Sustainability	Project Team Focus Group Staff Survey Industry Partner Survey	Year 2 Year 2, 3, 4 Year 2 & 4
What factors contributed to partners' involvement or lack of involvement in the program?	Staff Survey Industry Partner Survey	Year 2, 3, 4
Which contributions from partners were most critical to the success of the grant program?	Staff Survey Industry Partner Survey	Year 2, 3, 4
Which contributions from partners had less of an impact?	Staff Survey Industry Partner Survey	Year 2, 3, 4
How did the project effort support institutional capacity building?	Staff Survey	Year 4

Data Collection Tools

Table 2 summarizes the methods used for collecting data to address the formative evaluation questions and provide continuous program improvement data over the course of the grant. Each of these methods is described in more detail below.

Table 2. Summary of Data Collection Methods

Activity	Year 2 (2015-16)	Year 3 (2016-17)	Year 4 (2017-18)
Project Team Focus Group	✓		
Staff Survey	✓	✓	✓
Student Focus Groups	✓	✓	
Industry Partner Survey	✓		✓

Project Team Focus Group

A project team focus group was conducted in December of 2015 with nine staff members of Casper College, most of whom work directly with the WEST program. Staff included the Vice President of Student Services, the Dean of Continuing Education, the Associate Controller, the Dean of the School of Business & Industry (Diesel Technology, Electronics, Process Technology, Renewable Energy and Welding programs), the Dean of the School of Science (Geology, GIS and Extraction programs), a faculty member from the School of Science, the Veterans Outreach Specialist for Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, the Workforce Training Specialist, and the WEST Grant Manager. The focus group included many of the DOL formative evaluation questions, as well as additional questions to inform the researchers about the program. The project team focus group questions can be found in Appendix A.

Student Focus Groups

Student focus groups were conducted at the Casper College campus in the spring of 2016 and spring of 2017 with students involved with the WEST programs. Topics of discussion for the two student focus groups were similar and included future career plans, career guidance and advising services provided through WEST programs, additional education plans, and suggestions for program improvement. The complete list of questions for student focus groups can be found in Appendix B.

Staff Survey

As part of the data collection efforts, WEST program staff were surveyed annually. Surveys were administered through an online application during winter or spring of grant years 2, 3, and 4. In Year 2 of the grant (2015-16), the survey was sent out to staff members in April, collecting 13 responses. In Year 3 of the grant (2016-17) the survey was again sent out in April, collecting 11 responses. In Year 4 of the grant (2017-18) the survey was distributed for a final time, this time in January and February of 2018. A total of ten staff members completed the survey in Year 4. In Years 2 and 3 survey participants represented all eight WEST programs, as well as the program administration team. In Year 4 no extractive resources, process technology, or renewable energy staff took the survey. Extractive resources and process technology were not options on the Year 4 survey because those programs were discontinued.

The survey asked about the following topic areas: staff members' involvement with the grant programs, general program content, preparation of students, feedback heard from students, student access to support services, effectiveness of industry partner contributions, and strengths and challenges of the programs to

date. In the Year 4 survey additional questions were asked about the sustainability of the grant efforts. The complete list of items from the staff survey can be found in Appendix C. The survey contained industry-specific versions of each question in order to gauge differences between industries. Due to small sample sizes of staff within each program, however, data is presented in aggregate in this report rather than by industry, and items have been generalized to be applicable to all industries. Because some staff worked in multiple programs, they are represented more than once in the aggregate response ratings.

Industry Partner Survey

A survey was distributed to industry partners through an online application in years 2 and 4 of the grant. In Year 2, the survey was sent to 12 key industry partners via email and it was completed by six partners. In Year 4, the survey was sent out to 13 partners via email and it was completed by seven partners. Partners were asked about their involvement with the WEST programs, what roles they played, satisfaction with their level of involvement, and perceptions of preparation of students and program impact on the energy industry. The WEST program staff were also interested in learning the most important soft skills for industry partners and the soft skills that current employees could improve upon. The complete list of questions from the industry partner survey can be found in Appendix D.

Impact Evaluation

Due to the fact that participants were enrolled in WEST programs based on eligibility, it was not feasible to conduct an impact evaluation that included true random assignment. Random assignment would have resulted in Casper College denying program support to interested individuals and potentially limiting the number of qualified applicants admitted to the program. Instead, Casper College supported a quasi-experimental cohort study with all students enrolled in the WEST program courses during Year 2 (2015-16) and Year 3 (2016-17) of the grant.

TAACCCT grant participants were chosen from those students enrolled in one of the eight WEST programs who meet the following WEST-determined eligibility requirements: veterans/spouse of a veteran, TAA-eligible workers, Pell Grant eligible students, and non-traditional students (over 25 years of age, have dependents other than a spouse, do not have a high school diploma-completed with a high school equivalency certificate). The comparison group was created using the remaining students enrolled in the WEST programs that do not meet the WEST-determined program requirements. Due to the fact that the treatment group is made up of non-traditional (i.e., historically underserved) students, the goal for the impact analysis is to see similarities in outcomes between groups rather than significant differences. That is, the program is targeting non-traditional students in hopes of providing them support so that they may produce equivalent outcomes to traditional students.

PRE worked with Casper College in the development of a system for tracking, reporting, and analyzing treatment and comparison student outcome data for the outcome/impact evaluation required by DOL. Student outcome data include a series of descriptive and outcome variables related to education and employment outcomes. The nine DOL outcomes, as listed below, have been examined for students in the TAACCCT-funded programs:

DOL Educational and Employment Outcome Variables

- What is the total number of participants served?
- What is the total number of participants completing a TAACCCT funded program of study?
- What is the total number of participants still retained in their program of study or other TAACCCT-funded program of study?
- What is the total number of participants completing credit hours?
- What is the total number of participants earning credentials?
- What is the total number of participants enrolled in further education after TAACCCT-funded study completion?
- What is the total number of participants who gained employment after program of study completion?
- What is the total number of participants retained in employment after program of study completion?
- What is the total number of those participants employed at enrollment who received wage increase in employment post-enrollment?

WEST Program Development

Three primary components of the WEST program at Casper College will be reviewed below, including: 1) The development or modification of eight energy sector programs, 2) The enhancement of student support services, and 3) The leveraging of relationships with local industry partners. The programs that were created or modified through WEST include:

- Diesel Power Technology
- Electronics Technology
- Extractive Resources Technology
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Geology
- Process Technology
- Renewable Energy
- Welding Technology

Course and Program Development

The eight program offerings listed above were either added to the WEST course schedule or modified using the grant funding. The sections below detail the steps taken by WEST to create and run the training program; the administrative structure of the program; how curriculum was selected, used, or created; how programs were designed or improved using grant funds; what delivery methods were offered; and how the project effort supported institutional capacity building.

What steps were taken by the institution to create and run the training program?

The project team members were asked to discuss the steps that have been taken by the institution to create and run the training program. Staff had slightly different accounts of how they chose the programs for this Round 4 TAACCCT grant. In 2012 the school was awarded a TAACCCT Round 2 grant to create The Health Science Simulation Center (HSSC), whose aim was to improve the healthcare programs at

Casper College by training students in realistic settings while learning core skills. The intention was that students would learn how to respond effectively in a wide range of healthcare delivery situations. The HSSC was also able to provide a larger number of students with clinical practice in an improved educational setting. After successfully implementing that grant, program staff knew they wanted to focus on a sector other than healthcare. At the time that requests for proposals for the Round 4 TAACCCT grants were posted, employers in the energy sector had indicated a dearth of skilled laborers needed to fill important positions. Casper College's grants coordinator met with the Dean's Council about which sector could most benefit from this round of DOL funding. At that time, the eight energy programs operated somewhat autonomously from each other; the grants coordinator and Dean's Council determined a need to streamline their operations. With this in mind, the committee chose to focus simultaneously on eight related programs: Diesel Power Technology, Electronics Technology, Extractive Resources Technology, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Geology, Process Technology, Renewable Energy and Welding Technology.

The team also wanted to look at increasing capacity in the sustainable energy programs, including the Renewable Energy Technology program, which focuses on harvesting electrical energy from solar power and wind. Also, with the TAACCCT funding, there is an ability to buy equipment to enhance and expand programs; the faculty recognized that this would not only help to improve and enhance all eight energy programs, but also to substantially improve the work readiness of students.

What is the program administrative structure?

The project team included the grant director, participant recruiter and support specialist, deans, student services staff, veterans outreach specialist, the associate controller, and an accountant. A smaller group made up of the grant director, participant support specialist, and deans of WEST programs met bi-weekly depending on schedules and needs that arose. At the beginning of the grant the larger group of people met once a month and eventually moved to quarterly meetings. They pulled faculty into meetings as needed and discussed certain grant outcomes with department chairs.

How was curriculum selected, used, or created?

According to the project team, this WEST TAACCCT grant focused on de-fragmenting and linking the programs to make them stronger and adding equipment more than they focused on adding technical skills that may be missing. There has also been a push to add soft skills training to the already existing programs. Most of the curriculum enhancements were about bringing the content from hypothetical to practical application for work-readiness and utilizing newly purchased equipment to do so. Before the grant, curricula primarily addressed theoretical applications, such as how you would hypothetically operate a rock slicer. Now they have the equipment such as a rock slicer to demonstrate and practice working with. Some of the equipment are simulators, or can be programmed with a problem to solve that is realistic for work in the field. One of the deans, who oversees five of the WEST programs, said that each of those programs has a separate advisory board, who meet once or twice a year. If they make changes to the curriculum it is usually because advisory boards have recommended it, based on industry requirements and standards. She said:

The advisory boards are really helpful when they come together and are worthwhile, they can help you look at a program and say, 'Okay, we probably don't need this anymore. This is what we need'. For instance, with the PLC aspect of Electronics, plants want PLC experience in their hiring. It doesn't matter whether it's gas or oil. The industry is now requiring that and so that became important for our Electronics programs. Those advisory boards can play a critical part of designing curriculum change. They are out there doing it, and they know what needs to be done.

When the WEST program staff met with industry partners to discuss curriculum and other needs of the energy sector, they thought they would hear that there were technical skills gaps, but they were instead told that the industry partners felt students were missing soft skills. In response, one of the staff members created a list of learning objectives for each program and assessed the need for additional soft skills training to be added to the required technical skills objectives. The curriculum already existed and therefore was easily integrated into instruction. The areas of concentration included:

- **Personal Skills**: integrity, initiative, dependability and reliability, adaptability, professionalism and leadership
- **People Skills**: teamwork, communication and respect
- **Applied Knowledge**: reading, writing, mathematics, science, technology and critical thinking
- **Workplace Skills**: safety, planning and organizing, problem solving, decision making and working with tools and technology
- **Employability Skills**: interviewing, resume building, dressing for success, effective communication and networking

On the survey in Years 2 and 4, industry partners were asked to identify the soft skills that were most important to them in hiring employees. In Year 2, Reliability and Initiative were rated as most important by partners and in Year 4, communication, reliability, and professionalism were consistently rated as most important to industry partners. Table 3 summarizes the partner ratings on soft skills from the Year 4 survey and reinforces the importance of continuing to offer training in these areas moving forward.

Table 3. Soft Skills Most Important to Industry Partners (n = 7)

Soft Skills	n	%
Communication	6	85.7%
Reliability	5	71.4%
Professionalism	5	71.4%
Dependability	4	57.1%
Integrity	3	42.9%
Planning and Organizing	3	42.9%
Safety Awareness	3	42.9%
Teamwork	3	42.9%
Problem Solving	3	42.9%
Decision Making	3	42.9%
Showing up to work on time/Attendance	3	42.9%
Critical Thinking	2	28.6%

Soft Skills	n	%
Respect	1	14.3%
Initiative	1	14.3%
Leadership	1	14.3%
Other	1	14.3%
Dressing Appropriately for Work	0	--
Adaptability	0	--

How were programs and program design improved or expanded using grant funds?

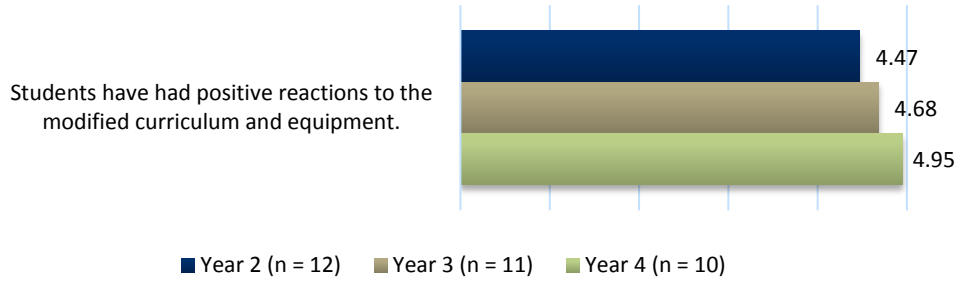
The grant allowed enhancements to be made to the following programs: Diesel Power Technology, Electronics Technology, Geographic Information System (GIS), Geology, Extractive Resources Technology, Process Technology, Renewable Energy, and Welding Technology (See Table 4). Enhancements to the programs included purchasing new machines and technology, expanding program capacity (allowing them to admit more students), expanding training opportunities for students, and hiring more specialized staff. One example of equipment enhancements was for the Renewable Energy program; wind turbines were purchased to enhance work readiness. Industry partners Chevron and Duke had previously allowed students to come out and look at their equipment, but for a student to climb up 350 feet and work on an expensive piece of equipment presents too much of a liability. Now the students can do that in a classroom setting and safely troubleshoot problems they may encounter in the field. This is also the case with the hydraulic trainers for the Diesel program. Instead of working on a $600,000 engine for the first time while on the job, the students can troubleshoot in the classroom, so they are competent when they get out in the field.

Table 4. Program Enhancement or Creation

Course/Program	Enhanced	Sustained
Diesel	✓	✓
Electronics Technology	✓	✓
Geographic Information System (GIS)	✓	✓
Geology	✓	✓
Renewable Energy	✓	✓
Welding Technology	✓	✓
Extractive Resources	✓	
Process Technology	✓	

As shown in Figure 1 below, staff were asked to rate student reactions to the modified curriculum and equipment and had increasingly positive perceptions over the course of the grant.

Figure 1. Staff Perceptions of Students' Reactions (Average Agreement Ratings on a Scale of 1-5)



What delivery methods were offered?

Several students participating in focus groups reported that they are involved in distance learning and taking courses online. While some students took all of their courses online, others engaged in blended learning and took courses both online and on campus. Students in focus groups reported both positive and negative aspects of taking courses online. Some challenges to online learning that students identified included navigating the learning management system (Moodle), maintaining self-motivation, and a lack of face-to-face interaction with instructors and other students. One student explained how they overcome the challenges of taking courses online. Like other students, they sometimes found it difficult to complete coursework remotely, without the face-to-face assistance on an instructor: "I do all of my courses online. But I will not go forward until I learn what I am supposed to learn. I email my instructors and tell them 'I need to come see you'. Because of that I am really connected with my instructors". While difficulty communicating regularly with instructors was the most common complaint about online learning, it was clear that some students were able to take the initiative to facilitate these sorts of interactions. Another student described why they enjoy the ability to complete their coursework online:

I don't have to come to campus unless my advisor wants me to her office for advising. Other than that, I do everything online. That is the biggest reason I chose GIS. Almost every one of my classes I can do online. I am not a night person, so if I am going to take classes and work I have to do both during the day. Online is amazing. The way Casper College has it set up is super easy and user-friendly. I remember them sending me an orientation packet and it lists everything you are supposed to do and how you are supposed to do it.

In addition to distance learning, the new technology purchased through the TAACCCT funding has allowed the WEST program change the way knowledge is delivered. One student in the diesel program commented on an engine that the department had recently purchased:

We got that Cummins ISX #1520 engine. That is a full DEF system, so that is nice to have. The rest of the engines are older than 2007, and it is cool to see the different technology. You can put your hand on the exhaust of the ISX and it won't be hot, and you can't do that with the others. Having that technology is really cool.

Although students were generally happy with the new technology, some students in Year 4 expressed a desire for virtual trainers. One students said, "If we had access to virtual trainers that would help us along. There is only so much we can do with having one truck with a shop". Other students who did have access to virtual assets commented on how much they benefitted from the exposure to them as well as the online tools that their programs had already purchased. Students pointed out that in the workplace, familiarity with online tools and resources will be an advantage.

How did the project effort support institutional capacity building?

In Year 2, the WEST team expressed a desire to maintain the connections, synergy, flexibility, and diversity of the teams working on these eight programs together as a means for sustainability. Unified, they anticipated they would be able to sustain their ability to be agile with industry and college needs.

The team also articulated excitement about the Renewable Energy program. In Wyoming, the gas and oil industries are always fluctuating; building capacity in the renewable energy sector brings some vitality to the economy and workforce. The team has also been pragmatic in not wanting to saturate the market. One way to avoid saturation is by ensuring the programs are thoughtful in recruitment in order for graduates to have ample employment opportunities. Early in the grant the team also expressed plans to maintain and increase industry partnerships by continued attendance at advisory board meetings and hosting meetings with industry partners to explore expanding or enhancing cooperative work.

Students in Year 2 expressed their desire to see the WEST programs and the supportive services sustained. They communicated concern that instructors may get burned out if spread too thin, and because they have been so valuable to their education and career development, students would like to see more instructors hired. Should that not be possible, students expressed a desire for an increase in lab assistants who may be able to sign off on tasks. Students have a desire for more one-on-one learning time, as they believe this would allow them to learn more and progress more quickly through the program. Students in Year 3 echoed the need for more instructors or lab assistants to be available in the classroom, particularly when students are learning how to handle new technology. One student explained,

> *In the welding program, when we talk about barriers, time is the biggest one. We only have 1 instructor and 20 of us, it can get frustrating if you are looking to get something done or you need help. It is not that our instructor is not there but he is tied us helping someone else. You spend a lot of time waiting to get help. You need someone to tell you what you are doing wrong and how to improve it so you can start moving forward.*

The strongest element of sustainability highlighted by WEST staff, students, and industry partners is the equipment purchased for the programs. With the purchase of up-to-date equipment, the students are learning more industry-relevant skills, which increases their ability to be hired, attracts more students, and encourages industry partners to be more generous with donations to the programs. The new equipment itself is more sustainable in that much of it can be updated in its life through updates to software and completion of required maintenance. It is important to note that students believe the equipment will be more easily sustained with the addition of more instructors or lab assistants, because it will allow students

to ensure that they are using the technology properly and not damaging the equipment. Students also indicated support for the integration between programs and hoped for more cross-training and field work opportunities between them. One student in Year 3 said,

> *I would like some cross-training with other departments, where if I am in electronics and they have an electronic block in automotive or diesel power, for instance, maybe I could get credit for that instead of it being separate. I don't know about renewable energy, but I am interested in that and I feel there are also some classes I could take there.*

In terms of sustainability, students in the Year 2 focus groups expressed a desire to see more integration with the energy programs at the University of Wyoming (UW). In order to attain a bachelor's degree, many of the students would have to go to UW to continue their education. If there was an articulation agreement, and qualified instructors at Casper were allowed teach required bachelor-level courses, students feel that it would be mutually beneficial in that UW students would be able to take courses not available to them in Laramie (e.g. GIS), and it would have the potential to increase class sizes so courses would not have to be canceled as often. From their vantage point, it would also keep the talent local in Casper.

WEST Students

Characteristics

WEST student characteristics were gathered through program enrollment forms. The following data provide summary demographic characteristics for the two cohorts that participated in the program. Cohort 1 students were enrolled during the 2015-16 school year and Cohort 2 students were enrolled during the 2016-17 school year. Table 5 shows the number of students in each cohort. Students in both cohorts were predominately male (78.3% in Cohort 1 and 72.3% in Cohort 2) and the average age was 29 years old for Cohort 1 and 31 years of age for Cohort 2 students. Slightly under half of students in each cohort were working either full-time or part-time (43.3% for Cohort 1 and 46.8% for Cohort 2).

Table 5. Number of Students in WEST Programs by Cohort

Program	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
Welding Technology	13	13
Diesel Power Technology	14	9
Renewable Resources	2	3
Geology	7	4
Extractive Resources	5	0
GIS	8	14
Electronics Technology	8	4
Process Technology	3	0
Total	60	47

TAACCT Grant Components

WEST Programs

A series of programs were enhanced through the WEST program at Casper College. Each of these program is described in more detail below.

Diesel Program

As described by the Diesel Program staff, Casper College has the only diesel program in the state of Wyoming. With TAACCCT funds the program was able to buy four hydraulic trainers. This doubled the program's capacity, as they went from being able to have six students working at a time to 12. Before buying the additional trainers, they had to offer more labs, which translated to a lot of overtime and overload of the staff. In discussion with industry partners, they said that they needed to be able to have employees that were trained in certain emission standards put forth by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The existing equipment at the college did not allow them to do that; the grant provided funding to buy a diesel engine to be used for training purposes with that capability. TAACCCT funding added incredible training opportunities for the students to gain skills which employers are seeking in the diesel industry.

Electronics Technology Program

The Electronics Technology program staff described that the program was enhanced significantly through the purchase of equipment. Casper College was able to purchase both Siemens and Allen-Bradley Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs). These PLCs are the standard in the field for processors; companies usually prefer one or the other. The students in the program having the ability to train on these machines makes them much more employable in the industry. In the past, Casper College has had 100% employment placement when students complete the program. The college has even had employers trying to recruit students before they graduate because of the high level of skills obtained as they are going through the program. The college has asked employers to allow their students to finish, so they can become that much more skilled and well-rounded employees. As part of the Electronics program students learn about robotics. This overlaps a bit with the Welding program, as the college was able to buy a new robotic welder with TAACCCT funds. The robotic welders are also a great recruiting tool, as the high school students are fascinated with the robots, where the PLCs may not seem like much to look at. Having both PLC and robotics training makes the students that much more competitive in the job market, as there are manufacturers in Wyoming who use robotics.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Program

Geographic Information Systems program staff said they were able to get some minor equipment for the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program with TAACCCT funds. This equipment will give the students hands on experience working with equipment in labs. The added benefit is that they are learning safety protocols and procedures in working with and manipulating this equipment. The program also purchased tablets for the GIS students to take out into the field and use in work-simulated situations. The students are learning basic skills in GIS so they can transfer to different parts of the industry whether they are going into environmental science or renewable energy. If they have the GIS skills, it makes them more valuable to employers and they are able to transfer between industries seamlessly when the market changes. A previous student was working in the uranium industry for the past six years, and when that

industry plummeted he was able get employment as a head geologist in the transportation industry because of his GIS experience. Students have a higher success rate if they have a GIS certificate or some experience in GIS associated with any other degree. Because opportunities increase dramatically, the team is working on emphasizing the opportunity to the students, as well as industry partners. The college has seen these connections and relationships form with the energy sector employers. Program leaders had a meeting with the University Of Wyoming School Of Environmental Science, who were excited to know that Casper had a GIS program. They wanted to send their students to Casper College because they do not have that opportunity at the University of Wyoming. They have a GIS course, but it is at the 400 level, so you have to be a senior in geology to take it. They are wanting students to have Casper's certificate level program experience to add to their environmental sciences program. This has perhaps been the biggest impact on this program specifically- is the increase in connections on and off college campuses and in the industry.

Geology and Extractive Resources Programs

As a result of the grant, Casper College received a donation of industry-specific software that they otherwise would not have been able to afford. Program staff stated that when a student is trained on this software, they can be immediately placed into an industry position. For the Extractive Resources program, the software and equipment purchases brought a lot of the curricula from hypothetical to real. One staff member described this, "For years I would say to students, 'now if you ever have a chance to see a rock slicer, this is what you could do, given that opportunity'. Now I can take them over to the rock slicer and show them and they can get those skills." Students had available to them a computer that has the software they will be using in industry. These TAACCCT-dependent resources improved these two programs immensely, ensuring students who complete them are ahead of the competition in the job market. Please note, however, that the Extractive Resources program was not sustained in Year 4.

Process Technology and Renewable Energy Programs

The Process Technology and Renewable Energy programs are both very new. Program staff described that they were born out of an initiative by Wyoming's Governor to properly train the Process Technology and Renewable Energy workforce to make the industry more viable and safe for workers. There had been some high-profile industry accidents, making safety training is an important component of the two programs. The students get generic energy and safety training for the first three semesters and the last semester they choose to focus on Renewable Energy or Process & Power. Because of this streamlining, they can offer more training to more students.

Prior to TAACCCT funding, Casper was working with fragmented equipment pieced together from Chevron and Duke who generously provided it, but there was not a fully functioning piece of equipment. With grant funds, they were able to get wind turbine systems for training. With these turbines, they are able to properly train for AWEA (American Wind and Energy Association), which is the industry standard. This is huge asset for a geographical area that has to endure the ups and downs of the oil and gas industry. The Renewable Energy program offers a much more sustainable education for students than they had access to prior to TAACCCT funding, allowing them to be nimble in the workforce.

In Process Technology, the main part of the program that was enhanced was adding a significant employability skills and safety component to the curriculum, which has not been seen at other institutions. Some of Casper's energy programs may require OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act) and MSHA

(Mine Safety and Health Administration) certificates, and this is still under consideration by program leadership. The Process Technology program was also not sustained in Year 4.

Overall, these new and enhanced programs produce a more qualified workforce in the renewable energy field. The renewable energy field is a growing sector, particularly in Wyoming where plentiful sun and wind provide abundant alternative energy resources. This program is training highly skilled workers to enter an in-demand field. The funding for equipment has enabled the college to provide students with a much higher level of training through AWEA. This is going to allow for expansion of the renewable energy program.

Welding Technology Program

The Welding Technology program is fairly costly to support. The program was able to purchase some virtual welders with TAACCCT funding. Metal is expensive, so it is helpful to have students practice on a virtual welder before they go through a lot expensive materials while learning. Casper College has not had virtual welders before, which can help with both safety and cost of supplies. If a student's welds are not sufficient, there does not need to be hesitation in encouraging them to practice additional welds to improve their skills, because they are not using expensive resources in doing so. The college was also able to include Power Wave welders and software, which is an industry standard. With that software, the students can practice TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas), MIG (Metal Inert Gas) welding, aluminum, and pipe welding, which was not available to the students before. As a result of the virtual welders, the program has also been able to run larger class sizes without safety risks.

The school was also able to purchase a new robotic welder, which was necessary as the one they had was over ten years old and not up-to-date with technology. This was an exciting purchase, because there are manufacturers in Wyoming who use robotics, creating a need for employees who are familiar with such technology. The new robotic welder and virtual welders better prepare the students for the workplace in a safer and more economical way. One of the staff said, "Welding has been a solid program at Casper College, but now our welding program is stronger."

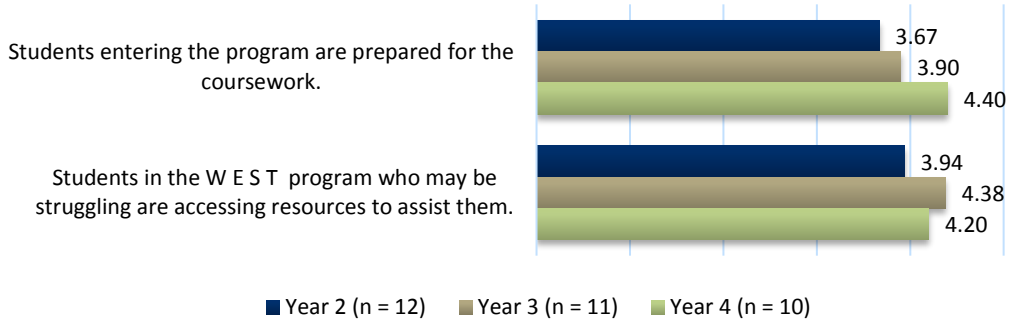
Student Support Services

Aside from the instructional enhancements made as part of the WEST courses and programs, student support services are a significant component of the TAACCCT grant, and provide both academic advising and career guidance as detailed below.

What support services and other services were offered?

Figure 2 shows staff perceptions of the advising services provided to students in years 2 through 4 of the grant. Average staff agreement ratings increased with regard to students being prepared for coursework and accessing resources when struggling. Staff in Year 3 were also asked if the WEST training program is providing students with advising resources that otherwise would not have been available to them and 90.0% expressed agreement.

Figure 2. Staff Perceptions of Advising Services (Average Agreement Ratings on a Scale of 1-5)



When asked about academic support received from the WEST program, many students talked about their advisors. In general, students expressed feeling supported and encouraged by their advisors. One student explained, "My advisor made me feel comfortable, like I was being welcomed into a family or something". Students saw their advisors as accessible, competent, and straightforward as suggested by one student: "My advisor sat down in class and laid out the guidelines and told us what we needed to do and what we needed to have done to take the second half of the class".

Other support services offered included support enrolling in the program as well as tutoring supports. One student discussed the value of having access to tutoring, particularly for nontraditional students:

> *I am 42 years old. I had a child early at 19 and got married. I am a forklift driver and truck driver, so to be coming back to school 20 years later, and having to take developmental classes, especially in math and chemistry, it has been crucial to have access to good tutoring. We are blessed to have that here at this school. I get a lot of support here. We have smaller class loads and teachers are willing to spend that time. They are not unapproachable or unavailable. I think that is one positive experience here. It is essential. The tutoring, math lab, and chemistry tutors are really cool.*

Did grantees conduct an in-depth assessment of participants' abilities, skills, and interests to select participants into the grant program?

Students were asked to fill out a WEST program intake form, which is not an assessment to gain entry, but a tool to collect comprehensive data about the students. The intake form did not have any bearing on their education plan. Many of the students first enrolled in WEST were already in the targeted programs.

Was career guidance provided, and if so, through what methods?

Students were asked if they received any career guidance as part of their involvement in the WEST programs. Most of the students said they received career guidance from the instructors of their programs. Many of the program instructors came from working in the industry and have sustained connections within the industry. One student described opportunities provided by their advisor:

It has been overwhelming at times but it has been a really neat experience so far. Amazing is a good word for it. My advisor has a board with job opportunities. He brings it up to the people who are close to graduating. I heard him discussing a new company out of Oklahoma, they want our skills. There are a lot of opportunities.

In Year 3, staff members were surveyed about their perceptions of career guidance provided by the WEST program. On average, staff members agreed that the WEST program is assisting students in choosing courses that are aligned with their career path, is helping to place them in the correct career pathway, and will help students reach their career goals at a faster pace (see Table 6).

Table 6. Staff Perceptions of Career Guidance in Year Three (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree)

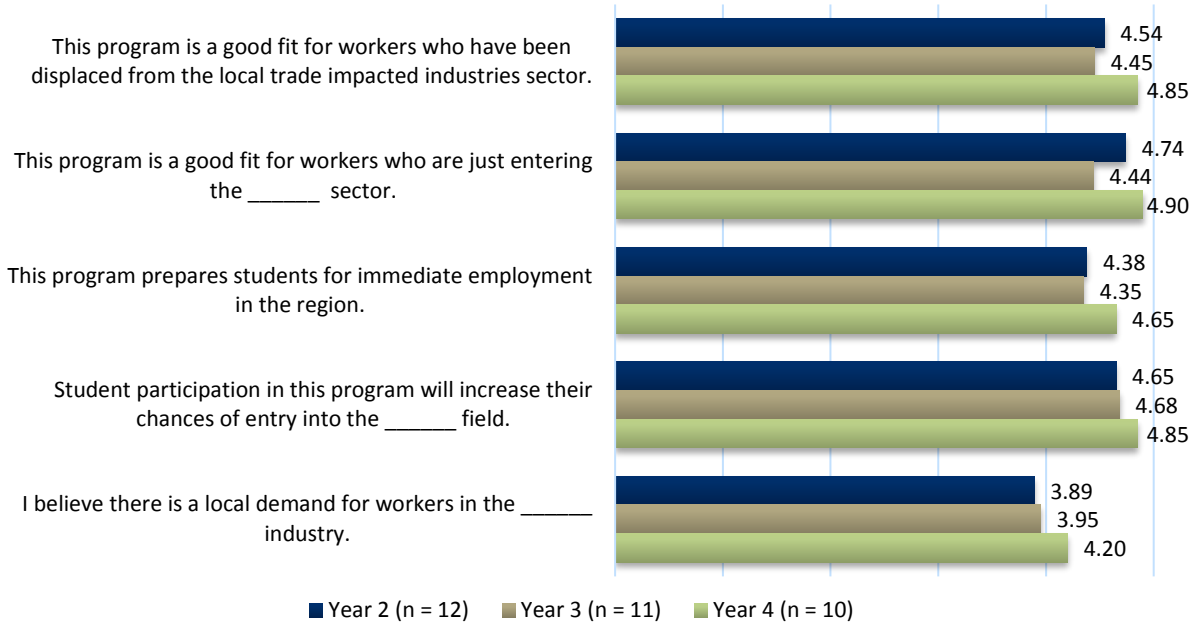
The West Training Program…	Average Agreement Rating (n = 11)
Is assisting students in choosing courses that are aligned with their career path.	4.45
Is helping to place students in the correct career pathway.	4.18
Will help students reach their career goals at a faster pace.	4.27

In Year 4, staff members were asked to elaborate on the career guidance provided by the WEST program. One staff member responded, "We worked to expand our business partners list and to see what they needed in future employees. We also worked with students to develop soft skills, provide resume assistance, share information on job openings, provide a variety of pertinent resources, and organize a meet and greet where they could speak one-on-one with multiple employers in a non-threatening environment."

Career Preparation

Figure 3 presents average staff ratings over the course of the grant with regard to career preparation. Staff expressed high rates of agreement across all years, particularly in Year 4 of the grant. Almost all staff strongly agreed that the WEST programs are a good fit for workers who have been displaced and also for those that are just entering these sectors. Staff felt strongly that the WEST programs would prepare students for immediate employment in the region and that by participating in the programs, their chance of entry into the field would be increased. Agreement was slightly less regarding belief that there is a local demand for workers in the targeted industries.

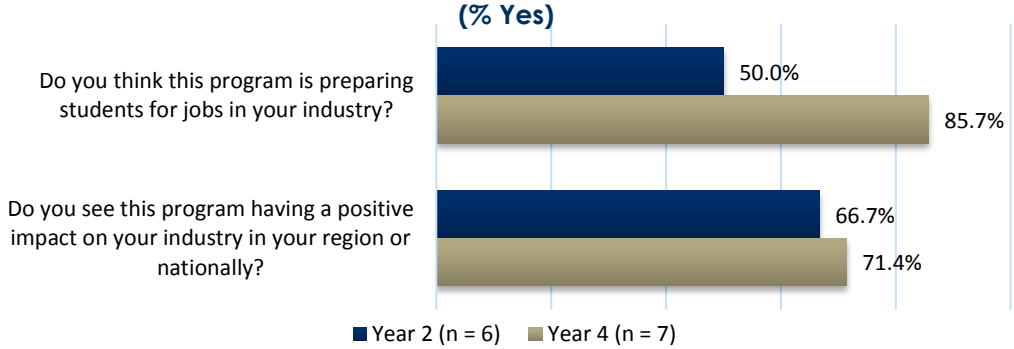
Figure 3. Staff Perceptions of Career Preparation
(Average Agreement Ratings on a Scale of 1-5)



On the Year 4 survey, staff members were given the opportunity to elaborate on the career opportunities provided by their programs. One staff member explained, "We supply entry level or higher technicians to all of the industries in the area. Employers have a place to come and recruit future or immediate employees. We have employers hiring students through our Cooperative Work Experience program while they are still in school. Many students are already working at what will be a full time job and start of their career when they finish school."

Industry partners also provided feedback on WEST career preparation and impact on their industry. By Year 4, the majority of industry partners (85.7%) indicated that the WEST programs are preparing students for jobs in their industry and 71.4% see the program having a positive impact on their industry either regionally or nationally.

Figure 4. Industry Partners Perception of WEST Industry Impact
(% Yes)



In Year 4, industry partners specifically praised the soft skills training. One industry partner stated, "The program is helping to prepare students for the industry by training students in modern electronics

equipment and in the soft skills, such as; responsibility, writing, and verbal skills required for successful employment in the electronics industry." Another industry partner also praised the soft skills training as well as the training specific to their field:

> *This program teaches students major skills required to be successful in the welding and fabricating industry. They have also helped with many of the skills that are not usually teachable, like showing up on-time or personal presentation.*

Industry Connections

From the beginning of the grant, Casper College excelled at leveraging partnerships with local industry. Students, staff, and project team members referenced industry involvement throughout the course of the WEST programs. The WEST program engaged industry partners early in the grant process and consulted with them in determining which courses or programs would be enhanced. Both staff and industry partners were asked to reflect on the contributions that the partners made to the WEST programs in terms of:

- Program Design
- Curriculum Development
- Recruitment
- Training
- Placement
- Program Management
- Leveraging of Resources
- Commitment to program sustainability

What contributions did each of the partners make in terms of: Program Design, Curriculum Development, Recruitment, and Commitment to Program Sustainability?

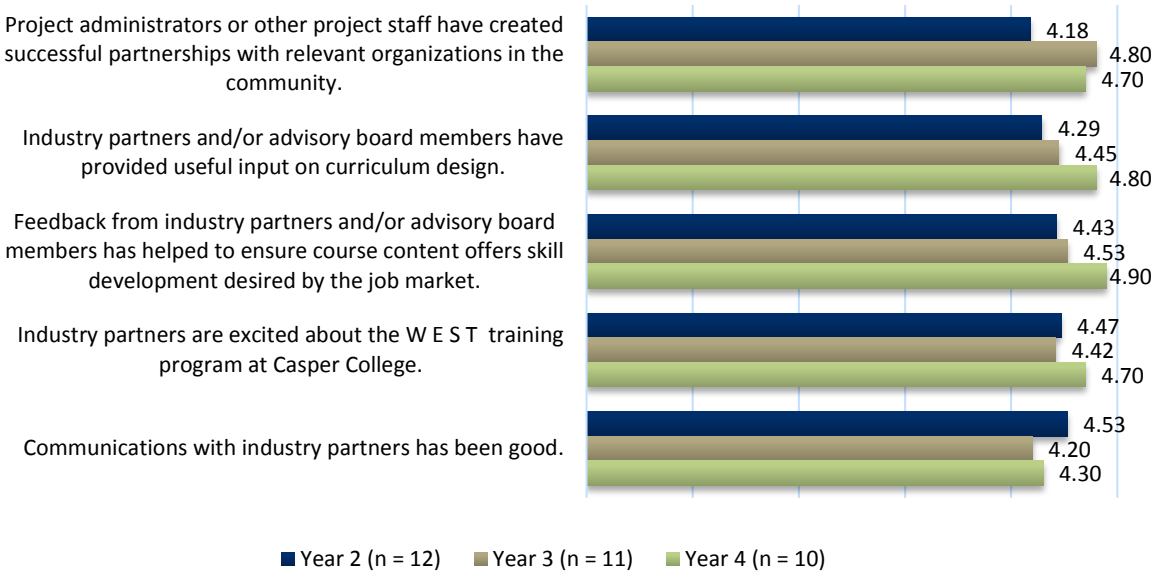
When asked about the contributions of industry partners, the WEST team reported meeting with these stakeholders very early on in the grant. They say it really reframed the way they were running the programs in that it became about workforce-readiness. They were able to focus on what the employers want to see in an employee when they are new graduates of a program in their industry sector.

This meeting was where the feedback regarding soft-skills gaps was communicated. The WEST team had another industry partner meeting in the spring of 2016 where they discussed the potential for partnership growth, as people in the industry started hearing more about the program and expressed interest in getting involved. At this point, the team also started talking with employers about customized training and asking questions including: "If employers want customized training, what would that look like?", "Could employers help in modularizing training programs that better meet the needs of their specific employment gaps?", and "Is there the potential to offer apprenticeships, internships, job shadow, and classroom presentations?". This was desired by the WEST team in order to provide students with the opportunity to see first-hand what it is like working in the field. If it is a potential career interest, students could be forming relationships with potential employers.

On the staff survey, WEST staff reported very positive perceptions of industry partner involvement throughout the grant as shown in Figure 5 below. Staff largely agreed that partners have provided useful input on curriculum design and course content that is relevant to the job market. Staff also feel that

communications have been good with the partners and that they have expressed excitement about the WEST training program.

Figure 5. Staff Perceptions of Industry Partners (Average Agreement Ratings on a Scale of 1-5)



On the Year 4 survey, a staff member described industry partner involvement:

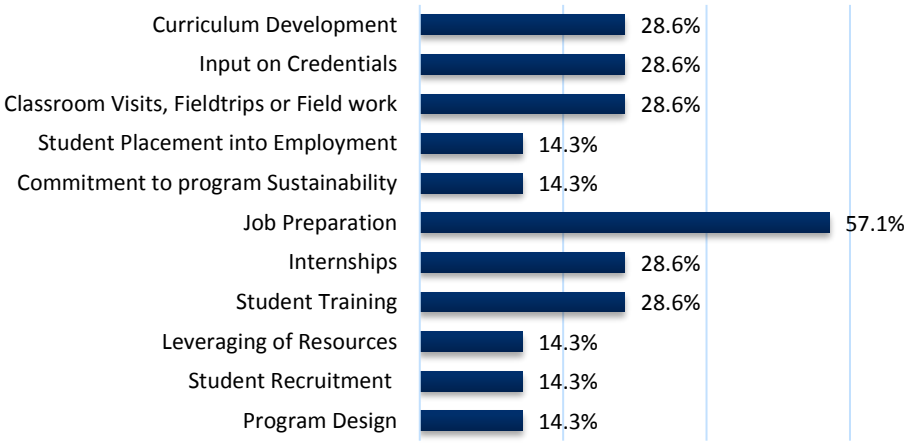
> *All the industrial partners for electronics are members of the Electronics Advisory Board. These advisory board members are also the employers of our graduates. By working with the WEST Grant, the industrial partners ensure that their future employees have the skills needed to do their job and succeed in their career.*

Industry partners were also asked to provide input on their involvement in the WEST program on the surveys in Year 2 and Year 4. In Year 2, partners described their involvement in the program with 50.0% percent reporting they had input on the program credentials and were involved in classroom visits and/or providing space or resources for field trips or field work (See Figure 6).

Figure 6. Industry Partners Areas of Involvement in Year 2 (n = 6)

As shown in Figure 7, on the Year 4 survey most industry partners reported being involved with job preparation. One partner commented on internships, job preparation, and sustainability, stating, "We recruit from their diesel technology program and have had interns before. We participated in mock interviews with students. We submitted a commitment to program sustainability letter. We provide scholarship funds to the diesel technology program." This industry partner has formed a mutually beneficial relationship to the WEST program, which aligns with the grant's goal of increasing engaged partners.

Figure 7. Industry Partners Areas of Involvement in Year 4 (n = 7)



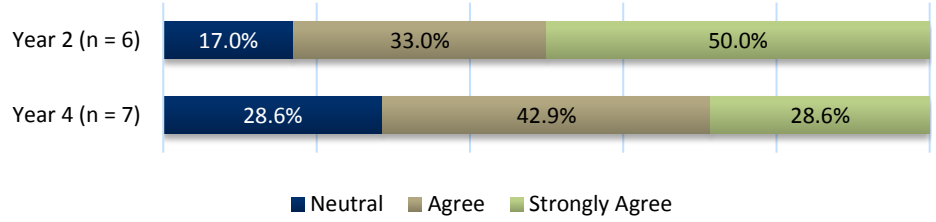
In Year 4, industry partners were asked to elaborate on their involvement in the activities listed in Figure 7 (above). One industry partner described their recent involvement:

> *We went to the college and provided input on the curriculum and courses and trainings that would be great to offer. We discussed and have been working with Casper College on an internship program. We have offered tours and had Casper College come out to the site when giving tours to students to provide pamphlets and speak about what the college has to offer.*

What factors contributed to partners' involvement or lack of involvement?

As noted previously, when asked if they have had the opportunity to work with any of the students from the WEST or other Casper College programs in Year 2, zero out of the six participating partners said they had. This increased to three out of the seven participating partners in Year 4 which indicates that partner involvement increased throughout the duration of the grant. Partners were also asked about their satisfaction with their current level of involvement with the WEST program. In Year 4, seventy-two percent (71.5%) said they agreed or strongly agreed which was a slight decrease from agreement rates in Year 2 (See Figure 8).

Figure 8. Partners are Satisfied with Current Level of Involvement



In Year 2 partners reported some factors that have impacted their level of involvement such as time and distance, as noted by one industry partner: "The meetings are not ideal for those who are unable to be there in person. They are too short, too structured and allow little time for input." On the Year 4 survey, partners echoed concerns from Year 2 regarding time constraints and workloads being barriers to involvement. One partner also noted that, "The amount of recent graduates that we have hired in previous years" and "The high skill level of recent hires" were positive reasons for continued involvement. When asked on the Year 4 survey to elaborate on what contributed to the involvement of industry partners, one staff member described the impact of the industry downturn on the program's relationship with industry partners:

> *The bottom fell out of the energy industry in Wyoming. Despite our best efforts, some partners became completely unresponsive, especially as we worked toward the end of the grant period. I'm not sure if this is due to lack of jobs in the industry, their own personal workplace stressors, or external factors. In many cases, some of the original contacts we made who supported WEST ended up leaving their employer for one reason or another.*

Which factors from partners were most critical to the success of the grant program?

In terms of the most useful aspects of working with industry partners, staff highlighted that partners have provided valuable input on desired skills for employees, a focus for updating curriculum, and an industry context for the programs. The staff also appreciated their input on new equipment to purchase, donations of equipment, and software and internship opportunities they were offering students. Staff expressed a few challenges in working with partners. Staff noted that partners often lack time to contribute fully to program development, and because of the highly cyclical nature of the industries, partners tended to only be engaged when they have a need for new employees which makes long-term planning difficult.

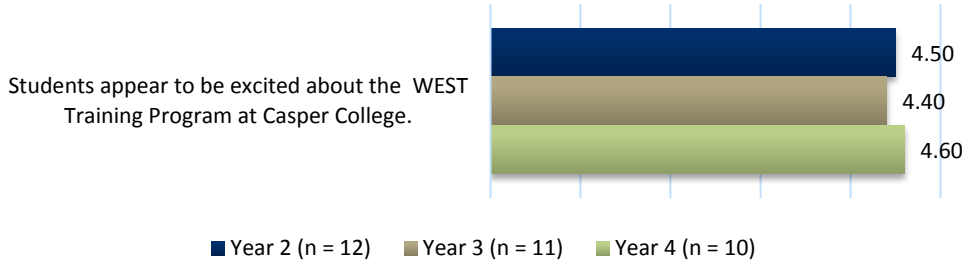
Several respondents to the Year 4 staff survey communicated that they are not aware of the details of partner involvement as highlighted by one staff member: "I'm unsure of the level of interaction between our program faculty members and their industry partners. I know that those conversations are occurring, but I'm not familiar with the details". Other staff members who were more familiar with the college's involvement with industry partners lamented the difficulties they have experienced with decreasing partner involvement. This was attributed to several different factors, including time constraints and industry-wide stressors in the energy sector, as detailed above. This again indicates that, although the

grant has allowed WEST to forge new connections with local industry partners, further efforts to maintain these relationships may be necessary.

Program Strengths

The WEST program is offering a unique service in the college's region, preparing students to enter lucrative and in-demand careers, and forging relationships with local industry partners. In Year 4, seventy-three percent (72.8%) of staff members surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: "The WEST training program is the only training program of its kind in the region". In general, the program is experienced as positive by staff, students, and industry partners. They see the program addressing a need for high-skilled labor in the region, and they appreciate the work the college is doing for its local community. As shown in Figure 9, staff agree that students appear to be excited about the WEST training program at Casper College. This has remained fairly consistent during all three years of reporting.

Figure 9. Staff Perceptions of Students Excitement (Average Agreement Ratings on a Scale of 1-5)



One example of WEST program success was highlighted by a staff member: "The electronics program has had a 100% employment rate for graduates over the last 8 years. The new equipment and skills that our students have access to will help continue this employment rate." Industry partners are also largely satisfied with the graduates from the WEST program as noted by one industry partner in Year 4:

> *The employees that we hire from the college require a lot less training than other prospects usually do. These graduates really hit the ground running and help the company to be profitable which allows us to pay them at average or, in most cases, above-average rates*

Another strength of the WEST program was the decision to include soft skills training in the program enhancements. This was a need that industry partners shared with WEST program administrators and the grant has allowed the program to begin addressing in the classroom alongside technical skills. As shown in Table 7 below, when partners were asked to identify soft skills that were missing from employees, the areas for growth included decision making, dependability, and integrity. The needs in these areas decreased in Year 4 showing preliminary evidence of program impact on employee soft skills.

Table 7. Soft Skills Missing from Employees

Soft Skills	Year 2 (n = 6)		Year 4 (n = 7)	
	n	%	n	%
Decision Making	4	66.7%	1	14.3%
Dependability	4	66.7%	2	28.6%
Integrity	3	50.0%	0	--
Communication	3	50.0%	1	14.3%
Leadership	3	50.0%	2	28.6%
Respect	2	33.3%	1	14.3%
Initiative	2	33.3%	1	14.3%
Teamwork	2	33.3%	1	14.3%
Adaptability	2	33.3%	2	28.6%
Reliability	2	33.3%	2	28.6%
Critical Thinking	2	33.3%	2	28.6%
Problem Solving	2	33.3%	3	42.9%
Showing up to work on time/Attendance	1	16.7%	0	--
Professionalism	1	16.7%	2	28.6%
Planning and Organizing	1	16.7%	2	28.6%
Other	1	16.7%	2	28.6%
Dressing Appropriately for Work	1	16.7%	0	--
Safety Awareness	0	--	1	14.3%

Partners were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with students' soft skills. In Year 2, the majority of partners responded to this question with "not applicable" (88.3%) and 16.7% were dissatisfied. In Year 4, forty-three percent (42.9%) of partners were satisfied or very satisfied (57.1% responded with not applicable). This shows promising evidence of progress towards improving the soft skills of students in this industry.

Finally, the program's leadership was highlighted as a strength by multiple staff in the Year 4 survey. One staff member commented:

> *Rachel Chadderdon deserves a huge round of applause for her tireless work on this grant. Much of which she's had to do by herself. She knows what needs to be done to satisfy the DOL requirements, while best serving the students. She has worked very hard with instructors, institutional leadership, students, businesses, and DOL representatives to make this program as successful as possible, while oftentimes having many unforeseeable challenges presented to her. Her efforts should not go unnoticed or unappreciated.*

Program Constraints

While staff and industry partners generally agree that the WEST program is succeeding at preparing employees to enter the workforce, a main program constraint identified by the staff is the perceived deterioration of the energy industry in Wyoming. According to some staff members, issues within the energy industry have led to fewer employment opportunities for WEST students and have caused a decrease in industry partner involvement. This problem is likely aggravated by inconsistent relationships

between the college and industry partners, despite the impressive technical and soft skills training given to WEST students. One staff member explained:

> *The downturn in the energy industry continues to be a barrier, as there are few jobs available. It is slowly coming back but it does not have the same draw as before. An additional challenge is a lack of institutional support in promoting the career and technical programs, as they tend to be forgotten and are not seen as a priority.*

Additionally, one staff member lamented that certain programs are not being sustained because of a lack of students. This staff member believed that there should be no enrollment minimum in order to continue a class or program.

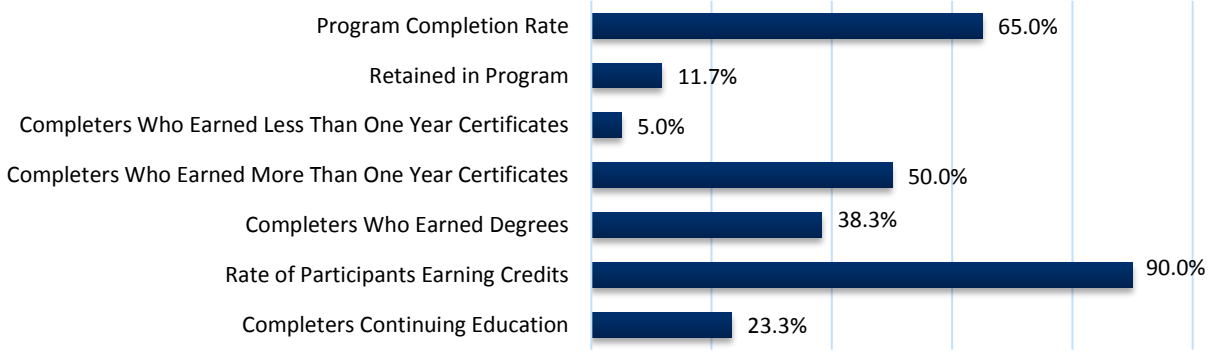
TAACCCT Outcomes

TAACCCT grants are geared toward the attainment of both academic and employment outcomes for participants. Education outcomes include program completion, continued enrollment, credential earned, credit attainment, and further enrollment in education. Employment outcomes include wage increases for incumbent workers as well as entered and retained employment for non-incumbent workers. The education and employment outcomes specific to the WEST participants are detailed in the sections below.

Education Outcomes

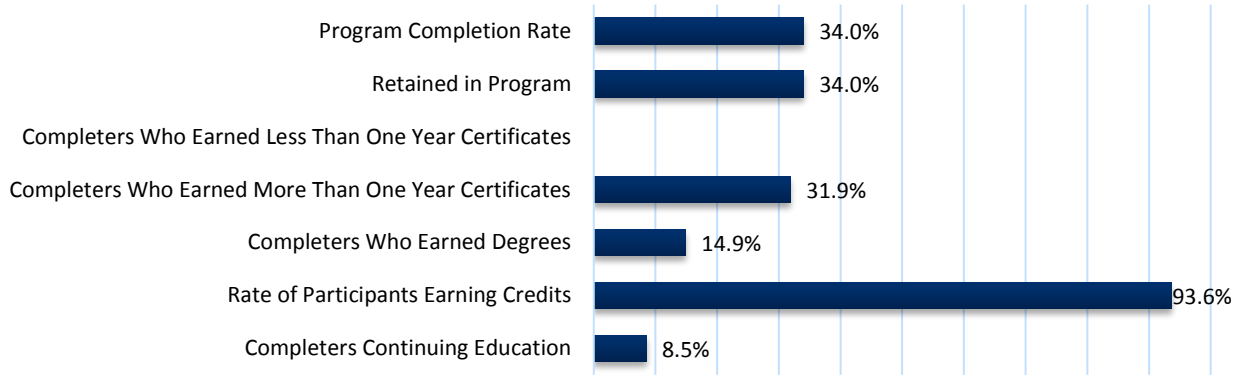
The grant started enrolling students and assigned them as part of the participant or comparison group at the end of the first year of the grant (SY 14-15). Two cohorts of students were enrolled over the course of the TAACCCT grant. Cohort 1 students started during SY 15-16 and Cohort 2 students started during SY 16-17. The education outcomes for the 60 students in Cohort 1 are presented in Figure 8 below and show that 65.0% completed the program of study and 11.7% were retained in the program of study. In terms of credentials earned, 93.3% of Cohort 1 students earned a credential of some type with 38.3% earning degrees, 50.0% earning more than a one year certificate, and 5.0% earning less than a one year certificate. A less-than-one year certificate is defined as a certificate or credential that can be completed with one year of training or less. A more-than-one year certificate is defined as a certificate or credential that can be completed with more than one year of training, but less than two years. Ninety percent (90.0%) of Cohort 1 students earned credits and 23.3% were enrolled in further education.

Figure 10. Cohort 1 Participant Group Educational Outcomes (n = 60)



The education outcomes for the 47 students in Cohort 2 are presented in Figure 9 below and show that 34.0% completed the program of study and 34.0% were retained in the program of study. In terms of credentials earned, 46.8% of Cohort 2 students earned a credential of some type with 14.9% earning degrees and 31.9% earning more than a one year certificate. Ninety-four percent (93.6%) of Cohort 2 students earned credits and 8.5% were enrolled in further education.

Figure 11. Cohort 2 Participant Group Educational Outcomes (n = 47)



Employment Outcomes

Employment outcome data was requested from the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services in Year 3 and Year 4 in order to evaluate the outcomes of wage increase post-enrollment, employment after program of study and retained employment after program completion. In terms of wage increase, 85.7% of incumbent workers received a wage increase post-enrollment which provides evidence of the WEST program impact on incumbent workers.

Due to a variety of factors including the lag time between the quarter when students exit and when the wage data is available as well as confidentiality restrictions that prevent the reporting of data with less than five observations, wage data cannot be reported for non-incumbent workers in Year 3 of the grant. Many students were employed at the time of enrollment which contributes to the small sample size since incumbent workers are excluded from the outcomes of entered and retained employment.

An adequate amount of employment data were available for non-incumbent workers in Year 4 which showed that 21 non-incumbent participants were employed after program completion (15 who completed in May 2017 and 6 who completed in December 2017). Of those students who completed in May of 2017, eight have been retained in employment. Retention data for those that completed in December 2017 will not be available until October.

Although complete employment outcomes were not available for WEST students, subjective outcome data was available through the industry partner surveys. In Year 4, three of the seven industry partners surveyed reported working with WEST students and were asked to rate students' performance in eight skill areas. Table 8 below shows that all industry partners surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that WEST

students performed well in each skill area. This provides prelimiary evidence of the successful employement outcomes for WEST students.

Table 8. Industry Partner Perceptions of WEST Students' Skills in Year 4 (n = 3)

Skill Area	% Agree/Strongly Agree
I am confident in their skills to complete on-the-job tasks they are given.	100.0%
They seem to care about the quality of their work.	100.0%
They have solid problem-solving skills on the job.	100.0%
They are driven to learn more than is asked of them.	100.0%
They communicate well on the job.	100.0%
They work well with their team.	100.0%
They show up to work on time.	100.0%
They manage time effectively.	100.0%

Partners also had the opportunity to comment on the employment outcomes for WEST students. A sample of quotes are included in Table 9 below and show that the industry believe the program provides a hands-on training that is giving students the technical skills needed to work in Wyoming's energy industry. Partners also acknowledge the benefit of connecting with local candidates and using less resources for hiring as a result of the connection with the WEST program.

Table 9. Industry Partner Comments

"The program offers solid curriculum and hands on training."
"The program is preparing a technically skilled workforce for Wyoming's energy industry."
"The program gives us contact with local candidates."
"The graduates that we have hired have cost the company less resources allowing us to give more back to each employee."
"It's always a positive having local colleges offering degrees in the industries that are near these communities."

Program Impact

The participant group was created by enrolled students, who met the following WEST determined eligibility requirements: veterans/spouse of a veteran, TAA-eligible workers, Pell Grant eligible students, and non-traditional students which includes those over 25 years of age, those who have dependents other than a spouse, and those who do not have a high school diploma (completed with a high school equivalency certificate). The comparison group was identified by determining students who are in WEST programs who do not meet the WEST-determined eligibility requirements listed above. Because the program has targeted non-traditional students, there is a hope in providing them educational and employment supports that have similar outcomes to the comparison group of traditional students.

Because the eligibility requirements were demographic-based, there are some distinct differences between the treatment and comparison group populations. That being said, the gender and race/ethnicity are quite similar between the two groups in both Cohorts 1 and 2, both groups being predominately male and white, as shown in Figures 10 and 11. In line with the eligibility requirements, the comparison groups are

made up of more traditional college students whose average age is under 25 years, are not veterans, and are not Pell eligible.

Figure 10. Cohort 1 Participant and Comparison Group Demographics

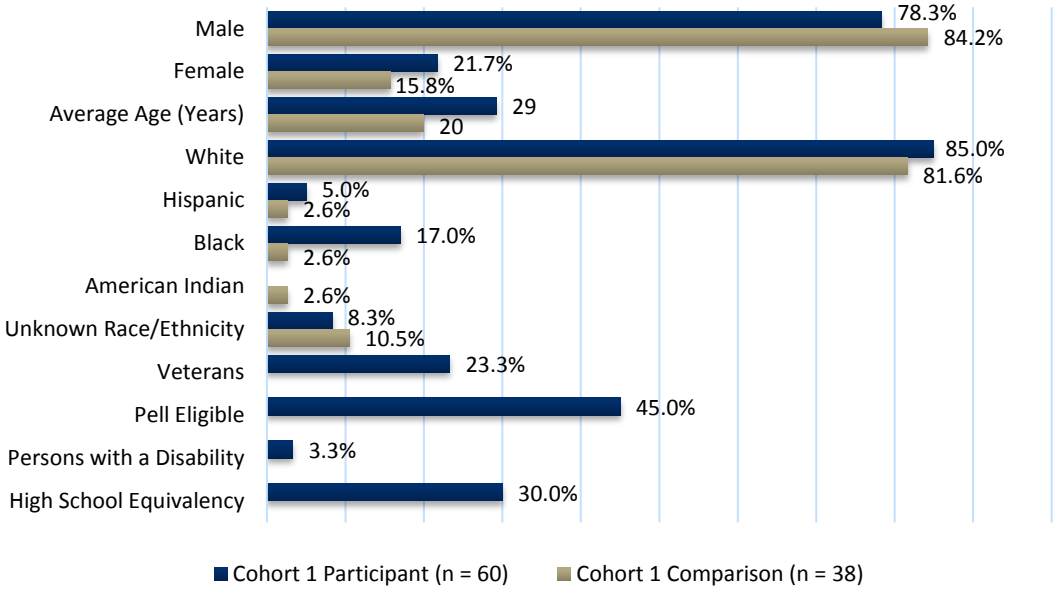
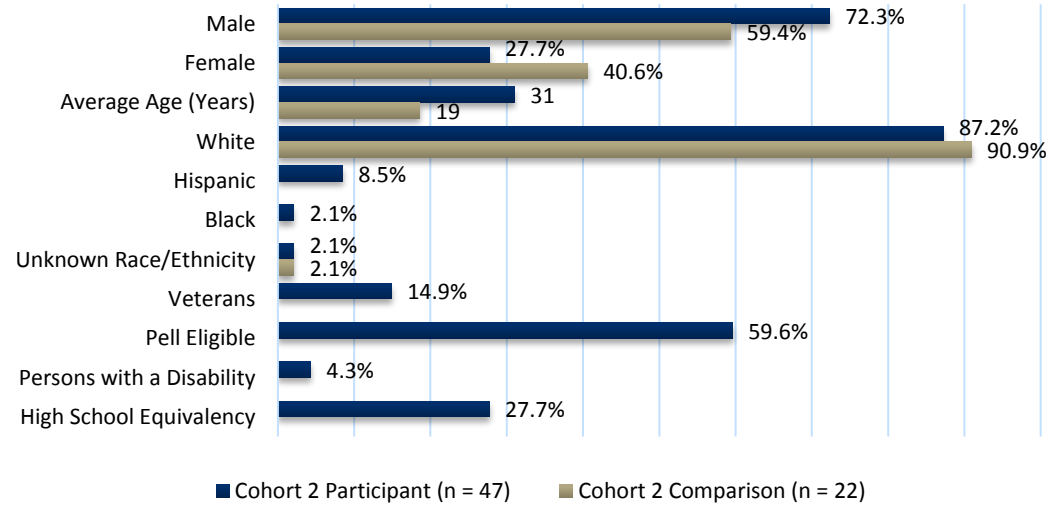


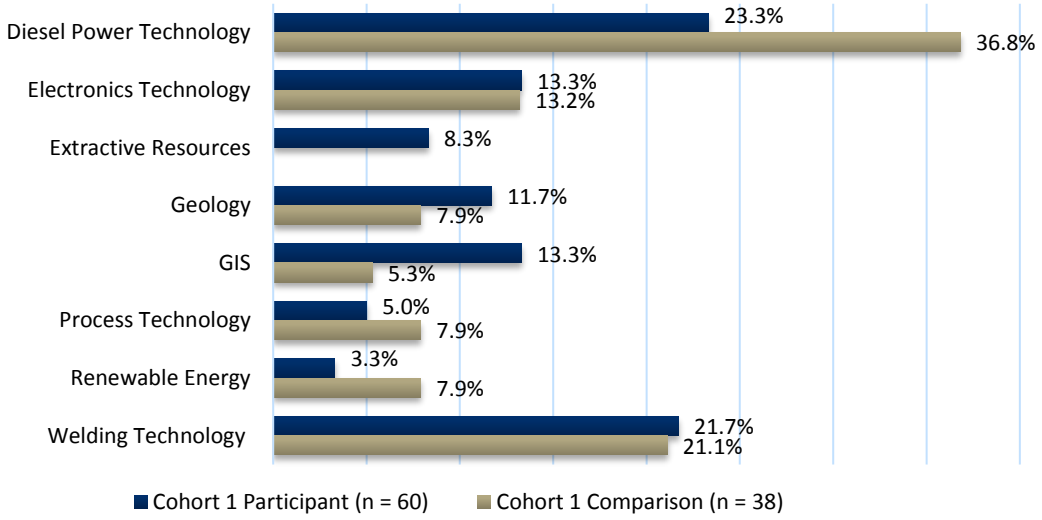
Figure 11. Cohort 2 Participant and Comparison Group Demographics



Figures 12 and 13 provide an overview of participant and comparison student enrollment in each of the WEST programs. In Cohort 1, there were a greater numer of participant students enrolled in the Extractive Resources Technology, Geology, and GIS programs. A greater number of students in the comparison group were enrolled in the Diesel Power Technology, Process Technology, and Renewable Energy programs. The percentage of students enrolled in the Electronics Technology and Welding

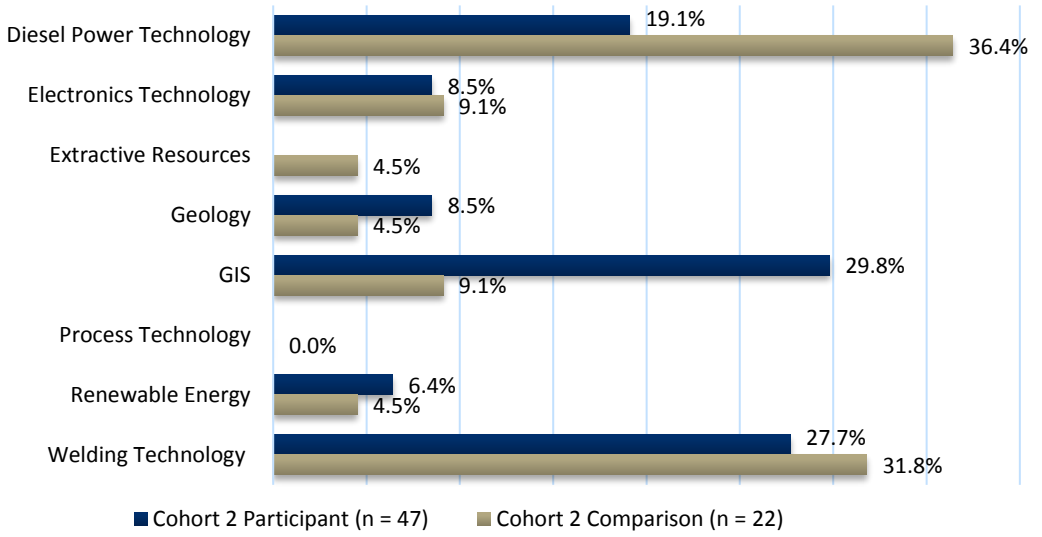
Technology programs were almost equal in the Cohort 1 comparison and participant groups (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Participant and Comparison Group Program Enrollment



As shown in Figure 13 below, a greater percentage of the Cohort 2 comparison group is enrolled in the Diesel Power Technology and Welding Technology programs. The percentage of students from the Cohort 2 participant group enrolled in the GIS program is 20 percentage points greater than that of the comparison group. The enrollment rates for the Electronics Technology, Geology, and Renewable Energy Technology are similar between the participant and comparison groups.

Figure 13. Participant and Comparison Group Program Enrollment

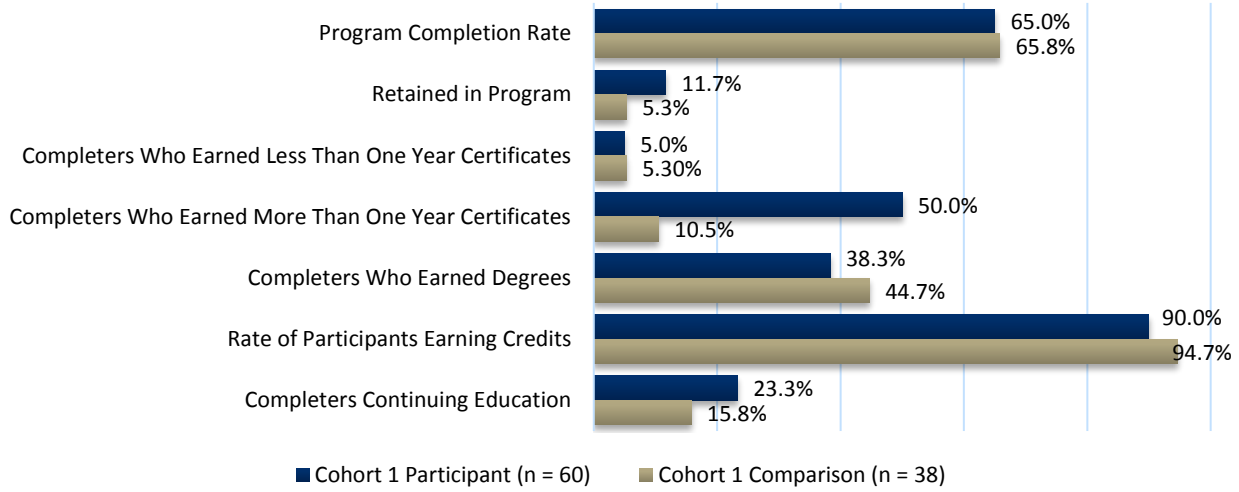


Academic Impact

Figures 14 and 15 present the DOL academic outcomes for the Cohort 1 participant and comparison groups. The goal of the impact study is to see similarities in the participant and comparison groups.

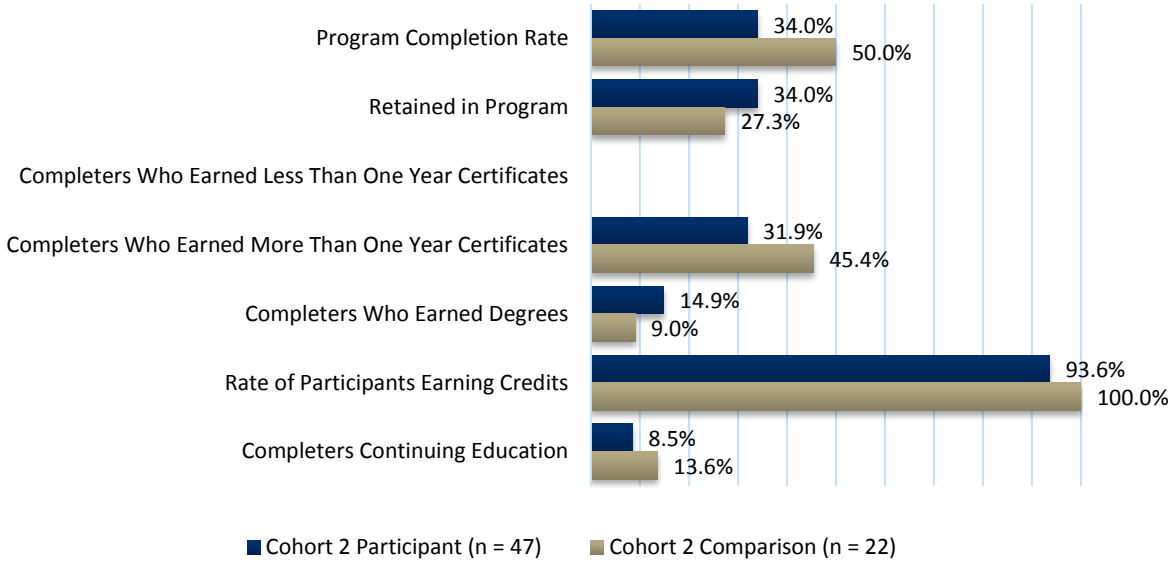
Similarities are seen for the outcomes of completion and rate of credit attainment. The percentage of Cohort 1 participants earning a credential was 93.3% compared to the 60.5% of comparison group students earning a credential. The Cohort 1 participants also showed a higher percentage of students retained in the program and a higher percentage of students enrolling in further education.

Figure 14. Participant and Comparison Group Educational Outcomes



Cohort 2 outcomes were not as positive as Cohort 1. The percentage of Cohort 2 students who completed or were retained is 68.0% compared to 77.3% of their comparison cohort. Similarly, the percentage of Cohort 2 students who earned a degree or certificate was 46.8% compared to 54.4% of the comparison cohort. The majority of Cohort 2 students earned credits and 8.5% enrolled in further education.

Figure 15. Participant and Comparison Group Educational Outcomes



Employment Impact

Complete individual level employment data were not available for WEST students or their comparison cohorts due to the fact that data were reported by quarter and for confidentiality purposes data were repressed when less than five participants were represented. Table 10 below presents available wage increase data for participants and comparison students in Year 2 and 3 of the grant and shows that participants had high rates of wage increases both years. Fewer comparison student received wage increases after program enrollment.

Table 10. Wage Increase for Incumbent Workers

	Participants	Comparison
Year 2 (2015-16)	92.5% (13/14)	85.7% (6/7)
Year 3 (2016-17)	81.0% (17/21)	20.0% (1/5)

For the outcomes of entered and retained employment, there is no retention data for the control group students who completed in May of 2017 as the number was suppressed because it was less than 5 and data are not yet available for those control group students who completed in December of 2017. Thus, an impact analysis was not conducted for the outcomes of entered and retained employment.

Evaluation Insights

Although TAACCCT grant funding for Casper College will conclude in September 2018, PRE would like to offer the following insights regarding the WEST programs that will be sustained. These insights are based solely on the data collected through the evaluation activities referenced in this report.

1. The grant has allowed WEST to expand curriculum delivery methods, including allowing students to engage in distance learning via online courses. While students appreciated the opportunity to do their coursework remotely, they also commented on certain barriers that came with learning online and off-campus that the program may be able to direct resources to overcome in the future. Distance learning students emphasized that they missed having ready access to instructors. Students who do not go to campus often or sit in classrooms with their instructors regularly do not have as many opportunities to reach out to their instructors for help. While students are able to email their professors, there is an element of face-to-face interactions that is missed. Facilitation of more interaction between professors and distance learning students (through in-person meetings, video calls, etc.) is encouraged.

2. The program may benefit from an increase in the ratio of instructors and lab assistants to students. Several students commented that they would like to be able to make better use of the time when they are in class. Students sometimes felt that time in class was wasted when the instructors did not have time to interact one-on-one or in a small group setting with each student in the class. If there were less students in each class, or more lab assistants to assist, students may benefit more from class time. Students also highlighted that they would feel more comfortable using the new equipment purchased by the grant in class if they had more instructor or lab assistant support. Students are sometimes uncomfortable using the expensive equipment without close guidance.

3. There may need to be a re-evaluation of the climate of the energy industry in Wyoming. While certain programs, such as Electronics Technology, appear to have no problem placing students in high-

paying jobs after graduation, there is a strong perception among some staff that the energy industry in Wyoming is waning. Because of this, they are concerned about being able to successfully place all WEST graduates into appropriate jobs. Additionally, staff members believe that the downturn of the energy industry in Wyoming is decreasing industry partner engagement. It's possible that the college would better serve students if they facilitated a meeting between staff and industry partners in order to evaluate the climate of the energy industry and brainstorm ways to increase industry partner involvement and decrease the perception among staff that students will not be able to find jobs after graduation. A needs assessment could be an appropriate next step. Alternatively, if the state of demand for employment is low as staff evaluate it to be, perhaps funds should be directed towards programs such as Electronics Technology who have been extremely successful at placing students in jobs.

Appendix A

Project Team Focus Group Questions

1. Can you tell us about the steps that were taken by the institution to create and/or run this training program?

2. Can you summarize how programs have or will be improved or expanded using grant funds?

3. What is the administrative structure of the program?

4. How was the curriculum for the programs selected or created?
    - How is it being used?

5. What are your expectations for students in the funded programs?
    - How do you expect this program to affect TAA-eligible individuals? (e.g., re-entry into the workforce, fast completion)

6. At this point, what contributions have partner organizations made in terms of program design and curriculum development?
    - What level of involvement would you like to see from partners over the course of the grant?

7. At this point, what would you identify as the strengths of this training program?
    - How about the weaknesses?
    - Do you have any recommendations for program improvement at this time?

8. Thinking long term, what are your goals for program sustainability?

9. Do you have any other comments about this project?

Appendix B

Student Focus Group Questions

Year 2:

1. What specific program are you enrolled in that is part of the WEST programs at Casper College?
2. Please describe any assessments you took to gain entry into the WEST program (RE: Rachel-intake form and survey).
    - How were the results of the assessment used?
    - Were they useful in determining whether this is an appropriate program for you?
3. How did you hear about the ____ program at Casper college?
    - Were you already enrolled in Casper college?
4. What kind of advising services have you received at Casper College?
    - How was your experience?
    - What supports would you like (i.e. from the Student Services Specialist)?
5. What kind of career guidance has been provided through the program?
    - Through what method is career guidance provided?
6. What are your career plans?
    - Do you think your involvement in this program will increase your chances at gaining employment in this field?
7. What are your education plans following this program?
8. What type of opportunities have you received in _____ (career area) because of your participation in the WEST program?
    - If you haven't received opportunities-what would be helpful?
9. What kind of equipment were you able to work on as part of your program?
    - Equipment purchases: portable welders, virtual welders, welding robot, well separation units, CO2 injection units with electrical and control mechanisms for separation, Wind turbine, Turbine generator control, Rigging crane, Diesel engine system simulator, Hydraulic simulator, Rock slicers for Geo, GPS handhelds for GIS.
        - Have you had experience with this type of equipment before?
        - How does this equipment relate with the equipment you will use on a job site?
        - What did you like, or not like about the equipment?
        - Do you feel prepared to interact with similar equipment on a job site?
10. What do you think the biggest barriers might be in completing this program?
11. What do you think the biggest successes were?

12. Do you have any suggestions for improving the program?
13. Are there other energy-related educational opportunities you would be interested in if offered by Casper College?
14. Has there been components of your program that were online?
    - If so, can you describe what they were?
    - How do these online aspects of the program work for you?
    - If there were some sort of online orientation video which described the different types of jobs or career paths for each of the programs, or a combination of the programs, would you be interested? Would you use it?
15. In terms of the setup of the courses, what worked well? What could have been improved? (program scheduling, labs, tutoring availability etc.)
16. Do you have any other comments?

Year 3:

1. Which WEST program of study are you enrolled in at Casper College?
    - How did you hear about this program?
    - Were you already enrolled at Casper College before enrolling in this program?
2. Have you received any advising services while in this program?
    - How was your experience?
    - What supports would you like from advising and/or student support services?
3. Do you have any additional educational plans following this program?
    - Are there other energy-related educational opportunities you would be interested in if offered by Casper College?
4. What kind of career guidance has been provided through the program?
    - Do you believe the emphasis on soft skills will be helpful in your future career?
5. What are your career plans?
    - Do you think your involvement in this program will increase your chances at gaining employment in this field?
6. What kind of equipment were you able to work on as part of your program?
    - Do you feel prepared to interact with similar equipment on a job site?
7. In terms of the setup of the courses, what worked well? What could have been improved? (program scheduling, labs, tutoring availability, etc.)
8. What do you think the biggest successes were?
9. What do you think the biggest barriers might be in completing this program?

10. Do you have any suggestions for improving the program?
11. Do you have any other comments?

Appendix C

Staff Survey Items

Years 2 and 3

1. Please indicate which program area(s) you have been involved with in the WEST program (check all that apply):

   - ☐ Diesel Power Technology
   - ☐ Electronics Technology
   - ☐ Extractive Resources
   - ☐ Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
   - ☐ Geology
   - ☐ Process Technology
   - ☐ Renewable Energy
   - ☐ Welding
   - ☐ Program Administration

2. Please describe your role in the WEST-Casper College program: _____.

3. When did your involvement in the WEST program(s) at Casper College begin? __Date__

Thinking about the WEST Training Program in general, please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
4. The WEST Training Program is helping to place students in the correct career pathway.	O	O	O	O	O
5. … is providing students with advising resources that otherwise would not have been available to them.	O	O	O	O	O
6. … is assisting students in choosing courses that are aligned with their career path.	O	O	O	O	O
7. …will help students reach their career goals at a faster pace.	O	O	O	O	O
8….is the only training program of its kind in the region.	O	O	O	O	O

The following questions were asked of staff members who indicated working with specific program areas. If a staff member worked in multiple program areas, the questions were asked of them for each program area separately.

Program areas: Diesel Power Technology, Electronics Technology, Extractive Resources, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Geology, Process Technology, Renewable Energy, Welding Technology Training Programs. and Program Administration.

Career Preparation Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**				
9. This program is a good fit for workers who have been displaced from the local trade impacted industry sector.	O	O	O	O	O
10. This program is a good fit for workers who are just entering the _____sector.	O	O	O	O	O
11. This program prepares students for immediate employment in the region.	O	O	O	O	O
12. Student participation in this program will increase their chances of entry into the field of _____	O	O	O	O	O
13. I believe there is a local demand for workers in the _____ industry.	O	O	O	O	O

Student Feedback Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**				
14. Students entering the _____ program are prepared for the coursework.	O	O	O	O	O
15. Students appear to be excited about the _____WEST Training Program at Casper College.	O	O	O	O	O
16. Students have had positive reactions to the modified curriculum and equipment.	O	O	O	O	O
17. Students in the WEST program who may be struggling are accessing resources to assist them.	O	O	O	O	O

18. Do you have any additional comments about the WEST Training Program at Casper College? (Open Text Box)

Partnerships Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
19. Project administrators or other project staff have created successful partnerships with relevant organizations in the community.	O	O	O	O	O
20. Industry partners and/or advisory board members have provided useful input on curriculum design.	O	O	O	O	O
21. Feedback from industry partners and/or advisory board members has helped to ensure course content offers skill development desired by the job market.	O	O	O	O	O
22. Industry partners are excited about the WEST training program at Casper College.	O	O	O	O	O
23. Communication with industry partners has been good.	O	O	O	O	O

24. What has been the most useful aspect of working with industry partners? (Open Text Box)

Additional Feedback

25. Please discuss the strengths of the _____ program at Casper College. (Open Text Box)

26. Please discuss areas for improvement in the ____ program at this point in time. (Open Text Box)

Year 4

4. Please indicate which program area(s) you have been involved with in the WEST program (check all that apply):

   - ☐ Diesel Power Technology
   - ☐ Electronics Technology
   - ☐ Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
   - ☐ Geology
   - ☐ Renewable Energy
   - ☐ Welding
   - ☐ Program Administration

5. Please describe your role in the WEST-Casper College program: _____.

6. When did your involvement in the WEST program(s) at Casper College begin? __Date__

Thinking about the WEST Training Program in general, please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4. The WEST Training Program is helping to place students in the correct career pathway.	O	O	O	O	O
5. … is providing students with advising resources that otherwise would not have been available to them.	O	O	O	O	O
6. … is assisting students in choosing courses that are aligned with their career path.	O	O	O	O	O
7. …will help students reach their career goals at a faster pace.	O	O	O	O	O
8….is the only training program of its kind in the region.	O	O	O	O	O

9. How have the WEST programs met your expectations for students who participated? _____.

The following questions were asked of staff members who indicated working with specific program areas. If a staff member worked in multiple program areas, the questions were asked of them for each program area separately.
Program areas: Diesel Power Technology, Electronics Technology, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Geology, Renewable Energy, Welding Technology Training Programs, and Program Administration.

Career Preparation Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**				
10. This program is a good fit for workers who have been displaced from the local trade impacted industry sector.	O	O	O	O	O
11. This program is a good fit for workers who are just entering the _____sector.	O	O	O	O	O
12. This program prepares students for immediate employment in the region.	O	O	O	O	O
13. Student participation in this program will increase their chances of entry into the field of _____	O	O	O	O	O
14. I believe there is a local demand for workers in the _____ industry.	O	O	O	O	O

Student Feedback Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**				
14. Students entering the _____ program are prepared for the coursework.	O	O	O	O	O
15. Students appear to be excited about the _____WEST Training Program at Casper College.	O	O	O	O	O
16. Students have had positive reactions to the modified curriculum and equipment.	O	O	O	O	O
17. Students in the WEST program who may be struggling are accessing resources to assist them.	O	O	O	O	O

18. How has the _____ program met the employment demands in the region? (Open Text Box)

Partnerships Please rate your level of agreement with the following items.	**Strongly Agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**				
19. Project administrators or other project staff have created successful partnerships with relevant organizations in the community.	O	O	O	O	O
20. Industry partners and/or advisory board members have provided useful input on curriculum design.	O	O	O	O	O
21. Feedback from industry partners and/or advisory board members has helped to ensure course content offers skill development desired by the job market.	O	O	O	O	O
22. Industry partners are excited about the WEST training program at Casper College.	O	O	O	O	O
23. Communication with industry partners has been good.	O	O	O	O	O

24. What factors contribute to partners' involvement or lack of involvement in the program? (Open Text Box)

25. What successes stand out from your implementation of the Diesel Power Technology Training program over the past few years? (Open Text Box)

26. What have been some of the barriers to successful implementation of this program? (Open Text Box)

27. What are your plans for sustainability of the Diesel Power Technology training program? (Open Text Box)

28. Do you have any additional comments about the Diesel Power Technology Training Program at Casper College? (Open Text Box)

Appendix D

Industry Partner Survey Items

1. Were you involved with the Casper College WEST program over the past year?

O Yes
O No

If answered **No** survey ends**, Yes**, continues to Question 2

2. Reflecting on your involvement with the Casper College WEST program, please select all of the program elements in which you have participated?

- ☐ Program Design
- ☐ Curriculum Development
- ☐ Input on credentials to be offered
- ☐ Student Recruitment
- ☐ Student Training
- ☐ Classroom Visits, Field Trips or Field Work
- ☐ Job Fairs, mock interviews, informational interviews or resume assistance
- ☐ Student Internships
- ☐ Student Placement into Employment
- ☐ Program Management
- ☐ Leveraging of Resources
- ☐ Commitment to Program Sustainability
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other-Write In

Please elaborate on your involvement in the above activities: (open answer)_____

Please tell us how much you agree/disagree with each statement.	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
3. I am satisfied with my current involvement in the above activities	O	O	O	O	O

(Logic) If participant answers Strongly Disagree or Disagree: If you were not satisfied, why? (open answer)

4. What factors contribute to your level of involvement with the WEST program? (open answer)___

5. Do you think this program is preparing students for jobs in your industry?

O Yes If yes, could you elaborate on the ways in which the program prepares students? _____

O No If no, what could make the program more effective? _____

O Don't Know

6. Do you see this program having a positive impact on your industry in your region or nationally?

O Yes If yes, how? _____

O No

O Don't Know

7. Are there strengths of the WEST program from your valuable perspective that you would like to share at this point in time?

O Yes If yes, what are the strengths of the WEST program? _____

O No

8. Are there barriers or challenges of the WEST program from your valuable perspective that you would like to share at this point in time?

O Yes If yes, what are the barriers or challenges of the WEST program? _____

O No

9. Have you had the opportunity to work with any students from the WEST or other Casper College programs?

O Yes

O No

O Don't Know

If yes, please rate the students in the following areas:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't Know
I am confident in their skills to complete on-the-job tasks they are given.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They seem to care about the quality of their work.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They have solid problem-solving skills on the job.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They are driven to learn more than is asked of them.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They communicate well on the job.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They work well with their team.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They show up to work on time.	O	O	O	O	O	O
They manage time effectively.	O	O	O	O	O	O

10. The Casper staff have heard from meeting with workforce partners in the past that students coming out of academic programs that there were soft-skill gaps such as: (Personal Skills: integrity, initiative, dependability and reliability, adaptability, professionalism and leadership; People Skills: teamwork, communication and respect; Applied Knowledge: reading, writing, mathematics, science, technology and critical thinking; Workplace skills: safety, planning and organizing, problem solving, decision making and working with tools and technology; Employability skills: interviewing, resume building, dressing for success, effective communication and networking). The college is wanting to ensure they are focusing on nurturing the most important soft skills for work readiness of their students.

Of your new employees that come through the door, what percentage of them would you say are lacking these types of soft skills?

_____%

11. Which of these soft skills do you feel are missing the most?

- Integrity
- Initiative
- Dependability
- Reliability
- Adaptability

- Professionalism
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Safety Awareness
- Planning and Organizing
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Dressing Appropriately for Work
- Showing up to work on time/Attendance

12. Which of these soft skills are the most important to you?

- Integrity
- Initiative
- Dependability
- Reliability
- Adaptability
- Professionalism
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Safety Awareness
- Planning and Organizing
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Dressing Appropriately for Work
- Showing up to work on time/Attendance

13.

Please rate the students	**Not Applicable**	**Very Satisfied**	**Satisfied**	**Neutral**	**Dissatisfied**	**Very Dissatisfied**
If you have worked with students from Casper College's WEST program, how would you rate their soft-skills?	O	O	O	O	O	O

14. Please elaborate on their level of soft-skills if you have feedback: _____.

15. Do you have any other comments about the WEST program at Casper?

O Yes If yes, please provide us with additional feedback on the WEST program? _____

O No