

WICHE



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education



In partnership with Summit Search Solutions, Inc.

Position Profile

Vice President for Programs and Services

June 2021



The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is seeking an experienced, strategic, and forward-thinking individual to join its senior leadership team as Vice President for Programs and Services. Based in beautiful Boulder, Colorado, WICHE is an interstate compact and 501(c)(3) that partners with 15 U.S. states, two territories, and one freely associated state on a diverse range of higher education issues like access and affordability, technology, workforce development, behavioral health, and more. Today, postsecondary education and the students we serve are facing unprecedented challenges in these areas, which is why WICHE's mission is more important than ever. Reporting to the President, this unique role will require a truly visionary and collaborative leader who has their eyes on the horizon for what's to come, while building upon WICHE's long and successful history as a trusted resource for higher education in the West since 1953.



ABOUT WICHE

Since 1953, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been strengthening higher education, workforce development, and behavioral health throughout the Western region. As an interstate compact, WICHE partners with states, territories, freely associated states, and postsecondary institutions to share knowledge, create resources and develop innovative solutions that address some of society's most pressing needs. From promoting high-quality, affordable postsecondary education to helping states get the most from their technology investments and addressing behavioral health challenges, WICHE improves lives across the West through innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy.

WICHE serves these States and Territories:

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States (Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and as of July 1, 2021, the Republic of the Marshall Islands)

WICHE's work is grounded in five primary focus areas approved by the WICHE Commission and included in its annual [Workplan](#):

- **Finance & Affordability:** supporting aligned appropriations, tuition, and financial aid policy and practice at the institutional, state, and federal levels to promote affordability.
- **Access & Success:** improving student access to, and success in, higher education, especially those who are traditionally underserved.
- **Workforce & Society:** ensuring the region's states, territories, and postsecondary institutions meet workforce and societal needs.
- **Technology & Innovation:** developing and supporting innovations in technology and beyond that improve the quality of higher education and reduce costs.
- **Accountability:** striving to ensure that students gain a valuable education and that government receives a strong return on its investment.





WICHE Leadership

The WICHE Commission oversees the development of WICHE programs and assures that the Western Regional Compact is carried out for the benefit of the citizens of the West. WICHE's 48 commissioners are appointed by the governors of the 15 Western states and the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States. The commissioners are a diverse group of experienced and thoughtful leaders from the West and include state higher education executive officers, college and university presidents, legislators, business and community leaders, and other key partners.



Demarée K. Michelau is the first female president of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Prior to her role as WICHE's president, Dr. Michelau was WICHE's vice president of policy analysis and research, a role in which she managed WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit and oversaw externally funded projects related to projections of high school graduates, closing postsecondary attainment gaps, and the development of a multistate longitudinal data exchange. The author of numerous reports and policy briefs, she has experience in a variety of higher education policy issues, including those related to equity and attainment, strategic planning, adult learners, articulation and transfer, accelerated learning options, college affordability, workforce linkages, and K-16 reform. She currently serves on the board of directors for the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Previously, she held positions with the National Conference of State Legislatures and with former Colorado Congressman David Skaggs. Michelau received her bachelor's degree in public law from Northern Illinois University and her master's degree and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Mission Statement

WICHE's mission is to increase access to high-quality higher education for all citizens of the West. The mission is advanced through a vast array of programs, projects and initiatives, and valuable resources that address the needs of Western states, territories, and freely associated states. When appropriate, some initiatives also extend beyond the WICHE region. Internally, WICHE is organized into four operational units:

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Programs and Services unit broadens student access to postsecondary education and fosters higher education collaborations that increase institutional effectiveness. The unit manages WICHE's four student access programs and other regional initiatives, such as the [Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders](#) and the [Western Academic Leadership Forum](#), that help institutions and students save money and use resources wisely. The unit also oversees initiatives that bring together the West's higher education leaders to address common goals and issues, streamlines the student transfer process through a nationwide network of [Interstate Passport®](#) institutions, and develops a new cadre of academic administrative leaders through the Western Academic Leadership Academy. In addition, the unit helps institutions achieve cost savings through four programs in collaboration with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which created and administers the programs.

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit offers various resources to support better-informed decision-making, principally at the state level. Topics for its numerous research projects and collaborations include postsecondary completion, closing attainment gaps, adult learners, and multistate data-sharing to support educational planning and workforce development. The unit's staff members serve as subject-matter experts on higher education issues including finance, state and federal financial aid, articulation and transfer, strategic planning, and student demographics. Publications, including the WICHE Insights series, explore a range of significant policy issues. Unit staff members undertake long-term grant-funded projects, collaborate with regional and national partners, and provide short-term technical assistance to WICHE members.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

WICHE's Behavioral Health Program (BHP) provides technical assistance, education, consulting, and research services to strengthen behavioral health care in the West. Initiatives focus on analysis and growth of the behavioral health workforce, as well as overall improvements within the public mental health system. The BHP has a long history of providing mental health services in rural areas, and for providing training to support prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts throughout the West.

WCET

The WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. Its growing membership includes about 400 institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. WCET is widely recognized as one of the most informative, reliable, and forward-thinking organizations focused on the role of technology and innovation in higher education.



Student Testimonials



"My home state did not offer the program I was interested in. As a first-generation college student with limited means, I thought my choices were limited, and never even considered attending an out-of-state school. After starting a graduate program in my home state I found it did not suit my needs. When I chose to make the shift to seeking a program that was a good fit, instead of settling for what was nearby, the costs seemed daunting. WICHE's WRGP made it financially possible to pursue the degree I longed for in the setting that was right for me."

~Jacie, Utah, WRGP
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
Master of Public Health, Native and Indigenous Health

"Getting accepted into Physician Assistant school was one of the greatest accomplishments in my life, and WICHE's PSEP has been a game-changer as PA school can be very costly. Being born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, I strive to become the best physician assistant possible, so that I can provide medical care in the community in which I was raised."

~Satinderpreet, Nevada, PSEP
Marshall B. Ketchum University
Physician Assistant Studies



"By receiving the WUE scholarship I have had the opportunity to attend a critically acclaimed school I may not have otherwise been able. Because of the competitive nature of local scholarships, many students work hard on applications, yet leave empty handed at graduation. I was one of those students. While my parents have been a great help towards my financial aid, without WUE I would not be where I am today. For the many kids whose parents are unable to contribute, this makes an even greater difference. WUE has helped me afford to attend a Pac-12 School where I am receiving a top-notch education and meeting people who are as driven as myself."

~Alice, Alaska, WUE
University of Utah
Political Science



THE OPPORTUNITY

Vice President for Programs and Services

The Vice President of Programs and Services leads an experienced and talented staff of seven and has responsibility for activities in three major areas, including:

1) Leading WICHE's regional student access programs that expand access to higher education for more than 45,000 students and help develop the West's workforce; 2) directing regional initiatives that foster college and university collaborations to enhance institutional effectiveness and efficiencies; 3) managing collaborations with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact that provide cost savings opportunities to postsecondary institutions and systems. The vice president has oversight of two general fund budgets totaling approximately \$544,000 and from 10 to 15 non-general fund budgets that currently, or in the recent past, range from \$20,000 to \$7.3 million per budget. Additionally, the position has fiscal oversight of the annual pass-through of some \$14 million in state funds to public and private institutions participating in WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program.

The vice president serves on WICHE's Senior Leadership Team and regularly works directly with institutional leaders including presidents, provosts, vice presidents of academic affairs, vice presidents of administration/finance, deans, CEOs, and chief academic and administrative officers of state higher education agencies, CEOs and staff of the three other higher education compacts, legislators and their staff, U.S. Department of Education senior leaders, foundation leaders, senior leaders of other state and federal agencies including Labor and Health and Human Services, and the CEOs and staff of other higher education organizations.

Specific responsibilities include:

LEADING 4 REGIONAL STUDENT ACCESS PROGRAMS ACROSS 16 WESTERN STATES/TERRITORIES:

- **Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP):** Through PSEP, WICHE provides students in 10 Western states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) with access to 130+ professional and graduate healthcare programs at 62 public and private institutions at reduced rates, typically when a public program is not available in the student's home state. In AY 2020-21, the participating states and the CNMI invested nearly \$14 million to grow their healthcare workforce by reducing the educational costs of almost 600 students.
- **Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP):** WRGP allows students who are residents of WICHE states, territories, and freely associated states to affordably enroll in more than 1,400 graduate programs (graduate certificate, master's, and Ph.D. levels) at 63 public universities in the West.
- **Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE):** WUE – the nation's largest regional tuition-savings program – allows students from a WICHE state, territory, or freely associated state to enroll in participating out-of-state two- or four-year public colleges or universities at a discounted tuition rate. Students can choose from over 160 participating WUE institutions that offer hundreds of majors and pay no more than 150 percent of that school's resident tuition.
- **Online Course Exchange (OCE):** The Online Course Exchange (OCE) helps higher education systems and consortia share courses, through the Exchange's online platform, with peer member institutions and the students they serve. In doing so, it expands student access to high-quality curricula and enables teaching and learning at a scale convenient for institutions, and less feasible within a single institution.

OVERSEEING INITIATIVES THAT FOSTER COLLABORATIONS AND RESOURCE SHARING:

- **Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum):** Fifty-eight doctoral, master's, and baccalaureate granting institutions, systems, and state higher education agencies are members of this regional organization and are represented by their provosts and chief academic officers. Through the Forum, members exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on initiatives addressing regional needs. Members are involved in the Interstate Passport, the Western Academic Leadership Academy, and the Academic Leaders Toolkit initiatives.
- **Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance):** This organization enables leaders of 81 institutions and systems in the two-year sector (community and technical colleges) throughout WICHE's region to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on initiatives addressing regional needs. Projects in which its members play key roles are the Interstate Passport Initiative, and the Academic Leaders Toolkit.
- **Interstate Passport ®:** An initiative that facilitates the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria. It is the only nationwide network of regionally accredited, nonprofit, public and private two- and four-year institutions dedicated to the block transfer of general education attainment. It also provides institutions in the network with an academic progress tracking system for Passport transfer students designed by registrars and institutional researchers in conjunction with the National Student Clearinghouse. The goal of Interstate Passport is to eliminate transfer students' unnecessary repetition of learning previously achieved. WICHE staff provide overall direction and support for this innovative program.
- **Western Academic Leadership Academy:** Academy is a year-long professional development program aimed at expanding the pipeline of qualified chief academic leaders for four-year institutions in the West. Academy activities focus on understanding the context of academic leadership, setting academic goals and priorities, and developing specific skill sets required of chief academic officers. Academy is funded by registration fees, sponsorships, and Forum support.
- **Native-Serving Institutions Initiative:** This initiative is focusing on identifying and supporting the implementation of culturally relevant high-impact practices among Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs) to improve American Indian and Alaska Native students' postsecondary attainment. A longer-range objective is the creation of a network of Native American-Serving Institutions to mobilize them to enhance their visibility in higher education and public policy areas.
- **Master Property Program (MPP):** In conjunction with staff at the Midwestern Higher Education Compact, WICHE offers participation in the MPP to two-year, four-year, public and private institutions throughout the West. Institutional members benefit from comprehensive property insurance coverage tailored to their specific needs while improving their risk management and asset protection strategies.
- **MHECare:** WICHE offers this program to institutions in the West to help reduce the costs and improve the coverage of their student health insurance programs, in partnership with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.
- **Western Purchasing Options through MHEC-Tech:** WICHE partners with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact to help colleges and universities; K-12 systems; local, county, and state governments; and some education-related nonprofit organizations in the West to reduce their administrative costs through group purchasing options. Under the MHECtech competitively bid contracts, institutions are eligible to purchase hardware, software, and technology services. The agreements aggregate volume purchases to lower product costs and reduce the time institutions must spend developing and conducting the bids themselves.
- **MHEC Cyber Insurance Program:** MHEC offers institutions access to services including analysis of threat environments, the significance of vulnerabilities in security controls, and potential financial exposure.

The Vice President of Programs and Services also develops new initiatives that expand WICHE's reach, impact, and resources, often in collaboration with other organizations. This involves collaborating with higher education leaders from the WICHE region and nationally who can assist with conceptualizing new initiatives and develop funding proposals for foundations and/or the U.S. Department of Education. Past examples include WICHE's seeking and attaining grant funding to support an international partnership of higher education institutions and organizations based in the U.S. and Canada that established a network of Remote Web-Based Science Labs to support online labs in introductory biology, chemistry, and physics.

Position Qualifications

REQUIRED:

- A graduate-level degree in a field relevant to education, policy, government, administration, or business.
- Relevant experience working with higher-education policy, initiatives, or programming. Successful experience in conceptualizing, organizing, and directing collaborative initiatives involving leaders of multiple postsecondary institutions, state and federal agencies, and policymakers.
- Knowledge of issues in higher education funding and finance.
- Demonstrated experience directing complex programs, managing large budgets, and supervising skilled and diverse professionals.
- Ability to work with multiple, diverse constituencies, including policymakers; state, regional, and federal educational institutions; WICHE commissioners; foundations, and government agencies.
- Knowledge of legislative and governmental processes, organizations, and agencies.
- Strong communication skills and the ability to make professional presentations both in-person and virtually, and to speak and write clearly and concisely.
- Willingness and ability to develop a working knowledge of the history, goals, and purposes of WICHE programs and to be creative and innovative in contributing to the strategic direction of WICHE's programs and services.
- Ability to represent WICHE to elected officials, higher education administrators, and other stakeholder groups.

PREFERRED:

- Successful track record at obtaining grant funding and/or working with foundations.
- Advanced proficiency with Microsoft Office 365 applications.



PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Confidential review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled; parties who apply by **July 20, 2021**, will be given first consideration. Please submit a PDF version of your resume and a letter of interest explaining your suitability for this position. To apply online, go to <https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su253>

For more information or to offer recommendations:

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WICHE is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer with a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. WICHE prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other legally protected status.

Applications by members of all underrepresented groups are encouraged.



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ABOUT BOULDER, COLORADO

The City of Boulder is nestled in the Colorado foothills where the rolling plains meet the Rocky Mountains. Centrally located near downtown Denver, Denver International Airport, Rocky Mountain National Park, and only a few hours from many of Colorado's world-famous ski resorts, Boulder is the ideal Colorado destination with its dramatic sandstone slabs of the Flatirons and the snow-capped peaks beyond.

The Boulder Valley was first the home of Native Americans, primarily the Southern Arapaho tribe. Ute, Cheyenne, Comanche, and Sioux tribes were also occasional visitors to the area. Gold seekers established the first non-native settlement in Boulder County in 1858, and the City of Boulder was founded the following year. In 1860, Boulder's citizens lobbied the state legislature to have a state university located here. They were successful, and its designation as the home to the University of Colorado would shape the social landscape of Boulder. Today, over 60 percent of Boulderites have at least a bachelor's degree, the highest level of any metro area in the country.

With its “work hard, play hard” attitude, this college town (which has a modest population of around 100,000 - with some 30,000 of those being CU Boulder students), it is no wonder that Boulder often tops the lists such as:

- National Geographic's "The Happiest City in the U.S."
- Gallup's "Highest Well Being Communities"
- Forbes' "America's Fittest Cities" and Self magazine's "The Top 10 Fittest Cities in the U.S."

In 1967, Boulder became the first city in the U.S. to tax itself for the acquisition, management, and maintenance of “open space” (or protected land). Today, there are 45,000 acres of this open space surrounding the city, giving residents and visitors instant access to forests, mountains, plains, and wetlands for nature walks, hiking, biking, rock climbing, and more. And when you're not hiking on one of the amazing trailheads, you can feel good that Boulder truly *reaches for the stars* - this city has produced 18 astronauts, including hometown hero, Scott Carpenter.

To learn more about Boulder, visit: <https://www.bouldercoloradousa.com/>