Photo of two students in a Biology lab, raising their test vials to the light, to see what color the contents are so they can record their findings.
The past 20 months have changed all of us – there was no way that it couldn’t. From the first
days of the pandemic, when Lake Washington Institute of Technology (LWTech) was the first
college in the country to be directly impacted by COVID-19, to where we’ve come since then, I
can say that our students, faculty and staff are incredibly resilient. Through the uncertainty
we’ve faced, the college has developed innovative ways to continue to serve our students while
in remote operations and limited face-to-face instruction. While uncertainty still exists, we have
laid the groundwork for a robust future as we look forward.

This past summer, I began my ninth year as LWTech’s president. Over the years I have been so
incredibly proud of our students; their tenacity and perseverance, and the unwavering
dedication of our faculty and staff. Together, we’ve weathered the Great Recession, the
pandemic, and our country’s awakening to dismantle systemic racism. LWTech has led the
state and nation in Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST), launched more new
Applied Bachelor degrees than any other technical college in the state, and we’ve opened the
Resources for Support and Empowerment (RISE) Center, and the Center for Veterans Student
Success. We’ve continued to create innovative programs for students during this past year,
even when there was so much uncertainty.

We’ve been able to grow programs and student support because of your support through the
LWTech Foundation. You have given generously to help our students for years, and when they
needed you most, at the start of the pandemic, you were right there.

This past year, when the Foundation moved their largest fundraising event, the Bright Futures
Benefit Breakfast, to a virtual weeklong event, you donated a record-breaking over $335,000 for
scholarships and student emergency support.

Now, as we hope the pandemic begins to subside, and our workforce begins to rebuild, we
continue to prepare our students for today’s careers and tomorrow’s opportunities. Just as you
know we are here to support you, your family and our shared community during times of
educational and career transitions, we are proud to prepare our region’s workforce knowing that
you are right beside us, as you’ve always been, ready to support our graduates, the future nurses, public health workers, welders, engineers, and architects.

We couldn’t do this without you, and I’m incredibly appreciative of your continued support of the college as we support our students and the community.

With appreciation,

Signature of Amy. M. Morrison

On the Cover:

A pandemic isn’t going to slow their learning or their pathways to their careers! Biology students return to their labs and observe and record changes in their lab specimens.
Supporting the LWTech Community
A Message from the Board of Trustees

On behalf of LWTech’s Board of Trustees, I’d like to thank you for your ongoing support of our students and college.

For more than 70 years, LWTech has been preparing students for the workforce by providing career-connected learning in an affordable, flexible, and accessible way. This has been even more apparent since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic as the college moved into mostly remote operations, and Instruction and Student Services created innovative ways to support students.

Our students not only felt this support from the college, but they also felt it from the community. When the Foundation asked for support, our community immediately reached out to help. Because of you, our students didn’t have to choose between paying a utility bill, feeding their families, or paying their rent instead of staying in college. Your generosity helped keep them on track to reach their educational goals.

Their success is all our success. As our workforce continues to rebuild, we need these future nurses, welders, public health workers, engineers, and restaurant and bakery workers more than ever, and you’ve played a direct part in that.

In our role providing governance to the college, we see the impact of your generosity firsthand through our work with Dr. Morrison and the Foundation Board of Directors, as they support students.

We hope as you read through the pages of the Annual Report that you’ll be inspired to get involved with the college. Join an advisory committee where you can provide direct input to our programs, donate to one of our many student scholarships, or come to campus and support our student-run software developers, bakery, or dental clinic, all of which are open to the public.

Thank you for being a part of the LWTech community. We are here for you and your family just as you’ve been for us.

With appreciation,
Signature of Anne Hamilton

2020-2021 Board of Trustees

Anne Hamilton, Chair
Robert Malte, Vice Chair
Dr. Lynette D. Jones
Darrell S. Mitsunaga
Laura Wildfong
Dear Friends,

Thank you for your outstanding support of our hardworking, highly motivated students throughout this unprecedented time. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, you, our wonderful donors, stepped up to ensure that LWTech students have access to life-changing scholarships and student emergency funds.

This past year, to protect the health and safety of our community, we pivoted from our Annual Bright Futures Benefit Breakfast into a Bright Futures Benefit WEEK; an online campaign comprising of five days of inspirational videos to raise critical funds for student scholarships, program support, and the student emergency fund. Bright Futures Benefit WEEK featured students and donors communicating messages of hope, gratitude and perseverance, as well as two very successful matching gift challenges: (1) Bright Futures Scholarship Matching Challenge generously spearheaded by donors Ed and Pam Belcher and (2) Bridge the Gap Student Emergency Fund Matching Challenge generously spearheaded by donors Jim Kinsella and Bob McNeal. You can still watch and be inspired by the videos on our website, LWTech.edu/breakfast. As a result of this stellar philanthropic leadership and your collective generosity, we raised over $335,000 to support our hardworking students during the COVID-19 crisis. Thank you!

Your unwavering dedication and support has sustained our students and campus community during this tumultuous year. We are deeply appreciative of your leadership, contributions and care. Thank you for transforming lives and strengthening our wonderful community with your support.

With gratitude,

[Signature]

Photo of Clara Hollin, LWTech Foundation President

Photo of Elisabeth Sorensen, LWTech Foundation Executive Director
2020-2021 LWTech Foundation Officers

2020-21 Executive Committee

Clara Hollin President
Financial Planner, Lincoln Financial Advisors

Bill Shelby Vice President/ Scholarship Committee Chair
Developer, StockCharts.com

Diane Haelsig Immediate Past President
Retired Software Company Founder

Walt Krueger Treasurer
Attorney, Krueger Beck, PLLC

Dan Frost, DDS Secretary
Dentist, Frost Family Dentistry

Diane Toomey Bright Futures Benefit Breakfast Chair
Vice President of Human Resources, PAC Worldwide

2020-21 Board Members

David Alskog Partner, Livengood Alskog

Glenn Gardner President and General Manager, Synrad

Ann Habernigg Assistant General Counsel, Microsoft

Gina Haggerty Chief Financial Officer, Prism Worldwide

Kathy Katzenberger Hospice Manager, EvergreenHealth

John Feistner Private Client Banker, JPMorgan Chase

Nazanin Nabaie Dental Hygienist, Implant & Periodontic Specialists

Brenda Nunes Managing Broker, Keller Williams Eastside, Brenda Nunes KW Nunes Group

Kristen Overleese President, KBA, Inc.

Ex-Officio Directors

Nolan Koreski Professor Emeritus, LWTech

Amy Morrison, Ed.D. President, LWTech

Elisabeth Sorensen Executive Director, LWTech Foundation

Bruce Riveland VP, Administrative Services, LWTech
Financial info

Revenue 2020-2021

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Expenses 2020-2021

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2021-22 Dates to Remember

- Nov. 1-5, 2021
  2021 Bright Futures Benefit WEEK
- Dec. 1, 2021
  Spring 2022 Scholarship Applications Begin
- Feb. 3, 2022
  Spring 2022 Scholarship Applications End
- April 2022
  Annual LWTech Virtual Open House
- Apr. 29-30, 2022; May 6-7, 2022
  Spring Plant Sale
- May 2, 2022
  Fall 2022 Scholarship Applications Begin
- July 14, 2022
  Fall 2022 Scholarship Applications End
- Nov. 1, 2022
  2022 Bright Futures Benefit Breakfast
An Update from LWTech’s Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

A Message from the Executive Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Hello from the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

I’m pleased to share with you the work of the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) at LWTech over the past year.

In 2020-2021 we worked to address the goals and initiatives that support our EDI efforts. In addition, as part of our response to the events of 2020, including the onset of COVID-19, a tumultuous election cycle, events around Anti-Asian hate, and the senseless deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Jacob Blake and so many others, LWTech prepared several messages of unity for our community. These messages, and subsequent community conversations, have further shaped the college’s EDI efforts and focus. Many students, faculty, and staff have contributed substantially to improving the equity, diversity, and inclusion of this community, which further serves as a reminder that this heart work is continuous and that our collective efforts, past and present, serve as a framework and benchmark for our desire to evolve, innovate and transform.

LWTech’s EDI efforts are driven by our mission, core values, and the need to build out a comprehensive EDI Plan, a “living” document with the aim of highlighting the amazing work the college has engaged in to dismantle systemic racism and close equity gaps. Much of this work began several years ago and is now structured around key pillars of our directive: The Four Connections, the Community of Belonging and now our Diversity & Social Justice (DSJ) efforts. Each of these pillars work to strengthen our community, shape our learning environment, and provide an enriching experience for students, faculty, and staff as we continue to scale our initiatives into greater action.

Below are some of the efforts we’ve undertaken over the past year. The amount of collaborative work from all sectors of the college is nothing short of remarkable.
Current EDI Accomplishments

- Formalized Land Acknowledgement
- Funding to Hire EDI Coordinator
- Listening Session for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Staff on Racial Trauma
- College Training on Micro-Aggressions
- Senate Testimony in Support of SB 5227
- Developed Glossary of EDI Terms for the College Community
- Worked with the Lake Washington School District
- EDI Leadership Training Sessions
- Various EDI Focused Sessions for Students
- Diversity & Social Justice Requirement for Graduation
- Juneteenth Recognition
- Launched EDI Survey
- Public Health Vaccination Session
- “Ask EDI” Communications Tool Launched
- Established Relationship with WA Alliance for Better Schools

In Progress Work

- EDI Strategic Plan
- Bias Response Team Annual Report
- Search Committee/Advocate Training
- Launch Human Library to Build Community
- Formalize Community Conversations Space
- Strategy Development to Close Equity Gaps
- HR Partnership/Training
- New Hire Equity Onboarding Process
- Deploy Policy/Program Analysis Tool

Our work is by no means complete and our conversations are just beginning. The aforementioned items are not an exhaustive list of our EDI work to date, but a snapshot into our collective efforts and the amount of resolve shown over the last couple of years. We will continue our discussions with and about the Kirkland Police Department (KPD Task Force), EDIC and its various sub-committees and ongoing discussions about how we support underrepresented students.

Our flourishing partnerships with the Foundation, Marketing and Communications, Student Services, Instruction, Institutional Grants and Research, our Board of Trustees, and Executive
Cabinet are vital to our continued support of EDI at LWTech. These relationships add many layers of support to our overall efforts on behalf of our students, faculty, and staff.

The Foundation has expressed its ongoing support of our Equity efforts through scholarships that go directly to systemically underrepresented students. Without this support, many of our students would not be able to persist quarter to quarter. Your generosity, and the generosity of all our donors, of which many of you are, make degree attainment possible for students who need this underlying support.

The Foundation specifically created the Students of Color Conference Scholarship and Undocumented Students/DREAMERS scholarships in partnership with the Office of EDI. In addition to these scholarships, the Foundation provides several scholarships that support students through the equity, diversity, and inclusion work at LWTech.

We encourage you to engage with us as we continue to drive innovation and speak to the needs and demands of our students, staff, faculty and our community. Equity is the end we seek, diversity the ideal we strive for and inclusion the result of our efforts!

Thank you to our entire college community for the amazing EDI efforts underway at LWTech.

Robert Britten, Executive Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Image of Robert Britten’s Signature
Mission & Vision Statements

What Drives Our Purpose

LWTech Mission

Grounded in equity and the need for resilience, the mission guides our overall direction as a college: To prepare students for today’s careers and tomorrow’s opportunities.

LWTech Vision

Grounded in equity and the need for resilience, the vision inspires how we see ourselves in the future: To be the college of choice for workforce education.

Foundation Mission

To actively engage business and the community in supporting LWTech, its students, and its role in building a strong economy.

LWTech Core Themes

- **Pathways**: LWTech is accessible to the community by providing multiple entrance points and educational pathways. The college is a conduit for students to upgrade their skills, transition into new careers, or further their education and training.

- **Student Achievement**: At LWTech, students gain the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their educational goals and to participate in the workforce.

- **External Engagement**: LWTech forms partnerships with governmental and community organizations, educational institutions, business, and labor in order to effectively support the Institution’s mission.

- **College Community**: LWTech provides a safe, supported and engaging learning environment for students and work environment for faculty and staff.

LWTech Core Values

- **Inclusive**: We intentionally create a welcoming environment where all feel a sense of belonging.

- **Innovative**: We are leaders in maximizing opportunities to create a thriving college community.

- **Collaborative**: We are open to change and work together to achieve success for all.

- **Respectful**: We engage others with acceptance, open-mindedness, courtesy, and care.
Classic LWTech Events “Go Virtual” During Pandemic

This past year was a year of innovation and inspiration as LWTech moved from several key annual events traditionally held in-person and on campus to dynamic and engaging online participation events. The Virtual Open House and the Spring Plant Sale are two examples of innovative virtual events.

Traditionally, LWTech holds its annual Open House in late February or early March when the college invites members of the community to come to campus to learn more about the Applied Bachelor’s and Associate degrees and certificates offered at the college. Open House attendees can meet with members of the student services and instruction teams, and visit classrooms and labs. This event not only helps encourage new student enrollment, but also creates a culture of community on campus. This past year, due to the ongoing pandemic, the college moved the Open House online for a three-day event, held from May 25 to May 27. Website visitors could still meet with and hear from members of the Student Services and Instruction teams and see our students hard at work. It was a mix of live virtual events and pre-recorded videos. The campus community came together to create a robust experience for guests, including a welcome message from the president, information sessions with professors, and a brand-new 3D virtual campus map tool. The page had over 500 page-views and about 340 unique users. LWTech’s Admissions Coach was also able to successfully help students apply for LWTech and schedule follow-up appointments for new students. You can still view and engage with the virtual open house online at LWTech.edu/OpenHouse.

The Spring Plant Sale, spearheaded by the students and faculty in LWTech’s Environmental Horticulture Program, was also moved to a virtual environment this past year. The Plant Sale, which traditionally is held on campus the last weekend of April and first weekend of May, was moved to an online platform where guests could browse available plants and flowers online and then arrange a time to pick up their orders on campus. This four-week sale was a wonderful convergence of the community and the college. Proceeds, as in previous years, went to support the needs of the Environmental Horticulture program. This pivot allowed the Horticulture department to raise $75,000 in funds to support their program. The sale was run by 24 Horticulture students and 10 to 15 volunteers; everyone wore masks and practiced social distancing. While the customers missed the excitement of the greenhouse experience, they loved having the opportunity to purchase plants and support the students.
Group photo of Environmental Horticulture students and faculty that worked on the plant sale.
LWTech by the Numbers

Demographics for 2020-2021

LWTech Enrollment Data: 2020-2021

Enrollment (total headcount) 4,642
Enrollment (full-time equivalent students) 2,104
White Students 2,103
Students of Color 1,702
Student Race Not Reported 837
Male 1,764*
Female 2,878*
Enrolled with a degree already earned (associate or higher) 982
Workforce Training 2,445
Transfer 1,458
Other (enrichment, improve job skills, etc.) 483
Basic Skills 1,504
Median Student Age 33
Students Receiving Financial Aid 25%
Estimated Rate of Employment** 81% (2018-19 Graduates most recent data available)
Student : Faculty Ratio 13:1

10 Highest Enrolled Programs

Health Sciences 315
Digital Gaming and Interactive Media 251
Early Childhood Education 248
Nursing 213
Computing and Software Development 210
Design 169
Behavioral and Social Services 109
Accounting 106
Funeral Service Education 105
Medical Assisting 104

LWTech Employee Information: 2020-2021

White Employees 464
Employees of Color 97
Male 170
Female 330
Full-Time Teaching Faculty 90
Part-Time Teaching Faculty 231
Classified 90
Administrative 97
Median Employee Age 45

**LWTech Financial Information: 2020-2021**

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* LWTech began collecting expanded gender identity information in 2013 to assist in promoting a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students; however, that information is not publicly shared at this time.

** Source: Data Linking Outcomes Assessment. Additional information available at: [sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/data-services/data-warehouse-documentation.aspx](http://sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/data-services/data-warehouse-documentation.aspx)

Supporting Education Equity Through Scholarships

Education connects students to career paths and opportunities that would otherwise be closed to them; and with the growing cost of education, scholarships have become an increasingly important tool for enabling access to higher education for groups who have been historically underserved. However, the question now becomes, what can be done to ensure that scholarships are equitably awarded?

This question was on the mind of LWTech Trustee and Board Chair, Anne Hamilton when she attended a Trustee conference several years ago. One of the sessions was a data review on how scholarship recipient demographics compared to the student body as a whole. The presenters were surprised to learn that percentage of white scholarship recipients was higher than the percentage of white students in the college. Likewise, the percentage of African American, Latino/a/x, and Native American students receiving scholarships was lower, while the numbers for Asian students were in line. While exploring how to improve equitable distribution, the presenters began to consider how many of the traditional factors used to select recipients (including GPA, need, and personal essays) target a specific cohort of students. While this makes sense as donors and foundations want to help those who will make the most of these limited resources, it doesn’t take into consideration that there are many different paths to success.

Due to systemic racism, generations have lacked the wealth and resources to access quality education from an early age. Students from underserved communities may have greater skills gaps to overcome, and economic barriers to performance such as reliable transportation, childcare, and the demands of full-time work. These students may have lower GPAs and less time to demonstrate their writing skills, but bring a different kind of persistence and strength to the college. For example, a passing GPA is 2.0, but in many cases, a student needs to have a 3.5 GPA to be competitive for a scholarship. The student earning a 2.5 GPA is just as likely to succeed, but much less likely to be identified for a scholarship using the traditional metrics.

After this eye-opening session, Hamilton suggested the Trustees Persistence Scholarship to the LWTech Foundation in 2014. It attempts to award scholarships to underserved students who
aren’t as likely to be awarded using traditional scholarship metrics. “I wanted to create a scholarship that works to recognize students who get overlooked during the usual awarding process,” said Hamilton. “Trustees care about student completion rates. Exploring new ways to help those who need it most—those who demonstrate potential in non-traditional ways—felt like a needed disruption to the status quo.”

For example, instead of simply relying on an online application process, written essays, and GPA ranking, the Foundation reaches out to Student Services, Student Government, and the Veteran’s Center to identify candidates. As these departments get more one-on-one interaction with LWTech students, getting their input allows the Foundation to identify applicants who might not have been recognized using traditional selection methods. The top applicants are then interviewed by contributing trustees.

The data shows that this innovative approach is working. Fourteen students have received the scholarship. The scholarship has been awarded to students identifying as Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American/Native Alaskan, and White. Seventy percent are low-income, and fifty seven percent are first-generation college students. Seven of the recipients have completed their certificate or degree, and three are working toward completion. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted progress for four recipients, whom LWTech is working to re-enroll.

Student testimonials are also positive. One of the early recipients, Feliz Arana never gave up on her dream of becoming a registered nurse despite a series of financial obstacles and family struggles. “I wanted to provide for my children and to be a positive role model,” said Arana, who completed her Applied Associates Degree in Nursing last spring. “You have lifted a huge weight off my shoulders. Thank you for getting to know me without judgment, and for being interested in my goals and aspirations,” said Arana.

Angelique Rodriquez, a veteran who is just beginning her pre-nursing education, is the most recent awardee. “As a first-generation college student, the gesture of this scholarship goes a long way. Your generosity has given me hope and motivation to continue, regardless of my setbacks.”

“It’s heartening to hear the success stories from this experiment so far,” said Hamilton. “The awarding process takes a village, but it’s worth it. I hope we’re creating a model that other colleges might adopt. It’s a small experiment towards dismantling systemic racism in our education system, but I think we’re learning a lot in the process.”

“Our students are incredibly fortunate to have a forward-thinking Board of Trustees so invested in education equity,” said Dr. Amy Morrison, president, LWTech. “I’m proud that we are exploring new approaches to rewarding student persistence and expressing our unwavering dedication to student success.”

“Trustees care about student completion rates. Exploring new ways to help those who need it most—those who demonstrate potential in non-traditional ways—felt like a needed disruption to the status quo.”

—Anne Hamilton, LWTech Trustee
Sponsor Spotlight: PAC Worldwide

Image of PAC Worldwide logo

The LWTech Foundation salutes PAC Worldwide for its longstanding sponsorship of the Foundation’s Annual Bright Futures Benefit Breakfast. PAC Worldwide, a leader and innovator in the development and manufacturing of customized packaging and contract packaging solutions headquartered in Redmond, Washington, began sponsoring the Foundation’s signature fundraising event in 2017 and stepped up to the co-presenting sponsor role in 2020 and 2021.

“PAC Worldwide is a strong supporter of both students and our community and we love that this event makes scholarships possible for LWTech students, who are so driven and passionate about their education,” says Diane Toomey, Chief People Officer, PAC Worldwide. “We are especially proud to serve as co-presenting sponsor given the critical need to support students with scholarships and emergency funds during the pandemic.”

PAC Worldwide’s sponsorship has funded thirteen student scholarships for students in an array of diverse programs including dental hygiene, computing and software development, and auto body technician. All of their scholarships recipients have either graduated or are actively enrolled at LWTech, pursuing their education. That is a 100% success rate for their investment in our students.

PAC Worldwide’s impact is best explained by Jianing Xu, a student in the Bachelor of Applied Science Program in Early Childhood Education and PAC Worldwide scholarship recipient. “PAC Worldwide believes in giving back to the community and supporting LWTech students. This is also my philosophy. I will use my scholarship to continue my college journey and try my best to support the children of our community. When I told my sons I got a scholarship, they were so excited and proud of me. Learning is a life long journey, so I hope I can be a role model of children.”

In addition to sponsorship, Toomey, an LWTech Foundation Board Officer, has served as Chair of the Bright Futures Benefit Breakfast for the past two years. “Diane’s creativity and positive attitude are tremendous,” gushed Elisabeth Sorensen, Executive Director, LWTech Foundation. “I’m so grateful for Diane’s leadership as we pivoted our longstanding signature event into an all online event, Bright Futures Benefit WEEK in 2020, due to COVID-19. Thanks to her leadership, we had the most successful fundraiser to-date, which is invaluable to our students during these challenging times.”

Thank you PAC Worldwide!

“...we love that this event makes scholarships possible for LWTech students, who are so driven and passionate about their education”

—Diane Toomey, Chief People Officer, PAC Worldwide
2021 Distinguished Alumni Award

The Foundation is pleased to announce Dr. Lin Zhou as the recipient of the 2021 LWTech Foundation Annual Distinguished Alumni Award! We look forward to formally honoring Dr. Zhou at Commencement in Spring 2022.

Image of 2021 Distinguished Alumnae, Dr. Lin Zhou

Dr. Zhou currently serves as the President of Bates Technical College in Tacoma, Washington. She is the first female president of Bates Technical College and the first female Chinese immigrant to serve as president at a public two-year college in Washington.

Dr. Zhou is a shining example of a successful alumnae mastering English language skills at LWTech and continuing on to achieve numerous educational and professional goals. Dr. Zhou first began as a student in LWTech’s Computer Security Network Technician (CSNT) program in fall 1999. After completing this program, she was hired in LWTech’s Office of Instruction. In her 11-year stint as a LWTech employee, Dr. Zhou was promoted to progressively responsible positions starting as a Technical Support Aide and rising to Associate Dean of Extended Learning.

An outstanding colleague and advocate for the Washington State Community and Technical College System, Dr. Zhou has a distinguished career in higher education. In thinking about her journey from an English Language Learner student to a college president, Dr. Zhou shared “I feel like I was re-born at LWTech because I started my life over as a new immigrant, from learning how to speak English to navigating cultural differences. I then grew as a professional at Bates Technical College. Without the support from mentors, friends and family, I wouldn’t have been able to make it this far. Washington community and technical colleges do an amazing job for students like me. I am very humbled and honored to be recognized as a success for our system.”

Dr. Zhou holds a Ph.D. in education from Oregon State University, a Master’s Degree in business administration from City University in Seattle, an Associate Degree in CSNT from Lake Washington Institute of Technology, and an Associate Degree in accounting from Renmin University of China. In 2017, Dr. Zhou participated in the Harvard University’s Institute for Educational Management, administered by the university’s Graduate School of Education.
In addition to her educational and professional accomplishments, Dr. Zhou is active in many community organizations including Commissioner on Diversity, Inclusion and Equity of American Association of Community Colleges, Board of Trustee for American Technical Education Association, and the National Asian Pacific Islander Council Board.

Congratulations to Dr. Lin Zhou on this distinguished honor.
Each Spring, the Foundation delights in uniting donors and scholars at the Foundation’s Annual Scholarship Reception. Due to the pandemic, this special event was canceled in both 2020 and 2021, yet the connection between scholarship donors and scholarship recipients was sustained through thank you notes and video messages of gratitude.

However, in June 2021, the Foundation was able to host a special, socially distanced meeting for longtime scholarship donor Bob Tjossem and Welding Technology student James Kamp. Kamp, a recipient of The Tjossem Family Endowed Scholarship, thanked Tjossem for investing in his education while giving him a tour of the welding lab. Tjossem shared his passion for welding and inspiration for creating The Tjossem Family Endowed Scholarship, which assists students just like Kamp.

Below is an excerpt of Bob and James’s Q&A style conversation over lunch in the welding classroom. A special thank you to Associate Professor of Welding, Sarah Mason, for helping us organize this special meet and greet.

**Kamp:** I can’t believe that I will graduate with my Applied Associates Degree in Welding this quarter! I have three job interviews lined up in the next several weeks and I’m really excited. I am so appreciative of your scholarship, Bob. The financial aspects of college have been overwhelming, especially during COVID-19, and your scholarship made it possible for me to continue.

**Tjossem:** Congratulations! I’m thrilled for you and I take a great deal of satisfaction in knowing that you’ll have a terrific career in welding. What did you like best about the program at LWTech?

**Kamp:** I didn’t enjoy high school and I wasn’t sure what to do after graduation. LWTech, however, was a great fit for me. I was attracted to the welding program because I am a “car guy”
who loves working with his hands. I really enjoy the labs and hands-on learning experience. I also appreciate learning from instructors who have backgrounds in the industry. Their teaching is really focused on the processes and techniques necessary to be successful in the workplace. How did you get involved with scholarships at Lake Washington Institute of Technology?

Tjossem: I've always been a strong supporter of technical education. As an assistant attorney general and as an attorney in private practice, I had many interactions with Lake Washington Tech. I'm impressed with the array of programs that provide students with in-demand skills and fulfilling careers. I also believe that there are many routes to success and the trades, like welding, can be an incredibly rewarding career path both financially and in terms of importance to our everyday lives.

Kamp: It truly is! I'm looking forward to a great career in welding. I love that it crosses several industries, aerospace and marine, to name a few and there are opportunities to continually hone my skills and add specialties. I'm also looking forward to being able to pay my bills and get settled my hometown in Monroe. But I think I am most motivated by the sense of purpose that welding has given me. I really enjoy perfecting my skills and working alongside colleagues to create and build meaningful projects like bridges, ships, planes, etc.

Tjossem: That is great to hear, James. Education is the great equalizer and my father always told me to “find something that you like to do and the money will follow.” My late wife Linda and I funded The Tjossem Family Endowed Scholarship both to give back to the community that has given so much to us and to assist students just like you in reaching your academic and career goals. I'm proud of you and your accomplishments.

Photo of James Kamp (R), showing Professor Sarah Mason and Bob Tjossem some of his welding work.
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Each year, hundreds of students are able to enroll in a program at LWTech to get the education that will help them secure a job, learn the skills that employers need, or update their skills as technology advances. Your generosity provides the scholarships and emergency help they need to fulfill their dreams.

On behalf of the Foundation, and all who benefit, thank you!

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A special thank you to LWTech and LWTech Foundation staff for their help in the creation of the 2020-2021 Annual Report; and to the students and faculty who through their awards, achievements, and amazing lives we are able to celebrate them today!