



LAKE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE



LATC Student Voice Visits the 100th Legislative Session

Four members of Lake Area Tech's Student Voice took in a historic week of the SD legislative session when they visited Pierre for the Board of Technical Education Legislator Breakfast. Representing LATC were Aaron Veldhuizen, Agriculture; Demetri Bryant, Auto Body & Paint; Kaylin Warrey, Licensed Practical Nursing; and Dani Fischbach, Surgical Technology.

In addition to hosting breakfast, they met legislators, attended committee meetings, watched both the Senate and the House in session, and witnessed the swearing in of South Dakota's new Lt. Governor, Tony Venhuizen.

A special thank you to Senator Glen Vilhauer and Representative Matt Roby, Representative Taylor Rehfeldt, and Representative Amber Arlint for joining Student Voice for dinner to share their experience and behind-the-scenes perspectives.



LATC IS 60!

The Lake Area Tech College campus community kicked off its 60th Anniversary on March 13th, the date the SD Senate finalized the bill package in 1965 to create the technical college system. Governor Nils Boe signed the bills on March 17th and, a few short months later, on June 23rd, the Watertown School District and state board of education reached an agreement to bring Lake Area Vocational Technical School to life. That year, programs started throughout the community. In the Fall of 1967, the first campus building opened.

The college will celebrate its 60 years throughout 2025, recognizing the great efforts of founders and builders over the years and sharing what's to come.



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WE ARE ON THE FRONT LINES OF SOLVING A WORKFORCE BATTLE. WE NEED GREAT PEOPLE. GREAT THINKERS. GREAT DOERS. COMMUNITY INVESTORS. FAMILY BUILDERS. ECONOMIC ADVANCERS. BUSINESS LEADERS.

WE NEED GREAT PEOPLE. THAT'S YOU. AND THAT'S THE STUDENT OF LAKE AREA TECH'S FUTURE.





Ready.Set.Go! Held for Build Dakota

The 2nd Annual Build Dakota Ready.Set.Go! event at Lake Area Tech offered high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to make connections with Build Dakota business partners well before deciding which employer they'd commit to through the Build Dakota Scholarship process. In January, more than 50 businesses attended, along with 275 students and their support teams.

In collaboration with the LATC Admissions team, free applications were made available to any attendee who had not yet applied to LATC for Fall 2025. The event featured guided tours, allowing attendees to explore campus and learn more about programs offered.

22% of Cohort 10 partnerships were students and STM Partners that attended the 1st Ready. Set. Go! event held in January 2024.

The Build Dakota Scholarship application window is open through Monday, March 31st.

“Ready. Set. Go! is all about creating early connections—because strong relationships lead to successful Build Dakota /Stretch-the-Million partnerships for our students and partners.”

Tracy Buiser,
LATC Foundation
Director





CAMPUS VISITS \ \ \



5th Annual Weld Off Involves Record Participation

357 welding students from high schools throughout the tri-state region demonstrated their skills at LATC's Weld Off in December 2024. Senior winners are eligible for the Build Dakota Welding scholarship. Many thanks to our sponsors and judges: *Marmen Energy Co., Masaba, Inc., A-OX Welding, Terex Utilities, Miller Welders!*



8th Graders Introduced to Health Careers at Camp Med

Before registering for high school courses, 72 8th graders from 6 area middle schools spent a day at Lake Area Tech in February. They learned about health careers and the courses they could take in high school to prepare to work in the field.



CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS III

Winter 2025

LATC Educare & Watertown School District Expand Childcare

In March, the Watertown School District and LATC's Educare announced a partnership for families in Watertown, making stronger connections between Educare (Lake Area Tech's Daycare) and McKinley Early Childhood Center.

Care will be available at Educare from 6:30 a.m. until 5:45 p.m. for families whose children attend McKinley Early Childhood Center during the 2025-26 school year. This is an expansion of the current partnership for kindergarten students; it increases availability and helps parents simplify care for their preschool aged children outside of school hours. The Watertown School District will provide the transportation to and from Educare, supporting families so they will not have to find additional options for transportation.

Learn more: <https://www.watertown.k12.sd.us/article/2087955>



Students Recognized at Spring Scholarship Luncheon

Dozens of LATC students were recognized with spring semester scholarships in January and had the opportunity to meet the donors who are supporting them in their education. LATC's Jordan Hilbert, Training & Development Manager, keynoted the event.





Energy Training Expansion Project



Mitchell Technical College is planning an expansion that would increase program capacity across the Energy Division. In addition, it will allow students to receive extensive education and training indoors before moving out into the elements for the next phase of their coursework, where they apply what they have learned under real-world conditions.

Phase 1: Indoor underground lab (34,000 sq. ft.). This portion of the project, set to begin May 2025, would create lab space for students to gain hands-on experience indoors before moving training to the outdoor energy field, where they experience scenarios in the ever-changing elements of South Dakota. This facility maximizes the students' ability to learn during the winter months, as they will be able to complete dig exercises without the extreme expense and unmanageable time restrictions of bringing in earth-warming equipment.

Phase 2: Energy Training Center addition (14,000 sq. ft.). This portion of the project will create

dedicated spaces for Electrical Utilities and Substation Technology labs and classrooms which allows students to spend more time working 1:1 with equipment, giving for a more thorough understanding of their trade and better preparation to apply their skills in high-pressure situations. This phase also accommodates increased for increased class sizes across the Energy Division, as well as increased opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction.

At the completion of both phases, the expansion would positively affects all four programs in the Energy Division: Power Line Construction and Maintenance, Electrical Utilities and Substation Technology, Natural Gas Technology and Wind Turbine Technology. The two-phase energy division expansion will support the needs of industry by providing an additional 48,000 square feet of space for direct instruction of students and accommodating enrollment growth in these programs.

Partnership to Build Workforce Housing



Workforce housing is an economic driver in many communities. Without adequate housing for workers and their families, it is difficult to attract new business and industry to grow a region's economy. With this challenge in mind, the Mitchell Area Development Corporation (MADC), in partnership with Mitchell Area Housing Inc. (MAHI), created a plan to address the need for new homes as indicated in the 2022 Mitchell Housing Study.

MAHI identified two areas within the Mitchell community to develop workforce housing. These developments focus on providing affordable housing for a growing population of 20-40-year-olds obtaining employment in Mitchell. MADC and MAHI obtained land on the east side of Mitchell and the south side of Lake Mitchell for this purpose.

Mitchell Technical College approached MAHI proposing a partnership in this development project. Currently, Mitchell Tech's Architectural Design & Building Construction program constructs a house each year for public sale. This project will continue to provide hands-on instruction for the program while providing workforce housing for Mitchell.

MAHI and MADC have generously offered Mitchell Tech five lots at no cost. Mitchell Tech will place the first house in the east side development this spring with a completion date of May 2026.

This partnership highlights the strong support from the Mitchell community for Mitchell Technical College. The community appreciates the education and training provided by Mitchell Tech, which prepares the next generation of the regional workforce. Both partners are committed to mutual support for the betterment of Mitchell and the surrounding area.

Mitchell Tech and MADC share compatible visions focused on economic growth and workforce development. Mitchell Tech highly values this partnership and looks forward to enhancing the workforce across the state and neighboring regions.

South Dakota SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference

The South Dakota SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference will be hosted for the second year by Mitchell Technical College on Thursday and Friday, April 10-11. More than 200 high school and 130 post-secondary students will participate in a variety of leadership-building activities and trades skills competitions. The conference is sponsored in part by Masaba, Inc., Marmen Energy, Twin City Fan, and HMMI.

This event allows students from across the state to showcase skills through competitions in building trades, automotive, electrical, welding, public speaking, and more. Winners of the state contests advance to compete at the National SkillsUSA competition this June in Atlanta, Georgia.

Future Homes Built by:

 **MITCHELL
TECHNICAL
COLLEGE**

In Partnership with:

 **Avera**  **Mitchell**
AREA DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION  **M.A.H.I.**
Mitchell Area Housing Inc.





January Exploration Day

Mitchell Tech Admissions hosted high school juniors and seniors for the January 23rd Exploration Day. Students and guests from South Dakota and surrounding states came to explore the campus and experience life at Mitchell Tech. Throughout the day, they had the chance to visit classes and labs in the programs of their choice, learn about financial aid and scholarship opportunities, and attend an information session to discover the unique qualities of Mitchell Tech.



Coinciding with the Exploration Day event, Mitchell Technical College hosted 36 companies at the first Industry Partner Connection Event. Build Dakota partners from qualifying programs had an opportunity to meet and engage with 120 students wanting to learn more about partnership opportunities. This addition to the Exploration Day event allowed students to better understand potential career, and their connections to programs at Mitchell Tech

Mitchell Technical College Job Fairs

Mitchell Tech hosted three job fairs on Thursday, February 20, 2025. The Energy Division Career Fair, Health Sciences Career Fair, and General Career Fair gave over 140 employers the opportunity to interact with over 475 first and second year Mitchell Tech students attending the job fairs. Holding three separate job fairs at different locations on campus allowed companies to better focus their search and target students from programs where they most needed candidates.



Eagle Feather Ceremony

Mitchell Technical College will host its eleventh annual Eagle Feather Ceremony on Thursday, May 8, to honor graduating students. Eagle feathers are given to MTC students to wear during commencement. The ceremony is a celebration of graduation and the start of new journeys for young people.

Tribes present these young people with eagle feathers upon graduation to signify the achievement of this important educational journey and the honor the graduate brings to his or her family, community, and tribal nation.

Mitchell Tech in the Community



Helping One of Our Own

On March 1, a benefit for Brady Larson was held to raise funds to assist with medical expenses. Brady is a Mitchell Technical College Agricultural Business student. He was diagnosed in December 2024 with severe aplastic anemia, a rare and serious condition that occurs when a person's body stops producing enough new blood cells.

The event raised over \$125,000 to help defer expenses related to Brady's treatment. Many MTC students and staff donated items to the silent auction as well as assisted with the event. Mitchell Tech Ag program students helped set up tables and chairs for the benefit.

Mitchell Tech Students Offering Free Income Tax Preparation Service

Mitchell Technical College Accounting students are polishing tax preparation skills while saving individuals tax preparation time and the expense of hiring a professional tax preparation service again this year. The federally funded Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to individuals earning under \$63,000 in 2024 and taxpayers who need assistance in filing tax returns.

Mitchell Tech's Accounting students are certified to provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals. VITA services are not only free – they are also a reliable and trusted source for preparing tax returns. All VITA volunteers who prepare returns must take and pass tax law training that meets or exceeds IRS standards. This training includes maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all taxpayer information. In addition to requiring volunteers to certify their knowledge of the tax laws, the IRS requires a quality review check for every return prepared at a VITA site before filing. Each filing season, tens of thousands of dedicated VITA volunteers prepare millions of federal and state returns.

LifeQuest LifeSkills Academy

Mitchell Technical College has partnered with LifeQuest, a non-profit community agency in Mitchell, to offer a series of two-hour courses designed especially for LifeSkills Academy participants. The seven courses are scheduled once per month starting in October each year. Participants graduate from the Academy with a certificate upon completion of the coursework.

Course topics include basic money management, first aid and safety,

basic computer graphic software, Recipes 101 cooking, and nutrition and fitness. Both participants and presenters enjoy the interaction and the satisfaction associated with the training.



Coinciding with the LifeSkills Academy, Mitchell Tech provided coursework for the LifeQuest leadership team to enhance personal and leadership skills.

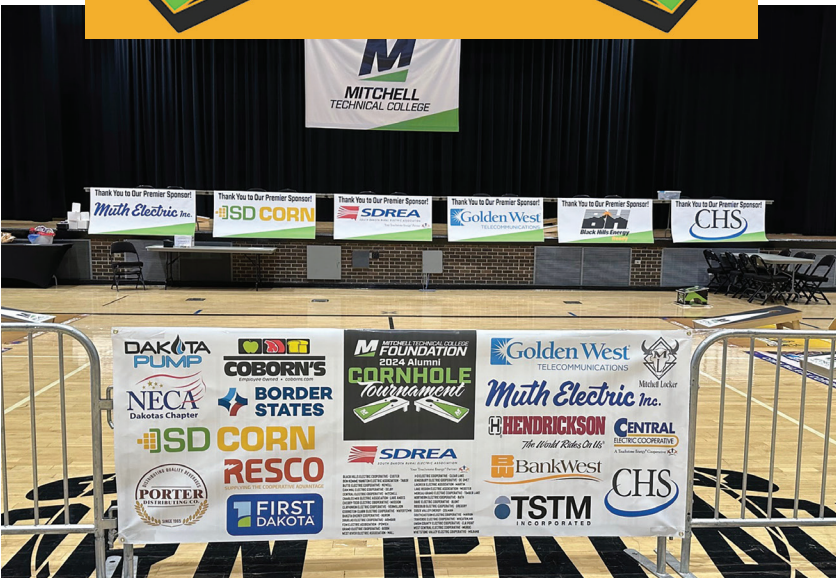
Weekend Snack Pack Program



Mitchell Technical College students and staff will stock and pack 500 packs of food Tuesday, April 15, to distribute to Mitchell PK-8 students for the long Easter weekend. Weekend Snack Pack is MTC's annual service project and involves students and staff donating time and food items to help Mitchell children experiencing food insecurity.



Cornhole Tournament to Support MTC Legacy Scholarship



Mitchell Technical College Foundation will host the 2nd Annual Alumni Gathering and Cornhole Tournament Friday, April 4, in the World's Only Corn Palace. The event, which hopes to raise \$50,000 for alumni scholarships, offers competitive and recreational cornhole brackets, as well as food, games, and a silent auction.

Tyler Earls will be back to handle the technical portion of the tournament. Earls, state director for the American Cornhole League, has been running cornhole tournaments throughout South Dakota and surrounding states for several years. The Foundation is hoping to attract more high-level competitive cornhole players to participate in the competitive bracket.

New for 2025 is a recreational bracket to attract many friends and alumni of MTC. This bracket allows for friendly competition for participants of any skill level. With the two brackets, the Foundation is hoping to attract more participants and create additional excitement.

Teams competing in either bracket of the tournament must have at least one Mitchell Tech alum.

While the focus of the cornhole tournament is raising funds for the Legacy Scholarships given to incoming children, grandchildren, and siblings of Mitchell Tech alumni, a secondary goal is bringing alumni and the community together to celebrate the affordable, quality college education available in Mitchell. The event will also be a great time for guests who just want to relax, socialize, or join in on side games and raffles.

March 2025

Board of Technical Education
Dr. Cory Clasemann, STC President

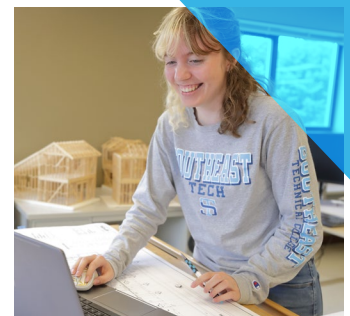


NEW ENROLLMENT RECORD

Southeast Technical College Spring 2025 Enrollment up 4%

Spring enrollment at Southeast Technical College is up 4% in student headcount and 5% in credits compared to spring 2024, which was the highest spring enrollment in over a decade. STC is serving 2,569 students this spring. The unduplicated headcount this academic year for fall and spring semesters is 3,186 students with more starting the summer 2025 term on May 19.

<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2025/stc-spring-2025-enrollment-up-4-percent.php>



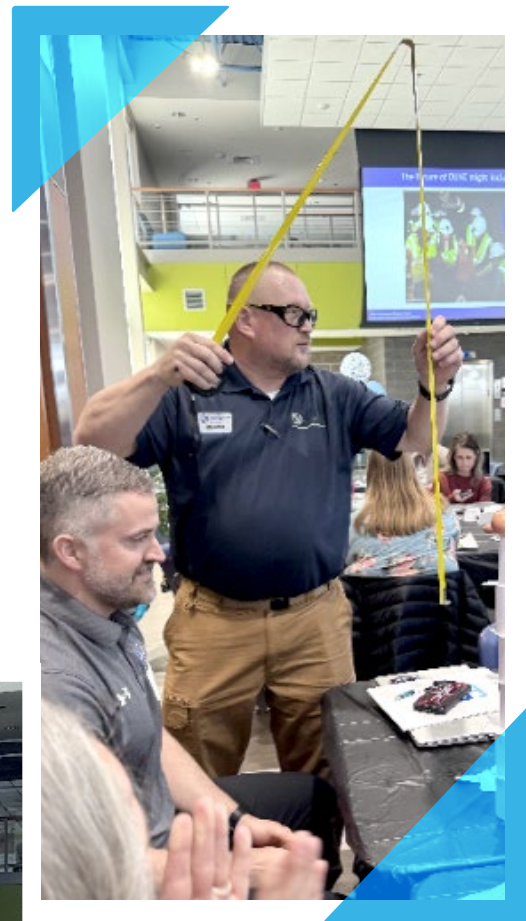
STC Graduates from the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy

Southeast Technical College is one of 19 colleges and universities that recently graduated from the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) Assessment Academy, which aims to enhance student learning and engagement.

<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2024/stc-graduates-from-hlc-assessment-academy.php>

Perkins Annual Consortium

Southeast Tech hosted the 2025 Eastern South Dakota Perkins Consortium annual meeting on March 10. The consortium brings school districts together to strengthen Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming and collectively collaborate with the support of Perkins V funding. Sessions at this year's conference were STEM focused, including a panel discussion with industry representatives, Sanford Underground Research experiment and opportunities in biotech. The consortium began in 2020 with 21 schools, and now has 36.



SOUTHEAST Technical College

STC and NSU Announce Integrated Admission Option for Students

Southeast Technical College and Northern State University in Aberdeen announced an innovative co-enrollment agreement that creates the first direct path between a technical college and state university in South Dakota. Starting fall 2025, students from any of Southeast Tech’s business programs may take one course each semester from Northern, that can be applied to both their AAS degree from STC, and a bachelor’s degree from Northern, should they choose to continue their education.



<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2025/stc-nsu-co-enrollment-agreement.php>



‘Our Story’ Student Magazine Wins Literary Award

“Our Story,” the student literary magazine at Southeast Technical College has been recognized as “Excellent” by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in the Recognizing Excellence in Art and Literary Magazines (REALM) contest.

<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2025/our-story-wins-literary-award.php>



IN THE NEWS

- **From Loss to Purpose: STC Student Turns Personal Tragedy into Nursing Career**

For Landen Kroger, a licensed practical nursing student at Southeast Technical College, the decision to pursue a career in healthcare was personal.

In 2019, Landen lost his grandmother and aunt to cancer, and both were very important people in his life. Their passings were within two months of one another.

<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2024/landen-kroger-build-dakota-nursing.php>

- **Alumni Feature: STC Graduate Named Civil Engineer of the Decade**

Cory Bauer is a Herried, S.D., native who began his notable career at Southeast Technical College. He was recently named “Top Civil Engineer of the Decade” for 2024 by the International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP).

<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2025/stc-grad-named-civil-engineer-of-decade.php>

- **STC Horticulture Instructor Tapped for Industry Blog**

LawnLove.com recently asked Southeast Technical College Horticulture instructor Benjamin Ringling to weigh in on the best growing conditions for apples in “Crisp Destinations: 2025’s Top 20 States for Apple Lovers.”

<https://www.southeasttech.edu/news/2025/stc-horticulture-instructor-tapped-for-industry-blog.php>



March 2025

S.D. Board of Technical
Education Report

Steve Willard, Ed.D.
WDTC Acting President

WESTERN
DAKOTA
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National Search Underway for WDTC's Next President



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Dr. Willard

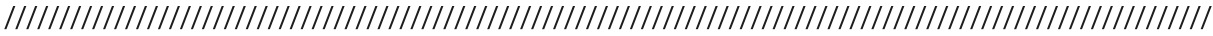
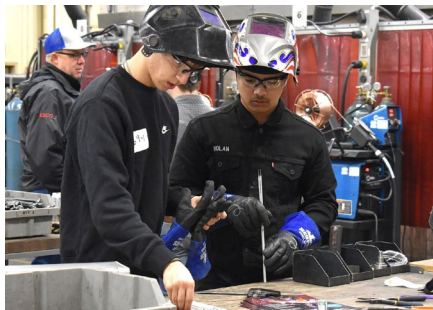


Hazard, Young, ATTEA, and Associates are actively recruiting for the President position at Western Dakota Technical College, with the goal of the new President taking office by July 1, 2025. The

recruitment process is underway to identify a strong leader for the institution. Until the President position is filled, Dr. Steve Willard has transitioned from his role of Board of Trustees Chair to Acting President.

High School 'Weld to Win' Competition Sets Participation Record

Western Dakota Technical College hosted its annual "Weld to Win" competition, bringing together 80 high school students (the most ever!) from nine schools to showcase their welding skills. This exciting event provided participants with the opportunity to demonstrate their talents in a competitive setting. The competition's top winner receives a Build Dakota Scholarship, supporting their future education and career in welding.



WDTC Hosts Engaging Spring Advisory Board Meeting



WDTC hosted its annual Spring Advisory Board meeting on Feb. 5, bringing together advisory board members for an engaging and informative session. Attendees received updates on the latest developments at the college. The event provided an opportunity for meaningful discussions and valuable insights to help shape the future of WDTC. As an additional bonus, guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres specially prepared by our talented in-house dining services staff.

Fresh, Locally Grown Produce Available in Campus Dining

Our campus dining staff has been growing fresh lettuce, and other seasonal produce, indoors using our hydroponic garden. This is bringing a new level of sustainability and freshness to meals served at the campus dining center, ensuring high-quality, nutritious ingredients straight from our own facility. We're excited to support sustainable food practices while providing delicious, farm-to-table options for our campus community.



Western Statewide Consortium Annual Meeting Greatly Attended



On March 3, Fawn Wilde, Director of Western Statewide Consortium, hosted the Western Statewide CTE Consortium Annual Meeting at WDTC. Approximately 80 people attended this year's meeting, which included CTE teachers, administrators, and counselors/advisors from the 21-member school districts, as well as five school districts that are part of the Three Rivers Special

Services Co-op, Department of Labor Regional Specialists, AHEC, and AI experts. The meeting provides an opportunity for all the participating districts to gather for professional development, networking, collaboration, data evaluation, and to review and plan to improve and enhance CTE programs.

Career Programs Showcased at Sturgis Brown Career Fair



Western Dakota Technical College (WDTA) participated in the 17th Annual Sturgis Brown High School Career Fair on Feb. 13, where students from the Northern Hills and surrounding areas explored future college/career opportunities. More than 900 students attended the event, along with 171 adults representing 118 businesses, post-secondary

programs and branches of military. WDTA offered students engaging with hands-on demonstrations from 17 WDTA programs. It was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the skills and training WDTA offers to help students prepare for their futures!



Dental Hygiene Program Moving Forward with First Cohort Slated for Fall 2026



The Dental Hygiene AAS degree program has received approval from both the Board of Technical Education and the Higher Learning Commission, marking an exciting milestone for Western Dakota Technical College. This program will help meet the growing demand for skilled dental hygienists, providing students with valuable career opportunities while enhancing access to quality oral healthcare in our community. We are on track to welcome our first cohort of students in Fall 2026.

WDTC Hosting Legislative Cracker Barrels



Western Dakota Technical College was pleased to host three Legislative Cracker Barrels, providing the community with direct access to local legislators as they shared insights and updates on key legislative topics. Each was well attended and a great way to showcase the college.



RapidRide Bus Stop Added Near WDTC

In response to our requests, the City of Rapid City has added a bus stop at Western Dakota Technical College, making campus more accessible for students who rely on public transportation. This new stop provides a convenient and affordable way for students to get to and from campus, ensuring better access to education and resources. We're excited about this improvement and the positive impact it will have on our students.



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