

Wor-Wic Community College's Response to the National Call to Action

Wor-Wic Community College welcomes the national conversation about the purpose, value and accountability of American higher education. As an open-access community college serving Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore, we see this call to action as an opportunity to reaffirm what has long guided our work: providing high-quality, affordable education; preparing students for meaningful careers and further study; supporting open and respectful inquiry; and strengthening the communities we serve.

Our response is grounded in Wor-Wic's mission: *Wor-Wic educates, engages and equips our students and communities for success*. It is guided by our vision, *Access and achievement for all*, and by our core values of access, community, diversity, learning, integrity, innovation and heart. These commitments are reflected every day in our classrooms, workforce programs, student services, community partnerships and stewardship of public resources.

Access, Affordability and Economic Mobility

Wor-Wic's vision of access and achievement for all calls us to provide seamless on-ramps for people pursuing their learning and vocational goals. Transparent tuition and fees, financial aid guidance, flexible scheduling, dual enrollment opportunities, seven-week courses, online and in-person options, student-centered services and student-ready instruction help reduce barriers that can stand between students and success.

We offer clear pathways to associate degrees, certificates, industry-recognized credentials, transfer and employment. Our partnerships with public schools, universities, employers, workforce organizations and community agencies ensure that learning is connected to opportunity. We measure our success not simply by enrollment, but by whether students persist, complete, transfer, earn credentials and move into family-sustaining careers.

Academic Excellence and Intellectual Inquiry

Wor-Wic is committed to rigorous teaching, evidence-based practice and continuous improvement. Our faculty challenge students to think critically, communicate clearly, solve problems and apply knowledge in real-world settings. Academic programs are reviewed through established assessment processes and, where applicable, are aligned with accreditation standards, professional licensure requirements and employer expectations.

Learning requires the freedom to ask difficult questions, examine evidence and consider different perspectives. We support constructive and respectful dialogue across viewpoints while maintaining a learning environment where every student is treated with dignity. The college does not endorse candidates, political parties or ballot measures.

Our role is educational: to develop informed students who can participate responsibly in their workplaces, communities and democracy.

Accountability, Transparency and Stewardship

As a public institution, Wor-Wic accepts its responsibility to students, families, taxpayers, employers and the broader community. We communicate program requirements and costs, assess student learning, review institutional outcomes, comply with state and federal requirements, maintain accreditation and use data to guide improvement. We also remain committed to responsible fiscal stewardship, ethical conduct and clear governance.

External accountability is built into many of our programs through advisory committees, employer partnerships, transfer agreements, professional standards, licensure expectations and programmatic accreditation. These relationships help ensure that our curriculum remains current, credible and responsive to the needs of students and the region.

Workforce Readiness and Community Impact

Wor-Wic's academic and workforce programs are shaped in partnership with the communities of the Lower Eastern Shore. We collaborate with employers and industry leaders to identify changing skill needs, strengthen career pathways, expand apprenticeships and work-based learning, and prepare students for fields essential to the region and the nation, including health care, education, public safety, business, cybersecurity, skilled trades and emerging technologies.

Our mission to educate, engage and equip extends beyond the classroom. When students earn credentials, transfer successfully, enter the workforce or advance in their careers, families become more secure, employers become stronger and communities become more vibrant. This is the transformational value community colleges deliver.

Student Success and Support

Students arrive at Wor-Wic with different experiences, responsibilities and goals. We meet them with high expectations and the supports needed to achieve them. Academic advising, tutoring, disability services, mental health counseling, financial aid assistance, career services, basic-needs connections and student engagement opportunities are integral to our educational mission.

Our values shape this work. Access means providing seamless on-ramps and student-sustaining supports. Community calls us to create supportive, inviting spaces and foster belonging. Diversity asks us to welcome all people and exchange ideas and experiences. Learning inspires curiosity and growth. Integrity requires honesty, respect and our best effort. Innovation challenges us to imagine and apply fresh solutions. Heart

calls us to lead, share and teach with compassion and empathy, to care and persevere, and to be good neighbors.

Our Continuing Commitment

In response to this national call to action, Wor-Wic Community College reaffirms that we will:

- Protect access to high-quality, affordable education and training;
- Strengthen student completion, transfer and career outcomes;
- Promote rigorous inquiry, academic integrity and respectful dialogue;
- Maintain transparency, accountability and responsible stewardship;
- Align programs with regional workforce needs and national priorities;
- Support students as whole people while holding high expectations for learning; and
- Work collaboratively with faculty, staff, trustees, employers, educational partners and the community to improve continuously.

This is not a temporary response to a national moment. It is the work expressed in our mission to educate, engage and equip our students and communities for success, and it is the work we will continue to advance with integrity, innovation and heart.

Students First. Excellence Always.