



# ANNUAL REPORT

## Cohort 9 2023-2024

Created for T. Denny Sanford and Governor Noem  
April 2024





# BUILD DAKOTA

## SCHOLARSHIP FUND



### Cohort 9 Annual Report

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## 1. BUILD DAKOTA ADMINISTRATION BOARD

The Build Dakota administration board was appointed by Governor Noem and consists of community leaders with diverse backgrounds in targeted, high-need industries:

### **Build Dakota Scholarship Administration Board Members and Staff**



Dana Dykhous, Chair  
CEO  
First Premier Bank  
Sioux Falls, SD



Diana VanderWoude, Vice Chair  
VP of Academic Affairs  
Sanford Health  
Sioux Falls, SD



Scott Knuppe  
Facility Manager  
Caterpillar, Inc.  
Rapid City, SD



Greg Carmon  
Owner  
Midwest Railcar Repair, Inc.  
Brandon, SD

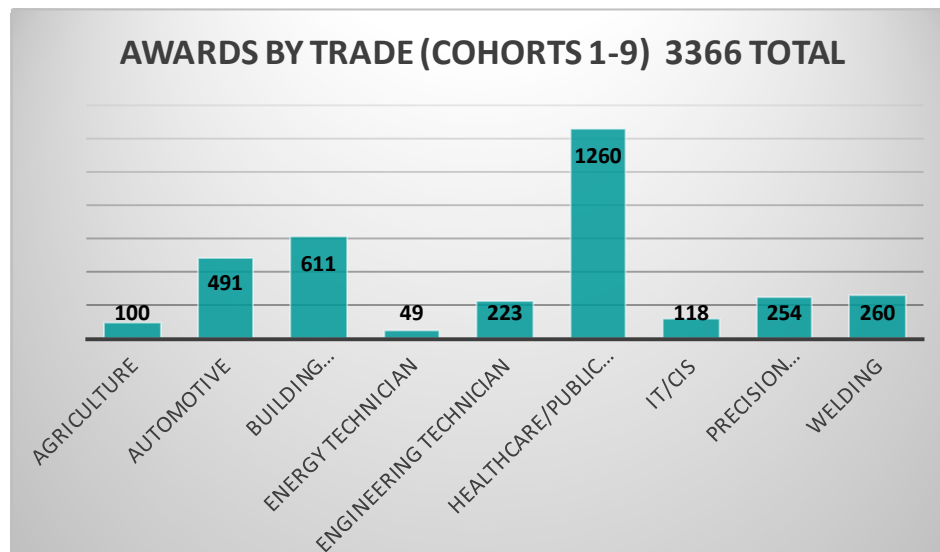
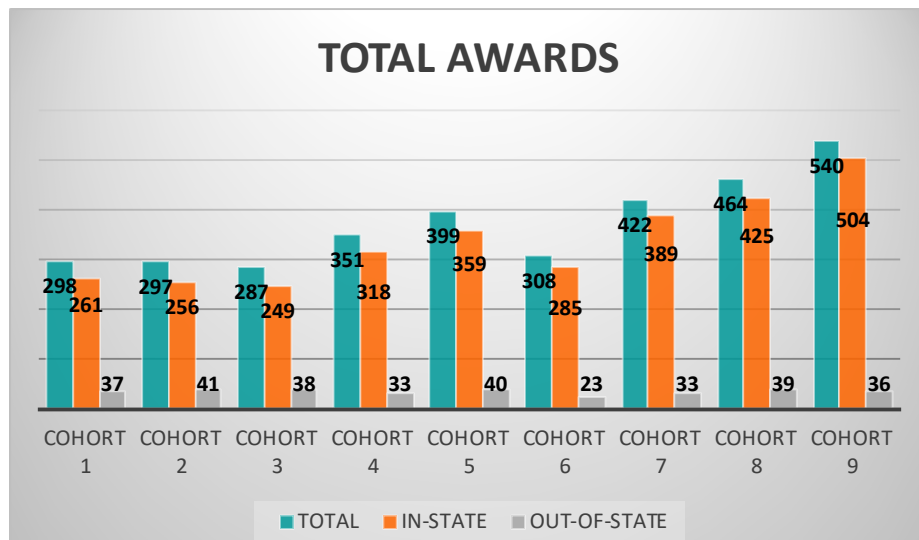
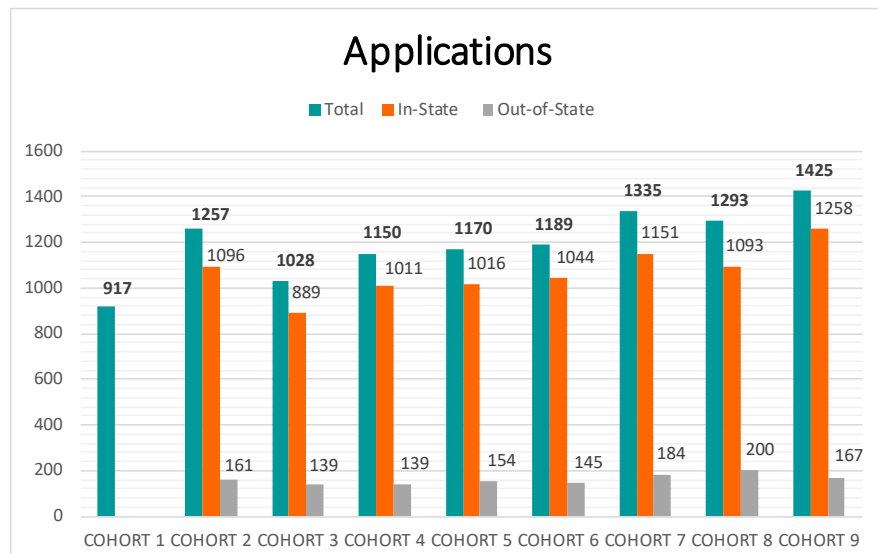


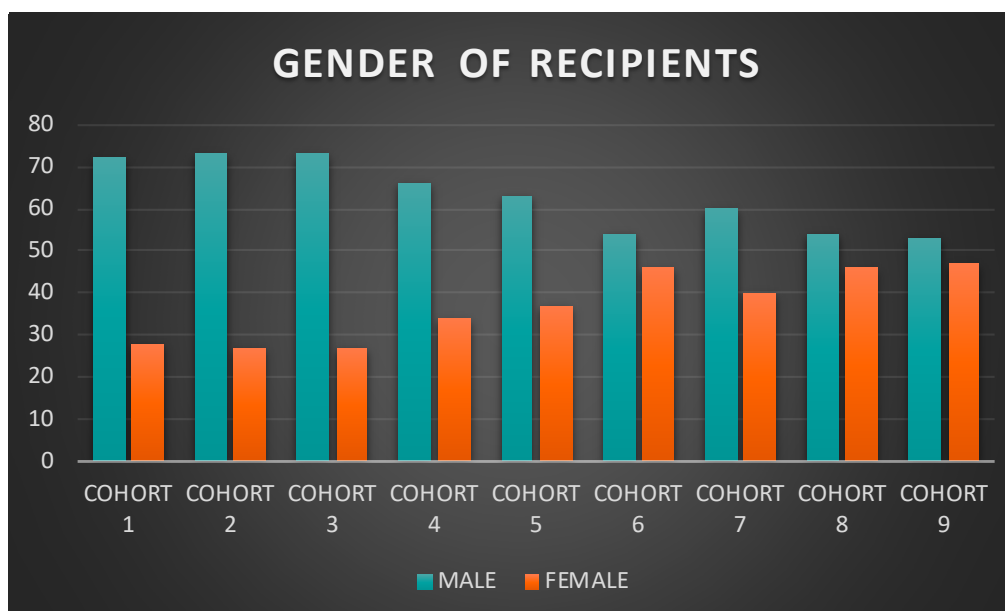
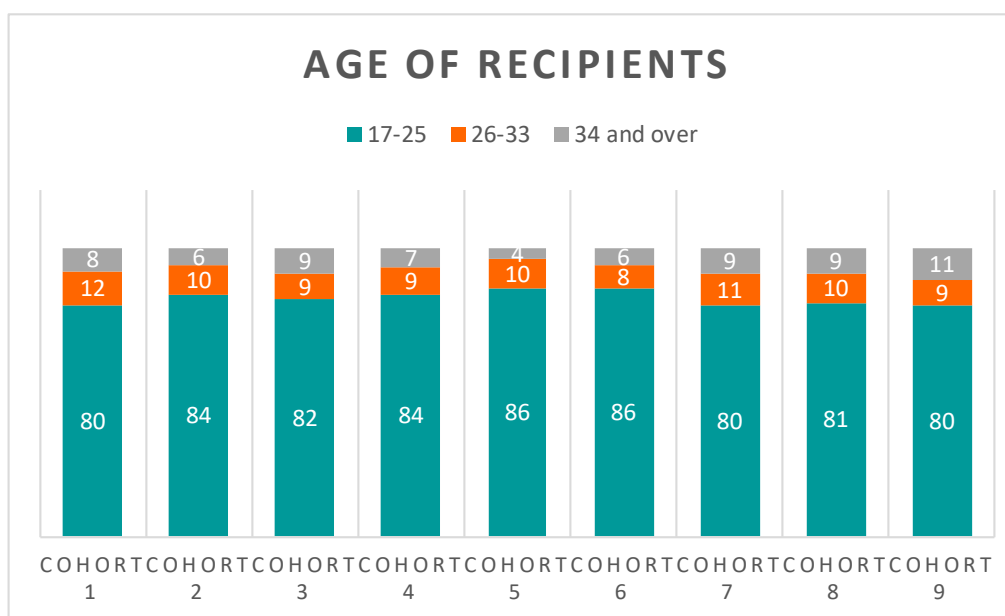
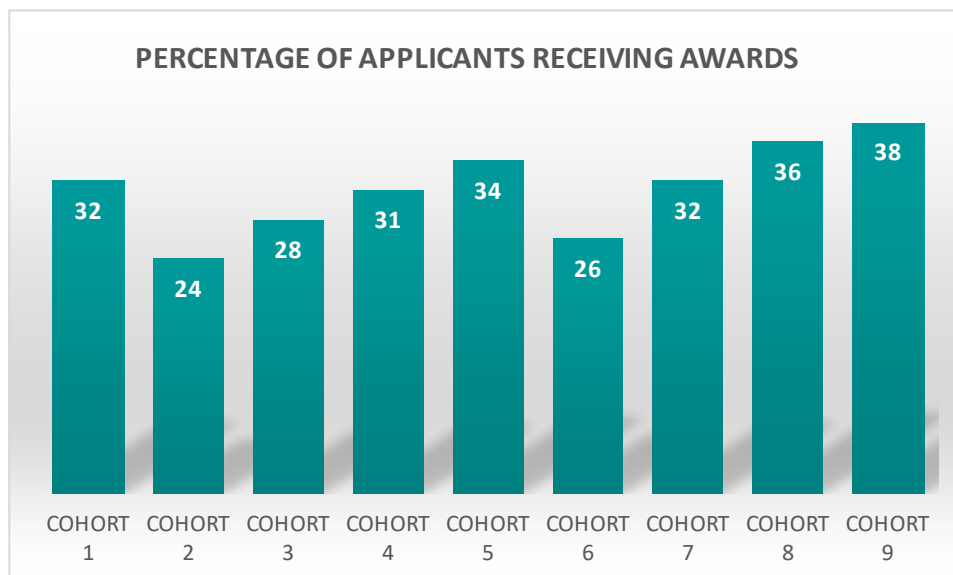
Derek DeGeest  
President  
DeGeest Corporation & LestaUSA  
Tea, SD

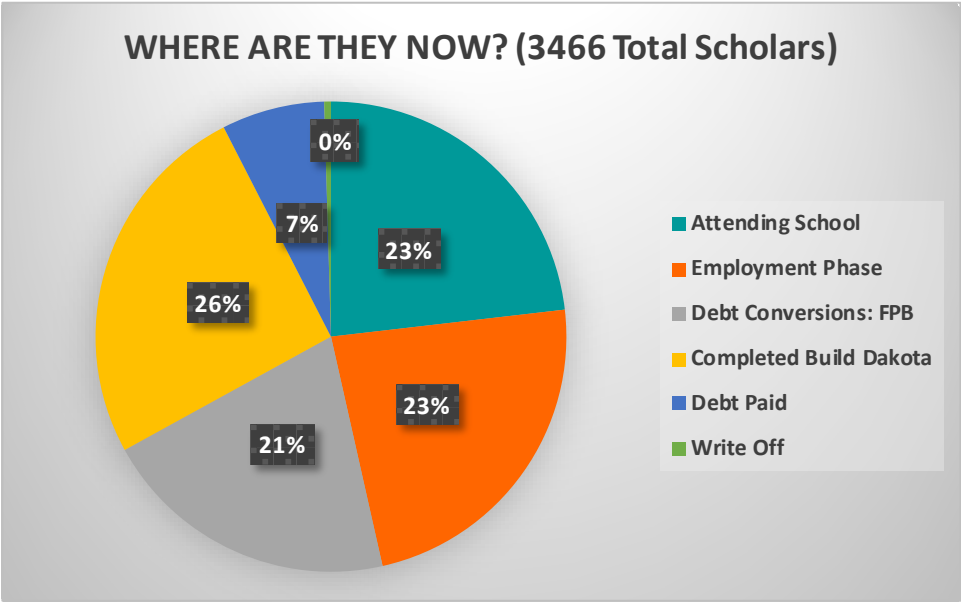
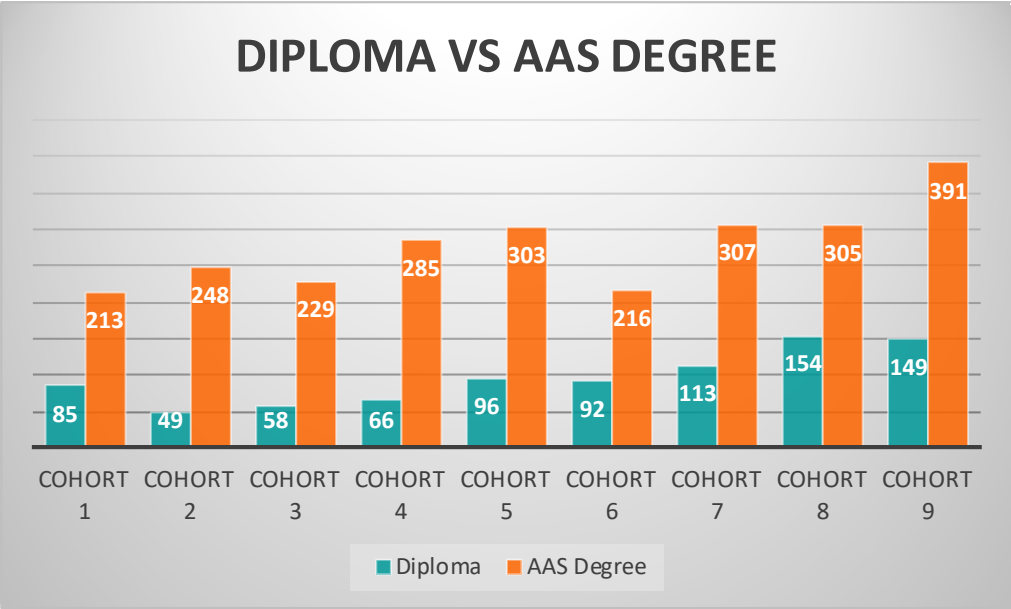


Deni Martin  
Program Manager  
Build Dakota Scholarship  
Wall, SD

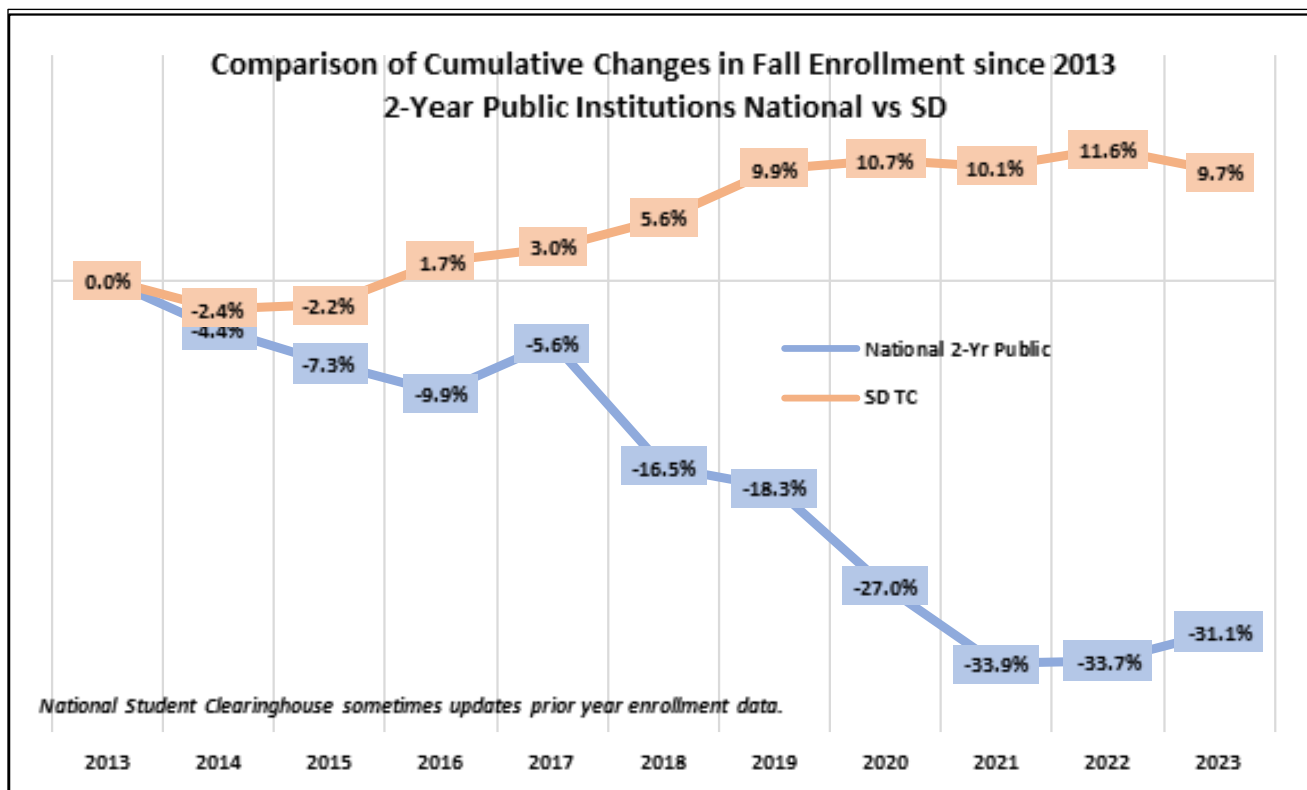
## 2. TARGETED AREAS OF STUDY: APPLICATIONS & AWARDS







- **Looking Ahead- New Programs Approved for Cohort 10:**
  - MTC: Medical Lab Assistant- AAS Degree
  - STC: Architectural Engineering Technician- AAS Degree
  - STC: Medical Lab Assistant- AAS Degree
  - WDTC: Health Information Management- Coding Specialty- AAS Degree



#### Comments from technical colleges regarding enrollment, programs and general school updates:

##### Lake Area Technical College:

##### LAKE AREA TECH CAMPUS UPDATE ARCHWAY PROJECT

Lake Area Technical College is scheduled to open the 57,900 sq. feet Archway Project just ahead of the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. The highly anticipated Archway Project ties the campus together via a walkway connecting two new buildings. The Advanced Manufacturing building will house the Robotics and Electronic Systems

Technology programs. The Dana J. Dykhous Business Center will house the Business, Financial Services, and General Education programs. The Archway Complex is part of the 1'm IN Capital Campaign.





### DENTAL ASSISTING REMODEL

A major remodeling project is underway in the Dental Assisting program area, giving the entire space a complete innovative renovation. The project will include:

- ❑ 10 fully functioning dental operatories for student use
- ❑ 14 state-of-the-art dental simulators that provide realistic training on mannequins for basic to advanced dental education
- ❑ Full dental lab facilities
- ❑ Dedicated patient waiting room
- ❑ Locker room for student use

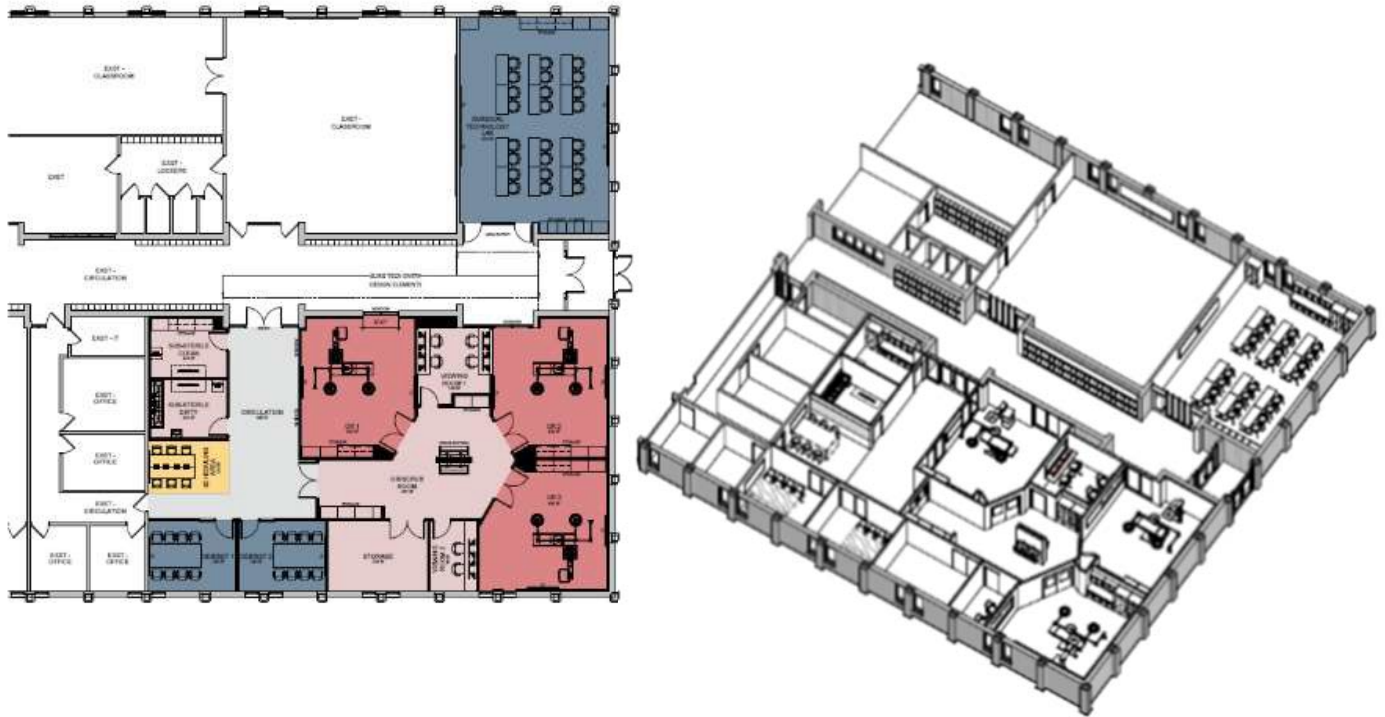
Construction will continue through the summer with the goal of opening the new Dental Assisting facilities in Fall 2024.



### SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY RENOVATION

Plans are also underway to construct a new home for Lake Area Tech's newest program, Surgical Technology. Construction is set to begin this spring and has come to fruition as a result of the program's high enrollment and interest. The expansion project will include three fully equipped state-of-the-art simulation operatories and sterilization simulation space along with debriefing rooms. In addition, dedicated classroom space will be added for the Surgical Technology program which is already full for the Fall of 2024.





### ACE A. BRANDT DIESEL CENTER

The new 18,000 square-foot Diesel Program expansion was completed in the summer of 2023 and opened for students in Fall 2023. The Ace A. Brandt Diesel Center expanded the Diesel Technology program's lab and classroom space to accommodate rapid growth and enables Lake Area Tech to meet the high-demand workforce needs in the diesel and transportation industry. The primary occupants of the new space are students in the Diesel Technology TechKnowledge option.



All building projects, additions, and remodels have been funded through industry and individual contributions, along with state funding; alleviating the need for bonds and preventing current and future college students from bearing any of the cost.

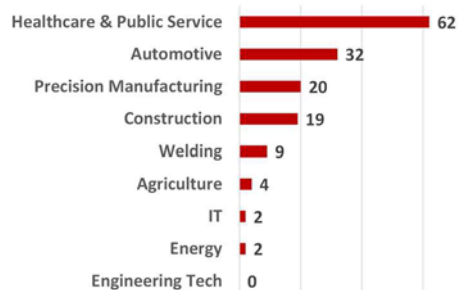
## ELIGIBILITY UPDATES

Starting in Cohort 9, Lake Area Tech was pleased that BDS eligibility was expanded to include:

- Law Enforcement, a 2-year A.A.S. degree with both on- campus and hybrid e-degree. In its first year of eligibility, one student earned the scholarship with a commitment to a STM Partner. Two additional students were awarded full scholarships without a partner to kick off the new eligibility. There has been quite a bit of interest from police departments and sheriff's offices from across the state since.
- LATC's new Surgical Technology program opened in Fall 2023. It is a 2-year A.A.S. degree. We were able to award five incoming students that committed to a STM Partner. Five companies signed up to partner, with three finding one match in the applicant pool and one finding two matches.
- Agri-Production became the third option within the Agriculture program that is eligible for Build Dakota. Five companies signed up to partner but no matches were made.



### Awards by Trade Sector



### Mitchell Technical College:

Mitchell Technical College hosted a ribbon cutting on March 21st for the new 36,000 sq. ft. Diesel lab addition. The new lab space allows MTC to bring the entire Diesel Technology program under one roof. The light truck division of the Diesel program had been located on the east side of Mitchell previously.

The Diesel program is currently at capacity for 2024. With the new lab completed MTC can continue to grow a successful Ag and Light Truck Diesel program.



Mitchell Tech is working to finalize funding for the expansion of our Energy Training Center and a new Indoor Underground Energy Lab. The growth of the Powerline Construction & Maintenance and Electrical Substation programs over the past 5 years led to a need for larger class and lab space. The Underground Training center will allow students to continue lab projects through the winter months.



Mitchell Tech is at capacity in many of our Build Dakota programs: Agronomy, Architectural Design and Building Construction, Electrical, Electrical Substation, Diesel, Heating & Cooling, Precision Ag, LPN, RN, Radiologic Technology and Welding.

### **Southeast Technical College:**

**STRENGTHENING OUR MISSION:** Since 2015, the Build Dakota Scholarship Program has played a pivotal role in enhancing Southeast Technical College's (STC) commitment to its workforce mission. Considering this, President Bob Griggs, on behalf of STC's faculty and staff, as well as our esteemed Build Dakota alumni and current students, extends heartfelt gratitude to Governor Kristi Noem and Mr. T. Denny Sanford for their steadfast support of technical education in South Dakota.

**ENROLLMENT UPDATE:** In Cohort 9, STC garnered 499 applications for the Build Dakota Scholarship, ultimately granting a total of 150 scholarships. Notably, all these scholarships were generously sponsored by 50 industry partners. Fall 2023 enrollment at STC hit a decade high with a total student headcount of 2,478, and that's on the heels of serving a record number of 3,095 total students and awarding 935 associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates during the 2022-23 academic year. It's worth noting that Build Dakota continues to play a pivotal role in our recruitment efforts, consistently contributing to positive outcomes in enrollment, retention, and graduation.

**NEW PROGRAMS:** In Cohort 9, STC expanded its program offerings to address the workforce demands in our region by introducing Mechanical Systems that combines HVAC/R and Plumbing into a versatile, high-wage career. Students may stack the Plumbing and HVAC/R diplomas and earn an associate degree.



Also, for Cohort 9, STC added the following Build Dakota-approved programs: Horticulture, Sports Turf Management, and Law Enforcement.

**LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT & HEALTHCARE SIMULATION CENTER** – In 2022, the legislature awarded STC \$4.5 million to renovate, starting in March 2023, an existing building located adjacent to STC's campus that formerly served as the home for Startup Sioux Falls. In partnership with the City of Sioux Falls, the Sioux Falls Development Foundation, the Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce, Forward Sioux Falls, Sanford Health, Avera Health, and the State of South Dakota, this STC facility opened in January 2024, and the building's Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting celebration was held on April 11, 2024. The STC Sim Center houses a high-tech healthcare simulation center, allowing Build Dakota healthcare programs to expand, including Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Registered Nurse (RN), Surgical Technology, Medical Laboratory Technician, and Invasive Cardiovascular Technology.



### **Western Dakota Technical College:**

The Computer Science Program at Western Dakota Technical College has been accredited as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity Program for Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) by the National Security Agency (NSA). The CAE Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) designation is awarded to regionally accredited academic institutions offering cybersecurity-related degrees including majors, minors, and/or certificates at the Associates, Bachelor's and graduate levels. The goal of the NCAE-C program is to promote and support quality academic programs of higher learning that help produce the nation's cyber workforce. Western Dakota Technical College is now the only 2-year college in a 750-mile radius of our campus and one of fourteen technical colleges in the entire country with this distinction.

### **BELLWETHER FINALIST**



### **Meeting the Need**

Centralizing Coordination of Scholarship Program

*Planning, Governance, and Finance:  
Programs or activities that have been  
designed and successfully implemented  
to improve efficiency and effectiveness  
in the community college.*

Our Practical Nursing Program is launching its third off-site location in Hot Springs, SD this upcoming August 2024. These off-site locations have allowed us to meet needs of surrounding communities in the Northern Hills (Whitewood, SD), East of Rapid City (Phillip, SD), and now Southern Hills in addition to the main campus in Rapid City. Also as of March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, all takers of the NCLEX from our LPN December graduating class have passed on their first attempt.

Our Foundation met with over 100 local leaders during our Regional Leaders Breakfast series in 2023 as it went through the Northern Hills, Southern Hills, West Central South Dakota, and Rapid City.

Western Dakota Technical College's Scholarships Office was recognized in February 2024 with as a National Bellwether Finalist for our work in improving the scholarship program. Improvement aspects included streamlining scholarship application process for students, increasing student applications for Foundation Scholarships and Build Dakota Scholarships, and strengthening participation from employers for Build Dakota Sponsorships.

## Outcomes – Build Dakota Improvements



BDS Cohort	Sponsors	Returning Sponsors	Sponsored Students
3 (2017)	1	0	4
4 (2018)	5	1	7
5 (2019)	6	1	7
6 (2020)	8	2	15
7 (2021)	16	4	33
8 (2022)	20	9	44
9 (2023)	24	14	65



**BUILD DAKOTA WDTC APPLICANTS**



### ➤ Timeline Notes:

2020: 1<sup>st</sup> Cohort with Scholarships Office

2021: 1<sup>st</sup> Cohort with 2-Person Scholarships Office

2023: 1<sup>st</sup> Cohort with 2 exempt employee Scholarship Office

#### 4. RECRUITMENT OF INDUSTRY PARTNERS

The technical colleges have developed industry partner programs to maximize the Build Dakota Scholarship funds and offer more scholarships than are otherwise available through Build Dakota specific funds. The industry partner programs assist students by working with businesses willing to pay a portion of the full-ride scholarship and again an employee who will fulfill their scholarship work commitment following graduation.

##### **Comments from technical colleges regarding success and challenges of recruitment and retention of industry partners:**

##### **Lake Area Technical College (Stretch-the-Million):**

In Cohort 9, a record-breaking 150 scholarships were awarded to LATC students pursuing high-demand careers in South Dakota. Healthcare & Public Service programs topped the award list with 62 awards, followed by Automotive (32), Precision Manufacturing (20), and Construction (19). Industry participation held steady with 82 companies signing up to participate in the April interview phase, 22 of which were new to the opportunity. Overall, there are 77 unique companies that partnered up with one or more Cohort 9 scholars.

In the past few years, we have noticed more students are applying with a partner already in place. The number continued to grow in Cohort 9 where 67 awardees were considered to be “recruits” - of which 15 were transitioning from LPN to RN Build Dakota. The number of recruits grew from 15 in Cohort 7 to more than 30 in Cohort 8. Oftentimes, a “recruit” has a previous connection with the company, such as a part-time job, internship, or job shadow. We also appreciate the continued support from the South Dakota Community Foundation and the Gil & Delores Miller Fund.

Overall, 310 applications were received. It continues to be a very competitive process. Lake Area Tech promotes Build Dakota as both an amazing opportunity and responsibility. We encourage students to review their contract with the STM partner in detail as well as with trusted advisers such as a parent, spouse, or mentor.

##### **Mitchell Technical College (Double Edge):**

Mitchell Tech continues to see many new employers partnering with the Build Dakota Scholarship. The continued success of the Double Edge partnership has led to new businesses to Mitchell Tech.

We are mid-way through the award process in cohort 9. Electrical Construction & Maintenance, Radiologic Technology, Nursing (RN and LPN) and Heating and Cooling partnerships have increased over last year’s final awards.

Mitchell Tech continues to retain nearly all our large industry partnerships. We continue to assist in filling high need areas in small communities throughout South Dakota. MTC continues to have many industry partners seeking one student to fill their company’s need.

MTC currently has an industry/financial partner for every student selected for a scholarship. Industry demand has outpaced qualified applicants in some areas: Heating and Cooling, LPN, RN, Medical Lab Tech.

While Mitchell Tech continues to see more applications than we currently have funding for, the bigger challenge is quality applications. MTC has seen a shift, where students put more effort into finding an industry partnership and less effort into the application process.

Challenges:

Mitchell Tech's biggest challenge is making strong partnership matches in a limited amount of time. The time from the application deadline (March 31st) to the time high schools host award ceremonies (early May) is short. In that time employers must review, interview, and agree to an industry partnership student. This has led to some industry partnerships ending prior to the 3-year work commitment.

#### **Southeast Technical College (Sponsor-a-Scholar):**

**INDUSTRY PARTNERS** – As Build Dakota has evolved this last decade, STC continues to see an increased interest from industry partners, especially in our health and trades-related programs. In fact, we have businesses and organizations contacting us year-round, from small towns to Sioux Falls, about how to sponsor a student through Build Dakota, and that didn't happen a few years ago. We also get a lot of out-of-state businesses from Minnesota and Iowa asking if they can participate in the program!

For Cohort 9, and as we are working on Cohort 10, we had to cap industry partners on the number of students they could sponsor because we did not have enough funds to allow all industry partners to sponsor the number of students they wanted. We estimate easily awarding 200+ sponsored students if the Build Dakota budget was larger. Furthermore, it is concerning to turn businesses away or cap their sponsorship numbers, as we worry this may eventually limit some businesses from having the opportunity to sponsor a student in future cohorts. The demand by industry sponsors is just that high! In fact, for Cohort 10, we had one industry partner alone request 120 students, and, of course, we had to deny this request. Also, more students are proactive to gain an industry sponsor because more people – students and parents – are aware of Build Dakota through the Build Dakota Roadshow, marketing campaigns, and witnessing students at their schools receive full ride Build Dakota Scholarships!

At STC, we also deal with internal program caps. We need funding to expand our health and trades programs to offer more cohorts, and this means building more facility/lab spaces and hiring more instructors and support personnel to serve more students. How does this impact Build Dakota? If a student is on a waitlist for a program, that student is not eligible to apply for Build Dakota until accepted to the program and sometimes that means they must wait a full year.

#### **Western Dakota Technical College (Have Your Pick):**

Interest from industry partners has grown consistently for the last 3 cohorts and into Cohort 10. For Cohort 7, there were 27 different companies that expressed interest in sponsoring with 19 sponsoring at least one student. For Cohort 8, that grew to 35 companies interested in sponsoring with 21 sponsoring at least one student. Cohort 9 grew again to 51 companies interested in sponsoring with 24 sponsoring at least one student. Cohort 10 already has 44 companies that have expressed interest in sponsorship, with 8 choosing to sponsor at least one student before the end of the January-March application cycle.



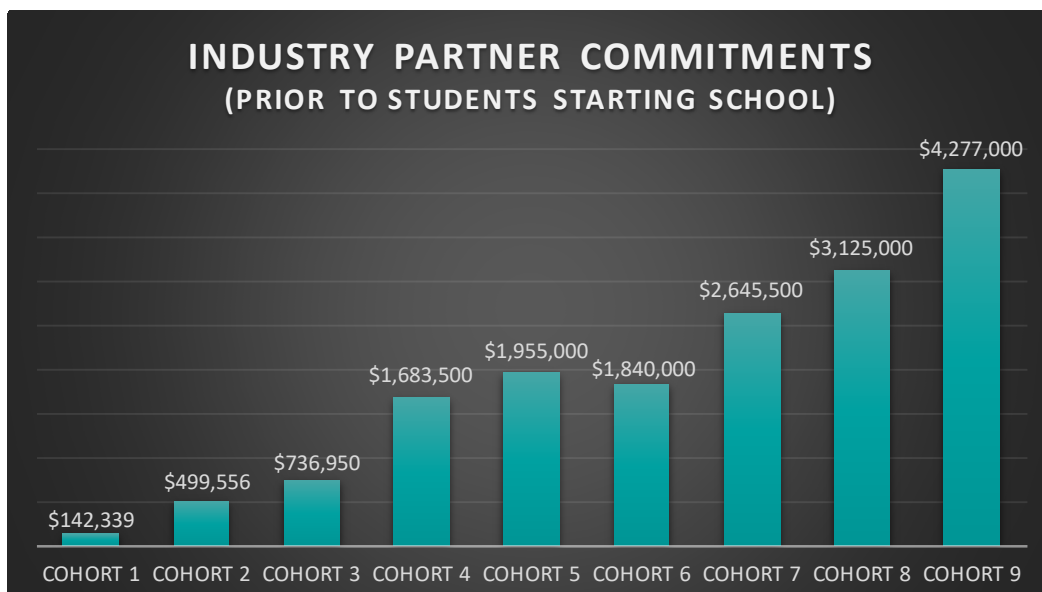
Industry demand is outpacing the applicant pool. We have seen multiple programs with more sponsors than applicants, especially trades areas such as HVAC/R Technology, Plumbing Technology, and Construction Technology. 100% in field employment rates of numerous BDS Programs from our most recent 2022 Placement Report also show how quickly industry is not only sponsoring but hiring graduates from the Build Dakota eligible programs. We also had one employer, Caterpillar Engineering Design Center, commit funds equivalent to a sponsorship for any Cohort 10 Architecture & Engineering recipient, to support industry growth even though they do not have a need to employ the recipient. This shows industry is recognizing the work Build Dakota is bringing to industry and supporting the overall growth even if not directly sponsoring students to work for them.

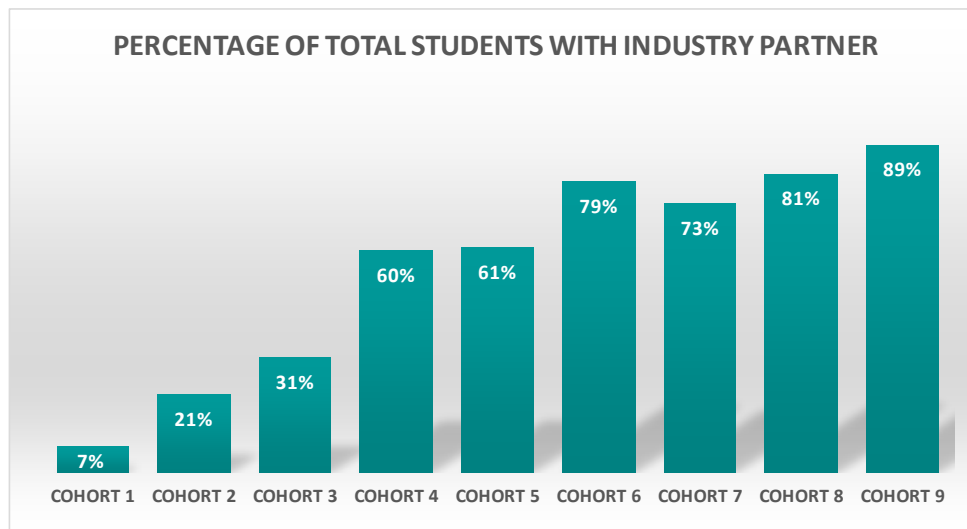


We had 11 employers participate in our 1<sup>st</sup> Sponsorship Networking Mixer on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. Over 30 individuals, applicants and those seeking more information about applying for Build Dakota, attended throughout the hour to meet the local employers seeking to sponsor students.



### **COMBINED EFFORTS!**





## 5. MARKET BUILD DAKOTA SCHOLARSHIP AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TECHNICAL CAREERS

- Lawrence & Schiller leads the overall marketing campaign, collaborating with state partners to promote the program with less expense.
  - **South Dakota Department of Education:** All of the Division of Career and Technical Education career development specialists and directors share the Build Dakota message and promotional materials with high school administrators, counselors and teachers. They also regularly invite the Build Dakota program manager to conventions, workshops and webinars to make sure Build Dakota remains on the forefront of discussion.
  - **South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation:** Each of the 16 Department of Labor offices across the state have provided education on Build Dakota as well as promotional flyers to distribute to job-seekers. Dual website cross promotion has also been very effective.
  - **South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development:** Representatives from this office and local communities have been instrumental in promoting the program.
  - **Build Dakota Staff:** Our staff continued high school roadshows and community outreach as well as training presentations for the SD Department of Labor staff. We also started reaching out to all newspaper, radio and television outlets to inquire if they would like to feature Build Dakota in any of their outlets. We've received great response from these efforts.
  - **South Dakota Technical Colleges:** Each technical college promotes Build Dakota in many capacities. Their admissions representatives deliver flyers and talk to interested parties as they travel across South Dakota and the surrounding states. Campus visitors are also provided an overview of the scholarship. The technical colleges have added Build Dakota to their own marketing campaigns, flyers, websites, commercials and billboards. Large

marketing pieces were designed by Lawrence & Schiller and delivered to each campus to increase awareness for visitors.

### **2023 BUILD DAKOTA MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS:**

2023 was an extremely successful year for Build Dakota marketing efforts. We helped reach prospective students and industry partners through a variety of different channels, including annual partner printed materials and resources, media campaign strategies with a refreshed creative look and feel, website content and maintenance, organic social media, Brand Ambassador promotion, earned media placements, and more.

The 2023 Build Dakota Scholarship paid media campaign was the first year that the campaign's target audience geared towards both traditional students (Adults 16-24) and non-traditional students (Adults 25-34), vs. solely traditional students previously. Media and creative channels included digital display banners, social ads, direct mail (consisted of postcards sent to SD High School Seniors), and sponsored content articles. These efforts ended with a grand total of **8,208,198 impressions** throughout 2023. The campaign saw **873 conversions** with a majority of those conversions being a click to program page interactions and clicks over to the school websites.

Compared to the previous year, in 2023 builddakotascholarships.com saw a **42% increase** in pageviews, **35% increase** in engaged sessions and an **increase in goal completions by 153%** including clicks to apply, clicks to contact Build Dakota Scholarships, Partners, and colleges and clicks directly to the colleges' websites.

The Brand Ambassador Program began its third year in 2023 working with ambassadors from the four technical colleges to create authentic content that resonates with our audience through the Build Dakota social channels. Through a combination of earned and paid efforts, the Facebook Page saw **4,000 visits**. There were **33.3k impressions** on Facebook, driving 1,466 total followers and 245 total page likes. Our Instagram account had **981 impressions** and 27 new followers encompassing 127 total followers. We created a LinkedIn account in 2023 and saw 192 impressions with 8 followers.

All these marketing efforts ladder up to Build Dakota's ongoing goals of continuing to create awareness of the scholarship program's offerings as well foster a positive perception of technical college education and growing the workforce in the state of South Dakota.

## 6. INCOME/EXPENSES

Information submitted by: Cassie Stoeser, Controller, South Dakota Community Foundation

	Year Ended					Year Ended			
	12/31/2014					12/31/2015			
	Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total		Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total
Beg. Bal	-	-		-		9,750,000	4,994,365	-	14,744,365
+ Contributions	9,750,000	5,000,000		14,750,000		-	5,000,000	159,030	5,159,030
+ Inv. Earnings		(5,364)		(5,364)		42,062	(587,999)	-	(545,936)
- Expenses		(272)		(272)		(4,106,487)	(59,613)	(59,590)	(4,225,691)
Ending Balance	9,750,000	4,994,365	-	14,744,365		5,685,575	9,346,753	99,439	15,131,767
	Year Ended					Year Ended			
	12/31/2016					12/31/2017			
	Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total		Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total
Beginning Balance	5,685,575	9,346,753	99,439	15,131,767		6,081,514	20,708,113	144,343	26,933,971
+ Contributions	5,025,695	10,000,000	132,664	15,158,359		10,032,202	5,000,000	-	15,032,202
+ Inv. Earnings	20,932	1,458,246	1,173	1,480,351		27,389	3,667,909	1,602	3,696,900
- Expenses	(4,650,688)	(96,886)	(88,933)	(4,836,507)		(4,234,601)	(177,695)	(86,687)	(4,498,984)
Ending Balance	6,081,514	20,708,113	144,343	26,933,971		11,906,505	29,198,327	59,258	41,164,089
	Year Ended					Year Ended			
	12/31/2018					12/31/2019			
	Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total		Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total
Beginning Balance	11,906,505	29,198,327	59,258	41,164,089		7,405,287	27,301,506	111,497	34,818,290
+ Contributions	87,238	9,000	93,540	189,778		130,104	-	100,000	230,104
+ Inv. Earnings	53,280	(1,717,884)	1,044	(1,663,560)		29,362	3,561,312	1,264	3,591,939
- Expenses	(4,641,736)	(187,937)	(42,345)	(4,872,018)		(5,576,757)	(188,603)	(105,092)	(5,870,453)
Ending Balance	7,405,287	27,301,506	111,497	34,818,290		1,987,996	30,674,215	107,669	32,769,880
	Year Ended					Year Ended			
	12/31/2020					12/31/2021			
	Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total		Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total
Beginning Balance	1,987,996	30,674,215		32,662,211		9,987,521	34,813,445		44,800,966
+ Contributions	10,245,397	2,100,000		12,345,397		392,099	-		392,099
+ Inv. Earnings	5,704	4,409,018		4,414,722		-	2,730,432		2,730,432
- Expenses	(4,467,680)	(153,685)		(4,621,364)		(4,756,404)	(181,466)		(4,937,870)
Inter-Fund Transfers	2,216,104	(2,216,104)		-					
Ending Balance	9,987,521	34,813,445	-	44,800,966		5,623,216	37,362,411	-	42,985,627
	12/31/2022					12/31/2023			
	Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total		Sanford	Endowment	SDDOE	Total
Beginning Balance	5,623,216	37,362,411		42,985,627		673,239	35,280,974		35,954,213
+ Contributions	428,839	2,100,000		2,528,839		676,357	14,200,000		14,876,357
+ Inv. Earnings	-	(4,000,105)		(4,000,105)		-	5,172,746		5,172,746
- Expenses	(5,378,816)	(181,333)		(5,560,148)		(5,117,479)	(198,087)		(5,315,567)
Inter-Fund Transfers						3,900,000	(3,900,000)		
Ending Balance	673,239	35,280,974	-	35,954,213		132,117	50,555,633	-	50,687,750

## 7. FUTURE FOCUS

- The Build Dakota administration board, program manager and technical colleges will continue to promote and expand technical college industry partner programs.
- Continue to work with technical colleges to increase the quality of applicants and maintain a low default rate.

### 10-Year Strategic Planning:

Thanks to the generosity of First Premier Bank, they funded an extensive strategic planning session with RVM Consulting. Several stakeholder focus groups were conducted under the guidance of the Build Dakota administration board. As a result, several future goals have been established for us to complete over the next three years.

- Ensure the financial stability of Build Dakota by securing future funding.
- Increase the awareness of the Build Dakota Scholarship through networking, targeted marketing, and brand toolkits.
- Create a welcoming/approachable experience from career exploration (8<sup>th</sup> grade) to post graduation.
- Define the desired qualities of industry partners and expand staffing and resources to support continued industry partner growth.
- Complete a full review of current Build Dakota programs offered at the technical colleges.

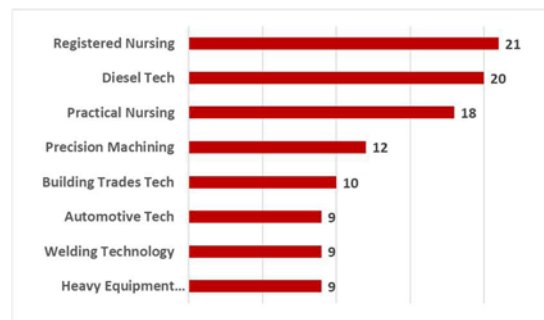
### Comments from technical colleges regarding future focus/goals for Build Dakota on each campus:

#### Lake Area Technical College:

LATC's Foundation continues to manage all aspects of the Build Dakota Scholarship. The Foundation works very close with Admissions, Marketing, Outreach, Financial Aid, Student Services, Bookstore, Data Team, and program staff.

In Cohort 9, Registered Nursing and Diesel Technology saw the most BDS awards made, with Practical Nursing in a close third position. A fair number of Precision Machining, Building Trades, Automotive, Welding and Heavy Equipment Operator awards were also made.

As we look forward, we continue to evaluate and identify programs that have high need and demand in the State of South Dakota. LATC continues to seek qualified applicants for Build Dakota. During the last few weeks of our application cycle (Jan. 1 – Mar. 31), the Build Dakota Team worked closely with our Admissions team to reach out to potential applicants via email and text to encourage them to apply for Build Dakota.



Having added Law Enforcement, Surgical Technology and Agriculture Agri-Production as approved Build Dakota Scholarship programs has put a spotlight on those programs. Specifically, Law Enforcement had an enrollment of 17 for Fall of 2023 and is already anticipating 26 for Fall of 2024. Surgical Technology had a full cohort of 12 for their first year at LATC in fall of 2023 and is currently already full at 21 for Fall of 2024 with a waiting list. In addition to program growth, the interest in these programs continues to grow with Stretch-the-Million partners.

As the need for quick turn around and high demand for a skilled workforce, the South Dakota Board of Technical Education has approved three new certificate programs that will begin in the Fall of 2024.

Certificates include:

- Phlebotomy
- CNC Operator
- Manufacturing Maintenance Technician

### **Mitchell Technical College:**

Mitchell Tech continues to promote the Build Dakota program on all levels. We continue to educate students, parents, educators, counselors, workforce development professionals and industry partners about the benefits of Build Dakota and the Double Edge program. MTC travels to support the Build Dakota Road Show event arranged by Deni.

The Mitchell Tech enrollment team continues to support and promote the Build Dakota scholarship program at career and educational events not only in South Dakota but throughout the Great Plains region.

The dedication to the Build Dakota program does not stop after a student is awarded the scholarship. Each Build Dakota Scholar is assigned a student success coach who will work with them as they progress in their program.

For the second year in a row, MTC should have 100% of our Build Dakota students awarded with a financial partnership.

### **Southeast Technical College:**

**COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY** – Since President Robert Griggs' tenure began in 2016, a top priority for STC is engaging business and civic leaders through Sector Breakfasts. The goal of these events is to generate feedback and ideas in a setting that allows for open discussion regarding industries' greatest needs. From these events, new programs that are Build Dakota eligible have emerged: (1) Dental Assisting (new for Cohort 8); (2) Paramedic Science (new for Cohort 7); (3) Behavioral and Mental Health Technician (new for Cohort 10); (4) Medical Lab Technician (new for Cohort 10); and (5) Respiratory Therapist (new for Cohort 10). Other non-Build Dakota programs have also started within the last few years from these efforts: Community Health Worker, Medical Assistant, Human Resource Management, Risk and Investment Management, and Veterinary Technician.

**BUILD DAKOTA GOALS** – Ongoing goals for STC's Build Dakota program include the following: (1) Strive for 100% of Build Dakota students sponsored to stretch our dollars and provide scholarships to as many students as possible; (2) Increase the number of businesses who sponsor students; (3) Remain

consistent with holistic advising of Build Dakota Scholars and having them assigned/tracked by one Student Success Advisor; (4) Annually evaluate the tiered sponsorship model for industry sponsors; and (5) Celebrate our Build Dakota Scholars and industry partners at the Build Dakota Signing Day in June.



**Western Dakota Technical College:**

Over the next couple of years, Western Dakota Technical College's advancement focuses for Build Dakota are:

- 1) Grow the Sponsorship Networking Mixer event to provide a forum to guide applicants in actively communicating with potential sponsors.
- 2) Work with Lake Area, Mitchell, and Southeast Technical Colleges to implement standardization goals from the Build Dakota Strategic Plan currently under development.



## 8. SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE TECHNICAL COLLEGES

### Lake Area Technical College:



#### JASMINE GREEN | COHORT 6 HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Jasmine shared her story on April 22, 2024, during the 22nd Annual Governor's Luncheon, featuring South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem.

#### I didn't think college was in the cards for me

Jasmine graduated from Ipswich High School in 2019. At the time, she didn't think she could afford college, so she went straight into the workforce.

One day, a co-worker encouraged her to apply for the Build Dakota Scholarship. Jasmine decided to apply, and received an offer from Associated General Contractors of South Dakota - Heavy Highway Utilities Chapter.

She would receive a full-ride scholarship and be able to work for any AGC HHU Chapter member during her 3-year work commitment to S.D.

Jasmine graduated from Lake Area Tech in May 2022 and was thrilled to be offered a position at Webster Scale, a heavy highway construction company based in Webster, SD.



Learn more at [BuildDakotaScholarships.com](https://BuildDakotaScholarships.com)



**AGC SOUTH DAKOTA**  
HIGHWAY-HEAVY-UTILITIES CHAPTER  
THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

Associated General Contractors of S.D. has been partnering with Lake Area Tech and Build Dakota Scholarship since the early years of Cohort 2.

Since 2016, AGC has sponsored 9 students as they pursued a Heavy Equipment Operator degree, ready to commit to share their skills with our state after graduation. An additional 3 Stretch-the-Million partnerships with AGC are pending for Cohort 10.

Applicants are drawn to AGC's unique partnership because it offers multiple networking opportunities with its chapter members.



#### AGC OF SD: HIGHWAY-HEAVY-UTILITIES STRETCH-THE-MILLION PARTNER

Toby Crow, Vice President of Associated General Contractors of SD-Heavy Highway Utility Chapter, is in center. On the right is one of AGC's sponsored students - Jasmine Green, a May 2022 graduate of LATC Heavy Equipment Operator program and Cohort 6 scholar. On the left is Joel Shoemaker, Vice President of Webster Scale and AGC board member.



Learn more at [BuildDakotaScholarships.com](https://BuildDakotaScholarships.com)

**Mitchell Technical College:**

“Prior to hearing about Build Dakota my future was uncertain and without direction. From my small town in Oklahoma, it is incredibly difficult to find and compete for scholarships, especially for those going into the trades. Upon finding Build Dakota, a world of possibility opened for me. This program has helped me build an extremely solid base for both my personal and professional future and has allowed me to experience a new part of the country that I otherwise would’ve never seen. I am extremely grateful for the opportunities that this scholarship has brought and continues to bring. I truly cannot thank this program enough and look forward to seeing how it impacts more students' lives in the future.”

Braxton Fowler

1<sup>st</sup> year Architectural Design and Building Construction

Industry Partner: Summit Contracting

“Mitchell Tech’s Build Dakota partnership has been such a blessing for Avera. The solid programs and instructors have prepared our students for rural healthcare here in South Dakota. Our staff and patients have benefited greatly because of this opportunity.”

Kat Haartstad

Avera Healthcare

“Build Dakota has brought me the opportunity to focus on school and not have to worry about the financial side of things. With the program I am enrolled in, it is very intense and being able to strictly focus on school and not having to worry about a part-time job has been a relief for myself and my family. I have also been able to network with many leaders and directors within the Sanford system in the Radiology Department. Being able to network with people in the field has brought many opportunities to me and I am very grateful and excited that Sanford and Build Dakota have given me this opportunity to become the best that I can be!”

Peyton Fisher

Radiologic Technology Student

## Southeast Technical College:



### **Cohort 9, Surgical Technology, Avera Health A DREAM REALIZED!**

Dewas Gajmer is also a graduate of the Avera Academy!

Dewas' parents are both medically unable to work. Throughout high school he worked to help pay the family's bills. He also bought a car for his family.

"If it was not for the Build Dakota Scholarship, I wouldn't have been able to attend college...I would have had to work a fulltime job to pay my bills."

"The moment I decided I wanted to become a surgical technician was when my dad had his kidney transplant in 2014."



### **Cohort 9, Automotive Technology, Brookings Auto Mall TALENTED AND DETERMINED!**

"I lived with my grandparents all my life. My stepdad knew how to work on cars if they ever broke down, and I thought it was neat. So, I figured it was something I could do, and it's something I enjoy doing! Also, mechanics are needed, and I like being part of a change."

"Having the Build Dakota scholarship means everything to me. Like I said, I have lived with my grandparents, and my grandfather always worked, and my grandmother collects disability. I now only live with my grandmother, so I pay for mostly everything we need."

"Build Dakota will have a huge impact on my life because it gives me a better chance to make more money without having the debt of school."

### **Western Dakota Technical College:**

Two student success stories we are sharing are Anthony Kitchens (Architecture & Engineering Technology) and Quinn Ernst (Automotive Technology). To best understand the impact the Build Dakota Scholarship has made for them, we asked them to share their experiences:

#### **Quinn Ernst**

Before applying for the Build Dakota Scholarship, I never thought I could afford the investment in myself to go to school. Receiving the Build Dakota Scholarship has changed my life and allowed me to follow my dream of becoming a mechanic. Going to college has been a very positive experience for me and I would not do a single thing differently. It has prepared me for a future of success and fulfillment in the automotive industry.

#### **Anthony Kitchens**

I was fortunate enough to receive the Build Dakota Scholarship for the Architectural and Engineering Technologies program at Western Dakota Technical College. To say this was an honor is an understatement. I am grateful for this opportunity every day. Receiving this scholarship has afforded me the opportunity to spend more time on my studies while also allowing time with my family. As a husband and father of 3 young children, I have learned just how valuable time is. I have to manage my time very wisely. Between classes, homework, housework, and helping my children with their homework, there is very little time left at the end of the day. I am able to spend quality with my family and make memories that will last a lifetime, instead of working every spare minute to pay for college. My children also see the example I have set for them. I have proven that it does not matter how old someone is, it's never too late to pursue old or new dreams. I have also shown them with hard work and determination, other people will believe in you too, and help you along the way. I have enjoyed comparing grades with my 5th grade daughter, and seen her pride grow as she shows me her hardworking paying off as well. This scholarship has truly been a blessing that I am thankful for every day. I will continue to strive for that 4.0 GPA to prove just how much it means to me. Thank you for everyone involved in the excellent program. I look forward to shaking hands with each of you at graduation.

### **Two Industry Partner Success Stories:**

Floyd's Truck Center has been a supporter of the Diesel Technology program at Western Dakota Technical College for over a decade. 52% of their Diesel Technicians are WDTC graduates going back 24 years, including multiple Build Dakota recipients. In the 9<sup>th</sup> Cohort of the Build Dakota Scholarship, they decided to add Build Dakota Sponsorship to the numerous ways they support the program here under the leadership of the Rapid City Manager, Jon Gillam. This year, they were our nominee for the Silver Star of Excellence Award from the American Technical Education Association. We received word in March that they were selected as the winner for this national award.



Midwestern Mechanical has sponsored students through Western Dakota Tech's 'Have Your Pick Program' since the 7<sup>th</sup> Build Dakota Cohort. In addition to sponsoring the six students through Cohort 9, they proactively participate in the learning process. They communicate to ensure the students they sponsor have work opportunities that fit around their class schedule. In addition, they utilize the work opportunities as additional learning experiences, not just extra work hands. In the testimonial they provided to encourage other companies to participate in Build Dakota Sponsorships they said:

Midwestern Mechanical has been fortunate enough to work with Western Dakota Technical College as support on their advisory boards and the school has been very receptive to working on curriculum together to the benefit the graduates. Our company has multiple Build Dakota Scholarship recipients on board in both the Plumbing and HVAC/R trades and they have been a great asset to the company. We recently had one graduate pass his Journeyman test and another to take the test this coming spring. We are very satisfied with the quality of applicants for the Build Dakota Scholarships and their ability to do the work needed for us. We definitely plan on utilizing Western Dakota Technical College in the future to keep adding to our workforce.