

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 11, 2017

Private universities address Foxconn workforce

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) today delivered a memorandum to each Wisconsin legislator. The memorandum (attached) addresses higher education’s capacity to meet Foxconn’s workforce needs.

About WAICU:

The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) is the official organization of Wisconsin’s 24 private, nonprofit colleges and universities. WAICU is dedicated to expanding educational opportunity for students and is nationally recognized for its innovative programming to control college costs and for its partnerships with employers to provide skilled graduates.

WAICU members include Alverno College, Bellin College, Beloit College, Cardinal Stritch University, Carroll University, Carthage College, Columbia College of Nursing, Concordia University Wisconsin, Edgewood College, Lakeland University, Lawrence University, Marian University, Marquette University, Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Mount Mary University, Nashotah House, Northland College, Ripon College, St. Norbert College, Silver Lake College, Viterbo University, and Wisconsin Lutheran College.

###

Contact:

Cassandra Krause, Director of Communications and Marketing

Email: cassandra.krause@waicu.org

Phone: 608-204-5225

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
BELOIT COLLEGE
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
CARROLL UNIVERSITY
CARTHAGE COLLEGE
COLUMBIA COLLEGE OF NURSING
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
LAKELAND UNIVERSITY
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
MARIAN UNIVERSITY



WISCONSIN'S PRIVATE, NONPROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
WORKING TOGETHER FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN
MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY
NASHOTAH HOUSE
NORTHLAND COLLEGE
RIPON COLLEGE
ST. NORBERT COLLEGE
SILVER LAKE COLLEGE
VITERBO UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 10, 2017

To: WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

From: Dr. Rolf Wegenke, President
Wisconsin Association of Independent
Colleges and Universities

Subject: **Foxconn Workforce in Wisconsin**

The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) is in enthusiastic support of locating Foxconn in this state and applauds the professionalism of Wisconsin's leadership in bringing this opportunity to Wisconsin.

At last week's Assembly hearing, questions were raised about Wisconsin's capacity to supply the thousands of highly trained and educated workers Foxconn needs – particularly in engineering and information technology. Dr. Ray Cross, president of the UW System, and Dr. Mike Lovell, president of Marquette University, gave forthright, but encouraging, responses. Higher education in Wisconsin – both public and private – has a long history of fostering excellence in responding to economic and civic needs. I wish to build on Drs. Lovell and Cross' remarks, focusing on what I know best, Wisconsin's 24 private, nonprofit colleges and universities:

Overall, WAICU members graduate 27 percent of the bachelor's degrees in the state and 37 percent of the advanced degrees. In recent years, WAICU members also produce:

- 31 percent of the state's engineering graduates
- 28 percent of the state's computer/information system graduates
- 29 percent of the state's undergraduate business degrees and 46 percent of advanced degrees in business.

Of course, when I think of engineering, I think first of the Milwaukee School of Engineering and of Marquette University, but Foxconn – and other Wisconsin employers (isn't it great to say Foxconn is a Wisconsin employer?) – also will need chemists and human resource professionals and accountants. The Capitation Program has a long, and successful, history of incentivizing students to enter critical occupations. We must do more to have more.

I worked in economic development – particularly international trade and investment – in the administration of five Wisconsin Governors, both Democrats and Republicans. I have been asked if the Foxconn development has made me sorry I left. I would answer that I never left: education is economic development – and much more.

I would be happy to answer any questions.