

Northwood Tech

Volume 21

IMPACT



Ashland New Richmond Rice Lake Superior Balsam Lake Hayward Ladysmith Shell Lake

Content

Volume 21

New skills center boosts local workforce

Learn how this advanced training facility equips individuals with in-demand manufacturing skills, SACA credentials, and workforce opportunities to solve skilled labor shortages and fuel regional economic growth.



4

Transforming training with immersive simulation

Cutting-edge simulation technology enhances emergency response training, equipping students with critical skills to better serve underserved communities.



6

Ways to hack college

Discover ways to reduce college costs and earn credits at Northwood Tech through financial aid, military benefits, dual credit, scholarships, and apprenticeships.



14

Anchored in Excellence

Alaskan Evan Plumb chose Northwood Tech's Marine Repair Technician program for its hands-on training. After graduating, he secured a marine mechanic job, highlighting the program's career success.

- President's message
- A head start on career success
- 8 Seamless transfers
- 10 Driving demand
- Mobile training expansion
- Surgical Technology | Power Sports expands to Superior
- 15 600-mile journey
- Your investment, their future: foundation annual report

Northwood Tech Impact

is published for the community, alumni and friends of Northwood Technical College.

Northwood Tech is part of the Wisconsin Technical College System, with four campus locations (Ashland, New Richmond, Rice Lake and Superior), three outreach centers (Balsam Lake, Hayward and Ladysmith) and a Health Education Center in Shell Lake.

Visit our website at NorthwoodTech.edu



©2025 Northwood Technical College. All rights reserved. Northwood Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to manage inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Amanda Gohde, Associate Vice President, Talent & Culture; 1900 College Drive, Rice Lake, WI 54868; Amanda.Gohde@ NorthwoodTech.edu; phone: 715.645.7042.









Message from **President John Will**



Mission: Students First

We strenathen communities by empowering each student to realize their own success story.

Vision: Transforming Communities

We aspire to be the recognized education leader in the workforce development and community engagement through our students' success.

Values:

Collaboration, Innovation, Excellence, Community, Support, Integrity, Respect

Greetings,

Northwood Tech is continuously adapting and innovating to better serve our students and the broader community.

This past year, the College updated its mission, vision and values to better reflect its priorities. Based on a process driven by our faculty and staff, a more individualized approach is reflected in the new mission statement of "Students First," where the student is empowered to define what success means to them. This can mean completing traditional programming on campus, finishing a short-term academy while in high school at one of our mobile labs, earning a digital badge, or completing an apprenticeship. It also can mean completing a course or certification. This mirrors the growing trend of education and work becoming more interwoven, and students have more and more opportunities to determine when, where, and how they learn. It is through this collective student success that the new vision statement of "Transforming Communities"

is realized. We strive to make the

communities we serve better through the individual successes and contributions of our students, who now have better access to education than at any point in history. These changes, along with revised values, are already guiding decisions and discussions in how Northwood Tech operates to better meet students where they are in their life and career.

Dr. John Will, President

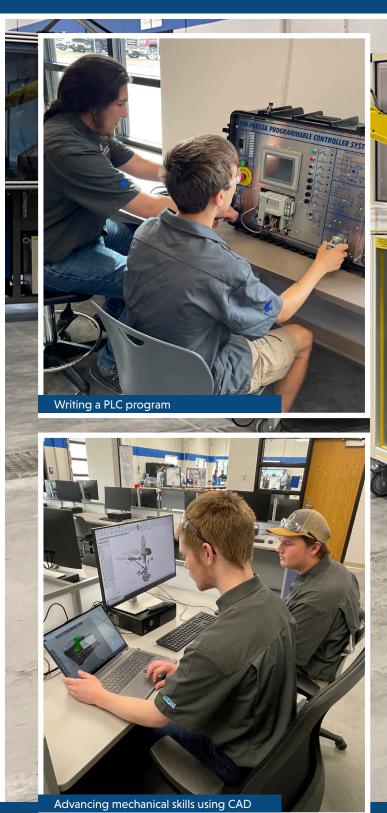


ST. CROIX MANUFACTURING SKILLS CENTER

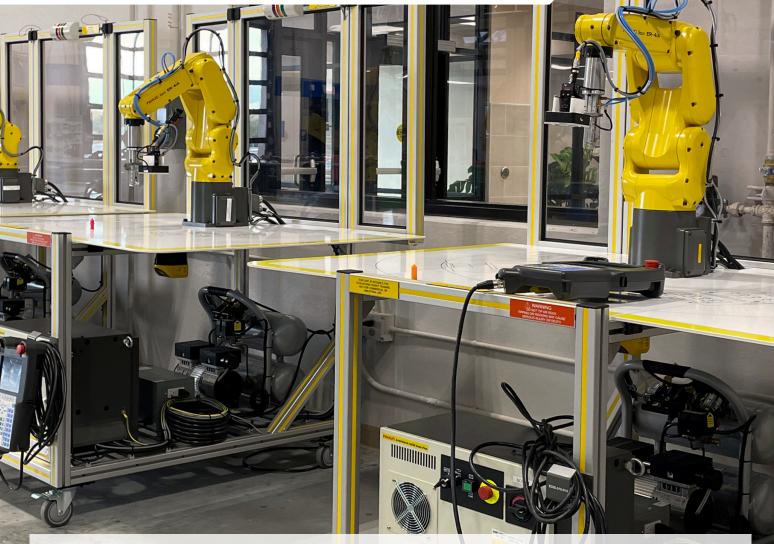
Northwood Technical College, in collaboration with St. Croix Central High School, has launched the St. Croix Manufacturing Skills Center, a state-of-the-art training facility for students and local workers. Located within St. Croix Central High School, this center opened its doors for classes in the fall of 2024, offering hands-on training to equip learners with essential skills in advanced manufacturing, meeting the region's workforce needs.

The center was made possible by a \$10 million Workforce Innovation Grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) as part of the RESTORE project, which addresses Wisconsin's skilled labor shortage. RESTORE (Restoring Employment through Support, Training, Outreach, Recruitment, and Education) is a statewide initiative focusing on job-ready training for students, career changers, and workers, especially in fields like mechatronics, which combines mechanical, electrical, and computer systems essential to modern manufacturing.

New Skills Local Work



Center Boosts cforce



At the St. Croix Manufacturing Skills Center, Northwood Tech provides pathways to Smart **Automation Certification Alliance** (SACA) industry-driven credentials, combining knowledge and handson skill certifications in automation, robotics, and smart manufacturing. These credentials include silver and gold components: the online silver certification builds foundational knowledge, while the in-person gold certification applies those skills. Silver certification is required to earn gold.

The center offers flexible, handson training options for starting or advancing careers in manufacturing while enabling companies to partner with Northwood Tech for customized workforce training. The facility provides vital training and resources for individuals to achieve industry-recognized credentials and advance their careers. By focusing on flexible training for students, adults, and justice-involved individuals, the center builds a skilled workforce to drive regional economic growth.

Learn more about FREE TRAINING:









Northwood Tech is addressing workforce shortages in rural areas and improving training access for underserved communities through innovative methods.

By utilizing Echo Healthcare technology, the college creates realistic scenarios, such as docks and fire scenes, that focus on technical procedures, decision-making, teamwork, and maintaining calm under pressure. These scenarios are enhanced with sensory elements like smoke and biological fluid scents from AromaPrime, adding a layer of realism.

Students practice responding to high-stakes situations, such as saving a child from water or treating a burn victim, navigating real-world constraints and making rapid, informed decisions. This training enhances their readiness to handle emergencies with competence and confidence. Reflecting Northwood Tech's vision of transforming communities through education and workforce development, this initiative strengthens the college's commitment to serving rural and underrepresented communities across its 11-county region.

The Immersive Simulation Room is funded in whole with Federal money by ways of the Education and Support for Triaging and Accelerating Training in Rural Healthcare (EduSTAT) grant, Strengthening Community Colleges (round 3).



A Head Start on Career Success

Owen Sabel, a senior at Shell Lake High School, will graduate with two technical diplomas from Northwood Technical College before receiving his high school diploma.

Through Northwood Tech's Start College Now program, Sabel completed a CNC Technician diploma in May 2024 and is on track to earn a welding diploma in May 2025. He also obtained his Firefighter 1 certification and serves as a volunteer firefighter for the Shell Lake Fire Department.

This dual enrollment program reduces college costs by allowing students to earn both high school and college credits. For Sabel, it has been transformative, providing hands-on skills and a career head start.

His choice to attend Northwood Tech was influenced by the program's flexibility. "My school and Northwood Tech work well together to allow me to attend college and earn high school credit," he explained. Balancing coursework has been challenging, especially with his hour-long commute from St. Croix Falls and Shell Lake, where he lives with each parent. "I've been working to pay for fuel," he said.

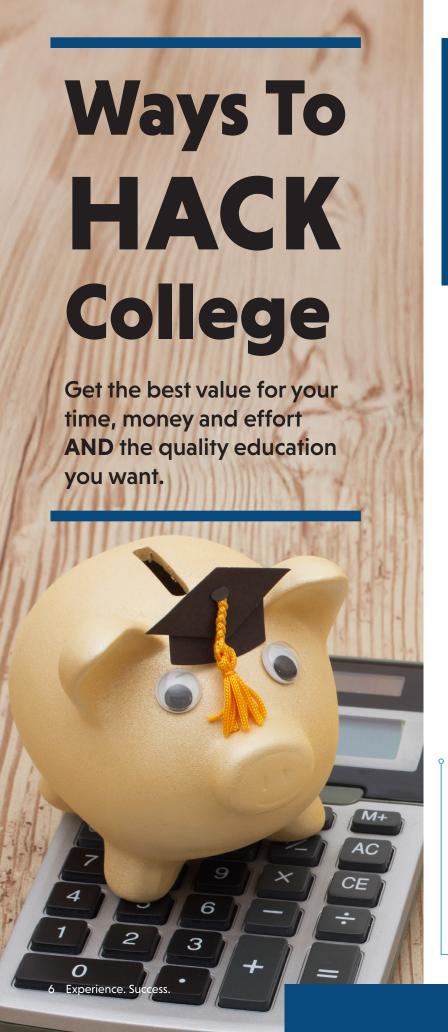
At Northwood Tech, he appreciates the hands-on learning environment. "The classes are more engaging, and I can focus on what I enjoy" Sabel said.

Earning two diplomas and a Firefighter 1 certification before high school graduation has opened immediate career opportunities. "With this education, I'll be able to get a great job and support my future family," he noted. He looks forward to entering the workforce in a stable, high-paying job.

Reflecting on his journey,
Sabel expressed pride in his
achievements. "I'm most proud
of graduating college courses
twice before high school," he
said. He credits his agriculture
teacher and FFA advisor, Jenifer
Bos, for her support. "She has
always pushed me to be the
best I could be," he said.

NorthwoodTech.edu/startcollege-in-high-school





EARN FREE COLLEGE CREDIT WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL

Last year alone, high school students earned

\$1,055,432

worth of Northwood Technical College credits.

Here are ways you can get started before high school graduation. All the following options are **FREE to students.**

Dual Credit/Advanced Standing Courses

Check your high school for courses that count toward both high school AND college credit. These courses are taught by high school staff at the school. "Dual credit" courses earn you credits at both automatically, while "advanced standing" courses must be brought to Northwood Tech's attention at your counselor meeting to get the credit.

Academies

Northwood Tech works with school districts to create academies in areas such as CNC, construction, finance, welding, and more.

3 Start College Now

In Start College Now, high school students can attend Northwood Tech either full or part-time and earn both high school and technical college credit. If you are interested, you must submit the application to your local school board by March 1 for the fall semester or October 1 for the spring semester.

Youth Apprenticeship

Youth Apprenticeship is a comprehensive one or two-year elective program that combines academic and technical classroom instruction with mentored on-the-job learning for high school students.

Maximize Your Education Budget:

Reduce College Costs and/or Earn Credits for Your Experiences

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Filling out this form not only determines eligibility for free federal aid, it is also can be used to determine eligibility for certain grants, loans or scholarships.

Credit for Prior Learning

Earn credit through work and life experience by creating an experiential learning portfolio or skillsbased assessment. You can also get credit through national and industry exams such as Challenge Exams, Advanced Placement (AP) and more. You may also earn credit through your military transcripts or spouse education programming.

Transfer Credit from Another College

You can transfer credit for coursework from other accredited colleges if the course meets at least 80 percent of Northwood Tech's course competencies and you received a grade of "C" or better. Some Northwood Tech programs do have higher grading standards.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are state-certified training programs that provide an opportunity for you to enter a skilled occupation and achieve journey-level status. It is a formalized training program in which you "earn while you learn" offering on-the-job training (OJT) combined with classroom related instruction.

Employer-Sponsored Tuition

Your current or future employer may also sponsor you to complete courses, certificates, technical diplomas or degrees. In this arrangement, the employer pays the tuition upfront for your education and training.

West Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (WCW) and Northwest WI Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB)

Northwood Tech partners with NWWIB and WCW to connect students with financial assistance for things like childcare costs, gas, computers, tuition, training uniforms, and more.

Military

Beyond credit for military experience, veterans and military-connected people may have access to the G.I. Bill®, the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program, WDVA Retraining Grant, and more. Work with a financial aid advisor.

Federal Work-Study

Federal work-study is money you will not have to pay back. You earn federal work-study money by working part-time through Northwood Tech.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps offers individuals who complete their service an education award that can be used for tuition payments or even repaying qualified student loans.

Start at Northwood Tech and Transfer Credits toward a Bachelor's Degree

Every associate degree at Northwood Tech has a transfer agreement with a four-year university or college. You could also take advantage of the University Transfer Degree Associate of Science or Associate of Arts to complete general coursework before finishing out a four-year degree. Find details on the next page.

Scholarships and Grants

Scholarships and grants are both sources of free money that do not have to be paid back. Northwood Tech has numerous college-specific scholarships students can apply for and can provide lists of external scholarship opportunities. Eligibility varies by scholarship or grant and is not always grade based. Each year, many scholarships go unclaimed, so it's worth a shot if you're eligible.

Seamless Transfers

Transferring colleges can be daunting.

That's why Northwood Tech and the University of Wisconsin-Superior have teamed up to simplify the process, especially for students in the University Transfer Degree program pursuing an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS). These students benefit from a guaranteed transfer.

"We remember our guidance counselors and well-intentioned parents and relatives warning about four-year schools not accepting credits from two-year school," said Matt Dietsche, associate dean at Northwood Tech.

"We've created a solid plan for seamless transfer, shared through advisors and counselors on both campuses. This plan provides peace of mind and adds value to students' educational journeys."

University Transfer Degree programs

Students can enroll in classes at both Northwood Tech and UW-Superior to complete their AA or AS degree requirements. These programs allow for a seamless transfer to a bachelor's degree. The AA and AS degrees provide the general coursework needed for various majors. Classes can be taken in person or online, offering location flexibility. For a traditional college experience, UW-Superior offers residence halls, intramural programs and meal plans.

"The transfer agreement between Northwood Tech and UW-Superior is a great option for students," said Maria Cuzzo, UW-Superior provost.

The institutions collaborate on advising. When a student knows their desired major at UW-Superior upon completion, counselors from both schools advise on the best coursework to reach their goals for the best value. That doesn't mean students need to know their exact four-year degree to pursue.



"Many students enter the AA or AS program without a clear career path. It's great to see them explore their interests," said Northwood Tech Counselor Katie Rybak.

"Our transfer advisors help Northwood Tech students transfer credits, create program plans, and register for courses," said Anne Carlson, Transfer Center coordinator. "We connect them with campus resources and activities and be a source of support to ensure a positive experience."

Students have access to study and organizational skills help, library resources, disability accommodations, tutoring, technology resources, and more.

"This collaboration allows students to shape their transformation on their terms with support from two excellent schools," said Dietsche. "It's a win-win for students, their families, and their communities."

SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS

"Northwood Tech's energy in industry and UW-Superior's 50 respected majors and concentrations create a powerful partnership," explained Dietsche. "We help each other and support students' visions for their next steps that create balance with the rest of their lives."

DID YOU KNOW?

Every Northwood Tech associate degree transfers to a four-year university, giving you options to either start working in your field or to easily start pursuing a bachelor's degree.



Explore requirements for guaranteed transfer and view other transfer options at NorthwoodTech.edu/transfer



Driving Demand



my age."

I'm doing better financially than any other kid

-Jessica

10 Experience. Success.

CDL graduate and Karl's Transport employee,

Jessica, with her former instructor



Participants graduate with both a technical diploma and a CDL, with the skills to secure employment in one of the most in-demand professions nationwide and within Northwood Tech's 11-county district. Over the years, the program has expanded to include customized training with regional employers and high school students, further increasing its reach and community impact.

Through this training, high school seniors can graduate with both a technical diploma and a CDL. Since 2023, 15 high school seniors have completed the program, with eight more set to graduate in 2025. These steady enrollment numbers reflect the program's growing success in preparing young adults and career changers for thriving careers.

To meet the demand for skilled drivers, Northwood Tech has expanded its reach with online CDL permit prep courses, enabling high schools and students to participate remotely. This flexibility ensures continued training opportunities for students and businesses, which now share the benefits of this program.

Mobile Training Expansion

MEAT PROCESSING

In the 2023-2024 academic year, Northwood Technical College launched a new FREE mobile meat processing program, bringing handson training and practical skills directly to our communities to meet an important need.

The U.S. meat processing industry continues to expand, and by 2025, Wisconsin jobs in this field are expected to rise by 1.5%.

Our district, already a hub for meat processing, employs more than twice the national average in this field, making an ideal location for the program.

INSIDE THE PROGRAM

The mobile meat processing program consists of three progressive levels of training.

LEVEL ONE:

Students learn basic safety and sanitation and practice breaking down larger cuts of meat into smaller portions.

> LEVEL TWO:

Students develop skills in sausage making and learn to cut a wider variety of meat for retail.

> LEVEL THREE:

Designed for leaders or business owners, this level covers advanced techniques such as smoking and curing and teaches how to create industry-required safety plans.

BUILDING LOCAL TALENT

Graduates leave with skills that prepare them to start work immediately, benefiting businesses by reducing training costs for new employees.

Training in local facilities strengthens the community by creating a skilled workforce. As demand for meat processors rises. Northwood Tech's program supports the local economy by preparing residents for in-demand jobs.

Evening classes are brief, running 20 to 80 hours, to accommodate working students. Partner sites, such as Louie's Finer Meats in Cumberland and Jim's Meat Market in Iron River, Wisconsin, ensure the program is accessible throughout Northwood Tech's district. As the program expands, additional dates and locations will be introduced.



Learn more at NorthwoodTech.edu/meat-processing

This program is grant funded by the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS).

COMING SOON!

MOBILE DENTAL TRAINING

Northwood Tech plans to introduce a mobile dental training program. Students will earn dental assistant technical diplomas through handson, career-focused education. This initiative will support strong, local workforces in the dental field.





Northwood Technical College's Surgical Technology apprenticeship—the only one of its kind in Wisconsin—combines full-time paid employment with classroom instruction, allowing apprentices to earn credits toward a Surgical Technology associate degree while increasing wages along the way.

Surgical technologists work under a surgeon's supervision to maintain a safe operating environment, ensure equipment functions properly, and support procedures to maximize patient safety. Their work requires expertise in sterile technique, anatomy, surgical procedures, and equipment.

Classes are delivered online, in hybrid formats, and on-site at apprenticeship workplaces.

Graduates with an associate degree* may be eligible to take a national certification exam through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA).

*Northwood Tech is seeking accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) who accredits programs upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA). Graduates of an accredited program are eligible to sit for the national certification exam. Successful completion of the exam grants certification as a surgical technologist.

Note: A felony conviction may affect eligibility for certification.

Power Sports Expands to Superior

As trails and outdoor activities grow in the Northland, so does the demand for maintenance on boats, motorcycles, ATVs, and outdoor equipment. Get into the action with the Power Sports Technician Program, which has expanded to the Superior Campus with part-time options, ideal for hobbyists or working adults seeking to upskill.

"We discussed the specific skills the power sports industry needs in technicians. With a successful existing program, we knew we could adapt to meet the local need," said Dr. Aliesha R. Crowe, vice president of academic affairs.

Graduates will be proficient in repairing brake systems, engines, drivetrains, electrical systems, suspensions, fuel systems, and hydraulics. They'll also learn to create customer work orders, essential for client interaction in the field.





The Marine Repair Technician program has garnered national appeal for its comprehensive and handson approach to training.

The three-semester program focuses exclusively on marine engines without diversion into other power sports.

"We are unique and there are not a lot of schools in the United States or Canada that focus just on marine. I think it turns out a better, well-rounded technician," said Larson.

Small class sizes allow for personalized instruction, which Larson believes is crucial. "I can work with each student on a very individual basis," he said. The college's location in a region rich with recreational opportunities adds to its appeal, attracting students from across the country and even internationally.

Evan Plumb, a student from Alaska, exemplifies the program's reach and impact. After working in Hoonah, Alaska, he sought specialized training and found Northwood Tech's program highly rated.

Plumb praised the program for its comprehensive training and the beautiful, small-town setting near Lake Superior. The camaraderie among students and the supportive teaching staff make the experience both educational and enjoyable.

"It's been a great experience," said Plumb. "I've learned a ton, and Todd is the best teacher ever. You can ask him anything and he is on it. He is very knowledgeable and will always help you out."

Plumb's experience has been transformative, providing him with the skills and certifications needed to secure a job as a marine mechanic back in Alaska, working on whalewatching boats for the local lcy Straight Point cruise ship docking company in Hoonah.

Plumb's story highlights the program's ability to prepare students for diverse opportunities in the marine industry, making it a sought-after choice for aspiring marine repair technicians nationwide.

"There is a line of businesses looking to hire our graduates," Larson said. "They are in high demand, and it's such a diverse industry; they can really go anywhere in the United States."

600-Mile Journey

Programs with National Appeal

Jack Byrnes and Austin Hart's journey through the Northwood Tech Automated Packaging Systems Technician program highlights the national appeal and transformative potential of this specialized field.

Jack graduated from Laingsburg High School in Michigan in 2022. He wanted an education that could quickly lead to employment so he could support his mother, who had recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Inspired by a family member who completed the Auto Pack program, and with his cousin Austin by his side, he moved to Wisconsin in August 2023.

Jack and Austin's decision was influenced by the program's strong reputation. The program offers specialized training in mechanical, electrical, fluid power, and automation skills.

Jack reflects, "I truly never thought my life would ever lead me here, but I'm happy it did."

The cousins both value the supportive environment and relationships at Northwood Tech. "Everyone has been very welcoming to me," said Austin. They also appreciate the state-of-the-art facilities, including the packaging shop, which provide hands-on learning experiences. The program emphasizes maintenance and troubleshooting of electrical, mechanical, fluid power, robotics, and PLC components on packaging machines. Students gain real-world experience through classroom instruction and hands-on lab work.

Leaving Michigan was challenging for the cousins, especially being away from family. Balancing work and school has been demanding, but they have found ways to manage. Frequent trips home and support from new friends, along with determination and a positive outlook, have been key to their success.



Learn more about all Northwood Tech programs.



YOUR

Investment,

THEIR future

THE NORTHWOOD TECHNICAL **COLLEGE FOUNDATION**

provides support to promote, develop and expand quality education and services of Northwood Technical College. Your gift may be the one thing that makes college a possibility for a student.

Scan to donate today!



future.

With the generous support, I am able to pursue and reach my end goal of becoming an underwater welder. Not only will welding be a solid career, it also can be used in my everyday life. This scholarship will help to cover the costs of books, tools, and welding gear. I cannot express my gratitude enough for your generosity and support. The Onan Family Scholarship plays a vital role in my educational journey and a contribution to my future success. Thank you again for your kindness and generosity."

NorthwoodTech.edu/give

FY2024 Student & College Support Statistics

\$189,443

in total scholarship disbursements

Facilities/capital

\$839,893

College, program and club support

\$150,325

Staff development/ training

2.434

Emergency student grants/support

28,647

CHANGE LIVES

Every gift makes a difference.

Established in 1978, the Northwood Tech Foundation depends on the generosity of donors to help the students we serve. Thanks to our supporters, we remove financial roadblocks, allowing students to achieve their educational and career dreams.

Together, we help make college possible for hundreds of students.

Financial Summary

Years ended June 30, 2024 and 2023

	Audited 2024	Audited 2023
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$55,094	\$505,096
Accounts receivable	\$1,752	\$3,60
Total Current Assets	\$56,846	\$508,693
Investments	\$6,355,500	\$5,334,958
Total Assets	\$6,412,346	\$5,843,655
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$67,155	\$56,25
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	\$62,757	\$206,465
With donor restrictions	\$6,282,434	\$5,580,939
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$6,412,346	\$5,843,655



"Thank you for choosing me as the recipient of the Mayo Clinic Health System Scholarship for \$1,500. I could not be more thrilled. I can now continue to take steps closer to achieving my academic goals. I am deeply appreciative of your support and all the good that you do. Upon my graduation from the Medical Assistant program in December 2024, I am hoping to proceed by starting the Associate Nursing program as soon as possible.

This scholarship will help make that dream happen. Thank you again for your significant financial assistance."





Northwood Technical College

1900 College Drive, Rice Lake, WI 54868



ECRWSS Residential Customer



60+ career areas.

Countless possibilities.

Accounting Accounting Assistant Administrative Coordinator

Advanced EMT

Agricultural Power and Equipment Technician Architectural Commercial Design

Architectural Woodworking/Cabinetmaking

Automated Packaging Systems Technician

Automation for Industrial Systems

Automotive Service Technician

Automotive Technician

Billing and Posting Clerk

Business Management

CNC Technician

Construction and Cabinetmaking

Construction Essentials

Cosmetology

Criminal Justice - Law Enforcement 720 Academy

Criminal Justice Studies

Customer Service Manager

Dental Assistant

Diesel Equipment Technician

Drafting Technician

Early Childhood Education

E-Child

E-Connect - Child Care Services **Emergency Medical Technician**

Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic

Farm Operation

Financial Services

Financial Services Customer Representative Funeral Service (shared with MATC)

Gerontology - Aging Services Professional

Health Information Technology Health Office Professional

Healthcare Receptionist

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning/

Refrigeration

Hospitality Foundations

Human Resource Management

Human Resources and Payroll Generalist

Human Services Associate

HVAC Installation Technician

Individualized Technical Studies

Industrial Maintenance Technician

Industrial Systems Specialist

IT - Cybersecurity Specialist

IT - Systems Administration Specialist

IT - Web and Software Developer

Leadership Development

Leadership Essentials

Machine Tool Operation

Machine Tool Operation - CNC

Machine Tool Technician

Machine Tooling Technics

Marine Repair Technician

Mechatronics Basics

Medical Administrative Professional

Medical Assistant

Medical Billing Specialist

Medical Coding Specialist

NEW Medical Laboratory Technician

Microsoft Office

Nonprofit Leadership

Nonprofit Professional

Nursing - Associate Degree

Nursing - Associate Degree - Part Time

Nursing Assistant

Office Support Specialist

Office Technology Assistant

Paramedic Technician

Power Sports Technician

Refrigeration Essentials

NEW Small Engine Repair Specialist

Substance Abuse Education

Technical Studies - Journeyworker

Truck Driving - CDL A

University Transfer Degree - Associate to

Bachelor's/Arts

University Transfer Degree - Associate to

Bachelor's/Science

Utility Construction Technician

Veterinary Technician

Welding

