

2009 MORAINE PARK



MID-YEAR ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

APRIL 2009

Environmental Scanning is a necessary tool for planning the long-term strategic direction of Moraine Park Technical College. The process can help proactively define the opportunities, potential threats, or areas of change that will impact the college from internal and external environmental factors. This timely, actionable trend information can help the college overall, as well as individual teams, develop and implement goals and strategies

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH



MORAINE
PARK
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING AND EMERGING TRENDS

POPULATION/DEMOGRAPHICS/SOCIETAL

- Neil Howe, who coined “millennials” with William Strauss, predicted that the generation’s preference for consensus-building and nonstop, digital communication will alter business and political landscapes. Businesses will accommodate this generation by creating more team projects, and millennials will tend to reject the negative and moralistic politics they witnessed as children. (#4745, *washingtonpost.com*, 07/06/08)
- The youth population aged 16 to 24, will grow 2.9 percent over the 2004-14 period. As the baby boomers continue to age, the group aged 55 to 64 will increase by 36 percent or 10.4 million persons, more than any other group. The group aged 35 to 44 will decrease in size reflecting the birth dearth following the baby boom generation. (#4768, *Occupational Outlook Handbook 1*, 2008)
- An annual average of 27.2% of Americans 16 and older volunteered in their communities from 2005 through 2007, a study by the Corporation for National and community Service found. (#4869, *USA Today*, 10/07/08)
- The median age is now the oldest since the U.S. Census started keeping track in the 1890s: almost 26 for women and almost 28 for men. (#4873, *USA Today*, 11/10/08)
- Cultural synergetic intelligence is more about pushing one’s comfort zones and feeling confident in ambiguous, unfamiliar situations, while recognizing the value each individual brings to the table. Cultural synergetic intelligence, the ability to work, collaborate, cooperate, and innovate across cultural and linguistic barriers and borders, combines emotional social, and cultural intelligence by putting the focus on synergy---how we work together, both successful and creatively. (#4942, *Improving Human Performance*, 02/2009)

EDUCATION OVERALL

- Community colleges are key to sustainability priorities because the new jobs in solar and wind power installation and green construction will require more than a high-school education but less than a four-year degree. (#4891, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 10/31/08)
- The average community college tuition and fees this fall increased at less than the inflation rate, according to the annual College Board reports on college costs and student aid. For full-time students, the average tuition and fees charges at public two-year colleges in 2008-09 was \$2,402 for 2008-09, marking an increase of 4.7 percent or \$108, according to the College Board. The Consumer Price Index for roughly the same period was 5.6 percent. (4902, *Community College Times*, 11/08/08)
- China, now takes in more students than it sends abroad. The increase reflects student awareness of China’s growing importance in world affairs. But it is also the result of a concerted governmental push to enhance China’s appeal as a college destination and a study-abroad locale. China has a plan not only to establish world-class universities, but in the process to internationalize higher education. In July, Chinese officials outlined plans to attract half a million foreign students by 2020—just under current United States levels. The United States is now China’s third largest source of students. (#4936, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 09/19/08)
- Ripple effects of a dour economy are making this college application season as nerve-racking for some admissions office as it is for applicants. For savvy families, there may be new opportunities.

For many students, financial safeties consist of public universities or community colleges, where costs are subsidized and admission is sometimes guaranteed. (#4908, *USA Today*, 01/08/09)

- Nearly one in five college seniors and 25% of freshmen say they frequently come to class without completing readings or assignments, a national survey shows. And many of those students say they mostly still get A's. Students report spending about 3 1/2 hours a week preparing for each class. That's about half what instructors expect from a typical student. Of those who frequently didn't do homework, 29% of freshmen and 36% of seniors got mostly A's. (#4871, *USA Today*, 11/10/08)
- In S. Korea 93% of all students graduate from high school on time. But in the United States, almost one-quarter of all students - more than 1.2 million individuals each year - fail to graduate. Once the world leaders in secondary-school education, the United States now ranks a desultory 18th among 36 nations examined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (#4887, *USA Today*, 11/19/08)
- College students would save nearly 40 percent, or an average of \$245 a semester, on the cost of their college textbooks if they shopped online, according to a new report from the New York state comptroller's office, reports the Buffalo News. Rising cost of college textbooks, which has increased an average of 6 percent a year, or twice the rate of inflation. (#4894, *eCampus News*, 12/23/08)
- Data shows that between 2003 and 2006, the USA slipped from fifth to seventh in the percentage of adults, ages 18-24 enrolled in college, and from seventh to 10th in the percentage of adults 25-34 holding an associate's degree or higher. (#4896, *USA Today*, 12/03/08)
- A group of college presidents and other top education officials says the USA's "economic, democratic and social health" could worsen over the next several decades if more Americans don't earn a college degree. The group is pushing to increase the percentage of young people who earn a degree from 40% to 55% by 2025. (#4905, *USA Today*, 12/11/08)
- All colleges across the nation have in recent years been spending a greater share of their revenue on expenses other than instruction, including computing centers, student services, administrative salaries, and lawn care. (#4938, *USA Today*, 01/15/09)
- The poor economy is ratcheting up anxieties about college affordability at a time when more Americans than ever say a college degree is essential to success. Based on a survey of 1,009 Americans in late December, represent dramatic shifts in public attitude in a short period of time:
 - 55% in 2008 said a college degree is necessary vs. 31% in 2000.
 - 43% in 2008 said there are many ways to succeed without college vs. 67% in 2000.
 - 67% in 2008 said most people who are qualified for college don't have the opportunity to attend vs. 47% in 2000.
- The survey also suggests public trust in higher education is wavering:
 - 53% say colleges could spend less and still maintain quality.
 - 55% say colleges worry more about the bottom line than educational mission. (#4947, *USA Today*, 02/04/09)

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT/SUPPORT SERVICES

- High school is not rigorous enough. Educators don't demand enough. Our poll found 80 percent said that they would have worked harder if their high school had set higher expectations. Fifty-one percent said they feel strongly about this. Only 14 percent remedial students said that their high school prepared them extremely well for college. Many remedial students also reported that their high school did not do a good job of letting them know what skills they would need to do well in college. Nearly four in 10 students said their schools did a poor or fair job of helping them understand what level of academics were necessary to succeed in postsecondary education. (#4828, *Strong American Schools*, 2008)

- Some of the findings of a new survey that gauged the online expectations and behaviors of college students who intend to transfer to another higher education institution. Not surprisingly, the Internet played a large role in their research, with 67 percent using Web searches to help develop their list of colleges and half listing the Web as their primary research tool. Students also expressed interest in online tools to help them research student aid and facilitate the transfer process. Sixty-two percent asked for an online calculator to help estimate the cost of attending, while 48 percent requested a calculator for estimating scholarships. Forty-two percent requested an online tool to estimate the credits they could transfer to the prospective college. Forty-seven percent showed interest in a separate Web site section with resources to help transfer students complete their enrollments. (#4814, *Community College Times*, 09/26/08)
- Disconnected Curricula: Many high school graduation standards do not meet the demands required by college entrance or placement requirements, but that is not usually publicized by high schools or colleges. Most states have large gaps between the two sets of standards. One set of community college standards is embodied in placement tests, which are usually set at a higher level than high school graduation requirements. (#4910, *Barriers to College Success*, 2008)
- More than 80 percent of non-college goers reported that the availability of financial aid was either "extremely" or "very" important in their decision not to enroll. Thirty-eight percent of non-college goers expressed a need to work, and 24 percent of these students said they faced the obstacle of family obligation-- such as raising a child or caring for a sick relative. (#4913, *Inside Higher Ed*, 11/14/09)
- The Case for Tours with More: Most IHEs, however, have miles to go with their virtual tours, at least from Ron Reis's vantage point. As co-founder and digital dean of YOU University, a new (and free) provider of campus video tours for invited institutions, Reis estimates that 90 percent of online campus tours are stuck in Web 1.0, with static text links, still photos, and no allocated resources. "Schools are proactive about teaching their students with the latest technology and about having the latest technology, but they're not using that technology," he says. Reis sees the tour as "singlehandedly the most important element" of a college website. Research has shown that tour-related buttons get the most clicks, which is not surprising. "Those looking at college now were 13 when they iPod came out," he says, adding that viewing streaming video is part of their everyday lives. (#4787, *University Business*, 09/2008)

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- Videoconferencing Gaining Ground: Cutting travel costs seems to be the trend and videoconferencing and telepresence are the solutions on existing corporate networks. According to a recent survey 85% of respondents' organizations either use or plan to use videoconferencing, and 41% either use or plan to use telepresence. (#4800, *Office Pro*, 08/09/2008)
- Statewide hospitals are seeing an average work force shortage of about 9 percent, and expect it to get worse over the next decade. The most difficult positions for hospitals to fill due to shortages are physical and occupational therapists. One reason is there aren't enough training programs available for those occupations. (#4845, *The Business Journal*, 10/10/08)
- The water industry could lose as much as 40 percent of its employees to retirement in the next few years, according to the American Water works Association. The water sector and community colleges should collaborate to explore innovative ways to build a pipeline of talent. (#4925, *Community College Times*, 01/16/09)
- Virtually reality now includes several different types of computer-based experiences ranging from fully immersive environments with complex HMD gear and body suits, to realistic PC-based programs. Regardless of hardware and software used, all types of VR aim to simulate a 3_D location through computer-generated imagery and to give users a powerful sense of "being there", "taking control", and interacting personally with the environment and its contents through one or

more senses such as vision, hearing and touch. Many occupations require learning so that workers can perform safely in dangerous situations. Because it is extremely realistic, VR creates high levels of active learner involvement with detailed and accurate visual scenes. VR is currently being used for training in high-risk occupations such as law enforcement, military, firefighting, emergency medical response, aviation and space exploration, marine exploration, nuclear energy, hazardous materials handling, dangerous driving situations, mining and railway operations. Usable desktop VR applications can be developed in-house with an equipment investment cost of around \$3,000 plus a high-end off-the-shelf desktop computer and some software. The equipment and software required for this production include a good quality digital still camera, a camera tripod with a special pan head, and VR software that ranges from \$400 to about \$1,200. (#4815, *Techniques*, 10/2008)

- Aurora's electronic intensive care unit is where it takes brain, not brawn, to care for patients. Virtual nursing has become a way for hospital systems to retain experienced caregivers who would have otherwise left the profession because of the physical demands. A study by the foundation found that about 40 percent of U.S. nurses will be more than 50 years old in 2010, and the average age of nurses nationally is 47 years old. (#4898, *Human Resources Recruitment and Retention*, 01/02/09)
- From online courses to kid-friendly laptops and virtual teachers, technology is spreading in America's classrooms, reducing the need for textbooks, notepads, paper, and in some cases even the schools themselves. The Internet is also a catalyst for change. U.S. enrollment in online virtual classes reached the 1 million mark last year, 22 times the level seen in 2000. Our projections show that 50 percent of high school courses will be taught online by 2019. Online tutoring is also expanding rapidly. (#4744, *washingtonpost.com* 07/07/08)
- A full 82% of undergraduates kindly offered that they'd be willing to entertain an alternative to showing up to class and paying attention in real time. The study suggests not only willingness but a "clear preference" among undergraduates for "lecture capture," the technology that records, streams and stores what happens in the classroom for concurrent or later viewing. The study sponsored by University of Wisconsin-Madison's E-Business Institute and based on a survey of more than 29,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Over 60% of respondents said they would pay for lecture capture capabilities, and of those, 69% said they would be willing to pay on a "course-by-course" basis rather than bundled fees. (#4798, *Inside Higher Ed*, 09/23/08)

ECONOMIC/OCCUPATIONAL/LABOR FORCE OVERALL

- The first look ever at how the USA's economic downturn could affect education finds that states probably will cut an estimated 18.5% of spending over the next three years, an \$80 billion drop that could eliminate 574,000 publicly funded jobs. (#4946, *USA Today*, 02/11/09)
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and energy leaders reveal what fields are expected to grow:
 - Engineers: 11 percent projected growth, \$44,790-\$145,600 annually, depending on specialty. Chemical engineers who work with biofuels, electrical engineers who design power plants, mechanical engineers who find better ways to capture air and wind energy.
 - Nuclear Power Reactor Operators: 11 percent projected growth, \$35,590-\$75,240 annually.
 - Industrial Machinery Mechanic: 9 percent projected growth, \$42,350-median annual income. Someone has to install the solar panels and repair wind turbines, and industrial machinery mechanics are often the one who get the jobs.
 - Electricians: 7 percent projected growth \$44,780-median annual income
 - Line Workers: 7 percent projected growth, \$52,570-median annual income
 - Welders: 5 percent projected growth, \$32,270 median annual income. (#4743, *Yahoo hot jobs*)

- Based on the FDL Retirement & Departures Intentions Survey data from the labor availability research, Fond du Lac County will see employment departure levels near 50 percent over the next 15 years. Where Fond du Lac would have anticipated losing roughly 66 percent of its work force over the next 30 years, the number appears closer to 85 percent. (#4752, *FDL Retirement & Departure Intentions Survey*, 2008)
- As baby boomers prepare to retire, it's possible that more than half of the existing construction work force will retire by 2012. (#4755, *Action Sunday*, 07/06/08)
- In 2005, 15 prominent business groups warned that a lack of expert to U.S. competitiveness, and said the country would need 400,000 new graduates in the so-called STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields by 2015. (#4757, *Science News Report*, 2008)
- Late 2007, the number of U.S. manufacturing jobs dropped below 14 million for the first time since 1950. (#4758, *Washington Post*, 06/29/08)
- The long-term shift from goods-producing to service-providing employment is expected to continue. Service providing industries are expected to account for approximately 18.7 million of the 18.9 million new wage and salary jobs generated over the 2004-14 period.
 - Education and health services: projected to grow faster, 30.6 percent, and add more jobs than any other industry supersector.
 - Healthcare and social assistance: will grow by 30.3 percent and add 4.3 million new jobs. Employment growth will be driven by increasing demand for healthcare and social assistance because of an aging population and longer life expectancies.
 - Professional and business services: will grow by 27.8 percent and add more than 4.5 million new jobs.
 - Employment in computer systems design and related services will grow by 39.5 percent and add almost one-fourth of all new jobs in professional, scientific, and technical services.
 - Goods-producing industries: employment in the goods-producing industries has been relatively stagnant since the early 1980s. Overall, this sector is expected to decline 0.4 percent over the 2004-14 period.
 - Construction: Employment in construction is expected to increase by 11.4 percent, from 7 million to 7.8 million.
 - Manufacturing: employment change in manufacturing will vary by individual industry, but overall employment in this supersector will decline by 5.4 percent or 777,000 jobs. (#4772, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2008)
- Fastest growing occupations and occupations projected to have the largest numerical increases in employment between 2004 and 2014, by level of postsecondary education or training.
 - Associate Degree:
 - Physical therapist assistant
 - Dental hygienists
 - Forensic science technicians
 - Veterinary technologist and technicians
 - Diagnostic medical sonographers
 - Registered nurses
 - Paralegals and legal assistants
 - Medical records and health information technicians (#4774, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2008)
- Employment in Wisconsin is projected to grow between 2006 and 2016 but at a slower pace than in the past. Changing demand, technology, advancements, and global competition will continue to drive the long-term historic shift to the need for more skilled workers in the state. (#4775, *Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development*, 07/2008)

- The three factors that will have the greatest impact on Wisconsin's employment during the projection period are: aging population, technological change, and globalization. The aging of the state's population will have two conflicting effects on the labor market. On one hand, there will be an increased demand for healthcare and social assistance services. These employment opportunities may go unfilled as employers struggle to find qualified workers to fill the jobs vacated by retiring baby boomers. The labor force in Wisconsin is expected to grow slower compared to growth in the past several decades. (#4776, *Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 07/2008*)
- Top Ten Industries with the Most New Jobs, 2006 to 2016:
 - Ambulatory Health Care Services: 29,840
 - Administrative & Support Services: 24,090
 - Food Services & Drinking Places: 22,000
 - Hospitals, Including State & Local Government: 20,950
 - Social Assistance: 20,410
 - Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services: 17,270
 - Educational Services, Including State & Local Government: 11,104
 - Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Prof. & Similar Organizations: 10,900
 - Nursing & Residential Care Facilities: 10,230
 - Specialty Trade Contractors: 7,910 (#4779, *Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 07/2008*)
- Dental laboratory technicians, cabinetmakers and bench carpenters, and welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders are among the production occupations with the fastest growth rates between 2006 and 2016.
 - Overall employment in Management, Business, and financial occupations is projected to grow by 8.7 percent, adding 21,600 new jobs over the decade.
 - Within this major occupational group, the three occupations to exhibit the fastest growth are personal financial advisors, financial analysts, and employment, recruitment, and placement specialists.
 - Construction and Extraction occupations will have 150,100 jobs in 2016 compared to 138,200 in 2006, an increase of 11,900 jobs.
 - There will be nearly 26,200 job openings in Installation, Maintenance, and Repair occupations during the decade. The following occupations are expected to grow the fastest during the ten-year period: medical equipment repairers, tire repairers and changers, and industrial machinery mechanics. (#4780, *Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 07/2008*)
- \$19,185,703-2007 Wisconsin Exports 11.8% increase over 2006, U.S. Exports increased 12.2%, Among the 50 states, Wisconsin's 19th in exports- \$19,185,703. (#4796, *PowerPoint by Fred Monique/BG Chamber of Commerce FVWFD, 2008*)
- Women have the upper hand at home, a new Pew Research Center study suggests. Of 1,260 individuals surveyed in four areas of decision-making in the typical American home, women had the final say in 43% of couples - almost twice that of men. Yet 31% of couples volunteered the information that they share in the decisions-making, a response that wasn't even listed on the survey. (#4802, *USA Today, 09/25/08*)
- At 35 percent, Wisconsin's black poverty is second highest in the nation, far exceeding the already extremely high national black poverty rate of 25 percent. In 2005, even as 86 percent of whites graduated from high school, just 44 percent of the state's African Americans graduated. (#4806, *Center on Wisconsin Strategy, 2008*)
- Sharp declines reported in manufacturing, employment. Manufacturing activity plummeted in September to its lowest level since the Sept. 11 terror attacks. The data showed sharp declines in manufacturing orders, production, employment and exports. (#4851, *USA Today, 10/02/08*)

- A record 7.3 million people were working part time in November although they wanted to work full time, up 62% from accounting for 5% of the total workforce, the highest proportion in 15 years. They were working less because their hours were cut or the only job they could find was part time. (#4906, *USA Today*, 12/08/08)
- Women are holding onto their jobs more than their male counterparts in the recession as the types of jobs women hold generally offer more stability. Three-quarters of the workers in the health care and education sectors are women. Employers added 536,000 workers in those two fields in 2008. Men represent 93 percent of workers in construction and 72 percent in manufacturing. Employers cut 632,000 construction jobs in 2009. (#4931, *The Reporter*, 11/14/09)
- People pay to keep cars going rather than buy new. Parts and service departments are expected to see a revenue gain of about 3% this year. Motorists are hanging on to vehicles longer. The average age of the entire U.S. fleet of cars and trucks averaged a record 9.2 years in 2007 for the second year in a row. (#4937, *USA Today*, 02/09/09)
- The year-old recession worsened in the final months of 2008 and will last until at least mid-2009, making it the longest in post-war history and one of the most severe since the Great Depression, according to economic forecasters surveyed by BNA. (#4945, *BNA HR Report*, 01/19/09)

HUMAN RESOURCES

- A recent survey by Towers Perrin claims to debunk some common workforce myths.
 - The survey of 90,000 employees in 18 countries found that, contrary to a "workforce myth", most workers are not stressed out. Of those polled, 68 percent said their reaction to workplace stress ranged from being energized by it to being "neutral" to it. Towers Perrin says the survey also explodes the "myth" that most Americans are workaholics who "live to work," while the truth is that most people work to support their families.
 - People work an average of 45 hours a week in the United States, with almost one-fifth routinely working 51 hours or more.
 - Nearly 60 percent of those surveyed said they work to support themselves and their families, and only 18 percent said work was the most important aspect of their lives.
 - 86 percent of respondents to the Towers Perrin survey say cell phones, laptops and other personal electronic devices help balance their lives instead of making work a 24/7 "virtual prison".
 - 86 percent of workers said they liked or loved their jobs; 77 percent liked or loved their companies; and 73 percent liked or loved their bosses. (#4748, *HR Magazine*, 2008)
- The Fond du Lac Retirement and Departures Intentions survey was sent to the employees of Fond du Lac County companies with more than 50 employees, excluding health care employers who were previously covered in a 2007 study of nearly 7,800 health care workers conducted by the Fox Valley Health Care Alliance (FVHCA) and the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB). 48 percent of workers plan to retire within 15 years (44 percent for health care workers). Hardest hit with retirements will be the education, government, health care, manufacturing, and service and sales sectors, with roughly one-third of employees planning to retire within 10 years. Respondents planning to retire within the next five years were asked numerous questions regarding their post-retirement plans. Over 25 percent plan to actively train for a new career field. (#4750, *FDL Retirement & Departures Intentions Survey*, 2008)
- A growing number of government and private-sector employees are turning to telework centers, usually government-funded spaces that offer the perks of an office, including copy machines and water coolers, much closer to home. In federal circles, the telework movement got a boost last year

when the GSA (General Services Administration) announced a plan to have 50 percent of its eligible employees telecommuting from home or at a center at least one day a week by the end of 2010. (#4762, *Washington Post*, 07/27/08)

- Share of the Labor Force in Wisconsin, by Age Cohort 2000: 16-24=17.3%; 25-34=20.9%; 35-44=26.3%; 45-54=21.9%; 55+=13.5%. 2030: 16-24=16.1%; 25-34=19.7%; 35-44=22.7%; 45-54=21.4%; 55+=20.1%. (#4777, *Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development*, 07/2008)
- An AARP survey conducted in April found that nearly 20% of workers 55 to 64 plan to delay retirement because of the economy. People in their 50s and 60s are going back to work just because of the downturn. RetireeWork.com, a website launched in 2007 that matches retired workers with jobs, has generated 1.5 million new hits in the past year. (#4795, *USA Today*, 08/27/08)
- The lack of cross-generational interaction contributes to a very real talent shortage in the future. Gen Y's in today's workforce outnumber Boomers. With this pending generational shift in the workplace, businesses need to focus on building professional relationships with their employees while developing employee's skills. (*Office Pro*, 08/09/2008)
- As 25 percent of the U.S. workforce nears retirement age, more companies are considering phased retirement programs to address skills shortages and to help employees transition to an easier and more affordable retirement, according to a new survey by HR consultancy and outsourcing firm Hewitt Associates. (#4859, *HR Magazine*, 09/08)
- The AARP asked 1,628 workers over age 45 if they would delay retirement "if the economy does not improve significantly". Saying yes:
 - Men, 62%
 - Women, 69%
 - Income under \$30,000, 72%
 - Income \$50,000 or more, 64% (#4872, *USA Today*, 11/10/08)
- Even in an economy that is cutting jobs executives still view employee retention as their number one concern, but bad managers get the blame for most defections. Reasons for losing top performing employees. The top reason was unhappiness with management; limited opportunities for advancement and lack of recognition were second. Inadequate salary was third. In today's business environment managers need to be extra attentive to the need of their teams or risk losing their most valuable employees. Employees want to see their efforts rewarded and acknowledged. (#4941, *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, 01/13/09)

MPTC DISTRICT/MARKETPLACE

- Instead of dissolution or consolidation, the Markesan School District is offering another option to neighboring schools facing future financial constraints due to state revenue limits. Their proposal: Markesan and one or two neighboring K-12 districts would both continue to operate separately and claim their own students, but would contract to share a cooperative regional school for grades 7-12. (#4767, *Green Lake Reporter*, 07/31/08)
- Lower birth rates, a retiring baby boomer population and a growing number of younger adults leaving northeast Wisconsin for sunnier pastures. There will be a shortage of skilled labor, and the effects of that shortage will drastically avail themselves in the next 10 years. (#4824, *New North B2B*, 09/2008)
- Wisconsin's residential property taxpayers contributed just under 51% of total property taxes in 1970. By 2007, residential property accounted for 71% of all property tax collections; largely due to decreases in the share contributed by manufacturing and agricultural property. (#4825, *Executive Summary*, 09/16/08)

- A survey by ApplyWise.com, an admissions counseling service, and Next Step magazine found that 70% of families are seeking more economical college options, either because their financial situation changed in recent months or because they're afraid it will. (#4855, *USA Today*, 10/27/08)
- Wisconsin's associate degrees, especially our occupational associate degrees, offer a very strong pay-off for the workers who hold them. The median wage for Wisconsin workers with occupational associate degrees was \$18.18 compared to \$17.08 nationally. Finally, and perhaps most important, almost one in 10 Wisconsin workers holds an occupational AA degree. That's almost twice the national share. In fact, Wisconsin ranks fifth in the nation in terms of the AA attainment of the adult workforce, and moves up to No. 3 considering the share of workers with an occupational AA degree. (#4807, *Center on Wisconsin Strategy*, 2008)
- As the national unemployment rate soars, retraining is becoming increasingly popular. As part of the House stimulus package, the federal government would send the states an additional \$1 billion to provide training and re-employment services to 270,000 dislocated workers. But retraining is not a panacea. Many jobless fear they won't find good positions after their classes end and they'll be back at square one. Starting over in a new career can often mean entry-level positions with lower salaries and less-desirable shifts. This is especially true for those in manufacturing, many of whom pulled in more than \$25 an hour with just a high-school diploma. (#4922, *cnnmoney.com*, 01/27/09)
- Environmental sustainability efforts and programs continue to expand across community college campuses in the U.S. Several community colleges have signed on to use the new national Sustainable Building Advisor Program in their continuing education curricula, beginning this coming academic year. The focus of the program is primarily to train building professionals to make their practices more sustainable and less harmful to the environment. It entails a nine-month course taught during one weekend a month. The \$2,195 fee includes instruction, campus parking, bus transportation and field trips. Through the program, students learn to:
 - Identify key sustainable-building practices
 - Apply Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) guidelines and other standards.
 - Analyze costs and benefits of incorporating sustainable building measures.
 - Tap financial incentives and technical assistance offered by governments, utilities and nonprofit organizations. (#4746, *Community College Times*, 07/04/08)
- Community colleges train 80% of the country's police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians and more than half of its new nurses and health care workers.
 - In 2000-2001, the latest year for which Education Department data are available, the nation spent \$140 billion on four-year public universities and just under \$30 billion for public two-year colleges.
 - Community colleges enroll 6.5 million degree-seeking students, or nearly half (47%) of all college undergraduates.
 - Community College Survey of Student Engagement, found that more than half of 310,000 students on more than 500 campuses reported they got little to no attention from advisers in their first four weeks. Nearly half (47%) said they had never talked with instructors outside of class about class, grades or assignments. (#4754, *USA Today*, 2008)
- Catching up costs billions: One-third of American college students have to enroll in remedial classes. The bill to colleges and taxpayers for trying to bring them up to speed on material they were supposed to learn in high school comes to between \$2.3 billion and 42.9 billion annually. Analyzing federal data, the report estimates 43 percent of community college students require remediation. The cost per student runs to as much as \$2,000 per student in community colleges. (#4786, *The Reporter*, 09/15/08)

- In 2006-07, there were 1,045 community colleges in the United States, enrolling 6.2 million students (or 35 percent of all postsecondary students enrolled that year). Average annual community college tuition and fees are less than half those at public 4-year colleges and universities and one-tenth those at private 4-year colleges and universities. (#4809, *Community Colleges, 2008*)
- In 2004-05, the average total expenditure per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student at a community college was \$10,500 compared with \$31,900 at a public 4-year college or university. The instructional cost per FTE student at community colleges was \$4,100 compared with \$8,000 at public 4-year colleges and universities. (#4810, *Community Colleges, 2008*)

TECHNOLOGY

- High-speed Internet access is so important to the welfare of U.S. consumers that America can't afford not to offer it—free of charge to anybody who wants it. There's a social obligation in making sure everybody can participate in the next generation of broadband services because, increasingly, that's what people want. Only 38% of rural households are broadband customers. For urban and suburban areas, the numbers are much higher: 57% and 60% respectively. (#4784, *USA Today, 08/20/08*)
- Twitter lets users communicate with text-message-like “micro” posts via cell phone, instant messaging or the web. Many of its popular, regular posters have thousands of followers. (#4888, *USA Today, 11/19/08*)

ECOLOGY

- Could wind power be the next big wave? Wind power accounted for nearly 30% of all new electricity generating capacity added nationally in 2007, up from less than 1% just five years ago, in 2002. (4793, *Wind Power Outlook 2008, 2008*)
- Wind industry manufacturing facilities surged from a very small base in the U.S. in 2005 to 100 in 2007. Many existing facilities are expanding. In 2007, new tower, blade, turbine and assembly plants opened in Illinois, Iowa, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin. In the same year, seven other facilities were announced in Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, North Carolina, New York, and Oklahoma. Altogether, the new and announced facilities are expected to create some 6,000 jobs. (#4794, *Wind Power Outlook 2008, 2008*)
- College-bound high school students with an interest in environmental sustainability have a new tool to help them evaluate colleges. The nonprofit Sustainable Endowments Institute recently unveiled an interactive, searchable website that grades the nation's 300 wealthiest schools on their efforts to go green. (#4849, *USA Today, 09/30/08*)
- The U.S. economy currently generates more than 750,000 green jobs -- a number that is projected to grow five-fold to more than 4.2 million jobs over the next three decades. The report found that more than half (419,000) of current green jobs were found in the categories of engineering, legal, research, and consulting. The second largest category was renewable powered generation (127,000 jobs), followed by agriculture and forestry. Green jobs could contribute 10 percent of new jobs through 2038, representing the fastest growing job segment in the U. S. economy. (#4861, *www.greenbuildinginsider.com, 10/21/08*)
- There are three big trends to watch out for: sustainability labels, virtual meetings, and zero waste. A sustainability label provides information about sustainability to consumers so they can make informed choices. The labels will break down into a few categories, a carbon footprint, index measuring recycled content, and food miles traveled. This will result in more video conferencing of

meetings and even expos/conferences. The future consists of webinars instead of seminars.
(#4944, *fastcompany.com*, 12/05/08)