



UW System announces new COVID-19 student health care worker initiative

MADISON, Wis.—University of Wisconsin System President Tommy Thompson today announced a new incentive for UW students with nursing skills and other health backgrounds to work on the front lines of Wisconsin’s fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The new variant threatens to overwhelm our health care system,” President Thompson said. “Our students have stepped up in the past, and this is another opportunity for them to gain valuable experience while helping Wisconsin combat the latest coronavirus wave.”

About 1,000 students will be eligible for the \$500 tuition incentive for working in hospitals and other health care settings. Thompson announced that the Wisconsin Department of Health Services would provide \$500,000 toward the incentive. UW System is working to secure additional funding to expand the program.

A \$500 tuition refund will be provided to students who meet the following criteria:

- Must be enrolled at a University of Wisconsin System campus during the Spring 2022 semester.
- Must work a minimum of 50 hours in a Wisconsin clinical or health care setting, such as a hospital, clinic, nursing home, long-term care facility, state or local health care facility, or state veterans home, between December 1, 2021, and February 28, 2022.
- Must meet health care licensure and certification requirements, such as a Registered Nurse (RN), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Certified Medical Assistant (CMA), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Emergency Medical Technician (CEMT), or Nurse Aid.

The program is open to students currently employed or who become employed in a Wisconsin clinical or health care setting. To be eligible, students must present a letter from their employer verifying the type of work and the hours worked to their campus Bursar’s Office by no later than March 31, 2022.

Students who qualify will receive a \$500 tuition refund at the end of the Spring 2022 semester. Students may receive only one \$500 tuition refund regardless of number of hours worked beyond the 50-hour minimum. Depending upon demand and available funding, lower tuition reimbursement amounts may be necessary.

Students interested in becoming involved can connect with employers via Handshake, an online job listing and candidate management system. The UW System will promote the use of Handshake to potential health care employers, and UW campus career services administrators will help students identify job eligible opportunities.

The UW System is considering additional spring semester incentives for health care work, including clinical support for vaccinations.

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The University of Wisconsin System serves approximately 165,000 students. Awarding nearly 37,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin's talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. Nearly 90 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree – with a median salary of more than \$66,000. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System universities also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin's culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.

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