

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) Program Report
From the College of Health Sciences
1 OCTOBER 2011

[Pursuant to W.S. 21-17-109 (e) and (f)]

To the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Interim Committee

Program update

The WWAMI Program provides loans to University of Wyoming students that cover the bulk of their costs to attend medical school through the University of Washington’s School of Medicine). Students have the option of repaying the loans either by practicing medicine in Wyoming or by repaying the money with interest. The program is authorized under W.S. 21-17-109(e). In prior years, students attended medical school under similar programs at Creighton and Utah Medical Schools.

A loan repayment does not begin until the student has completed residency training, which usually lasts from three to eight years, or more in some circumstances. One hundred eighty-three Wyoming students will have entered the WWAMI program as of August, 2011. Fifty-five students have finished residency training and thirty-seven (67.3%) of them have returned to Wyoming to practice medicine. Three of them completed the three-year payback requirement of their contract and subsequently left the state. They had practiced in Lander, Casper, and Laramie. Of the remaining thirty-four students, the breakdown by community is:

Buffalo.....	1
Casper.....	4
Cheyenne.....	5
Cody.....	2
Douglas.....	1
Evanston.....	1
Gillette.....	3
Jackson.....	1
Lander.....	4
Laramie.....	4
Powell.....	3

Sheridan.....	2
Riverton.....	1
Green River.....	1
Ranchester.....	1

During the legislature’s 2004 special session, legislation was enacted to expand the size of the WWAMI program by two students each year until it reached 16 students. In the fall of 2005, the entering class size was increased from 10 to 12. In 2006, it was increased from 12 to 14 students. The fall 2007 class was expanded to 16 students, but only 12 elected to pursue the program. The 2008-2010 classes have consisted of the full enrollment of 16 students each.

In 2011, the legislature expanded the class size by four students, bringing the total to 20. As a result, the WWAMI class that started in August 2011 had 20 students.

Required report

W.S. 21-17-109 (f) – Under this provision, the University’s Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, may relieve a student from repayment of a loan provided under this section for undue hardship. The provision requires the University to report to the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Interim Committee the number of students who have been relieved of the obligation to repay the loan. For FY 2011, no students were relieved of the obligation to repay the loan.

W.S. 21-17-116 (e) – Under this provision, effective July 1, 2005, all loan repayments under this program are credited to an account to be invested by the University and the earnings used exclusively for scholarships and support for WWAMI medical students. This provision requires the University to report to the Committee regarding income and expenditures from this account during the preceding fiscal year. The bulk of the payments to this account are from physicians who participated in the Creighton program.

FY11 – Fiscal report

Corpus in Medical School Student Fund

Beginning balance	\$ 4,023,720
Collections	\$ 1,113,428
Net gains to corpus (investment earnings)	\$ 151,891 (estimated)
Total in corpus	\$ 5,289,039

Total Earnings (expendable)

Unexpended balance	\$ 349,612
FY 10 earnings	\$ 157,569
Total available for expenditure	\$ 507,181

FY 11 expenditures \$ 163,956

Allowable expenditures from medical contract repayment account

Payment of USMLE Exams/Step III (9)	In residency	\$730/student
Payment of USMLE Exams/Travel stipend to Part IICS:	Third year	\$2145/student
Payment of USMLE Exam/Step I	Second year	\$ 525/student
Dislocation allowance for 1 st year relocation to Laramie		\$1000/student
Dislocation allowance for transition to Seattle:		\$1000/student
Dislocation allowance for clinical rotations	Third year	\$1000/student
	Fourth year	\$1000/student
Dislocation allowance for moving to WY to practice (2)		\$7500/student
Dislocation allowance for enrolling in residency program in Wyoming (1)		\$1000/student
Wyoming rural clinical rotation track (4)	Third year	\$2000/student
Wyoming WWAMI Rural Integrated Training Experience (WRITE) program (1)		
Third year		\$2000/student
On-line and other educational/instructional materials for test prep		\$ 726/student

Expenditures listed above include assistance offered to graduating WWAMI students to interview and relocate at one of the UW family medicine residency programs in Cheyenne or Casper and to establish a practice in Wyoming regardless of where the student completed his/her residency. There were two WWAMI physicians who took advantage of this offer in FY11. Financial assistance is also offered to WWAMI students entering and completing the newly developed Wyoming rural clinical rotation track, which consists of four rotations in Wyoming with only one permitted in either Cheyenne or Casper, and for the WRITE program, which consists of 20 weeks in one rural location.