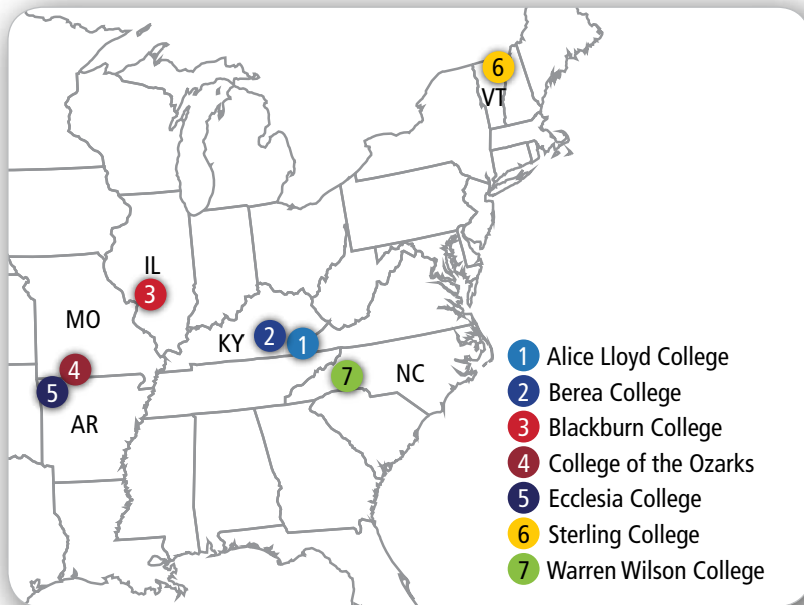




An Education that Works.



**Understanding and
Measuring Success of
Work College Graduates**



Work Colleges believe a work-learning-service education teaches: Critical thinking • Problem solving
Initiative • Resourcefulness • Teamwork • Effective communication • Decision making • Respect for others
Leadership • Responsibility • Appreciation for diversity • Research skills • Accountability • Professionalism
Time management • Respect for constructive criticism • Lifelong learning

Resourcefulness • Teamwork • Effective communication • Decision making • Respect for others
75%
 Leadership • Responsibility • Appreciation for diversity • Research skills • Accountability • Professionalism

of all Work College graduates agree that their work program experience **helped prepare them for their first job.**

Leadership • Responsibility • Appreciation for diversity • Research skills • Accountability • Professionalism
84%
 Initiative • Resourcefulness • Teamwork • Effective communication • Decision making • Respect for others

of Work College graduates report their work program experience helped them to **get along with people with different attitudes and opinions.**



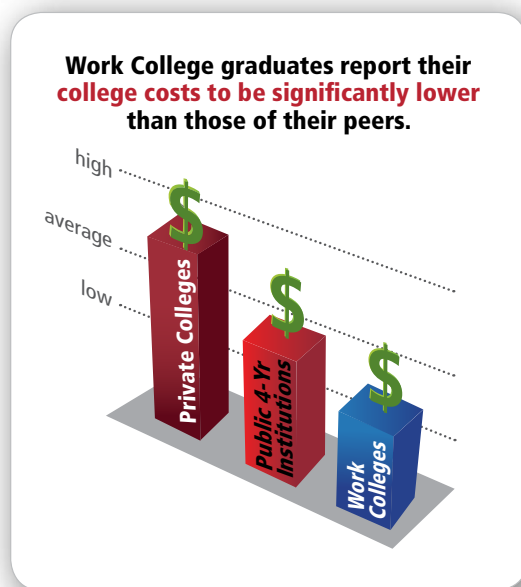
**An engaged and involved student body,
a pragmatic approach of “earning while learning,”
and a focus on service
that strengthens communities—
these are the hallmarks of Work Colleges.**

Work Colleges use an inventive approach to “earning while learning” to help promising, dedicated students earn college degrees while reducing—sometimes even eliminating—their educational debt. This work-learning-service method may sound revolutionary, but it is not new. In fact, some members of the Work Colleges Consortium (WCC) have demonstrated its success for more than 100 years.

All resident students are required to participate in the work program regardless of financial means or other scholarships. Specially designed work programs focus on building leadership and personal development while providing essential campus services and contributions to the larger community.

The expectation is clear: work is for the common good and all work done well has value. WCC Member Colleges view work positions as vital to a student’s educational experience. Each Member College expresses the commitment to work-learning-service in ways that align with its individual mission. Helping students earn a college education with reduced debt is a unifying principle. **In addition to reducing student reliance on grants and loans, Member Colleges continually strive to strengthen programs, evaluate outcomes and extend expertise to others.**

The following pages provide a glimpse into the effectiveness of the work-learning-service approach. **Work College graduates have some of the lowest student debt in the nation, are more engaged in community service after graduation and report having better career preparation than their counterparts.**



who we are



As accredited higher education institutions, Work Colleges recognize the power of a college education to help pave the way for a rewarding career and often personal transformation. Work Colleges are geographically and academically diverse, and share a core belief: the foundation for advancement should not be a privilege limited to those with financial means.

Every day Work Colleges put this belief into action by providing a high-caliber liberal arts education to those who otherwise might not be able to afford college. Each year, Work Colleges provide this opportunity to more than 5,000 students from across the nation.

“Earning while learning” not only reduces student debt, it provides employers with dedicated professionals who have a proven work ethic.

Graduates go on to be effective and responsible leaders in business, community and government. They are more likely to be employed in education, public service and mission-driven careers than their degreed peers. Work College graduates are also involved in civic activities. **Over half of WCC alumni surveyed are currently involved in service, environmental or community activities.**

They're also much more likely to understand and value people who have differing opinions, backgrounds and experiences than their own.

*“As the reading lab coordinator, I communicated and coordinated with the public school district, teachers, reading series representatives, parents and Blackburn personnel. This position gave me a large amount of responsibility at a young age, which helped ease me into many of the responsibilities I now have as a public educator. **Blackburn’s work program truly prepares students for life after college.**”*

—Sarah Fleck,
Blackburn Graduate

87%

Resourcefulness • Teamwork • Effective communication • Decision making • Respect for others • Leadership • Responsibility • Appreciation for diversity • Respect for constructive criticism • Accountability • Professionalism

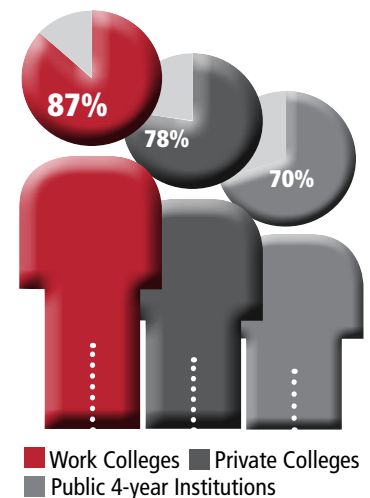
of Work College graduates agree that their work experience helped them **develop good communication skills.**

62%

Critical thinking • Teamwork • Effective communication • Decision making • Respect for others • Leadership • Responsibility • Appreciation for diversity • Respect for constructive criticism • Accountability • Professionalism

of Work College graduates **are employed in nonprofit, educational or service organizations.**

Work College graduates ranked their school as having a favorable impact on “developing and using effective leadership skills.”





The purpose of Work Colleges is to recognize, encourage and promote the use of comprehensive work-learning-service programs as a valuable educational approach when it is an integral part of the institution's educational program and part of a financial plan that decreases reliance on grants and loans and to encourage students to participate in community service activities.

As legislatively defined in Part 675.43 of the Federal Work Study Programs and administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The Code for Federal Regulations is available at <http://bit.ly/xyrG58> or www.workcolleges.org.

84%

teachers: Critical thinking • Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Resourcefulness • Teamwork • Effective communication • Decision making • Respect for others • Leadership • Responsibility • Attention for diversity • Respect for individuality

of Work College Graduates agree that the work program experience helped **build self-confidence.**

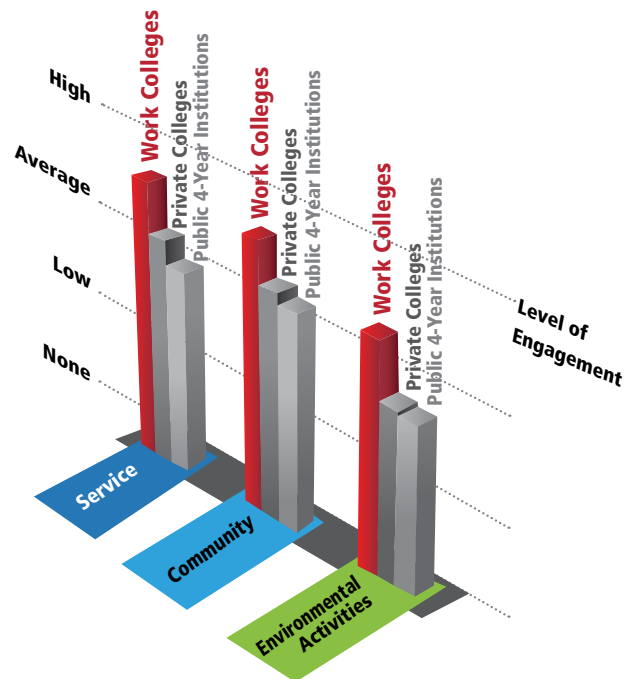
Blackburn College

A stroll across the Blackburn campus shows how well the fruits of student labor endure. Now celebrating its 175th anniversary, Blackburn College launched its student work program in 1913 as a way to make college education affordable for thousands of first generation students. It's no surprise that Blackburn was ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the #2 Best Value College in the Midwest.

Over the years, students have built Blackburn—literally brick by brick. Ten campus buildings including dormitories, the library, athletic facilities, academic buildings and the administration building were constructed with the help of student workers.

Blackburn students are still required to hold work positions, which today support campus operations such as the bookstore, administration, public relations, academic tutoring, informational technology and maintenance. The Blackburn work program is run by student managers who establish and implement work policies and assignments.

Work College graduates report higher levels of engagement in service, community and environmental activities.





PARADE names Work Colleges as a top “Winning Strategy for Financing a College Education.”
 —Parade Magazine.com August 2010



work

Each work program is distinctive and teaches students the critical balance of academics with managed work and service expectations. Most labor positions average 10-15 hours per week and are intended to enhance each student’s college experience.

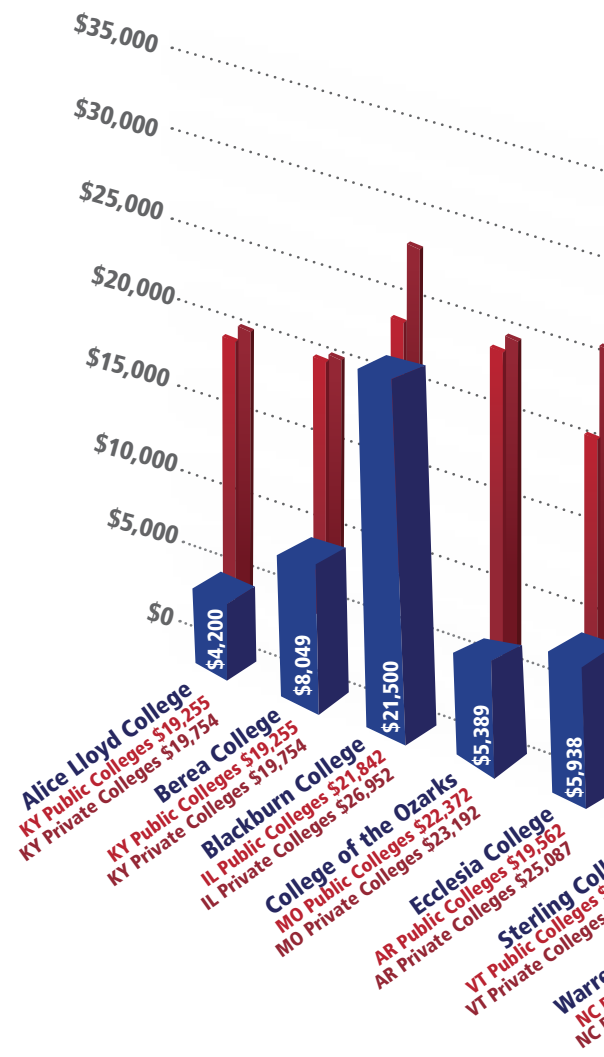
This is very different from just “working while in college.” Work programs are specifically designed to expose students to people, places and practices that are new and different. Like professional careers, students undergo performance evaluations and have opportunities to advance.

The work-learning-service approach has been proven to build character, work ethic, leadership, critical thinking and time management skills. These attributes are transferrable to the real world and, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, mirror those characteristics most desired by employers and post-graduate institutions.¹

College of the Ozarks

CBS MoneyWatch.com ranked College of the Ozarks #15 out of 650 schools for outstanding professors. No Ivy League schools made the top 25 list; Princeton was the closest contender at #57. **Known as “Hard Work U,” College of the Ozarks is consistently recognized by national publications like Forbes, U.S. News & World Report and Kaplan Newsweek as both a “best buy” and one of the best overall colleges in the nation.**

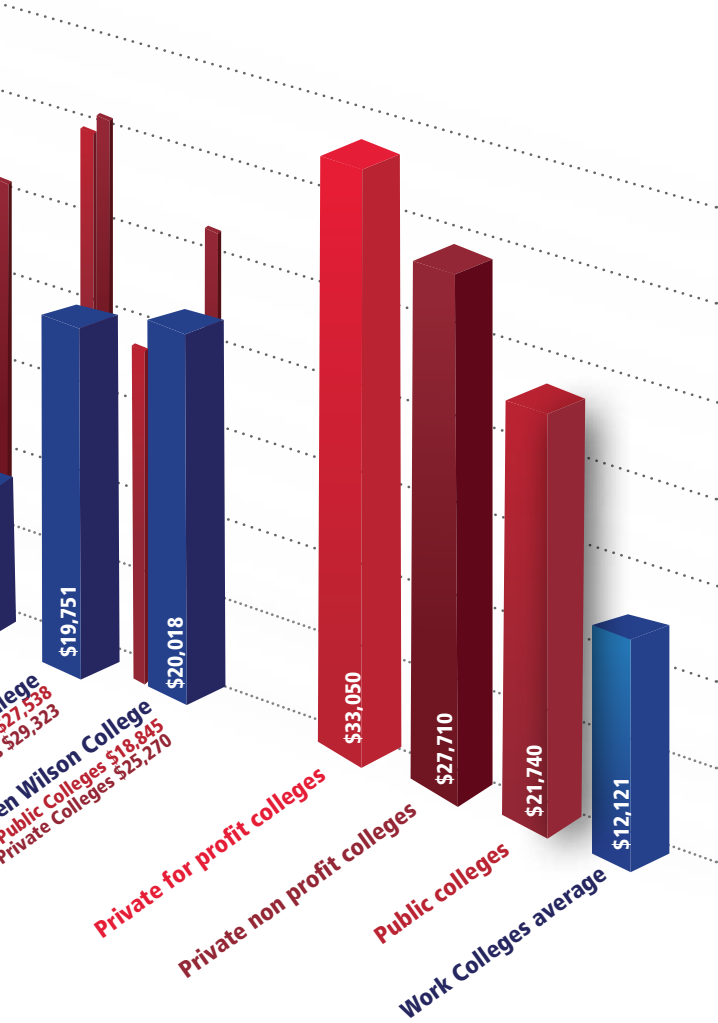
Students work in one of 80 diverse assignments, often selected to complement their career path. Upon completing the work education program, College of the Ozarks guarantees to meet the entire cost of education. Work experiences are considered so valuable, performance grades as well as academic grades are included in student records. This creates an impressive set of credentials to show future employers.





Work Colleges share an approach to higher education so distinctive it is legislatively defined.² They are more affordable than comparable private or public universities and allow students to earn a valuable college degree and graduate with modest or no debt.

Average Debt upon graduation for four-year college graduates in 2010



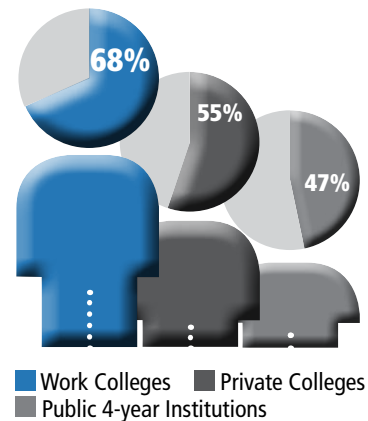
³Data from the 2010 Project on Student Debt, except Private for profit colleges which is from 2008.

Alice Lloyd

Since its inception, Alice Lloyd College has provided education of the highest quality to deserving mountain students. In addition to academics, ALC provides opportunities for students to develop a strong work ethic and leadership skills. The totally unique "Leadership U" experience not only helps students grow intellectually, but also prepares them for a life of service.

ALC charges no out-of-pocket tuition for students from its defined geographic region. For this reason, *U.S. News & World Report* continually ranks ALC as the Top College in America for graduating students with the least amount of debt. This investment in the future yields a high return—95% of ALC graduates are accepted to professional or graduate school, and more than 80% of graduates return to Appalachia to serve as leaders in their communities.

Work College graduates report the experiences at their college better prepared them for their current job as compared with their peers.





learning

The primary focus of each Work College is to provide a valuable liberal arts education. The work-learning-service approach teaches responsibility and time management skills, and exposes students to diverse ideas and a global perspective. **Armed with an academically broad base of knowledge and transferrable skills, WCC graduates are well prepared for the evolving challenges they'll face throughout their careers.**

Work Colleges award bachelor degrees in traditional vocations such as education, business, computer science and criminal justice, as well as unique fields like conservation ecology, outdoor leadership, environmental humanities, communication ministries and intercultural studies.

According to research by the Department of Education, access to higher education is most difficult for students whose parents did not attend college.⁴ These first-generation students, on average, have less academic preparation and more difficulty in acclimating to the college environment than their counterparts. Their success often depends on resources available at the college they attend. Work Colleges understand the importance of building a supportive college environment. Small class sizes, low student-faculty ratios and requisite work and service programs help build an environment of collaboration and cooperation.

*“Education involves a balance of thinking, reflecting, coming to conclusions and acting. At Sterling the focus on actually experiencing what you are learning is key. As an agriculture major, I couldn’t imagine sitting for hours in a lecture and never sinking my hands in the soil, applying what I was learning. **I know that at the end of four years I will walk away from Sterling with not only a degree, but with a resume full of work and life experiences.**”*

—Allyson Makuch,
Sterling College Student

Sterling College

Sterling College may have the smallest student body of any four-year residential college in the country; however, this small-size strategy helps deliver enormous benefits. Individualized learning is emphasized throughout Sterling’s diverse environmental curriculum that includes majors in Conservation Ecology, Sustainable Agriculture, Outdoor Leadership or advisor approved, self-designed majors.

The Sterling experience combines hands-on practice with academic knowledge. Students are immersed in a world where sustainability is a way of life, reducing the carbon footprint a fundamental necessity and preserving natural resources a moral obligation.

The Sterling motto, “Working Hands, Working Minds,” accurately conveys a commitment to experiential education and community participation that, according to Sterling alumni, was a highlight of their college careers. Those graduates surveyed rated the opportunity for student involvement in campus activities at 4.7 on a 5-point scale.

88% of all Work College graduates agree that their work program experience was an important way to **reduce their college costs.**

of all Work College graduates agree that their work program experience was an important way to **reduce their college costs.**

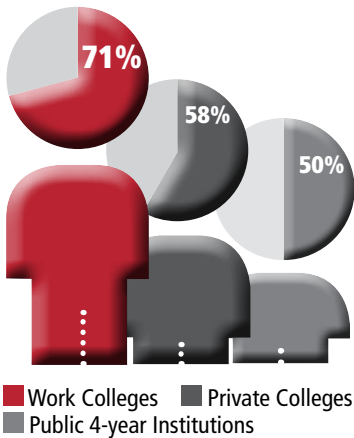


“We all benefit when colleges produce groundbreaking research that drives economic growth, when they offer students from low-income families the path to a better life, and when they shape the character of future leaders.”
—2011 Washington Monthly Magazine

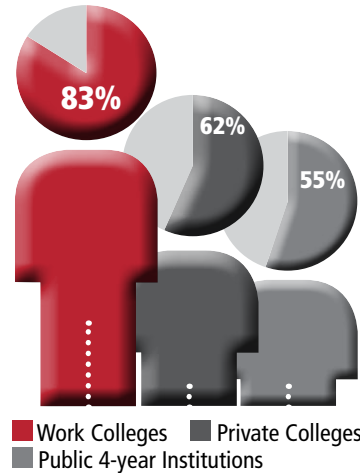


Work College graduates gave either a moderate or major rating to the impact of their college experience on:

Understanding international issues (EG: political, economic)



Appreciating and exercising my rights, responsibilities and privileges as a citizen



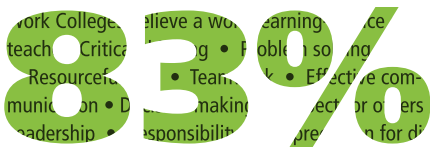
Berea College

Berea College was named as the nation’s top liberal arts college in 2011 by *Washington Monthly*. The prestigious award looks beyond standard ranking criteria like student test scores, economic data and peer surveys. Instead, *Washington Monthly’s* criteria focus on social mobility, excellence in education and community service.

According to Berea College President Larry Shinn, “Given the current national conversation about the cost/value equation of higher education, it is particularly gratifying to receive recognition for Berea’s mission: to serve the public good by educating talented low-income students who become service-oriented leaders in Appalachia and beyond.”

Founded in 1855, Berea was the first interracial and coeducational college in the South. Berea awards four-year tuition scholarships to all its students, who because of financial circumstances cannot otherwise afford a high-quality, residential, liberal arts education. The labor program has been an integral part of Berea’s educational program for more than a century.

Berea College was recognized by the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for engaging its students, faculty and staff in meaningful service that achieves measurable results in the community.



of Work College graduates credit work experience with making them **effective problem solvers.**



of Work College graduates report their work program experience helped them **learn how to work cooperatively in groups and teams.**



service

Work Colleges are rooted in pragmatism. Work is considered an expression of service to others—it’s for the common good and depends on every person’s contribution. Through purposeful integration of work-learning-service, students develop social responsibility and understanding, allowing them to identify and address needs in their immediate community or the larger world. Prospective employers consider these experiences highly desirable. WCC alumni are more likely to be engaged in service, environmental or community activities after graduation.

Service components differ on every campus and complement each college’s broader mission. These service opportunities benefit students by helping them develop a keen awareness of the needs of others while learning first-hand the true meanings of words like tolerance, diversity, patience and open-mindedness.

Ecclesia College

The Ecclesia student motto “Where Leaders are Learning” captures the spirit evident throughout the campus. The natural component of a conservative, Christ-centered institution, Ecclesia’s work learning program makes higher education personally challenging and financially accessible to serious students. This work college serves students regardless of their family resources—building character, skills and resumes while significantly offsetting educational expenses. While the national average student debt is \$25,250, Ecclesia students graduate with an average debt of \$5,938.

Denominationally and culturally diverse, Ecclesia incorporates personal growth opportunities and team-building activities into daily campus life, cultivating a strong sense of community. Additionally, EC students participate in cross-cultural service initiatives, locally and abroad, equipping them to effectively connect, serve and thrive in the global community. **In the last three years it was awarded, Ecclesia earned its place on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.**

75%

of Work College graduates agree that their work program experience helped them to **understand the importance of service to others.**

Warren Wilson College

The aspirations at Warren Wilson College are as lofty as the Blue Ridge Mountains framing the college’s 1,100-acre campus just east of Asheville, North Carolina. They are shared goals, grounded in the liberal arts and driven by a learning triad of academics, work and service to community.

In addition to its distinctive triad, Warren Wilson is widely known for its strong international and environmental emphasis. Regarding the latter focus, *Outside Magazine* has called Warren Wilson “one of the most earth-friendly colleges on the planet.”

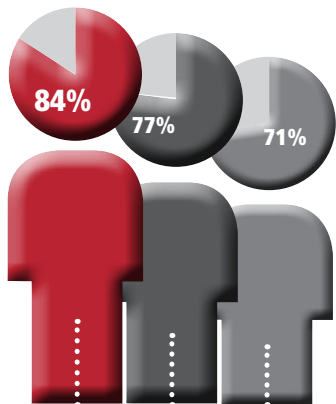
At Warren Wilson the pursuit of knowledge and the demands of labor merge on a path to serve the greater good and a world seeking solutions. The lessons learned here prepare the inspired not only to make a living, but also to make a well-rounded life.

Warren Wilson College was recognized in the *Fiske Guide to Colleges* as one of the “25 Best Buys” among private colleges and universities. In addition to high marks for its academics, social life and affordability, the *Fiske Guide* honored the College with the highest possible rating for overall quality of student life.



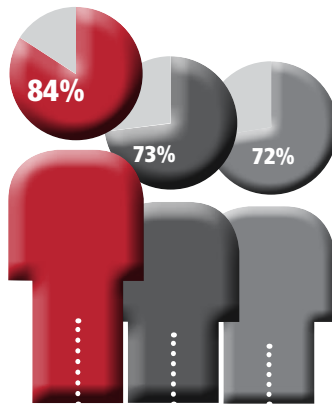
Work College graduates gave either a moderate or major rating to the impact of their college experience on:

Getting along with people whose attitudes and opinions are different from their own.



■ Work Colleges ■ Private Colleges ■ Public 4-year Institutions

Getting along with people from various cultures, races and backgrounds, etc.



■ Work Colleges ■ Private Colleges ■ Public 4-year Institutions



of Work College graduates report their work program experience helped them to **appreciate the value and dignity of work.**

Unless otherwise noted, research data is from the Work Colleges Consortium Fall 2010 Alumni Outcomes Survey. ACT administered the survey electronically to Work College Graduates between 1993 and 2007. All colleges had response rates over 21%. The aggregate response rate was 30.2%. The complete survey methodology is available at www.workcolleges.org or by contacting the WCC office 859-985-3156.

Photos used in this publication were provided by Work College students, many as part of their college work program.

¹ Job Outlook 2012, National Association of Colleges and Employers The Job Outlook 2012 survey was conducted August 3 through September 23, 2011, among NACE employer members. The report is available to NACE members at www.naceweb.org/job_outlook_2012

² As legislatively defined in Part 675.43 of the Federal Work Study Programs and administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The Code for Federal Regulations is available at <http://bit.ly/xyrG58> or www.workcolleges.org.

³ Data provided by the 2010 Project on Student Debt, an initiative of The Institute for College Access and Success, <http://projectonstudentdebt.org>. Private for profit college data is 2008.

⁴ WCC research and Choy, Susan P. 2001. Students Whose Parents Did Not Go To College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment (NCES 2001-126). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/2001126.pdf>.

