



News Release

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South Dakota Public Higher Education Drives \$2.1 Billion of State's Economy; Sustains More Than 12,000 Jobs

PIERRE, S.D. – Across six universities, South Dakota public higher education institutions generated a total impact on the state's economy of more than \$2.1 billion in Fiscal Year 2019, according to an economic contribution analysis released today. The study further concludes that the economic activity of the public university system supported or sustained 12,354 jobs throughout the state.

“These economic impact numbers reflect the importance of our system's work across the state. It shows our universities are making an impact in the communities they serve and retaining graduates to continue to grow our workforce and economy,” said John W. Bastian, president of the South Dakota Board of Regents.

The study measured the economic contribution of South Dakota's public higher education institutions under the direction and leadership of the Board of Regents. The study calculates the impact of operations, student spending, and visitor spending across six universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota Mines, South Dakota State University, and the University of South Dakota.

“The mission of the Board of Regents is to govern the system of public higher education across South Dakota. That ensures higher education is resourced and delivered to maximize results,” said Brian L. Maher, the regents' executive director & CEO. “This is a commitment we take seriously, with an ultimate goal to advance communities statewide. We are proud of the work we do for students, families, and citizens. Our system's economic impact is a strong and stable indicator of our duty as stewards of public higher education.”

The study was conducted by [Parker Philips, Inc.](#), a nationally recognized consulting firm specializing in economic impact analysis. Nichole Parker, President and Principal at Parker Philips, said, “Economic contribution is an objective way to measure the significance of an organization in the statewide economy. It is a tool that policymakers can use to view the economic value and return on investment in public higher education. South Dakota's public universities are stable and sustainable economic drivers that are making a demonstrable impact across the entire state. Each of these universities understands their unique niche and the needs of the South Dakotans they serve.”

Economic Impact – 2

Among the findings in the study:

- The **\$2.1 billion total economic impact** of public higher education in FY19, which **included \$1.3 billion direct and \$0.8 billion indirect and induced spending**, was the result of operational spending, capital spending, payroll and benefits paid to employees, student spending, and visitor spending.
- The operations of the system supported or sustained a total of **12,354 jobs — 2.7% of South Dakota’s workforce**.
- Through its local spending and the jobs it supported or sustained, the **public university system generated \$74.1 million in state and local taxes**.
- The staff, faculty, and students of the system contribute an estimated **\$16.7 million annually in charitable giving and volunteerism**.
- The public university system **supported or sustained 4% of South Dakota’s economy**.

In addition to the significant impact of campus operations, the report also found that the income being added into the economy as a result of graduates obtaining post-secondary education is significant. The six universities conferred 6,665 bachelor, masters, doctoral, and professional degrees in 2019. The total number of alumni living and working in the state is more than 104,000, a group that will generate \$287.5 billion over their careers, support 1.9 million jobs, and generate \$12.9 billion in taxes.

The full economic contribution analysis is available at

https://www.sdbor.edu/mediapubs/publications/EconomicImpact21_w.pdf

About the South Dakota Board of Regents: The Board of Regents has constitutional authority to govern the system of public higher education in the state of South Dakota. Supported by an executive director and staff, the board provides leadership and sets policies for programs and services delivered by its six public universities and two schools serving special K-12 populations. The public universities (and home campus locations) are Black Hills State University, Spearfish; Dakota State University, Madison; Northern State University, Aberdeen; South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, Rapid City; South Dakota State University, Brookings; and the University of South Dakota, Vermillion. The special schools are South Dakota School for the Deaf, Sioux Falls, and South Dakota School for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Aberdeen.