

GREATER GREEN BAY DRIVING THE INDUSTRY

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How educational institutions are helping Greater Green Bay's logistics industry drive growth right at home

When considering an education and jobs of tomorrow, there might not be a better match both now—and into the future—than Green Bay's educational institutions and its booming logistics industry.

Transportation and logistics (T&L), a strength of Green Bay's industry, is quickly becoming one of the country's fastest-growing fields, one that encompasses careers in everything from purchasing, inventory management, data analytics, warehousing, lean manufacturing, and much more.

Already a hub for several top-tier companies, another asset to the Greater Green Bay logistics industry is its proximity to several exceptional college campuses—whether at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), St. Norbert College, or the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay—which advantageously positions itself to foster future talent pipelines.



Recent data shows that an education in a logistics-related field pays off, providing immediate opportunities for job placement.

NWTC's Supply Chain Management (SCM) program, for example, boasts a 100% job placement rate, with 80% of students landing a job within a supply chain related field, according to Angela Hansen-Winker, lead supply chain management faculty member at NWTC.

As quality education meet unmatched internship opportunities for students to build their experience close to home, according to Schneider President and CEO Mark Rourke, "there is simply no better place to be than Green Bay for those passionate about the profession."



"Students that study T&L improve their employability and earning potential with local companies," said Hansen-Winker. "We have one of the largest transportation companies in North America located right here. Our students are mission-ready to work for any Fortune 500 company in the field."

Dan Heiser, dean of the Donald J. Schneider School of Business & Economics at St. Norbert College, sees a similar abundance of opportunity for students in Greater Green Bay, which can ultimately be a conduit for filling the local talent pipeline.

"One of the best ways to supplement a classroom education is through an internship," Heiser said. "Greater Green Bay has an abundance of manufacturers and logistics providers in search of talent, and we'd love to collaborate more with local businesses to help fill their needs."

“A well-crafted internship program allows the company to directly observe the intern’s skill set. Perhaps more importantly, it also allows the intern to see what career opportunities the company can offer upon graduation.”

While students learn about the industry over the course of an internship program, they aren’t the only ones who benefit. MatchBack Systems, Inc., a Green Bay-based company that uses an innovative approach to manage shipping container costs, has seen first-hand the benefits of differing points of view which drive growth.



“We’ve seen tremendous benefit from the internship programs,” Tammy Leurquin, chief technology officer at MatchBack Systems. “Students receive hands-on exposure to an industry they might not have considered, while we benefit from the interns’ expertise and fresh perspectives. At MatchBack Systems, our interns are excited to learn how technology is transforming logistics and some have become valued employees.”

Companies and colleges in the area also understand the importance of playing the “long game” when it comes to getting in front of students. That means everything from tailored curriculum to meeting students where they are.

“Greater Green Bay’s higher education establishments have brought T&L into the classroom,” said Leurquin. “They recognize the area is a hub for this sector and gear education to real world experience by engaging with local companies.”

“We’ve forged deep and reciprocal relationships with the region’s colleges, speak to classes about our logistics technology business, participate in IT program development and attend career fairs.”

As the industry looks to a prosperous future in Greater Green Bay, the ability to continue to innovate will remain top of mind. Increasingly, for example, more and more decisions being driven by data.

Logistics generates an enormous amount of data, such as GPS coordinates, sensor data, smart contracts, or timestamps. And using that data correctly to drive decisions related to route optimization, preventive maintenance, scheduling, and inventory levels can mean the difference between profit and loss.

At C.H. Robinson its C.H. Robinson Labs, an innovation incubator, drives the industry forward with the latest predictive analytics and technology to solve supply chain challenges.

In the same way these innovations challenge the industry, companies also continually need to keep an open mind when it comes to what qualifications they look for in a candidate.

“Innovation is crucial to ongoing success in business,” says Heiser. “Understanding both the technical elements of process improvement and the human aspects of change management are necessary for an organization to become competitively nimble.”

“I recognize that not every position requires a college education. However, hiring someone with a formal business education can pay real benefits, too, particularly when an organization is faced with complex & ill-defined problems or unfamiliar situations. Critical thinking and problem solving skills can help cut through the fog to generate new ideas and avenues to explore.”

Similar new technologies will continue to shape the future of education, the types of jobs that companies seek, and ultimately, the future of the business.

“Technology is changing everything, fast. By necessity, this dictates that it is also a period of immense experimentation and innovation,” says Matt Dornbush, dean of the Cofrin School of Business at UW-Green Bay.

“Partnership between higher education and local T&L companies are more important than ever, because no one knows exactly where and how technology will play out in their organizations—organizations can’t afford to experiment with all promising innovations, nor can we as a higher education provider train learners with all promising technologies.”

As business and higher education move forward, Dornbush says that not losing sight of continued partnership will remain integral for the industry to flourish regionally.

“Partnerships are the key... [and] provides for the collective learning we as a region need to navigate this period,” he said. “Faculty are trained researchers, so periods of experimentation really speak to the heart of who we are and what we can provide for regional business.”

There is no better time to be part of transportation and logistics/logistics tech industry in the Greater Green Bay area. The region is an internationally-renowned hub in the industry and continues to grow in terms of companies, career opportunities and innovation.

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