

William Stanton
Nursing Student
Western Connecticut State University

Members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is William Stanton, I'm currently a sophomore nursing student at Western Connecticut State University. I'm here to ask you to support funding for our community colleges

At WCSU, I was, before COVID, actively involved in campus life as well as some of the inner workings of the campus. Besides going to many school events hosted by PAC as well as other on campus organizations. I was a Senator in the Student Government Association for my first semester as a freshman and in my second semester I was a Resident Assistant. All the while I was able to live on campus and maintain good grades. I also worked at a restaurant/bakery to make money to be able to go to school. Since I've been home, I've had to adjust to a whole new set of challenges, the same goes for many of my fellow classmates I go to university with. On top of managing all the original problems that were already systemic issues everyone had trying to attend higher education there was a load to tackle regarding the fallout of the Pandemic and dealing with it. Originally it started with trying to figure out the new platforms we were conducting school on, with the lack of adaptation and lack of effective communication of our professors which even still rears its head three semesters down the line. Then with the challenges in work situations that many others and myself had to deal with. Such being where they worked closing, laying people off and some places cutting hours. My work closed for the original six weeks at the start of the pandemic then more weeks added on after when the restrictions were beginning to be eased. Even now my work hasn't had the same business as before, having to cut staff and reduce hours. Which has influenced me with loss of income which is troubling when trying to attain higher education. Especially when the costs outside of tuition add up to be over a grand a semester in combined costs.

This doesn't even begin to address how everyone's home life including mine is hectic and not a helpful or productive work environment to study and learn. This affected plenty of my classmates and myself. Making us struggle in school whereas before we were able to concentrate, learn and get good grades rather than get by with the skin on my teeth.

For these reasons I encourage prioritization of funding to colleges and universities of the state to effectively adapt to the new challenges we face. Challenges concerning technology, finances/work opportunities and addition help in trying to effectively provide a proper education in an online format.

That's most of the time I'm allowed, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak before you all.