

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

JULY 2026

Dr. Brian Knetl



ADULT & WORKFORCE EDUCATION GRADUATION CEREMONY

Waubonsee celebrated the accomplishments of 173 Adult & Workforce Education students during the 2026 Graduation Ceremony. Graduates included 64 High School Equivalency (HSE) recipients, 59 English Language Acquisition (ELA) completers, and 14 Waubonsee Works graduates, each taking an important step toward brighter futures.

The ceremony also recognized the largest number of industry-recognized credentials in program history, including 24 Paraprofessional Educators, 9 Entrepreneurs, 7 Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), 6 Industrial Maintenance Technicians, and 3 Welders—underscoring Waubonsee's commitment to workforce readiness and student success.

SCHOLARSHIPS FROM STATE PARTNERS



Waubonsee students closed out the academic year by earning several prestigious scholarships from state and national partners, recognizing their hard work and preparing them for continued success.



\$31,000 Southern Illinois University Provost Scholarship awarded to Justin Winters to complete his bachelor's degree in Automotive Technology.



\$4,500 Be a Technician Scholarship through the National Hot Rod Association awarded to Elvis Chau.



\$50,000 Grow Your Own grant from the Illinois Community College Board, which provided \$1,000 scholarships to each of the program's 15 participants.

SALUTE TO A NATIONAL CHAMPION

Congratulations to Benjamin Swanson, also a Grow Your Own participant, on winning the gold medal for Collision Damage Appraisal at the 2026 SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Competition.



ALUMNI NIGHT AT BLACKBERRY FARM

Scores of Waubonsee alumni gathered for the annual WCC Alumni Night during Blackberry Farm's Live & Uncorked Concert Series on July 9. Alumni enjoyed an evening of live music, reconnected with classmates and friends, and received exclusive giveaways from the Alumni Office.



STATE LEADERS GATHER AT WAUBONSEE



Waubonsee was both the host site and presenting sponsor of the 2026 Aurora Regional Economic Alliance Legislative Lunch. A packed crowd convened at the downtown campus to hear from our state leaders.

A special thank you to State Senator Linda Holmes, State Senator Karina Villa, State Representative Matt Hanson and our very own Waubonsee Alumna State Representative Barbara Hernandez for providing integral updates on their work in Springfield and throughout their home districts. We appreciate their leadership and commitment to our community.

JUNETEENTH VOICES INSPIRE AND EMPOWER



Waubonsee's Juneteenth Lunch-n-Learn brought together faculty, staff, students, and community members for a meaningful dialogue about Juneteenth and its significance within higher education and community development.

Esteemed Panelists – Tacarra Ford, English Instructor; Shellee McCullum, Institutional Effectiveness Project Manager; and Dr. Chassie Sherretz, Director of Student Academic Support – shared their personal and professional journeys, offering powerful reflections on how their lived experiences shape the work they do every day to support the next generation of students.



DR. SHEELA VEMU EARNS NATIONAL STEM SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Sheela Vemu, Associate Professor of Biology, was recently featured in the American Association of Community Colleges' "Community College Daily" for her role in helping community colleges build innovative, science-based STEM training pathways nationwide.

WAUBONSEE TAKES THE WORLD CUP STAGE

Our new recruitment commercial, featuring Waubonsee student-athletes and staff, is airing during FIFA World Cup coverage on ESPN and several other television networks, generating **tens of thousands of impressions** across the local market while showcasing the Waubonsee experience to prospective students and families.



ON THE HORIZON



**Monday,
August 3**
Soft Launch of the
Waubonsee
Food Pantry



**Thursday,
August 6**
WCC Night at
Kane County
Cougars



**Friday,
August 14**
All College
Meeting



**Monday,
August 17**
First Day
of Classes