NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

of Northeast Community College

FY25

Prepared by Tripp Umbach

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HIGHLIGHTS FY25

Northeast Community College at a Glance

2,870 degree-seeking credit students + **4,493** non-degree-seeking credit students = **7,363** Total students

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT
OF NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON NEBRASKA

$464.1 million
generated in economic impact

5,681 total jobs
supported and sustained statewide and nationwide

$19.9 million
generated in state and local taxes

ECONOMIC IMPACT BY CATEGORY	ECONOMIC IMPACT	EMPLOYMENT IMPACT	TAX IMPACT
OPERATIONS	$124.1 million	1,419 total jobs	$6.1 million
CAPITAL INVESTMENT	$22.8 million	261 total jobs	$1.1 million
STUDENT SPENDING	$11.6 million	133 total jobs	$463,795
ALUMNI	$305.7 million	3,869 total jobs	$12.2 million

COMMUNITY IMPACT

$4.0 MILLION in donated time and charitable giving by staff, faculty, and learners.

Note: *These benefits are in addition to the* ***$464.1 million*** *economic impact generated by Northeast in FY25.*

RETURN ON EDUCATION INVESTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Students: For every **$1** invested in their education, students realize **$6** in lifetime earnings.

$2.99 billion

in total increased lifetime earnings from students enrolled at Northeast in FY25

ROI FOR STUDENTS

$6

FOR EVERY $1 INVESTED

State: For every **$1** invested in Northeast, the public sector generates **$2.50** in additional tax revenues over the student's lifetime.

$119.6 million

in total incremental tax revenue attributable to increased lifetime earnings from students enrolled at Northeast in FY25

ROI FOR THE STATE

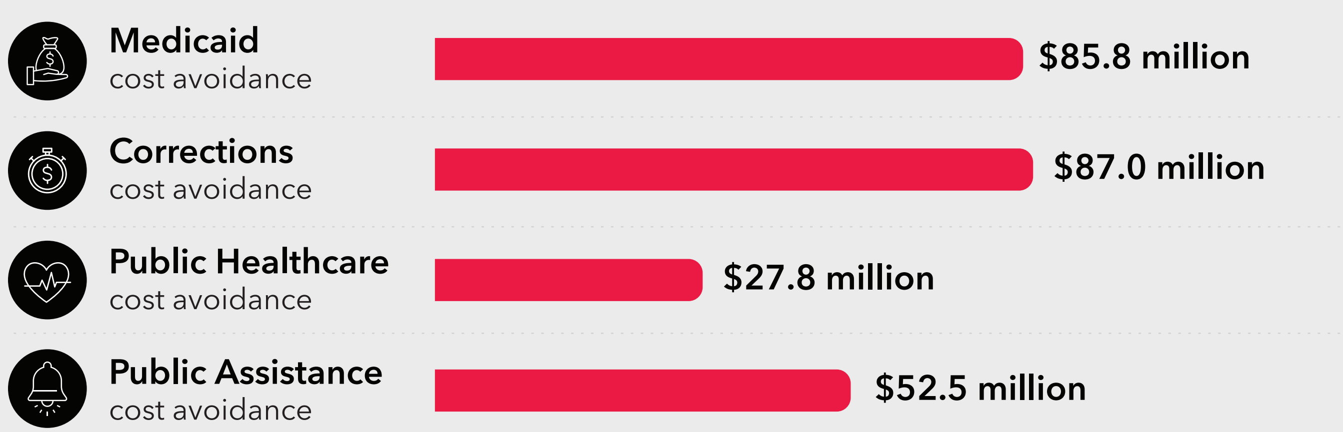
$2.50

FOR EVERY $1 INVESTED

PUBLIC SECTOR COST AVOIDANCE HIGHLIGHTS

$253.2 million

in estimated reductions in public expenditures attributable to educational attainment over the working lifetime of Northeast students from FY25.



ABOUT NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Northeast Community College (Northeast) is a public, comprehensive community college serving northeast Nebraska with a mission centered on access, workforce preparation, and regional opportunity. Formed in 1973 through the consolidation of multiple postsecondary institutions, Northeast was designed to deliver education and training that reflect the needs of a largely rural, multi-county service area. Through a network of campuses and learning centers, the college ensures that residents across the region can pursue postsecondary education without leaving their home communities. Northeast's primary campus is in Norfolk, with additional instructional locations in:

- **O'Neill**
- **South Sioux City**
- **West Point**
- **Hartington**
- **Ainsworth**

This distributed campus structure allows the college to serve traditional and adult learners while responding to the geographic and workforce realities of northeast Nebraska. By maintaining a presence in multiple communities, Northeast supports employers, expands educational access, and strengthens regional workforce pipelines.

Northeast in FY25 enrolled 7,363 students, many of whom attended part-time while balancing employment, family responsibilities, and community commitments. A portion of Northeast's student population enrolled exclusively online, reflecting the college's emphasis on flexible delivery models, including in-person, hybrid, and distance education. Academic offerings include a portfolio of certificate and associate degree pathways aligned with regional labor needs, with programs spanning healthcare, agriculture, business, skilled trades, transportation, and information technology.

Affordability and student support remain central to Northeast's institutional approach.

Through dual-credit and early entry opportunities, Northeast Nebraska high school students can earn college credit at no tuition cost, strengthening college readiness and accelerating time to completion. Northeast also maintains high academic quality standards in concurrent enrollment, helping ensure that coursework completed in high school is transferable and aligned with postsecondary expectations.

STUDY OVERVIEW

Northeast partnered with Tripp Umbach to conduct a comprehensive economic and community impact analysis focused on northeast Nebraska and the state. This assessment is designed to inform state and local policymakers, education leaders, and community stakeholders about Northeast's role in driving economic activity, supporting workforce development, and strengthening community stability across the region.

The analysis evaluates economic activity generated by Northeast during FY25, with primary impacts concentrated in northeast Nebraska and in key counties served by its campuses and learning centers. These impacts are closely tied to Northeast's main campus in Norfolk and instructional sites in O'Neill, South Sioux City, West Point, Hartington, and Ainsworth, where the college serves as a major educational provider and employer. Additional economic effects extend statewide as institutional spending, employee compensation, and student-related expenditures circulate through Nebraska's economy. As a regional-serving community college, Northeast functions as a critical economic anchor while contributing to statewide workforce and tax impacts.

This study examines several key areas of impact, including:

- **Operations and Capital Investment:** Economic impacts produced through operating expenditures, capital investments, employee compensation, and benefits, with the greatest concentration of activity occurring in northeast Nebraska.
- **Student Spending:** Off-campus expenditures on housing, transportation, food, childcare, and other essential goods and services that support businesses in northeast Nebraska and throughout the state.
- **Employment Impact:** Jobs strengthened directly by Northeast within its service area, along with additional employment resulting from supplier activity and household spending across Nebraska.
- **State and Local Tax Impact:** Tax revenues delivered for local governments within the service region and by the state through payroll-related taxes and consumer spending.
- **Workforce and Alumni Outcomes:** Long-term economic benefits tied to credential attainment, including the additional annual earnings of Northeast's alumni, the jobs those earnings sustain, and the tax revenue they produce for state and local governments across Nebraska.
- **Community Impact:** Contributions through customized workforce training, adult education, dual-credit programs, and partnerships with employers, K–12 districts, healthcare providers, and community organizations.
- **Public Sector Cost Avoidance:** Projected reductions in public expenditures attributable to the educational attainment of FY25 Northeast students over their working lifetimes, including estimated savings across Medicaid, corrections, public healthcare, and public assistance programs.

These elements illustrate the far-reaching economic and community impact of Northeast throughout northeast Nebraska, with ripple effects extending across the state. Beyond immediate spending and operational impacts, the analysis underscores Northeast's enduring role as a key workforce developer, major employer, and vital community partner. Within the college's service region, where population centers, business activity, and labor demand intersect, Northeast is instrumental in creating educational and career opportunities, building a skilled talent pipeline, and fostering long-term economic stability and growth for the region and the state.

ECONOMIC IMPACT METHODOLOGY

Tripp Umbach utilized IMPLAN, a nationally recognized input-output modeling system widely used in higher education and public-sector economic analysis. Primary data, collected directly from Northeast, included operational expenditures, capital spending (based on a multi-year average), employment and payroll data, benefits, and student enrollment information for FY25.

IMPLAN multipliers were applied to estimate how institutional spending circulates through Nebraska's economy, creating additional business activity, employment, and household income. In keeping with conservative modeling standards, the analysis excludes expenditures made outside the state to ensure that only in-state economic activity is captured. Spending assumptions are grounded in established benchmarks and standard economic modeling practices.

This disciplined, transparent approach provides a reliable estimate of Northeast's economic and community impact, demonstrating its critical role in sustaining local economies, strengthening Nebraska's workforce, and boosting long-term statewide prosperity.

Please see Appendix B for a detailed methodology.

TOTAL IMPACT OF NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE FY25

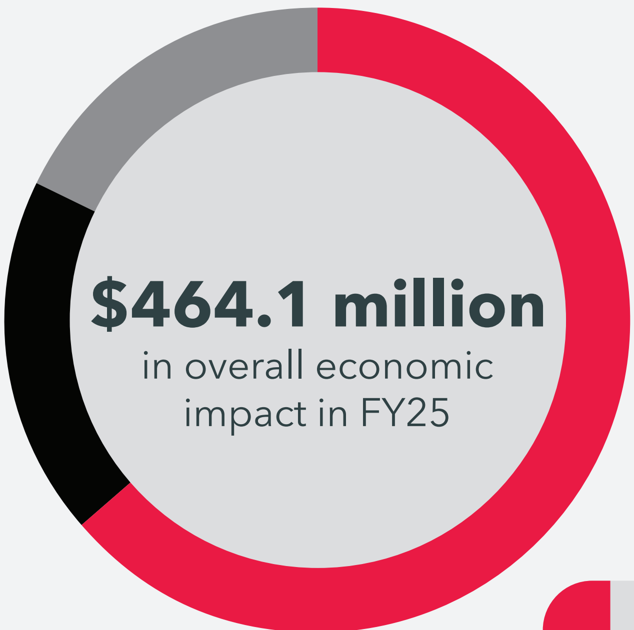
Northeast contributes ongoing economic value to northeast Nebraska and the state through multiple interconnected activity streams. As a multi-campus institution serving a large, predominantly rural service area, Northeast directs key resources into its communities through employee compensation, vendor purchases, capital investments, student spending, and graduates' long-term earning power. These streams support businesses, create employment, and reinforce economic vitality across northeast Nebraska and beyond.

Northeast's economic influence flows through two distinct but complementary dimensions. The first encompasses the near-term economic activity stemming from the college's operations, capital investments, and student spending, creating immediate demand for goods and services from Nebraska-based firms that then circulates through supply chains, employee wages, and household spending in the region. The second is the long-term alumni earnings impact, the recurring economic value driven by Northeast graduates whose credentials translate into higher wages that flow back into northeast Nebraska communities throughout their working careers.

Economic impact flows through the following channels:

- **Direct Economic Impact:** Institutional spending on operations, facilities, capital investments, and employee compensation, combined with off-campus spending by students, supports businesses and employment across northeast Nebraska. These direct expenditures represent the most immediate and visible layer of Northeast's economic footprint, spreading to the vendors, contractors, landlords, and service providers surrounding each of the college's campuses and learning centers.
- **Indirect and Induced Impact:** Vendor purchases and household spending lead to indirect and induced impacts, expanding economic activity across regional and statewide supply chains. As Northeast dollars move through the economy, from supplier to employee to business, the original institutional investment multiplies, extending the college's economic reach well beyond its campuses and into industries and households.
- **Alumni Extra Earnings Impact:** Beyond the near-term impacts of institutional and student spending, Northeast builds long-term economic value through its graduates' higher earnings. As Northeast alumni enter and advance in the workforce with credentials that command higher wages, their additional income circulates through local and regional economies, promoting jobs, tax revenue, and financial stability in their communities.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON NEBRASKA



$158.4 million
in operations, capital investment, and student spending impact

$78.8 million
in direct impact

$79.6 million
in indirect and induced impact

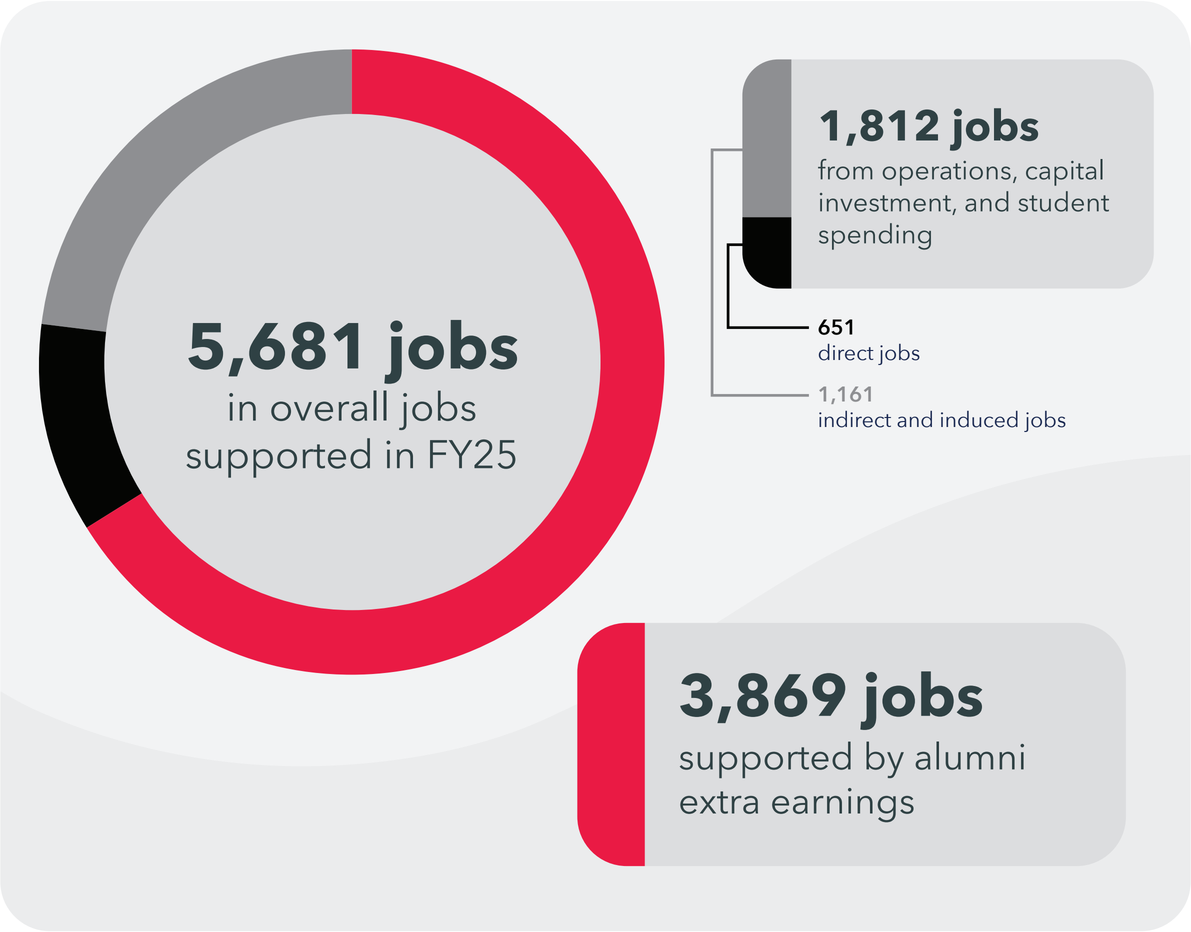
$305.7 million
in alumni extra earnings impact

Northeast is a cornerstone of economic activity across northeast Nebraska, serving as one of the most consistent and consequential institutional contributors to the region's long-term economic health. Its influence extends far beyond the boundaries of any single campus, permeating the businesses, households, and public budgets of its communities. Northeast in FY25 delivered an estimated **$464.1 million** in overall economic impact, a figure that captures the immediate economic activity the college drives through operations and graduates' long-term earnings power.

The economic activity resulting directly from Northeast's operations, capital investments, and student spending in FY25 totaled **$78.8 million** in direct economic impact, benefiting Nebraska businesses, contractors, vendors, landlords, and service providers across the college's service area. As those dollars circulated through supply chains, employee paychecks, and household budgets, they stimulated an additional **$79.6 million** in indirect and induced economic activity, bringing Northeast's total operational footprint impact to **$158.4 million**. In a predominantly rural region where large institutional spenders are limited, Northeast's consistent operational presence is one of the most dependable and productive sources of economic demand in its communities.

The additional annual income earned by Northeast's graduates totaled an estimated **$305.7 million** in alumni extra earnings, income above and beyond what those individuals would have earned without their Northeast credentials. These earnings recur annually, circulating through the regional economy in consumer spending, homeownership, tax contributions, and demand for goods and services that higher-earning households create. For communities where workforce retention and household income levels are ongoing priorities, the alumni earnings impact is a consequential contribution to the region's long-term economic health.

EMPLOYMENT IMPACT OF NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON NEBRASKA

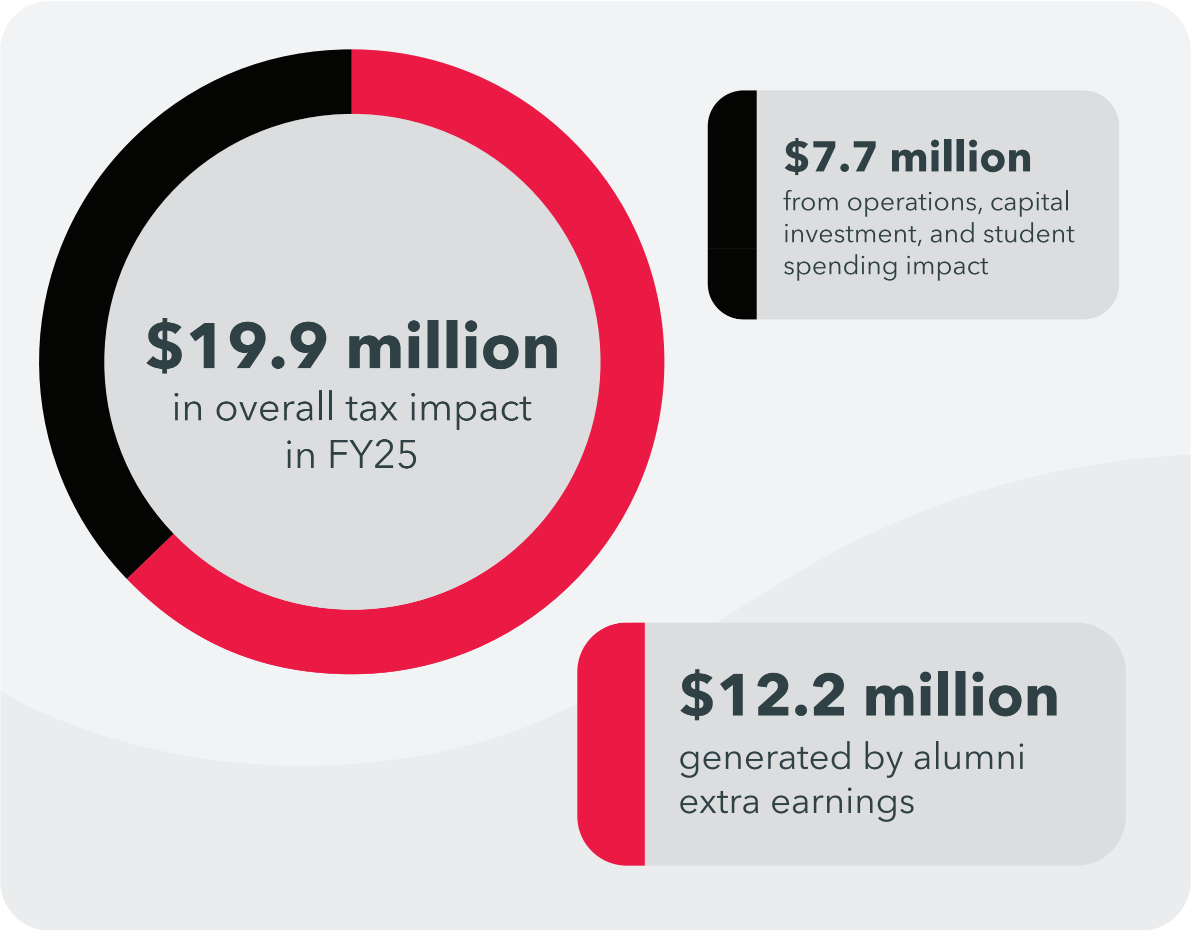


Behind every dollar of Northeast economic impact is a person earning a wage, a household supported, and a community strengthened. Northeast's combined economic activity in FY25 supported an estimated **5,681** total jobs statewide, a contribution spanning industries, income levels, and communities.

The college's operations, capital investments, and student spending bolstered **651** direct jobs in FY25, positions sustained by the college's payroll and student consumer activity in communities. As that spending worked its way through supply chains and household budgets, it resulted in an additional **1,161** indirect and induced jobs, bringing the total employment impact of Northeast's operational footprint to **1,812** jobs in education, construction, healthcare, retail, food service, and transportation. In the smaller communities, the employment attributable to the college's operations represents a key share of the workforce.

The additional income from Northeast's alumni helped fund an estimated **3,869** jobs in FY25, positions that exist because graduates earn more, spend more, and drive demand for goods and services. Multiplied across thousands of alumni, those individual spending decisions create employment demand benefiting workers and businesses.

TAX IMPACT OF NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN NEBRASKA

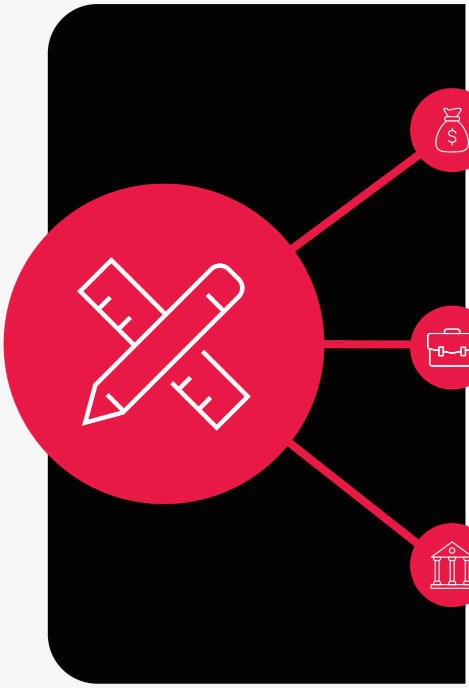


The public dollars directed toward Northeast, while funding an institution, enable a recurring return for the communities and governments of northeast Nebraska and the state. Through its operations, capital investments, student spending and its graduates' earnings power, Northeast fosters recurring tax revenue for state and local governments. The total tax impact attributable to Northeast in FY25 reached **$19.9 million** in state and local tax revenue.

Northeast's operations, capital investments, and student spending produced **$7.7 million** in state and local tax revenue, arising through payroll taxes associated with college employment, sales and use taxes tied to institutional purchasing, and taxes triggered by campus spending of students and employees. In the smaller, rural communities, the consistent tax contribution is a dependable public revenue source for local governments whose budgets are often heavily reliant on a small number of institutional contributors.

The additional income earned by Northeast's graduates produced an estimated **$12.2 million** in state and local tax revenue in FY25, a recurring contribution that grows with each graduating class and compounds over their working lifetimes. These revenues return to public budgets annually as alumni continue to earn at levels that reflect the credentials their education provided, strengthening the tax base that funds schools, infrastructure, and essential services.

OPERATIONS IMPACT



$124.1 million
in total operations impact in FY25

$62.0 million in direct operations impact
$62.1 million in indirect and induced operations impact

1,419 total jobs
supported by operations

458 direct jobs
961 indirect and induced jobs

$6.1 million
in tax revenue generated by operations

Northeast is a vital institutional economic contributor, maintaining a substantial operational presence in a predominantly rural region. The college's day-to-day expenditures, spanning faculty and staff compensation, vendor procurement, facility maintenance, and the full range of costs associated with operating a multi-campus institution across a rural service area, represent a reliable and recurring source of economic demand for businesses and workers. The total economic impact of Northeast's operations in FY25 reached **$124.1 million**.

Direct Operations Impact

Northeast led to **$62.0 million** in direct operational economic impact in FY25 through its expenditures on employee compensation, benefits, goods, services, and the operational costs of running a multi-campus institution. These are dollars spent close to home, permeating the businesses, service providers, and households that depend on Northeast's presence as one of the region's most stable institutional spenders. In the smaller communities, the operational expenditures represent one of the most dependable sources of economic demand and grow with every enrollment increase and program expansion.

Indirect and Induced Operations Impact

Northeast's direct operational expenditures generated an additional **$62.1 million** in indirect and induced economic activity, as vendors reinvested in their own supply chains, employees spent their wages at businesses, and those businesses created additional employment and spending. The near-equal split between direct and indirect impact demonstrates that Northeast's operational spending creates a multiplier effect of extraordinary efficiency, effectively doubling the original institutional investment.

Jobs Supported

Northeast's operations maintained **1,419** jobs in FY25, including **458**[1] direct jobs on the college's payroll. The remaining **961** indirect and induced jobs reflect employment as operational dollars moved through the regional economy, bolstering positions across construction, retail, healthcare, food service, and professional services. In this rural labor market, where stable employment opportunities are a challenge for community sustainability, the jobs supported by Northeast's operations are a genuine and lasting contribution to the region's workforce health.

Tax Revenue Generated

The economic impact of college operations totaled an estimated **$6.1 million** in state and local tax revenue, through payroll taxes, sales and use taxes on institutional purchasing, and the tax contributions of employees and vendors whose income is supported by the college's operational spending. In rural communities where the public revenue base is often limited and heavily reliant on a small number of institutional contributors, the recurring tax contribution is an important dimension of the college's value.

[1] Direct jobs included full-time faculty and staff.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT IMPACT

$22.8 million

in total capital investment impact in FY25

$10.4 million in direct capital investment impact
$12.4 million in indirect and induced capital investment impact

261 total jobs

supported by capital investment

119 direct jobs
142 indirect and induced jobs

$1.1 million

in tax revenue generated by capital investment

Every capital investment Northeast makes in its physical infrastructure is a direct injection of economic activity into northeast Nebraska communities. When the college builds, renovates, equips, or modernizes its campuses and learning centers, the economic benefits of that activity extend to the regional construction industry, the local supply chain, and skilled workers' households. In a predominantly rural region where large-scale construction projects are relatively infrequent, Northeast's capital investment activity represents a consistent source of project work and economic demand for contractors, tradespeople, and suppliers. The total economic impact of Northeast's capital investments in FY25 reached **$22.8 million**, reflecting the immediate value of the college's commitment to maintaining and improving facilities and the economic activity those investments set in motion.

Direct Capital Investment Impact

Northeast's capital investments led to **$10.4 million** in direct economic impact in FY25, spreading to construction firms, engineering companies, equipment suppliers, and skilled tradespeople engaged in building projects, renovations, technology upgrades, and facility improvements across the college's campuses and learning centers. In the smaller communities, such institutional capital activity provides a reliable source of project work for contractors and tradespeople, contributing to the vitality of a construction and trades workforce that depends on a pipeline of institutional project work to reinforce employment.

Indirect and Induced Capital Investment Impact

As Northeast's direct capital expenditures flowed through contractors and suppliers in FY25, they generated an additional **$12.4 million** in indirect and induced economic activity. Construction firms purchased materials from regional suppliers, skilled tradespeople spent their wages at businesses, and those businesses supported additional employment and spending. Each transaction extended the original capital investment further into the economic life of northeast Nebraska.

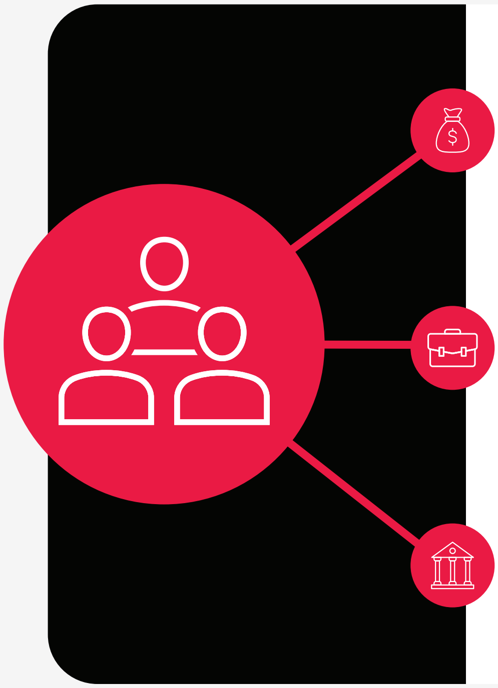
Jobs Supported

Northeast's capital investments supported **261** jobs in FY25, with **119** direct jobs tied to the immediate execution of construction and infrastructure projects across campuses and learning centers. The remaining **142** indirect and induced jobs reflect the employment created as capital dollars worked through the supply chain and into the regional economy, supporting positions in industries connected to but not directly involved in the construction activity itself. In rural northeast Nebraska, where construction-related employment opportunities are often seasonal and project-dependent, the college's consistent capital investment activity drives workforce demand supporting tradespeople and their families.

Tax Revenue Generated

Northeast's capital investments contributed to an estimated **$1.1 million** in state and local tax revenue. This contribution reflects the consistent pattern that runs through every dimension of the college's economic footprint: Institutional investment in facilities and infrastructure leads to public return, and every dollar committed to improving the college's campuses finds its way, in some measure, back into public budgets in northeast Nebraska and the state.

STUDENT SPENDING IMPACT



$11.6 million
in total student spending impact in FY25

$6.4 million in direct student spending impact
$5.2 million in indirect and induced student spending impact

133 total jobs
supported by student spending

74 direct jobs
59 indirect and induced jobs

$463,795
in tax revenue generated by student spending

Northeast students, besides being learners, are economic participants in northeast Nebraska communities. Students pay rent, buy groceries, fill gas tanks, arrange childcare, and make everyday purchases. In the smaller communities, this consistent consumer activity is an underappreciated source of economic demand supporting businesses and employment.

Direct Student Spending Impact

Northeast students in FY25 drove **$6.4 million** in direct economic impact through off-campus spending on housing, food, transportation, childcare, and other essential goods and services. In rural communities where the commercial base is often limited and heavily dependent on a small number of consistent spending sources, student consumer activity adds a recurring layer of economic demand benefiting businesses.

Indirect and Induced Student Spending Impact

Student dollars surging into businesses and households generated an additional **$5.2 million** in indirect and induced economic activity. The landlord who collects rent from a student reinvests in property maintenance, the grocery store restocks from a regional supplier, and the childcare provider spends her wages at a nearby business. Each secondary transaction extends the original student dollar further into northeast Nebraska's economic fabric and compounds the value of the student population across the region's communities.

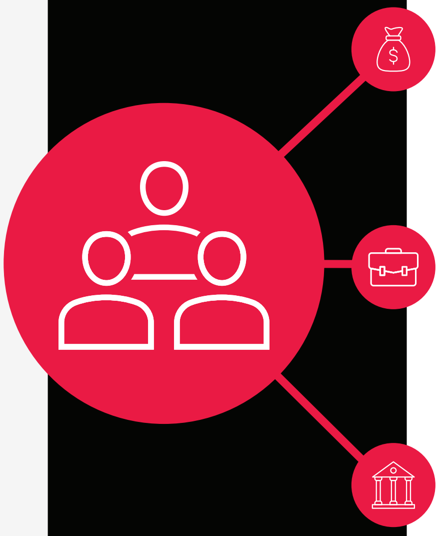
Jobs Supported

Northeast student spending contributed to **133** jobs in FY25, with **74** direct jobs resulting from student consumer activity in the college's communities. The remaining **59** indirect and induced jobs reflect the employment strengthened as student dollars moved through the regional economy, supporting positions in retail, food service, housing, transportation, and other industries serving students. In rural northeast Nebraska, where the loss of even a modest number of jobs can have an outsized impact on a small community's economic health, the employment enabled by student spending represents a quiet but genuine contribution to workforce stability.

Tax Impact Generated

Northeast's student spending activity also created public revenue for state and local governments. The economic activity associated with student off-campus spending in FY25 led to an estimated **$463,795** in tax revenue, a natural byproduct of students living, spending, and contributing to the commercial activity that sustains public revenue across the region.

ALUMNI IMPACT



$305.7 million
in total alumni extra earnings impact in FY25

3,869 total jobs
supported by alumni extra earnings

$12.2 million
in tax revenue generated by alumni extra earnings

The most enduring measure of Northeast's economic contribution is found in the careers of its graduates, working across northeast Nebraska and beyond, earning more than they would have without their college credentials, and stimulating recurring economic value. In a part of Nebraska where workforce retention and household income levels are among the most pressing economic challenges, the alumni earnings impact is a consequential dimension of the college's contribution to the region's long-term vitality.

Alumni Extra Earnings

Northeast's graduates in FY25 totaled an estimated **$305.7 million** in additional annual earnings compared to what they would have earned without their community college education. That figure represents the accumulated wage premium of a Northeast credential, multiplied across every graduate contributing to the workforce. These earnings recur with every paycheck, in every community where a Northeast alumnus is building a career, strengthening household financial stability, supporting businesses, and reinforcing consumer demand. For the rural communities, where higher-earning residents are reliable drivers of economic health, the aggregate earnings power of the graduate base is a contribution of extraordinary and lasting significance.

Jobs Supported by Alumni Extra Earnings

The additional income generated by Northeast's alumni supported an estimated **3,869** jobs in FY25, as higher-earning graduates spent more on housing, goods, services, and healthcare in their communities. In places where a modest number of jobs can make a major difference to a local economy, the employment attributable to alumni extra earnings represents one of the most impactful and least visible contributions to the region's workforce stability.

Tax Revenue Generated by Alumni Earnings

The additional income from alumni in FY25 produced an estimated **$12.2 million** in state and local tax revenue, through income, sales, and property taxes as graduates spent and invested their higher earnings across the region. These revenues return to public budgets annually as Northeast alumni continue earning at levels that reflect the credentials their education provided. In rural communities where public revenue streams are often limited and difficult to grow, the recurring tax contribution of alumni earnings represents a dependable source of tax support for schools, infrastructure, and services.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

$4.0 million

in donated time and charitable giving by staff, faculty, and learners.

Note: *These benefits are in addition to the* ***$464.1 million*** *economic impact generated by Northeast.*

Northeast, its alumni office, faculty, staff, and students contribute to the social and economic vitality of northeast Nebraska through charitable giving, volunteer service, and community engagement. These efforts reflect a commitment to civic responsibility and community, strengthening the region beyond the instructional mission.

Northeast community members each year provide an estimated **$4.0 million** in combined financial and in-kind support across northeast Nebraska. This total includes approximately **$2.3 million** in charitable donations and **$1.7 million** in volunteer service, representing thousands of hours dedicated to scholarships, community service projects, organizational partnerships, and student-led engagement initiatives. Northeast's work with donors, alumni, and community partners helps expand opportunities for students while reinforcing strong community ties.

Charitable Giving Initiatives: Northeast's philanthropic impact is supported in part by the Northeast Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization that mobilizes private gifts from individuals, corporations, foundations, and other supporters to expand student access and workforce development. The foundation solicits aid for capital projects, program enhancements, and scholarships that help reduce barriers to postsecondary attainment and enable students to pursue education with less financial burden. Scholarship gifts, whether directed to specific programs or designated as "areas of greatest need," provide crucial financial assistance that makes higher education attainable for many learners.[2]

Student and Alumni Volunteer Engagement: Northeast students are encouraged to serve their communities through formal and informal volunteer activities that complement their academic and professional development. Through student leadership organizations such as the Student Activities Council, members contribute time to campus events, service projects, and outreach efforts that build community and enhance student life.

Besides organized campus engagement, students volunteer through community activities. For example, Northeast learners have been involved in partnerships that bring students into events and organizations that support community needs, including participation in horticulture and plant fairs that benefit regional agricultural education and Master Gardener programs.[3]

Recognition and Support for Community Contribution: Northeast also celebrates alumni and community partners who demonstrate exceptional commitment to service and leadership through its Achievement Awards program. Recipients, including graduates who demonstrate strong professional accomplishments and civic engagement, reflect the college's long-term commitment to producing graduates who contribute to their professions and communities.[4]

These charitable giving and volunteer activities reinforce Northeast's role as an engaged community institution. Through private giving that provides scholarships and workforce pathways and through volunteer service that strengthens organizational capacity and resident well-being, Northeast extends its positive impact well beyond its campuses and into northeast Nebraska's communities.

[2] Giving and Alumni

[3] Northeast Scholarship Help Provided by Plant Fair

[4] Achievement Awards

RETURN ON EDUCATION INVESTMENT

For the students who choose Northeast, and for the taxpayers and communities of northeast Nebraska who invest in it, the financial case is clear and compelling. Northeast delivers measurable, lasting returns to the individuals who earn credentials, to the state that funds the institution, and to the rural communities that depend on a more educated, higher-earning workforce. In FY25, those returns reflected an institution that consistently delivers on its promise to the people and their communities.

Student Enrollment in FY25

Northeast enrolled **7,363** students in FY25, representing two distinct but equally important populations. Of those, **2,870** were degree-seeking credit students, individuals pursuing credentials, certificates, or associate degrees with clear career and educational goals. The remaining **4,493** were non-degree-seeking credit students, working adults, career changers, and community members seeking targeted skills and certifications that meet the immediate demands of a rural labor market. The student body's composition reflects the breadth of the college's mission and the diversity of needs it meets, from high school graduates entering the workforce to seasoned professionals adapting to changing demands of their industries.

Cost of Attendance

Northeast maintained an average cost of attendance of **$16,983** in FY25, encompassing tuition, fees, and estimated living expenses. In a region where household incomes tend to run below urban averages and access to higher education options is limited by geography, the affordability commitment is central to the college's mission. By keeping cost of attendance within reach for working adults, first-generation students, and lower-income families, Northeast ensures that the economic and professional benefits of a community college credential are accessible to the full breadth of the region's learners.

Total Current Expense and Forgone Earnings

Northeast students in FY25 collectively shouldered **$125.0 million** in direct educational expenses, the aggregate cost of attendance across all enrolled students, excluding financial aid interest. Beyond those costs, students set aside an estimated **$365.6 million** in wages they could have earned had they remained in the workforce full-time rather than investing that time in their education. These figures represent nearly **$490.6 million** in combined investment that students made in themselves and in their futures, a sacrifice speaking directly to these students' confidence in the value of their education and the returns it will deliver.

STUDENT'S RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Students: For every **$1** invested in their education, students realize **$6** in lifetime earnings.

$2.99 billion

in total increased lifetime earnings from students enrolled at Northeast in FY25

ROI FOR STUDENTS
$6
FOR EVERY $1 INVESTED

Expected Earnings After Graduation

Northeast graduates are projected to earn an estimated **$432.0 million** in additional income because of their credentials, wages above and beyond what they would have earned without that education. This earnings premium flows directly from the alignment between Northeast's programs and the needs of northeast Nebraska's employers in healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing, business, and skilled trades. From the moment they enter the workforce, Northeast credential holders begin building economic value for themselves, their families, and their rural communities.

Lifetime Extra Earnings Over 45 Years

Northeast students in FY25 are projected to amass a combined **$2.99 billion** in lifetime extra earnings over 45 years, a figure that reflects the compounding wage advantage the college's credential delivers throughout a professional life. The long-term retention of higher-earning residents is one of rural communities' most pressing economic development challenges, so the lifetime earnings impact of a single enrollment class provides a lasting investment in the region's economic future.

Return on Investment

The financial case for students choosing Northeast is compelling. Northeast delivers a return on investment of **6**, meaning that for every dollar a student invests in their education, accounting for direct costs and forgone earnings, they can expect to receive **$6** back over their working lives in higher wages and expanded economic opportunity. That return matches the statewide community college high and speaks to the quality and relevance of Northeast programs.

STATE'S RETURN ON INVESTMENT

State: For every **$1** invested in Northeast, the public sector generates **$2.50** in additional tax revenues over the student's lifetime.

ROI FOR THE STATE
$2.50
FOR EVERY $1 INVESTED

$119.6 million

in total incremental tax revenue attributable to increased lifetime earnings from students enrolled at Northeast in FY25

Nebraska's state government invested **$47.4 million** in grants and appropriations to Northeast in FY25, reflecting the state's recognition of the college's critical role in education and workforce development. State appropriations help keep tuition affordable, facilitate faculty and academic programs, and ensure that residents of the region's smaller, more isolated communities have access to the same quality of higher education as in Nebraska's larger population centers.

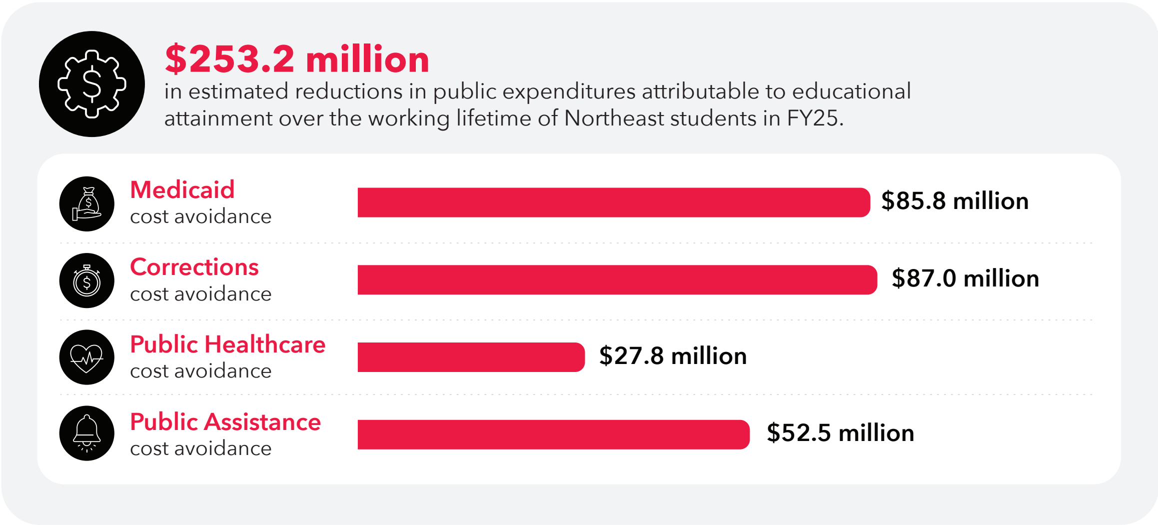
Tax Revenue Generated

The projected lifetime extra earnings of FY25 Northeast students are expected to result in an estimated **$119.6 million** in additional tax revenue for state and local governments over students' working lives. These tax dollars available because of the higher wages a Northeast credential makes possible will fund schools, roads, public safety, and essential services. Where rural communities often struggle to grow their public revenue base, the lifetime tax contribution of Northeast's graduates represents a reliable and impactful tax return to northeast Nebraska's governments.

Taxpayer Return on Investment

From the taxpayer's perspective, the return on Nebraska's investment in Northeast is clear and quantifiable. For every dollar the state appropriates for Northeast, taxpayers can expect to see **$2.50** returned through increased tax revenues and reduced public expenditures on programs such as Medicaid, corrections, and public assistance. This return reframes the conversation around community college funding in the most direct terms possible; it is a financially sound investment in the long-term economic health and sustainability of northeast Nebraska and its communities.

PUBLIC SECTOR COST AVOIDANCE



The value of a Northeast education reaches well beyond the graduate's paycheck and the employer who benefits from their skills. It extends into the public budgets of state and local governments, where the higher educational attainment of graduates translates into lower demand for publicly funded services over their lifetimes. In a rural region where public resources are often stretched thin, and the tax health of local governments is closely tied to the economic stability of households, the cost avoidance produced by Northeast's educational impact is among the most vital and most underappreciated dimensions of what the college contributes to northeast Nebraska. Over the working lifetimes of FY25 students, Northeast's educational impact is projected to yield **$253.2 million** in public-sector cost avoidance, a concrete demonstration of long-term return on investment in community college education.

Medicaid Cost Avoidance

Northeast graduates who enter the workforce with credentials and competitive wages are significantly more likely to access employer-sponsored health insurance, engage in preventive care, and maintain the financial stability that reduces long-term reliance on publicly funded healthcare coverage. Over the working lifetimes of FY25 students, these outcomes are projected to equal **$85.8 million** in Medicaid cost avoidance for Nebraska.

Corrections Cost Avoidance

Individuals who complete community college programs are less likely to be arrested, convicted, or incarcerated than those without credentials, a pattern driven by improved employment prospects, higher wages, and the greater economic stability that career attainment brings. For Nebraska, that pattern translates into **$87.0 million** in projected correction costs avoided over the working lifetimes of FY25 Northeast students.

Public Healthcare Cost Avoidance

Individuals without stable employment and adequate income are far more likely to seek care in emergency departments, rely on uncompensated care, and use community health resources funded by local and state governments. As more northeast Nebraskans gain Northeast credentials and enter higher-wage employment, the burden on publicly funded health infrastructure decreases correspondingly. Over the working lifetimes of FY25 students, this reduction is projected to produce **$27.8 million** in public healthcare cost avoidance.

Public Assistance Cost Avoidance

Long-term reliance on safety net programs such as SNAP, TANF, housing assistance, and childcare subsidies represents an ongoing cost to state and federal budgets. Northeast accelerates the transition out of public-assistance dependency by equipping students with the credentials and competencies needed to secure better-paying, more stable employment. Over FY25 students' working lifetimes, the reduced reliance on public assistance programs attributable to Northeast's educational impact is projected to mean **$52.5 million** in cost avoidance, savings that compound and produce relief to public budgets.

These four categories of public sector cost avoidance reinforce the most fundamental argument for investing in Northeast. The benefits of a Northeast education do not stop at the graduate's front door. They ripple through public budgets, reducing the demand for government-funded services and freeing resources for the infrastructure, healthcare systems, and community investments that Northeast Nebraska needs to grow its rural communities. At **$253.2 million** in projected lifetime cost avoidance, all from a single enrollment class, the total is a powerful case for Northeast.

CONCLUSION

Northeast is a foundational economic institution in northeast Nebraska, and the data presented in this report document that contribution across every measurable dimension of economic activity. From the direct operational expenditures and capital investments that enable businesses and employment across the college's rural service area, to the student spending that moves through local economies each semester, to the earnings power of Northeast's alumni whose higher wages create hundreds of millions in annual economic value for the region and the state, the college's economic footprint is broad and deep. The combined impact of these activity streams positions Northeast as one of the most productive economic assets in northeast Nebraska, delivering returns that extend well beyond any single campus or community and compound across industries, households, and public budgets annually.

The long-term tax and workforce dimensions of Northeast's impact are equally compelling and equally important to the case for sustained public investment. The nearly **$3.0 billion** in projected lifetime extra earnings from a single year's enrollment class, the **$253.2 million** in lifetime public sector cost avoidance attributable to FY25 students, and the **$2.50** taxpayer return on every dollar of state appropriation demonstrate that Northeast delivers one of the most financially sound and socially productive returns on public investment available to Nebraska. For policymakers, education leaders, and regional stakeholders evaluating the long-term value of community college funding, the evidence is unambiguous: Northeast is not a budget obligation but is an indispensable economic anchor for the long-term vitality, workforce capacity, and tax health of northeast Nebraska and its communities.

APPENDIX A
Definition of Terms

Study Year	FY25 represents the period from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. For Northeast, data was supplied for FY25.
Total Economic Impact	The combined direct, indirect, and induced effects across the economy are generated by Northeast.
Direct Economic Impact	Spending by Northeast, its employees, and its students and visitors.
Indirect Economic Impact	Re-spending by vendors and suppliers that provide goods and services to Northeast.
Induced Economic Impact	Household spending by employees whose wages are tied to Northeast, generating activity in housing, retail, food, and other services.
Multiplier Effect	The added economic activity created when Northeast's direct spending circulates through local businesses and households.
Direct Employment	The total number of jobs directly supported by Northeast, including faculty, staff, professionals, administrative staff, and operations personnel. Part-time and student employees are excluded.
Indirect Employment	Additional jobs created through Northeast's spending with vendors and suppliers. As these businesses expand to meet demand, they hire more employees, generating a ripple effect across industries such as construction, transportation, and professional services.
Induced Employment	Jobs sustained when Northeast employees, vendors, and suppliers spend their earnings in the local economy. This household spending supports employment in sectors such as retail, dining, housing, hospitality, and other community services.
State and Local Tax Impact	Government revenue generated at the state and local levels through Northeast's operations. This includes taxes paid directly by the organization, as well as those generated through employee wages, household spending, and purchases made by vendors and suppliers that support Northeast.

APPENDIX B
Methodology

This report measures the direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts generated by Northeast during FY25. The analysis captures the economic activity associated with the colleges' ongoing operations, workforce development role, and community engagement across the state. The impacts evaluated in this study fall within the following categories:

- **Business Volume Impacts:** Capital expenditures, operating expenditures, and payroll associated with community college operations.
- **Employment Impacts:** Direct employment at the community colleges, as well as indirect and induced jobs supported through supplier activity and household spending.
- **State and Local Tax Impacts:** State and local tax revenues generated through college operations and related economic activity.
- **Student and Employee Spending:** Off-campus expenditures on goods and services such as housing, food, transportation, childcare, retail, and hospitality.
- **Alumni Extra Earnings Impact:** The contribution of community college graduates to Nebraska's economy through higher earnings attributable to their education, which support additional jobs, generate increased state and local tax revenues, and strengthen household income and economic stability across the state.
- **Community Impact:** The economic value of employee and student charitable donations and volunteer activity.

This economic impact analysis measures the combined direct, indirect, and induced economic, employment, and state and local tax impacts associated with Northeast and its respective campuses, programs, and service areas. Collectively, these institutions operate as locally embedded public assets that support economic activity throughout both urban and rural regions of the state.

Economic impact begins when an organization spends money. Studies measuring economic impact capture both the direct effects of institutional spending and the additional rounds of spending that occur as dollars circulate through the economy. This analysis uses the IMPLAN (IMpact Analysis for PLANning) modeling system to estimate these effects. Primary data used in the analysis were collected directly from Northeast and included capital expenditures (five-year average), operating expenditures, employment headcounts, payroll and benefits, taxes, and selected student and employee spending inputs for FY25.

The multipliers applied in this study were derived from industry-standard IMPLAN software. Tripp Umbach's methodology is intentionally conservative, relying on established economic modeling techniques and cautious assumptions regarding individual spending behavior. Where applicable, spending assumptions are informed by federal per diem rates and adjusted to reflect Nebraska-specific economic conditions.

The total economic impact reflects the dollars generated in Nebraska by the presence and activities of the community colleges. This includes in-state spending on goods and services, as well as the economic activity generated by businesses, employees, students, and alumni connected to the colleges. Spending that occurs outside Nebraska, such as purchases from out-of-state vendors, is excluded from the impact totals to ensure that results reflect only impacts retained within the state economy.

IMPLAN is an econometric input-output modeling system developed by applied economists at the University of Minnesota and the U.S. Forest Service. It has been in continuous use since 1979 and is widely employed by private consulting firms, academic institutions, and government agencies. IMPLAN integrates data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and other federal sources to model trade flows between industries and households, allowing analysts to estimate how changes in economic activity affect a defined geographic area.

For this study, IMPLAN's Regional Economic Accounts and Social Accounting Matrices were used to construct state- and regional-level multipliers relevant to Nebraska. These multipliers describe how spending by community colleges, their employees, and students generates additional economic activity, which eventually "leaks" out of the state. IMPLAN explicitly accounts for such leakage based on workforce composition, supplier availability, and regional purchasing patterns, ensuring that only Nebraska-specific impacts are included.

The model also accounts for substitution and displacement effects by applying multipliers that are deflated below national benchmark levels. Multipliers are applied only to personal disposable income, producing more realistic estimates of induced economic effects. IMPLAN excludes imports to the economic area by applying Regional Purchase Coefficients (RPCs), which estimate the proportion of goods and services likely to be purchased within Nebraska based on observed trade flows and regional economic characteristics.

Employment Definitions

Employment impacts in this analysis are measured in terms of jobs (both full-time and part-time), not full-time equivalents (FTEs). Both full-time and part-time positions generate economic activity and support additional indirect and induced employment throughout Nebraska. Northeast provided employment data and included all individuals receiving compensation, including faculty, staff, student employees, and contracted personnel, where applicable.

State and Local Tax Impact Definition

State and local tax impacts include all taxes paid to Nebraska state and local governments that are attributable to community college operations and related economic activity. These include payroll-related taxes, sales and use taxes, property-related taxes, unemployment taxes, and other applicable state and local taxes. Federal taxes are excluded from this analysis.

Community Impacts

Community impact quantified in this report includes two primary forms: charitable donations and volunteer service provided by community college employees and students.

Tripp Umbach utilizes survey-based research to estimate annual charitable giving by faculty, staff, and students. Donation levels vary by individual and are adjusted to reflect each individual's participation rate.

The value of volunteer service is estimated using the Independent Sector's $34.79 per volunteer-hour valuation. This value is applied based on survey-informed assumptions regarding participation rates and average annual volunteer hours among community college employees and students.

Together, these components provide a comprehensive and conservative estimate of the economic and community value generated by Northeast during FY25.

APPENDIX C
Education and Earnings

One of the most well-documented relationships in labor economics is the connection between educational attainment and earning power. The following data, generated through earnings modeling and benchmarking using multiple data sources, including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, illustrates the tangible wage premium associated with each level of educational credential, from less than a high school diploma through a doctoral or professional degree. These figures served as the foundation for two key analyses in this report: the return-on-investment calculations, which reflect the lifetime earnings premium of Northeast students, and the alumni extra-earnings impact, which measures the additional annual income generated by the system's graduates currently active in the workforce.

For Northeast, the associate's degree row is particularly significant. A worker with an associate's degree earns approximately $177 more per week and nearly $9,194 more per year than a high school diploma holder in inflation-adjusted dollars, a difference that compounds over a 45-year career. Compared to a worker without a high school diploma, that annual gap widens to $19,641, nearly $20,000 in additional earnings every single year. These are not abstract figures. They represent real and recurring increases in household income flowing into Nebraska families, businesses, and tax bases as a direct result of the educational investment Northeast makes possible every semester.

Table 1: Educational Level and Earnings

Education Level	Weekly Earnings	Annual Earnings	Annual Earnings Above High School Diploma
Doctoral Degree	$2,383	$123,939	+$73,340
Professional Degree	$2,472	$128,563	+$77,964
Master's Degree	$1,925	$100,109	+$49,510
Bachelor's Degree	$1,614	$83,950	+$33,351
Associate's Degree	**$1,150**	**$59,793**	**+$9,194**
High School Diploma	$973	$50,599	
Less Than High School	$772	$40,152	-$10,447

Source: *Tripp Umbach generated earnings modeling through benchmarking using multiple data sources, including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.*

APPENDIX D

Methodology for Public Sector Cost Avoidance

To estimate lifetime public-sector cost avoidance, Tripp Umbach applied an established benchmarking methodology, drawing on resources including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), as well as peer-reviewed research on the tax impacts of postsecondary educational attainment. Using these inputs, public-sector cost-avoidance estimates were projected for FY25 community college students pursuing and completing an associate's degree, capturing the anticipated reduction in public expenditures attributable to that level of educational attainment over the course of a working lifetime. Key categories of savings include Medicaid, public assistance and social services, public healthcare, and corrections and incarceration.

By modeling the expected outcomes associated with associate's degree attainment and applying component-level savings across each expenditure category, Tripp Umbach estimated the total lifetime public cost avoidance attributable to the educational investment made by FY25 students. All present-value estimates were converted to current dollars using the CPI-U, ensuring that the projected savings reflect present-value lifetime benefits that are comparable in today's economic context. The figures presented in this section represent lifetime public cost savings per associate's degree graduate and form the basis for estimating total lifetime cost avoidance across Nebraska's community college student population. These projections demonstrate how investment in associate's degree education generates measurable and lasting economic and social returns that extend well beyond the individual student, reducing demand on public programs and strengthening the long-term fiscal health of Nebraska's communities and state government.

APPENDIX E
Tripp Umbach Qualifications

Founded in Pittsburgh, PA, and now headquartered in Kansas City, MO, Tripp Umbach is recognized as the nation's leading private consulting firm specializing in economic and community development. For 35 years, the firm has partnered with more than 1,000 healthcare, education, government, and corporate clients to measure, plan, and advance the economic, social, and physical well-being of communities worldwide. Tripp Umbach has completed more than 500 economic impact studies for higher education institutions across the United States, as well as community assessments and economic development strategies. As a pioneer in developing economic impact analysis in the 1980s, Tripp Umbach is the most respected and trusted provider of university impact studies.

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