



**News release**

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**Technology, partnerships and serving all students in all ways  
foundation of Gateway State of the College address**  
*College holds first-ever SOC address*

Continued partnerships with industry, advanced technology to help students learn and building on the college's strong foundation of learning were some of the areas of focus for Gateway Technical College President and CEO Ritu Raju at the college's first-ever State of the College address.

The event can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/gN0iUBxXBv4>

Raju's inaugural address included a wide range of Gateway topics, from successes of the past year to the current state of the college and a peek into plans for the upcoming year.

It lauded faculty for their work in providing training for students to gain the skills to successfully enter the workforce, an ever-increasingly important role.

"For the technical and two-year colleges, our work in populating the workforce pipeline has never been stronger," said Raju.

Raju also pointed to the importance of partnerships forged with area high schools and four-year colleges which give students opportunities to begin their

college careers early. These partnerships also offer a pathway to earn a four-year degree after graduating from Gateway.

She included the recently implemented Gateway Edge in the Elkhorn Area School District as one of those successes. High school students in the Edge will be able to earn their associate degrees while completing high school requirements so they can transfer to a four-year college right out of high school.

“Think about the savings in college tuition for the students and their families and the reduction in time to get them into the workforce,” said Raju. “This program was piloted with Elkhorn Area High School and has been so well received that our hope is to expand it.”

She also mentioned recent transfer agreements with area four-year colleges as examples of how Gateway is working to help its students. Two recent developments include partnering with UW-Milwaukee and Carthage College.

“These agreements reaffirm our commitment to deliver affordable and relevant education to our students,” said Raju.

Strong partnerships have also fueled the college’s success, said Raju, including recent work with Microsoft on a data center project.

“Recently, we welcomed Microsoft to the distinguished roster of partners that support us,” said Raju. “We are very grateful to all our industry partners for their support through the years. As Microsoft proceeds with the construction of their data center in Mount Pleasant, we are working with them to ensure that our curriculum meets their needs for the operation of a data center.”

Looking to the future, Raju pointed to the college's strategic plan and recent Moon Shot for Equity partnership as moves the college will continue to make to ensure that education is accessible to all students.

"Our aim is to reduce achievement gaps and support all our students to achieve better outcomes in terms of retention and completion," said Raju.

"Our innovative partnership and work with Moon Shot for Equity represents a win-win because eliminating equity gaps and producing successful graduates allows us to transform our students' lives and meet our community and industry needs at the same time."

Raju pointed to a new opportunity in the college's Architecture-Structural Engineering Technician associate degree program as a great example of how the college is integrating advanced technology into its curriculum to benefit students.

ImaginX is a tool that allows students in the program to conduct home inspections in a virtual environment.

"With a VR headset, computer, tablet or phone, they can practice their skills in a controlled, virtual environment from anywhere in our district before stepping onto a real site," said Bob Kaebisch, Gateway Architectural-Structural Engineering instructor.

"This is critical to providing practical, hands-on experience in a field where every detail counts and safety matters."

Photos of the event can be found here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBbMTy>

**Excerpts from President Raju’s State of the College address include:**

“The past year has seen further opportunities for colleges and universities to manage our resources more efficiently as well as support our students as they bounce back from the pandemic. For the technical and two-year colleges, our work in populating the workforce pipeline has never been stronger.”

“Artificial intelligence, or AI, will continue to inform teaching and learning and provide new ways to integrate hybrid learning seamlessly into our academic curriculum. We have already been offering micro credentials and stackable credentials – these will continue to grow.”

“Our goal, through all of these endeavors, is to remove barriers to student success and produce graduates with highly relevant credentials that address the current and future workforce needs of our region.”

“Our Gen Z students are affectionately called ‘screenagers’ and learned on iPads and tablets, using tools like Instagram and TikTok. We expect that Gen Alpha will continue these trends, with technology becoming more and more real, more multi-dimensional and more on-demand. The example of teaching using virtual reality that we heard about earlier (from Bob Kaebisch) is one of the many ways in which we will engage our students using technology that they are comfortable with.”

“Looking ahead, we see many exciting opportunities that offer the potential to be disruptive in a good way. The question I frequently ask myself and our teams is ‘Who are we not serving?’ Our goal is to provide services and resources

to all sections of our community. One area that we are now focusing on is our uniquely-abled students.”

Gateway Technical College’s mission is to deliver industry-focused education that is flexible, accessible and affordable for our diverse community. The college collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

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