

MATC FAST Fund: Gov. Evers appoints Director Rosen to Student Debt Task Force

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The *Local 212/MATC Believe in Students FAST Fund* is excited to announce that its Director, Dr. Michael Rosen, has been appointed to Governor Evers' Task Force on Student Debt.

"The cost of attending college has soared in Wisconsin forcing more and more young people to accumulate huge debts while others are compelled to forgo an education altogether," says Barbara Toles, former Milwaukee legislator and current President of the *FAST Fund* Board of Directors.

"Governor Evers has made a wise choice because Michael Rosen has been working on this issue for the past 20 years, first as a concerned professor and union leader at MATC, then as founder and Director of the *FAST FUND*," Toles explains. "Rosen is on the front lines every day counseling students and working to keep them in the classroom."

Rosen explains, "It is simply unacceptable that Wisconsin is in the top ten states in the nation for the percentage of graduates with student loan debt. This burden of personal debt is preventing people from accomplishing life goals like starting a business, buying a home, purchasing a car or even getting married," Rosen continues, "so it not only affects individuals, but it is a serious impediment to economic growth."

Wisconsin's class of 2018 graduates have an average debt burden of nearly \$32,000 according to the *14th Annual Report on the Burden on Debt at Graduation* by The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS).

Dr. Lisa Conley, a member of the *FAST Fund* Board and President of the American Federation of Teachers Local 212, says, “ Student debt has soared in Wisconsin because the state has failed to adequately invest in the Wisconsin Technical College System, the University of Wisconsin System and in Wisconsin Higher Education Grants. The cost of a post-secondary education has been shifted to Wisconsin’s students and their families at the very time that their incomes have stagnated or even declined. I’m pleased Governor Evers will use Dr. Rosen’s expertise on this crucial Task Force.”

Wisconsin saw the fourth-largest decline in per-student spending between 2013 and 2018 according to an [analysis](#) by the [State Higher Education Executive Officers Association](#). In 2018 Wisconsin spent close to \$1,500 less per student than the national average.

The *FAST Fund* is a non-profit organization that provides financial assistance to Milwaukee Area Technical College students experiencing economic emergencies.