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## **WITCC IS FIRST TO ACQUIRE STATE-OF-THE-ART DRIVING SIMULATOR**

Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC) has become the first educational institution in northwest Iowa to purchase an advanced simulator that can train individuals by recreating a vast range of real-life driving situations.

The state-of-the-art equipment, which can simulate everything from texting while driving to high-speed chases, will dramatically enhance the college's ability to train people for occupations where driving is involved. These occupations include firefighting, law enforcement, truck driving and emergency medical services.

The equipment can also simulate the full range of hazards encountered in today's challenging driving conditions. These situations include drunk driving, texting while driving, driving while sleep deprived and tire-blowouts. In addition, it can reproduce specific types of weather conditions, ranging from strong crosswinds and ice-covered roadways to heavy rain and fog.

The simulator, a PatrolSim IV Driver Simulator, uses the latest in digital simulation technology. It has a three-channel, high-resolution plasma screen, components that can be adapted to reproduce the conditions of specific methods of transport, and design features that create the look and feel of a real vehicle.

The college believes that the new equipment will significantly impact the local economy, which depends heavily on transportation, by enhancing the skills and abilities essential to everyday transport operations.

The college is already using the simulator to train law enforcement officers and truck drivers and plans to progressively incorporate the equipment in its training programs for firefighters and emergency medical vehicles.

Perry Nelson, Corporate College coordinator, is overseeing the use of the simulator for students in WITCC's truck-driver training program. "The simulator is no ordinary piece of equipment," Nelson said, "There's just one word for it and that's 'wow.'"

"Thanks to this amazing simulator, we can expose our students to dangerous driving situations without placing their life in jeopardy," Nelson said. "In the past, that wasn't an option. Unfortunately, learning how to cope with all the hazards that can come your way could only be achieved through direct experience."

Nelson said the simulator will provide students with experience of driving in mountainous areas, something they cannot experience in the relatively flat conditions of northwest Iowa. They can also learn how to respond to certain types of acceleration, braking and steering cues that would be impossible or dangerous to demonstrate in field training.

The simulator is housed at WITCC's Sioux City campus in The Security Institute, a security training facility that is based on a partnership between WITCC and state and local federal agencies.

Western Iowa Tech will make the simulator available for company training exercises upon request. For information and pricing, contact Nelson, at [nelsonp@witcc.edu](mailto:nelsonp@witcc.edu) or 712-274-8733, ext. 1387, or Steve Ebsen, director of The Security Institute, at [ebsens@witcc.edu](mailto:ebsens@witcc.edu) or 712-274-8733, ext. 1232.