WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Bruce Shepard by Steve Swan, V.P. for University Relations

DATE: August 14, 2009

SUBJECT: **University Relations Report**

PURPOSE: Information Item

Purpose of Submittal:

A written report is provided on the recent activities of University Relations.

Supporting Information:

Report Attached

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

REPORT FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

University Branding Initiative

WWU is moving forward at a rapid pace now that a commercial partner has been selected for the university branding initiative. The selection committee was comprised of Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations; Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations; Dr. Joseph Garcia, Associate Dean of the College of Business and Economics; and Paul Cocke, Director of University Communications. The committee reviewed 20 proposals that were submitted as a part of a RFP process, and interviewed three finalists before selecting Lyric, Inc., of Seattle. The committee was impressed with the firm's experience with higher education entities and with its work with not-for-profit agencies that are comprised of numerous complimentary operations and that work with multiple constituent groups.

The branding initiative, which is being funded with non-state appropriated resources, will be completed by December 31, 2009. The goal of the project is for the WWU community and its stakeholders to identify the core values and attributes of the university and to align the functions of the various components of the institution with those values and attributes. This will be accomplished through four segments to the project. The first will be through *brand research,* which will include review of existing WWU data as well as through interviews with hundreds of various stakeholders; second, by the creation of a *brand definition* which will result from extensive data analysis and research; third, the *creation of a brand identity*, which our visual and verbal brand will convey; and fourth, the *brand integration*, which will include the brand rollout and the brand strategy development.

Three teams totaling approximately 50 people are being compiled to work on the branding initiative. The three teams will be: the Executive Leadership Team; the Steering Team; and the Practitioners Team. The Steering Team will work with Lyric on a daily basis in facilitating the branding process while the all important Practitioners Team will be responsible for the rollout and implementation of the brand across the campus. The Executive Leadership Team will be the reporting entity which the brand findings will be presented to.

The branding process will include in-person interviews with 25 individuals who will represent a cross section of the multiple stakeholders that comprise or support the university. On-line and telephone surveys will be conducted with more than 400 stakeholders in the research phase of the project.

The result of this work will be the creation of our WWU brand promise, a promise that every university associate will be charged with keeping in their daily work with our various stakeholders. The second phase of the project, should it be recommended by the vendor and the WWU branding team, could be the creation of new graphic elements such as logos and a word mark.

After completion, this branding initiative will be followed in 2010 by a campus-wide integrated marketing exercise.

Waterfront Project

While the recent decision of NOAA to not locate in Bellingham was a disappointing development for the Waterfront Development Project, it does not change WWU's focus on creating a programming and physical presence at the site.

Western continues to work closely with the Port and City of Bellingham in seeking procurement of federal stimulus funds (TIGER) for infrastructure development at the site. The funds would provide major support for the tearing down of the current Cornwall Street bridge and for the construction of a new bridge at the same site. The funds would also address access issues at Central Avenue as well as railroad crossing issues at two other locations, and enable the city to construct a roundabout at the top of Wharf Street. Finally, the funds would pay for the move of the Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railroad tracks from the center of the site to the bluff at the edge of the site.

As reported months ago, internal planning discussions continue to focus on programmatic synergies that could lead to the creation of a nationally recognized entity focused on "Green Business." While many universities across the country are striving to create a similar programmatic entity, none has been successful in reaching that goal. Because of its attributes of location (the Pacific Northwest, in the mountains, on the ocean, between two major cities, on major highway and railroad corridors, 20 miles from an international border, facing the Pacific rim) and the strength of a nationally recognized environmental science program (Huxley) and a high respect business school (CBE), Western is positioned for success as few others are. On-going planning also includes complimentary programs involving the College of Science and Technology (which is already located on the waterfront in the IPZ Zone), international programs, health, and educational outreach.

Externally, the Port and the City continue to make good progress working together in establishing Development Standards and in creating a Master Plan for the site.

OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

The Office of University Communications continued to work on a wide array of projects, including developing an increased ability to provide information via various online and new media methods.

Online/Publications

Our office continues to develop more cost-effective and efficient means of communicating with Western's many stakeholders. We continue to transition our print publications to online-only or hybrid online-print.

Effort is under way to revamp our major electronic campus newsletter **Western Today**, which now goes out to campus weekday mornings with a summary of news and announcements about Western.

Current plans for the new version of **Western Today,** currently in a beta stage, will have a far wider range of features. Where the current version is sent out as a HTML-formatted e-mail, with no ability to embed video or support more advanced features, the new version will have a teaser e-mail sent to all subscribers each day which will then direct them to a functioning Western Today Web presence, which will feature links, photo galleries, video, a feed from WWU's new

campuswide calendar system, RSS feeds of news stories from external media, a searchable **"news bank"** of past stories about WWU, and more. This project is now in the process of undergoing extensive campus feedback and review from multiple stakeholders.

The Office also is working on several key publications this summer, including our first-ever **Annual Report** highlighting a year's worth of WWU stories as told through WWU press releases. The report will be available in September. We're also hard at work on the **fall edition of Window**. We launched a **Web site for Window**, www.wwu.edu/window, stocking it with online-only content.

And we've added helpful links and features on the **Soundings Web site,** www.wwu.edu/soundings, in anticipation of the quarterly family newsletter going online beginning this summer. Soundings will still have a six-page paper edition each summer for families of new students, and all families will receive a quarterly flyer encouraging them to check out the Soundings Web site for the latest news for WWU families. And we're working with the WWU Foundation to build a Web site for the **President's Annual Report**; our annual report to donors and friends will be online only this year.

Work also continues on another major electronic outreach projects: **Gaia,** a Web site dedicated to showcasing research in the life, earth, marine and environmental sciences at WWU.

Due in large part to the efforts of program assistant **Pam Smith, graphic designers Chris Baker and Shona Fahland** successfully transitioned from their former offices in the commissary building to the Office of University Communications suite at 300 Old Main due to a reorganization within the University Relations Division.

The work of the two graphic designers, which had been charged to campus users on an hourly basis because the designers formerly were part of the self-sustaining Print and Copy Services, will no longer incur charge-backs to campus users. That change will result in a substantial cost savings across campus. Locating the graphic artists in close proximity to the editors and writers at University Communications will also provide much greater efficiency and more effective collaboration on university communication and marketing projects

Our office continued its community outreach by connecting community organizations and expert faculty and staff via **Western's Speakers Bureau**. We arranged five Speaker's Bureau events for August and September, and have several more awaiting confirmation.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

International / National media:

An *Associated Press* story in June on students transferring to universities closer to home because of the recession quoted **Karen Copetas**, Western's director of Admissions and Enrollment Planning, and featured a student transferring from Tufts University to Western. The story, which mentioned the **academic excellence of Western**, ran in newspapers, TV and radio stations and web sites across the state, region and nation including: the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *ABC News.Com*, *Boston Globe*, *College News.Com* and Seattle and Washington state media. After the initial story ran, the *Scripps-Howard News Service* sent out a nationwide editorial again discussing the topic and WWU. This editorial ran in numerous media outlets.

The New York Times on July 27 discussed the participation of **Huxley faculty member Andy Bunn** in the Polaris Project, a fascinating scientific and educational expedition under way on one of the more remote, unusual rivers on the planet, the Kolyma in eastern Siberia. It is the largest river in the world that is completely underlain by permafrost. The region, like most of the Arctic, has seen substantial warming, and the expedition, among other things, is aiming to measure how much carbon dioxide and methane could be liberated if the permafrost thaws in a big way. Bunn also was quoted in the Web site *First Science* about his experiences with the Polaris Project.

USA Today on July 9 featured research by WWU sociologist **Jay Teachman** on dating and cohabitation.

WWU Associate Professor of History **Johann N. Neem was** quoted June 29 in the *Boston Globe* on a story about whether America is a nation of "joiners."

On July 22, the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* quoted SMATE Director **George "Pinky" Nelson** about his time as a NASA astronaut. Nelson also was featured in the *Harvey Mudd College* magazine in an article titled "Space Hero, STEM Advocate and rock star," following his induction into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame.

WWU alumnus **Bill Wright** was profiled in the *Washington Times* July 1 about his many accomplishments, including being the first African-American to win a United States Golf Association title.

The Campus Community Coalition, hosted and funded by Western, was featured June 18 in *Medical News Today* as an excellent example in a story about programs that bring colleges and their surrounding neighborhoods together to help reduce off-campus drinking problems.

Regional media:

Don Alper, WWU political scientist and director of the **Border Policy Research Institute**, was quoted July 14 in *the Spokesman-Review* about the effects of tighter security on cross-border traffic. The article also ran via wire services in other regional and state media outlets.

The Seattle online news publication *Crosscut* on July 8 ran a story featuring **President Bruce Shepard's** first year as WWU president.

In a July 30 editorial, the *Seattle Times* wrote an editorial saying that Washington state was still a great place to build airplanes. In that editorial the newspaper mentioned state funding to establish the **Advanced Materials Science and Engineering Center at Western**. The newspaper noted that the center integrates chemistry, physics and engineering into the production of materials used in industries such as aerospace, microelectronics and biotechnology**.**

The Olympian noted that Gov. Chris Gregoire had appointed **Brad Smith**, dean of Huxley College, to the state's **Fish and Wildlife Commission**. The announcement also ran in other media, including June 25 in the *Everett Herald.*

The Seattle P-I Online on July 22 featured Huxley faculty member **Andy Bunn's** research on **global warming and bristlecone pines** in Nevada.

The Seattle Times on June 15 quoted **Vehicle Research Director Eric Leonhardt** on the **VRI's biomethane project** and development of the world's first plug-in hybrid car powered by biogas, or fuel derived from cow manure. A similar story also ran in the *Seattle Examiner* publication.

The Puget Sound Business Journal on July 15 featured Western receiving a $900,000 grant from the National Science Foundation a**imed at encouraging students to become science and math teachers for middle and high schools**. **Bruce Larson**, WWU Professor of Secondary Education, is the primary administrator for the grant, and **George "Pinky" Nelson**, WWU director of SMATE, is co-director of the grant The grant award also was reported July 27 in the *Bellingham Herald.*

KIRO TV in Seattle on July 4 featured highlights of **Western's fifth consecutive NCAA Division II national championship in women's rowing**.

The Skagit Valley Herald quoted **Shannon Point Marine Center scientist Paul Dinnel** in a story about restoration of the native Olympia oyster to Puget Sound waters.

The Everett Herald reported that Western is bringing an **MBA degree** program to the University Center in Everett. The *Tacoma News-Tribune* reported the same news on July 7, as did the *Bellingham Herald.*

The Peninsula Daily News in Port Angeles reported July 13 on a wildfire assessment released in May by the Peninsula College Center for Excellence and **Western's Huxley College.**

The Olympian newspaper on August 3 reported that the work of recent graduate Western Washington University graduate **Dan Erickson** was recognized by the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

The Stanwood Camano News on July 29 highlighted WWU's **Western Kids Camp.**

Local media

A series of prominent stories on Western research on global warming have been running in the Bellingham Herald, with front-page placement with color photos. One featured **Huxley faculty member Andy Bunn and his participation in the Polaris Project.** The other story, on June 22, featured research by **David Shull,** an assistant professor of environmental science at Huxley College. Shull is among 94 scientists from 10 states and two countries who have teamed up for a $52 million study of the ecosystem of the eastern Bering Sea shelf, which lies between the Aleutian Islands and St. Lawrence Island.

The Bellingham Herald ran a couple of stories on the **Board of Trustees'** adoption of operating and capital budgets.

A guest column by **Arlan Norman**, dean of the College of Sciences and Technology on the critical importance to our society of **science, math and technology education** ran Aug. 5 in the *Bellingham Herald.*

The Bellingham Herald reported August 5 that Bellingham will not be the new home of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Operations Center-Pacific. **Steve**

Swan, WWU's vice president for University Relations**,** was quoted as saying that Western remains firmly committed to being on the waterfront and the decision of NOAA in no way changes that.

The Bellingham Herald on August 4 noted that Western has been named one of the **top "green power" universities in the country** by the Environmental Protection Agency. Western, which buys 100 percent of its electrical energy from green sources, was ranked eighth in the nation.

The Bellingham Herald reported that **Sociology professor Jay Teachman and Demographic Research Laboratory director Lucky Tedrow** received nearly $75,000 from the National Science Foundation via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The grant will cover two years of study into the mental and physical health of veterans who fought mostly in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Bellingham Herald on August 3 noted that $750,000 had been earmarked in a bill for possible use by Western's **Vehicle Research Institute** to design and build two prototype, **fuel-efficient, lightweight public transit buses for small transit districts.**

The Bellingham Herald on August 3 also ran an article about the city installing WWU-designed pet waste collection stations in a city park. The challenge of crafting a collection station was given to **industrial design students at Western Washington University**.

The Bellingham Herald on July 31 featured WWU Research technician **George Mustoe**, who curates the fossil, rock and mineral collection of the **Geology Department** at Western, in a story on fossils.

KVOS TV ran a segment July 17 featuring the **Youth For REAL** mentoring program, which pairs **Woodring College students** with students at Shuksan Middle School through the **Center for Service Learning** with partial funding through the **Washington Campus Compact**

Grandparents U, a program by Western's **Extended Education and Summer Programs**, was featured July 17 in the *Bellingham Herald.*

The Bellingham Herald reported July 15 that the Humanities Building at Western was briefly closed after a contractor dislodged some ceiling material that contained **asbestos.**

The Bellingham Herald on July 6 quoted **Craig Dunn,** an associate professor in the College of Business and Economics, about business ethics and the sentencing of Bernard Madoff to 150 years in prison.

The Bellingham Herald on June 6-23 reported that Western placed 10th nationally among NCAA Division II schools in the final **2008-09 Learfield Sports Directors' Cup standings**. It is the Vikings' highest placing in school history and the school's first top 10 finish.

The Bellingham Herald reported that Western's **Joseph Garcia** has been named to the editorial board of The Business Journal of Hispanic Research. Garcia is the director of the new **Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership**.

The Bellingham Herald reported that Western is suspending its **Performing Arts Center Series** for at least two years because of budget cuts. The PAC Series began in its current state in 1991, bringing dancers, musicians and singers to Western's campus.