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: October 9, 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 Communications

Two significant projects that the University Marketing and Communications Office completed and unveiled at the start of the fall academic quarter warrant some special mention. Trustees can read more about these projects later in the University Relations report from University Communications. The projects are a new Western Today daily web-based campus communication and a new WWU Annual Report.

In an effort to begin the development of an integrated marketing approach for Western, focus has been placed on elevating the quality of internal communications. That effort has started with the enhancement of Western Today which you can view at: http://onlinefast.org/wwutoday/ This new web-based communication reflects the merging of a number of communications that used to be stand alone pieces, including the Fast faculty and staff publication and the old Western Today. This new version is designed to serve as a one-stop go-to communication that presents the latest campus news through multiple mediums and serves as a news library through RSS housing of information. This new communication piece has received very positive feedback from the Western community.

The Western Washington University Annual Report is a new publication that is designed to serve as a marketing piece to promote the news, achievements and examples of excellence that took place at the university in 2008-09. It is organized under 16 different sub-titles to capture the wide-array of activities that took place at Western. The goal of the report is to better inform and market to the various constituents, both on and off campus, of the multitude of accomplishments taking place at Western. Future annual reports will be categorized around the 15 initiatives that President Shepard identified in his Mid-Year Convocation address that will drive the Western community to reach its collective vision of WWU's future.

The annual report is available in PDF format to provide individuals and entities within WWU the opportunity to pull portions or sections of the report for their own specific use. It can be accessed at: http://news.wwu.edu/posted/1538/wholereportforweb.324300.pdf .

University Branding Initiative

The long awaited branding initiative is now in full swing with in-person interviews and on-line surveys being conducted in the last week of September and the first week in October. A total of 25 personal interviews are being conducted either in-person or via telephone with a array of individuals who represent the multiple constituent groups that comprise the Western community. The surveys are being sent to students, alumni, faculty and staff.

The interview and survey work is being conducted by Lyric, Inc., a Seattle-based commercial branding company that is partnering with Western in the branding initiative. Lyric has impressive experience working with higher education institutions and complex not-for-profit entities. A few of the key particulars regarding the project are:

Branding Initiative Goals

Create Brand definition

- Lyric is working with WWU's "Brand Leadership Team" which will consist of representatives from faculty, staff, students, alumni and community to define and reach a consensus of our brand promise utilizing the data obtained during the research phase.

Create Brand Identity

- Lyric is working with WWU to establish the University's brand promise.
  It will:
    - Create templates and writing samples to implement brand identity.
    - Create a brand handbook that is the definitive source for visual and verbal expression that focuses on delivering the University's brand. This handbook will be easy-to use and also include the detail to communicate our brand.

Branding Initiative Process

- Lyric is working with WWU to conduct the University's first-ever branding initiative this fall. This project is being paid for with non-state appropriated funds.

- Lyric is conducting in-depth personal interviews with representatives of:
    - Students and Alumni
    - Faculty and staff
    - Board of Trustees
    - Foundation and Alumni Association Board of Directors
    - Legislators
    - Academic advisors

- Lyric is conducting online interviews with a minimum of 400 students and alumni. The students and alumni to be interviewed will be segmented by the college they are affiliated with. A segment of undeclared students will be included in the interview pool.

- The University will have three different teams involved in the branding process.
    - The Executive Team – This is the group that the Branding Leadership Team will report to with it recommendations derived from the branding process. This group is comprised of the members of the President's Cabinet along with several other appointees. It has 20 members.
    - The Leadership Team – This group is compiled of leaders of the university, all whom are engaged in various aspects of marketing and institutional image, in their respective positions. A community leader who has extensive experienced in branding is also a part of this team. This team has 15 members.
    - The Practitioner Team - The people who will be engaged in and responsible for the successful implementation of the WWU brand will comprise this group. This team will have on-going responsibility for the implementation and consistent use of the brand in the areas they represent. This team will have 35 to 40 members.

Brand Integration

- Lyric is working with WWU to create an internal presentation of recommendations.

- This work with the WWU Brand Leadership Team will include the development of strategies to integrate the new brand throughout the University

Consulting and Follow-Up

- Lyric will be available during the initial year to attend meetings of the WWU Brand Leadership Team

The branding initiative, which is being funded with non-state appropriated resources, will be completed with a presentation of the new brand in January 2010. Phase II of the project, if recommended in the initial phase, will focus on Western's visual properties such as logo, word mark and colors.

Waterfront Project

Western's work on the Bellingham Waterfront Development Project has intensified this fall with the official creation of the Western Crossing Development Corporation. This entity, which was formerly referred to as Viking Development, conducted a planning meeting on September 11 which included the people designated by their positions to serve on the entity's board of directors. They are Bruce Shepard, President of WWU; Peggy Zoro, WWU Board of Trustees appointee; Fred Seeger, Interim Director of the Port of Bellingham; and Scott Walker, President of the Commissioners of the Port of Bellingham. A fifth person will be appointed by WWU and the Port. The by-laws and articles of incorporation will be presented for action at the October meeting of the Board of Trustees.

One of the first acts of business of the board of directors was approval of the new name of Western Crossing Development Corporation. The name, which was created by the University Marketing Office after the solicitation of recommendations from student classes and marketing professionals on campus, was endorsed by the academic deans and directors serving on the internal Waterfront Academic Planning Committee. The name has been registered with the State of Washington Secretary of State and the internet domain name has also been secured.

The need for the creation of the Western Crossing Development Corporation has heightened as WWU aggressively explores options for land procurement at the waterfront, along with increasing interest from private developers. In addition, 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.

Internal discussions continue regarding potential programming that will be located on the waterfront. Catherine Riordan, WWU's new Provost, has become a part of the team that is working on the programming component.

Government Relations Report

Work in the Government Relations office has not slowed down.

As you are aware, legislators were invited to the August Board of Trustees meeting for a panel discussion on the future of higher education and how it fits into this new economic reality. Representatives Skip Priest, Kathy Haigh and Scott White, along with Senator Dale Brandland, participated in the discussion lead by Representative Kelli Linville and WWU Trustee Chair Phil Sharpe. If one theme could be taken away from that discussion it was that the conversation has

only begun. We must continue to work toward strategizing how higher education can come out of this recession stronger with more legislators advocating for higher education.

Throughout the summer the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) has been working on a number of initiatives and studies mandated by the 2009 legislative session.

The approval by the legislature of the HECB's Strategic Master Plan in 2008 resulted in the conclusion that a new plan was needed to guide the development of the Washington higher education system. Most likely the most comprehensive review of the higher education delivery system in Washington in nearly 30 years, the review is called the "System Design Plan." Throughout the summer Provosts, legislative officers, the Council of Presidents, HECB and legislative staff have been meeting and working with the system Design Study Design Committee discussing the future of higher education in Washington State.

The new plan hopes to provide the following:

- Recommendations to increase undergraduate and graduate educational attainment levels for Washington by the year 2030.
- Recommendations to determine when and where to locate new campuses and higher education centers.
- "Rational rules for growth" to help guide expansion and coordination of the higher education *system* in Washington over the next several decades.
- Recommendations to increase higher education for under-served areas and populations.

In October the HECB will report its preliminary findings and in November adopt the new recommendations. These recommendations will then go to the legislature for approval and implementation and will most likely chart the future course of higher education in Washington State.

The HECB has a committee that is studying tuition flexibility options. This study was mandated by legislation during the 2009 legislative session. The proposed tuition policy urges the state to "adopt a new cost-sharing policy for higher education to help keep tuition moderate, ensure broad student access, and meet master plan goals for increased degree attainment." In its latest draft, the policy would require the state to fund no less than 55 percent of undergraduate instructional costs at the six baccalaureate institutions. It would also limit the amount of instructional costs provided by tuition to 45 percent. A draft report was presented and reviewed at the September 29 HECB meeting where Provost Catherine Riordan testified on behalf of Western. HECB action on the recommendations is expected at their November meeting.

Thirdly, the HECB will be conducting an Education Cost Study (ECS) as required in RCW28B.76.310. The ECS requires the HECB to produce "cost study reports to meet the information needs of the governor's office and the legislature" and to "complete an annual calculation of the cost of state support of instruction which is known as the Disclosure Report." The first meeting took place on September 18 with the public baccalaureates, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Council of Presidents participating. The ECS must be submitted to the legislature by January 2011.

The Government Relations office has been on the road with Cyndie Shepard meeting with legislators to discuss her peer mentoring program, better known as *Compass 2 Campus*. We are gearing up for the big kick-off on October 27. Already we know Lt. Governor Brad Owen and several legislators will be in attendance.

We are also beginning to gear up for the 2010 legislation session and have begun meeting with various departments and offices on campus. We will continue these meetings through the fall. On the agenda we are asking for small, little-to-no-cost initiatives from departments. We are working closely with our faculty and classified unions, the faculty and student leadership.

On October 2, 2009 President Shepard testified on our 2009-2011 budget implementations and cuts at Western in front of the Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development committee in Olympia. The committee was interested on how the cuts affected enrollments, employment, degree production and class size among a serious of other questions. Bruce also met with Representative Jeff Morris and Senator Derek Kilmer while in Olympia.

Our fall calendars are already full as we continue to work with the HECB, the campus community and the legislature. We look forward to updating you on our fall work and the interim HECB studies at the December board meeting.

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 new, electronic campus newsletter **Western Today** was launched the first day of fall classes. The Office of University Communications completely revamped Western Today to take advantage of multimedia technologies and to better disseminate the stories it publishes. This new product is part of our effort to retool the way we tell Western's story. When we stopped printing FAST earlier this year, we looked for a better way to ensure that Western's campus community can still get the information it needs.

The new version of Western Today has a far wider range of features. Where the previous version was sent out as a HTML-formatted e-mail, with no ability to embed video or support more advanced features, the new version has a teaser e-mail sent to all subscribers each day which then direct them to a functioning Western Today Web presence, featuring links, photo galleries, video, a feed from WWU's new campuswide calendar system, RSS feeds of news stories from external media, a searchable **"Knowledge Bank"** of past stories about WWU, and more. This project went through extensive campus feedback and review from multiple stakeholders. For examples of the new online publication, please see: Western Today. **John Thompson** and **Matthew Anderson** in University Communications developed and now update Western Today.

Our office published our first University Relations Annual Report, collecting news and highlights from throughout Western. Gathering so many of the year's accomplishments in one place is a great reminder that we have much to be proud of and will be an effective marketing tool for the university. This inaugural report was compiled and edited by **Mary Gallagher.**

We continue to transition the **Soundings newsletter** for WWU families into an online publication. In early September, we put the new edition of Soundings online at Soundings and sent e-mails to about 11,000 addresses and saw a surge in hits to the Web site. We followed up by sending a full six-page Soundings edition to incoming WWU families. And we sent an

abbreviated version to returning families, urging them to find more information on our Web site. We continue to evaluate the best ways to get the electronic version of the newsletter to as many families as possible.

We're entering into production mode for **Window,** our university magazine. As we get closer to our publication date, we'll post some preview stories and photos on the magazine's Web site to build interest. Watch Window for more information.

The transition of graphic artists **Chris Baker** and **Shona Fahland** continues to be a smooth one due in large part to the continuing efforts of program assistant **Pam Smith.** The graphic artists have 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. Both Chris and Shona are busy with numerous projects of benefit to the university.

Our office continued its outreach by connecting community organizations and expert faculty and staff via **Western's Speakers Bureau**. We facilitated a number of speakers in the community, including:

- **Kathy Knutzen**, associate dean of Humanities and Social Sciences and Director of Western's Center for Healthy Living, spoke on Aug. 17 to the Spring Creek Retirement and Assisted Living Community in Bellingham on "What is Your Health Worth to You?"
- **Bob Keiper**, associate professor of Secondary Education for Woodring College of Education, spoke on "Laughter: Motivation and Medicine" on Aug. 20 at the Sunrise Rotary Club in Bellingham; Sept. 17 at the Spring Creek Retirement and Assisted Living Community in Bellingham, Sept. 24 at the North Whatcom Rotary Club in Bellingham
- **Rosemary Vohs**, an instructor in the Communication Department who also teaches storytelling and children's literature for Woodring College, spoke on "Get a Grip! Stand Up to Platform Panic" on Aug. 27 at the North Whatcom Rotary Club
- **Tom Dorr,** director of the College of Business and Economics' Center for Economic Vitality, spoke on "How to Survive as a Small Business" on Sept. 10 at the North Whatcom Rotary Club.

Media Highlights

Note: The previously exhaustive media listing is being replaced, for the sake of brevity, by this summary of major media stories about Western. A more extensive listing of media stories – grouped by category – that reference Western is now available via the Knowledge Bank at Western Today. More prominent media stories included:

- A number of local and area media stories highlighted the start of the academic year and fall quarter at Western. *The Bellingham Herald* on Sept. 17 ran an extensive front page story covering President **Bruce Shepard's** convocation talk to faculty and staff. On Sept. 26 the *Bellingham Herald* ran an editorial about Western's response to the severe state budget cuts titled: **"Western on right track, despite cuts and tuition increases."** The Herald also ran stories about students moving into residence halls and the university's preparation for the H1N1 flu.
- On Aug. 24, the *Wall Street Journal* quoted **Eric Grimstead**, a business advisor at the **Center for Economic Vitality** at Western, in a story on ways to speed up SBA loan approval for small businesses. On Sept. 24, the *Bellingham Herald* ran a story about the Center for Economic Vitality being awarded $330,860 from the U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration. **CEV Director Tom Dorr** said the two-year grant will be targeted toward business development in rural Whatcom County and with four area Indian tribes – Nooksack, Lummi, Upper Skagit and Swinomish.

- On Aug. 25 the *Bellingham Herald* ran an extensive story on Western's remodel of Miller Hall. *The Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce* on Aug. 20 ran a story about the use of affordable construction materials and a streamlined design approach in construction of Western's new Academic Instructional Center.
- **U.S. News & World Report** ranked of Western as the third best public, master's-granting university in the West. Their ranking also was featured in the *Bellingham Herald* on Aug. 27 as well as the *Seattle Times, Seattle P-I* and other media outlets via the *Associated Press.*
- *The Puget Sound Business Journal* on Sept. 10, *Associated Press, Seattle Times, Bellingham Herald, KGMI Radio* and other media outlets reported that Western's **Vehicle Research Institute** had been awarded a $500,000 grant that will be used in a project that will turn manure from dairy cows into fuel that will power buses in Bellingham. The grant from the U.S. Department of Energy will be used to expand the Biomethane for Transportation project at Western, which is researching turning dairy cow manure into a clean-burning biomethane fuel. Part of the money will install three new biomethane-powered engines in buses used by Bellair Charters of Bellingham.
- *The Bellingham Herald* ran an extensive front-page story Sept. 6, which also appeared in the *Tacoma News Tribune, Olympian and in the Seattle Times* and other newspapers via the Associated Press, on Western geologist **Doug Clark's** research analyzing a glacier in Canada to determine clues to climate patterns.
- *The Bellingham Herald* on Sept. 14 ran an extensive story on WWU geologists' research on the Racehorse Creek Landslide in Whatcom County, including an interview with **Juliet Crider,** associate professor in the WWU Geology Department**.**
- And the *Bellingham Herald, Tacoma News Tribune, Olympian, Skagit Valley Herald* and other media outlets throughout the state in mid-August ran an extensive story about research by scientists **Suzanne Strom and Kathy Van Alstyne at Shannon Point Marine Center** on harmful algae blooms in Puget Sound waters.