**Dean’s Update January 2015**

All – I hope your classes are off to a good start. I thought I’d share a few good news items with you.

During the 2014-15 academic year, our students received $97,705 in scholarship support from departmental and college scholarships. That’s about $50,000 more than last year due to the Meltzer Scholarships. And we’ll do better in the future.

Cultural Anthropologist Jim Veteto was recently named by Southern Living Magazine as one of “50 People Who Are Changing the South” for his work with the Southern Seed Legacy Project. Congratulations, Jim!

Jamie Wallen (Chemistry& Physics) and Maria Gainey (Biology) wrote a successful grant to the Howard Hughes Medical Institute for their HHMI SEA-PHAGES program. Western was selected as one of 17 new schools to join the program starting with the 2015-2016 academic year. This program provides exciting new ways to offer hands-on research opportunities for our science students. Great work!

ESL specialist Eleanor Petrone along with faculty in CEAP was awarded $287,000 grant to develop after school program for students from Spanish speaking households. This grant will allow for our campus to continue to make meaningful contributions to our community. Congratulations, Eleanor!

Western will host the North Carolina Biotechnology Conference: "Molecules in the Mountains” in April with national brewing expert Ray Daniels as a keynote speaker and many presentations on all things scientific.

Todd Collins is coordinating a LSAT prep course for our students who plan to apply for law school. The only cost is the price of the textbook. See this link for more information: [http://www.wcu.edu/academics/campus-academic-resources/writing-and-learning-commons-walc/Graduate-and-Professional-Exam-Preparation/lsat.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/academics/campus-academic-resources/writing-and-learning-commons-walc/Graduate-and-Professional-Exam-Preparation/lsat.asp%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

The By-Laws Task Force led by David Dorondo continues their work and should have a proposal for faculty discussion soon. Watch your email for more information.

We have a number of events upcoming related to the North Carolina campus theme, so expect more information soon. Our faculty have led the way in developing campus and community programming for this initiative and I appreciate it.

Our faculty, staff, and students continue to do very impressive things during challenging times. I wish you the best for the Spring semester. As always, my door is open to you.

Best,

RDS

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