



Campus Computer Technology Leaps Forward With Latest Upgrades Near Completion

In an age of faster, smaller, and better, it is not a matter of keeping up with the Joneses, but one of keeping up with rapidly changing technology—specifically, high-power, versatile computers. Late last fall, Western invested in the future when it purchased nearly 300 new computers, and installation is now close to completion.

“Last year’s state budget cuts forced us to recall computer upgrade orders, so we started in the fall with serious deficiencies,” said Thomas Franke, chief information officer. “Fortunately, the university allocated funds this year so that we could meet our commitment to keep Western a technology leader.”

The largest number of new computers were installed in five of Western’s seven electronic classrooms. Each of the classrooms has between twenty-four and thirty-two student work stations and an instructor’s station. The new Gateway computers have eighty gigabyte hard drives with one gigabyte of RAM, CDR-Write drives, and seventeen-inch, flat-panel monitors. Since the remaining two electronic classrooms were equipped with new computers a year ago, additional RAM upgrades were installed, bringing those computers up to 572 bytes of RAM.

Students using the computer labs in Forsyth and Hunter Library found new computers the first of the semester. These labs are open access for students since they feature curriculum-specific software that most students may not own. The one-year-old computers in the Moore Building lab were upgraded to twenty gigabyte hard drives with one gigabyte of RAM.

“Faculty seem to be very excited about what has been happening,” said Faith Dabney of Academic Computing Support Services. “The Department of Computer Information Systems is especially pleased, since all the computers are running Windows XP.”

One of the reasons for the upgrades was the older computers couldn’t use some of the current software, which took up too much room on the hard drives. The older equipment was no longer supported by vendors and required constant attention from Western’s staff.

Once the computers arrived on campus January 2, there was the daunting task of getting the machines in all the labs and electronic classrooms up and running by the time classes resumed January 8. A crew of twenty faculty and staff volunteers gave up a weekend and numerous evenings to make sure the computers were ready for students. “The installation could not have been done without the volunteers, who were very instrumental in the success of the project,” said Dabney.

“It was a very impressive effort,” said Danial Clapper, associate professor of computer information systems. “I think it really highlights how motivated and talented our information technology staff is and how fortunate we are to have them.”

It’s Not Over

Since the labs and classrooms became functional, staff attention has been focused on upgrading the electronic carts found in a number of classrooms. Each cart holds a computer, VCR, and projection system. Computers were replaced or upgraded.

As of mid-February, staff members were beginning to configure ninety-eight new computers for distribution in the near future to designated faculty members.

Help is Near

Academic Computing Support Services maintains a help line for anyone with computer questions or problems—227-7-ITS (7487). A special hot line has been dedicated to instructors having problems during class held in an electronic classroom. The hot line number is 227-7284. Only classroom support calls will be accepted on the special hot line. Other calls will be routed to the help line.

The electronic classrooms are used extensively, said Dabney. To schedule a classroom, contact her at 227-7487.



Students in Writing for Communications Media experience writing in the workplace and get immediate feedback on their work as they use new computers in one of the electronic classrooms in Stillwell. John Slater, associate professor of communication and theatre arts, holds all of his writing classes in these facilities. He believes the atmosphere is absolutely essential for this type of writing.

HIPAA To Ensure Medical Privacy; Educational Meetings Scheduled

For Americans, the right to privacy has always been a basic entitlement, especially when it comes to such information as a person's medical history. Protection of this particular point of privacy now comes under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

The goal of the legislation is to make insurance portable and confidential, to bring healthcare into the twenty-first century in the use of technology to organize and streamline insurance, and to guarantee privacy of health conditions, said Debbie Beck, director of University Health Services. "The government wants to protect the individual's rights to privacy and reduce the likelihood of the individual's health information being used improperly."

Western must comply with the new regulations. The university is considered a hybrid organization because only a few departments engage in electronic transactions of medical information. One of these is the Speech and Hearing Clinic, which files electronic Medicaid billing. Other departments, including health services, counseling, athletics, and the

Developmental Evaluation Center, also handle health-related information. Since one department has to comply, all areas must comply with the standards by the April 13 deadline.

Training for all employees, beginning with supervisors, will start in March by addressing the policies and procedures of handling this type of information. "The standards say we must train everyone in the workforce at the level their job requires," said Beck. The closer an employee works with health information, the more detailed the training. All training must be documented.

As of April 13, patients will see a difference at health services. All patients will have to sign a six-page document outlining patient rights, describing what the health information is to be used for, and detailing that the university is bound by federal law to protect that information. If patients feel their rights have been violated, they may talk to the designated privacy officer, Debbie Beck.

Severe penalties, both civil and criminal, can be levied for non-compliance.

Defense Department Awards \$4.7 Million To Western to Study Fiber Optics Production

The United States Department of Defense has awarded a \$4.725 million grant to Western Carolina University for a research project that could lead to the mass production of intricate components necessary to bring high-speed fiber optics communications to the consumer desktop.

U.S. Representative Charles Taylor announced the grant February 24, during a signing ceremony between representatives of Western Carolina and the University of Southern California, Western's newest high-tech partner. Through the federally funded venture, Western will be responsible for running a battery of tests on prototypes of opto-electronic components made by USC.

The award from the defense department's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center, in support of the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency, represents Western's single largest grant for research. Depending upon the next federal fiscal year budget, DARPA may fund up to another two years of applied research, increasing support to up to \$14.175 million over three years.

The grant also may lead to the production of working components, perhaps

through spin-off companies that could be located at Western's developing Millennial Campus, a "knowledge enterprise zone" designed to enable the university to develop public/private partnerships, incubate small businesses, and utilize existing electronics infrastructure to support economic development efforts.

Much of the DARPA funding will be used to outfit Western's engineering technology laboratories with new equipment that will be needed for the research project; undergraduate instruction in the areas of electronic and computer engineering technology, telecommunications, manufacturing engineering technology, and computer graphics and animation also will be enhanced.

The initial applied research will be directed by Western's Center for Integrated Technologies, a federally funded facility focusing on the "ultra-high technologies" of photonics and opto-electronics. Core technologies in the future of electronics in such areas as communication and computing, photonics and opto-electronics have

been called "electronics at the speed of light." The emerging technologies involve the generation and harnessing of light and other forms of radiant energy, and a key capability is the transmission of information via waves of light.

"Until now, the only mass produced optical components for consumer use have included such applications as CD-ROMs and DVDs," said Duane Dunlap, head of Western's department of engineering technology. "In terms of telecommunications, the use of fiber optics has been primarily limited to long-distance applications, between cities and other 'long-haul' portions of fiber networks. But now the shift is toward bringing fiber to the end user—to individuals, to homes, to business, to the desktop."

"The implications for this project are tremendous, not just for the university, but for the mountain region," said Chancellor John Bardo. "If our research indicates that it is practical to develop and produce these connectors, receivers, and other components in mass quantities, Western could spin off the companies that would make those parts. The potential economic impact on a region beset by hundreds of lost manufacturing jobs is truly incredible."

WCU Calendar

Monday, March 3

Women's History Month event—ninth annual Walk for Women, featuring an address by award-winning poet and storyteller Glenis Redmond. Donation of \$1 requested, noon, Alumni Tower. (227-3839 or 227-3982)

Women's History Month event—Glenis Redmond, performing original poetry detailing her family and her African-American heritage, 7:30 p.m., MHC. (227-3839 or 227-3982)

Tuesday, March 4

Women's History Month event—"Women's Ways of Leading," with Ann van Harlengen, executive director of REACH of Macon County, 5 p.m., Catamount Room, UC. (227-3839 or 227-3982)

Concert—Wind Ensemble, 8 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

Women's History Month performance—Antigone Rising, five-woman band featuring a mix of punk, glam rock, and blues, 9 p.m., Club

Illusions, UC. \$. (227-3839 or 227-3982)

Wednesday, March 5– Saturday, March 8

Southern Conference Basketball Championship Tournament, North Charleston Coliseum, North Charleston, South Carolina. (227-7338)

Wednesday, March 5

Meeting—Board of Trustees, 9:30 a.m., Board Room, HFR. (227-7100)

Catamount baseball—vs. UNC Asheville, 3 p.m., CF/HS. (227-7338)

Women's History Month event—"Women in Management: Shattering the Glass Ceiling," featuring Sandra Frappier, past president of National Club Managers Association of America,

5 p.m., Auditorium, Forsyth Building. (227-3839 or 227-3982)

Thursday, March 6

Faculty recital—Mary Kay Bauer, soprano, 8 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

Friday, March 7

Catamount baseball—vs. The Citadel, 3 p.m., CF/HS. (227-7338)

**Saturday, March 8—
Sunday, March 16**

SPRING BREAK

Saturday, March 8

Lady Catamount tennis—vs. West Virginia, 1 p.m., Tennis Courts, Reid Gymnasium. (227-7338)

March 3–16, 2003

Look for regular updates on the university's Web site at www.wcu.edu/cal.html

Catamount baseball vs. The Citadel, 2 p.m., CF/HS. (227-7338)

Sunday, March 9– Friday, March 14

Spring Break trip—ski trip to Snowshoe, West Virginia. Cost includes transportation, food while at Showshoe, lodging, ski-lift tickets for four days and four nights (rentals not included). Base Camp Cullowhee, UC. \$ (227-3466)

Sunday, March 9

Catamount baseball—vs. The Citadel, 1 p.m., CF/HS. (227-7338)

Tuesday, March 11

Training Tuesday—"Purchasing Update" will allow opportunity for participants to meet purchasing agents and to review changes that have occurred in purchasing procedures. For administrative employees with purchasing responsibilities, 9–11 a.m., Room 404, BB. (227-2388)

★★★★ **Now Showing** ★★★★★

Exhibitions:

North Carolina Women Making History. The trials, triumphs, and changing roles of women during the past 400 years. Through December. MHC. (227-7129)

Migration of the Scotch-Irish People. (Permanent exhibition). Information, illustrations, artifacts, and murals. MHC. (227-7129)

Asheville Quilt Guild Presents. Colorful array of traditional, art, antique, and award-winning quilts made by members of Asheville Quilt Guild. Through March 31, MHC. (227-7129)

Karl Michel and Patricia Bailey: New Faculty Exhibition. Opening March 3. Through April 18. Belk Gallery, BB. (227-3591)

Much Ado. Featuring sculpture class installation. Through March 6. Chelsea Gallery, UC. (227-7206)

Key: \$ - Admission fee; HA - Hoey Auditorium; HFR - H.F. Robinson Administration Building; HS/CF - Hennon Stadium/Childress Field; MHC - Mountain Heritage Center; NSA - Natural Sciences Auditorium; RRAC - Ramsey Regional Activity Center; RH - Recital Hall, Coulter Building; BB - Belk Building; UC - A.K. Hinds University Center; UOC - University Outreach Center; WS/BW - Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field; SSF - Shrader Soccer Field.

Submissions:

Send news items and calendar notices to WCU Calendar, 1601 Ramsey Center, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723 or e-mail to Reporter@email.wcu.edu.

Submit items for the university's online calendar at least one week prior to the event.

WCU Newsfile

▲ **Michelle Stefanisko**, assistant director of Counseling and Psychological Services Center, became a licensed psychologist in the state of North Carolina after passing the state examination in January. She also became certified as a health services provider psychologist.

▲ **Karen Oldham**, Fitness Center director, will present her master's research "Comparison of Body Fat Percentages from Hand-Held vs. Stand-On Bioelectrical Impedance Analysis Devices" at the National American College of Sports Medicine Conference in San Francisco in May. In addition, the abstract of this research will be published in the professional journal *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*.

Oldham also was the top overall woman winner in the "Move Your Hooves" 5K Run held in Cherokee in February. She received her award from Billy Mills, 1964 Olympic gold medalist.

▲ **Jane Adams-Dunford**, assistant vice chancellor for student affairs, has been

Outstanding Staff Nominees Sought

Do you know a staff member who goes above and beyond the job description? Nominations for the Judy H. Dowell Outstanding Support Staff Award are now being accepted to get that person deserved recognition. Formerly known as the Outstanding Support Staff award, it was renamed in honor of Dowell, before her retirement in December, to recognize her long-time contributions to the university.

All current non-exempt SPA employees who have five years of full-time service are eligible. The award recognizes dependability, cooperative spirit, loyalty to the university, and effectiveness in performing assigned duties. A minimum of two paragraphs outlining the person's contributions is required.

The recipient of the award will receive \$1,000 and a plaque commemorating his or her selection. The award will be presented at the annual SPA Service Awards luncheon later in the year. Deadline for nominations is 5 p.m. Friday, April 4. Nominations may be made online at wcu.edu/staffaward or by using the nomination form distributed recently. For information on staff eligibility, contact the Office of Human Resources at 227-7218. For information or help with the nomination form, call Mike Farmer, Division of Facilities Management, who is selection committee chairman, at 227-7225.

named program chair for the 2003 Conference of the Southern Association for College Student Affairs to be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

▲ **Jill Dix Ghnassia**, dean of The Honors College and professor of English, primary author, and Marcia Seabury, professor of English at the University of Hartford, will have their article "Interdisciplinarity and

the Public Sphere" published in the forthcoming winter issue of *General Education*.

▲ **Mary Warner**, associate professor of English, had her essay "Who Speaks for Winter?: Jessica Powers, Poet and Mystic" published in *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature*, summer 2002.

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