



Phillip West, a member of Sigma Chi fraternity, helps new students move into residence halls.

Student Enrollment Tops 9,000 to Set New Record

The 2007 fall semester registration rolls are closed and the numbers are in – overall student enrollment at Western has topped 9,000 for the first time in the institution's history, with significant growth in the number of community college transfers and graduate students.

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning reported Tuesday, Sept. 4, that WCU's total student headcount is 9,055 this fall.

"We are seeing significant trends that tell us a lot about the direction of the university," Chancellor John W. Bardo said. "We have experienced an increase of about 27 percent in the number of community college transfers this fall, and the number of students taking courses through distance education programs is up about 20 percent."

Overall graduate school enrollment, which includes both traditional and distance education classes, has increased to 1,945 students this fall, up 230 from last year's enrollment.

Bardo attributed much of the increase in community college transfer enrollment to the Western 2-Step program, a cooperative agreement launched in May that aligns course requirements at WCU and all 58 community colleges across North Carolina so that students will know exactly what to expect when they transfer to Western.

Enrollment for first-time freshmen is down slightly, but the overall grade-point average for entering freshmen is 3.35, up from last year's GPA of 3.26.

"We are making a decided effort to bring our admission standards up," Bardo said. "When we enroll the right type of students – those who are better prepared academically and who are a better 'fit' with the university – they will be more likely to stay in school and remain on track to graduate."

—By BILL STUDENC

Two Online Programs Earn National Ranking

Two of WCU's online programs recently appeared in national rankings.

The September issue of *Fortune Small Business* magazine listed Western's online master's degree program in entrepreneurship as one of the five best online entrepreneurship programs in the nation, while distance education information clearinghouse GetEducated.com gave WCU's online bachelor's degree program in criminal justice a No. 1 national ranking in affordability.

"Distance education is all about making education more accessible, especially for working adults in need of career-specific higher education," said Vicky Phillips, the founder of GetEducated.com. "The cost of college is a huge inhibiting factor for most Americans. Western Carolina University is to be lauded for taking the initiative in making higher education more affordable, and therefore more accessible, for learners in North Carolina."

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Welcome to WCU

A special online edition of The Reporter introduces the newest members of the Western community. Check out www.wcu.edu/436.asp to see names, photographs and brief biographies of the newcomers within the last year.

CREATING extraordinary OPPORTUNITIES

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN

'Soft Spot' for Nursing Leads to Scholarship Gift



Michelle Hargis

When Michelle Hargis and her husband, Jake, heard about The Campaign for Western, they knew they wanted to donate to a special area in both of their lives—nursing.

Although Hargis, associate dean of grants and research holds a doctorate in educational leadership from Argosy University in Florida, she once was pursuing a nursing degree. "Nursing was one of my goals when I was young," Hargis said. "But I went down another path and never got back into it."

That other path was traveling the world and falling in love. Hargis planned to take a semester off during nursing school to travel throughout Europe, but after she met the man who would become her husband in

Berlin, Germany, she ended up staying for eight years.

Hargis also said that she and her husband both have a "soft spot" for helping people in need. Jake Hargis worked for 25 years as a director, regional trainer and reviewer of federal grants for Head Start, a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services program designed to provide child development services to economically disadvantaged children. He also is retired from the Institute of Child and Family Studies at Texas Tech University. Supporting nursing education was a natural fit because of his career background and family.

"Two of Jake's daughters and a niece are in the nursing field, and since it was once my goal to become a nurse, we felt that making a donation for a nursing scholarship was something we could get on board with," Hargis said.

Through The Campaign for Western, the Hargis family created the Jake and Michelle Hargis Nursing Scholarship Fund for nursing students enrolled in either an undergraduate or graduate degree program.

"Jake and I wanted to help students that need the financial assistance, as well as those who want to get into a field that is so important," Hargis said. "Nursing is a very critical area, and there are always employment opportunities. If there is a student who would love to pursue a nursing career, but cannot financially afford it, that's who we would like to help."

—By JESSICA CREGGER



Nursing student Whitney Sprinkle (front) and classmates practice skills.



Brandy Robbs takes an online class.

National Recognition

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The listing of WCU's online Master of Entrepreneurship Program among the "56 top schools for would-be tycoons" was included in Fortune Small Business and online at CNNMoney.com, the Internet home of Fortune Small Business and three other business magazines.

Fortune Small Business compiled its lists of top schools for entrepreneurship after seven months of interviews with entrepreneurs, professors, students, alumni, university administrators and venture capitalists. WCU was the only university in North Carolina recognized for its online program.

The magazine notes that WCU's entrepreneurship faculty members address topics ranging from small-business finance to how best to protect a company from fraud, and that students are required to take part in an online business discussion with a professor and classmates at least twice a week.

"The objective of our program is to help our students take an idea for starting a business and be able to create a sustainable venture by the time they graduate," said Frank Lockwood, director of the master's program. "A big majority of our graduates either expand their existing companies or start a new company."

GetEducated.com listed Western's online bachelor's degree program in criminal justice first among a group of 10 "best buys" based on a survey of 35 regionally accredited universities that offer bachelor's degrees in criminal justice, law, legal studies and homeland security through distance education.

North Carolina students who enroll in WCU's program pay about \$9,000 for the program, while the average cost for a bachelor's degree in the justice area is above \$38,000, according to the GetEducated.com survey.

WCU Professor Ron Hunter, who until recently served as head of the Western's department of applied criminology, said the ranking is a tribute to the leadership of William D. Hyatt, a criminal justice professor who oversaw the program's inception, Carlie Merritt, assistant professor and the program's current director, and Pat Brown, dean of distance and continuing education.

—By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN
campaign.wcu.edu

Contact Brett Woods, campus campaign director,
227-7124 or bwoods@wcu.edu



WHEE SAVE Western Fills Tanks With Biodiesel, E10

Western recently received the university's first delivery of biodiesel —1,480 gallons for a tank that fuels some Cat Tran shuttle vehicles, electric utility trucks, dump trucks, trash trucks and heavy equipment.

Increasing the use of biodiesel and E10, a blend of ethanol and unleaded gas, is part of the university's plan to comply with a state-required 20 percent reduction of petroleum usage by 2010, said Lauren Bishop, energy manager in Facilities Management. The university received a delivery of E10 in July.

"One of the easiest ways to meet this petroleum reduction usage goal is to implement these fuels," said Bishop. "These are important steps we are taking to reduce our carbon footprint and be a smart consumer of energy."

The biodiesel recently delivered was a B20 blend, 20 percent vegetable oil and 80 percent diesel, which required no switchover costs for vehicles to use the fuel.

Using it not only reduces emissions, but also could lengthen a vehicle's engine life and, according to recent studies, improve gas mileage, said Bishop.

In addition, the purchase from Blue Ridge Biofuels enabled the university to support a small business in the region, she said.

"Another aspect of the petroleum displacement plan is to promote good driving practices, such as avoiding unnecessary idling, and walking, biking and carpooling," said Bishop. "Other strategies include purchasing more electric vehicles for campus operations. Facilities Management already purchased three electric vehicles this year, and we hope to acquire more in the coming year. It is important for Western and the faculty and staff to lead by example for our students and our local community."

—By TERESA KILLIAN

Mac Minaudo, a partner in Blue Ridge Biofuels, delivers biodiesel to WCU.

'Wall of Oppression' Kicks Off Diversity Week

A physical wall representing the "wall of oppression" built by discrimination, racism, sexism and other "isms" will stand on the A.K. Hinds University Center lawn for one week and then be torn down in minutes on Friday, Sept. 14.

"We will be acknowledging the oppression that exists and then, through tearing down the wall, symbolically breaking down the barriers and oppression that holds us back as a society," said Tanisha Jenkins, director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Multicultural Center.

WCU's eighth annual Diversity Week begins with an introduction to the first "Wall of Oppression" event at 2 p.m. Monday, Sept. 10, on the University Center lawn at a plywood wall Facilities Management staff members helped prepare.

Students, faculty and staff will be invited to paint words or images that reflect what they have seen and heard that are examples of oppression. Volunteers will staff the site from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day until the closing ceremony at 2 p.m. Sept. 14.

The event spun off from the "Tunnel of Oppression" initiative developed in conjunction with the One World Project in the spring of 2006. About 100 people entered a "tunnel" set up on the third floor of the University Center, where movie scenes, skits and visual images exposed them to how oppression is present today.

"We had voice recordings of derogatory words being yelled, and, at the end, counselors from the Counseling Center talked with participants and debriefed them," said Jenkins. "People said the experience was powerful and made them think."

The plans for the "Wall of Oppression" event were developed with the Resident Student Association and an information exchange with East Carolina University, which sponsored a similar event last year.

Other events being planned for WCU's Diversity Week include a brown bag discussion, an evening of dance, trivia activities and the opening event for Hispanic Heritage Month. Call the Office of Multicultural Affairs at 227-2276 for more information.

Grant-Writing Workshop Opens Registration

A grant-writing workshop, titled "Let's Get a Grant," will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 27, in Room 143 of the Cordelia Camp Building.

The workshop will be led by nationally recognized grant writer Jack Smith and will cover personality styles of successful grant writers, grant-writing terms, key components of a proposal, differences between government and foundation grants, writing goals and objectives, developing a system to analyze grant activities, and completing online applications.

Smith will show participants the best ways to gain government and foundation funding for programs and projects. Participants also will receive boilerplate grant materials and will learn about accessing Internet resources.

Registration is \$69 before Friday, Sept. 14, and \$89 from then until the Friday, Sept. 21, deadline. For more information or to register, contact Susan Fouts, director of continuing education, at 227-3688 or visit www.wcu.edu/2872.asp.

Reporter Calendar

September 10–23

Monday, Sept. 10

Civil War Round Table—6:30 p.m. Room 101, MHC. (227-7129)

Monday, Sept. 10–Saturday, Sept. 15

8th Annual Diversity Week—Wall of Oppression. Faculty, staff and students will have the opportunity to help construct a wall and paint symbols and words that depict discrimination, injustice and oppression. At the end of the event, the wall will be torn down. Lawn, UC. (227-2276)

Monday, Sept. 10–Thursday, Dec. 6

Water Aerobics—Mondays through Thursdays. 5:30–6:15 p.m. \$. (227-3688)

Tuesday, Sept. 11

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Gardner-Webb. 7 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Catamount Concert Series—faculty showcase concert, including saxophonist Ian Jeffress' performance of a piece by new faculty composer Timothy Rolls. 8 p.m. RH. (227-7242)

Wednesday, Sept. 12

Evening of Spoken Word—CP Maze, 8 p.m.; Queen Sheeba, 9 p.m. Illusions, UC. (227-7206)

Retirement Conference—for members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System, provides pre-retirement planning information for those within 2–3 years of retirement. 9:30 a.m. Room 148 B, Myers Auditorium, Southwestern Community College. (227-7218)

Friday, Sept. 14

Lady Catamount volleyball—Catamount Clash VI tournament: vs. UNC–Wilmington, 2:30 p.m.; vs. The Citadel, 7 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Chili Cook-off—UClub members and their guests enjoy food, drink and camaraderie. 5:30 p.m. University Club. (227-3861)

One Night Stand (comedy)—Jeff Capri. 8 p.m. Illusions, UC. (227-7206)

Saturday, Sept. 15

Open House—for prospective students and their families. (227-7317)

Hispanic Heritage Month Opening

Celebration—7 p.m. Grandroom, UC. (227-7206)

Lady Catamount volleyball—Catamount Clash VI tournament: vs. Presbyterian, 12:30 p.m.; vs. North Carolina A&T, 7 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Catamount cross country—Catamount Classic. All day. CAC. (227-7338)

Tuesday, Sept. 18

Catamount Concert Series—jazz trio featuring guitarist Stephen Wohlrab, pianist Pavel Wlosok and bassist Eliot Wadopian. 8 p.m. RH. (227-7242)

Lectures, Concerts and Exhibitions Series—Shenandoah Shakespeare Company, "The Merchant of Venice." 7:30 p.m. FAPAC. \$. (227-2479)

Wednesday, Sept. 19

Catamount Concert Series—music faculty showcase. 8 p.m. RH. (227-7242)

Friday, Sept. 21

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Appalachian State. Southern Conference match. 7 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

One Night Stand (comedy)—Edwin San Juan. 8 p.m. Illusions, UC. (227-7206)

Saturday, Sept. 22

Catamount football—vs. Presbyterian. 6 p.m. E.J. WS/BW. (227-7338)

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Davidson. Southern Conference match. 7 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Exhibits

Fine Art Museum, Fine and Performing Arts Center

"Norm Schulman: A Life in Clay" and selections from Schulman's personal collection of ceramics. Through Oct. 6.

"Tri-State Sculptors: MicroMonumentals." Through Oct. 6.

"WORLDVIEWS." Selections from Western Carolina University's Permanent Collection in all media by local, regional, national and international artists.

Fine Art Museum hours:

Tuesday–Thursday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.; first Saturday each month, 1–4 p.m. Donations appreciated. (227-3591 or <http://fapac.wcu.edu>)

Mountain Heritage Center

SLIDESHOW SPOTLIGHT FOR SEPTEMBER:

"Coverlets: New Threads in Old Patterns," the story of the handcraft revival in Southern Appalachia.

OPENING SEPT. 10: "Let the Thunder Roar: A Pictorial History of African Americans in Jackson County." Through Oct. 10.

OPENING OCT. 4: "Southern Stews: Traditions of One-Pot Cooking," a national, traveling exhibition organized by the McKisick Museum at the University of South Carolina. Through March.

Paul Reisman as the Prince of Arragon in the touring production of The Merchant of Venice. (Photo by Mike Bailey)

Gallery A:

"Migration of the Scotch-Irish People." Includes text panels, illustrations, artifacts and vibrant murals that trace the Scotch-Irish Appalachian settlers from Ulster to Pennsylvania, through the Shenandoah Valley, and into Western North Carolina. Permanent exhibit.

Gallery B:

"Bartram's Journey: The 1775 Journey of William Bartram to Western North Carolina." Celebrates the 18th century botanist William Bartram and his exploration in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Through Sept. 30.

Gallery C:

"After the War: Conflict and Domestic Change in the North Carolina Mountains." Portrays how wars and their aftermath have shaped the lives of people and communities in Western North Carolina. Through December.

Mountain Heritage Center hours:

8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday; and 2–5 p.m. Sunday. (227-7129 or <http://www.wcu.edu/2389.asp>)



KEY: \$—Admission fee; BB—Belk Building; CAC—Catamount Athletic Center; CAT—Center for Applied Technology; CCB—Cordelia Camp Building; CSC—Catamount Softball Complex; FAPAC—Fine and Performing Arts Center; HA—Hoey Auditorium; HFR—H.F. Robinson Administration Building; HS/CF—Hennon Stadium/Childress Field; MHC—Mountain Heritage Center; NSA—Natural Sciences Auditorium; RH—Recital Hall, Coulter Building; RRAC—Ramsey Regional Activity Center; UC—A.K. Hinds University Center; WS/BW—Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field.

Submissions: Send news items and calendar notices to *WCU Calendar*, 420 H.F. Robinson Bldg., Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 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.

