Project Analyzes Western’s Economic Impact On Area

What are the economic and social ramifications of a university with 8,400 students, 455 faculty members, and 790 staff members – with more on the way?

That’s exactly what Western’s Center for Regional Development is attempting to determine through a project designed to demonstrate the university’s impact on Western North Carolina and beyond.

“With the significant enrollment growth of the past two years, the substantial increase in new faculty, the historic amount of capital improvements taking place on campus, and the high number of new academic programs coming on line, it is time to take a hard look at the positive impact that Western is having on its primary service area,” said Jay Denton, a program manager with the CRD.

The counties selected for the analysis are Jackson, Macon, Swain, Haywood, Buncombe, Henderson and Transylvania. In their analysis, researchers will assess the economic impact of direct and indirect spending by the university’s faculty, staff and students. They will examine the effect that Western’s construction and renovation projects are having on the region’s economy, and they will investigate the role the university plays in bringing visitors to the region and the economic impact of visitor spending. The study also will gauge the impact the university is having on quality-of-life issues for the surrounding region.

Inhyuck “Steve” Ha, associate professor of economics and a faculty fellow in the CRD, will serve as the principal investigator for the project.

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Bardo To Chair National Committee

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities has appointed Chancellor John W. Bardo to serve as chairman of the organization’s committee on economic and workforce development.

Bardo will serve a one-year term as chairman of the committee, composed of presidents and chancellors of other AASCU member institutions.

The committee on economic and workforce development is charged with assisting AASCU institutions in enhancing the scope and visibility of economic and workforce development efforts in partnership with their communities and their regions.

Biology Labs Receive New Microscopes

Students in Western’s biology labs soon will get a better look at their slides and specimens, thanks to the generosity of alumnus Paul Burton, a biologist, scientist, professor and former chair of the biology department at the University of Kansas.

In addition to funds Burton has provided for a series of annual seminars, support for faculty research and donations for supplies for senior thesis projects, he recently contributed $10,000 to help the university replace old, worn-out microscopes with state-of-the-art instruments in Western’s teaching labs.

Burton, who grew up in Yancey County, came to Western for a degree in physical education and biology. After graduating from Western in 1954, he went out of state for a master’s degree and came back to earn his doctorate in zoology at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. His teaching and research took him to Minnesota, Wisconsin and Kansas, where he was a pioneer in the study of cell biology. Burton speaks enthusiastically about his work on tiny structures called microtubules, which he describes as “the railroad tracks” that carry cargo along neurons and help to maintain the health of those cells that can be up to a yard long.

What brings Burton back to Western is his gratitude for the strong support he received here as an undergraduate more than 50 years ago. “There were two professors – Gerald Eller and Clint Dodson – who were mentors. They gave me a lot of encouragement and urged me to go on to graduate school,” he says, and that’s where his long and successful career began.

In return, Burton says, “I’m pleased to be able to support the biology department at Western. I would like it to be one of the best in the state.”
Chancellor’s Teaching Award

Accepting Nominations

Students and faculty are invited to nominate Western faculty for the 2004-05 Chancellor’s Distinguished Teaching Award. Nominees must hold faculty status at the rank of instructor or above and be in at least her/his third year of teaching at Western. Faculty who have received the award during the past five years are ineligible.

Student and faculty nominations will help identify five finalists from which a committee of students and faculty will select the recipient of this annual award for excellence in teaching. The committee’s review will consist of observation of teaching and examination of materials submitted by each finalist. The recipient will receive a $1,000 honorarium and an engraved plaque at the annual faculty awards convocation, as well as recognition at graduation and other campus events.

All nominations will be made electronically. In order to nominate up to three faculty members for the award, go to the electronic nomination page at http://www.wcu.edu/facctr/cdta/. The nomination period ends at 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 12.

Impact Study

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Professor Michael Luger of the Carolina Center for Competitive Economies at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill will assist in the analysis of visitor spending. Luger has conducted similar analyses for other institutions in the UNC system.

The first part of the study is now under way, as CRD staff members are surveying faculty, staff and students using an Internet-based survey engine. Hard copy surveys are available for those without e-mail access.

To increase survey participation, the CRD is offering $1,000 in cash prizes as incentive to complete the survey. Winners will be selected by random drawing on Dec. 1.

The last economic impact analysis of the university was completed by Max Schreiber of the College of Business in collaboration with the Mountain Resource Center in 1997.

National Music Educators Honor

Robert Buckner

While Bob Buckner was busy handing out awards at the recent Tournament of Champions marching band competition hosted by Western, a national music education organization surprised the longtime director of athletic bands with an award of his own.

MENC: The National Music Educators Association presented Buckner with the association’s Lowell Mason Award, which is the highest award in the field of music education. The award, which includes a $1,000 contribution in Buckner’s name to the MENC Fund for the Advancement of Music Education, is designed to recognize music educators, music education advocates, political leaders, industry professionals and others who have contributed to music education.

Under the leadership of Buckner, who has been in charge of athletic bands at Western since 1991, the university’s marching band has grown from 82 members to more than 300 this year. Western now boasts the biggest marching band in the Carolinas, with a membership larger than the bands at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, N.C. State University and Clemson.

The Pride of the Mountains Marching Band has performed twice as an exhibition band at the prestigious Bands of America Grand National Championships, a showcase for the nation’s top high school marching bands.

NCAA Review Team Visiting Campus

Nov. 15-17 to Finish Self-Study

A yearlong study of Western’s intercollegiate athletics program is coming to a close as a team of external reviewers visits campus Nov. 15-17 to evaluate the findings of a campuswide self-study committee.

Appointed last year by Chancellor John W. Bardo as part of the NCAA Division I certification process, the committee has been examining issues of academic integrity, governance, rules compliance, and university commitment to equity, student-athlete welfare and sportsmanship.

The certification program’s purpose is to help ensure integrity in the institution’s athletics operations, said A.J. Grube, Western’s assistant to the chancellor for equal opportunity programs who is chairing the campuswide study committee.

An external team of peers from other colleges, universities or conference offices will be on campus Monday, Nov. 15, through Wednesday, Nov. 17, to evaluate the committee’s work, which includes the identification of six “areas of concern” and university strategies to address those areas.

The review team will report to the NCAA Division I Committee on Athletics Certification, another independent group, which will then determine the university’s certification status and announce the decision in January.

The athletics certification report is available online through the university’s athletics page: http://catamountsports.com/ by clicking on NCAA Self-Study Information, and on the chancellor’s page: http://www.wcu.edu/chancellor/.
Monday, Nov. 8
Summit—Renewing America: Restoring the American Community through Citizen Involvement and Community Engagement. 8:30 a.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-2086)

Concert—Western’s Percussion Ensemble. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. Catamount Concert Series event. (227-7242)

Wednesday, November 10
Appalachian Cultural Lunchtime series—Bennie C. Keel, archaeologist, will discuss the Cherokee Archaeological Project. 12:15–1 p.m. Auditorium, Mountain Heritage Center, H.F. Robinson Building. (227-7129)

Catamount basketball—vs. Erskine (exhibition). 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7338)

Wednesday–Sunday, November 10–14
Theatre —The University Players present Antigone by Jean Anouilh, adapted by Lewis Galantiere. Tickets: $12.50 adults; $10 seniors, Western faculty and staff; $6 students. Nov. 10-12 at 7:30 p.m.; Nov. 13 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Nov. 14 at 2 p.m. Hoey Auditorium. (227-7491)

Thursday, November 11
Open House—for prospective students and their families. Registration 9:30 a.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7317)

Concert—Western Carolina University Gamelan Ensemble, performing traditional and contemporary music. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Friday, November 12
Speaker—John Merriman, an expert in French history of the 19th century and early modern European history who teaches at Yale University, will give a Visiting Scholar Series presentation about his book “The Stones of Balazuc: A French Village in Time.” Open to the public. Free. 3:30 p.m. Room 209, McKee Building. (227-7243)

Concert—The Pride of the Mountains Marching Band will perform in free concert. 7:30 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-2259)

Saturday, November 13
Catamount football—vs. Appalachian State. Southern Conference game. 4 p.m. Whitmire Stadium/Waters Field. (227-7338)

Concert—Handel’s Messiah. WCU Concert Choir and WCU University Chorus, Western Carolina Community Chorus and Western Carolina Civic Orchestra. Admission: $8 adults; $4 children and students with valid ID. 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Sunday, November 14
Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Appalachian State. Southern Conference match. 2 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7338)

Lady Catamount basketball—vs. Charlotte Stars (exhibition). 6 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7338)

REEL Diversity Film series—filmmaker Andrew Bujalski’s Funny Ha Ha, a romantic comedy about post-college identity crisis. 7 p.m. Theater, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7206)

Tuesday, November 16
Faculty recital—Pavel Wlosok and friends. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. Catamount Concert Series event. (227-7242)

Thursday, November 18–Sunday, November 21
Southern Conference Volleyball Tournament—times to be announced. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7338)

Thursday, November 18
Open House—for social workers, students and others interested in learning more about the department of social work’s new master’s degree in social work. 6-7:30 p.m. Multipurpose Room, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7112)

Concert—So Percussion, combining the thrill and physicality of percussion playing with sophistication and intimacy of classical chamber music. Admission: $10 general; $8 staff, non-Western students; free for Western students. 7:30 p.m. Hoey Auditorium. Lectures, Concerts, and Exhibitions Series event. (227-7206)

EXHIBITS
Mountain Heritage Center
November SLIDESHOW
SPOTTLIGHT: New Threads in Old Patterns features coverlets and relates the story of the revival of handicrafts in Southern Appalachia.

Gallery A
Migration of the Scotch-Irish People—Permanent

Gallery B

Gallery C
All Things Iron: Practical and Decorative Ironware, through December 17. More than 200 iron items dating from the 1600s to the 1900s, including implements, blacksmith and farrier tools, and lighting devices.

Lobby
People of the Land: Cherokee Heritage Sites in the Cullowhee Valley. The latest reports on the finding of summer archaeological digs in the Cullowhee Valley.

The Dulcimer: An Appalachian Folk Tradition, through June 2005. Traces the development of the dulcimer from its origins to today’s traditional folk instrument.

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.

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Lois Petrovich-Mwaniki, director of international programs and services, Maurice Phipps, professor of health and human performance, and Bradford Sims, associate professor of construction management, visited colleagues and three Western students at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, the university’s partner school in Galway, Ireland. The purpose of the Oct. 12-17 trip was to give faculty from the partner schools an opportunity to discuss changes to Western’s longstanding exchange agreement with GMIT.

Robert Caruso, vice chancellor of student affairs, was the keynote speaker on the “Vision and Mission of Student Services” at a student services training seminar held in Barbados for student affairs administrators and other educators. The seminar was sponsored by the Caribbean Tertiary Personnel Association, an organization which Caruso helped to establish in the late 1990s. He also made presentations on connecting student services and academic departments and strategic planning.

A new book co-written by the current and former heads of the department of educational leadership and foundations at Western examines the unique characteristics and behaviors of school district leaders in Western North Carolina.

The book “The Social Construction of Educational Leadership: Southern Appalachian Ceilings” is based on research and interviews with school district leaders across the region conducted by Anna T. McFadden, current department head, and Penny Smith, retired former department head.

McFadden and Smith conducted a four-year study of WNC senior educational leaders in grades kindergarten through 12, using in-depth interviews with paired samples of 24 male and female system leaders. They also surveyed additional administrators and school board members.

“Initially, we were interested in the impact of race and gender on the selection and behavior of school system leaders in the region,” McFadden said. “However, the more data we gathered, the more convinced we became of the importance of place, both in decisions about who becomes a school leader and how those leaders behave professionally.”

The authors describe the changes in a regional leadership system grounded in race, gender and geographic preferences that date back to colonial systems of deference. “What we found was a pattern of expanding access to these positions that emerged over time,” said Smith. “Access has expanded and job expectations have shifted from a business-building focus to enhancing student performance success.”

The authors will sign copies of their book, published by Peter Lang Publishers, at a reception at City Lights Bookstore in Sylva from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 11.