



WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
CHANCELLOR'S DIVISION
ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022





Kelli R. Brown, WCU Chancellor



**TOP PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES
IN THE SOUTH**

-U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT



**BEST VALUE COLLEGES
IN THE SOUTH**

-U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT



**BEST COLLEGES FOR
VETERANS IN THE SOUTH**

-U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT



**TOP PERFORMERS ON SOCIAL
MOBILITY IN THE SOUTH**

-U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT



The Chancellor's Division saw another unprecedented year in 2021-2022 as the team continued to navigate the everchanging landscape brought forward by the pandemic, including a volatile and competitive labor market and continuing social and political scrutiny, all while focusing on advancing the strategic priorities of the University. Without hesitation, the talented staff of the division met these challenges head on and achieved significant accomplishments that will aid WCU in its mission of being a national model for regional comprehensive universities serving rural regions. The division leveraged unique opportunities to spearhead initiatives regarding leadership cultivation, external engagement, inclusive excellence, internal risk, economic development, legislative policy,

Office of the Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff serves as the principal aide and advisor to the Chancellor on important university operational matters as well as providing coordination of division strategic directions, goals and initiatives and its success.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- Successfully showcased WCU's excellence and distinction at the April 2022 meeting of the UNC Board of Governors held on campus in Cullowhee – meeting highlights included student showcases, performance by the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band, video and print collateral, and campus tour
- Led ongoing efforts related to the university pandemic response, including wrap up of the regional Vaccine Clinic mission at HHS; coordination of partnership activities with UNC System, Jackson County and community leaders; oversight and completion of university dashboard reporting; and the evolution and transition of university COVID-19 messaging
- Developed and executed, in partnership with the vice provost, a new Senior Leadership Fellows Program to cultivate and prepare campus leaders for executive-level positions as an aid to retention and succession planning

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- With new leadership team in place, renew efforts around advancing WCU's legislative agenda, brand and reputation, and economic development agenda
- Pursue progress on strategic and targeted agenda items with the UNC Board of Governors, including mission statement revision and out of state student cap
- Develop and pursue strategic board appointments for WCU Board of Trustees





Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff and External Relations

The Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff and External Relations supports the Office of the Chancellor and the Chief of Staff. The office has primary oversight of all Chancellor-level special events, the Chancellor's Residence, as well as serves as the university's primary contact with elected officials at the local, state and federal level. The office pursues state funding through the UNC System's established budget priorities process and the NC legislature.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- Increased Chancellor's external engagement through social media presence and return to in-person student, faculty, staff and community events
- Enhanced partnership with Advancement and external relations to align shared goals, including an Honoring Our Promise event in Raleigh featuring Western North Carolina delegation and Education committee legislators
- Successfully hosted high-level events such as the UNC Board of Governor's meeting, the grand opening of the Apodaca Science Building, and Chancellor's Athletic event programming
- Developed refreshed legislative and policy agenda for trustees and elected officials

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- Advocate for WCU's strategic goals with the General Assembly with focus on staff and faculty salaries, resources for the College of Engineering and Technology and creation of a prestigious Merit Scholarship program
- Host high value external partner visits to WCU campus, including ribbon cutting for renovated WCU Steam Plant, Mountain Heritage Day, key state commission meetings and community partner facility tours to increase awareness of WCU's role in meeting regional industry workforce needs
- Identify partnership opportunities for Chancellor and trustee leadership in the region, state and country on topics of college affordability, academic excellence and student athletic experience
- Enhance student-learning opportunities in WCU's External Relations programming as well as public service internships and work-based learning experiences

Office of Equality and Diversity Programs

The Office of Equality and Diversity is responsible for advancing WCU's diversity, equity and inclusion strategic goals, through partnerships, initiatives and internal consultations. The chief diversity officer works to facilitate every unit's diversity, equity and inclusion needs on campus and provides strategic leadership recommendations to senior administrators across campus.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- The Blue Ribbon Task Force completed and delivered the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan
- Partnered with the Academic Affairs Division's Coulter Faculty Commons, Hunter Library and Provost Office to launch the Diversity Community of Practice
- Secured more than \$10,000 in general support/sponsorship for the benefit of the Call Me Mister Program, Center for Career and Professional Development's job fair and Intercultural Affairs from LiveRamp

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- Host the 2nd annual Inclusive Excellence Day and begin implementation of the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan
- Grow the Diversity Research Network to facilitate diversity, equity and inclusion research opportunities among internal and external scholars
- Provide diversity, equity, inclusion and belongingness development for the benefit of the Summer Institute for Administrative Support Professionals participants



Office of Internal Audit

The Office of Internal Audit provides independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve WCU's operations. The mission of internal audit is to enhance and protect organizational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- The associate staff auditor performed an audit of the student and institutional funding resulting from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds awarded to WCU
- The chief auditor performed audits of Building Emergency Plans, Account Management and Access to Systems harboring Red & Orange data and SOC 2, Type 2 reports
- The chief auditor also served as a member of the Strategic Planning Committee addressing Honoring our Promise Goal 6.4 – Information Technology and Goal 6.5 – Safety and Security

- The chief auditor also participated in the Blue-Ribbon Task Force as facilitator and ex-officio for two committees: Climate and Belongingness, and Infrastructure Commitments

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- The chief auditor will be retiring effective June 2022, and efforts are underway to hire her replacement





Office of Economic Development and Regional Partnerships

The Office of Economic Development and Regional Partnerships is dedicated to the growth and sustainability of economic conditions throughout Western North Carolina, and beyond. The office is dedicated to developing and strengthening productive and impactful relationships between WCU and our partners in business and industry, government, non-profit and economic and community development sectors.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- Cultivated critical relationships with Pratt & Whitney officials in support of their \$650 million advanced manufacturing project in Buncombe County
- Further defined strategic interaction models with high-priority corporate partners to ensure concerted, positive engagement
- Participated in comprehensive economic development planning processes for Councils of Government and local economic development organizations
- Convened key internal and external stakeholders to develop strategies for supporting the region's high-growth, high-demand career opportunities, to include engineering and advanced manufacturing, health care and health sciences, and hospitality and tourism

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- Explore interdisciplinary curriculum opportunities in identified career sectors that are both applicable and adaptable to meet the region's workforce needs
- Expand efforts to leverage external funding for applied research, creative cohorts and to effect positive impacts on the workforce and economic challenges facing the region
- Develop and implement career awareness and immersion support programs for local school systems, to showcase high-growth, high-demand career opportunities in Western North Carolina
- Develop a strategic messaging strategy to showcase economic and community engagement activities and results, with a focus on the positivity and impact of our regional outreach and support

University Communications and Marketing

Our goal is to increase the WCU brand value by highlighting its academic rigor, collaborative research, vibrant student life, contributions to our community, commitment to service, athletic prowess, diversity and inclusion, and the overall achievements of the broad university community, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and others.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- Restructured UCM to better align with the university's goals and mission and shifted the scope of the team from tacticians to strategists and campaign leaders and partners
- Focused on social media strategy, added TikTok to our platform lineup and increased all social media engagement by at least 100% compared to FY 2020-21
- UCM received 11 awards (7 Platinum, 2 Gold, 2 Honorable Mentions) from the Hermes Creative Awards. The international competition is one of the oldest and largest creative competitions in the world
- Created award-winning photo essay series' such as Essential WCU and The Black Fantastic
- Conducted brand research to use as a foundation for our brand awareness campaign and data starting point (included a competitive audit, perception study, personality definition, current market analysis)

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- Launch of a new branding campaign (Live Western) to reinvigorate the WCU brand while supporting enrollment, awareness and retention efforts
- Introduction of innovative tools such as Clarity for website user personalization, AI-powered showcase of student achievements along with a focus on faculty success and expertise, and LucidPress for campus partners to use brand templates for their messaging
- Further expansion of targeted paid media to bolster our reputation across the region, state and nation with the goal of increasing awareness and enrollment
- An increased emphasis on earned media placements in regional and national media outlets
- Continue Brand Identity Research and Audit



Chancellor's Communication Specialist

The Chancellor's Communication Specialist supports the Office of the Chancellor and the Chief of Staff. This position has primary oversight of all the Chancellor's communication efforts and social media presence. The position was created in late fall 2021 and started in January 2022.

Highlights from FY 2021-2022

- Assumed responsibility for the Chancellors Social Media and Increased Chancellor's external engagement through various social platforms
- Fine-tuned a process for writing the Chancellor's remarks
- Implemented a process for version control and editing approvals

Upcoming for FY 2022-2023

- Enhance the partnership with the University Communications and Marketing's writing and social media teams
- Continue developing the Chancellor's voice in all communication efforts
- Expand the Chancellor's reach on social media
- Align Chancellor's messaging across all platforms
- Ensure that Chancellor's priorities are appropriately featured



New Arrivals

(in alphabetical order)



Christy Agner
Deputy Chief of Staff and
Director of External
Relations



Charlie Bulla
Photographer



Alei Coleman
Administrative
Assistant



Madyson Hayes
Communication Specialist



Priya Jaishanker
Videographer



Travis Jordan
Chief Marketing and
Communications Officer



Chance Kuehn
Web Developer



Tom Lotshaw
Multimedia Journalist



Madison Lovingood
Social Media Specialist



Deborah Millican
Project Manager



Jessica Mizzi
Marketing Manager



May Sweet
Graphic Designer

New Arrivals

(continued)



Kelly Tornow
Assistant General
Counsel

Promotions

(in alphabetical order)



Christy Ashe
Director of Special
Events



John Balentine
Senior Art Director



Patrick Hinkle
Web and Digital
Content Manger



Deidre Hopkins
Title IX Coordinator
& Equality Officer



Amber McKendrick
Special Events Manager



Marlon Morgan
Communications
Manager

Retirements

(in alphabetical order)



Lisa Gaetano
Chief Audit Officer

