Millennial Initiative Doubles Campus Size

Western recently announced the Millennial Initiative, a comprehensive regional economic development strategy made possible by the acquisition of 344 acres of property adjacent to the main campus.

Characterized by Chancellor John Bardo as “a defining moment in the university’s 115-year history,” the Millennial Initiative is designed to enable Western to engage in public-private partnerships that enhance educational opportunities for students in high-tech programs and increase the ability of faculty to conduct cutting-edge research, while simultaneously promoting economic development.

University officials plan to develop the property as a multiple-use neighborhood that will be home to a mix of academic buildings, research facilities, business, industry and housing. Located on the opposite side of N.C. Highway 107 from the university’s main campus, the land will become a “knowledge enterprise zone” where university, private industry and government partners conduct research and development into scientific and technological innovations that have commercial applications, Bardo said.

“We are attempting to fulfill a promise we made to the people of Western North Carolina,” Bardo said. “We want to keep the best and brightest of the region’s young people from having no choice but to leave home to find the type of high-paying jobs available elsewhere. We want the children of the mountains to be able to remain in the mountains and to be participants in the high-tech, knowledge-based global economy of the 21st century.”

State legislation approved in 2000, based on a measure originally written by staff at Western, made it possible for University of North Carolina institutions to seek public-private partnerships to improve the academic experience for students and allow universities to apply their intellectual resources – their faculty, students and staff – to foster economic development.

$1.5 Million Project to Upgrade Computing Capabilities

Western is carrying out a $1.5 million project to upgrade computer capability in university residence halls and classrooms, and is partnering with its network hardware manufacturer to install wireless networking in the public areas of residence halls.

The Division of Information Technology completed a major upgrade of the data network in a majority of Western’s residence halls during the week of Jan. 31, and the division’s ResNet and networking groups are currently installing network upgrades in Walker, Scott, Helder, Leatherwood, Harrill, Albright/Benton and Robertson residence halls, said Scott Swartzentuber, the division’s director of networking, operations and communications.

The result of that $1 million investment will be a faster and more reliable network for residential students, Swartzentuber said. Also, an upgrade of the fiber optic infrastructure planned for later this semester will provide increased bandwidth in the residence halls, he said.

In the meantime, the division’s educational technologies group is managing about $500,000 worth of technology refresh projects in support of instructional activities, said Bob Orr, Western’s associate chief information officer.

Among those improvements are the upgrading of faculty computers, installation of computer and projection equipment in numerous classrooms, and the upgrading of several departmental computer laboratories, including those that support geographic information systems and digital music.

The college-based technology committees will be working with the educational technologies group to focus on other
Information Technology Upgrade

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Robert Caruso, Western’s vice chancellor for student affairs, said the university’s department of residential living is “very enthusiastic” about the Enterasys donation. “The new wireless capabilities in some of the public areas of our residence halls will significantly add to the amenities and learning opportunities we offer to our residential students,” Caruso said.

Franke said the projects to upgrade computer capability and install wireless technology in Western’s residence halls depended heavily on the planning and support provided by the residential living staff.

Enterasys also has provided equipment to allow for ubiquitous wireless networking in McKee Building, which will provide for state-of-the-art teaching capability in a building that was built in 1939 and still has old-style chalkboards.

Sport Management Program Receives NASSM Approval

Western’s undergraduate sport management program has received program approval status from the North American Society of Sport Management (NASSM) through 2012.

Of the approximately 300 college undergraduate sport management programs nationwide, fewer than 40 are NASSM approved. “We’re thrilled to receive a renewal on our approved status,” said Kevin Ayers, associate professor of sport management. “We’re very proud that students receiving bachelor of science degrees in sport management from Western are very well prepared to enter the sports industry as professionals.”

Program approval status is similar to the accreditation process for other degree programs, Ayers said. To be considered for approval, sport management faculty submitted a curriculum portfolio to NASSM’s review council that reflected curricular competencies and other standards.

Western’s sport management program was first approved in 1996. The program has positioned itself as one of the best in the region and is one of only three sport management programs in North Carolina currently approved by NASSM, Ayers said.

Millenial Initiative

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development to benefit their respective regions and the state.

Western purchased the Millenial Initiative land – 64 acres known as the Killian property and 280 acres called the Hooper tract – using $2.87 million set aside for property acquisition as part of the university’s share of funds provided through the 2000 N.C. Higher Education Bond Referendum. University officials estimate that up to 75 percent of the land, extending from the property line of the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching past the Jackson County Airport, is suitable for building. The acquisitions more than double the size of Western’s campus.

“North Carolina is distinguished among states as an innovator in science and technology. Our ability to produce innovative technologies and a skilled, knowledgeable workforce will be an important factor in determining our future economic success,” said N.C. Gov. Michael Easley. “Western Carolina University’s Millenial Initiative capitalizes on Western’s research and entrepreneurial strengths to promote economic development and prepare the region’s workforce for the transformed economy of the new millennium.”

UNC President Molly Corbett Broad described Western’s plans as an essential part of the state university system’s responsibility to help build a stronger future for all North Carolinians.

“Economic development is of immense importance to the state of North Carolina and the 16-campus University of North Carolina, especially in light of the painful repercussions our state has suffered from relentless changes in the global economy,” Broad said. “But economic development does not happen by accident or through minor changes. It will only come through a large-scale transformation of thought and action, and that is what we see taking place at Western with the Millenial Initiative.”

University officials say they want to move as quickly as possible on development of the Millenial property, and are in the early phases of a comprehensive master plan to determine the most logical building sites for the different types of structures to be located there. More than 200 leaders were on hand for the historic announcement.

Additional information is available on the Web at millennial.wcu.edu.
March

Wednesday, March 2
Catamount Basketball—Southern Conference Tournament. Chattanooga, Tenn. (227-7338)

Wednesday, March 2
Catamount baseball—vs. UNC Asheville.
2 p.m. Greenwood Field, Asheville. (227-7338)

Thursday, March 3
Old-time Music and Bluegrass Jam—local musicians share tunes and techniques while enjoying old-time and bluegrass music.
7–9 p.m. Mountain Heritage Center, H.F. Robinson Administration Building. (227-7129)

Thursday, March 3–Saturday, March 5
Conference—Southern College Health Association, hosted by the Health and Counseling Center. Events include a Thursday night opening dinner and keynote address by Earl Davis, president of Moonsnadow Learning Services, Friday and Saturday morning educational sessions in Asheville and a tour of Western’s newly renovated Health Center. (227-7640)

Friday, March 4
Black History Month—Harriet Tubman, by Living Art for Students. Admission: $6. 10 a.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7667)

Sunday, March 6
Workshop—techniques and technology of collecting oral histories, designed for individuals who want to contribute to the Blue Ridge Parkway’s oral history program.
2–4 p.m. Mountain Heritage Center, H.F. Administration Robinson Building. (227-7129)

Southern Circuit Film Series—filmmaker Steve Gentile’s Loaded Gun: Life, and Death, and Dickinson, a search for insight into elusive poet Emily Dickinson. No admission charge. Director will be present to discuss films.
7 p.m. Theater, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7206)

Monday, March 7 and repeated on
Thursday, March 10
Workshop—sexual harassment training, with sessions offered through May. Required of all employees except those who attended new faculty orientation or new employee orientation after August 2004. Registration required.
March 7, 9–10 a.m. or 10:15–11:15 a.m. March 10, 2:30–3:30 p.m. or 3:45–4:45 p.m. Mountain Heritage Center. (Registration, http://edoutreach.wcu.edu/grants)

Catamount Concert Series—Michael Lowenstein, bass clarinet/guest artist. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Tuesday, March 8
Workshop—“Service Learning: How To Use It.” 12:30–1:30 p.m. Dogwood Room, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7147)

Lady Catamount tennis—vs. College of Charleston. Southern Conference match. 2 p.m. Reid Gymnasium tennis courts. (227-7338)
Catamount baseball—vs. Georgia State.
3 p.m. Childress Field/Hennon Stadium. (227-7338)

Academic Forum—“Challenges and Opportunities of a Growing Campus,” town hall meeting open to all interested members of Western’s community. Presentation by provost, followed by question-answer session.
3:30 p.m. Grandroom, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7495)

Catamount Concert Series—Faculty Follies, spoof concert by music faculty including the “WCU Faculty Marching Band.”
8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Wednesday, March 9
Appalachian Cultural Luncheon Series—country-gospel duo Ray and Jerry Wilson. Attendees are invited to bring their lunch. Co-sponsored by Ron Rash, Parris Professor of Appalachian Cultural Studies. 12:15–1 p.m. Auditorium, Mountain Heritage Center, Robinson Administration Building. (227-7129)
Catamount baseball—vs. Georgia State.
3 p.m. Childress Field/Hennon Stadium. (227-7338)

Concert—Western Carolina University Symphony Band. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Thursday, March 10
Movie—8 1/2 (Federico Fellini, 1963). Films that Matter series. 6 p.m. Room 130. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (227-2324)

Traditional Dance—informal traditional dance gathering. No dancing experience necessary; square dancers and buck dancers invited to teach steps to other participants.
7–9 p.m. Grandroom, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7129 or 227-7206)

Concert—Western Carolina University Jazz Ensemble. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Thursday, March 10
Colloquium Concert—Music and the Region: Appreciating Our Appalachian Culture, featuring four-time Grammy Award-winner David Holt. 12:30–1:30 p.m. Theater, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7311)

Faculty Colloquium—True Life Storytelling: Spice Up Your Teaching with Real Stories.
Four-time Grammy Award-winner David Holt will discuss how to look into the untapped stories within ourselves.
3:30–4:30 p.m. Multipurpose Room, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7311)

Thursday, March 10–Saturday, March 12
Film—The Incredibles. Admission: $2 with student identification; $4 without student identification (includes small soda and popcorn). March 10 at 10 p.m., March 11 at 9 p.m., March 12 at 6:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. Theater, A.K. Hinds University Center. (227-7206)

Friday, March 11
Workshop—“Grant Writing Basics,” designed for people who write grants for businesses or other organizations. Registration fee: $65 (including lunch). 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Room 139. University Outreach Center. (828-227-7397 or 800-928-4968; registration form online at http://edoutreach.wcu.edu/grants)

Meeting—Western’s board of trustees will hold its quarterly meeting.
9:30 a.m. Board room, H.F. Robinson Administration Building.

Lady Catamount tennis—vs. Coastal Carolina. 1 p.m. Reid Gymnasium tennis courts. (227-7338)
Catamount baseball—vs. Appalachian State.
Southern Conference game. 3 p.m. Childress Field/Hennon Stadium. (227-7338)

Concert—University Choral Ensembles.
8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Saturday, March 12
Lady Catamount tennis—vs. UNC Greensboro. Southern Conference match.
Noon. Reid Gymnasium tennis courts. (227-7338)
Catamount baseball—vs. Appalachian State.
Southern Conference game. 2 p.m. Childress Field/Hennon Stadium. (227-7338)

Concert—Western Carolina University Choral Clinic. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Coulter Building. (227-7242)

Sunday, March 13
Lady Catamount tennis—vs. Davidson.
Southern Conference match. Noon. Reid Gymnasium tennis courts. (227-7338)
Catamount baseball—vs. Appalachian State.
Southern Conference game. 1 p.m. Childress Field/Hennon Stadium. (227-7338)

Arti-Facts!—series designed for children ages 6 through 12 to explore our natural and cultural heritage, presents Cooking.
No admission charge, but reservations required.
2:30–3:30 p.m. Mountain Heritage Center, H.F. Robinson Administration Building. (227-7129)
SACS Update

Leadership Team Gets the Ball Rolling

The committees are formed, the task of informing the university community about the new standards and review process required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is under way, and the University Accreditation Office has been established.

The first committee formed as part of the SACS review is the Leadership Team, which is responsible for guiding the institution through a process of self-reflection, assessment and improvement.

A key focus of the Leadership Team’s activities will be the identification, development and implementation of a Quality Enhancement Plan, or QEP. An integral component of all institutional bids for reaccreditation, the QEP provides an opportunity for Western to improve all aspects of university functioning. SACS defines the QEP as a “carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue(s) related to enhancing student learning.”

While it is presented as a process that is separate from the SACS compliance certification the institution must also complete, the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan is, in fact, imbedded in the institutional mission, governance and effectiveness. The University Strategic Planning Committee, co-chaired by Kyle Carter and Newt Smith, will be meeting with Chancellor Bardo this month to initiate a revamping of our mission statement.

SACS Leadership Team Members

John Bardo, Chancellor
Kyle Carter, Provost
Troy Barksdale, University Planner
Newt Smith, Chair of Faculty Senate
Sharon Jacques, Associate Professor of Nursing
Noelle Kehrborg, Dean of Applied Sciences
Jerry Kinard, Professor and Department Head, Management and International Business
Dixie McGinty, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Foundations
Richard Starnes, Assistant Professor of History
Carol Burton, Director of the SACS Review
Darlene Stonesifer, Staff Assistant for the SACS Review