Technology and Resources

“Having up-to-date technology at Northwest is a major cost-cutting benefit for students. Buying a computer is one of the first things a student does when preparing to leave for college. It’s incredible that Northwest provides Gateway laptop computers equipped with current software to every student living on campus.”

Chris Grandfield, a management information systems major from Lorimor, Iowa

Considering Northwest Missouri State University’s dedication to adapt to continuous advancements in technology, it’s no surprise that raising significant funds for technology was a key element for The Campaign for Northwest. Northwest alumni and friends demonstrated great generosity by providing $4.6 million toward the campaign’s Technology and Resources component, well exceeding the $2 million goal.

Nationally the first of its kind, the Electronic Campus was established in 1987 by placing a networked computer in every residence hall room. The productivity and learning opportunities throughout Northwest’s Electronic Campus continue to be astounding. In today’s society, access to cutting-edge technology is imperative to the success of a college student. Since 1987, it has been confirmed that Northwest students are not just computer literate, which is a common expectation of many universities, but that they truly are computing proficient.

“I’m pleased with the access to technology Northwest offers its faculty and students,” said Dr. Nancy Zeliff ’81, associate professor of computer science/information systems. “Technology is everywhere, and whether it’s used in our professional or personal lives, technology gives us the edge. There is a digital divide creating the haves and the have-nots of society. The technology Northwest provides college students ensures they don’t become the have-nots.”

Since the onset of The Campaign for Northwest, the University acquired more than 3,000 laptop computers to enable every student living in a residence hall a notebook computer and every faculty member a tablet computer – all with built in wireless communication cards.

“Previously students had to share a desktop, but, because of our partnership with Gateway, Northwest is in an elite group of universities across the country that consider themselves laptop or notebook universities,” said Dr. Jon Rickman, vice president for information systems.

Joel Breyfogle, Gateway education account manager, said Northwest’s commitment to quality in education makes it a natural fit for Gateway.

“Gateway chose to support the technology efforts at Northwest because it is committed to forming alliances with higher learning institutions that share Gateway’s vision,” Breyfogle said. “The common goal Gateway shares with Northwest is to prepare students for tomorrow’s marketplace by empowering them with the tools, knowledge and flexibility to take full advantage of learning opportunities.”

The mutually beneficial relationship is something both Northwest and Gateway appreciate.

“Through our combined effort, we can openly discuss current products, on-going challenges and emerging technologies,” Breyfogle said.

Rickman said enrollment in online programs has dramatically increased, especially with the new online master’s in geographic information sciences and a master’s degree in computer science.

“Northwest faculty and staff are dedicated to increasing access to higher education whether a student is in the state of Missouri or the other side of the world,” he said.

In addition to providing funds to move Northwest’s student records systems to Banner, a relational database integrated system, campaign funds also have assisted with updating the University’s web site.
The annual support of Northwest Missouri State University faculty, staff, alumni and friends contributed $1.49 million toward The Campaign for Northwest. If not for the highly successful conclusion of the campaign nearly two years earlier than planned, the Annual Fund would have exceeded its $1.5 million goal by a comfortable margin.

“The Annual Fund is the heart and soul of every university’s charitable giving opportunities,” said Mike Faust ’74, vice president of the Northwest Foundation and former co-chair of the Northwest Annual Fund. “They are primarily unrestricted dollars, which allows funds to be applied wherever there is the greatest need.”

According to Northwest Development Officer Mark Stewart ’03, ’06, a key reason for success was the new Adopt-a-Bearcat program, which was introduced midway during the capital campaign. The scholarship allows donors to make a minimum $250 contribution, which is matched with University funds, creating a $500 scholarship in the donor’s name.

“This may have been the most well-received program in the history of the Annual Fund,” said Stewart, noting that many donors stepped forward to adopt more than one student. During the year and a half from the announcement of the program through the end of The Campaign for Northwest, 320 students were “adopted.”

One of those students is Emily Lambert, a freshman from Phillipsburg studying psychology and sociology at Northwest. She also helps finance her education by working in the Office of University Advancement as a ‘Cat Caller, one of a team of students calling Northwest alumni during the fall and spring seeking donations for the Northwest Annual Fund.

“I like talking to people who attended Northwest,” she said, “and I enjoy telling alumni about the exciting things happening on campus. Of course, I also get a plug in about the Adopt-a-Bearcat program and how I benefited because someone was kind enough to contribute.”

Another targeted program is the Annual Fund Business Alliance. Through an annual contribution at one of three levels, participating businesses receive promotional opportunities in addition to a charitable deduction. It also provides an opportunity for businesses to show appreciation for the University’s considerable impact on the region’s economy.

The Campaign for Northwest was successful beyond anyone’s expectations, and the many exceptionally generous planned giving pledges will help ensure a bright future for Northwest and generations of students. The Northwest Annual Fund provides “now” dollars that can help current Northwest students, 30 percent who are the first in their families to attend college.

“The Annual Fund, because it provides unrestricted dollars, has become vital in recent years,” said Ray Courter ’68, ’75, Northwest’s vice president for finance. “Currently, the state of Missouri provides about 45 percent of Northwest’s budget. Just 20 years ago, Northwest received 72 percent of its education and general budget from state appropriations.”

The many Annual Fund contributions toward The Campaign for Northwest, including an 84 percent participation rate among Northwest employees, are an important part of making the Northwest of today a high-quality, affordable educational experience.
August 26, 2001, was a historic day at Northwest Missouri State University. It was then that the College of Professional and Applied Studies was renamed the Melvin D. and Valorie G. Booth College of Business and Professional Studies as a result of a $5 million gift from a 1967 Northwest alumnus and his wife. It not only was the largest gift in the University’s history at that time, but it was the consummate event to launch Northwest’s successful inaugural capital campaign.

“It was important for me to make such a substantial lead gift because I, like most Northwest students, was a first generation college student,” Mel Booth said. “What I learned at Northwest gave me an excellent base to compete in the real business world. If something is worth doing then you need to do it right to make a difference, and the campaign has helped make a difference to both current and future students.”

The Booth’s gift, when combined with the generous donations of other Northwest alumni and friends, lifted the amount raised for the campaign’s business component to $6.7 million.

When the capital campaign was launched, the goal for the College was to generate funds to support international business program enhancements, develop the world’s first master’s in quality curriculum and endow scholarships, professorships, department chairs and fellowships. According to the dean, Dr. Tom Billesbach, the College is making substantial strides in each of these areas.

“We now have a MBA with quality emphasis, a master’s in quality and international business continues to grow,” Billesbach said.

In addition to Northwest being a three-time winner of the Missouri Quality Award, the College is a member of the Magellan Consortium. Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, Finland, Austria and Mexico make up the Consortium, which allows Northwest students to pay Northwest tuition rates and receive credit for courses taken at a Consortium school.

Northwest students also are reaping the benefits of a successful fund-raising initiative. Adam Sturm, a sophomore broadcasting major from Ankeny, Iowa, is confident the hands-on experiences he’s receiving at Northwest will impact his future.

“I’ve been involved in several activities within the College that I believe will be beneficial to my career,” Sturm said. “One of my personal favorites is radio practicum. This class allows freshmen to get on-air experience and to get a real feel for what the broadcasting industry is all about.”

Faculty benefit from the business component of the campaign because it assists in attracting academically-elite students.

“Business faculty indirectly benefit from the increase in attention, awareness and presence of Mel Booth’s donation,” said Dr. Jim Walker ’85, ’86, chairman of the marketing/management department. “These funds also allowed for a new faculty position to assist in establishing the master’s of science in quality.”

Alumni and friends who supported the business initiative express many reasons for their desire to give to the campaign. In most cases, however, it began with the experiences they had as students at Northwest.

“I believe alumni supported the campaign to better the business department, to improve facilities and to bring more money into the University because that will attract more students,” said Matt Borgard ’80, ’82, a member of the Northwest Alumni Association Board of Directors. “I had great college years at Northwest. It’s a great University with a lot of camaraderie, and I want to help make it even better for the future.”

Mel Booth ’67

“Most campaigns need a lead gift to create expectations for the rest of the campaign. Our $5 million gift was the elite gift that helped set the platforms and expectations for the entire campaign.”

Mel Booth ’67

$6.7 million out of $43.5 million designated to Booth College

Booth College Goal

Booth College Gifts

MILLIONS

$0

$1

$2

$3

$4

$5

$6

$7