A special time of year

This is a special time of year. With the beginning of a new year, not only do we often take a much-needed break to rest our mind and body and devote time to our families and loved ones, but it’s also an ideal time to reflect on the past year.

I am inspired by the great things we have accomplished at Northwest and the positive impact we have made on so many individuals. We’re coming off the heels of the second-best fundraising year in Northwest history, raising more than $6 million for scholarships and programs supporting Northwest. This also included the largest outright cash gift in school history! Additionally, it’s inspiring to see the 852 student scholarships awarded through the Northwest Foundation this past year.

This exciting news is coupled with record Northwest Alumni Association participation across the nation. Our Bearcats are staying connected and involved unlike any other time in Northwest history. Alumni are representing Northwest in activities from local parades to fundraisers for the less fortunate, and certainly all of these activities inspire other Bearcats to get involved.

The Northwest traditions are alive and dedicated to this fine institution. It truly is a great time to wear the Bearcat green and white.

Best Wishes,

Orrie Covert
Executive Director, Northwest Foundation
Vice President, University Advancement

A message from the president

If you haven’t read Northwest’s mission statement lately, it reads, “Northwest Missouri State University focuses on student success – every student, every day.” Continuing on, Northwest’s vision statement reads, “We will be the university of choice for a comprehensive, exceptional student experience.” The vision follows that same premise of value being placed on each student. Perfect!

Northwest’s values of student success; scholarship and life-long learning; intercultural competence; collaboration; respect and integrity; strategic thinking; and excellence speak well of the University’s focus, its leadership and commitment. The challenges of application and execution are daily, and the distraction of the current economic conditions adds to that complexity.

The rock-solid foundation in the mission, vision and values of Northwest are effective only if its incoming students are ready and its graduates are equipped. From communicating and collaborating with high schools on the preparation needs for college-bound students, to understanding what the needs of a graduate’s future employer are, we simply must do the right things to be successful. Northwest is positioning itself to deliver.

Individual private support, grants, corporate donations and legacy gifts are going to have to be a larger portion of the future of higher education. The Northwest Foundation is committed to delivering the same level of fiscal responsibility in managing these funds as the University has taken for the success of its students.

Northwest is committed to delivering a valuable education to an engaged student in order to deliver a top-quality graduate to an expectant employer. We need your help in this age of declining state and federal funding to ensure not only the success of Northwest and its graduates but also our community and society as a whole.

Please consider your part and join with me in the promotion of a greater Northwest for all of us!

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Runde ’81
President, Northwest Foundation

MISSION

The Northwest Foundation promotes the welfare, goals and programs of Northwest Missouri State University. Its mission is to encourage, receive, invest, manage, steward and disburse private support on behalf of Northwest’s donors, for the benefit of the University, its students, faculty, staff and alumni. Established in 1971, the Foundation operates independently of the state institution as a separate 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation governed by its own board of directors.
Northwest’s Celebration show choir is among the groups that benefit from the Department of Music’s extended tours.

Northwest’s women’s basketball team is in the midst of one of its best seasons in several years. This program, as well as any other Northwest athletics program, will now benefit from specified donations to the Champions Fund.

For more information, contact Neil Elliott at neile@nwmissouri.edu.

Contact Us
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College of Arts and Sciences

For several decades Northwest’s music department has recognized the value of extended tours and has scheduled tours annually on a rotating basis among its ensembles: Wind Symphony, Tower Choir, Jazz Ensemble and Celebration. The tours have musical, educational and recruitment purposes.

Northwest’s musical groups have toured throughout the country, including Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Ohio, Maryland, Washington, D.C., New Jersey and Indiana.

According to Dr. Stephen Town, professor of music, this program introduces Northwest students to the budgeting, planning and scheduling elements of which the tour is comprised. The tours also provide opportunities for Northwest students to serve others by singing in churches, schools and universities, to experience other cultures, to be ambassadors for Northwest and to have fun as they work toward their graduation.

Additionally, Town said many University students have decided to attend Northwest as a result of hearing one of the ensembles, communicating with Northwest students and meeting faculty during this touring time.

For more information, contact Teresa Gustafson at teresa@nwmissouri.edu.

Athletics

Highlights of the 2010 football season include a 12-2 overall record, a sixth consecutive MIAA title, a sixth consecutive region title, an undefeated MIAA season and setting the record for the most consecutive MIAA wins in the history of the league. In addition to numerous team and individual honors, Coach Mel Tjeerdsma was inducted into the NCAA Division II Football Hall of Fame and quarterback Blake Bolles was one of three finalists for the coveted Harlon Hill Award.

Although the Bearcat football program came up just short of winning another national championship this year, plans are to continue and expand the Champions Fund that was started following last year’s national championship. Northwest alumni and friends will once again be asked to support the fund, but with the additional option of being able to designate support to any of Northwest’s athletic programs. The goal of the appeal is to help raise the level of all of Northwest’s athletic programs to the championship level.

For more information, contact Neil Elliott at neile@nwmissouri.edu.
If you are an iPhone consumer, chances are you are dazzled by the technology and its capabilities. Now imagine taking that same multi-touch technology, enlarging it to the size of a coffee table, and using it to strategize war gaming. That’s exactly what a group of students at Northwest is doing while at the same time being exposed to the future of computing.

Dr. Dean Sanders, professor of computer science/information systems, is leading a group of eight students involved in the Battle Command Battle Lab project in partnership with the United States Army. Representatives from Fort Leavenworth approached the University with an interest in a feasibility study to learn how to best use technology for planning strategies to be used in training and combat. The students, comprised of undergraduates and graduate students, are building the software that will be used for that study.

“If the feasibility study indicates that this approach to war gaming is successful, then our software will be the starting point for building production software,” Sanders said.

The Army has a two-year contract with Northwest for the Battle Command Battle Lab project. As part of the contract, the Army has rented space in the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, is paying students and a portion of Sanders’ salary and has purchased equipment, including five Hewlett-Packard multi-touch screens and a Microsoft Surface computer.

Currently this is the only access Northwest students have to the multi-touch technology, and Booth College faculty members would like to purchase additional equipment similar to this for their classrooms. This project can be supported through a gift to the Northwest Foundation.

For more information, contact Polly Howard at pollyh@nwmissouri.edu.
Dr. Joyce Piveral is the new dean of Northwest's College of Education and Human Services. Piveral, who served as the interim dean since July 1, was previously assistant director of the college's Professional Education Unit, chaired the department of educational leadership and was coordinator of accreditation.

Private funding to the CEHS has been largely in support of scholarships. Helen Steffen '64 recently made a gift of $10,000 to provide an endowed scholarship for Missouri residents majoring in education. The Awalt G. Steffen Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of her late husband who graduated from Northwest in 1957 and later retired as principal from King City.

Another new scholarship opportunity will be available for 2012-2013 in memory of Abby Cockrill. Cockrill was a Northwest student majoring in elementary education at the time of her death in August as a result of an automobile accident. Students, staff and faculty members from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction collaborated with members of the Platte City School District, where Cockrill was a student teacher. Together the group collected memorial contributions toward four Adopt-A-Bearcat scholarships in Cockrill’s name.

The CEHS also is celebrating with Dr. April Haberyan, associate professor of psychology, sociology and counseling, who is Northwest’s recipient of the 2011 Governor’s Award for Excellence in Education. The award is presented annually to an outstanding faculty member from each of Missouri’s four-year higher education institutions.

For more information, contact Andrea Wagner at andreawagner@nwmissouri.edu.

Financial reports detailing FY10 activity of Foundation scholarship funds, as well as revisions to the Foundation’s spending policy, were sent to donors in November. University Advancement staff also took this opportunity to inform donors of the amount available from their respective funds for the upcoming 2011-2012 academic year.

University Advancement staff continues to visit with alumni and friends about the benefits afforded to Northwest through unrestricted giving. To date, 50 individuals and businesses have secured FY11 memberships in The 1905 Society with unrestricted gifts of $1,000 or greater.

In late October, members of The 1905 Society socialized with President and Mrs. Jasinski at the Gaunt House following the Homecoming parade and the following month participated in a Meet ‘n’ Greet with The Hunt Family following their Encore performance. The last of the recognition events slated for The 1905 Society members in FY11 will be March 14 following Meghan McCain’s Distinguished Lecture.

For more information, contact Laurie Long at laurie@nwmissouri.edu.
Alumni Relations

The Northwest Alumni Association continues to meet its objective of establishing and maintaining connections with alumni and friends of Northwest by offering events and opportunities for all Bearcats and friends to stay connected with Northwest.

The Alumni Association’s 18th chapter was recently chartered in Minneapolis-St. Paul. The Twin Cities Alumni and Friends Chapter is led by President Bill Rouse ’77, Vice President Amanda Barker ’03 and Secretary John Stacey ’03. Other areas that are being explored for possible chapters include Houston, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C. The Gridiron Alumni and Friends Chapter, a constituency group of former alumni who played Bearcat football, soon will be formed.

The Tourin’ Bearcats travel program has scheduled a trip for this spring. A capacity group of 40 Bearcats and friends will enjoy an eight-day and seven-night river boat cruise on the Rhine River. The April 15–23 trip will begin in Zurich, Switzerland, and conclude in Amsterdam, Holland. ❖

For more information, contact Steve Sutton at ssutton@nwmissouri.edu.

Corporate and Foundation Relations

The Northwest Foundation submissions to US Bank and DST Systems earlier this fiscal year have been reviewed and accepted.

US Bank has provided $1,000 toward the American Dream Grant. This is the fifth consecutive year the company has supported this initiative. DST Systems also accepted a portion of the Foundation’s original $15,000 proposal and will be funding $5,000 toward Theatre Northwest initiatives. This is the eighth consecutive year DST has supported theater initiatives, totaling $70,000. This has been a beneficial partnership resulting in many community outreach activities through Theatre Northwest, the naming of the south entrance to the new Studio Theatre at the Ron Houston Center for the Performing Arts and support to the Encore Performance Series. By all indications, this may be the last year of support from DST Systems. Due to restructuring within the company, DST no longer recruits Northwest graduates as heavily as it once did. Regardless, a proposal will continue to be submitted.

We’re also working closely with Terry Manies, the University’s grants coordinator. Manies joined Northwest in August and has been working collaboratively with the development officers to identify potential new sources of funding. ❖

For more information, contact Andrea Wagner at andrea@nwmissouri.edu.
Northwest news briefs

A changing of the guard

Several changes have recently occurred within Northwest’s Department of Athletics. In addition to the Dec. 29 announcement that Coach Mel Tjeerdsma was retiring, Scott Bostwick has been named the team’s next head coach and Wren Baker will begin duties as athletics director in mid-February.

One of the most successful and well-respected coaches in the history of collegiate football, Tjeerdsma, 64, vacates his post at Northwest following 17 years of service and after orchestrating one of the greatest football program transformations in the history of collegiate athletics. The Bearcats were 0-11 in 1994, his first season. The team is 183-32 since with three national championships and 12 conference championships in the last 15 seasons.

Bostwick, the 2007 AFCA Assistant Coach of the Year, has been Tjeerdsma’s defensive coordinator and linebackers coach since the duo’s arrival in 1994. He becomes Northwest football’s 18th head coach as the program enters its 96th season three wins shy of 500 (497-388-33).

Since 2006, Baker has served as director of athletics at Rogers State University in Claremore, Okla., where he was the first athletics director in the school’s history.

Northwest forms partnership with St. Joseph Central High School

Northwest and Central High School in St. Joseph have established a partnership called “Central by Northwest” geared toward enhancing the experiences of Central’s International Baccalaureate (IB) students.

The partnership allows Central IB students in-person and remote access to all of Northwest’s library resources, provides on-campus field experiences for students and provides field trips for IB students that focus on the program’s six areas of study.

Dr. Melody Messner, director of education outreach at Northwest, spearheaded the partnership as a way to support local students who choose to participate in the rigorous IB coursework.

“We are excited about this partnership and the academic support it gives these students as well as the scholarship options that are now available to them,” Messner said. “Creating campus-based field experiences aligned with their coursework is one way that Northwest can be involved in enabling Central’s faculty to achieve their goals.”

Art and theater students from St. Joseph Central High School’s International Baccalaureate program recently visited Northwest and worked with professors in their areas of study. Northwest and Central have formed a partnership that provides the high school students field trips and access to Northwest resources in six areas of study.

In November, 24 art and theater students from Central’s IB program visited Northwest where they worked with professors in their areas of study. The students observed classes, toured the University’s facilities and dined with Northwest students. A group of IB students interested in science, math and computing will visit Northwest in February.