

Maryville Daily Forum – Progress Edition
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Northwest Missouri State University President Dr. John Jasinski

Northwest Missouri State University has thrived for 106 years largely because of the commitment and support of the Maryville community and the northwest Missouri region. In 2010, we continued building on that foundation with great success while repositioning Northwest for the changes and challenges facing higher education institutions.

The University achieved record enrollment numbers during the fall, with 7,142 students attending the University. Additionally, our outreach centers in Liberty and St. Joseph are serving a key demographic of individuals interested in enhancing their education or acquiring new skills – and they are experiencing enrollment increases

Northwest employs 742 faculty and staff, making it among the largest employers in the county. The University also employs 900 students through an innovative, internationally benchmarked student employment program.

With an annual budget of \$105 million in Fiscal Year 2011, the University prides itself on being responsible stewards of taxpayers' dollars. Since 1982, our renowned alternative fuels initiative, for example, has saved \$13 million compared to purchasing natural gas and oil. In partnership with the city of Maryville, we've also begun collecting glass, which Northwest is turning into fine particles we can use as a base for concrete, an abrasive in icy weather and a variety of construction projects on campus.

But so much of what Northwest Missouri State stands for and values reaches beyond dollars and cents. During the fall, Northwest unveiled a revised mission statement that touts our focus on "student success – every student, every day." Thus, we strive to reflect that in everything we do.

Academic programs and initiatives impact the community in a variety of ways and help our students gain the hands-on experience needed to help them succeed professionally. Venues like the Horace Mann Laboratory School, the 750-acre University Farm and The Northwest Missourian newspaper allow our students to contribute to the community.

Of course, Northwest and Maryville have benefitted from national championships won in recent years by our football and cheerleading teams. But students involved in organizations such as soils judging, debate and forensics, and Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) also compete with tremendous success on the regional, national and international levels.

Being socially responsible is in our DNA at Northwest, too. During the 2009-2010 academic year, Northwest students contributed more than 23,000 volunteer service hours to the community. More than 70 percent of students actively participate in one or more of Northwest's 180 student organizations.

When we talk about driving economic development and entrepreneurship to better our region and community, there is no better example of that on our campus than the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The CIE is a mixed-use facility with an emphasis on technology-based, start-up companies. It also provides assistance to existing small businesses and encourages development of new small businesses.

Four small companies that specialize in science and innovative technology call the CIE home, and those businesses have created 30 jobs in the last six months. The CIE, with its state-of-the-art equipment and laboratories, also enables students in our biology and chemistry, as well as our new nanoscale science, programs to conduct experiments and research.

We are quite proud that the CIE continues to garner praise and recognition. Northwest and the CIE have represented Missouri the last two years as a winner of the Southern Growth Policies Board Innovator Award, which recognizes outstanding initiatives that help communities recover from the economic downturn.

Northwest students continually show they are leading the way in all academic areas. The University's freshman success rate is an impressive 74 percent compared to 68 percent statewide and 62 percent at other moderately selective Missouri institutions. Northwest's 58 percent graduation rate is 13 percent higher than the national average. Also, Northwest has a stellar student-athlete graduation rate of 87 percent, compared to the national average student-athlete graduation rate of 71 percent.

Data show our students are successful after they graduate, too. For instance, 95 percent of Northwest graduates who responded to an employment survey found employment or continued their education within six months of graduation. Meanwhile, Northwest's student loan default rate is a low 4.4 percent, compared to the national average of 7 percent, which provides further evidence that our students are finding jobs, being successful and paying off their loans. It's also worth noting 48 percent of Northwest alumni live in Missouri and are strengthening our state's economic activity.

There is, of course, so much more to Northwest Missouri State. I encourage you to experience some of the many athletics, cultural and entertainment events we offer on our campus. You also may want to get involved in our Maryville Alumni and Friends Chapter.

To learn more about Northwest, visit our website at www.nwmissouri.edu.

Northwest has entered an exciting and transformational period in the institution's history. With our new mission, vision and values as a compass, we will continue our tradition of strong performance based on a proud and resilient culture.