

Maryville Daily Forum column
Tuesday, July 2, 2013
Dr. John Jasinski, Northwest Missouri State University President

Summer is always a good opportunity to spend extra time with family members and recharge ourselves for all that comes with the fall season. At Northwest Missouri State, this summer has been especially productive as we are making enhancements to campus, engaging with our 70,000+ alumni and friends and continuing our focus on student success.

Last week, the University's Board of Regents approved Northwest's Fiscal Year 2014 budget, which includes an increase in state appropriations but also addresses increased funds for scholarships; rising mandatory expenses such as utility costs, benefits and facility improvements; and a 2 percent cost-of-living adjustment for our employees.

As we transition into the new fiscal year, we are receiving several pieces of good news on the giving front. Vice President of University Advancement Mike Johnson and his team are doing tremendous work, and there is much more to come as we move closer to the fall. We recently announced the Allman and Peterson Three-Dimensional Art Fund gift and are announcing two more significant gifts – gifts from John and Kris Teale and Mitchell Akers. Please know the Northwest Foundation Board is meeting on campus July 22-23 and will receive a campaign readiness assessment report from our Chicago-based consulting firm, Gonser Gerber.

Furthermore, we recently received word that Northwest is one of four institutions invited to submit a proposal for a National Science Foundation grant facilitated by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. Northwest advanced from an initial field of 420 institutions then eight and now to a consortium of four for the right to submit this grant application that will address methods for decreasing high failure rates in high-enrollment, lower-division courses serving as barriers to future success in STEM-related (science, technology, engineering, math) fields.

In the meantime, programming such as our annual Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration, Upward Bound, music and sports camps, and other community events have kept the campus buzzing this summer. Through eight SOAR dates, Northwest drew about 1,250 incoming freshmen, plus their family members, to learn about the University and help those first-year students understand what to expect when they arrived in the fall and to register for classes. Additionally, our assorted camps have drawn several thousand campers from throughout the four-state region. As part of our community, we value your welcoming words as you interact with these students and visitors because your efforts are so important to what we do at Northwest.

To see more examples of how Northwest is engaged in our surrounding communities, you needed to look no further than the historic Phil Welch Stadium June 22 as more than 4,100 gathered for the third annual Northwest Night at the St. Joseph Mustangs. Prior to the game, our outreach centers awarded the first Young Educator of the Year award to Lauren Rosier, a Savannah teacher who went above and beyond this year for one of her students. Additionally, Northwest helped set a new world record with 150 first pitches thrown

simultaneously. Thanks to those of you who attended the game and continue to support Northwest!

As we talk about student success, we have much to be proud of this month as well. Northwest's National Public Radio affiliate and the flagship station of the Bearcat Radio Network, KXCV-KRNW, recently brought home two first-place plaques from the Missouri Broadcasters Association Annual Convention. Two of our students, Anthony Liggett and Bryce Johnston, won first place in the news documentary and public affairs category for their behind-the-scenes look at Second Harvest Community Food Bank, in addition to John Coffey's first place for his sports reporting about Gallatin golfer Brice Garnett's participation in the 2012 U.S. Open Championship.

Furthermore, Amanda Mather, a senior music education major, has been selected to perform with the National Flute Association Collegiate Flute Choir Aug. 8-11 in New Orleans, and Kyu Seok Kim, a second-year student at Northwest's Missouri Academy of Science, Mathematics and Computing, was a national runner-up at the National Beta Club convention June 19-22 in Mobile, Ala.

While I encourage you to check Northwest's homepage for other news and events that may interest you, know there are just five weeks left in our Summer Movie Series. Free movies are shown each Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Ron Houston Center for the Performing Arts and at 9 p.m. at the College Park Pavilion, weather permitting.

Have a safe and happy Fourth of July, and let us remember those who have fought for our freedom.

Dr. John Jasinski is the 10th president of Northwest Missouri State University. For news and events at Northwest visit www.nwmissouri.edu.