

Local newspaper column
Thursday, Feb. 21, 2019
Dr. John Jasinski, Northwest Missouri State University President

I provide February greetings and hope you have managed to stay warm during these cold, snow-filled weeks. There is much taking place on the Northwest Missouri State campus, meanwhile, related to student success and strategy.

Northwest is one of six institutions selected to participate in the development of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' (AASCU) Center for Student Success through March 2020. This initiative will enable institutions that are leading student success efforts to work collectively, learn from one another and have access to tools and strategies through AASCU's engagement in a national network supported by the Gates Foundation. With AASCU's guidance, we have formed an initial cross-functional campus team with Allison Hoffmann, the director of student academic success and retention, as our project leader.

We also were pleased to receive notification last week from the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin that a review committee has selected Missouri's proposal for the Carnegie Foundation initiative to advance mathematics pathways. Our region and institution fit the criteria to fulfill the expectations and outcomes of this important work. This further dovetails nicely and aligns with our work on the AASCU Center for Student Success.

Missouri was one of five states invited in 2015 to partner with the Dana Center's Mathematics Pathways to Completion (MPC) project. Since then, math pathways have been adopted by nearly all of the state's public postsecondary institutions and successfully imbedded within the general education core transfer curriculum known as CORE 42. Our own Department of Mathematics and Statistics played a significant role in that initiative.

While the state's partnership with the MPC project officially concluded last November, the Dana Center invited Missouri to apply for a new math pathways opportunity, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, to focus on one region within the state. The project seeks to establish regional agreements on mathematics requirements for the most common transfer programs, strengthen math pathways and co-requisite remediation supports, and develop guided pathways, all of which Missouri already is doing or working to take to scale.

This new project with the Dana Center is a wonderful opportunity for our state, and we are eager to do more to assist students in fulfilling their educational goals and earning degrees. Dr. Cheryl Malm will serve as our institutional lead with the collaboration of Dr. Christine Benson as chair of our Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

There is much happening on our campus throughout the next month and we invite you to join us for several concerts, lectures and other activities. On Friday, the MIAA Indoor Track and Field Championships begin at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse and continue through Sunday – a first for Maryville and Northwest in the 78 years of the annual meet. Additionally, it will be the fourth track and field meet Northwest has hosted at the Hughes Fieldhouse since the first in December. These teams and their families, by staying in local

hotels and visiting restaurants and businesses, have provided tremendous economic impact to the city of Maryville that we would not have realized otherwise.

Additionally on Friday, our annual Northwest Jazz Festival hosts jazz performers from 32 area middle schools and high schools. Our Northwest Jazz Ensemble performs at noon and the Chris Burnett Quintet performs at 5 p.m. in the Charles Johnson Theater at the Olive DeLuce Fine Arts Building.

In coming weeks, the Oklahoma State University Concert Chorale joins our Tower Choir for a concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 3, in the Charles Johnson Theater; we'll host a Jazz Speakeasy, featuring sounds and sights from the 1920-era from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, March 9, in the J. W. Jones Student Union Ballroom; and we'll celebrate Women's History with several activities throughout March. Visit the calendar section of our website for more details about those activities.

Thank you for supporting our focus on our mission of student success. The likes of AASCU, the Charles A. Dana Center and many others understand and appreciate our efforts as we continue disrupting, evolving and addressing the future.

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