

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees
Carolyn Ehlert Fuller, Chair Cathy Early
Justin Brown Todd Lester
Roger Clawson Yvonne Savala
Lyneir Cole

From: Joe Rives, Senior Vice President, Strategic Planning and Initiatives

Date: September 30, 2018

Re: September 2018 Strategic Plan Update

This month's *Strategic Plan Update* will show that consistent with the *Vision in Higher Values in Higher Education 2017-2027*: (1) Western Illinois University continues to advance in national rankings of quality, opportunity, and affordability. (2) The University is implementing *Strategic Plan* priorities related to increased outreach and learning inside and outside of the classroom. (3) And, as a result of the efforts, Western students continue to receive national recognition for their academic excellence, and alumni maintain a very high percentage of workforce and/or graduate/professional studies placement after graduation from the University.

Western Illinois University continues to assert national leadership in quality, opportunity and affordability. Within the last month, the University placed in the *Princeton Review* for the 15th consecutive year, *U.S. News and World Report* for the 14th consecutive year, *G.I. Jobs Magazine* for the 10th consecutive year, and *Military Times EDGE Magazine* for the eighth consecutive year.

Future Strategic Plan Updates will benchmark Western's progression in these national ranking systems of quality, opportunity, and affordability. The University's performance will be compared to peer institutions on measures related to student and organizational inputs, outputs, and outcomes. The main point for now is that publications from across the nation recognize Western for our excellence and student success.

This same standard of excellence is being applied as faculty and staff work to increase student enrollment, persistence, and completion rates. In addition to actions of the Admissions Office, Quad Cities Admissions, and the School of Graduate Studies, and since the start of the fall semester:

- Supply Chain Management hosted Supply Chain Management Day, with 160 high school students, 85 professionals from 31 companies, and 25 faculty and staff members in attendance.
- Law Enforcement and Justice Administration (LEJA) sponsored its annual Fall Career Fair. Ninety-five agencies from across the nation and over 400 students participated in this event, which included two busloads of students from the Whiteside Skills Center and Willco Technical Center. These students attended the Career Fair, three classes, a general presentation, and a session with LEJA student organizations. Six faculty members also participated in these events.
- Engineering Technology hosted an open house on September 12th. Current and prospective undergraduate and graduate students interested in construction management, engineering technology, graphic communication, engineering technology leadership, and instructional design and technology were invited to tour facilities and learn more about the educational opportunities within the department.
- President Thomas led a community meeting in Macomb on September 19th. Discussions focused on how community members can help recruit students to Western Illinois University. Dr. Thomas

will lead similar sessions with retired faculty and staff members and a second group of Macomb community members on October 4th.

- Members from the President's Executive Institute will host similar community meetings in Moline and Galesburg on October 2nd and 15th, respectively.
- The School of Agriculture will host its annual Fall Open House for prospective students and their parents on October 5th in the University Livestock Center. Students and faculty members will answer questions and lead tours of the Macomb campus, University Farm, and the Western's agriculture facilities.
- The College of Arts and Sciences will host its annual College Days event on October 26th. High school students and their families will attend lectures and demonstrations in multiple academic areas, meet faculty and students, learn about careers, and tour the Macomb campus.
- The College of Education and Human Services and the President's Executive Institute will be host Educational Summits on graduate education opportunities on October 6th in Moline and December 6th in Peoria.

In terms of new or expanded educational opportunities:

- The B.B. in Supply Chain Management and the M.S. Ed. in Educational Studies are now online. A complete listing of the University's online inventory is available at www.wiu.edu/online
- The Deans, Director of the School of Global Education and Outreach, University Registrar, and Senior Vice President for Strategic Planning and Initiatives are applying for institutional participation in the Community College of the Air Force's (CCAF) General Education Mobile (GEM) and Air University Associate to Baccalaureate Completion (AU-ABC) programs.

CCAF is the largest community college in the nation, serving approximately 300,000 airmen annually. The GEM program allows partner institutions to provide the liberal arts component (15 credit hours) to CCAF's Applied Associates of Sciences degrees. The AU-ABC program is a 2+2 articulation agreement with CCAF. The Air Force requires that all courses in the GEM and AU-ABC programs are delivered online.

To help increase student persistence, completion, and job placement rates, Western Illinois University hosts career and internship fairs and supports learning inside and outside the classroom. Data from the last one-year *Alumni Survey* posted on the Career Development Website indicates that 90% of WIU alumni are employed and/or are attending graduate or professional school after receiving a baccalaureate degree from the University.

Examples from the first six weeks of this semester in helping to increase student persistence, completion and job placement rates include:

- Accounting and Finance hosting its annual Meet the Firms career and internship fair, with 15 companies, 100 students, and 35 business representatives in attendance.
- Western Illinois University-Quad Cities sponsoring its annual Fall Career Fair, with over 40 employers (maximum capacity) in attendance.
- Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration forming a partnership with IH Mississippi Valley Credit Union (IHMVCU), Heritage Landscape Design, and Russell Construction. In this new partnership, RPTA students are designing and planting a prairie "knoll" and will manage the 3-4 natural areas planned for the new IHMVCU corporate headquarters being built near the Western Illinois University-Quad Cities campus.

- Dr. Chris Jacques of Biological Sciences received a two-year, \$300,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to support students ongoing study of waterfowl on the Mississippi River.

With a strong emphasis of learning inside and outside the classroom, Western Illinois University students are highly successful in national competitions. Just this semester:

- School of Music graduate student Gwangwon Park was named the winner of the prestigious Atlantic Music Festival's (AMF) annual piano competition in Maine. Acceptance into the program involves a video audition of at least three different works, with only 25 students accepted nationwide. The academic excellence of AMF is highlighted by participation of faculty members from Juilliard, Eastman, Peabody, the New England Conservatory, and the University of Michigan.
- Western Illinois University junior Nissi Smith won the top prize in the musical theatre intensive category at the national Kennedy Center collegiate competition, where she performed "I'm Here" from *The Color Purple*.
- Three Western Illinois University Broadcasting students were honored by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) Mid-America Chapter during the 42nd Mid-America Emmy gala in Kansas City, Missouri.
 - Senior broadcasting major Justin Fitzpatrick won the Crystal Pillar for the best Short Form – Non-Fiction entry for *More Than a Number: Sam Pryor's Story*.
 - Senior broadcasting majors Emily Kenney and Terrance Black were awarded prestigious Walter Cronkite Scholarships. These merit-based scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate the potential to join the profession and contribute to its future.

As materials in this month's *Strategic Plan Update* show, the University is advancing its *Vision* of national leadership in quality, opportunity, and affordability; faculty and staff are working to increase *Strategic Plan* priorities related to enrollment, retention, and graduation rates; and emphasis placed on learning inside and outside the classroom have helped students achieve in national competitions, the job market, and with graduate and professional school admissions.

Please contact me if you have information to share on school, department or college outreach, enrollment, retention and/or graduation initiatives. Your information will be included in a future *Strategic Plan Update*. Likewise, please contact me if you have any questions about the material presented in this *Update*, and/or feedback for the continued successful implementation of the University's *Strategic Plan*.

cc: President Thomas CSEC President O'Bear SGA President Ramos
 Interim Provost Neumann COAP President Adamson Associate Provost Mossman
 Vice President Bainter Faculty Council Ch. Porter Associate Provost Morgan
 Vice President Williams Faculty Senate Chair Pynes Planning, Budget, and IR Staff
 Interim Vice President Polley SGA President Reed President's Office