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Karen W. Morse Gave Students a Lift; Western Soared During Her Presidency

By Paul Cocke
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

When Karen W. Morse first visited Western Washington University in 1993, she was surprised to see the University library still using an outmoded card catalog system.

"I thought we could do better than that," says Morse, the president of Western, who will retire Sept. 1.

Indeed, the University has reached many more goals than Morse might have imagined possible when she started as president at Western 15 years ago.

The University has grown and prospered. New, modern academic buildings grace south campus; many other buildings have been added to or extensively refurbished. The latest technologies have been embraced, enrollment has steadily climbed and Western's academic reputation has soared. The campus looks to the future with plans to expand to the Bellingham waterfront.

In the midst of so many changes, Morse has maintained an unerring emphasis on what is best about Western—its devotion to students and to the value of a liberal arts education.

"Commitment to the student by the entire University is a hallmark of Western," Morse says. "Our faculty, students, staff and Administration all are engaged and work extremely hard to make this a great place to learn."

"Under the stewardship of President Morse for the past 15 years, Western Washington University has fostered a well-deserved reputation for academic excellence and is regarded as one of the top colleges and universities of its kind in the nation. President Morse has been a strong and articulate advocate for higher education. Her service to the state of Washington is deeply appreciated," says Gov. Chris Gregoire.

"Close to campus with a backpack and carrying a large black portfolio case that was being buffeted by the wind. A car stopped next to her, the passenger door. The student smiled gratefully and got in.

"When I arrived at my morning class just minutes later there was the same delighted young woman who had just ridden to school with President Morse."

The Western Experience

Western Art Professor Rosalie King recalls driving to campus on a cold, frosty morning. Up ahead, she saw a student walking along a sidewalk toward campus with a backpack and carrying a large black portfolio case that was being buffeted by the wind. A car stopped next to the student, and the driver opened the passenger door. The student smiled gratefully and got in.

"When I arrived at my morning class just minutes later there was the same delighted young woman who had just ridden to school with President Morse."

She was the envy of the class," says King, adding that she often heard of similar acts of kindness by Morse.

More than a few students hoofing it up steep hills to campus in the rain have seen her car stop as she offered rides. Morse never advertised the fact; she just thought it was the right thing to do.

"We chat about the University, about being a student here," Morse says. "I learn a lot."

Learning has been a lifelong constant for Morse, and she has been a pioneer in a field that for years was not exactly crowded with women in top science or academic leadership posts.

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WWU Ranked Third in Peace Corps Volunteerism

Western ranks third among the top medium-sized colleges and universities with alumni serving as Peace Corps volunteers in 2007. Fifty-three Western alumni currently are serving as volunteers. Since the Peace Corps’ inception in 1961, 732 Western alumni have served. In the rankings for medium-sized schools, the University of Virginia tops the list, followed by George Washington University and then Western Washington University, Cornell University and The College of William and Mary.

WWU Hires Stegemeier as New Police Chief

Western has hired Randy Stegemeier as its new Director of Public Safety/University Police Chief. He began his duties Jan. 14. Stegemeier has almost 35 years of law-enforcement experience. He most recently was the executive director of Safety/Security, Facilities and Capital Projects at Shoreline Community College in Seattle. He also served as command­er of the Washington State Law Enforcement Academy and as assistant chief of the University of Washington Police Department. Stegemeier replaces interim chief of police Dave Doughty, who has assumed his previous role of assistant chief. Doughty had been acting chief of police since August 2007, when Jim Shaw retired. Shaw served for nine years at Western.

WWU Jumps to No. 38 in Kiplinger’s Rankings as a Best Value School

Western improved by 10 spots to rank 38th among the top 100 public colleges and universities in the nation that offer “a combination of outstanding academic quality plus an affordable price tag,” according to Kiplinger’s Personal Finance magazine. In its February issue, Kiplinger’s magazine ranks Western 38th on its list of the 100 Best Values in Public Colleges in the United States. The magazine ranked Western 48th in 2007. The magazine ranked each school after an analysis of academic quality, including SAT scores, admission and retention rates, cost and financial aid including factors such as tuition, mandatory fees, financial aid available and room and board.

Cox Hired as New Dean of Libraries

Christopher Cox will become the new dean of Libraries at Western by the end of the current academic year. Cox will be responsible for the overall leadership, management and direction of the Libraries and their programs. Cox was hired following a nationwide search. He currently serves as assistant director of Libraries and was previously interim director of Libraries of McIntyre Library at the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire. Cox succeeds Béla Foltin Jr., who has retired.

Program Helps Former Students Graduate

Western is providing an innovative new resource to former Western students who left the university with close to or more than enough credits to gradu­ate. Destination Graduation, established with a grant from College Spark, caters to senior-level stu­dents who have been away from the university for more than one year and who are not academically deficient. The Destination Graduation program sim­plifies the process for returning students and allows them to concentrate on their studies by providing graduation and application assistance, personalized academic advising and financial aid opportunities and resources. For more information about Destina­tion Graduation, contact Student Outreach Services at Western at (360) 650-3843 or visit http://www.wwu.edu/depts/sox/dgsite/dg.shtml.

Demment Gets Grant to Study Indigenous Language, Education

Western Professor William Demment has received a grant to study the influences of indigenous language development and a culturally based education program on improved academic performance. The $125,575 grant, which is from the Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii, will help identify teaching and curriculum strategies that will be more successful with students who are not currently served well by schools. Demment, a member of the Oglala Sioux and the Alaska Tlingit tribes, is a professor at Woodring College of Education.

Western Students Sweep Pacific Northwest Student Magazine Awards

Western Washington University Journalism students swept the Student Magazine category of the recently announced Society of Professional Journalists Region 10 Mark of Excellence Awards, with its two magazines, Klipsun and The Planet, finishing in first and second place, respectively. SJF’s Region 10 encompasses the states of Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho and Montana; all colleges and universities in these states, regardless of size, compete in the regional awards competition. All submissions were written or published during the 2007 school year. Klipsun is produced by the WWU Journalism Department, while The Planet is produced by WWU’s Huxley College of the Environment.

Western Presents First-Ever ‘Grandparents U’

Western is introducing “Grandparents U,” a new summer program featuring an innovative way for grandparents and grandchildren ages 7 to 14 to bond through active hands-on learning. Grandparents U is offered in partnership with WWU’s Extended Edu­cation and Summer Programs and WWU’s Alumni Association. The new two-day summer program offers participants a choice between nine exciting and diverse topics, ranging from plastics engineering and bird watching.

“It’s an opportunity for grandparents and their grandchildren to be together for an intergenera­tional learning experience in a university environ­ment,” said Diana Bakkom, assistant director of Summer Programs at WWU. Western’s Alumni Association is participating in the program by sponsoring and hosting a tailgate barbecue that gives Grandparents U participants the chance to meet WWU alumni. Grandparents U will run Thursday and Friday, July 17 and 18, on WWU’s campus. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis through July 10. The program cost is $195 per adult-grandchild pair, and includes instruction, activities and the Thursday night barbecue. Each additional adult is $135 and each additional child is $75. Lodging in University dorms and meals in the dining hall are also available at an additional cost. Alumni Association members receive a $25 discount. For information and regis­tration, visit www.ExtendedEd.wwu.edu or call (360) 650-3308.
western's vehicle research institute is working with bremerton-based kitsap transit to produce a prototype hybrid passenger bus that will get double the miles per gallon of its existing buses.

the prototype will be used to construct a fleet of up to six buses that will be purchased by kitsap transit.

"kitsap's 15-passenger buses are now getting about eight or nine miles per gallon. what we hope to produce is a hybrid vehicle that will get at least 20 miles per gallon - and we're shooting for 30," said eric leonhardt, the vri's director. he said he hopes the fuel/electric hybrid vehicle will be able to achieve 30 miles per gallon.

"this whole industry needs a wakeup call, and we just felt that the vri is the most imaginative, hands-on group to get us the breakthrough design we need," hayes said that while kitsap transit is taking the lead on this project other regional transit systems will be paying close attention to its progress.

"we can't do it alone; we're going to need all the systems to buy in," he said.

leonhardt says he envisions the project taking about three years, depending on the funding that is available; the vri has applied for a grant from the washington technology center, and will apply for more funding from a number of the regional transportation authorities.

"this is going to be a great learning tool for our students," said leonhardt.

according to leonhardt, all that is set in stone on the design so far is that it will be a fuel/electric hybrid; whether the fuel is biodiesel, biomethane from the vri's award-winning manure-to-fuel program, or another type has not yet been decided.

the vehicle research institute is western washington university's award-winning vehicle-design laboratory, producing everything from solar-powered vehicles to its electric-biomethane hybrid.

the vri is working on a system to refine biomethane from dairy farm waste to power its hybrid vehicle with the refined biomethane. the project was a winner in a national competition on sustainability, earning it a $75,000 award from the u.s. environmental protection agency.
Levels of Giving Took Huge Leap During Morse’s Tenure

By John Thompson
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

If growth is a realistic gauge of success, then the levels of giving during President Morse’s 15-year tenure at Western Washington University show an unparalleled period of achievement that will remain as one of her greatest legacies.

WWU Foundation endowment levels when President Morse arrived on campus in 1993 were about $4 million; when she leaves in September, levels will have grown to about $30 million. The Foundation’s total assets in 1993 totaled around $9 million; by the end of the 2007 fiscal year, they had grown to about $47 million.

There are other gauges of success. For example, the number of Life ($25,000 and above) and Benefactor ($100,000 and above) members of the President’s Club has more than quadrupled during her tenure.

Much of this success can be attributed to the tireless fundraising efforts of President Morse, says Stephanie Bowers, WWU’s Vice President for University Advancement.

“Scholarships continue to be one of WWU’s greatest needs. We want to reward our great incoming students.”
— Hoyt Gier

“She has been able to forge such incredibly strong relationships with alumni, parents and local and regional business and industry leaders,” Bowers says. “She has increased the visibility and connections of the University by taking it off the hill and into the community, and one of her greatest assets has always been that once she has forged these relationships, she’s always been willing to ask for whatever the University needed. And likely as not, when she’s asked, they’ve said yes.”

Scholarships show a similar trend. In 1993, about 300 scholarships were awarded through the Foundation each year; that number is now close to 1,000 awards with more than $1.3 million awarded.

“Scholarships continue to be one of WWU’s greatest needs. We want to reward our great incoming students, and provide opportunities to students with financial need. We want to attract the most diverse student body possible,” says Hoyt Gier, president of the WWU Foundation. “But all this takes private resources, and President Morse’s contacts and relationships have allowed us to grow tremendously in this area.”

Morse also has been instrumental in the successful growth of the Bellingham and Seattle Business Forums. Bowers says, “For example, using both the Seattle and Bellingham Business Forums not just as a PR effort but as a way to raise additional money for scholarships was an idea she supported, and it’s been a tremendous success,” she says.

Last year, nearly $125,000 was raised at the two events.

Gier also attributes Morse’s ability to boost volunteerism across the campus in such groups as the Western Foundation’s Board of Directors as being directly related to the University’s fiscal growth.

“People like to be around Karen. Her enthusiasm for Western is contagious. She has pulled in people to serve the University as volunteers or donors simply because she has increased the prestige of WWU and the pride of ownership in its donors and alumni,” Gier says.

“It begins to build upon itself. More people want to serve ... and in the end, that’s what her legacy is really going to be all about.”

Alumni Scholarships Have Never Been Higher—$100,000 Will Help Attract, Keep Deserving Students

By Carolyn Dale
SPECIAL TO UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

The Western Washington University Alumni Association will hit a landmark this fall with its largest-ever annual scholarship gift — $100,000 to new and returning students.

“It’s huge for us, and will result in a significant increase in scholarship recipients this year,” said Deborah DeWees, executive director. “We hope to continue that level of support in future years.”

The association is taking a new approach by giving block grants to the Admissions Office, the Athletics Department, and each of Western’s seven colleges for distribution as scholarships.

Admissions is awarding 32 scholarships of $1,000 each to freshmen from seven counties. Called the Western Emerging Leaders Alumni Scholarships, “these are for geographic areas with large concentrations of alumni,” DeWees said.

During April, admissions staff looked through files of students accepted from Spokane, Snohomish, Clark, Pierce, Thurston, Kittap and Skagit counties.

“We looked at who is admitted to Western and went through their applications, hand-selecting them based on academic achievement and leadership potential, as shown in their personal statements,” said Michael Barr ’96, assistant director of Admissions.

Barr said they also looked for connections to Western, such as parents who are alumni. Local media in some of these counties may give more visibility and recognition to the students’ achievements than in larger urban areas, he said.

“The focus is helping the University to retain and recruit the highest-caliber students.”
— Deborah DeWees

Meanwhile, the alumni association itself is awarding a total of $45,000 in scholarships. In addition, each of Western’s colleges will give three alumni-funded scholarships of $1,000, and the Athletics Department will award two, DeWees said. “The focus is helping the university to retain and recruit the highest-caliber students.”

Money for the scholarships comes from a portion of alumni association membership dues, the alumni association endowment earnings, and WWU license plate sales.

For each alumni license plate, including renewals, the association gets back $28 from the Department of Licensing to use for scholarships.

The fact that some of the alumni scholarships are renewable is essential to students who count on them during their years at Western.

Melissa Baldwin, a senior in the human services program, said the continuing support means she will go on to graduate school at Western this fall to pursue a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling with an emphasis in disabilities.

Baldwin transferred from the community college in her hometown of Twin Falls, Idaho, in fall 2006 with the help of an alumni-funded scholarship. Looking back, she said a remarkable aspect of the scholarship was the way it was still there for her, even after she had to delay transferring to Western by a year.

“That’s a true testament to keeping up the connection,” she said. “That’s what I’d like to tell about my story.”

Baldwin said she has worked to keep “pretty much a 4.0” grade-point average and treats her studies as though they are her job.

“My grades are extremely important to me. I work hard, but I want you to know your money is going to good use. I certainly appreciate every penny I get,” she said.

Baldwin feels Western has made a commitment to her that she wants to return. During an internship, she worked to improve disability access on campus, where “all of those bricks are an issue themselves.” The study resulted in her making accessibility recommendations to Western officials.

“Some of my suggestions have been followed through on, and you know your voice is being heard,” she said. “Western has made a mark on me, and I’m making my mark on Western.”

Kasse Rupp, a senior from East Wenatchee who is majoring in biochemistry and plans to graduate this spring, said the impact of having the renewable scholarships is “hard to explain. But I see my friends worrying all the time at the back of their minds about how they’re going pay for things. It’s so nice not to have that worry. Instead, I can concentrate on school.”

While her brother was at Western, he had similar scholarship support, she said; they overlapped on campus by one year. During the summer Rupp works on San Juan Island with a kayaking tour company. During the school year she works for the Admissions Office, where she leads tours for visitors to campus. “That job pays the rent,” she said.

But Rupp said she couldn’t do it without the scholarship from the alumni association.

“It’s awesome to get through without debt,” she said, “and in four years.”

Rupp plans to go to graduate school but will work for a while first, she said, perhaps at a Seattle biotech company.

“I’d like to end up in cancer research,” she said. “That’s my goal.”
Morse continued.

She earned her master's degree and doctorate from the University of Michigan, where she met her husband, Joseph G. Morse, now a retired Western chemistry professor and former director of Science Education. She came to Western from Utah State University, where she served as a professor of chemistry, head of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department and dean of the College of Science before being named provost in 1989.

Morse has published extensively in the field of chemistry and is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In 1997, she received the Francis P. Garvan-John M. Olin Award, one of the American Chemical Society's highest honors.

"Western was the kind of school that I wanted to come to. I've always had a love for undergraduate education," says Morse. "We treasure our liberal arts core and expect every student who graduates from Western to have experienced what a liberal arts education does for you—whether you end up majoring in a traditional liberal arts field or you go into a professional field."

Western faculty members are acknowledged experts in many fields, and the high caliber of its faculty is crucial to the University's success, Morse says.

Western faculty research reaches across the region, state and world in its benefits and applications. To name just a few, Western researchers are studying global warming in the arctic, researching a compound that might aid in the fight against liver cancer, creating alternative fuels to gasoline, working to improve math and science education at all grade levels and developing new lightweight composite materials that will help manufacturers develop new products.

"Science education at Western Washington University is a recognized national model of how to prepare the next generation of science teachers," says George "Pinky" Nelson, director of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education (SMATE). "It would not be what it is without the active support of President Morse and her husband Joe, who was the first director of SMATE. One cannot overestimate the impact of a president who understands the science as well as the difficulty and the critical importance of good science instruction on a program like ours. At every turn, we received encouragement and vital resources that allowed us to compete successfully for outside funds to continue to explore new ways to improve science education from kindergarten through college."

Morse has led an approach at Western called "The Western Experience," an interwoven mix of academic excellence, active learning, personal attention to students, a unique residential experience, respect for diversity and beautiful campus surroundings. At Western, faculty often work closely with undergraduate students in their research and academic achievements.

"We have faculty who are creative and very active in their fields. And they are scholars," Morse says. "They work on significant research, but not at the expense of their interaction with students."

Focus on Collaboration

Through the years, Morse and Joe have been fixtures at countless faculty, staff, student, alumni and community events.

"I remember her attendance at one of the early ethnic student retreats, in which the students invited her into a no-laughing game in front of the entire audience," says Eileen Coughlin, Western's vice president for Student Affairs. "One of the student leaders attempted antics that would make anyone break a straight face. The audience was absorbed in the contest as President Morse's face remained absent any expression. The students loved her willingness to be one of the group in a way that set a tone for the weekend."

Morse has fostered an emphasis on collaboration with students across a wide range of campus activities. Of note was the green energy program. When a small group of students was inspired by a Huxley College of the Environment professor to look into Western obtaining all of its electricity from renewable sources, Morse and Western's Administration encouraged and worked with them to make that vision a reality. Western became one of the first colleges or universities in the nation to obtain 100 percent of its electricity from green power sources, such as wind power.

Community service is another core tenet at Western. Students serve as interns and volunteers throughout the state, region and nation, often through their academic programs in service-learning projects. WWU alumni continue this strong tradition of service. Western ranked third among the top medium-sized colleges and universities with alumni serving as Peace Corps volunteers in 2007.

Athletics also has prospered at Western, and Morse is proud of its many notable achievements from the past 15 years—such as the women's rowing team seeking its unprecedented fourth consecutive national championship in June.

Very much look forward to calling Bellingham home," Shepard said. "In talks with campus groups in late April, Shepard stressed that as WWU president he will work collaboratively with others on and off campus.

"My leadership style is that I don't come in with answers. What does work is for groups of people to share ideas," he said.

Shepard said he was impressed by how passionate Western students, faculty and staff members are about Western, and how they want to make a premier university even better. And he praised the leadership of President Morse and the many achievements during her tenure as president.

"She has positioned this university for a very successful transition and has done a beautiful job here at Western," Shepard said.

Morse said she is delighted Shepard will be succeeding her as Western's next president. "I have complete confidence that Western will be in very good hands," Morse said.

The trustees also appointed him as a tenured professor in the Political Science Department.

Shepard assumed his duties as chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay on Nov. 1, 2001. The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is in Green Bay, Wisc., has an enrollment of 6,111 students and is part of the University of Wisconsin system.

Yet of greater importance to her is the balance of athletics and academic

Western's intramurals and club sports are also very popular, part of the empha-

"We are so excited to be joining a system."

"President Morse rejoices upon our victories and accomplishments and that she calls her own," says Ramiro Espinoza, Associated Western's new president
Surmounting Challenges

Morse's stamina is well known. Many workers in the University's Old Main administration building often see her parked car when they arrive for work and then again when they leave. That type of strength is needed to run an institution with an annual operating budget of $223 million, nearly 13,000 students, seven different colleges, 1,700 faculty and staff and 110 buildings.

Some decisions have been momentous—such as the breakup of a much larger College of Arts and Sciences into the two separate colleges of Humanities and Social Sciences and Sciences and Technology, placing Western in a better position to attract students and resources. The rise and fall of state funding also has led to difficult choices.

"Unfortunately, the first year I came we were being cut. And that has gone up and down. We've had some good years and some pretty lean years," Morse says, adding, "But one thing I discovered is that we're really effective and efficient in the way we use our money. And we've maintained a deep commitment to the academic area."

Western's reputation in turn has led to success in securing funds from the Legislature, providing modern facilities and equipment for the education of Western students: Campus infrastructure has markedly improved, with construction of new buildings such as the Chemistry, Biology and Science, Math and Technology Education buildings, the Communications Facility, Wade King Student Recreation Center and Campus Services facility; major renovation of the Haggard library and Viking Union and current construction of the Academic Instructional Center, the largest construction project in Western's history. During the 2005-07 biennium, capital appropriations was $73 million, the highest in the University's history.

She also has personally led planning for expansion of Western to the Bellingham waterfront. Western is the third-largest four-year campus in student population in the state but the smallest in geographic size, bordered by the arboretum and close-by neighborhoods. Some have described the campus configuration in golf terms as a narrow "dog-leg right," Morse says.

Too many more new buildings on campus would change Western's character and beauty, so Morse has presided over an inclusive planning process to work with the Port of Bellingham to locate part of Western—such as Huxley College of the Environment—at the former Georgia Pacific waterfront site being developed by the Port. The move to the waterfront also will increase access to Western as well as free up needed lab and instructional space on campus.

Throughout, there have been difficulties to face, from various crises on campus to the stroke suffered by her husband Joe, who has steadfastly remained an integral part of campus life. Western has been her home for 15 years, and she has shared the joys and sorrows of a close community.

"The campus has been renewed and restored, and her leadership will be enjoyed by future generations," Cole says.

Morse announced her plans to retire a year in advance to allow an orderly process for selection of her successor. In retirement, she will have more time for her family, including two small grandchildren, writing and travel.

She will be handing off a strong and stable University that is well-positioned for changes ahead.

"Western is not a place that will stand still, and it will be a wonderful opportunity for my successor to continue to move the University forward," Morse says. "I hope the next president can enjoy and appreciate this University as I have."

Morse will be remembered for her strong, focused leadership but also for her vision of a collaborative learning community where education always comes first.

"We will look back fondly on her years as President and, as time passes, the value of her contributions will multiply," Coughlin says.

A Legacy for the Future

Craig Cole ('77), CEO of Brown & Cole Stores, was a member of Western's Board of Trustees in 1993 and led the search effort that resulted in Morse being selected as Western's 12th president. At the time, the search committee was looking for "someone with seasoned judgment and integrity with a strong background as a scholar, and that's what we got," Cole says.

Cole says that Morse has provided "long-term, stable and thoughtful leadership" and that the results of her leadership will be evident many years into the future.

"The campus has been restored and renewed, and her legacy will be enjoyed by future generations," Cole says.

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"We will look back fondly on her years as President and, as time passes, the value of her contributions will multiply," Coughlin says.
President Morse has led significant improvements in campus infrastructure and sustainability. Here she helps break ground for improvements at Western's Lincoln Creek Transportation Center, a park and ride facility linked to campus by frequent bus service.

BELOW THE RIM

President Karen W. Morse became Western's 12th president in fall 1993. Her leadership has fostered Western as a premier undergraduate institution in the Northwest and in the top echelon of undergraduate schools in the nation.

- Enrollment has grown from 9,300 to 12,100 full-time equivalent students.
- Student-faculty ratio has decreased from 20:1 to 18.5:1.
- Campus infrastructure has markedly improved, with construction of new buildings such as the Chemistry, Biology and Science, Math and Technology Education buildings, the Communications Facility, Wade King Student Recreation Center and Campus Services facility; major renovation of the Haggard library and Viking Union and current construction of the Academic Instructional Center, the largest construction project in Western's history. During her presidency, capital appropriations have increased from $31 million in the 1993-94 biennium to over $73 million in the 2005-07 biennium. Western is preparing for a future campus expansion and enhanced connection to the community by setting the course for a waterfront campus.
- Last fall, Western enrolled the most diverse group of new freshman and transfers in Western's history. Creating a learning environment that capitalizes on diversity of backgrounds, experiences, identities and opinions is a core value at Western and a hallmark of Morse's presidency.
- Community service and outreach also has been an emphasis of Morse's presidency, through support of service-learning initiatives, Washington Campus Compact, which Western hosts, and student volunteered. WWU ranked third among the top medium-sized colleges and universities with alumni serving as Peace Corps volunteers in 2007. Strong community outreach is encouraged, with performing and visual arts events, and notable lecturers and speakers, such as through the President's Distinguished Lecture Series. Western's Outdoor Sculpture Collection has been named one of the 10 best on-campus public art collections in the country.
- President Morse has been a leader of WWU in its support for alcohol abuse prevention programs. In partnership with the Bellingham mayor, Morse created the Campus Community Coalition, a grassroots organization comprised of members of campus and community leaders who recognize that student alcohol misuse, specifically undergraduate drinking, are shared problems requiring shared solutions.
- Western solidified a commitment to NCAA Division II, moving from the NAIA, thereby setting expectations for producing a student athlete that reflected Western's character and expectations, resulting in a GPA and graduation rate of student athletes above the overall student rate.
- In 1993, when President Morse started at Western, the University received $3.5 million in combined federal, state and other grants for faculty research. That compares to $13 million in such grants in 2007. Morse collaborated with faculty to develop new faculty research programs, with recent examples including the Advanced Materials Science and Engineering Center (AMSEC), which bridges industries ranging from aerospace to microelectronics; and Biomedical Research Activities in Neuroscience (BRAIN), which links the expertise of Western's biology and psychology departments to prepare students for the growing biomedical field.
- Sustainability is a major theme for campus operations and instruction and student activism. Western became a national leader in green energy through a student initiative encouraged by the University Administration to have Western receive 100 percent of its energy from green power. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2005 awarded Western a national Green Power Leadership Award. President Morse was one of the first university presidents in the Northwest to sign a letter of intent for the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, which is an effort to address global warming. Students in programs such as the Vehicle Research Institute and Industrial Design are working to develop fuel-efficient hybrid cars and useful products from recycled materials. WWU's Huxley College of the Environment is one of the oldest and most respected environmental colleges in the nation.

- A multi-disciplinary Border Policy Research Institute opened in 2005 at Western and focuses on policy research dealing with transportation, mobility and security issues affecting the U.S.-Canada border, including the impact of the Vancouver/Whistler, B.C. 2010 Winter Olympics. The University established the Institute to further its mission of promoting research, academic programs and public programming on critical policy issues affecting the Pacific Northwest region and Canada.
- Morse supported expanded opportunities for international education, with events such as Japan Week, East Asian Studies collection, study abroad and Latin American ties.
- Morse oversaw strengthening of math and science education that put Western in a leadership position in the field. Shannon Point Marine Center, the University's marine research facility in Anacortes, Wash., in 2003 was one of six institutions in the nation President George W. Bush honored for achieving "remarkable" increases in "participation of minorities, women, and disabled students" in scientific fields.
- Morse actively supported the education of teachers, from Woodring College of Education's nationally recognized teacher education program to creation of the North Cascades and Olympic Science Partnership, which seeks to advance the teaching and learning of science throughout Northwest Washington and serving as a national model. Former NASA astronaut George "Pinky" Nelson is leading this effort to reform science education, which is funded by the National Science Foundation.

Graduates - with President Morse holding a prospective member of the class of 2017 - place memorabilia of their time at Western into a time capsule to be placed in Memory Walk, a tradition dating to 1912.

President Morse (above) with White House correspondent Helen Thomas. (Above left), One of Western President Morse's favorite events at Western is Commencement, and here she is with graduating students and Western's banners on the steps of Old Main. (Left) President Morse and George Pierce, vice president for Business & Financial Affairs, attend Western's Staff Art Show.

SPRING 2008 7
The inaugural Alumni Legacy Family of the Year award was presented to the Hickenbottom family which has had 24 family members attend Western since 1941. Fifteen family members came to campus to accept the award, which was presented at the Alumni Awards Celebration held on campus during the Fall Family Weekend. The Hickenbottom family surprised the WWU Alumni Association with a $2,040 donation to establish the Hickenbottom Family Scholarship in honor of their award. The scholarship will be presented to a Western student.

Front row: James (Jim) Hickenbottom (’63), Su Hickenbottom (attended ’61-’83), Patsy Baker (attended ’48-’49), Sharon Meyer (’66)
2nd Row: Megan Otis (’05 & ’08), Karen Hickenbottom (’88 & ’92), Gary Hickenbottom (attended ’69-’70)
3rd Row: Harold Hickenbottom (’52), Nadine Santo Pietro (’85), Gerald (Ivan) Hickenbottom (’57), Lily Hickenbottom (’08)
4th Row: Steven Hickenbottom, Paul Hickenbottom (’75 & ’77), Charles (Charlie) Hickenbottom (attended ’70-’71)
5th Row: Dana Hickenbottom (’07)

To nominate your family for the 2009 Award visit: www.wwualumni.com.
1986 - Barbara Fredericks has been named executive director of the Port Angeles Downtown Association. ... Curt Grady has been named store manager of the downtown De Waard & Bode downtown Bellingham location.

1988 - Tim "Dewey" De Jong was recently recognized by Best Lawyers in America and Oregon Super Lawyers.

1989 - Greg Otterholt, the former KVOS TV weatherman in Bellingham has recorded three CDs to benefit Seattle Children's Hospital. More than 170,000 of his previous nine CDs have been sold, raising more than $750,000 for children's hospitals in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

1992 - Damond Morris, founder, artistic director and producer of the nonprofit Shakespeare Northwest and the Skagit River Shakespeare Festival, is returning as a director to the Phillip Taro Theatre at Skagit Valley College. ... Alex Taub teaches prepolitics at Wattenach Valley College.

1993 - Casey Moitrim is vice president of commercial real estate at West Coast Bank's Vancouver office and was recently featured in an article in The Columbian newspaper.

1994 - Susan Lee-Pullen has created a line of jewelry called Honeyuckle Designs for wedding accessories and a less formal line called Pathwork Jewelry. She uses crystals, pearls, silver and gold designs for each customer so the jewelry is uniquely theirs. Lee-Pullen's work is available online and locally at Art and Soul Gallery in Bothell.

1995 - Penny Hillaire has been named family service director for the Youth Enrichment and Social Services program for the Lummi Nation. The program offers recreation, outreach, a safe house and counseling. Hillaire also represents her tribe at international events.


IN MEMORIAM

1932 - Garnet M. Paar, 94, former owner with her husband of Paar's IGA Market in Carnation, on July 14 in Carnation.


1938 - Josephine (Curtis) Miller, 91, a former teacher, in Wenatchee on Sept. 9.

1941 - Chester Dombrowski, 92, a former Shelton High School teacher, coach and principal in Seattle, Aberdeen and Shelton, in Shoreline on June 10. ... Mildred Bean Heller, 90, former teacher in Bellevue, Othello, Dupont and Skagit County, on March 14 in Mount Vernon.

1942 - Betty (Gilbert) Brusdahl, 87, writer, gardener and traveler in Seattle on Aug. 28. ... Puffy Heft Winkelman, 86, a retired teacher and Christmas tree farmer, on Nov. 20 in Mount Vernon.

1947 - Ethel Boynton Crook, 96, retired teacher and musician, on Aug. 29 in Bellingham.

1948 - John Noel Fox, 89, a former teacher and head basketball and baseball coach at Central Kitsap High School, Edmunds and Mountlake Terrace schools in Bellingham.

1950 - Paul Bajema, 89, a veteran and former teacher, in Lynden on March 2.

1951 - Millie (Gerold) Zembal, a retired teacher, in Aberdeen.

1956 - Mike McLaury is the new clinic director at Everett Physical Therapy and Sports Performance Center of the Integrated Rehabilitation Group. ... Brent Cole is the co-founder and owner of What's Up! Magazine, an independent music magazine that has been on the scene for 10 years and is still going strong.

1957 - Jenny Peterson, a former Vista Communications officer, has been hired as San Marcos, Calif.'s first public information officer. ... Joshua Klein, a senior technology principal with Frego Design, has created a crow vending machine. He studied crows for six years and invented a machine that crows drop coins into and a peanut dispenser is dispensed. His research found crows to be culturally adaptable and quick learners. ... Celina Steiger has been hired by the Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (FISH) as their education coordinator.

1999 - David McKellar has been appointed principal of Quil Ceda Elementary School in Marysville.

2000 - Jennifer Hahn, a sea kayaking guide and author, has a current work in progress on the art of sustainable wild harvesting of edible plants along the Pacific coast. ... Tim Patterson, former associate principal of Eastlake High School, is the new principal of Inglewood Junior High in Issaquah. ... Robb Lincoln makes wearable art - necklaces with pendants that depict Mayan hieroglyphics. He first started putting the pendants together with friends and family members' names using clay he molds and fires.

2001 - Mathew Lystra received the Emerging Leader Award from the City Club Tacoma last June. He is currently enrolled in the MBA program at UW Tacoma. ... Linsay Rapsell has been hired as the new librarian at Sequim High School.

2002 - Julia Schildker took her vows as a Maryknoll Sister and plans to devote her life to service overseas. She has worked in Korea, the Marshall Islands and Mexico. ... Hallie Shepherd co-wrote and produced an indie film called "GSP," which was filmed in Washington and won the best local film award at the Tacoma Film Festival last October.

2003 - Michelle Goetzenslechter recently graduated from the Washington State Patrol Fire Training Academy and is working as a firefighter and EMT for the City of Redmond. ... Justin Neilon has been hired as a counselor at White Pass High School. ... Jason E. Ankeny has recently started a new company, GetUSImmigrationHelp.com, specializing in employment, investor and family based immigration services.

2004 - Katie Hirschberg is the new recreation leader at the Issaquah Youth Center. ... Katherine Playford, a teacher at Sedro-Woolley High School, was selected in May as the Walmart Teacher of the Year. She received a certificate, a $1,000 educational grant for the school and a $100 personal gift certificate.

2007 - Western alumna Casey Henson spent three months in Korea last summer working with orphans and HIV-positive children.

2007 - Casey Henson spent three months in Africa last summer volunteering at the Kaloloni Integrated Anti-Aids Community Based Organization located in a large slum in Kisumu, Kenya. She there with orphans and HIV-positive children. ... Shawn Ingraham was hired by the Oka-anagan School District to teach math. ... Megan Johnson and Kristin Visser have been hired as staff accountants by Larson Gross in the Bellingham and Blaine offices. ... Becky Peace and Nick Giguerre pedaled 1,300 miles through Europe on Inside Passage - from Alaska to Bellingham last June and made it in time to catch a flight to Antarctica for their summer jobs. ... Erin Piñefer traveled to India for three months as a volunteer with Missionaries of Charity hospitals, orphanages and villages. ... Elisa Sparkman has produced a documentary about a children's bereavement camp, Camp Willie in Arlington, which helps children deal with the death of loved ones.
Why Membership in the Alumni Association Matters

By Carolyn Dale
SPECIAL TO UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Joining the alumni association helps to fill the pocketbook as well as the soul.

Members of the Western Alumni Association receive discounts throughout the state, thanks to a cooperative the association just joined with universities in Washington and California.

"Western alumni will now get discounts at 80-plus retailers in cities where they live," said Deborah DeWees, executive director of the alumni association, adding that new businesses join the program regularly. These discounts demonstrate to alumni that their membership has a real dollar value, she said.

Alumni membership has value to the university, too, DeWees said.

"Membership dues also pay for alumni social networks that help recent graduates who have moved to new communities to begin their careers. Gatherings are held every three months in a range of cities, including Portland, Everett, Seattle, Tacoma, and even San Diego and San Francisco," Roselli said. The assistant director for young alumni and student programs.

"We recently held an event at The Garage, a popular bowling alley on Capitol Hill (in Seattle), and about 70 alumni attended," Roselli said. While the young grads enjoy meeting each other, he said, they also are eager to hear news from the campus.

Listening to your suggestions, comments and concerns about what you want your Western experience to be today has inspired a New Era in Alumni services.

An era of offering you programs that are relevant and meaningful, regardless of where you live, the year you graduated, your profession or your stage-of-life.

In these pages you'll see exciting examples of this new direction. You clearly stated that you want to know what faculty are doing, so we've launched the Traveling Professor Series to bring faculty to your community to visit and share their research findings in a comfortable, relaxed setting, which might even include a glass of wine. In July, we are offering the first "Grandparents U." This is an opportunity for you to bring your grandchildren to campus for two days of learning, fun and memories.

We have completely reworked and revitalized our membership program. We've launched a new look, increased member benefits with more than 80 discounts throughout Washington at top-notch retailers, including Bully's, Ivars, Paramount Theatre, Boundary Bay, T-Mobile and more. And, we are letting our members know why alumni association membership matters and how dues strengthen Western.

For the first time we are developing student programming that responds to their needs. The creation of the Western Grad Packs for our graduating seniors debuted in April. Another first is offering our June graduates a free WWU license plate. It is an example of what happens when we partner with alumni like Dave Mann ('82) on programs to help our students. This partnership launched the Drive with Western Pride program to increase the number of WWU license plates on the road and provide student scholarship dollars.

Over the next few months you will continue to see new and improved alumni initiatives, partnerships and programs that are relevant to you. Let me know what you think, what we should do more of, and what we should do less of. I am interested, listening and so is Western.

Let me know how we are doing: 1-800-676-4885.

Alumni Association Executive Director

Karen W. Morse
President, Western Washington University

Received the Garvan-Olin Medal, from the American Chemical Society

Loves spending time with her husband Joe

Life Member WWU Alumni Association

"Joe and I became Life Members to share and support the objectives and efforts that tie alumni to the University."

Mentorship Matters!

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Mentorship Matters!

Deborah DeWees
Executive Director, Western Washington University Alumni Association

"While membership dues also pay for alumni social networks that help recent graduates..."

Western has 104,772 living alumni, and 1,830 belong to the association, DeWees said. Her goal is to build that number because "alumni participation correlates with many other aspects of a university's public profile," she said. She studied the strongest alumni associations around the country and found that, in all cases, those universities have better funding, more positive legislative environments, successful recruiting, good press, a strong reputation in their communities, and high rates of giving.

"It's critical. Membership really matters. For Western to sustain its high level of reputation, we need our alumni members to step up and be part of Western's recipe for success" DeWees said.

For alumni age 39 or younger, the cost of joining is $20 a year, and for not-so-young alumni, $45 a year, with discounted rates for joint memberships and Golden Vikings. Another way to provide support is to buy a WWU alumni license plate: $28 comes back to Western in the form of scholarship dollars.

Discounts at businesses and events, access to the Western library and Lakewood, lifelong learning opportunities, continuing education, networking, and career mentoring are all benefits of belonging to the alumni association. Plus, DeWees and Roselli both stress the amount of communication from the campus that keeps alumni in touch and informed.

"Members benefit from frequent communication from our office and the university," DeWees said. "They share a deeper understanding of the Western story."
Alumni Commencement Speakers Welcome Grads

By Carolyn Dale
SPECIAL TO UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Each Commencement, WWU alumni welcome new graduates to their ranks. Ethan Yarbrough (92 & 98), who spoke in March at the winter commencement ceremony, draws on his bachelor's and master's degrees in English literature in his daily work as president of Allyis Inc., a technology-support company in Bellevue.

The English Department's graduate program was where Yarbrough met Ken Efta and Richard Law in 1993. The three started Allyis Inc. in 1996. Ten years later, the Bellevue company tallied $17 million in revenue and employed 200 people. Allyis Inc. provides staffing and project management for technology applications across a range of businesses. Yarbrough said his background in literature gives him "the ability to understand the audience — and to craft the language."

Yarbrough said he did not take any business classes while at Western. "And now, I would tell business majors to take English classes," he said. "Clear communication is one of the most important tools in business. People who are good communicators don't have a good perspective on their skill set. It's a marketable skill and sets them apart from other people in business. I call it my secret weapon in business meetings."

New Benefit Program Gets Alumni Where They Live

By June Hathaway
SPECIAL TO UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Western's alumni association has always offered great benefits to its Whatcom County members. From lazy summer days spent boating at Lakewood to evenings passed rooting for the Vikings in Carver Gym, the association has delivered the best of the Western experience to its 12,000 local alumni.

But alumni who live outside Whatcom County have told the association they want benefits closer to home.

“We conducted extensive research among our alumni last summer,” said Deborah DeWees, executive director of the alumni association. “And what we heard was that they want programs that are relevant in their communities.”

They're about to get their wish. The association is rolling out a new benefits program, Western Preferred Alumni Partners, for members in Bellingham, Seattle and beyond. Alumni will get special discounts at nearly 100 participating merchants, including Jiffy Lube, Ivar's Restaurants, Hertz Rent-A-Car and the Tacoma Art Museum.

It adds benefits in Whatcom County, too. Even far-flung alumni might decide a road trip is in order to take advantage of discounts at Bellingham landmarks such as Boundary Bay Brewery and Malard Ice Cream.

Chris Roselli (99), assistant director of young alumni and student programs, noted that new merchants are signing up all the time. He encouraged alumni who own businesses to contact the association if they'd like to offer discounts to fellow Vikings.

"It's really win-win," he said, "alums supporting alums."

Getting the discounts is as easy as showing the preferred partners logo on the newly designed membership cards that will start appearing in members' mailboxes in June. Alumni whose memberships end in June, July or August will get their cards when they renew.

"The new design is really going to allow our members to take better advantage of all of the Alumni Association benefits," Roselli said.

The new cards not only can be used for the discount program, but they also can be used to check out materials from the Western Libraries and to use the Wade King Student Recreation Center.

Visit the Alumni Association Web site at http://www.wwualumni.com to see the full list of participating businesses.

WESTERN GRAD PACK

By Matthew Anderson
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Graduation is a momentous occasion, a crowning achievement, a glorious triumph.

Students who've put four years of hard work and hard-earned money into gaining a college degree deserve a little extra pomp and circumstance.

That, at least, is the opinion of Chris Roselli, whose excitement is plain when he talks about the new grad packs program from the alumni association.

Grad packs are Western duffel bags filled with Western gear such as license-plate frames, T-shirts, sweatshirts, diploma frames and engraved silver business card holders.

Grad Packs are available for our graduate's families to purchase as a special gift. We made sure there were opportunities for families to send a personalized, lasting message to their graduate in several of the packages.

"We wanted to provide an opportunity for our students as they're leaving to bring some of the Western nostalgia with them," says Roselli, assistant director of Young Alumni and Student Programs for the alumni association. "We know that with the majority of our undergrads, they look back at Western and it's among the best times of their lives."

Along with the grad pack program, the alumni association is partnering with the Western Foundation and is offering students a special opportunity to thank faculty and staff who've made a difference in their academic careers.

Those who donate $10 or more to Western can do so as a dedication to someone else — a special math professor or work-study advisor, for instance. The person recognized will receive a special letter, and the student's name will be listed in the commencement program.

This is part of a larger, ongoing attempt to make graduation something really special, DeWees says.

"We really want to celebrate our grads," she says. "It's a big deal."
By Matthew Anderson
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Dave Mann ('82) always believed in investing money wisely.
A 1982 graduate of Western Washington University's accounting program, Mann went on to earn his master's degree in business administration from the University of Washington. Mann's business acumen then landed him a job first as an accountant for one of the Big Four accounting firms, then as the controller at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and finally as the chief financial officer for ImmuneX, the Seattle-based biotech firm. Mann retired after helping broker the company's $10-billion sale to Amgen.

A fellow with a background like that doesn't throw away money. He understands the importance of sound investment policy. And to hear Mann tell it, donating money to Western is exactly that.

That's why he and his wife, Ann, have pledged $25,000 to outfit the cars of 524 spring 2008 Western graduates with brand-new WWU license plates. Each plate costs $47.75 and $28 of that money goes straight back to Western.

But the payoff doesn't stop there.

"Every time someone sees a Western plate, they think of Western," Mann says. "There goes another person who's proud of Western."

Mann thinks that the plates will maintain alumni's connections to the school even if they've moved hundreds of miles away.

"Maybe in 10 or 20 years, they'll give more and more," says Mann, who for years has donated money to various entities at Western. "They've got that license plate that reminds them they've not finished their relationship with Western. It reminds them that they still have a place at Western."

Deborah DeWees, executive director of Western's alumni association, says the money that comes to the University through the license plate program helps to fund student scholarships. And that's a benefit right up Mann's alley, she says.

"He really believes in our students," DeWees says. "He tries to help them in any way he can."

WWU already gets $18,000 a year from the license plate sales, Mann says. But other state schools get far more — in the case of Washington State University, a whopping $300,000 a year. The 524 new WWU plates will mean a one-year return of nearly $15,000. Plate renewals are $30 each year, plus the standard licensing fees, with $28 returning to Western.

"I think we have the ability to grow that amount and make it something the school can rely on," Mann says. "It doesn't seem like there's any way to lose."