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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.”

A resolve to engage the campus in looking for ways to creatively and consistently improve the educational climate is a core facet of her leadership of the University.

“Her guiding principle has always been what’s best for the education of students,” says Kevin Raymond, chair of Western’s Board of Trustees. “That focused, determined leadership has served the University extremely well.”

During her tenure, Western has been ranked for 11 consecutive years as second among the top master’s granting universities in the West, according to U.S. News & World Report. Kiplinger’s magazine now ranks WWU among the top public colleges in the nation offering a combination of outstanding academic quality at an affordable price tag.

“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.

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,” 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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*Western President Karen W. Morse is honored by the Washington State Senate while her husband Joe looks on. The State House of Representatives also honored her.*
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.

WWU Hires Stegmeier as New Police Chief

Western has hired Randy Stegmeier as its new Director of Public Safety/University Police Chief. He began his duties Jan. 14. Stegmeier 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. Stegmeier replaces interim chief of police Dave Dougherty, who has assumed his previous role of assistant chief. Dougherty 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.

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. SPJ’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 offers courses across a variety of fields: biology, chemistry, math, music, design, computer science, the arts and more. Participants work with Western students who lead the university with close to or more than enough credits to gradu­ate. Destination Graduation, established with a $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. Demmert, a member of the Ogalla Sioux and the Alaska Tlingit tribes, is a professor at Woodring College of Education.
Western's Vehicle Research Institute is working with Kitsap Transit on a prototype hybrid passenger bus that would be twice as fuel efficient as buses in the Bremerton-based organization's current fleet. Eric Leonhardt, the VRI's director, said he hopes the fuel/electric hybrid vehicle will be able to achieve 30 miles per gallon.

"Diesel wholesale prices have gone from .87 cents per gallon to $2.68. That would just shatter our budget," said Eric Leonhardt, director of the VRI.

"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 Leonhardt.

Dick Hayes, executive director of Kitsap Transit, said the genesis for this project lies in a tripling of wholesale diesel-fuel prices during the past three years.

"Diesel wholesale prices have gone from 87 cents per gallon to $2.68. Some analysts are saying we could be looking at $5 to $7 a gallon by 2012, and that would just shatter our budget," he said. "This whole industry needs a wake up 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.

WWU to Work with Kitsap Transit on New High-Mileage Hybrid Passenger-Bus Design

By John Thompson
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Western Washington University’s Vehicle Research Institute (VRI) 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 Transit in 2006 was running a fleet of 15-passenger buses," said Eric Leonhardt, director of the VRI. "We were 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 miles per gallon."

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I Am Honored to Have Spent 15 Years at Such a Wonderful Institution

By Karen W. Morse
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

As you know, I will be retiring in September so this will be my last column to you. It has been an ongoing pleasure to share with you so many great stories and interesting updates on the achievements of Western alumni, students, faculty, and staff.

During the past 15 years I have deeply appreciated the many individuals who truly care about the University and its mission of quality higher education. With your help, we feel that our University has taken major steps toward becoming a premier and nationally recognized liberal arts institution.

Throughout my time as president, I have been grateful for the efforts of our dedicated Western family — faculty, students, alumni and donors — as they have worked together to create an educational environment that is first and foremost about what is best for students. Our Board of Trustees, composed of distinguished men and women who deeply care about and believe in Western, provide wise and thoughtful leadership.

Through the efforts of so many, the University has prospered. I often meet with Western alumni — graduates from 50, 20 years ago or just last quarter — and find that there is a real fondness and pride in this institution. These graduates leave Western and go on to make significant impacts throughout our state and nation. They are successful scientists, physicians, teachers, engineers, writers, artists and stars in many other fields. I meet so many former students who say how much attending Western meant to them and how it changed their lives.

Being the president of your University for the past 15 years has been an extraordinary honor for me and I will always think of my many faculty and staff colleagues and friends at Western with great affection. The chair of the regional accreditation team that recently visited Western referred to the fact that the University had been "transformed" in the last 15 years. I know it has — and all our faculty and staff associated with Western made it happen!

It is the right time for me to retire, and I look forward to spending more time with my family and traveling. It is also the right time to bring in a new president, and I have complete confidence in Bruce Shepard, now the chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, who will succeed me as president of Western on September 1.

My best hopes and thoughts will always be with Western Washington University. I appreciate the time we have spent sharing Western stories. I invite you to visit Western at Commencement or during the summer, a wonderful time to return to campus to see how we are meeting the challenges of the future. I'll see you then!
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 at 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 and image 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 have grown to about $30 million. It will have about $47 million. The total assets in 1993 totaled around $9 million; by the end of the 2007 fiscal year, they had grown to about $47 million.

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 board 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 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 my 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 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 kayak 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.”
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 acknowledged experts in many fields, and the high caliber of its faculty is crucial to the University's success," Morse says.

Morse has led an approach at Western called "The Western Experience," an intertwined 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 Husky 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.

Yet of greater importance to her is the balance of athletics and academic work that "we have student-athletes, not athletes who also happen to be students."

Western's intramurals and club sports also are very popular, part of an emphasis on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by students on fitness, as witnessed by 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Students president. "Every part of this University owes a part of itself to the vision, dedication and commitment of President Morse."

Another emphasis for Morse has been encouraging a more diverse campus. Some 20 years ago, about 5 percent of Western students were students of color; that has increased during the past 15 years. Last fall Western enrolled its largest and most diverse group of freshmen ever, with an overall fall enrollment with nearly 17 percent students of color.

"She has spent so much of her life working to ensure that all students—no matter their race or socioeconomic status—get a quality education," says Rei' Paili Shin, D-Edrhbhds, chair of the Washington State Senate Higher Education Committee. "Her commitment has ushered in the most diverse campus in Western's history, and all of Washington should thank her for her important efforts."

**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 strong, focused leadership but also for my successor to continue to move the University forward," Morse says. "I have."
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.

BUILDING A LEGACY

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 261 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 a 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 volunteerism. 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 underage 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.

• 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 Ancortes, 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 Woodruff 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.

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 graduates on the steps of McMillan.

(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 ('07)
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.wwu'alumni.com.
1986—Barbara Frederick 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 "Devey" Delong 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—Damon 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 preoprophes at Wenatchee Valley College.

1993—Casey Moltrum 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 Pathwaysjewelry. 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.


CLASS Notes

1992—Garrett M. Paar, 94, former owner with his husband of Paar's IGA Market in Carnegie, on July 14 in Carnegie.


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

1941—Chester Dombrovs, 92, a former Shelton High School teacher and coach and principal in Seattle, Aberdeen and Shelton, in Shoreline on June 10. ...Mildred Bean Keller, 90, former teacher in Bellevue, Oak Harbor, Coupeville and Skagit County, on March 14 in Mount Vernon.

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

1947—Ethel Boynton Crook, 90, a former 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, Edmonds and Mountainlake Terrace school districts in Bellingham.

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

1951—Millie (Gerdis) Zembal, a retired teacher, in Aberdeen.
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, said Chris Roselli (99), 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 giving student scholarships of $100,000 for fall of 2008, the association has started new student programs.

Last fall, freshmen facing their first round of midterms were given a morale-boosting gift: "We believe in your" packages from the alumni association.

"We told them, '180,000 alumni have come through Western, and they have been successful. You will be successful, too," DeWees said. "We had a lot of students tell us how good this made them feel."

Membership dues also provide opportunities for our alumni from "Financial Living 101" to the latest issues in politics, science, and the arts.

"It's critical. Membership really matters," DeWees said. She studied the strongest 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, $35 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 Lake-outdoor, 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."
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.

ALUMNI

 Boundary Bay Brewing
 Tully’s
 Jiffy Lube
 Magnolia AudioVideo
 T-Mobile

ACCENT on Alumni

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 & ’95), 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.”

Barbara Duzan (’84), alumni speaker in June at spring commencement, is a sculptor intrigued by the beauty she saw under a microscope. While majoring in biology and chemistry at Western, “even though it was science, it was the beauty of it” that kept her enthralled, she said.

Duzan creates sculptures — some life-size — of wildlife, as well as beaded representations of animal heads. She graduated in 1984 and went to work at Immunex in Seattle, where she met her husband, Stephen. He retired as the company’s CEO, and the couple endowed a scholarship in her name in Western’s Chemistry Department.

Duzan said she would like to tell graduates that at Western, “faculty gut their emphasis on students, not on their research. They’re truly interested in you. When you leave, you really are a part of this family, and you never really have to leave. Your school is still interested in you.”

WESTERN GRAD PACK

By Matthew Anderson
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

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

Students who have 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 pack program from the alumni association.

Grad packs are Western duffle 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.”

The grad packs range to price from $25 to $500 and are named after Bellingham streets — Garden, State, Chestnut, High and Indian.

“It’s the last time before graduation a parent can say, ‘Hey, we’re really proud of you,’” says Deborah DeWees, alumni association executive director.

“It’s the last time before graduation a parent can say, ‘Hey, we’re really proud of you’.”

— Deborah DeWees

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.”
Manns' Gift to Graduates Will Roll Back to Western

By Matthew Anderson
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Dave Mann (’82) always has 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 money away. 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 plates 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.”