1999

UA3/9/1 Western Kentucky University Annual Report

WKU President's Office

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I am pleased to present this Annual Report covering 1998-1999 activities at Western Kentucky University.

Since my appointment as president in September 1997, we have talked about the transformation of Western as it assumes its rightful place as the university of choice for aspiring, college-bound Kentuckians.

This report shows the transformation is underway. Last year was an exciting time to be a part of the Western family. The international championship won by the William E. Bivin Forensic Society, the two top national awards won by the College Heights Herald, numerous recognitions of faculty and student excellence, the dramatic enhancement of our buildings and grounds, and a gift of $10 million from Gordon and Glenda Ford are indicative of the excitement and enthusiasm that exists today on our campus.

We all share in the accomplishments of our faculty, students and alumni. Their efforts are chronicled here in the progress that has been made in the first year of our five-year strategic plan, Challenging the Spirit. We have made significant strides in our initial efforts. While much remains to be completed, the momentum felt on campus is spreading throughout our constituencies. We welcome the challenges of the 21st Century and commit our resources to enhancing the quality of life for all Kentuckians.

I thank you for sharing the Western Spirit!

Sincerely,

Gary A. Ransdell
**Increasing Student Learning**

**PROMOTE LEARNING THAT FULLY DEVELOPS INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL AND PRODUCES NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE GRADUATES FOR THE WORKFORCE.**

An emphasis on student learning has long been a hallmark of Western Kentucky University. WKU students are known for their competitive undergraduate education, and efforts today are focusing on enhancing the educational experience available to all Western students.

*Challenging the Spirit* channels University resources into initiatives developed to provide lifelong learning opportunities designed to equip students with the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing world. Western ensures its students are proficient in major fields and that they can apply information technologies to function competitively in their respective disciplines.

WKU is committed to building programs recognized for excellence, with selected programs being nationally competitive. The University seeks to provide excellent facilities, state-of-the-art equipment and information technology, and alternative instructional opportunities to maximize learning.

During 1998-99, WKU accomplished significant progress toward increasing student learning by:

- adding 10 new courses, and two new academic programs, in the University’s Community College;
- creating new student internship opportunities in various academic areas with regional businesses;
- receiving a $10.6 million gift from Gordon and Glenda Ford, the largest gift in the University’s history, to enhance programs in the Gordon Ford College of Business;
- identifying the Applied Research and Technology Center as the University’s first state-mandated Program of Distinction and involving faculty-faculty, faculty-student and student-student interaction in the Materials Characterization Laboratory, Kentucky Climate Center, Center for Cave and Karst Studies, Agriculture Research and Education Center, Biodiversity Center, Biotechnology Center, Applied Technology Transfer Center, Environmental Health and Safety Resource Laboratory and Technical Assistance Center for Water Quality;
- the *College Heights Herald* receiving the two highest awards from major college newspaper services - the National Pacemaker from the Associated Collegiate Press and Newspaper Association of America and the Gold Crown Award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association;
- acquiring state-of-the-art equipment and technology in the dental hygiene program to maximize learning and ensure student proficiency;
- establishing the Biotechnology Center Laboratory to maximize efficiencies in shared equipment usage and providing a central research area for students and faculty;
- establishing the Scott Center for Construction and Engineering;
- gaining approval for a Master of Health Administration degree and a master’s degree in Public Health;
- identifying critical performances, developing corresponding continuous assessment strategies, and developing the electronic portfolio as a management tool for assessment products in student learning;
- receiving an endowment to benefit the string program in the Department of Music and establishing a $1 million endowment for a string faculty member/orchestra conductor;
- creating the Leon Page Business Leadership Series, named for the chairman of the Franklin Bank and Trust Co., as a partnership between the Gordon Ford College of Business and Franklin Bank and Trust;
- being selected as one of 10 participants in the Newspapers-In-Residence Program of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication;
- creation of a scholarship endowment to benefit the art department;
- winning the overall photojournalism competition of the Hearst Journalism Awards Program for the ninth consecutive year;
- excelling in the classroom with 130 of 257 student-athletes achieving a 3.0 or better GPA;
- winning all five first place awards in the Associated Press Broadcast Student Awards Competition;
- recognizing four WKU student-athletes who were named Academic All-America; and
- sponsoring the winning team of business students in the World Games Competition, a computer-simulated international business decisions competition.

![Enrollment (Fall)](image)

**Developing the Student Body**

**ATTRACT, RETAIN AND GRADUATE AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE, ACADEMICALLY TALENTED, AND ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED STUDENT BODY.**

WKU is pursuing innovative and aggressive marketing and recruitment strategies to increase the number of academically talented and highly qualified students, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Opportunities to develop scholarship and financial aid capacity through public and private resources will allow Western to recruit, retain and graduate highly competitive leaders in all academic disciplines.
Steps to improve student transition into the University through increased awareness of academic programs, admission requirements and scholarship opportunities, are instrumental in meeting enrollment targets established in Challenging the Spirit and by the Council on Postsecondary Education.

To provide students at Western with opportunities to enjoy an enhanced quality of campus life and “the Western experience,” WKU last year:

- revised the 2+2 program, a transfer guide for community college students, to incorporate transfer framework certification and to include KCTCS associate degree requirements;
- completed development of an online electronic student admission application form to be submitted from the WKU web site;
- broadened the University’s student recruitment open house program to include special activities in Evansville and Elizabethtown;
- accomplished an increase of 333 in the freshman applicant pool, an increase of 145 in enrolled first-time freshmen, and an increase of 339 in total enrollment;
- increased the average ACT score for first-time freshmen to 21.4;
- realized an 18 percent increase in extended campus enrollment in the MBA program;
- achieved a 92 percent pass rate on the NCLEX-RN nursing exam;
- created the School of Journalism and Broadcasting to house the University's highly regarded journalism and communications programs;
- enhanced the Minority Student Services program to provide additional tutoring services for incoming students in math, English and science;
- established an endowment in the Department of Biology to aid undergraduate student research and travel;
- enrolled more than 550 students, including approximately 150 first-time, full-time freshmen, in the Honors Program;

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**Assuring High Quality Faculty and Staff**


To enhance the educational experience for its students, Western’s priority is to increase the professional quality and diversity of faculty by attracting and retaining high-quality teacher-scholars through nationally competitive compensation and support.

WKU is committed to providing quality support personnel, technology and service to enable faculty and staff to achieve at high performance levels. The University seeks to link ongoing faculty and staff evaluation to strengthening individual performance and to the development of an appropriate rewards system.

During the first year of Challenging the Spirit, WKU:

- created a faculty exchange and international travel program in the Gordon Ford College of Business;
- appropriated a five percent salary adjustment pool to increase faculty salaries closer to the average of benchmark institutions;
- installed nearly 250 new faculty computers and upgraded approximately 160 existing faculty terminals;
- received an anonymous gift of $2.6 million to create a scholars program, a professor of entrepreneurship, a faculty scholar mentor program and a recognition award for entrepreneurial and creative faculty leadership activities;
- established the James L. “Bud” Layne Professorship in mechanical engineering technology, the first endowed professorship established under the Commonwealth’s incentive matching program for endowed professorships;
• added four endowed professorships in the Gordon Ford College of Business;
• involved faculty in re-invigorating the manufacturing and architectural design emphasis related to instruction, research and service to regional industry;
• created the Leon and Ruby Mai Page Professor of Banking and Financial Planning through a $500,000 endowment from the Pages; and
• established the Mary R. Nixon Professorship in accounting, with a gift of $500,000 matched from the state incentive matching program.

**Enhancing Responsiveness to Constituents**

**RESPOND TO EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS THROUGH INCREASED OUTREACH, APPLIED SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE AND INNOVATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING.**

Since its founding as a state normal school in 1906, Western has fostered appropriate collaborations and partnerships with other educational institutions (including P-12 schools), government, business and industry, and community agencies. The University seeks to expand educational opportunity and access and to support economic development, community advancement and workforce needs.

Increasing educational access and lifelong learning opportunities through expansion of the Community College and distance learning initiatives, and providing enhanced cultural and community events that enrich the quality of life for external as well as internal constituents, has been a priority this year.

In addition to actively engaging alumni in the life of the University and promoting the importance of life-long relationships, Western enhanced its responsiveness to constituents -
• by providing expanded services to regional industries through the Center for Applied Research and Technology;
• through establishment of the Kentucky Emergency Medical Services Academy, which has a statewide mission to promote research and professionalism in the emergency medical field;
• through the establishment of an enhanced campus lecture series that brought nationally known speakers Stephen Jay Gould and Doris Kearns Goodwin to the campus;
• by pursuing rapid growth and development of its nationwide alumni chapter and club network;
• by developing operational plans for the construction and use of Regional Postsecondary Education centers in Elizabethtown and Glasgow;
• through expanded course offerings and coordination with area community colleges to ease the transfer process for students in Ft. Knox and Owensboro;
• by serving as the host site for the State High School Speech Tournament, the State High School Marching Band Championships, and the Girls Sweet 16 State High School Basketball Tournament;
- by completing two rural leadership programs and developing the Leadership West Kentucky program through WKU's Institute for Economic Development;
- by offering preventive dental services to the Simpson County Family Research Center, Head Start programs, Commonwealth Health Free Clinic Referrals and the Macon County (Tenn.) School System;
- through a $60,000 award for the Public Child Welfare Certification program, a collaborative effort between seven social work programs in the state and the Cabinet for Families and Children;
- by continuing the biology alliance with high school teachers, including a summer workshop to enhance instructional technology skills for public school teachers; and
- through the Public Radio Service winning the 1998 Barry Bingham Award, representing exceptional efforts to bring information on mental illness to the people of Kentucky.

This year, the University -
- implemented Y2K versions of the University's human resources and financial records systems;
- implemented the Banner 2000 financial aid system;
- conducted administrative reviews and reorganizations of various administrative and service functions;
- deposited $5.7 million in philanthropic giving, raised $24.1 million in pledges, and increased the deferred gift inventory to $22 million;
- developed a plan to install sprinkler systems in campus residence halls;
- earned more than $19.3 million in externally sponsored research funding, a 28 percent increase over 1997-98;
- updated computing technology on the Ft. Knox, Glasgow and South campuses;
- increased the number of courses offered through Kentucky Education Television by 50 percent and enrollment in correspondence courses by 17 percent;
- developed and delivered a broad array of ITV, Internet and distance learning courses;
- updated the University's six-year capital plan and revised the campus landscape plan;
- developed new parking lots and traffic patterns to increase pedestrian safety and aid campus vehicular traffic;
- completed more than $6 million in capital projects;
- initiated planning and design for the renovation of facilities in the Science Complex;
- prioritized the deferred maintenance plan;
- designed and implemented the University's technology plan;
- increased combined University endowments to $33.9 million;
- established a self-insurance program to provide increased benefits and greater flexibility for faculty and staff;
- created a $1 million endowment for scholarships and operating support for the Center for Gifted Studies to ensure its place as the premier program in the Commonwealth; and
- completed construction of the Intramural Sports Complex.

### Improving Institutional Effectiveness

**COMMIT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS IN ALL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

Long recognized as a leader in the use of technology, Western is seeking to re-engineer its major administrative procedures and structures to streamline University operations and make innovative and effective use of appropriate technology.

Increasing external financial resources through private philanthropic giving reached new heights this year, and Western is pursuing mechanisms to assure appropriate participation of faculty, staff and students, as well as alumni and other constituents, in University planning processes.

### Research, Grants, and Contracts

![Graph showing Research, Grants, and Contracts]
THE 1998-1999 ACADEMIC YEAR was a time of reawakening at Western Kentucky University. The University embarked on initiatives in pursuit of goals outlined in its new strategic plan, Challenging the Spirit.

The five-year plan, adopted by the WKU Board of Regents in 1998, is focused on enhancing Western's academic reputation. It provides the cornerstone around which program decisions and the allocation of resources are determined. Initiatives included in the first year of the plan helped to define benchmark measurements and formed the basis for ongoing activities in subsequent years of the plan. This annual report highlights various accomplishments and initiatives related to those goals.

"We welcome the challenges of the 21st Century and commit our resources to enhancing the quality of life for all Kentuckians."

VISION

Western Kentucky University aspires to be the best comprehensive institution in Kentucky and among the best in the nation.

MISSION

Western Kentucky University shall produce nationally and globally competitive graduates and provide optimum service and lifelong learning opportunities for its constituents.