

The Roundtable on Higher Education Linking North Dakota and Its University System

Roundtable Chair: “Together We Have Moved Mountains”

Citing the unparalleled success of the Roundtable on Higher Education, Sen. Ray Holmberg, roundtable chair, said the challenge now is to sustain the vision.

“But even more to the point, our goal during the upcoming interim is not only to sustain that vision, but to embed the tenets of the roundtable in a new culture — a culture where the basic behavior patterns have been agreed upon and are followed, where the power and potential of the University System and the needs and opportunities of the state are recognized and accepted as the way to do business,” Holmberg said at the Oct. 21, 2003, roundtable meeting.

He said the overall goal of the roundtable is to create a university system that meets the rapidly changing needs and opportunities of students and the state, is entrepreneurial in its thinking and action, and where responsible risk-taking and failure are expected and accepted.

Holmberg also reviewed the consensus agreement model that has been a foundation of the group’s success. This model is based on three fundamental rules:

- Everyone must be heard.
- Every member should understand each recommendation so well that he or she can explain it to a neighbor over the back fence.
- Once the group has agreed on its recommendations, every member would support the entire package.

“We have moved mountains, but there are more yet to be climbed,” Holmberg told roundtable members before breaking into discussion groups created around the six cornerstones of the *Roundtable Report*. He asked each group to discuss what is needed to take the roundtable to the next level and to focus their responses on the following three questions:

- What do we need to do to make sure the momentum of the roundtable continues and becomes a part of the culture of the state?
- How can the private sector continue to play an important role in making this happen?
- What new mountains do we need to climb?



Sen. Ray Holmberg

Holmberg instructed each group to return with three high-priority recommendations for enhancing the economy and responding to other emerging issues for consideration by the interim Committee on Higher Education, the executive branch, the private sector and the State Board of Higher Education.

In his final comments, Holmberg encouraged members to be local advocates for the work of the Roundtable on Higher Education.

Consultant Encourages Roundtable Members to Keep the Conversation Going

Urging members to maintain the momentum of the Roundtable on Higher Education, Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), said it’s more important now than ever before to keep the conversation going.

At the present time, Jones said he would describe the roundtable as an unfinished agenda. In comparing the roundtable to higher education initiatives currently underway in other states, Jones said the distinction is that higher education planning in North Dakota is taking place at the state level, not solely at the institutions, and both a state-level long-term financing plan and accountability system have been developed. These efforts provide a state-level perspective on higher education, rather than just a summation of individual institution plans.

Another distinction, he said, is that from the beginning the focus of the roundtable has been on the state and its people and that the institutions are a means to an end for the people they serve. Few states are taking this type of approach to higher education planning, Jones said.

While North Dakota does an extraordinary job of providing education, the state parallels the national average in terms of the percentage of college-educated people in its population. Once educated, many leave for Minneapolis, Denver and elsewhere. In fact, North Dakota loses a higher proportion of students who obtain bachelor’s degrees than any other state in the nation. Jones said this emphasizes the importance of economic development so that college graduates can stay in the state. This is not an

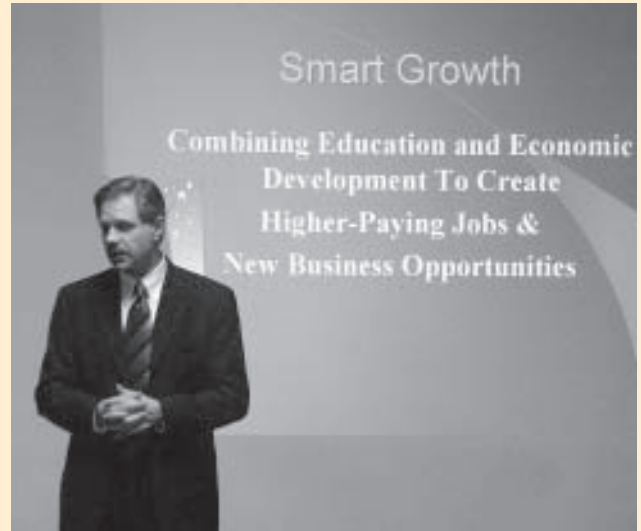
The Roundtable: A Catalyst for Statewide Economic Growth

Emphasizing the importance of working together to increase economic development opportunities, Gov. John Hoeven said the Roundtable on Higher Education is a catalyst for statewide economic growth.

Hoeven's comments at the Oct. 21, 2003, roundtable meeting focused on the role of the North Dakota University System in economic development in the state. He told the group the roundtable had laid the groundwork for centers of excellence and other programs that combine education with economic development to create career opportunities and higher paying jobs in North Dakota.

"It is important that we all work together to increase our economic development opportunities and leverage our resources at all levels," Hoeven said. "The governor's office, the state legislature, the congressional delegation, the University System, economic developers and the private sector all need to work cooperatively to sustain our strategic focus and collaboration efforts.

"The Higher Education Roundtable exemplifies the best engine to drive our efforts in leveraging and commercializing our research and technology development projects in the state," he said.



Gov. John Hoeven

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Dennis Jones

education capacity problem; this is a jobs problem, he said. For all levels of educational attainment, North Dakotans earn substantially below national average wages.

Other key points made by Jones include the following:

- Access to two-year education in the state's eastern population centers is limited.
- North Dakota lags behind most other states in terms of the percentage of adults enrolled in continuing professional education, continuing vocational education, job-related training and other types of short-term education.
- North Dakota high school students have limited access to advanced-placement (AP) college courses.
- The state's economy is becoming less dependent on agriculture and energy and is moving toward services in the finance, business and health sectors.
- Even though significant improvements have been made, the state is still slightly below the national average in per capita receipt of federal research funding.

- The state has not examined fully its role in providing state-funded student financial aid; state appropriations, federal aid and tuition policies all should be linked.
- Possible revisions to the University System's accountability measures should be brought back to the roundtable to be examined holistically and systematically.
- The accountability measures reports show progress is being made. There is great satisfaction with work force training, and, where national comparators are available, North Dakota graduates perform better than the national average.

In closing, Jones emphasized the importance of sustaining the vision of the Roundtable on Higher Education. He also credited private sector representatives for participation in the roundtable process and said they have been instrumental in getting ideas on the table and in getting legislation passed. He encouraged private sector representatives to stay engaged and to continue being a primary voice in roundtable conversations.

The Goal of the Roundtable

To enhance the economic vitality of North Dakota and the quality of life of its citizens through a high quality, more responsive, equitable, flexible, accessible, entrepreneurial, and accountable University System.

Jim Smith and Roxanne Woeste, Legislative Council; Sen. Ray Holmberg; Rep. Bob Martinson; and Larry Isaak, NDUS chancellor



Dr. Joe McCann, Williston State College, and Rep. Nancy Johnson



Sen. Dave Nething, Sen. Tim Flakoll and Sen. Ed Kringstad

Sen. Elroy Lindaas; Rep. Ole Aarsvold; Dr. Wayne Sanstead, Department of Public Instruction; Dr. Gary Hagen, NDUS faculty representative

Roundtable Joins in WICHE's 50th Anniversary Celebration

Members of the Roundtable on Higher Education joined the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) in celebrating its 50th anniversary at a luncheon held in coordination with the Oct. 21, 2003, roundtable meeting.

WICHE has been a major financial contributor to the roundtable since its inception. WICHE's support has been a key factor in the roundtable's success.

David Longanecker, WICHE's executive director, presented an overview of WICHE student exchange programs that provide North Dakota students affordable access to out-of-state education and bring out-of-state students into North Dakota to study. In 2002–03, for example, through WICHE, about 560 North Dakota undergraduate students studied out of state, while about 1,600 out-of-state undergraduates enrolled in North Dakota colleges and universities.

In comments to the group, Sen. David Nething, a North Dakota WICHE commissioner, said there is a clear connection between what WICHE is accomplishing and what has been envisioned by the Roundtable on Higher Education. He said North Dakota's relationship with WICHE is an important tool for providing access to education and for achieving the roundtable cornerstones, especially Cornerstone 2: Education Excellence, Cornerstone 3: Flexible and Responsive System and Cornerstone 4: Accessible System.



David Longanecker, executive director, WICHE



Kay Van Erem, D.D.S., WICHE Professional Student Exchange Program recipient



Ralph Kingsbury, SBHE member, and David Longanecker

Cornerstone Reports Built Upon Member Insights

Gaining insight from members is an integral part of each meeting of the Roundtable on Higher Education. To do so, roundtable members are assigned to task forces based on the six cornerstones of the *Roundtable Report*.

A summary of the key recommendations for creating a university system for the 21st century as provided by cornerstone chairs or spokespersons at the Oct. 21, 2003, roundtable meeting follows.



Cornerstone 1: Economic Development – Bruce Furness, private sector representative

1. Keep on, keeping on... the roundtable is working... stay the course!
2. Continue the strong emphasis on the direct connections and contributions of the University System to the economic growth and social vitality of North Dakota
3. Develop a more positive image of the state of North Dakota
4. Continue to assist with business development



Cornerstone 2: Education Excellence – Sen. Ed Kringstad

1. Continue to build support for the roundtable, particularly with higher education faculty
2. Recognize the importance of education excellence and that the cornerstones are unranked, even though they are numbered one through six
3. Encourage higher education institutions, departments and programs to establish private sector advisory boards
4. Improve higher education retention and graduation rates through improved college preparation and support for college students
5. Revise accountability measures related to education excellence to be more focused; the Education Excellence Task Force could be charged with reviewing performance accountability measures after the third accountability report is submitted in December 2003



Cornerstone 3: Flexible and Responsive System – Don Morton, private sector representative

1. Anticipate and identify future trends in North Dakota and apply a flexible and proactive approach
2. Facilitate a flexible and responsive system through an internal and external open exchange of information
3. Define a successful North Dakota University System partnership arrangement



Cornerstone 4: Accessible System – Rep. Nancy Johnson

1. Enhance the marketing efforts of the North Dakota University System with a focus on the older than average student
2. Develop a seamless preschool through college system, including the review of dual-credit courses and affordability
3. Review student financial assistance, including state-funded, needs-based aid and related student debt
4. Review the impact of increased tuition costs on enrollment



**Cornerstone 5: Funding and Rewards –
SBHE member Chuck Stroup**

1. Sustain the roundtable vision; the SBHE must examine how this vision can be carried out through the individual and collective assets of the NDUS.
2. Create a culture and provide the funding to reward success at the institutional and unit level and to provide incentives as a means of encouraging accomplishment of roundtable objectives, including collaboration; the definition of success needs to be determined at the outset.
3. Support the long-term finance plan adopted by the State Board of Higher Education; any updates to the plan should be done in the broader context, examining the balance between state, institutional and student sources, including the relationship of tuition to needs-based financial aid.



**Cornerstone 6: Sustaining the Vision –
Sen. Dave Nething**

1. Continue the roundtable concept by retaining the structure of the membership and having annual meetings
2. Develop a clear and concise message of the roundtable that explains the goals, objectives, benefits and impacts of the roundtable
3. Expand communication of the goals, objectives, benefits and impacts of the roundtable to the general public; the Legislative Assembly; public and private higher education faculty, staff and students; K–12 administration and staff; the business community; professional societies and trade associations

**Phil Leitner, SBHE student member;
Dr. Donna Thigpen, Bismarck
State College; and
John Botsford, private sector
representative**



**Sue Andrews, SBHE member,
and Nick Hacker, student
representative**



**Dale Knutson, NDUS faculty
representative; Jim Roers,
private sector representative;
and Dr. Sharon Hart,
North Dakota State College
of Science**



Dennis Johnson, private sector representative, and Sr. Thomas Welder, University of Mary

Tell Me More!

To learn more about the Roundtable on Higher Education, go to:

www.ndus.nodak.edu

Click on “**Reports and Information**” where you will find three key documents:

- The Roundtable on Higher Education: Linking North Dakota and Its University System: a publication produced in preparation for the October 2003 roundtable meeting
- Report of the Roundtable on Higher Education: Overview and Summary: a quick guide to the key components of the roundtable initiative, also produced in preparation for the October 2003 roundtable meeting
- A North Dakota University System for the 21st Century: the original Roundtable Report produced in 2000

Roundtable Members Charged with Taking a National Model to the Next Level

Members of the 2003 – 04 Roundtable on Higher Education include the following private and public leaders:

Legislators

Rep. Ole Aarsvold
Rep. Thomas Brusegaard
Sen. Tim Flakoll
Rep. Bette Grande
Sen. Tony Grindberg
Rep. Kathy Hawken
Sen. Ray Holmberg
Rep. Nancy Johnson
Rep. Frank Klein
Sen. Ed Kringstad
Sen. Elroy Lindaas
Rep. Bob Martinson
Sen. David Nething
Rep. Eugene Nicholas
Rep. Darrell Nottestad
Rep. Steve Zaiser

Private Sector

John Botsford
Blaine DesLauriers
Jennifer Feist
Bruce Furness
Don Hedger
Dennis Hill
Jim Jensen
Dennis Johnson
Don Morton
Ryn Pitts
Roger Reiersen
Warren Robinson
Jim Roers
Tom Shorma
Dr. Delore Zimmerman

SBHE

Sue Andrews
Dr. Ann Burnett
Bruce I. Christianson
Beverly Clayburgh
Ralph Kingsbury
Pam Kostelecky
Dr. Richard Kunkel
Phil Leitner
Chuck Stroup

Private/Tribal Colleges

Dr. Carty (Gerald) Monette
Sr. Thomas Welder

Ex-Officio

Larry Isaak
Curt Wolfe

State Government, K-12 Education and Labor

Linda Butts
Bill Goetz
David Kemnitz
Wayne Kutzer
Gloria Lokken
Dr. Wayne Sanstead

NDUS

Dr. Hardin Aasand
Dr. Joseph Chapman
Nick Hacker
Dr. Gary Hagen
James Klein
Dale Knutson
Dr. Charles Kupchella
Ken Quamme
Dr. H. Erik Shaar
Dr. Donna Thigpen



Dr. Charles Kupchella, University of North Dakota, and Rep. Ole Aarsvold



Gloria Lokken, North Dakota Education Association, and Bill Goetz, Office of the Governor



Dr. Richard Kunkel, SBHE president; Pam Kostelecky, SBHE member; and Dennis Hill, private sector representative



Rep. Darrell Nottestad; Dave MacIver, GNDA; and Bev Clayburgh, SBHE member