Tuition and required fees at North Dakota University System four-year campuses are more affordable than at regional counterparts, according to the Student Affordability Report, available at http://www.ndus.edu/uploads/reports/34/1-2012-student-affordability-report.pdf.

Limited tuition rate increases in North Dakota in recent years are a factor as other states have instituted significant tuition increases to offset state budget shortfalls. Tuition rate freezes for three years at North Dakota’s two-year campuses has helped to narrow the regional gap. Controlled tuition increases, another form of financial aid that benefits all North Dakota students, would not have been possible without the support of the Governor and legislature.

North Dakota four-year campuses more affordable

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The report outlines a number of factors to consider when examining the affordability of public higher education in North Dakota:

- Tuition and fees at UND and NDSU, on the average, are $920 or 11.4 percent less than regional counterparts and MiSU’s tuition and fees are $307 or 5.1 percent less than the regional average. The average rate at the other regional four-year campuses is $219 or 3.9 percent less than regional counterparts.
- Tuition and fees as a percentage of median North Dakota household income, are lower than the regional average. The average rate at the other regional four-year campuses is $219 or 3.9 percent less than regional counterparts.
- Tuition and fees range from 29 to 40 percent of the total estimated

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Hamid Augustine Shirvani has been named chancellor of the North Dakota University System. Shirvani, 61, was selected Tuesday, March 13, by the State Board of Higher Education and is expected to begin his appointment by July 1.

“Dr. Shirvani’s record of leadership, working with students and his visionary approach to higher education makes him the perfect fit to lead the North Dakota University System,” said Grant Shaft, SBHE President.

Shirvani, president since 2005 of California State University-Stanislaus, Turlock, Calif., was selected after two finalists emerged, including Marshall Hill, executive director, Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, Lincoln, Neb. Two others had also been recommended by the search committee and invited to final interviews but were removed from further consideration during discussion of the final four. They were Tim Flakoll, provost of Tri-College University, Fargo-Moorhead, and Warren Kent Wray, interim chancellor, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Rolla, Mo.

North Dakota’s new chancellor will be paid between $340,000 and $350,000, according to Shaft, slightly above the state’s highest-paid university president. The chancellor serves as the chief executive officer of the SBHE, is the chief executive officer of the NDUS and carries out the policies and directives of the board of higher education. The NDUS office is located at the state Capitol in Bismarck. Shirvani will succeed William Goetz, who is retiring.

Shirvani earned a master’s degree from Harvard and a doctorate from Princeton. He has served as a professor or administrator in California, Colorado, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania.

The University System includes 11 public institutions of higher education and has an operating budget of nearly $1.2 billion.
Coston named president at DSU

The State Board of Higher Education named D.C. Coston as president of Dickinson State University, Dickinson, N.D. Since Aug. 22, 2011, he had been interim president.

“I have nothing but positive things to say” about Coston, said Bill Goetz, chancellor of the North Dakota University System. "He has wonderful support from the community," including the faculty, staff, students and university constituents, said Duaine Espegard, SBHE vice president. And board president Grant Shaft added, "He's the right person to make the difficult decisions that will need to be made in the future."

Before serving as interim president, Coston was North Dakota State University's vice president for agriculture and university extension and was responsible for the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, the NDSU Extension Service and the Northern Crops Institute. He oversaw more than 800 faculty and staff members and annual expenditures exceeding $90 million.

Prior to joining NDSU in 2005, Coston served as the associate director and chief operating officer of Oklahoma State University's Agricultural Experiment Station, Stillwater, Okla., and as the interim associate director of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. He also was a faculty member and administrator at Clemson University, Clemson, S.C., and a faculty member and extension specialist at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Coston earned a bachelor's degree at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, N.C., and a master's degree and doctorate at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.

Enrollment: Headcount up, FTEs down

Student headcount enrollment in the North Dakota University System increased by 128 students, year-over-year, from spring 2011 to spring 2012. The total number of students in spring 2012 is 45,280 compared to 45,152 a year ago.

Full-time student equivalencies declined, however, 1 percent (181 FTEs) from 36,020 to 35,839.

Looking at a five-year trend indicates a system-wide headcount increase. As an example, the system included 5,651 more students in spring 2012 than it did in spring 2007 for a 14 percent increase. The same trend holds true for FTE’s when 32,784 students were served in 2007 and 35,839 in 2012.

Year-over-year numbers from 2011 to 2012 are indicative of a higher overall college participation, driven by an increase in part-time students.

Over a 10-year history, the spring 2012 headcount (45,280) is significantly higher than the 10-year average of 41,128. This spring’s FTE enrollment is 1,958 FTEs above the 10-year average.

Spring 2012 enrollment numbers at four-year institutions are: Dickinson State, 2,008; Mayville State University, 929; Minot State University, 3,369; North Dakota State University, 13,413; University of North Dakota, 13,950; and Valley City State University, 1,306, for a system-wide total of 34,975.

Two-year institutions numbers are as follows: Bismarck State College, 3,887; Dakota College at Bottineau, 783; Lake Region State College, 2,021; ND State College of Science, 2,811; and Williston State College, 803. The total two-year college enrollment number is 10,305.
SBHE approves ‘maximizing results’ plan

The State Board of Higher Education has approved a "Maximizing Results through Efficiencies" plan of key initiatives for the North Dakota University System. An SBHE oversight committee has been appointed and system-wide work groups will be formed to develop action plans for the initiatives.

"A critical role of the State Board of Higher Education is to promote and encourage North Dakota University System institutions, individually and collectively, to maximize their capacity to meet the needs of students and the state while improving quality, access and affordability," said Grant Shaft, SBHE president.

Broad-based initiatives include reviewing information technology, academic functions, legal services and capital budgeting.

"A great deal has been accomplished to date thanks to the hard work of faculty, staff and administrators," Shaft said, adding that a 2009 white paper showed that "the costs per credential are lowest in Florida, Colorado, Washington, Utah and North Dakota; these states convert resources into credentials that have value in their marketplace."

Work groups will be guided by a student-centered philosophy with the following objectives: Improving student retention and success, improving student access to programs and services, improving the quality of the student experience, controlling student costs, reducing the complexity across the system and within individual campuses, providing effective and efficient delivery of instructional and administrative services, and reinvesting savings to enhance student success, strengthen programs tied to state needs and retain high-quality faculty and staff.

"We must protect the unique mission of each campus," Shaft said. "At the same time, we must explore opportunities to maximize our individual and collective campus resources and talents without jeopardizing mission-critical activities." For more information or additional details go to http://ndus.edu/uploads/resources/2985/7-maximizing-through-efficiencies.pdf.

State retention of graduates at highest level

Almost 68 percent of North Dakota University System's 7,884 graduates from 2009 were employed or re-enrolled during the 2010 academic year - the highest state retention rate since an annual "Follow-Up Report" began. The number of graduates retained totaled 5,260.

The report, released by NDUS and "Follow-Up on North Dakota Education and Training," found that 2009 graduate retention rose 3.5 percent to 67.7 percent from 64.2 percent in 2008 and 5.2 percent from 2007 (62.5 percent). For a copy of the full report, go to http://www.ndus.edu/uploads/reports/75/2010-placements-of-2009-grads-findet.pdf

"Economic climate, diversity and opportunity contributed to the increase," said William Goetz, North Dakota University System chancellor. "Other factors are the increased role of our community colleges, quality of life and the increased opportunity and appeal of our graduate programs which has increased growth at our research universities."

While 7,884 individuals graduated, 802 of those students also earned second degrees and another 1,927 earned minors. The prevalent choice of graduates was a baccalaureate degree (55.6 percent). Twenty-six percent earned undergraduate certificates, diplomas and/or associate degrees. Almost 15 percent earned graduate degrees and 3.4 percent earned professional degrees.

Within a year of graduation in 2009, 63.1 percent of those students (4,972) were employed in North Dakota. Gender breakdown of employed graduates was 53.9 percent female and 46.1 percent male.

The report includes other data such as the percentages of graduate by age: Between 20-29 (81 percent), 30-39 (10.1 percent), 40-49 (4.8 percent), under-20 (2.2 percent) and 50-and-older (2 percent). Accordingly, similar percentages were found by age groups employed in North Dakota.

Additional data includes breakdowns by profiles such as ethnicity; in- and out-of-state residency; degree levels; and primary, secondary, minors or areas of study.

Upcoming SBHE Meetings

April 12........WSC
May 16-17.....Retreat
June 14..........NDSU
SBHE asks Supreme Court to rule on nickname-logo issue of constitutionality

The Board of Higher Education is challenging a law that dictates the University of North Dakota’s sports teams be known as the Fighting Sioux by filing a lawsuit asking the Supreme Court to rule the law is unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the case on March 16 under an expedited schedule that may permit a decision in time to block a June referendum public vote.

The board took the action after seeking advice from Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. At issue is constitutional language on who has what authority between the board and legislature on managing the state’s 11 public colleges and universities.

The university and board seek to retire the nickname and logo so UND is not subject to NCAA sanctions.

DSU irregularities isolated to special international programs

Two audits have uncovered 771 Dickinson State University special international program students do not have proper file documentation. DSU and North Dakota University System officials found 743 files of concern in February and 30 more in March.

Scott Staudinger, DSU coordinator of institutional research and planning, told the Dickinson Press about the second audit: “Dickinson State, in an attempt to make sure we had captured all of the international students who are affected, needed to go back and do further validation.”

The files reviewed were of students involved in dual-degree, dual-credit programs which offered degrees or credits from DSU and their home countries of China and Russia.

A third audit of all other student cohorts at DSU found no file irregularities. Bill Eggert, North Dakota University System director of internal audit and risk assessment lead the audits. The last one was comprised of 158 total student files taken from each semester from fall of 2005 through fall of 2011.

“Issues with student files were solely limited to the special international cohort,” Eggert said. “My (last) testing was on the other four cohorts: domestic-first year students, domestic first-year students and international transfer students, international first-year students and international transfer students, in which all 158 files were complete and no issues were noted.”

Files tested contained all the relevant prior transcripts, general education audits and final graduation audits at a minimum. They also contained letters, hand written notes, substitution and class waiver forms.

“The process used by the Office of Academic Records at Dickinson State to ensure these students were accurately enrolled and graduated was easy to follow and the amount of documentation made my review very easy,” Eggert said.

Board policy manual revisions approved

Policy manual revisions adopted at recent State Board of Higher Education meetings include the following:

January 2012

Second reading and final adoption

406.2 Class Starting Times
440 Enrollment Reporting
806.1 Payment or Reimbursement of Meals and other Travel or Institutional Expenses

February 2012

Introduction and first reading

305.1 College and University Presidents’ Authority and Responsibilities
807.1 Mobile Phones and Other Mobile Computing Devices; Restrictions on Use of State Phones
809 Gift Funds
810 Deposit of Funds; Investments

Budget, audit and finance recommendations approved

The following Budget, Audit and Finance Committee recommendations were approved by the State Board of Higher Education at the February 2012 meetings:

• Approval of the NDUS 2011 financial statement audit report responses
• Approval of the 2012-13 annual budget guidelines including tuition rates and fees
February 2012

NDUS/UND: Approval to proceed with Joint NDUS/UND IT Building

NDUS: Approval to amend the NDUS TIAA-CREF 403(b), supplemental retirement, plan document to include the Worker, Retiree, and Employee Recovery Act of 2008 (WRERA) amendment.

MaSU: Approval to expand the Agassiz Hall Renovation project by $30,000 to $3.775 million, with funds from campus housing reserves

MiSU: Approval to increase spending authority by $400,000 to $2.9 million for the purchase of 10 Olympic Village-style student housing units, to be financed through a low-interest loan and repaid with auxiliary revenues, with the amortization period extended from 10 to 15 years

MiSU: Approval to increase spending authority by $200,000, from $500,000 to $700,000, for an eight-plex faculty and staff housing unit, to be financed through a low-interest loan and repaid with auxiliary revenues, with the amortization period extended from 10 to 15 years

MiSU: Approval to increase spending authority by $200,000, from $500,000 to $700,000, for an eight-plex faculty and staff housing unit, to be financed through a low-interest loan and repaid with auxiliary revenues, with the amortization period extended from 10 to 15 years

NDUS: Approval to proceed with construction of the Industrial Agriculture Communication Center (IACC) electrical upgrades at an estimated cost of $730,000 to be funded from multiple sources and a one-time transfer of $300,000 from operating funds to the capital assets line for this project

NDSCS: Approval to proceed with the renovation of Forkner and Riley Residence Halls at an estimated cost of $9 million; and approval of the resolution for the issuance of State Board of Higher Education of the State of North Dakota, North Dakota State College of Science, Housing and Auxiliary Facilities Revenue Bonds not to exceed $9,000,000

NDSU: Approval to proceed with construction of the Industrial Agriculture Communication Center (IACC) electrical upgrades at an estimated cost of $730,000 to be funded from multiple sources and a one-time transfer of $300,000 from operating funds to the capital assets line for this project

NDSCS: Approval for authorization to solicit private funds of up to $100,000 for new lockers for the Clair T. Blikre Activities Center

NDSCS: Approval for authorization to expand the size of the Bisek Hall expansion project from 54,900 GSF to approximately 65,600 GSF

UND: Approval for authorization to proceed with installation of fire protection system within Walsh Hall, a residence hall facility, at an estimated cost of $950,000 to be paid from residence hall revenues

Academic Consent Agenda

January 2012

UND: Approval for an Institutional Organizational Change: Department of Petroleum Engineering

February 2012

BSC: Approval for institutional organizational terminations:

• Career and Technology Institute
• Workforce Training Center

BSC: Approval to offer a new program with an A.A.S. and P.C. in Digital Audio Production offered both traditionally and at a distance

UND: Approval to consolidate the Departments of Anatomy and Cell Biology; Microbiology and Immunology; Pharmacology, Physiology and Therapeutics; and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology into a single Department of Basic Sciences, effective July 1, 2012 in accordance with SBHE Policy 307.1, Institutional Organization – Notice and Approval

UND: Approval for a new program: Ph.D. in Aerospace Sciences offered both traditionally and at a distance

WSC: Approve constitution

Personnel Consent Agenda

February 2012

NDSCS: Approval to grant an honorary Associate Degree

MaSU: Approval to grant an honorary Baccalaureate Degree

Affordable, from Page 1

• student cost while room, board, books, supplies, travel and other expenses account for the remaining 60 to 71 percent of the cost.
• During 2010-11, more than 70 percent of North Dakota University System students received some form of financial aid, including federal and state need-based financial aid, loans and other institutional aid.
Celebrating Successes

In the spirit of the Roundtable on Higher Education, North Dakota University System colleges and universities share the following examples of their contributions to the economic growth, educational excellence and social vitality of North Dakota.

Bismarck State College

- Karen Bauer, assistant professor of journalism at Bismarck State College, is recipient of the Jack Fellowship Award for 2012 from the Bismarck State College Foundation. The fellowship, valued at $25,000, helps BSC faculty and staff further their education, conduct research or pursue other professional development. Bauer plans to use the fellowship to complete a master’s in journalism education from the University of Missouri - Columbia.

- Buster Gilliss, BSC athletic director, has been named by the NJCAA Men’s Basketball Coaches Association to the 2012 Basketball Hall of Fame. Gilliss has been coaching for 30 years. He began coaching the men’s basketball program at BSC in 1991 and was named athletic director in 1999. He held both roles until 2008. During his years as BSC coach, the men’s team won 11 Region 13 Championships and advanced to the NJCAA Division II national tournament three times (1993, 1997, 2001), including a sixth place finish in 1993. Gilliss was named Region 13 Coach of the Year 11 times and was a three-time NJCAA District Coach of the Year.

- BSC technical theater students took first place in the Stage Crew Showdown Jan. 16-21 at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) Region V competition at Iowa State University. The BSC team swept ahead of 14 four-year universities and another two-year college in the contest. Three BSC students also were cast in the Directors’ Showcase.

Dakota College at Bottineau

- Will Weaver, the author of this year’s Campus Read selection at DCB, will be on campus April 23. He will read excerpts from his book, Sweet Land, introduce and conduct a question and answer session during the showing of the movie based on his book, and meet with college composition and literature classes.

- On April 24, Dakota College will host its Annual Earth Day event. The theme for this year’s program is Agriculture: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow. Guest keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and service projects will be included in the day-long activities.

Dickinson State University

- The Elisa Monte Dance Company of New York City held week-long residency at Dickinson State University, Jan. 22-27. The company worked with students at DSU, Dickinson High School, Trinity High School and surrounding area high schools and dance studios. The company also taught yoga classes at West River Community Center and movement classes at both Hawks Point and at Able, Inc. The dance company offered master dance classes in jazz and modern dance, as well as a choreography seminar. The week of instruction culminated in a spectacular performance on Friday, Jan. 27. This residency at Dickinson State was made possible through grants from ArtsMidwest, North Dakota Council on the Arts and DOT Safe Communities.

- Jarri Newton, adjunct professor of agriculture at Dickinson State University, was recently selected as a nominee for the Excellence in Teaching First-Year Seminars Award. The award is sponsored by the National Resource Center and McGraw-Hill Higher Education. Newton has been teaching at DSU since 1999. Newton was nominated in recognition of her outstanding work with first-year seminars and her ability to work in creative ways to enhance the academic success of first-year students.

- Leah Walters, senior vocal performance major at Dickinson State University, recently won the West Central Regional Music Teachers National Association Voice Competition where she competed against state vocal winners from South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri. Walters now advances to the national level and will compete at the National MTNA Competition which will be held in New York in March 2012. Walters has been studying voice for nine years and is currently a student of Dr. Bruce Southard, director of choral activities at DSU and Dr. Virginia Sublett of North Dakota State University. With their collaborative instruction, Walters received the encouragement award during the Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions in 2010 and 2011 and received a scholarship to attend the 2011 Miami Frost School of Music summer music program in Salzburg, Austria.

Lake Region State College

- Doug Darling, Vice President of Instructional Services at Lake Region State College, was honored...
Celebrating Successes, from Page 6

with the North Dakota Career and Technical Education Administrator of the Year. The award, given by N.D. Career & Technical Education administrators, recognizes administrators who demonstrate support and promote career and technical education.

• Expanded focus on precision agriculture has prompted a name change for the Center of Excellence housed at LRSC. The center’s mission is providing research to help farmers make decisions regarding precision technologies to implement on their farms. The organization, which is part of LRSC, recently changed its’ name to Dakota Precision Ag Center. “We focus on more than just technology,” notes program director Dr. Paul Gunderson. The funding for the Dakota Precision Ag Center comes from the Centers for Excellence initiative, private-sector, and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

• Lake Region State College had a record spring enrollment. This spring 2,021 students are enrolled at Lake Region State College compared with 1,851 students spring 2011 and 1,695 spring 2010.

Mayville State University
• Mayville State continues to see significant enrollment gains. Final enrollment figures for the spring semester of 2012 show positive marks in a number of areas, including headcount enrollment which has grown to 929 in 2012, from 753 in the spring of 2009, a 23 percent increase. This is the second-highest spring semester headcount in Mayville State’s history.

• Mayville State is accepting applications for the Nelson Family Endowed Scholarship for non-traditional students. The scholarship is especially geared toward helping individuals who may be changing their paths in life or those who are pursuing career changes.

The scholarship is made possible because of a $1,000,000 gift from an anonymous donor received by the university last fall. For more information and an application, go to www.mayvillestate.edu/ NelsonScholarship.

• Several Mayville State Collegiate DECA members earned first or second place, and some qualified for international competition in competitions held at the North Dakota Collegiate DECA Career Development Conference. DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. Mayville State student Eric Domier was named 2012-2013 Collegiate DECA state vice president. Mayville State’s DECA chapter was established in 2011.

Minot State University
• This fall, MiSU students will have a new choice for a degree that is unique to the campus and pertinent to the region. Through Studies in Community and Environment, an interdisciplinary approach, students gain knowledge of the scientific, social, political, economic, aesthetic and cultural aspects of the human-environment interaction. It is the only program of its kind in North Dakota. A rapidly increasing sector of the U.S. economy now recognizes the importance — and profitability — of community or environmental sustainability.

• Charles Barney began his duties as the new director of MiSU’s Severson Entrepreneurship Academy Jan. 9. SEA offers students real-life knowledge and skills critical for understanding how to start, maintain and analyze start-up businesses. Having worked for Arthur Andersen & Co. and Maritz Communications Company, Barney has owned and operated several Minot businesses over the last 20 years.

• MiSU and Briercrest College in Caronport, Saskatchewan, signed partnership agreements Feb. 13, expanding concurrent degree programs between the two schools. Last year’s agreement enabled students to receive two degrees in five years — a Bachelor of Arts degree from Briercrest and a Bachelor of Science in Education from Minot State, so participants can earn an education degree with a focus in elementary education, music, physical education, English or history. This year’s signing ceremony commemorates the expansion of the program to include addiction studies, communication disorders and social work. Earning a degree from both institutions allows a student to teach or work in either the U.S. or Canada.

North Dakota State College of Science
• The Otto Bremer Foundation, majority owner of Bremer Bank, recently donated $120,000 to the North Dakota State College of Science Alumni Foundation. The funds will be used to update the technology and facilities in the NDSCS Allied Dental Education Clinic in Wahpeton, N.D. Through the combination of donation, grant and fundraising dollars, the dental department will be able to upgrade dental chairs and technology, reach more of the community to provide general services and help an increased number of underserved children at the annual “Give Kids a Smile” event.

• North Dakota State College of Science announced today that Dr. John and Marcia Richman of Wahpeton, N.D., have established a new endowed fund with a $10,000 initial gift that has been matched by NDSCS Foundation funds, gifted by the late Wilbur and Betty Lunday. The $20,000 endowment will fund professional development opportunities for NDSCS faculty.
Celebrating Successes, from Page 7

and staff through the John and Marcia Richman Faculty/Staff Professional Development Fund.

- According to the NDSCS 2011 Graduate Placement Report, 99 percent of the College’s 2011 graduates available for employment are employed or continuing their education with 67 percent in a field related to their training or education. Seventy-five percent have accepted employment or are pursuing additional degrees in North Dakota. More specifically, 2011 graduates are now employed within 32 of the 52 North Dakota counties. The survey reported 3.5 obs for each NDSCS graduate.

North Dakota State University

- The Centers of Excellence Commission has approved $1.67 million to fund two new centers of research excellence at NDSU, aimed at supporting growth and innovation in North Dakota businesses. The Center for Life Sciences Research and Applications will conduct life sciences research with private partners. The Center for Technologically Innovative Products and Processes will initially partner with industrial companies, assisting with product research, testing, evaluation and analysis.

- NDSU’s Center for Nanoscale Science and Engineering has developed an antennaless radio frequency identification tag that could eventually help businesses maximize supply chain management, tracking everything from barrels of oil to metal cargo containers. NDSU’s new technology solves problems associated with tracking metal objects and containers of liquid and allows for an inexpensive, manufacturable product that meets EPCglobal® Standards.

- NDSU is a part of two recently awarded U.S. Department of Transportation competitive grants. Each of the grants is for about $3.5 million. Only 22 grants were awarded across the country through the University Transportation Centers Program administered by the DOT’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration. The grants will support work at NDSU’s Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute.

University of North Dakota

- The University of North Dakota has been named one of the “Top Military-Friendly Colleges & Universities” by Military Advanced Education magazine for the second consecutive year. The magazine honored UND as one of fewer than 300 schools that specifically cater to veterans. UND enrolls about 600 student veterans who are receiving military education benefits.

- The University of North Dakota Law School was ranked 16th in the nation in the January 2012 edition of National Jurist in the category of “Best Schools for State and Local Clerkships.” This ranking is based on the percentage of graduates who are hired into judicial clerkship positions.

- Two University of North Dakota graduate students in the Space Studies Department, Annie Wargetz and Timothy Holland, recently returned from the Mars Desert Research Station (MDRS) near Hanksville, Utah, for field testing of the NDX-1 (North Dakota eXperimental-1), the only university-developed space suit in the United States. They were accompanied by UND researcher and principal investigator Pablo de Leon.

Valley City State University

- The Library and Information Technologies (LIT) concentration of VCSU’s online M.Ed. has been nationally recognized by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) as an approved NCATE-accredited school library education program. This is the highest recognition possible a program of this type can receive.

- VCSU introduced two new health-related majors. A medical laboratory science major, offered in collaboration with UND, is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences. The athletic training major prepares students for certification and is designed for accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education.

- Final headcount for spring semester was 1,306 students, an increase of 7 percent over last year. This marks the fifth consecutive spring semester of enrollment growth and the largest spring semester enrollment on record. This follows VCSU’s Fall 2011 headcount of 1,384 students, the largest fall semester enrollment in the university’s history.

Williston State College

- WSC will soon be home to the new community recreation and wellness facility. This collaborative effort will allow use by community members and WSC students while Williston Parks and Recreation will benefit from the large base of employees students could provide. Construction on this project is scheduled to begin summer of 2012.

- WSC’s chapter of PTK, an honor society which focuses on leadership and service learning, will be serving the next Banquet West Community Dinner, which is being sponsored by the WSC Foundation. Banquet West is open and free to the public and was designed to reach out to those who dine alone.