North Dakota University System

The morning of Jan. 14 was dedicated to the North Dakota University System’s presentation to the Senate Appropriations Committee of the North Dakota Legislature. Duaine Espegard, president of the State Board of Higher Education, kicked off the presentation, first thanking the system’s dedicated faculty and staff who “work tirelessly to educate thousands of students” and the Governor and Legislature for their past and future support. “We look forward to this session because we believe we have much to talk about and an exciting future ahead of us,” he said. Espegard referred to his career in the banking business and the importance of investing wisely to get a good return on an investment. “What better investment can you as legislators make than in the education of the future leaders of North Dakota?” he asked.

Espegard

Espegard said that this is a dawn of a new day and a bright future for the North Dakota University System because the Board has charted a clear path, developed after listening closely to all the stakeholders in higher education, has put strong leadership in place, and is dedicated to ensuring a well-run system that provides accountability and transparency for taxpayers and citizens.

For a full transcript of Espegard’s remarks, go to the NDUS website.

Chancellor Hamid A. Shirvani then gave a detailed presentation, “An Action Agenda for a Bright Future,”

NDUS Vision

• To become a premier system of higher education in the nation

• To offer measurable quality education

• To significantly contribute to distributed economic and social development of North Dakota

• To become the best system for student success

• To improve quality and keep costs down
... Action Agenda to Legislature (cont.)

outlining the system’s goals through 2020. He discussed the history of the system, including decisions by the Legislature and State Board in the ‘80s and ‘90s that laid the groundwork for a “cohesive system of higher education and a “common vision,” led by a chancellor responsible for fulfilling that vision. He talked about the good system North Dakota has today and the current golden opportunity to become great. He outlined guiding principles to build a quality system and the details of the foundational building block, “Pathways to Student Success,” which will lift educational distinction in the state through its objectives of Access, Quality, Affordability, Learning and Accountability. Shirvani relayed that the Board fully endorses the Governor’s recommended budget for higher education, with the additions of $5 million to support additional staff for the Chancellor’s office, $3 million for State Board of Agriculture Research and Extension Initiatives and $1 million to develop a system recruiting plan.

Shirvani talked about the importance of these investments in order to raise the entire system to a higher level of quality. He outlined where North Dakota currently ranks nationally and how its universities compare with others in the region regarding graduation and retention rates. He promised that if the Legislature invests in the system this session, by 2020 it will see:

- 15 percent increase in graduation and retention rates for research universities
- 10 percent increase in graduation and retention rates for comprehensive universities
- 10 point increase in National Science Foundation ranking
- Higher-quality graduates, tested by a nationally recognized assessment model
- Higher national and international rankings
- Partnerships with and tailored programs for dozens of corporations
- Improved accountability, efficiency, productivity and transparency
- Conservative tuition or fee increases, tied directly to need

The Chancellor’s entire presentation is available online.

Kirsten Diederich, Ph.D., vice president of SBHE, reiterated the Board’s commitment to the success of the plan Chancellor Shirvani outlined, and said, as an educator she was also there to speak on behalf of students. “Things are changing so rapidly that the career they choose today may not exist or may have evolved in a different direction between the time they enter college and the time they graduate,” she said. “Students are asking a lot of questions, and the answers are sometimes unclear or at least hard to discern in today’s world of information overload.”

But, Dr. Diederich said, a quality education and good preparation are keys to student success and helps them deal with ambiguity and to adjust career paths as the global economy ebbs and flows and as technology or discovery changes the shape of their industries.

“A quality education system will ensure graduates leave with an expandable rather than a fixed or brittle mind; critical thinking skills that can cut through information overload; tolerance for and openness to the ideas of others; effective, well-honed communication skills; and lastly, the ability to ask the right questions,” she said. “My question for you today is—why not? Why not commit to building a premier system of higher education—right here in North Dakota? Why not invest in becoming the best system for student success in the nation? Why not use what we have been blessed with to provide the highest-quality education possible for those who will inherit the future of this state? Why not?”

For a full transcript of Dr. Diederich’s remarks, go to the NDUS website.

Grant Shaft, immediate past SBHE president and current board member, wrapped up the presentation by reviewing the progress the university system has made since the last session—a direct result of listening to legislators, business leaders, community leaders, faculty, students, parents and citizens—and the Board’s work to create a new vision.

“Three sessions from now—when we stand before you again, just imagine where we can be IF we all commit today to this vision,” he said. “Just imagine how you would feel if you were part of bringing about higher-quality graduates who are better prepared to enter the workforce; better graduation and retention rates, so all of our students get through school with less debt; and national and international recognition of what North Dakota’s universities deliver. I am very confident that if we all commit to the vision and support it with the budget that is requested, a budget that is reasonable for dollars that are available, we will see all of those things come to fruition before 2020.”

See a full transcript of Shaft’s remarks at NDUS.edu.

“My question for you today is—why not? Why not commit to building a premier system of higher education—right here in North Dakota?”
North Dakota University System Unveils New Seal

At its presentation to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Jan. 14, the North Dakota University System unveiled a new seal that will soon replace its current logo.

“The people of the Dakota Territory established their first university in 1883, six years before North Dakota became a state, signifying their deep commitment to education,” said Hamid A. Shirvani, Chancellor of NDUS. “Today the North Dakota University System is a mission-driven system focused on student success. Our 11 institutions must work in concert to make students’ educational goals their highest priority. It’s important that the visual symbol of our system reflects the depth of our commitment and the importance of this charge.”

SBHE Ratifies Position on Governor’s 2013–15 Budget Recommendation

At its January meeting, the State Board of Higher Education ratified its position on North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple’s budget recommendation for the 2013–15 biennium. In this budget, the Governor has implemented a new funding model that will appropriate state dollars to colleges based on student course completion, rather than enrollment figures.

“This incentivizes the effective teaching of students—a very good thing to emphasize,” said Duaine Espegard, Board president. “The Governor’s budget is also generous, as it recommends an $89 million increase to the NDUS’s base budget—an increase of 14.7 percent—and $216 million in one-time expenditures, including $177 million in capital projects that will help develop the infrastructures of North Dakota colleges to better serve students for years to come.”

The Board discussed areas for which a modest investment by the state now would pay handsomely in future dividends. One investment would be an additional $5 million, which Chancellor Shirvani would use to hire capable people to fill essential needs in the North Dakota University System office—in human resources, risk management, finance, capital and facilities, institutional research, academic planning, economic and workforce development, legal counsel, compliance, and audit. Espegard said there is a pressing need to give the NDUS the resources it needs to operate effectively and efficiently; this $5 million would address it.

“Another wise investment would be a one-time allocation of $1 million to develop a systemwide recruiting plan,” Shirvani said. “Such a plan would help NDUS institutions bolster enrollment, even as North Dakota’s high school student population diminishes, and contribute to the stability of our colleges going forward.”

The Board also supported an amendment that would fully fund the budget proposed by the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education. These, too, are worthwhile considerations for the legislature, Espegard said. The total additional funding requested in support of SBARE is $3 million.
Hoffarth Re-appointed to Second Term on State Board of Higher Education

The North Dakota University System Staff Senate has re-appointed Janice Hoffarth, an administrative assistant in the University of North Dakota Department of Music, to serve as staff advisor to the State Board of Higher Education.

Hoffarth was the first University System employee to serve in this position, which was created with the passage of North Dakota House Bill 1213 by the 2011 Legislative Assembly. Hoffarth will serve another one-year term ending in June 2014.

An Esmond, N.D., native, Hoffarth was one of six statewide winners of the 2010 Governor’s Award for Excellence in Public Service. She was the 2008–09 UND Staff Senate president. She was elected the first president of the North Dakota University System Staff Senate, which convened in 2008. Each of the 11 NDUS campuses has at least one NDUS Staff Senate representative; the group represents more than 8,000 full and part-time University System employees.

“The staff throughout our University System are dedicated individuals who deserve a voice at all levels of administration,” says Hoffarth. “I am extremely honored to serve as their Staff Representative to the State Board. This is an exciting time for the North Dakota University system. As we begin to implement the new Pathways to Student Success plan, I am excited and encouraged by the possibilities, promise and certain future progress of our state and our world class students.”

University System Featured in Inside Higher Ed

North Dakota, unlike almost every other state, is poised to make an unprecedented spending increase in its higher education system,” wrote Kevin Kiley, reporter for the highly respected publication Inside Higher Ed, in its Jan. 9 edition. “The state’s governor has proposed a 14 percent increase—about $90 million— in the 11-campus system’s operating budget for the next biennium, as well as an additional $177 million in one time capital expenditures. Politicians and education leaders hope an infusion of cash will help transform the system—which has struggled with inconsistent direction and leadership—into one of the country’s best.”

Kiley interviewed Rep. Bob Skarphol, several Board members and Chancellor Shirvani for his story.

Read more on the Inside Higher Ed website.

ND Senate Confirms Board Members


Morton is a Microsoft Corp. executive in Fargo and a former coach of the North Dakota State University football team. Neset is a geologist and consultant to the oil industry. Reichert is an attorney and vice president for NISC, a Mandan information technology company.

Morton, Reichert and Neset are already on the board. Reichert and Neset were appointed earlier to replace members who had resigned.

Morton’s four-year term ends in June 2016. Reichert and Neset were confirmed for four-year terms that end in June 2017.

Board Ratifies Amendments and Makes Policy Changes

At its January meeting, the State Board of Higher Education ratified introduction of statutory amendments the Chancellor had already approved on an interim basis.

The first amendment adjusts the definition of “resident student” for tuition purposes to include benefitted employees of the North Dakota University System.

The second amendment would repeal a subsection of a statute that requires that 23.5 percent of the funds appropriated for the student financial assistance program be allocated to students at private baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, as North Dakota’s Attorney General has deemed the provision unconstitutional. Finally, the third proposed amendment would repeal a statutory section requiring payment of some scholarship disbursements through the Office of Management and Budget.

A revision was approved to Policy 310.2 to match Board policy with North Dakota constitutional and statutory requirements related to the appointment of the SBHE Executive Secretary.

Policy 402.9 was amended to implement a new set of requirements and standards prospective international students must satisfy.

The final policy revised, Policy 1902, makes it mandatory for students to subscribe to their respective campus emergency notification systems.
Board Members Reach Out to High School Students

Duaine Espegard, president of the State Board of Higher Education, and Dr. Terry Hjelmstad, board member, have joined Chancellor Shirvani in the University System’s efforts to reach as many high school students as possible in the coming months. The goal is to encourage all students to pursue their academic goals and to answer any questions they may have about the system’s Pathways to Student Success plan, which will be implemented in 2014. Schools that have been visited include Carrington, Richardton-Taylor, Minot, Washburn, Hillsboro, Cooperstown, Grand Forks, Surrey, Sawyer, Velva, Stanley, New Town, Watford City, Beulah, Center, and Hazen. In addition to talking to students about the value of higher education, sometimes NDUS leaders are asked to share their expertise in other ways. While visiting in Sawyer, Dr. Hjelmstad was approached and agreed to

Chancellor Speaks at First-ever Broadcast Event for Statewide Faculty, Staff

Chancellor Hamid A. Shirvani appeared Jan. 8 at an open forum for students, faculty and staff at the University of North Dakota, hosted by Janice Hoffarth, staff advisor to the State Board of Higher Education. This was the Chancellor’s first opportunity to discuss key points of the Pathways to Student Success plan with a large group of system constituents. “If the standards are raised, the quality of education is higher and students graduate quicker, faster,” he said. “For every year the students graduate sooner, they gain a great deal of life ahead of them.” Shirvani says the plan involves the implementation of several initiatives that fall under categories designated as Access, Quality, Affordability, Learning, and Accountability. Shirvani used much of the forum to answer a broad range of questions that were emailed or called in related to the Pathways plan. Many questions focused on admission standards. Pathways delineates a differentiated approach for admission to the state’s two-year schools, regional universities, and research institutions. Admission criteria—based on a combination of ACT score, high school grade point average and completed core course—will point students to the school that best matches their academic preparation for entry into the University System. Shirvani’s presentation was broadcast over the Internet and people at more than 170 locations connected to the event either in a meeting room or at their desks. This was the first time a University System Chancellor has used Internet technology to reach such a broad audience with a single, live event. Pathways to Student Success is scheduled for implementation in the fall of 2014.

View the Chancellor’s presentation online.
Consent Agenda Items Approved

Consent agenda items approved at recent State Board of Higher Education meetings included the following:

Financial and Facility Consent Agenda

MaSU: Resolution authorizing the issuance of not to exceed $2.1 million Facilities Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2013.

MiSU: Proceed with flood restoration projects of up to $2 million, funded from FEMA recovery and MiSU institutional funds, pending the 2011-13 deficiency appropriation request. Increase spending authority for the Beaver Lodge Housing (student) at $2.9 million to $3.1 million and University Apartments (faculty and staff) from $700,000 to $1 million.

NDSU: Replacement of the Burgum Hall fan coil units for $400,000; replacement of the roof on Ceres Hall at $800,000; replacement of a low rise lavatories renovation project, Phase I at $1 million; proceed with the Memorial Union—Food Court Renovations Project at $975,000. Ratify Chancellor’s interim approval to request an amendment to the 2013–15 appropriations bill to include the upgrade of a portion of Research 2 (R2) for the Center for Computationally Assisted Science and Technology in the amount of $660,000 to be funded by federal grant funds.

UND: Seek legislative authorization to purchase the Research Enterprise and Commercialization building (REAC1) on the UND campus and enter into a financing arrangement; authorize the Chancellor to approve the purchase terms and financing arrangement. Increase spending and revenue bond legislative authorization from $14 to $29 million for construction of an addition and renovation to Wilkerson Hall Dining Center. Increase spending from $950,000 to $1.5 million for installation of fire protection systems in Walsh Hall, a residence hall facility. Proceed with demolition of the original Winter Sports building, a.k.a. Old REA, as part of the construction of a new athletics practice facility. Proceed with replacement of Campus Road bridge at an estimated cost of $1.6 million with cost share to be paid from 2011–13 appropriated capital assets funding and local institutional funds and authorization for NDDOT to manage the project as per FHA requirements.

WSC: Amend a property description for construction of apartment units for WSC employees and employees of other state and local government entities as well as local hospital and clinic employees. Ratify Chancellor’s interim approval of the installation of a backup generator to power part of Stevens Hall, at a cost of up to $525,000, funded from the 2011 Special Legislative Session one-time state general fund appropriation.

Academic Consent Agenda

BSC: Program Terminations: D.P. in Graphic Design and Communication; D.P. in Information Processing Specialist; D.P. in Lineworker, Electrical

UND: Institutional Organizational Change: From Graduate School to School of Graduate Studies; Program Termination: P.C. in Graduate Certificate in Mathematics for Middle School Teachers

WSC: Program Terminations: P.C. in Administrative Assistant Health Information Management; P.C. in Administrative Assistant Information Processing Technology; P.C. in Agronomy Technician; A.A.S., P.C. in Entrepreneurship; A.A.S. in Information Processing

Fee Performance Audit Review Complete

In September 2012, the State Board of Higher Education approved a North Dakota University System Action Plan on Fees Performance Audit. Part of this plan called for the following: “review all current accumulated fee balances as of June 5, 2012 (audit report date) to ensure proper use of fee balances in support of unique purposes of initial fee assessment—completed 12/31/12.”

At the January Board meeting, Chancellor Shirvani reported that this review has been completed. The NDUS office, working with the campuses, has reviewed over 80 fee accounts with accumulated balances. Campuses have been instructed to utilize these accumulated balances prior to June 30, 2014, before transition to the new Pathways tuition model.

“The balances are to be used to support purposes for which the fee was originally established,” Shirvani said. “In certain limited, documented instances, campuses may retain an ongoing fee balance to fund equipment depreciation or other unusual expenses. However, in the future these accumulated balances will need to be regularly monitored and re-evaluated.”

A common set of guidelines has been provided to all campuses.
BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE

BSC TO OFFER COURSES TO CWA

BSC has partnered with the Communications Workers of America (CWA), the largest telecommunications union in the world, to provide continuing online education and training to its members. CWA represents over 650,000 men and women working in telecommunications, broadcasting, television, journalism, publishing, and other fields.

BSC OFFERS MLT AT MILES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BSC will deliver its Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT) associate degree to students enrolled at MCC beginning Fall 2013. Students enrolled at MCC will take their general education courses from MCC, but their technical MLT courses from BSC, earning an associate in science degree from BSC.

DAKOTA COLLEGE AT BOTTINEAU

This spring, Dakota College will again hold its annual “Rummage Sale for a Cause” event. The proceeds from the sale are donated to worthy organizations in the area, e.g. Relay-for-Life, Ambulance Service, Food Pantry, Family Crisis Center, and City/Rural Fire Departments. Over the last six years, a total of $14,157 has been raised and given back to the community.

This year, for the first time, Dakota College’s arts and humanities department, through the leadership of Dr. Gary Albrightson and Mr. Mike Porter, coordinated a “community read” program. The program invites the Bottineau community to participate in a series of discussions focused on seven books chosen for the 2012-2013 “read” season. This activity, along with events like Earth Day, community education/professional development classes, the Turtle Mountain Birding Festival and Marketplace for Kids serve to provide opportunities for lifelong learning and individual growth for all citizens in the Turtle Mountain region.

Earth Day has become a part of the custom and culture at Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB). The event has been institutionalized and 2013’s activity will be held on April 23 and 24. Earth Day at DCB is a component of the college’s Nature, Technology, and Beyond focus which endeavors to instill in students a care and concern for the environment.

The title for the event is “Into the Wild” and will be themed to the Jon Krakauer novel of the same title.

DICKINSON STATE UNIVERSITY

THEODORE ROOSEVELT CENTER RECEIVES FIVE AWARDS

The Theodore Roosevelt Center at DSU recently received five national awards; the ADDY, Summit, Horizon, Davey, and WebAward. The awards were given due to the outstanding work of their website, www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org. Additionally, the Center houses the Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, a product of a collaboration by DSU with the Library of Congress, Harvard College Library and the National Park Service.

SPRING 2012 NURSING STUDENTS REACH ONE HUNDRED PERCENT PASS RATE ON NCLEX

The DSU 2012 spring nursing graduates received a 100 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Nursing graduates must pass this test to receive registered nursing licensure. This is the first time in 17 years that a DSU graduating class of registered nurses has received a one hundred percent pass rate. In 2011, the registered nursing class came close to perfection with a pass rate was 94.7 percent.

DSU’S SECOND WINTER COMMENCEMENT HELD DEC. 14

DSU hosted its second annual winter commencement ceremony Friday, Dec. 14, at 2 p.m. in Dorothy Stickney Auditorium, May Hall. This fall, 154 students reached academic eligibility to graduate from DSU. These students represented the United States and the countries of Canada, China, Colombia, Germany, Kenya, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria and Russia.

LAKE REGION STATE COLLEGE

The 65th graduating peace officer training class at Lake Region State College puts 2012—and the program—in the record books. Nineteen students graduated from the peace officer academy December 13. They joined another 74 graduates who trained in 2012 at LRSC peace officer academies in Minot, Grand Forks, and Fargo, bringing the year’s total to 93.

(continues on next page)
The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) has partnered with Prometric to deliver ASE certification exams at Lake Region State College. Tests will be offered at scheduled dates throughout the year.

MAYVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

MaSU alumni and friends are making a greater impact in North Dakota through the state’s endowment tax credit. Fourteen donors can take advantage of the credit with their charitable gifts totaling $125,000 to endowments through the MaSU Foundation in 2012. The tax credit, combined with the generosity of donors, is making a positive difference for North Dakota’s young people and their communities.

As of the first week in January, total annual giving to the MaSU Foundation is showing a 63 percent increase over last fiscal year. The number of donors has increased by 7 percent, while the average gift size is up 51 percent.

Standard & Poor’s Ratings Services has affirmed its “A-” long-term rating to ND State Board of Higher Education’s series 2010 student housing and auxiliary facilities revenue bonds issued for MaSU.

MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY

Mikhail Bobylev, associate chemistry professor, obtained a U.S. patent in December for a new method for the synthesis of new agrochemicals and pharmaceuticals. The new method “An improved method for the synthesis of substituted formylamines and substituted amines via an accelerated Leuckart reaction” reduces what used to take hours in the lab into minutes. Bobylev is the first MiSU faculty to obtain a patent.

The Disability Health II project of the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities is offering technical assistance on disability-related issues to emergency responders, health care providers and other disability health-related groups across North Dakota. NDCPD is a University Center of Excellence on developmental disabilities on the MiSU campus. Training topics include health promotion and wellness, access to health care, disability awareness and emergency preparedness. The training is free and part of an effort to promote the health and wellness of North Dakota citizens with disabilities.

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

NDSCS and RDO Integrated Controls announced a new partnership agreement that annually will provide land surveying and civil engineering technology students the opportunity to learn on state-of-the-art industry equipment valued at $225,000. Each fall, RDO Integrated Controls will provide the College with the latest field equipment to be used for the academic year free of cost along with free faculty training, support and setup.

The economic impact of NDSCS and its students on the state of North Dakota has risen dramatically over the past dozen years and stands at an estimated $185.5 million for Fiscal Year 2011, an astounding $98 million growth compared to previous statistics.

NDSCS students Morgan Burrer and Cody Zarak have been nominated to the 2013 All-North Dakota Academic Team, which recognizes the academic achievements of community college students. Burrer and Zarak will be recognized at a dinner and awards ceremony in Bismarck, N.D., on March 7, 2013. Nominations are based on outstanding academic performance and service to the college and community.

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

U.S. Sen. John Hoeven announced Dec. 14 that NDSU and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, Calif., have entered into a memorandum of agreement to partner on research and development projects involving high performance computing to develop new technologies for the energy industry and give students access to outstanding educational opportunities.

NDSU’s graduate architecture program recently was rated one of the best in the nation, according to a survey of Midwest-based firms. The rankings were part of DesignIntelligence’s 2013 edition of its annual publication, “America’s Best Architecture and Design Schools.”

NDSU’s couple and family therapy program received the national Training Award from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. The program was recognized for developing and providing cutting-edge education that focuses on diversity and social justice.
Campus Highlights

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Wayne Barkhouse, University of North Dakota astrophysicist, shared in a major astronomical discovery of how the universe works. Using a special camera in the Chilean Andes, an international team of scientists captured images of three very distant supernovae—exploding stars—that help prove the universe is full of dark energy.

University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences Rural Assistance Center, a national resource for rural health and human services, is celebrating 10 years of service. Since its launch, RAC’s website has received more than 6 million visits, and staff members have addressed more than 8,700 information requests.

The University of North Dakota is tipping the “scales” on creative teaching and learning practices by adding a new student-centered classroom that encourage students to be more engaged in their learning. The new classroom, referred to as “SCALE-UP” (Student-Centered Active Learning Environment for Undergraduate Programs), move away from traditional large lecture-style classrooms and involve technology to foster student interaction.

VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

With the beginning of the Spring 2013 semester, VCSU students are taking classes and labs in the newly built Rhoades Science Center expansion. Construction on this 28,000 square foot facility began in November 2011 following a $10.3 million legislative appropriation. This state-of-the-art facility represents the first new construction of academic space at VCSU in four decades. Construction will continue during the next six months on renovating the 2nd and 3rd floors of the existing Science Center.

A commemoration of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 was held on December 2, 2012 in Froemke Auditorium in Foss Hall on the campus of Valley City State University, and featured keynote speaker Dr. Elden Lawrence. Dr. Lawrence is a former tribal college president and professor of sociology. Students from two VCSU Communications classes helped coordinate and promote this important commemoration.

The VCSU Human Communications class was able to send out 14 large boxes that were stuffed full of books and other goodies for the Books for Soldiers project. Not only did the soldiers benefit, but the students did as well while working on each aspect of the entire campaign!

WILLISTON STATE COLLEGE

After teaching Art classes for 40 years, spanning kindergarten through college-aged students, WSC art instructor Clif Sundt displayed his life’s work in an exhibition at Williston’s James Memorial Art Center this past December.

The Department of Education has approved WSC’s five-year Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) grant application. With the support of this Title III grant, WSC will pursue goals related to pathways to/in higher education as well as completion and retention.