Legislature Supports Unprecedented Higher Ed Budget

After much deliberation and discussion, North Dakota’s Legislature last week passed an unprecedented budget that supports quality higher education in the state and recognizes the dedication of faculty and staff to students.

“We are extremely grateful that they listened attentively and carefully considered all the information we provided as they made their decisions,” said Duaine Espegard, president of the State Board of Higher Education.

North Dakota University System Chancellor Hamid Shirvani expressed particular appreciation to members of the Conference Committees for SB2003 and SB2200 for their work. In addition to all of the information that SBHE and NDUS leaders provided to legislators during the session, the state auditor also released a performance audit report in March recommending steps be taken to “ensure there is a unified system of higher education” in North Dakota and that the system should “obtain the necessary resources to adequately perform the functions and duties of the office.”

“I won’t say the journey was easy, but I will say that I am proud of the destination we have reached,” Shirvani said. “We now have a solid foundation upon which we can build one of the best education systems in the country.”

NDUS has been granted an 11.9 percent increase in permanent base funding, or $72.4 million, and a one-time increase of $46.2 million. In addition, $177 million will be dedicated to major capital projects. The system office will see a permanent base funding increase of $9.9 million, and a one-time increase of $50.4 million.

NDUS employee compensation approved is a 4 percent average salary increase for the first year of the biennium and 3 percent for the second year. A one percent employee and employer retirement contribution increase will be effective Jan 1, 2014.

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
Chancellor Keynote Speaker at Economic Development Annual Meeting

Improving the quality of universities and their students can build up the economies of their surrounding regions, said Chancellor Hamid Shirvani, in his keynote address at the annual meeting of the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corp.

“Today’s university cannot be an ivory tower,” he said. “Universities and the regions in which they are located are inextricably linked, socially and economically.”

Shirvani emphasized the State Board of Higher Education’s plans to improve the university system and their relationship to local economic development. “When you bring additional high-quality, distinguished faculty in, they attract high-quality graduate students,” he said. “That multiplies the level of research and development.”

In turn, Shirvani said, high levels of research contribute to the local economy through technology and business incubation, employment and production. “I think that, with the North Dakota economy, (the university system) can become great,” he said.

North Dakota University System has a $4.4 billion impact on the state, and for every one tax dollar invested into the system, the state sees a return of $2.30. Further growth can be found by raising standards at the state’s two research universities, UND and NDSU. “All boats rise together,” he said. “If we bring up the standards at those two schools, the other schools will follow.”

The university system has a goal to raise graduation rates by 15 percent by 2020, and that will bring an influx of highly motivated and educated students, Shirvani said. EDC President and CEO Klaus Thiessen said that kind of growth is vital to the region’s success. “The bottom line is, we can’t grow without people,” he said.

Williston State College Going Strong

Williston State College President Ray Nadolny gave a presentation to SBHE about how well WSC is doing even though there are many challenges in the region. For example, WSC sailed through its accreditation, despite ongoing issues of employee turnover. WSC has recently won a national championship in hockey; housed the DMV and grown its $2 million operation into a $12 million operation; and trained 10,000 employees in its TrainND division. WSC has a new library, a landscaped yard, and a new café for students that was paid for by the WSC Foundation.

President Nadolny explained that WSC was requested to address the housing situation in its community, and opened 74 housing units for public employees. Despite Williston High School’s shrinking graduation classes, WSC’s entering class has doubled in size. WSC is doing more and hoping for more, President Nadolny said—goals include automation and electronics programs and a center for economic research to understand housing, retail, and oil production.

The Legislature was poised to provide critical resources for WSC, President Nadolny added, as the capital allocations for a new generator and to renovate Stevens Hall would be transformative. He stated that the proposed funding model demonstrates the accountability and integrity of state leadership, but added that WSC, which Larson Allen’s audit stated to be a high-risk college in a high-risk community, is anomalous with respect to the model.

Employee turnover, President Nadolny explained, is about 40 percent per year, and the college struggles to hire new employees at wages two-thirds higher than those offered two years ago. Security and counseling funding is also decreased for WSC in the budget’s current form. President Nadolny cited that Chancellor Shirvani is working to address this decrease in funding, and that he also proposed creating a statewide master plan that would help identify opportunities for WSC to grow. WSC has significant opportunities, President Nadolny explained, in petroleum, automation, and electronics; WSC is worth investing in to address the growing population and needs of the northwestern part of the state.

President Espegard responded that the Board supports supplementing WSC’s funding, and reinforced that one-time funding would not satisfy Williston’s needs, as ongoing expenses should be addressed with continually budgeted money. Mr. Hull agreed with the concerns about WSC, and asked how to go about obtaining increased funding in light of the new funding model. President Espegard answered that it was the Board’s goal to explain to legislators the wage, security and senior staff issues at WSC, and expressed his confidence that the House will hear WSC’s request. He then thanked President Nadolny for his work. Chancellor Shirvani added that it would be appropriate for WSC to receive a special appropriation for its structural deficit. President Nadolny concluded that despite negative press surrounding the Williston area, WSC is a great counter example in that men and women are advancing their careers there.
Darling Named Next President of Lake Region

The State Board of Higher Education on March 6 named Dr. Doug Darling to be the next president of Lake Region State College, in Devils Lake, N.D.

Darling had been serving as Lake Region State College’s interim president and Vice President of Instructional Services, a position he has held since 1998. He was previously the director of the Lake Area Vocational Technical Center in Devils Lake from 1995 to 1998.

“The Board is pleased to appoint such a highly qualified and experienced community college leader as Dr. Darling to continue to serve as the president of Lake Region State College,” said Board President Duaine Espegard. “Under his leadership, we expect the college to make great strides forward in its mission to provide exemplary programs for the benefit of the people of North Dakota. We are confident that he is the right leader at the right time for the students, faculty and staff of Lake Region -- and that he will continue to be an asset to the community of Devils Lake as well.”

North Dakota University System Chancellor Hamid A. Shirvani added, “I have enjoyed my working relationship with Dr. Darling over the past eight months, and I believe the Board has made an excellent choice.”

Board member Dr. Terry Hjelmstad chaired the campus committee that screened applicants, interviewed semifinalists, and forwarded its recommended finalists for the position to the Board. “The Presidential Search Advisory Committee deserves credit for its thorough work,” Hjelmstad said.

Darling earlier served LRSC (then the University of North Dakota-Lake Region) as the continuing education coordinator and the interactive video network site coordinator from 1991 to 1995. Darling was also the college’s public information officer from 1988 to 1995 and a marketing and business computer operations instructor at LRSC from 1988 to 1991.

Darling earned a Ph.D. in occupation and adult education from North Dakota State University. He also holds a master’s degree in vocational education and a bachelor’s degree in marketing education, both from the University of North Dakota.

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education Annual Report

During its annual report to the SBHE at its March 7 meeting, SBARE Chairman Rodney Howe explained that the organization helps meet North Dakota’s agricultural needs through NDSU Agriculture Research and Extension. SBARE prioritizes agricultural needs, creates funding packages, and submits those packages to lawmakers. He noted that agriculture is North Dakota’s leading industry, with an annual production of about $35 billion, compared to about $13 billion produced by oil.

SBARE, Howe continued, is an important cog in the agricultural wheel, as North Dakota leads the nation in the production of 15 different crops. SBARE formed the Global Harvest Initiative with private partners such as IBM, DuPont, and John Deere to analyze the future global demands for agricultural production. Although developing new crop varieties requires a process of 10 to 15 years, Howe stated that North Dakota is well equipped to grow, with excellent facilities and a staff with worldwide recognition.

SBARE does have needs, such as updates to obsolete laboratories and warehouses without water or electric service. Howe thanked NDSU President Dean Bresciani, SBHE President Espegard and Chancellor Shirvani for allowing SBARE’s priority funding list to go forward to the Legislature. He expressed his appreciation for the governor’s funding recommendation as approved by the Senate, stating that it would strengthen agriculture in North Dakota.

Dr. Ken Grafton, vice president of agricultural affairs at NDSU, explained that NDSU and SBARE have had a close working relationship. He gave examples of the impact of that relationship—SBARE has made 870,000 direct contacts with North Dakotan students, producers, and agribusiness people in 15 years, providing educational opportunities and economic impact for North Dakota. Dr. Grafton explained that SBARE is heavily vested in the development of crop varieties at NDSU with agribusinesses, the US Department of Agriculture, and other partners; and that SBARE has developed close relationships with gene technology companies to avail North Dakota to the best crop varieties. He added that the release of a good crop variety can lead to a $250 million to $300 million annual return and that SBARE and NDSU currently grow 42 different crop commodities and are invested in livestock research. Dr. Grafton concluded that SBARE and NDSU have fantastic research capabilities that attract state-of-the-art innovation and investment, with great potential for growth.
NDUS Presents Legislative Showcase

North Dakota’s 11 public colleges and universities presented a public showcase titled “Pathways to Student Success” in the state Capitol Memorial Hall March 20.

Representatives of the 11 North Dakota University System institutions as well as the NDUS Staff Senate, North Dakota Student Association, Council of College Faculties and TrainND provided displays highlighting some of the high-quality academic experiences and innovative new ventures taking place on its campuses.

The Bismarck State College Choir and the University of North Dakota Red River Trio performed during the lunch hour. Legislators, students and members of the public were highly engaged as NDUS demonstrated how it is on its way to providing the best Pathways to Student Success in the nation.
MaSU Has Made Impressive Progress

Mayville State University President Gary Hagen described to the SBHE the condition of MaSU in 2006—a $1 million deficit, the highest amount of deferred maintenance in the NDUS, and minimal dorm occupancy. Since that time, MaSU has eliminated its debt (as of 2010) and built a considerable collection of reserves. MaSU needs a new dormitory, President Hagen explained; implementing new on-campus programs at MaSU is a conjectural goal at this point because there is no room to house them. Since 2008, he added, enrollment is up 35 to 75 percent (in headcount and distance enrollment, respectively), in-state enrollment has grown, and the fitness major has grown and run out of space. Deferred maintenance, which was 40 percent in 2004, is down to about 6 percent. In MaSU’s sole building project in 44 years, the campus reduced 62 percent of its deferred maintenance costs; MaSU has also introduced a new cleaner coal plant that has reduced heating costs by 75 percent.

In terms of MaSU’s academic mission, it has placed 94 to 98 percent of students in satisfactory jobs, with 80 percent of graduates in North Dakota. There are also 800 alumni teaching in North Dakota, President Hagen added. MaSU supplies teaching and service to 55 North Dakota communities and 48 states, undertaking many collaborations. Donations have doubled year-over-year, and average gifts have grown significantly, leading to a doubling of MaSU’s endowment in 2 years. MaSU receives 23 percent of its revenue from federal grants, which President Hagen suggested is a good figure for research institutions.

Previously, the North Dakota Student Association awarded Thursby with the “Student Advocacy Award” in appreciation for his dedicated services to the students of the state. Thursby’s foresight has not only touched students, it has also more broadly impacted the entire state. He is a true champion of North Dakota information technology.

Thursby Named North Dakota 2013 IT Champion

The Information Technology Council of North Dakota has named Randall Thursby as the 2013 recipient of the North Dakota IT Champion Award. Thursby is the chief information officer of the North Dakota University System.

The council annually presents the award to an individual who has championed the development of a North Dakota IT company, promoted the use of technology in the academic realm, or positively influenced the delivery of technology to North Dakota citizens.

Thursby has served as chief information officer of the North Dakota University System since 2006. During this time, he developed and delivered a strategic vision that was built on an integrated approach to technology innovation.

His vision for the University System included close collaboration with the North Dakota Information Technology Department, the K-12 community, and the private sector. Through these partnerships, he was able to forge a common IT vision that leveraged resources by sharing services to maximize IT investments while increasing overall efficiencies.

Thursby’s leadership significantly influenced a broad spectrum of organizations. He tirelessly sought to drive down student costs and increase worker productivity. From that framework, he led the development of a number of system-supported solutions that have enhanced capabilities while reducing costs at all 11 NDUS institutions.

Previously, the North Dakota Student Association awarded Thursby with the “Student Advocacy Award” in appreciation for his dedicated services to the students of the state. Thursby’s foresight has not only touched students, it has also more broadly impacted the entire state. He is a true champion of North Dakota information technology.

Mayville State University
Bismarck State College

96 Percent Job Placement for Grads

BSC’s 2011-12 Job Placement Report shows 96 percent of BSC’s technical program graduates employed or continuing their education six months to one year after completing their program at BSC. Twenty-two of BSC’s 37 technical programs showed 100 percent of program graduates either employed or continuing their education.

Leingang Wins Jack Fellowship

Daniel Leingang, associate professor of mathematics at BSC, is recipient of the 2013 Jack Fellowship Award from the BSC Foundation. The $25,000 fellowship helps BSC faculty and staff further their education, conduct research or pursue other professional development. Leingang is completing a doctorate in educational leadership from UND.

BSC Theatre Wins Two Awards

BSC Theatre earned two merit awards for work submitted to the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival competition held in January. Dean Bellin, assistant professor, was recognized for outstanding scenic and lighting design for “Dancing at Lughnasa.” Sophomore Ashley Kramer of Bismarck received the other certificate for her poster design for the same show.

Dakota College at Bottineau

Within a month, bids will be requested for the construction of the Bottineau Children’s Academy – a new day-care facility to be built on the Dakota College campus. The structure will have room for 45 pre-school, day-care and head start children. The project is being organized by the city’s Economic Development Corporation. Although DCB will not own the building, the facility will provide an outstanding internship site for the college’s child care and paraeducation programs.

In 2009, the Dakota College foundation decided to take its fundraising capabilities to the next level. Since that time, the organization has been aggressive in building its financial position. Annual scholarship awards have grown from $100,870 to $198,300 – an increase of nearly 100% in five years!

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) recently received a $24,000 grant to help fund tuition for vegetable producers enrolled in the college’s farm business management program. The program’s focus is using quality fiscal and production records for making sound business decisions. The program is driven through the course AGRI 242 and is a component of DCB’s Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture.

Dickinson State University

DSU’s TR Center Featured in New Initiatives

The Theodore Roosevelt Center is one of six presidential sites participating in a pilot project. This new website, www.presidentialcollections.org, offers a single source for discovering the digital collections of multiple presidential sites and libraries. The initiative is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and was developed by the University of Virginia’s Miller Center. Additionally, Theodore Roosevelt’s documents and artifacts are also now available in WorldCat, the world’s largest network of library content and services.

Women’s Voices Program to Emphasize the Journey of Women

The 10th annual “Women’s Voices” program at DSU was held Tuesday, Feb. 26, and concluded Tuesday, March 26. This year, the program was themed around the various life journeys of women in the areas of education, new beginnings and cross-cultural leadership. This year’s keynote speaker, Dr. Brenda K. Marshall, is a native of North Dakota and the author of two novels, “Mavis” (1996) and “Dakota, Or What’s a Heaven For” (2010).

CommUniversity Held During February

CommUniversity was a month of non-credit courses related to the humanities, daily living and public issues designed to stimulate thought and enrich lives. It is a joint effort held each February between DSU and the Dickinson community to support lifelong learning, and as such, depends upon the generous donations of community members for its continued operation.

Lake Region State College

Twenty-five community college instructors – including Teresa Tande from LRSC – have been selected from among nearly 3,000 chapter advisors to serve as Phi Theta Kappa’s 2013 Faculty Scholars. The scholars were selected through a rigorous application process based on knowledge of the 2012-2013 Honors Study Topic, “The Culture of Competition,” and demonstrated excellence in teaching or administration.

An independent five-year review by members of the National Academies of Science has given the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Program (AgFF) the highest score for relevance, 5 out of 5, and a 4 out of 5 for impact on worker safety and health. These are among the highest scores ever awarded to a government program of its kind. Paul Gunderson, Ph.D., director of the Dakota Precision Agriculture Center at LRSC served as lead reviewer.

Campus Highlights
Mayville State University

MaSU experienced across-the-board enrollment increases this spring. With a highest-ever spring semester headcount of 981 students, the university is reporting a 5.6 percent increase over last year. Growth is seen in the number of full-time students enrolled, the full time equivalent, and the total number of credits in which students have enrolled.

Sixteen of the 19 MaSU students who participated in the North Dakota Collegiate DECA Career Development Conference February 10 and 11 qualified for participation in the international competition. The international competition was held in Anaheim, Calif. April 17-20. MaSU student Wesley Bernier was elected as 2013-2014 state vice president for Collegiate DECA.

MaSU STEM Coordinator Sarah Konschak represented North Dakota at a national convocation of education leaders regarding the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), a national collaboration of states committed to the development of next generation assessments aligned to the CCSS, sponsored the gathering held in Chicago in February.

Minot State University

U.S. News Ranks MiSU Online Business Programs Among Best

The U.S. News & World Report reported that MiSU’s College of Business online graduate and undergraduate programs rank among the country’s best online education programs. Among reporting universities, the CoB’s online Master of Science in management and Master of Science in information systems ranked in the top 7 percent for “Faculty Credentials and Training.” They also ranked top 20 percent for “Student Services and Technology,” top 30 percent for “Admissions Selectivity” and top 38 percent for “Overall Rank.” MiSU’s programs are among the most affordable online master’s programs in the nation.

NDCPD Sets the Bar

The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities recognized the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities for quality grant writing. A portion of the NDCPD core application was shared with 67 centers across the U.S. as an “exemplary example” of how to structure components of a grant application. NDCPD is a University Center of Excellence on developmental disabilities located on MiSU’s campus.

North Dakota State College of Science

The NDSCS 2012 Graduate Placement Report revealed that 99 percent of 2012 graduates are employed or continuing their education with 64 percent in a field related to their training or education. Sixty-eight percent have accepted employment in North Dakota, while 90 percent of those pursuing additional education have chosen to do so at a university located in North Dakota.

NDSCS and North Dakota Case IH regional dealers announced an educational partnership offering a two-year diesel technology program focusing on Case IH agricultural equipment and technology. Through this innovative partnership, incoming students will be sponsored by participating Case IH dealerships. Sponsorships will be customized by each dealer and could include tuition assistance, internships, branded dealer uniforms and/or reimbursement for technician toolkits.

NDSCS announced a one percent spring enrollment increase from 2012, and a 20 percent increase over the past five years. NDSCS has 2,842 registered students for spring semester through Monday, February 4. Enrollment is up by 31 students, compared to spring 2012 when 2,811 students were enrolled.

North Dakota State University

NSDU and the NDSU Research and Technology Park hosted the fourth annual Innovation Week, Feb. 26-28, to encourage student innovation, increase awareness of innovation as a precursor to entrepreneurship and highlight resources available for innovators and entrepreneurs. The week included an innovation competition for students, educational sessions and networking.

Farmers can use a new Farm Fuel Budget cellphone app to plan their fuel budget and use. John Nowatzki of the NDSU Extension Service developed the Android app for farmers to compare projected fuel costs and use for their operation based on alternate crop acreages, tillage systems and crop rotations.

For a class project, students in the Transportation Planning and Environmental Planning course helped assess possible locations for a new bridge across the Little Missouri River between Medora and Teddy Roosevelt National Park. Engineers from KLJ Engineering challenged students to investigate locations by assessing the possible environmental impacts of each.

University of North Dakota

University of North Dakota Theatre Arts faculty, students and crews received several honors, including a certificate of merit for their original production of My Generation, at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Region V, Jan. 20-25, in Lincoln, Neb. UND’s Emily Cherry conceived and directed the play.

Consul General Jamshed Merchant, the top Canadian diplomat for the Upper Midwest region of the U.S. was a special guest on the University of North Dakota campus Jan. 24, as he explored existing and future ties between UND and his country. He also took part in a Canadian Studies class.

Rachel Navarro, assistant professor in the University of North Dakota Department of Counseling Psychology & Community Services, recently was recognized nationally with the Henry Tomes Award from The Council of National Psychological Associations for the Advancement of Ethnic Minority Interests for her significant contributions in psychology in minority communities.
Valley City State University

VCSU’s online Master of Education program was ranked as a top program in the second annual edition of Top Online Education Program rankings by U.S. News & World Report, earning the 22nd spot of 143 and is the only program offered by a North Dakota college or university to be ranked in this category.

The VCSU men’s and women’s basketball teams had successful seasons. The women finish the regular season with 22 wins and the men with 21 wins. Both teams have advanced to the NAIA Association of Independent Institutions post-season tournament held in Jamestown with the top two teams advancing to the national tournament.

Larry Woiwode presented a reading at VCSU on Friday, February 8. Larry has published fifteen books. He is a recipient of the Theodore Roosevelt Rough Rider Award and in 1995, was named Poet Laureate of North Dakota.

Williston State College

Several students from WSC’s Post-secondary Agriculture Student Organization (PAS) attended the North Dakota PAS convention in Minot this past January. Many of them placed, but most noteworthy of all was the election of WSC’s Kayla Crooker to be the NDPAS President for the 2013-2014 term.

WSC hosted a Welcome Wagon event, in coordination with a campus-wide open house, on April 13th. The goal was to assist the influx of new residents by familiarizing them with community offerings. Non-profit organizations, as well as essential services, were present to answer questions and provide assistance.

Consent Agenda Items Approved

Financial and Facility Consent Agenda

MiSU: Approve request for increase in geothermal project authority from $9.35 million to $10.0 million, with the increase of $650,000 funded from Department of Commerce ARRA funds.

UND: Authorize entering into a ground lease between UND and UND Aerospace Foundation to enable construction of a new aerospace building; approve site of new building (Center for Aerospace Research and Innovation) to be constructed and owned by UND Aerospace Foundation; and authorize exception to SBHE policy 902.3, section (11) permitting construction and project accounting to be managed by the Aerospace Foundation. Authorize proceeding with miscellaneous renovation projects throughout the existing School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) facility at an estimated cost of $475,000, to be funded with SMHS local funds.

VCSU: Authorize the issuance of not to exceed $3,000,000 Housing and Auxiliary Facilities Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2013 (Kolstoe Housing Bonds) to refinance its 2003 Bond issuance.

Academic Consent Agenda

UND: Institutional Organizational Change From: Department of Physical Education, Exercise Science and Wellness To: Department of Kinesiology and Public Health Education Changes in Program Title and New Degree From: Physical Education, Exercise Science and Wellness To: Kinesiology and Public Health Education New Degree – Bachelor of Science in Public Health Education Program Approval and New Degree – Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Termination – Bachelor of Arts in Classical Languages Program Termination – Transitional – Master of Occupational Therapy

Contact Information

Linda Donlin, Editor Director of Communications and Media Relations North Dakota University System 600 E. Boulevard Ave. Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0230 Phone: 701-328-2962 E-mail: linda.donlin@ndus.edu Website: ndus.edu

SBHE Update

The SBHE Update is created to increase awareness of the role of the State Board of Higher Education and the North Dakota University System and to ensure the system remains connected to, understood by and accountable to the citizens and needs of the state of North Dakota.

SBHE Members

Duaine Espegaard, President Kirsten Diederich, Vice President Terry Hjelmstad Sydney Hull Don Morton Kathleen Neset Kari Reichert Grant Shaft Janice Hoffarth, Staff Adviser Doug Munski, Faculty Adviser

The Role of the SBHE

The State Board of Higher Education is the governing board of the North Dakota University System.