I recently represented the State Board of Higher Education at a meeting with state business leaders, sponsored by the Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce. I expressed how happy we are to partner with them in discussing the future of higher education, and we welcomed their thoughts and ideas. The following is the message I shared with the group:

I am very proud to be involved with the North Dakota University System. Our strategic plan is founded on the vision: “The North Dakota University System drives economic and social vitality for state residents by educating the population to the highest level in the nation.”
But let me tell you what we are most proud of — our students.

— Diederich, SBHE President

The vision is supported by four goals:

- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Economic development through quality education, research, training and service
- Flexibility and responsiveness

Certainly we understand that there are concerns about some issues that have come up in recent years. But we believe that from a big picture perspective, we’re on our way to achieving our vision of leading the nation in educational attainment.

Here are some pertinent facts for you to know:

- 50.4 percent of North Dakota’s 25- to 34-year-old population has associate degrees or higher, 10 percent above the national average.
- North Dakota ranks #2 in the nation in percentage of STEM field degrees produced.
- In 2012, TrainND served 1,765 businesses and trained 18,466 employees.
- The estimated economic impact of the University System climbed from $1.6 billion in 1999 to $4.4 billion in 2011.

There are so many great things happening at our 11 colleges and universities. But let me tell you what we are most proud of — our students.

They are the reason we are all here today. We care about them and their futures. I can assure you that every member of the State Board of Higher Education is dedicated to ensuring that our colleges and universities provide them the best education possible at an affordable cost. We take very seriously our role in helping to build a strong future workforce for the state of North Dakota. We look forward to partnering with the ND Chamber in this endeavor.

Kirsten Bakke Diederich, Ph.D.
SBHE President
Board to Appoint Interim Chancellor

At its Sept. 25 meeting, the State Board of Higher Education will appoint an interim chancellor for the North Dakota University System. That chancellor’s contract will run through June 2015. Dr. Larry C. Skogen, current president of Bismarck State College, has been serving as acting chancellor since June.

With the assistance of the Association of Community College Trustees, the Board has conducted an extensive search to fill the position. Six candidates were interviewed via videoconference on Sept. 6, and the field was narrowed to three finalists. One withdrew his name from consideration. The two remaining finalists, Dr. Skogen and Shane Goettle, J.D., were interviewed in person on Sept. 16 in Bismarck.

Goettle, former Commissioner of the North Dakota Department of Commerce, said, “The goal of the North Dakota University System (NDUS) should be, in main, to graduate students prepared for 21st Century jobs, with an emphasis on the kinds of jobs produced within the North Dakota and regional economy. The modern workforce is also dynamic and in constant change. In that environment, we serve our students best when we impart to them not only knowledge, but also the ability to use that knowledge to critically evaluate their environments and innovate within them. Topping all this off by cultivating opportunities to appreciate and participate in culture and the arts should give our NDUS students the well-rounded and dynamic education they deserve and need to thrive.

Dr. Skogen pointed to collaboration, common definitions, data-driven decisions and measurable outcomes as four strategies to put in place to move the system forward in raising its level of excellence in education. He said the university system needs to maintain a stronger focus on students. “We sometimes lose sight of the fact that we are doing everything, making every decision for the sake of the students,” he said. “They are the most important stakeholder, and we have to keep that in focus.”
Kelsey (Aide) Stanley ‘11

Kelsey (Aide) Stanley, attended Dickinson State University from 2006-2011 and participated as a student athlete all five years of her academic career.

She is currently the DSU female pole vault record holder. In addition to holding the pole vault record, Stanley was named the 2011 Indoor DAC Conference Female Athlete of the Meet, a six time track and field All-American and four-time National Pole Vault Champion. Stanley completed her athletic and academic career in 2011, when she was named the Dickinson State University Senior Female Athlete of the Year.

Stanley and husband, Keri, reside in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. Stanley is the assistant volleyball coach and a Physical Education Instructor at North Idaho College.

What did you like most about Dickinson State?

Kelsey: There are so many things that I liked about DSU. The one thing that sticks out in my mind the most is the wonderful people that I met. It was amazing to see how supportive and caring the community is. Dickinson State was a place where I met my best of friends who I am still today very close to.

Was there a particular faculty member that influenced you?

Kelsey: Pete Stanton, who is currently the men’s and women’s head track coach. Coach Stanton is not only a wonderful coach but also a great role model. He showed me how a real coach should treat his/her athletes and being a coach myself today I thank him for that.

What would you like to tell others about your experience at DSU?

Kelsey: Embrace each day to its fullest because it goes by FAST! I was very blessed to have the opportunity to meet such wonderful people in the community and also at the college. Because of track I was able to travel and see more then I probably would have ever seen. Dickinson State is and always will be “Home” to me. “Once a HAWK, always a “HAWK”! GO HAWKS!
Bismarck State College

Leingang honored by National Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) - ACCT has honored Dan Leingang, BSC associate professor of mathematics and department chair, with the 2013 Western Region ACCT Faculty Award. He will now contend for the national award to be announced October 4 during the Annual ACCT Awards Gala in Seattle.

Graphic design program receives Award of Excellence - The Graphics Design and Communications program at BSC received the Director’s Award of Excellence for Trade, Industry and Technical programs at the Department of Career and Technical Education Professional Development Conference. The award acknowledges superior career and technical education programs in North Dakota.

Hill to keynote upcoming Kennedy event - Former Secret Service agent Clint Hill, a Washburn, N.D. native, will be the keynote speaker at The Kennedy Legacy: 50 Years Later, Nov. 5-7, 2013, at BSC. The symposium explores the life, career, politics, vision, character, and legacy of John F. Kennedy.

Dakota College at Bottineau

Dakota College Ranked Among the Best Community Colleges - The Washington Monthly has released its 2013 ranking of U.S. community colleges. The rankings use best educational practices and student success as measures, and about two-thirds of all community colleges in the country were included in the analysis – roughly 700 institutions. Dakota College at Bottineau was ranked 27th out of the 700. Among the factors used to calculate the rankings were student-faculty interactions and support for learners. According to the Washington Monthly, the best community colleges have deeply ingrained cultures of academic achievement and make outstanding contributions to the public good.

First Year Sequence Program - As an institutional policy implemented to increase student retention, DCB has begun a “First Year Sequence” or “Protective Advising” program. Criteria were defined to identify new students most at risk of not persisting in college and not graduating. The students identified were required to enroll in a first year sequence program. Three special advisors were assigned to these students and they will follow up with techniques intended to gauge participants’ academic progress, e.g., weekly attendance records from faculty, semi-weekly grade reports from faculty, individual consultations with each student on a frequent basis, individual consultations with faculty on a frequent basis, and strict adherence to a first year sequence curriculum.

Community Read Series - For the second year, the DCB Arts and Humanities department is sponsoring a community read program. The seven titles chosen will be discussed on weekday evenings throughout the 2013-2014 academic year. Following, are the books chosen for this year’s program: Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey Through Reservation Life, The Big Burn, Ernie’s America: The Best of Ernie Pyle’s 1930’s Travel Dispatches, Great Plains, Giants in the Earth, Runes of the North, and Bad Land. All sessions are held in the Bottineau Technology Center and serve to fulfill DCB’s commitment to its community.

Dickinson State University

DSU’s BSN program receives maximum accreditation - On Aug. 8, the Department of Nursing at DSU received official notice from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) that the baccalaureate in nursing degree was afforded the maximum 8-year continuing accreditation. Dr. Sharon Tanner, CEO of the ACEN, informed the department the next scheduled evaluation visit will be spring of 2021.

Tutoring center at DSU receives positive review and recertification through CRLA - The College Reading and Learning Center (CRLA) has recertified DSU’s tutor training program from July 1, 2013 to Aug. 31, 2014. CRLA reviewers noted that the application was “one of the most complete applications we have reviewed,” also stating DSU “provides a solid course-based training program that gives tutors everything they need to provide outstanding service.”
DSU hosted 23rd annual Family Day - Magician Peter Boie brought his show, "The Magician for Non-Believers," to the DSU campus as part of the 27th annual Family Day programming that was held Saturday, Sept. 14. This year’s Family Day activities included a pep rally before the DSU vs. the University of Montana-Western football game and concluded with magician Peter Boie.

Lake Region State College

Keeping commercial licensed drivers (CDL) in this booming North Dakota economy is becoming a critical issue for the trucking industry. Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC), Spirit Lake Tribe’s college, and TrainND Northeast, the workforce training department at Lake Region State College, are taking the lead to build a pool of trained and qualified drivers who hold a CDL. The two institutions have developed and implemented a course that takes TrainND’s current course and adds additional time for students to study any other needed skills.

LRSC’s Business & Office Technology Department was awarded the Outstanding Achievements of a Middle Level, High School, Community College, and/or College Business Education Programs at the annual Mountain Plains Business Education Association Conference this summer. The annual award is given to a business education program that has made significant contributions to the field of business education by implementing creative and innovative strategies to enhance the program, providing partnerships with community, school, and business leaders, and providing examples of student accomplishments as a result of being a student in the program.

Lake Region State College, in cooperation with the Grand Forks Police Department, graduated 16 students from its Grand Forks Academy August 14. A similar academy in Fargo run by LRSC in cooperation with the Fargo Police and Cass County Sheriff’s Department graduated 24 students August 15. The 14-week academies started in May.

Mayville State University

With 1,016 students enrolled, Mayville State University’s first-day fall semester headcount has topped the all-time record which was set on the first day of classes in the fall of 2012. This is the latest in Mayville State’s consistent trend in enrollment gains.

Mayville State is seeing a 7 percent increase in employee giving through the MSU Foundation. Forty-five percent of Mayville State’s employees have made a gift to the MSU Foundation in support of the university. This indicator coincides with Mayville State’s high employee satisfaction rate.

Because Mayville State has joined the North Star Athletics Association (NSAA) of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the MaSU Comets baseball team is enjoying the opportunity to play ball this fall. Due to inclement weather conditions, the Comets weren’t able to play a single home game in the 2013 spring season.

Minot State University

Digital Minot records oral histories - Minot State University student interns conducted an oral history session in the Taube Museum during the Downtown Minot Fall Festival Aug. 17. Digital Minot is a web-based museum and archive, established by Bethany Andreasen, history professor.

Through Digital Minot, the public can access historical photos, postcards, newspaper articles, advertisements, scholarly journals, legal documents, oral histories and biographies. The Digital Minot website is located at http://history.minotstateu.edu, or http://digitalminot.minotstateu.edu/omeka.

Registrar’s Office receives award - The Office of Personnel Management, Federal Investigative Services, recently recognized MiSU Registrar’s Office for its continued cooperation and superior service to the agency. Special Agents Mike Schmitt and Tim Allen presented the award to Rebecca Porter, registrar, and the entire office staff.

“The complete and comprehensive information provided by this office helps our efforts and enhances overall national security,” Schmitt said.

OPM-FIS provides background checks and investigative services for federal agencies to use as the basis for suitability and security clearance determinations.

North Dakota State College of Science

Washington Monthly Magazine has ranked the North Dakota State College of Science number three in the nation among community colleges. Ranking is based on two sources of information: The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and U.S. Department of Education measures of student retention and completion.

As of this fall, NDSCS is now offering an Information Technology (IT) Forensics option in the Information and Communications Technology department. This certificate, when paired with one of the Information and Communications Technology two-year degrees (such as an A.A.S. in Information Systems Administrator), will show versatility and provide advanced skills in IT
NDSCS summer enrollment was the second highest posted in the past decade with 779 students enrolled in classes in Wahpeton, Fargo and online. Ten years ago, enrollment was 695 and peaked in 2012 with 819 students. Enrollment has fluctuated throughout the decade, but overall it continues the upward trend in two-year college enrollment.

North Dakota State University

The NDSU Research and Technology Park received a five-year, $1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. The focus of the grant is to provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs and early stage ventures, advance applied research focused in STEM-based disciplines, and share best practices.

The National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research has awarded North Dakota EPSCoR and South Dakota EPSCoR $6 million for NDSU, UND, SDSU and the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. The funding is to establish the Dakota Bioprocessing Consortium and conduct collaborative research focused on using plants to replace petroleum.

NDSU and UND are expected to play key roles as the state competes to become a Federal Aviation Administration test site for unmanned aerial vehicles and systems. The state has identified unmanned aircraft systems as a significant area for economic development. Agriculture is expected to be the biggest commercial application.

University of North Dakota

The University of North Dakota broke ground on Phase I of the $13 million UND Athletics High Performance Center, to be located between Memorial Stadium and the EERC; it’ll serve as the indoor training center for all UND Athletics programs and as a competition facility for track and field events.

The University of North Dakota School of Law has selected ICON Architectural Group of Grand Forks to design an expansion of the 90-year-old law school building, set to launch construction in May. Since 2005 enrollment in has grown from 200 to 250 students. The ND legislature OK’d about $11.5 million for the project.

University of North Dakota summer graduates got a commencement message from astronaut and UND Engineering alumna Karen Nyberg; it was recorded aboard the International Space Station, where she is currently serving a six-month mission.

The University of North Dakota recently received two patents on processes that boost the commercial viability of thermal cracking as a pathway to renewable fuels and chemicals. These technologies provide the capability to generate additional renewable products in biorefineries that are based on UND’s noncatalytic cracking technology.

Valley City State University

Two Valley City State University alumni—Jeffrey Berens ’13 and Erin McLean ’12— have received 2013 Graduate Student Research Assistantship awards at NDSU from the North Dakota Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (ND EPSCoR). The awards carry a monthly stipend for up to 24 months of research.

Three Valley City State University faculty and staff members completed doctoral degrees at NDSU recently. Gregory Carlson, director of institutional research and assessment, earned a Ph.D. in institutional analysis. Peder Gjovik, assistant professor in the department of technology, earned a Ph.D. in occupational and adult education. Sheri Okland, assistant professor in the department of education and graduate studies, earned a Ph.D. in education.

Valley City State University earned the No. 2 spot among Top Public Regional Colleges in the Midwest in the 2014 edition of U.S. News Best Colleges. This marks the fifth straight year that VCSU has been ranked either first or second in its category, the fifth consecutive year that VCSU has been North Dakota's highest-rated Public Regional College in the Midwest, and the 16th year in a row that VCSU has been recognized by U.S. News as a "Best College."

Williston State College

The apartment building on campus was completed last month. All 74 units are fully occupied with a combination of WSC employees and other essential service personnel in Williams County. A grand opening of this facility will be held during the month of October – date yet to be determined.

Students from Kokusai Junior College, WSC’s Japanese sister school, recently visited (Sept 3-14). A total of 15 students and two chaperones participated in a variety of courses/events in hopes of gaining a taste of American education, life, and culture. Of the visiting students, two will remain for the fall semester.

A check presentation was held on September 10th where Caterpillar and Tractor & Equipment both donated $10,000 each to the Williston Diesel Technology Program. This money will be going towards scholarships, tools, and equipment.