Reflections

Potency of Bemidji State’s mission and vision evident during Trustee visit

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees, Chancellor Dr. James McCormick and key members of the chancellor’s staff were on campus last week to begin system-wide planning for the next decade. During their two-day session, they explored the realities of shifting demographics, the challenges of tight budgets and the need to keep pace with student expectations. They reiterated their commitment to increased access for underrepresented students and the need for continued innovation in the teaching-learning process.

They came to plan for the future and while here, they came face-to-face with a glimpse of that future.

The board met Luke Dorman, a mathematics and secondary education major, who exuberantly shared his undergraduate research project with them. His study, first presented at last year’s Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement conference, not only demonstrated his mathematical prowess, but also his ability to create new knowledge.

Preserving knowledge was the focus of Dr. Tony Treuer’s talk to the trustees. He spoke about the urgency of documenting the Ojibwe language before tribal elders die and the knowledge is lost. He looks to preserve the information and transform it into the first extensive Ojibwe grammar manual. Dr. Treuer, Bemidji State’s first Guggenheim Fellowship recipient, will use support from that fellowship, along with grants from the American Philosophical Society and the Bush Leadership Foundation, to further his work.

Meanwhile, Erika Bailey-Johnson, our new sustainability coordinator — one of a few, if not the only sustainability coordinator in the system — shared her vision for a campus with a reduced carbon footprint. In addition, Vice President for Administration and Finance Bill Maki described some of our city-university partnerships, including the Outdoor Program Center’s move to the waterfront at Diamond Point Park and the free bus rides for BSU and NTC students through our arrangements with Paul Bunyan Transit. Trustees learned about the benefits and efficiencies the University can realize through such partnerships.

In the evening, the group was serenaded by the beautiful tones and passionate voices of opera singers, Dr. Jennifer Swanson, assistant professor, and BSU music student Sara Wabrowetz. Their pianist was another BSU student, Abe Hunter.

Had the trustees had another day on campus, they would have gained another glimpse into the future as nearly 600 participants of the historical trauma conference explored the past as a way to build a stronger future for Native Americans. Keynote speaker Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart challenged the audience to understand the impact of historical trauma in order to begin finding ways to help transcend it.

These brief, yet powerful, glimpses of Bemidji State reflect the potency of our mission and vision. By engaging in new worlds of thought, embracing responsible citizenship and educating for a world that can only be imagined, we progress toward our vision — shaping the potential of those we serve, so they, in turn, may shape the worlds in which they live and work.

In interviews with our local media, Board of Trustees Chair David Olson and Chancellor McCormick spoke highly of our people, programs and goals for the future. Their praise reflects the work that each of us undertakes daily to make certain Bemidji State University is the very best that it can be. In the midst of our hurried lives, let’s take time to celebrate their recognition of our accomplishments.
As part of a proposed reorganization plan for the Department of Athletics, Director of Athletics Dr. Rick Goeb announced on Oct. 29 a University proposal to discontinue men’s indoor and outdoor track and field as varsity intercollegiate sports, effective at the end of the 2008-09 academic year.

The proposal to discontinue men’s indoor and outdoor track and field is a significant portion of the Department of Athletics’ response to a February, 2007 directive by President Dr. Jon E. Quistgaard to reduce the University’s direct financial contribution to the department by $750,000 over a three-year period. That directive was part of a $5 million University-wide budgetary restructuring initiative.

Earlier efforts by the department to meet its obligation to reduce $750,000 in direct financial contributions from the University included a $2.5 million fundraising campaign to support its NCAA Division I men’s ice hockey program, an increase in the student athletic fee, ticket price increases for men’s hockey, which included charges for student tickets and a department-wide initiative to require all student athletes to be self-insured in order to compete.

Bemidji State’s men’s indoor and outdoor track and field programs compete in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference in Division II of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Under the reorganization proposal, BSU would continue to sponsor women’s cross country, women’s indoor track and field and women’s outdoor track and field, which also compete in the NSIC.

The proposal to discontinue men’s indoor and outdoor track and field would leave Bemidji State University with a 15-sport varsity intercollegiate athletic program. Bemidji State would have 13 sports competing at the NCAA Division II level and NCAA Division I men’s and women’s ice hockey.

The proposal recommended track be discontinued as it best met five criteria to be considered as part of any reorganization by the Department of Athletics. Those criteria are:

• make every effort to minimize impact on the entirety of the student body.
• minimize the impact of budgetary decisions on permanent and probationary faculty and staff.
• enrollment growth potential for the University must be strengthened.
• careful consideration should be given to how we might more effectively provide services through innovative approaches.
• consideration must be given to how decisions will impact the University’s commitments and reputation.

University takes BREC lease draft to MnSCU Board

BSU asks board to approve basic terms of agreement with city of Bemidji

Vice President for Finance and Administration Bill Maki announced on Oct. 30 that the University has asked the Board of Trustees for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU) to approve the basic terms of a lease agreement between the University and the City of Bemidji for the hockey arena at the city’s new events center, which is scheduled to open in Jan. 2011.

The Board of Trustees will consider the motion during its Nov. 18-19 meetings in St. Paul, Minn.

The MnSCU Board of Trustees must approve all contracts, including real estate leases, with a value greater than $2 million. Bemidji State University’s 20-year lease with the City of Bemidji is expected to be valued at approximately $4.5 million over the term of the lease.

“Ask our board to approve the contract moves Bemidji State closer to finalizing its partnership with the city as the anchor tenant of the regional events center,” Maki said.
College of Arts & Sciences

• Dr. Mark Fulton, professor of biology, presented a poster titled "Mantel Tests Are Not the Only Way to Examine Relationships Between Dissimilarity Matrices: A Regression and Cross-Validation Alternative" at the annual meeting of the Ecological Society of America in August. At this meeting he also co-authored two posters with graduate students Gary Swanson, John Kamman and Matt Coyle; co-organized a special session on wild rice conservation and traditional harvesting; and chaired the meeting of the ESA Vegetation Section.

In September, Fulton gave invited talks on Forest Dynamics at the 2008 Tree Climbing Rendezvous in Atlanta.

• Randy Westhoff, professor of mathematics, and Marty Wolf, professor of computer science, along with Darren Parker of Grand Valley State University, have had their paper "Convex Independence and the Structure of Clone-Free Multipartite Tournaments" accepted for publication in the International Journal of the Game Theory.

College Health Sciences & Human Ecology

• Dr. Lorraine Boyle, associate professor of professional education, and Dr. Barbara Bridges, professor of professional education, presented "Beginning with the End in Mind: Using Evaluation Rubrics Tied to State Standards and the eFolio in Wikis a and Google Docs" at the eighth annual Still Blazing the Trail and Meeting New Challenges in the Digital Age conference, Aug. 7-10, in Minneapolis. The conference was sponsored by Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching.

Boyle also presented at the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education’s 2008 fall conference in Minneapolis on Oct. 24. There, she presented with BSU students Amanda Sovell, Deborah Schandelmeir and Julie Stender on the university’s DLITE and FasTrack programs.

• Dr. Rochelle ("Riki") Scheela did poster presentations at two national conferences in October. The first, "Polygraphy: Outcomes of New Sex Offender Treatment Strategy," was presented at the National State of the Science Congress in Nursing Research in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 3. The second, "Sex Offenders: New Treatment Strategy and Outcomes," was presented at the American Psychiatric Nurses Association Conference, Oct. 15-18, in Minneapolis.

Student Affairs

• Nathan Meints, Residence Hall Director; Mary Tosch, Interim Director Hobson Memorial Union; Anna Ask, Office and Administrative Specialist, Residential Life; and Josh Zaborowski, Russell Pikal, and Lia Pirro, BSU students, represented BSU at the fall Minnesota College Personnel Association (MCFA) conference: The Political Climate in Higher Education, October 16-17, 2008 in St. Paul. Lia Pirro was a scholarship recipient for the conference. Nathan Meints presented "Theories and Models of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Student Development" at the conference. Mary Tosch participated in a Student Activities Roundtable: "Let’s Communicate, Celebrate and Commiserate!" on political activity on campuses.

Campus Halloween Events

Thursday, Oct. 30 - 5 p.m. - Residence Hall Trick-or-Treating
The front desk of each residence hall will have a listing of rooms participating in the trick or treating event; participating rooms will have a door tag to indicate that they are giving out candy. Residence hall students are also encouraged to decorate their floors in Halloween themes.

Friday, Oct. 31 - 8 p.m. - OPC "Boulderween" Climbing Contest
"Boulderween" will award prizes for the climber with the best costume and the most climbing points. Climbing paths with a range of difficulty levels will be set up on the climbing wall. Walk-ins are welcome but pre-registration is encouraged. Registrants can pay beforehand or at the door.
Personnel News

New faces and old friends in new places

- Demetrias Ioannides named systems librarian at the A.C. Clark Library, effective Nov. 3.
- John Miller named student paraprofessional for men's ice hockey in the Department of Athletics, effective Oct. 3.
- Travis Schock named assistant athletic trainer in the Department of Athletics, effective Oct. 20.

Things to Do on Campus

Upcoming Events at Bemidji State University

- Complete University events calendar on the Web: http://www.bemidjistate.edu/calendar