SPRING SEMESTER KICKS OFF WITH FACULTY INSTITUTE

Faculty members heard updates on the state of the college from senior administrators and devoted much of the day to division meetings during the Faculty Institute held at the Public Higher Education Center on Wednesday, Jan. 13.

President Ted Spring provided an update on the status of plans for the new Raleigh County Campus and the renovation of the student activities building on the Greenbrier Valley Campus. He stated that even when the new Raleigh County Campus is completed, New River will continue to use the Erma Byrd Center.

“The idea is to show four-year and two-year colleges working together,” he noted. “We will continue to encourage that idea.”

He reported that the College has also assembled a committee to explore ways that New River might help restore the old library building in downtown Lewisburg for use by the College. There is also potential for use of the former Excel Homes manufacturing facility in Ghent for heavier technical programs. The 93,000-square-foot building sits on 26 acres within sight of I-77.

“We are talking with potential partners to help us fill the building. It is a very viable project,” he said.

Spring commented that since the transition from Bluefield State has been completed New River should focus on what we are doing in the classroom, with an emphasis on quality, accountability and retention. He acknowledged the challenges presented by the rapid growth in enrollment over the past five years, noting that headcount has increased 66 percent, while FTE has grown at an even greater rate.

He also noted that processes and procedures need to be reviewed, revised and formalized. He has asked Leah Taylor, director of human resources, to spearhead the process development effort. Taylor spoke briefly about the need for input from faculty and staff to develop processes and procedures that make sense for New River.

Attendees also received a brief budget update from Larry Barnhill, who has retired as vice president for finance and administration but is continuing to work as a consultant to assist with finance and process development projects. Steve Benson, Barnhill’s successor, was introduced to the group.

Barnhill said that the 3.4 percent mid-year budget cut recently called for by the governor will supposedly be offset by backfill from federal stimulus money. However, he cautioned that there will be discussion of being conservative in coming years because there are plans to cut the budget back to the 2009 level in two years.

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Chief Information Officer David Ayersman provided an update on Angel training, the new phone system and the IVN system. He noted that while group training is being provided, individuals with problems or questions about these new technologies should call the Help Desk for personalized assistance. The Help Desk number is (304) 929-6725.

Bill Loope, vice president for institutional advancement and workforce education, reported that the College will launch a $6 million capital campaign in February. He said that with government and other sources, the campaign will most likely raise much more than that amount. He pledged that at the end of the 36-month campaign, funds will have been secured for expansion of the Nicholas County Campus and to create our own campus in Mercer County.

Dr. Harry Faulk reported that Donna Lewis has been named registrar and Tracy Evans has been named director of enrollment services. The two have held the positions on an interim basis for the past nine months. He reported that Bob Chapman, instructor of Computer Science on the Raleigh County Campus has retired and Steve Hedrick, instructor of Chemistry on the Beckley and Nicholas County Campuses, has resigned.

Joyce Egnor introduced Sherry Garavaglia, who joined the faculty of the practical nursing program as an instructor for the Clay County Cohort after the start of the fall semester.

Before breaking for lunch and division meetings, the faculty heard brief updates from Faculty Senate President John Mullens; Dr. Nancy Wemm, reporting on the updated bylaws of the newly created Academic Affairs Committee; and Dr. Lucie Refsland, representative on the to the WV Advisory Council of Faculty.

“I am pleased we were able to schedule a large block of time for the faculty to meet in their divisions to discuss a number of critical academic topics,” Faulk said. While significant progress was made on a number of issues, the divisions will need to meet during the spring semester to continue the dialog. Of particular importance is the revision of the general studies curriculum.”

One of the benefits of Faculty Institute is a chance to visit with colleagues from other campuses. Top left: Nicholas Bassett, associate professor of Business and Computer Science (Nicholas County Campus), chats with Beckley/Raleigh County Campus Dean Carolyn Sizemore. Top Right (L-R) Judy Stennett, associate professor of English and Nathan England, instructor of Fine Arts (Greenbrier Valley Campus) enjoy a coffee break with Dr. John Mark Walkup, professor of Music (Nicholas County Campus).

Bottom: The Math Squad (L-R) Michelle Jeitler, Mathematics instructor (Nicholas County Campus); Sharon Evans, instructor of Developmental Mathematics (Mercer County Campus), Dr. Shirley Davis, associate professor of Mathematics, (Beckley Campus); and Dr. Lucie Refsland, professor of Mathematics (Greenbrier Valley Campus).
EVENT WILL HELP STUDENTS AND PARENTS APPLY FOR MONEY FOR COLLEGE.

GREENBRIER VALLEY CAMPUS WILL BE A SITE FOR FIRST STATEWIDE “COLLEGE GOAL SUNDAY”

The first annual West Virginia College Goal Sunday (CGS) event will be held at 17 sites around West Virginia, including New River’s Greenbrier Valley Campus, on Feb. 21 from 1-5 p.m.

Coordinators for the New River event are Nora Overath, financial aid counselor on the Greenbrier Valley Campus, and Suzanne Soucier, educational outreach counselor for Bluefield State College who assists students on the Greenbrier Valley Campus. The event will take place in the student lounge and Hollowell Auditorium.

This event is an opportunity for students and parents to have financial aid experts provide free assistance in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the cornerstone of the higher education financial aid application process.

The FAFSA is a crucial first step for all college students who plan to pay for college with the help of grants scholarships, work-study funds and/or student loans.

Individuals who plan to attend college and would like help with completion of the FAFSA or would like answers regarding general financial aid questions are encouraged to attend. Interested students and parents are asked to bring their Social Security numbers, 2009 Federal Tax Return, W-2, other income records, driver’s license and other valid ID to the session. The more income information that families can provide, the more likely they will be able to submit their FAFSA on the day of the event. All information shared is protected by privacy laws.

Other College Goal Sunday locations in the New River service area include the Public Higher Education Center in Beaver and Bluefield State College. The closest location for Nicholas County residents is the Higher Education Center at Braxton County High School. To learn more about College Goal Sunday and specific time and site information, visit www.collegegoalsundaywv.org.

College Goal Sunday was created by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association with funding from the Lilly Endowment Inc. and supplemental support from the Lumina Foundation for Education. This year’s efforts in West Virginia are coordinated by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, the West Virginia TRiO Association, and the West Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators with funding by a grant from the Lumina Foundation.

SEVENTH ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, MAY 16

New River will hold its Seventh Annual Commencement ceremony on Sunday, May 16, 2010, at 2 p.m. at the Beckley/Raleigh County Convention Center. The change from Friday night to Sunday afternoon was necessary because Mountain State University has booked the facility for their commencement and related activities for Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

In order not to limit the number of family and friends who can attend this joyous event, the decision was made to move the ceremony to Sunday rather than changing the location.
NICHOLAS COUNTY CAMPUS
SGA DONATES WINTER CLOTHING TO SALVATION ARMY

The Nicholas County Student Government Association held a coat drive in December. The group donated 80 items of winter clothing to the local Salvation Army. Pictured are (L-R) Stacey Buckner, SGA Secretary, Ken Scott, SGA President, and Lieutenant Jessica Tosh from the Salvation Army. The SGA is now making plans for a Valentine’s Dance in February.

Thanks to Kathy Scott, SGA vice president, for submitting this update and photo.

APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED

Tracy Evans has been named director of Enrollment Services. She had been serving as interim director since last March. Prior to that, she was director of high school relations.

Donna Lewis has been appointed registrar. She had been serving in that capacity on an interim basis since last March. She was previously coordinator of student services on the Greenbrier Valley Campus.

Jill Kinder has been named supervisor of student accounting services. She joined New River last year as supervisor of student accounts on the Beckley Campus.

Share news from your campus! Send news items, tips or photos for Transitions to Barbara Elliott, belliot@newriver.edu.