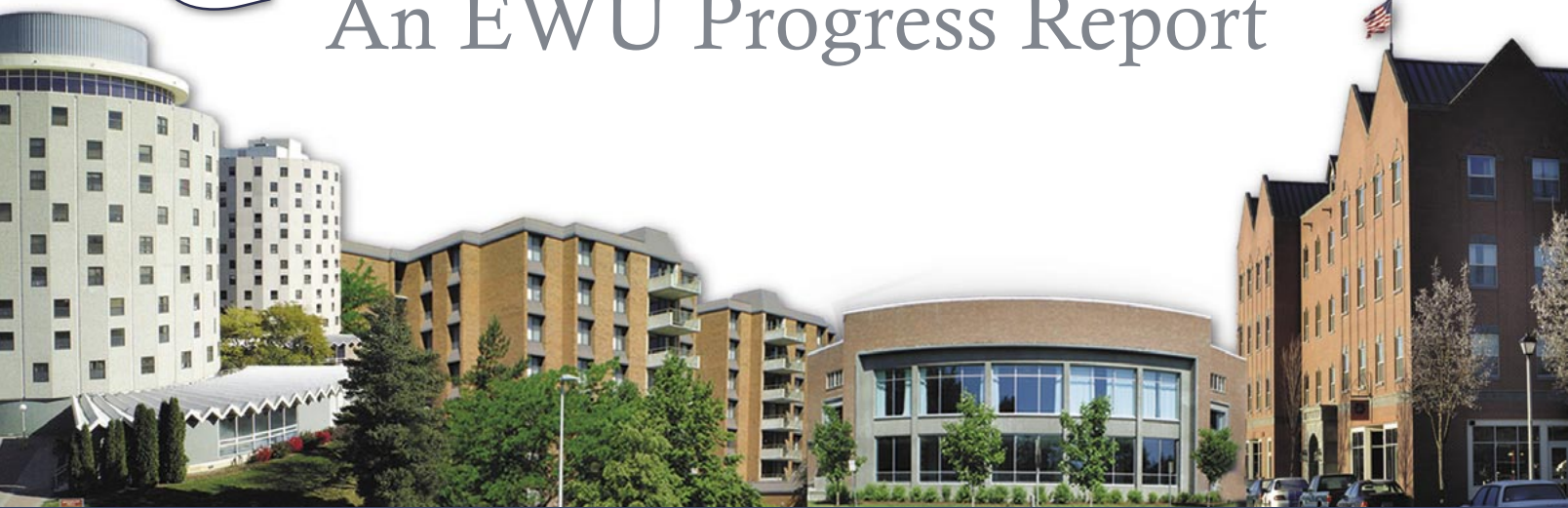


Growing Stronger: An EWU Progress Report

Stories by David Rey and Stefanie Pettit



In this spanking new century, Eastern Washington University has blossomed as an educational leader in the state of Washington, an innovator and an institution others look to for a blueprint on how to problem-solve and develop forward-thinking vision.

Going back a few years into the 1990s, it didn't look like that's where Eastern was headed. Since those days, Eastern developed a new kind of muscle, displaying an inner

strength that has caught the attention of business and industry leaders, politicians and — most importantly — students.

On the following pages, an update is presented — a progress report on your university, the people and the events from the late 1990s to today — how we bloomed, the state of our garden today and how we plan to keep growing stronger.

Seven Years of Progress: A List

There isn't room enough in *Perspective* to include every good thing that happened at Eastern these past seven years, but here's a synopsis, a progress report in microcosm.

1998

- Washington Legislature directs EWU to refocus its mission as a residential campus.
- Aaron Gutierrez named as the first EWU student member of the EWU Board of Trustees.
- Stephen M. Jordan named president; he and his wife Ruthie return the president's official residence from Spokane to the Cheney campus.
- A new mission statement is developed, proclaiming Eastern a student-centered university that prepares "broadly educated, technologically proficient and highly productive citizens."
- JFK Library addition/renovation completed.
- The Seattle Seahawks return their summer training camp to EWU for the second year in a row, citing

When the skies got cloudy over Eastern in the mid-1990s, largely due to a declining enrollment picture, a lot of people at the University rolled up their sleeves and got to work to fix things.

Rick Romero, '78 B.A. marketing and '93 M.B.A., who was director of business services at the time (and is now associate vice president for business services), took under his umbrella Eastern's housing system, which had dropped to an all-time low occupancy rate of 947 in 1996. He developed a plan to hold housing costs level for students, offer more single-occupancy rooms and provide an incentive grant for students who chose to live on campus.

Even though enrollment at the University continued to decline



Rick Romero in front of Morrison and Streeter halls.

for one more year, occupancy in the residence halls improved by 15 percent in 1997 and was up to 1,300 students by 1998.

Meantime, Brian Levin-Stankevich, then vice provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (and now provost/vice president for Academic Affairs and newly named interim president), began to develop strategies to recapture enrollment – and by fall 1998, the turnaround had begun.

Today, it's sunny, with prospects bright for continued improving conditions at Eastern. This spring, the University experienced its 15th consecutive quarter of record enrollment growths – way ahead of what had been considered very optimistic targets in the late 1990s. Residence hall occupancy today stands at 2,000 – with plans under way to accommodate 2,500 students in campus housing.

The not-so-closely guarded secret is that when the 1998 Washington Legislature directed Eastern to refocus itself as a residential campus in Cheney, the seeds for that strategy had already been sown and were quietly germinating – in large part driven by the housing business model and the enrollment-recapture plan.

Of course, the legislative mandate was added incentive to keep headed in the right direction, said Gordon Budke, current chair of the EWU Board of Trustees and a member since September 1997.

It's not only what Rick Romero or Brian Levin-Stankevich did back then that got Eastern to where it

Eastern has soared and excelled beyond anyone's imagining.

— Gary Locke, governor of Washington, 1997-2005

the University's superior athletic facilities; the Seahawks camp has returned every summer since.

- Fall quarter enrollment begins an upswing after four consecutive years of enrollment declines; approximately 1,300 students live in campus residence halls, an increase from the low of 947 in 1996.
- In fall quarter, EWU pilots the WUE (Western Undergraduate Exchange) program, which allows students from 14 western states to attend Eastern, paying 150 percent of in-state tuition.
- Dr. Jordan calls for an enrollment level of 9,000 full-time equivalent students by 2010 (by 2003-2004, an annualized FTE enrollment of 8,956 FTEs is reached).

1999

- The Office of Naval Research funds a \$1.2 million project at EWU to develop a prototype for detection of airborne microbes that may be used in bioterrorism or biowarfare.
- Louise Anderson Hall placed back in service as a residence hall after 18-year hiatus.
- EWU named a "hidden treasure" by *Newsweek* magazine.
- As part of an effort to take education out to where students live, EWU begins offering classes in a community center at the Spokane Valley Mall.

is today, Budke said, but they are symbolic of the talent, the kind of thinking and action at Eastern Washington University that moves to the forefront when it's needed most.

"What Eastern had was institutional will," Budke observed. "We had – and continue to have – people who work here who love this place and who understand that it takes both an innovative academic *and* business plan to make and keep a university healthy. We have a university community that 'gets it,' that gets who we are and what we need to do – then goes and does it."

There probably isn't anyone who knows anything about Eastern who would disagree with this statement: The best thing Eastern's Board of Trustees has done in the last 10 years is to bring Stephen M. Jordan on board as president of the University in July 1998.

"No doubt about it, Steve built a strong management team, pulled the University together to agree on a mission statement, bolstered our student support services and helped raise awareness of the institution across the state," Budke said. "He was the right man at the right time. I've seen firsthand how well he and Eastern are respected now in Olympia."

State Sen. Mark Schoesler, who has served Washington's eastern counties both in the House and Senate since 1993, has observed the transformation with pleasure.

// We're fortunate to have a place like Eastern to hold summer training camp. They have first-class facilities ... and the people there really work hard to see that our purpose is accomplished. //

— Mike Holmgren, coach of the Seattle Seahawks



Trustee Gordon Budke in the central mall on campus.

"Frankly, the best higher education budget presentations I've seen in recent years have come from Eastern," said Schoesler, a member of the Senate's K-12 & Higher Education and Ways and Means committees. "Steve Jordan, Mary Voves (EWU vice president for Business and Finance) and others from Eastern give presentations that let us know where the institution has been, where it's going and leave nothing to doubt."

It's the team that has been built and the initiatives undertaken these past several years that created the stability and status Eastern now enjoys, said Budke. Here are a few highlights:

- **Expanding the "hub and spoke" concept of higher education.** While continuing to grow a strong residential campus, Eastern increased its off-site offerings to nine locations across the state, recognizing that underserved and place-bound students need upper division college degree programs right where they live. This past year, 620 fully qualified transfer students found no room at the state's four-year institutions. Jean Floten, president of Bellevue Community College, notes that Eastern's 2-plus-2 offerings at BCC are "a godsend" for her students. "It's a great partnership. We have not found the same level of cooperation from other

2000

- EWU receives \$340,000 grant from the Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education for an innovative curriculum revision (begun in 1999), integrating social and behavioral sciences disciplines and providing career-centered certificates, a curriculum model which now leads the nation.
- Occupational Therapy Program begins.
- National Science Olympiad held on campus, drawing 2,000-plus middle school and high school science students to Eastern's campus for the annual nationwide competition.
- Renovated Monroe Hall reopens.
- EWU Children's Center opens.
- The old Jore School, a one-room schoolhouse from Newport, Wash., moved to the campus.
- The Associated Press locates its Western Election Center at EWU, tracking election returns from 20-plus states in the November general election (the center returns in 2002 and 2004).

institutions," she said at this spring's dedication of the EWU @ Bellevue facility on BCC's campus.

- **Developing programs that meet the needs of today's marketplace and anticipating future demand** – such as new offerings in physical therapy, electrical engineering, cybersecurity, forensics and the true-to-our-roots disciplines in education – and properly marketing them. Former Washington Gov. Gary Locke concurs: "Eastern established itself in the state by emphasizing and promoting outstanding programs...and now more people than ever are aware of them and the high-quality education that Eastern provides."
- **Being a partner in the community**, as with the creation in 2002 of the Institute for Public Policy and Economic Analysis, which provides interdisciplinary research and data analysis on matters of significance to business and government officials, planners and other decision makers.
- **Smart future planning for the institution.** Academic strategic planning; long- and short-range planning for growth, capacity and resources; developing and revising a campus

Eastern's contributions to the vitality of our region these past several years have proven what a great asset this university is to us all.

— Scott L. Morris,
Avista Utilities president

Let me tell you what our EWU partnership means for us: The EWU university center at BCC is a godsend.

— Jean Floten,
Bellevue Community College president

master plan. And getting broad and deep ownership in that planning. "We know clearly where we want to go and how to get there," Budke said.

- **Being student-centered.** Eastern is first and always a teaching institution centered on its students. One aspect of this is keeping costs as low as possible and providing value-added benefits, such as free ridership on Spokane Transit Buses.
- **Understanding the need for private support.** As state support continued to decline as a percentage of Eastern's operating budget, the administration and EWU Foundation boldly reach out to alumni and friends to help leverage grants and contracts. The EWU Foundation's fund-raising efforts in 2005 expect to exceed \$4 million; in 1995, \$877,000 was raised. Total endowed assets, including those managed by the state, were \$15.6 million, as of the most recent annual report. In the period July 1, 2004-March 31, 2005, Eastern secured \$8.2 million in external grants, up 16 percent in a year.

Eastern's direction since the late 1990s has established the University as a strong higher education presence in the state. "I can't think of one thing Eastern hasn't improved upon over these last several years," Sen. Schoesler said.

Budke observed that there's a good roadmap for the future on the table now, a living document, and the people in place at all levels within the institution to move forward with confidence.

2001

- EWU named to *The 201 Best Colleges of the Real World* and *Newsweek* names the University to its Best Values for the Tuition Dollar list.
- Pathways to Progress, a Cheney-EWU community revitalization group, is created; a long-term plan begins with a first project, linking campus to downtown Cheney with sidewalks.
- Lech Walesa, creator of Poland's Solidarity movement, is the inaugural speaker in EWU Presidential Speaker Series.
- EWU's health science programs move into a new building at the Riverpoint Higher Education Park in Spokane.

2002

- Brewster Hall opens in downtown Cheney as a public-private housing and retail facility.
- Eastern announces a new Forensic Science Program.
- Renovated American Indian Studies Center (Longhouse) reopens.
- The Institute for Public Policy and Economic Analysis is established to provide the region with independent interdisciplinary analysis of social, economic and public policy data.
- EWU Board of Trustees calls on the University to engage in a strategic planning process to set the course for the future.
- A Center for Entrepreneurial Activities and a distinguished professor of entrepreneurship position are established.