

Dear Alumni and Friends,

We enter this new year facing unprecedented challenges. The worsening economic conditions have forced the state to revise its economic forecast downward, projecting a multi-billion dollar budget shortfall for the next two years. Because of this projected shortfall, the governor's office has asked EWU to make large budget cuts for the upcoming two-year budget cycle.

We will give our best effort to provide the resources to our high-priority core functions and most importantly, protect our core mission of providing a first-rate education. However, it is important to recognize that a reduction of the magnitude proposed in the governor's budget will require more than just finding areas to cut; rather it will also require a reassessment of what we do and how we do it.

On campus we are dealing with this new reality in a transparent and inclusive manner seeking input from all. For you, our alumni and friends, I would like to request your advocacy on Eastern's behalf with your legislators and other community leaders. Eastern's impact extends beyond simply providing higher education – it is also a primary economic driver and workforce supplier for our region.

I would also like to make you aware that my recovery from a recent health issue is going slower than what I had hoped. After consulting with the Eastern Washington University Board of Trustees, I have decided to extend my medical leave.

In the interest of ensuring strength of leadership at Eastern Washington University during the term of my leave, the Board of Trustees has appointed EWU Provost John Mason as full-time acting president. Dr. Mason has my full support, and I am confident that under his capable direction the University will keep moving forward during these challenging budgetary times.

The University is in close contact with the governor's office, the state Legislature and other key political leaders, but we appreciate anything our alumni can do to share the message about the importance of higher education to the state and the region. Your continued support of EWU's annual giving efforts is also greatly appreciated and much needed in budgetary environments such as these.

It is understandable that there is apprehension and anxiety associated with this tough economic situation – I share those feelings with the EWU community. But I also have confidence that the process we have in place will assure the University will survive these difficult times and come out of them in a position to prosper in the future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rodolfo Arévalo, President
Eastern Washington University



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EASTERN, a magazine for alumni and friends of Eastern Washington University, is published in fall, winter and spring by University Marketing and Communications and mailed free in the U.S. to alumni of record.

An online version of this issue is available
at www.ewu.edu/easternmagazine



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