

The Monograph Series

Institute monographs represent the core of the Institute's initial activities. To-date, ten have been published and several more are in the pipeline. They engage EWU faculty to address issues of high local and regional interest.

The hallmark of these reports lies in their origins: the majority of the topics are determined by community concern, not the research agendas of EWU faculty members. To arrive at accurate notions of community interest, the Institute has carried out focus groups dating from the first few months of its launch. Over time, this has led to twelve meetings, convening more than 200 Spokane area leaders.

The other source of topics for the Institute lies with the University's commitment to explore and embrace diversity. This has led to a series of profiles of the largest racial and ethnic groups in Spokane and Kootenai counties.

The following are Institute monographs published to-date:

- ✦ *A Demographic & Economic Analysis for the City of Spokane Valley*, by Associate Professor Grant Forsyth (Economics)
- ✦ *Racial & Ethnic Diversity in Spokane & Kootenai Counties*, by Adjunct Professor Steve Neufeld (Sociology)
- ✦ *Racial & Ethnic Inequality in Spokane & Kootenai Counties*, by Adjunct Professor Steve Neufeld (Sociology)
- ✦ *An Analysis of Population Change in Spokane & Kootenai Counties*, by Professor Fred Hurand (Urban & Regional Planning)
- ✦ *An In-Depth Socioeconomic Profile of Asian Americans in Spokane & Kootenai Counties*, by Assistant Professor Pui-Yan Lam (Sociology)
- ✦ *Transfer Payments in Spokane & Kootenai Counties*, by Assistant Professor Lori Geddes (Economics)
- ✦ *The Culture of Economic Development in the Spokane Region*, by Professor Shane Mahoney (Government)
- ✦ *Technology Transfer Analysis of Inland NW Research, Part I*, by Assistant Professor Harm-Jan Steenhuis (Management)

Director's Message

Welcome to the first annual report of the Institute. It is now three years since activities commenced and a progress report is certainly due.

The genesis of the Institute for Public Policy and Economic Analysis dates at least to the start of this decade. Behind the vision was the conviction that this University can and should contribute critical insights for the region it has traditionally served. I would like to thank the Board of Trustees; Presidents Jordan and Levin-Stankevich; Deans Martin, Cornelius, Shields and the family of Jeffers Chertok; faculty who were engaged in the planning of the Institute before its launch; the advisory boards of the Institute and the College of Business & Public Administration; and certainly not least, the many EWU faculty who have participate so far.

We welcome all comments. You can contact me at 509.358.2266 or dpjones@ewu.edu. At our interim web site, <http://www.ewu.edu/x4901.xml> you can also access most of the studies that the Institute has commissioned or completed for others.

D. Patrick Jones, Ph.D.

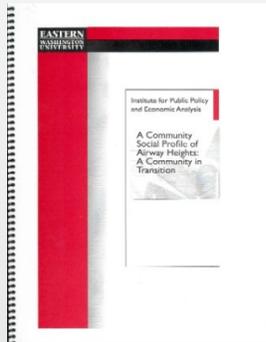


Highlights

- 10 **monographs** published to-date
- Over 21 different EWU **faculty** members engaged in this research
- Two local economic **forecasts** given to the Spokane community, with another scheduled for November, 2005
- **Community Indicators Initiative** has convened of 175 thought leaders and is now entering data collection and web site design phase
- 7 **contract research** projects completed, and several more in pipeline
- Increasing **leverage** from prior work, as measured by additional contract research work, articles published in peer-reviewed journals and appointments to governmental boards.

Monographs cont.

- ✦ *Medicare Reimbursement & Physician Flight in Spokane and Kootenai Counties*, by Associate Professor Lynne Bownds (Economics), Assistant Professor Lori Geddes (Economics) & Assistant Professor Mary Ann Keogh Hoss (Health Services Administration)
- ✦ *A Community Social Profile of Airway Heights: A Community in Transition*, by Professor Pamela Elkind (Sociology), Professor Dick Winchell (Urban & Regional Planning) & Dale Lindekugel (Sociology)



Several more monographs are in the pipeline for publication over the next 12 months. These include:

- ✦ *A Racial & Ethnic Analysis of Yakima County*, by Steve Neufeld
- ✦ *Exploring the Similarities between National and Regional Economic Activity*, by Grant Forsyth
- ✦ *Technology Transfer Analysis of Inland NW Research: 8 Case Studies*, by Harm-Jan Steenhuis
- ✦ *A Socio-Economic Analysis of Hispanics in Spokane & Kootenai Counties*, by Carlos Maldonado (Director, Chicano Education) and Steve Neufeld

- ✦ *Overview of Fiscal Challenges facing Eastern WA Municipal Governments*, by Professor Terry Novak, Professor (Public Administration) and Professor Tom Trulove (Economics)
- ✦ *A Socio-Economic Profile of Native Americans in Spokane and Kootenai Counties*, by Raphael Guillory, Assistant Professor (Education) and Pui-Yan Lam
- ✦ *An Analysis of Clusters & Entrepreneurship in Spokane County & Comparative MSAs*, by Vince Pascal, Assistant Professor (Marketing) and Nancy Birch, Professor (Accounting & Information Systems)
- ✦ *An Investigation of Changes in Income Distribution in Spokane & Kootenai counties*, by Doug Orr, Professor (Economics)

The Institute will shortly issue a call for proposals to honor former Social and Behavioral Sciences Dean Jeffers Chertok. Dean Chertok was instrumental in the creation and early success of the Institute. In contrast to most Institute monographs, this will be open topic for university faculty, albeit with parameters defined by Jeffers Chertok's abiding intellectual interests.

To-date, 21 faculty members from 11 departments have participated in these community-based research projects. Students have also been involved, a trend we expect to continue.



Indicators

The goal of this institute project has been to provide policy makers, the press, community leaders and all other interested parties

with unbiased information about their community and region. In the process of developing this service, we realized that many other community organizations share a strong interest and capability in the same goal. Consequently, this project has become a group effort that includes the Spokane Regional Health District, United Way, the City of Spokane, the Health Improvement Partnership, and the Lands Council, among others. The project is now called the *Community Indicators Initiative* (CII) to reflect the broad base of engagement. An easy to use web site will be the immediate product of the CII.

To-date, the work group has surveyed best practices in communities across the U.S. The democratization of data via online sources has accelerated rapidly across urban America and much can be learned from others' experiences. The CII work group has also convened eight focus groups, by topic, to elicit interest in and rankings of indicators. This process engaged approximately 175 community leaders over the course of three months, culminating with a meeting of many elected officials at all levels of government. An interim report on the status of the project was issued in July from the Institute.

Data assembly has already begun. The remainder of the fiscal year will be spent designing the site to be as user-friendly as possible, replete with brief descriptions of the data, ability to manipulate the data and graphing functionality.

The CII targets the launch of the web site in late spring 2006. Our goal is to introduce 150-200 variables for Spokane County and the City of Spokane, arranged by functional categories. As an academic institution, EWU's role has been viewed by many as critical in anchoring the data in a non-partisan, neutral setting.

Local Economic Outlook

Grant D. Forsyth, Ph.D.

Department of Economics &
Institute for Public Policy
and Economic Analysis

Eastern Washington University



Economic Forecasts

Since 2003, this role of the Institute has been filled by Associate Professor of Economics Grant Forsyth. This November will mark the third appearance by Dr. Forsyth at the Spokane Chamber of Commerce/Journal of Business Annual Forecast. Before a typical audience of 300, Dr. Forsyth has proved to be capable forecaster and able presenter, delivering for many the most significant part of the event – the local and regional outlook.



Contract Research & Grants

The final, and by no means least significant, goal of the Institute has been to respond to requests from community and regional organizations to apply skills of EWU faculty to specific research needs. This dimension of Institute has been very active over the past two years. We have responded positively to most requests; for some, however, we have had neither the time nor expertise to tackle the research question.

Completed contract studies are:

- ✦ *The Economic Impact of the Spokane Gorge Park*, for The Friends of the Falls
- ✦ *The Differential Developmental Impact of Spokane County Industries*, for the Spokane EDC
- ✦ *Economic Impact of Spokane Healthcare Sector*, for INHS, the Spokane County Medical Society, the Spokane Area EDC and the Spokane Regional Chamber
- ✦ *An Analysis of Medicaid Reimbursement to Washington Hospitals for Inpatient Care*, for INHS
- ✦ *Economic Impact of and Opportunities in the Spokane University District*, for the City of Spokane
- ✦ *An Assessment of the First year of Spokane Project Access*, for the Spokane County Medical Society
- ✦ *The Economic impact of the Inland Northwest Ski Association*, for Inland NW Ski Association

In all its work, the Institute has set the principle with contracting organizations that its findings may not support a position the organizations may have prior to the research. None of the findings in the research to-date have confronted this outcome. Nonetheless, it is vital for the Institute to maintain internal integrity and the overall standards of academic excellence for the University.

Several more contract research and grant opportunities are currently in work or discussion stage. In the initial two years of this activity, approximately \$110,000 has flowed to EWU.

Leverage for Faculty & the University

Beyond the immediate four objectives, the Institute can and has helped faculty succeed professionally. Some of the monographs provide a stepping stone to the creation of articles destined for peer-reviewed journals. To-date, this has happened once, as Professor Steenhuis's work on regional technology transfer was published in an international journal. Another monograph and a contract research project face good odds of landing in professional journals. Ideally, Institute studies will either provide the data set or inspire enough framework thinking to lead to dual publications for many EWU faculty.

Early monograph and contract work has led to further contract work. This has happened especially in the health field.

In addition, some faculty and staff associated with the Institute have been tapped to serve on local or state boards. The most significant example concerns Professor Forsyth. On the basis of his forecasting work for the Spokane area, he has joined the Governor's Economic & Revenue Forecast Council. This marks the first time a EWU faculty member has been invited to serve on the group that provides a critical roadmap for the State's economy.

Nearly all of the monographs and some of the contract research studies have been covered by the Spokane print media. In certain cases of contract research, publicity is not desired. In addition, the Community Indicator Initiative has received both direct and indirect coverage by the same media. Similarly, the Economic Forecast attracts both print and electronic media attention every November.

Next Steps

We anticipate growth in all areas of the Institute over the next year. While the number of monographs will be fewer, the Institute will increasingly consider communities beyond Spokane and Kootenai counties. We will also look to involve faculty in colleges outside of CBPA & CSBS, in particular, Science, Health and Engineering, Social Work and Education.

Over time, the economic forecast will benefit from Dr. Forsyth's membership on the State Forecast Council. We will examine the feasibility of a regional forecast for other parts of Eastern Washington. It is our goal to publish a modest economic outlook of the Spokane-Kootenai County MSA, at least online.

The next phase of the Community Indicators Initiative will profit greatly from the University's support. Without it, the web site simply would not be built. After the first version is live, we expect to refine the product on the basis of community feedback. Over time, a significant question will need to be answered: does the CII expand its capabilities via a broader geographic sweep or via an examination of socio-economic indicators at a sub-city geographical level?

Several more grants and contract proposals are either in work or targeted. It is the Institute's keen intent to seek government grants, either from State or Federal sources, and either separately or as a part of a collaborative initiative.

All these efforts will be aided by the Executive Director's elevation to full-time status. In addition, he now enjoys (half-time) secretarial support. Finally, the move to increase the appointment of the Institute's policy analyst to 75% will greatly assist our ability to carry out the CII and contract work.

Institute Advisory Board Members

- ✦ Greg Bever, Publisher, Spokane Journal of Business
- ✦ Douglas Kelley, Regional Account Executive, Avista Utilities
- ✦ Dean Dee Martin, College of Business & Public Administration
- ✦ Jan Monaco, Executive Director, Spokane County Medical Society
- ✦ Dean Vickie Shields, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

EWU Institute for Public Policy &
Economic Analysis
668 N. Riverpoint Blvd., Ste A
Spokane WA 99202-1677

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