February 2, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

Now that we are settled into the winter quarter, I am excited to give an update on our "Inspiring the Future" strategic-planning process. As you know, students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members rolled up their sleeves to put in countless hours to help create the final document.

I am proud to say we heard you! The numerous workshops, leadership sessions and open-feedback forums proved to be invaluable tools that helped get us to this point.

The plan we have in place clearly defines our vision of student success, emphasizes the importance of developing graduates who are critical thinkers and highlights the uniqueness of Eastern - such as the student-faculty interaction.

There is still so much more to do to make this plan work effectively. The next step is for the university to officially launch "Inspiring the Future" by developing an action plan for 2012-13. The action-planning process will begin immediately, as each unit on campus will be asked to identify specific steps that will help Eastern achieve the goals identified in the final strategic planning document. The vice presidents will each play a role in establishing how this will be rolled out in each division.

The university will celebrate this important phase with a campus-wide event on Friday, April 13. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Mark Milliron, an award-winning leader, author, speaker and consultant well known for exploring leadership development and learning strategies. An announcement on the time and location will be forthcoming.

During the past year, we heard many outstanding ideas that we will be exploring more in-depth as we go through the action-planning process. But I also want to encourage each of you to keep thinking about the innovative things your department can do to make a difference. It does not have to be something tied to a budget, and hopefully the ideas will be something new or different than how we currently do business. Maybe you've always had an idea but have not felt comfortable putting it forward. Now is the time. All suggestions are encouraged, and success is only measured by how we try - not if a certain idea works exactly how we thought.

EWU is hopeful this will be a new era of unique collaboration and effort to focus in on what we do best - providing a high-quality education to our students. This will allow the university to excel during these difficult economic times.

Please remember to visit ewu.edu/inspiringthefuture for access to the final strategic plan. I look forward to you joining me during the next phase of this important process.

Sincerely,

Rodolfo Arévalo, PhD
President