Monitor Newsletter November 13, 2007

Bowling Green State University

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Chancellor Fingerhut calls for ‘shared vision,’ stewarding of resources

The University System of Ohio was created not to cut programs at state institutions but to steward resources, promote a common vision and strengthen colleges’ and universities’ areas of excellence, Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric Fingerhut said Nov. 7.

The chancellor, the first ever to hold an Ohio Cabinet position, was on campus last Wednesday and Thursday as part of a tour of state colleges and universities. “The goal of the ‘Campus Conversations’ visits is to spend an extended enough period of time to really get a feel for the campus,” he said. He met with student groups, faculty, the provost, president and the board of trustees, and attended a musical performance. He also visited some of the programs BGSU has identified as its “centers of excellence,” a key concept of the new university system.

At a meeting with elected leaders of campus governance groups, chairs of college advising councils, deans and others, Fingerhut discussed what the system will mean for the state and took questions from attendees.

Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Patrick Pauken, leadership and policy studies, expressed what has perhaps been on everyone’s mind when he asked a question submitted by a faculty member: What does the new system mean for individual campuses and specifically, what programs at BGSU might be eliminated?

Fingerhut responded that the new system calls for a different approach, in which every university will provide a “comprehensive, quality education” and develop areas of excellence that are magnets both nationally and even internationally. The state must stop the “disinvestment” in higher education if it is to become economically viable, he added, but to do that it must choose wisely where to put its resources. BGSU President Sidney Ribeau, as past president of the Inter-University Council, was involved in advocating for stronger state support, the chancellor noted.

“Everyone can’t do everything. We must make priority decisions,” he said. “Schools must identify their centers of excellence and make choices. To be truly good at something, you need to invest in it over time and stay ahead of the competition.

“In the past, we’ve shied away from making those difficult choices,” he said, which was understandable because “if the state isn’t investing anyway and you can’t really become what you want to be, why do it?”

“Now,” he added, “we will expect you to make those choices. But I will judge you on whether your choices are real.”

The state needs not 13 identical universities but a diverse offering to serve all its citizens’ needs, the chancellor said.

Categorization of institutions

As part of his response to a question about categorization of institutions, Fingerhut said the University System of Ohio does not entail reducing research. “Everyone must do research because that’s at the core of what it means to be a university, but not everyone needs to be a comprehensive research university like Ohio State,” he said. As the seventh-leading research institution in the nation and the second in industrial research (something that is not widely known, he added), OSU is “our best shot” at national prominence and economic growth and needs to continue all its research programs.

Ohio State is “the 21st-century version of what a land-grant university should be, and as
such has statewide responsibility. It must find ways to partner with other universities to raise the system as a whole," he said.

Other institutions, however, will serve differing purposes, though all must help support their geographic areas. Some of the more urban universities will naturally "play an important role in the global competitiveness of their region," he said.

Fingerhut is eager to reintroduce the "four corners" concept of Ohio higher education, he said. BGSU, Kent State, Ohio University and Miami University are all "extraordinary undergraduate institutions, and each does important research." With two about to celebrate their 200th anniversaries and the other two (BGSU included) approaching their centennials, they are "part of our unique and special history in the state," he added. "So we're not new to the question of the role of higher education in our state but are restoring it—not creating a new role."

The strategy will be to increase the ability of institutions to encourage students to "choose Ohio first," he said, adding that BGSU is also well positioned to be a magnet that draws people from outside the state.

Future of arts and humanities
Another questioner asked about the role of the arts and humanities in state higher education, given the recent emphasis on the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

Fingerhut reassured the participants that the Strickland administration and the university system fully recognize the importance of the arts and humanities, realizing that the "essential skills" for success—creativity and the ability to think, communicate and make connections—come from the arts and humanities.

The regents understand that it is important for all students to have those skills, "just as it is important that everyone have a good understanding of science," he said.

Role of the university system
The chancellor also expanded on the role the University System of Ohio can play in promoting and supporting public higher education, which educates 80 percent of college students in the state.

One function will be to improve the image of Ohio's colleges and universities, he said. "We need to let citizens know what good is going on in higher education," he said, adding that the story often goes largely untold.

The system can help "brand" state institutions positively, the chancellor maintained. "Being part of a state that lifts up, protects and promotes higher education will be beneficial."

By supporting higher education, the system will help Ohio reestablish its prominence nationally and economically. Higher education must be the economic engine and is the most important part of Ohio's future, he said.

"We need people. Ohio isn't growing, and what else but higher education can bring people here and keep them here?"

BGSU creates a virtual campus in Second Life

BGSU is creating an educational environment on its own virtual island.

"It's like an empty canvas; you can do anything," says Bonnie Mitchell about BGSU's home in Second Life, a three-dimensional, virtual environment open to multiple users. "That's why it's really good for education—we can define a new direction."
Mitchell, digital art, is co-administrator of the island with Anthony Fontana, art. They are also co-facilitators of BGSU's Second Life Learning Community, which was seeded with a $6,000 grant from the Ohio Learning Network and is studying how the technology can be used educationally.

Some University faculty members who have joined the community have also begun exploring the possibilities. For one of her classes, Dr. Linda Mandlebaum, intervention services, interviewed the owner of "Wheelies," a Second Life social space for people in wheelchairs. The interview was conducted using digital representations, or avatars, controlled by real people.

Communication in Second Life is through voice or text chat—"much like any other instant messaging application," Fontana points out. For the interview, Mandlebaum typed questions submitted by her students and projected the virtual environment on her classroom wall for the class of 60 to see the exchange.

Elsewhere on campus, Dr. Terry Herman, visual communication technology, has had her students do presentations on BGSU's island, and Dr. Radhika Gajjala, interpersonal communication, has formed a group researching the concept of embodiment via avatars. Also, Fontana and Mandlebaum hold office hours in their virtual offices.

Mitchell is taking advantage of the technology as well. She has displayed her students' digital art work in a virtual "vertical gallery" whose patrons use their avatars' ability to fly in order to view the art. A second gallery hosts art exhibits from around the world, including one from Perth, Australia, in which Mitchell participated. The actual art is scanned into the virtual environment, and "note cards" projected on the computer screen provide information about the works.

Streaming media, movies and PowerPoint presentations can be seen in a virtual conference room, and various media can also be viewed in a newly built virtual theater. Approaching the theater recently, Mitchell's avatar met a counterpart from James Madison University in Virginia. "It's all very impressive," the visitor texted, adding this reaction to the BGSU island: "A little jealous."

The Web site SimTeach.com lists Bowling Green among fewer than 90 universities, colleges and schools worldwide that are, in Fontana's words, "investigating or using SL in some way." Only "a fraction" of them, he says, own an island. The BGSU island was purchased in April with the support of the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

The University's Second Life virtual campus was on display Nov. 9 in the Lenhart Grand Ballroom of the Bowen-Thompson Student Union. The grand opening featured live musical performances by students and tours of the virtual campus, including its art galleries and media theater. The (Toledo) Blade featured BGSU's Second Life in a front page story that day.

While it looks like a video game, Fontana and Mitchell say the difference with Second Life is the lack of levels, strategies or goals. In addition, says Mitchell, the companies that sell video games create all the architecture and objects in their virtual worlds. Not so with Second Life, which was developed by San Francisco-based Linden Lab but lets participants create everything, Fontana notes, except their avatars' bodies and the land around them.

The BGSU island allows students and other visitors to build in the "sandbox," which Mitchell calls "the most popular part of our island." But new creations don't stay there indefinitely, she explains—after a few hours, what's built in the sandbox goes into the builder's digital inventory.

"Every week, we add new architecture and new learning objects," says Mitchell, noting that BGSU's neighbors on what she terms "the 3D Internet" include Princeton, Cornell and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "We're out there with the top dogs. It's an exciting place to be."

Bowling Green's virtual campus is an open, "PG island" in a university sector of Second Life. A visit by a University of Oklahoma class interested in the technology is an example of
the benefits of having an island open to the public, according to Mitchell. At the same time, she points out, "we have full control," with the ability to set permissions and eject and ban problem users.

Anyone over 18 can register for a Second Life account through secondlife.com, and it's free. A "welcome island" provides instruction on navigation to new participants, who can then teleport to the BGSU island, Fontana explains. A teen grid is also available for those under 18, once they get the required parental permission to join. Users will need a cable, DSL or direct internet connection to run Second Life; "you can't do this with dial up," says Mitchell.

She compares her excitement about Second Life to her interest in the World Wide Web when it was introduced. "I could just see the potential," she recalls. "That's what's happening with Second Life right now. It's in its infancy, and the potential is huge."

"We're creating an environment that is very interactive and engaging," she adds, echoing Fontana's assertion that a traditional classroom and lecture format "really doesn't fly" in Second Life.

"I just love it," says Mitchell, "because I know we're at the forefront of something big."

Maurers named Friends of the University Libraries

The University Libraries showed their appreciation for two of their strongest supporters by presenting them the 2007 Friend of the Library Award. Robert and Patricia Maurer received the honor Nov. 7 in Jerome Library during the annual Authors and Artists reception, hosted by the Friends of the University Libraries.

The couple recently gave $200,000 to the libraries to establish the Maurer Library Endowment Fund, which will be used to support priority library projects at the University.

"The Maurers are exceptional advocates for the libraries," noted Dr. Thomas Atwood, dean of University Libraries, when the gift was given. "Their interest is in enhancing students' learning experiences, and the establishment of this endowment will do just that for years to come on our campus. We are grateful for their support."

A member of the BGSU Library Advocates Board, Bob Maurer has shown his support for the libraries in many ways. Last April, he and Patricia helped the libraries celebrate their 40th anniversary by donating a "little black dress" once owned by Oprah Winfrey to be auctioned at the birthday gala, only to buy it back again to be used once more for fund raising.

Recalling the anniversary at the Nov. 7 reception, Catherine Cardwell, chair of library teaching and learning, said "the Maurers were an essential part of that celebration, and it was great to work with them."

Friends not only of the University Libraries, the Maurers are also staunch allies of the University as a whole. They are longtime members of the BGSU Presidents Club, Varsity Club, Falcon Club and Marketing Advocates, among other campus activities.

The Maurers, both of whom were accounting majors at BGSU, raised five children in Bowling Green. Bob has practiced law in Bowling Green since 1968 at Maurer, Newlove & Bakies, LLC. Pat operates and manages Greenbriar Inc., a real estate property management and development company.

With a strong belief that everyone in a community can and will benefit from the resources of excellent libraries, they also have been contributors to the Bowling Green District Public Library Foundation. The family funded the purchase of the historic Muir house so that the Wood County District Public Library could enlarge its facilities to better serve the community.
Freshmen tour Great Lakes, get early introduction to college

Six incoming freshmen began their college experience early last summer when they traveled to the Great Lakes during a 16-day, field-based course called “Exploring the Great Lakes: Environments and Cultures.”

Developed by Dr. Holly Myers, Center for Environmental Programs, the course was part of BGSU on the Road, a new program that gives students the opportunity to earn six credits while meeting faculty and other students in a unique setting.

The course began in late June and ended in early July. The first two days, which were spent on campus, were an introduction to the trip, environmental studies and cultural geography. The next 14 days were spent traveling to Milwaukee, Wis.; Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, and Toronto and Montreal, Canada. During their travels, students fulfilled the requirements for both Environmental Studies 101-Introduction to Environmental Studies, taught by Christine Onasch, environmental programs; and Geography 230-Cultural Geography, taught by Myers.

“The Great Lakes is one of the most interesting areas we have,” Myers said. “As a cultural region, it was settled east to west, but as a natural system it evolved west to east. We want to look at the impact and role of humans in a watershed.”

The trip also offered students the cultural contrasts of being in Watertown, N.Y., on the Fourth of July and Toronto on Canada Day and of differences between English and French Canada. “We also want to look at the culture of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula—is it different, and how does it reflect people’s perception of the environment?” Myers said of the “very values-oriented” cultural geography class.

Along with learning about the world around them, students went kayaking, were underground in a silver and nickel mine for an hour, and went under Niagara Falls.

Freshman Melissa Miller thought the trip was a good introduction to college life. “We were on our own for over two weeks, and we all bonded together and learned from each other and learned more about ourselves.”

Bernadette Wiggin, another participant, agreed. “Doing this gave me a hint as to what will be expected of me in college in terms of academics and socializing with a variety of people.”

“I hope the students improved their observation skills and their ability to read the landscape to gain a better understanding both of the past and the present,” Myers said. “I also hope the students now have a better understanding of the importance of the Great Lakes as both an ecosystem and a cultural region.”

From an environmental awareness perspective, “students take away a better appreciation for environmental impacts, both positive and negative for everyday choices—how far to drive, how cold the air conditioner is, how much electricity to use and how it affects everything else,” said Onasch.

Participants took away much more than environmental studies and geography knowledge, they said following the trip.

“I gained a better understanding of who I am and where I am from,” said Wiggin. “Living in Michigan, I grew up in the middle of the Great Lakes and never fully appreciated all that they
have to offer not only to the surrounding states, but to the entire world.

"I have traveled to 12 other countries including Australia, Belgium, Switzerland, France and Germany. While I have seen the world, I have barely seen my own country and participating in this program gave me that chance. This was a great experience and I will benefit from it for years to come," she added.

Although the classes were taught mostly outside the classroom, students still had their work cut out for them. They were required to read The Living Great Lakes by Jerry Dennis and take two midterms on the road. Travel time was spent watching educational videos and PowerPoint presentations.

Myers also required students to write a journal entry every day.

Once they returned, students had to complete five assignments and take a final exam for both classes. The finals were based on the experiences from the trip and the PowerPoint presentations.

Students interested in art and ethnic studies were encouraged to attend "Exploring Art and Culture of the Southwest." During that trip, the group traveled to San Antonio and El Paso, Texas, and the Navaho Nation, New Mexico.

Along with the knowledge gained through BGSU on the Road, students also saved money on tuition. They earned six credits for the price of four, a savings of $780. Although the trip is geared primarily toward freshmen, students of any age may attend.

Continuing and Extended Education plans to continue the program next summer.

BGSU to feel second wave of minimum wage hike

The second phase of an increase in Ohio's minimum wage, approved by voters in November 2006, will impact BGSU when it takes effect Jan. 1.

The increase, from the current state minimum of $6.85 to $7 per hour, will affect about 375 current student employees who are paid by the hour and whose hourly base rate is less than $7, according to Michelle Simmons, acting director of the Career Center. Students will see the increase in their Jan. 25 paychecks, which cover the period from Dec. 30-Jan. 12.

Over the 15-week spring semester, the increase in wages is projected to add up to about $48,430. However, Simmons pointed out, "It's difficult to predict costs because the number of student employees and their work schedules fluctuate weekly." The $48,430 figure is a "snapshot" of student employee costs at this moment, she said, and will likely change as administrators review and adjust departmental wage structures.

For students already making at least $7 per hour in base pay, the decision whether to increase that figure will be up to individual departments, units and colleges.

BGSU felt the first impact of changes to Ohio's minimum wage law last January, when the first phase of the increase boosted the minimum wage of $5.15 to $6.85 an hour.
IN BRIEF

Friday is deadline to submit forms for benefits open enrollment

Friday (Nov. 16) is the deadline to return forms to the Human Resources office for any changes or updates to your health care and life insurance benefits. All forms and information are online. Visit “What's New” at the Human Resources/Benefits Web site: www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/benefits/index.html

You must submit a form to the Office of Human Resources if:

- Your spouse has BGSU health insurance as his or her primary coverage. Important: The “Primary Coverage Spouse Form” must also be completed by you and your spouse's employer.
- You are making changes to your insurance coverage, such as dropping or adding dependents or a spouse. (Form: Health Care Enrollment Form)
- You are starting or wish to continue a reimbursement account (Section 125) for health care or child care expenses. These must be completed each year. (Form: Health Care Dependent Care Reimbursement Form)
- You are changing your life insurance coverage by purchasing additional supplemental term life and/or other insurance products offered with Sun Life, BGSU's life insurance vendor.

Don’t be the last to know: Get AlertBG

More than 2,800 faculty, staff and students have signed up to receive AlertBG email messages when there are campus crimes in progress, weather emergencies, school or building closures or other situations.

Sent by the campus police, the alerts are used only in emergencies.

To register your cell phone, visit MyBGSU and click on the “AlertBG” tab at the top of the Welcome Page. A short form asking for your name, cell phone number and provider and email address is all you need to fill out to be included in the warning system.

Monitor to take post-Thanksgiving break

Due to the Thanksgiving recess, Monitor will not be published Nov. 26. The Nov. 19 issue will contain news and information through Dec. 3.

Please be aware of the schedule and submit items for inclusion by Wednesday (Nov. 14).
Send news to bblanki@bgsu.edu or call 2-2618.

CALENDAR

Monday, Nov. 12
Veterans Day observed. Classes canceled, offices closed.

Tuesday, Nov. 13
Men's Soccer, MAC Tournament play-in game vs. Northern Illinois, 1 p.m., Cochrane Field.

Concert, BGSU Jazz Lab Band II, directed by Jeff Halsey, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.
Violence and Art Film Series, “Rape of Europa” (2006), 9 p.m., 204 Fine Arts Center.
A $1 donation to the Art History Association is suggested for admission.
Movie, “Bourne Ultimatum,” 9:30 p.m., Bowen-Thompson Student Union Theater.
Wednesday, Nov. 14

Brown Bag Luncheon, "Identity Development for the Progressive African-American College Student," presented by Dr. Linda Whittington, executive director, Avenues to Healing, noon-1 p.m., Women's Center, 107 Hanna Hall.

Faculty Artist Series, by pianist Laura Melton, featuring the works of Adler, J.S. Bach, Ligeti and Mozart, 8 p.m., Bryan Recital Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Thursday, Nov. 15

Firelands Public Forum, "The Widening Gap between Rich and Poor in America," featuring Pamela Rosado from Policy Matters Ohio, a nonprofit organization that studies the impact of public, government and corporate policies on Ohioans, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., 115W West Building, BGSU Firelands.

Concert, BGSU Jazz Lab Band I, directed by Scott Gwinnell, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Friday, Nov. 16

Women's Research Network Seminar, "Toledo: Images from Our Past and Realities of Our Present," presented by Barbara Floyd, director, Ward M. Canaday Center for Special Collections, University of Toledo, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Women's Center, 107 Hanna Hall. Sponsored by the Women's Studies Program and the Women's Center.

Hockey vs. Northern Michigan, 7:05 p.m., Ice Arena.

Concert, University Band, directed by Kenneth Thompson, and BGSU Concert Band, directed by Carol Hayward, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Movie, "Bourne Ultimatum," 9:30 p.m., Union Theater.

Saturday, Nov. 17

Men's Basketball vs. Morehead State, 4 p.m., Anderson Arena.

Hockey vs. Northern Michigan, 7:05 p.m., Ice Arena.

Concert, BGSU Collegiate Chorale, directed by William Skoog, and Wind Symphony, directed by Bruce Moss, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center. Tickets are $5 for students and senior citizens and $8 for other adults. For tickets, call the box office at 2-8171.

Sunday, Nov. 18

Concert, "Sounds of the Stadium," performed by the BGSU Marching Band, directed by Carol Hayward, 3 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center. Tickets are $5 for students and senior citizens and $8 for other adults. Call the box office at 2-8171.

Benefit Concert, Graduate students from BGSU's College of Musical Arts will present a San Miguel Tzinacapan Hurricane Relief Benefit Concert, 5:30 p.m., 2028 Union. Including solo and chamber works by Chávez, Ginastera, Ravel, Granados, Strauss and Sampson. A donation of $5 is suggested; proceeds to go toward rebuilding and repairing damaged schools and community buildings affected by Hurricane Dean in the remote indigenous Mexican village of San Miguel Tzinacapan. Sponsored by the College of Musical Arts.

Movie, "Animal House," 9:30 p.m., Union Theater.

Monday, Nov. 19

'The Naked on Nutrition' Brown Bag Luncheon Series, "Eat Smart, Dine Fast," noon-1 p.m., 107 Hanna Hall. Samples of food related to the topic will be served. Presented by dietetics students in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences. Email chaar@bgsu.edu for more information.

ARTalk, "Enochs on Stone," by freelance sculptor Dale Enoch's, known for his highly innovative use of stone and for the elegance of his sculptural forms, 6-7 p.m., 1101 Fine Arts Center.

Continuing Events

Nov. 12-16

Blood Drive, American Red Cross Blood Bowl VI, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., 228 Union. Walk-ins welcome; ID required. Sponsored by the American Red Cross and the BGSU Red Cross Club.

Nov. 15 and 16

Conference, "Darwin's Heirs: Evolution, Behavior and Societies," featuring the keynote address "Darwin’s Challenges and Their Continuing Usefulness," by Dr. Richard Alexander, University of Michigan, 7:30 p.m. Thursday (Nov. 15) in 207 Union, followed by a reception at 9 p.m. The conference concludes Nov. 16 with all the speakers participating in a panel discussion, 2:30-3:30 p.m., 206 Union. Hosted by the Social Philosophy and Policy Center. See www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/monitor/11-05-07/page40067.html for more information.

Nov. 15-17

Art Exhibition, "SPLASH: The Student Water Projects," showcasing projects, posters...
and art that address water topics such as the environment and the economics, politics and representation of water, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Willard Wankelman Gallery, Fine Arts Center.

Through Nov. 17

Art Exhibition, "Water Works," featuring photography of Robert Glenn Ketchum and water project documentations by Jackie Brookner, Betsy Damon and others, Dorothy Uber Bryan Gallery, Fine Arts Center. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.

Through Nov. 19

Design Exhibition, fourth annual exhibition of work by students in the architecture/environmental design studies program, Union Gallery. Gallery hours are 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sundays.

Through Nov. 28

Art Exhibition, mixed media resin works by Laura Gajewski, Little Gallery, BGSU Firelands. Gallery hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Through Nov. 30

Planetarium Show, "Oceans in Space," showings at 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays, 7:30 p.m. Sundays, and 2 p.m. Saturdays (Nov. 17 and 24). $1 donation suggested.

JOB POSTINGS

FACULTY

There were no jobs posted this week.

Labor Postings
http://international.bgsu.edu/index.php?x=facinfohires

Due to the recently announced hold on hiring for faculty and staff, all newly posted jobs have received additional authorization to proceed through the hiring process. Please see the links below. If you have questions regarding classified (hourly) positions or administrative (salaried) positions, please contact the Office of Human Resources at 419-372-8421.

CLASSIFIED

On-campus classified:
www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/employment/BGSU_only/page11151.html

ADMINISTRATIVE
www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/employment/adm_staff/page11137.html

OBITUARY

Julie Burke, 54, an associate professor and chair of interpersonal communication, died Oct. 31 in Waterville. She had taught at BGSU since 1992.