



VALLEY CITY
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the President



November 2010

Science Programs See Tremendous Growth

Much of the growth that VCSU experienced over the last few years, including the largest headcount in 40 years that VCSU announced this Fall, has been driven by a rapidly increasing number of students who have declared majors in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) related fields. Overall, the number of students with majors in these fields increased by 48% over last year, continuing a trend that has produced a 337% growth over the last decade.

In VCSU's Division of Math, Science and Health and Physical Education, some of the most popular majors did not even exist ten years ago. For example, the Division's major in Health Science was established in 2004. The major is designed for students wishing to pursue a degree at professional or graduate school in any of several health science disciplines such as medicine, dentistry, chiropractic, pharmacy, and many others. The Division's major in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences, which prepares students for careers in wildlife and fisheries management or additional study in graduate school, was first offered in 2005. A third major, Exercise Science was first offered in 2002. These programs have grown very quickly since their inception and now account for 57% of the division's declared majors.

VCSU has been focusing resources to respond to this strong demand for STEM majors. In April, VCSU announced the founding of the Prairie Waters Education & Research Center to serve as a statewide resource for water education, research and management. In June, VCSU received approval from the State Board of Higher Education to establish the Great Plains STEM Education Center to provide STEM Education and training opportunities for K-12 students and teachers. Expanding use of STEM Education methods, particularly in K-12 schools, is widely seen as an essential step in the process of increasing technology and engineering capacity of the U.S. workforce. Both centers were largely funded by grants from various state and federal agencies.

New Vocal Ensemble Selected to Perform at NDMEA Conference

The Valkyries, a new all female vocal ensemble at Valley City State University, have recently been selected to perform at the North Dakota Music Educators Association Conference at 7:30 pm on Sunday, March 20 at the Bismarck Civic Center.

"This is a tremendous honor, particularly for a group that has only been in existence for a few months," said Dr. Diana Skroch, chair of the

Division of Fine Arts at VCSU. "This is a testament to the talented students we have, their hard work, and the dedication of their instructors. We can all be very proud."

The Valkyries was created in August, 2010 by students active in the VCSU Department of Music. The group is under the direction of Dr. Leesa Levy, assistant professor at VCSU, and accompanied by instructor Jaime Namminga. Members of the ensemble come from various academic programs across the campus, with this year's members representing degrees in art, music, education and the sciences. The group has embraced a wide variety of musical styles and enjoys the challenge and responsibility associated with performing chamber music.

In December the group can be heard at the annual choral concert "Christmas at Saint Catherine's" (St. Catherine's Catholic Church, Valley City) on December 9 at 7:30 pm, and at the Cathedral of Saint Mary in Fargo on December 5 at 7:00 pm. The tour and December concerts are in conjunction with performances of the VCSU Concert Choir.

Partnership to Bring STEM Education Methods to Native American Schools

VCSU, Sitting Bull College, and a group of five K-12 schools have formed a partnership to improve math and science proficiency at Native American K-12 schools in North Dakota. The partnership has been funded by a \$360,000 grant from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction.

Under the partnership, Sitting Bull College and VCSU will deliver a 10-day professional development institute during the summer of 2011 to equip up to 40 K-12 teachers at Native American schools with the very latest research and trends in teaching STEM Education methodologies. A series of one-day follow-up workshops will increase the depth of understanding, expand instructional options, and help these teachers implement curriculum from the summer institute.

Up to eight VCSU faculty will participate from the departments of STEM Education and Elementary Education plus the Great Plains STEM Education Center and the Prairie Waters Education and Research Center. Sitting Bull College will also have eight faculty members involved from math, science and elementary education. Scientists from the NDSU Electron Microscopy Lab, scientists from the NDSU Nanoscience program, as well as private corporations with expertise in GIS and GPS systems and instruction will also participate.



THE DIFFERENCE IS ME





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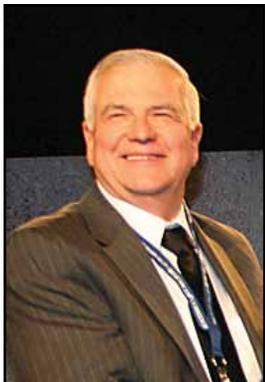
Faculty Recognized for Achievements

Three members of the VCSU faculty recently received statewide recognition for outstanding work.

Professor David Melgaard, VCSU's Career & Technical Education Coordinator, was recognized by the North Dakota Association for Career and Technical Education (NDACTE) with their Outstanding Career and Technical Educator award. The award recognizes career and technical educators who have recently provided or currently are providing significant contributions to professional associations and career and technical education programs for youth and/or adults. Dwight Crabtree, Assistant State Director, Department of Career and Technical Education, said, "Dave has been an outstanding individual to work with, and he is a true supporter of career and technical education in North Dakota."

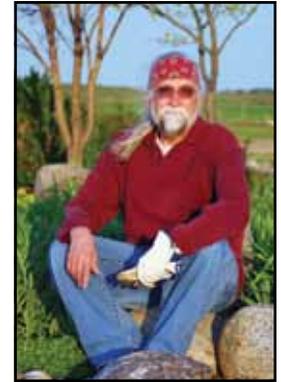


Dr. Don Mugan, Director of VCSU's Great Plains STEM Education Center, was recognized at the Milestones and Horizons Conference co-hosted by U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan and the Red River Valley Research Corridor with the Pathfinder Award. This award recognizes exceptional achievement in developing and deploying technologies, products, processes or services in the marketplace that have a significant effect on the way business and society operates. Previous winners of the Pathfinder award include Doug Burgum (2008) and James Carlson (2009). In presenting the award to Dr. Mugan, Senator Dorgan said, "North Dakotans should be extremely proud of Don Mugan for his work to boost high-tech education initiatives in the



state. Don's efforts will help continue to grow our state's future high-tech workforce in the Red River Valley Research Corridor."

Dr. Joe Stickler, professor and chair of VCSU's Division of Mathematics, Science and Health & Physical Education, was presented with the "Environmental Educator of the Year" Trees Award by the North Dakota Forest Service. The award recognizes individuals, organizations and agencies who contribute in an outstanding way to forestry activities that improve North Dakota's forest resources, enhance quality of life, and impact the state's health, safety and economy. Dr. Stickler was nominated for the award by Karen Olstad at the Barnes County Soil Conservation District for his tireless work on the Medicine Wheel Park. In her nomination, Olstad said, "Professor Stickler and his students have been working on Medicine Wheel Park since 1992, and the project has expanded beyond the classroom to involve the community of Valley City. Area residents are regularly treated to a variety of educational opportunities including environmental presentations, Native American presentations and others. Professor Joe Stickler had the inspiration for this park and has been its sparkplug in its development."



Valley City State University earned the #2 spot among the Top Public Regional Colleges in the Midwest in the 2011 edition of America's Best Colleges by U.S. News Media Group



Regional Colleges
Midwest