



VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the President



September 2010

Enrollment Largest in 40 Years

Final headcount Fall semester 2010 at VCSU is 1,285, a 19% increase over the final headcount of 1,083 last year. This is the largest overall enrollment at VCSU since 1970. The new freshman headcount at VCSU was 220, a 42% increase over last year and the largest since 1988. The share of freshman students from North Dakota also increased from 57% in 2009 to 67% in 2010.

The increase is due to a number of strategic initiatives the University has put in place to grow enrollment and increase opportunities for students. For example, the University has recently introduced new academic programs including the Fisheries and Wildlife major (2005), and the Health Science program (2004). Both programs have grown rapidly since being introduced.

New athletic programs are also contributing to the increase in enrollment. Cross Country and Track & Field are both having inaugural seasons in 2010-2011, and Men's and Women's Golf is entering its second year.

Dr. Shirley believes many other factors are also having an impact on enrollment. "Our alumni and donor base has been absolutely fantastic and has really stepped-up to the plate to help us maintain our scholarship base in the face of a very difficult economy, and we have received tremendous support from the community. All of this has contributed to our increased presence, and subsequently, our increased enrollment. We could not be more pleased with our progress in all of these areas."

As one sign of the enrollment increase, the residence hall population increased by nearly 10% this year, following an increase of nearly 7% last year. These increases combined with the closure of Snoeyenbos Hall for renovation has filled the University's residence halls to capacity this year.

Viking Athletics Greet New Athletic Director, Volleyball Coach

Viking Athletics has a few new faces this fall. Jack Denholm is VCSU's new athletic director, coming to VCSU from Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls, Iowa, where he served as the athletic director and dean of student services. His career spans 18 years in collegiate athletics and academics including seven years with Ridgewater College in Willmar, Minnesota and 11 years at Ellsworth Community College at Iowa Falls, Iowa.

Also new to Viking Athletics is Susan Kolbow who assumed her responsibilities as head coach of the Viking volleyball team on August 1. She came to VCSU from Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) where she

was an assistant volleyball coach since 2006. Her responsibilities have included advising student athletes, recruiting prospective student athletes, and teaching within the Health and Physical Education Department.

Also new to Viking Athletics is Galen Morton who became the head coach of VCSU's recently re-established Track & Field and Cross Country programs in August.

VCSU Ranked #2 Public Regional College in Midwest

VCSU earned the #2 spot among the Top Public Regional Colleges in the 12-state Midwest region in the 2011 edition of "America's Best Colleges" by U.S. News Media Group. This marks the 13th year in a row that VCSU has been recognized by U.S. News, and the second year in a row it has been in the #2 position. VCSU is once again the highest ranked public college in North Dakota or Minnesota in this category.



The U.S. News college rankings group more than 1,400 accredited four-year schools based on categories created by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and compares them based on a set of 15 widely accepted indicators of excellence. Criteria in which VCSU fared well included peer assessment, graduation and retention rates, the student-faculty ratio, and alumni giving.

Women's Basketball, Volleyball Recognized for Academic Excellence

Two women's athletic teams at VCSU were recently recognized for academic excellence during the 2009-2010 academic year by prominent league organizations.

The Viking women's basketball team was awarded a spot on the 2009-10 Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll published by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA). This award recognizes teams throughout the nation that carry the highest grade point averages (GPA) for the entire season. VCSU's team GPA was calculated to be 3.688, the second highest in the NAIA and the third highest in the entire WBCA.

Separately, the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) announced that the Viking volleyball team was recognized with the AVCA Team Academic Award for the 2009-2010 season. The award honors collegiate and high school volleyball teams that displayed excellence in the classroom during the school year by maintaining at least a 3.30 cumulative team grade-point average on a 4.0 scale.



THE DIFFERENCE IS ME





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Nine Students, Three Faculty Experience China

In May 2010, a group of nine VCSU students spent three weeks studying abroad in China with stops in Shanghai (including a visit to the Shanghai World Expo), Hangzhou, and Beijing. The experience was made possible through a new relationship with Zhejiang Economic and Trade Polytechnic (ZJETP) of Hangzhou, China. According to Dr. Shirley, "Having nine students from a campus our size seize the opportunity to travel to the other side of the world to broaden their education is phenomenal."

In addition, Dr. Curt Hill, associate professor of Mathematics, spent four weeks in May and June teaching three classes in computer science for ZJETP. Dr. Joan Aus and Dr. Shou-ching Chao also visited ZJETP to conduct an ESL (English as a Second Language) summer camp.

Increasing opportunities for VCSU students to experience diverse and multicultural activities on-campus and abroad is part of a strategic plan that outlines goals for the University between 2010 and 2015. Specific goals include supporting Chinese cultural exchange activities and updating the sister university agreements with schools in LaPaz and Oaxaca, Mexico.

Great Plains STEM Education Center Established with Workshops, Visit from Senator Dorgan

VCSU recently established the Great Plains STEM Education Center to provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Education and training opportunities for K-12 students and teachers. Implementing STEM Education is seen as an essential step in the process of increasing the technology and engineering capacity of the U.S. workforce.

To mark the occasion, U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan (ND), who helped to secure \$1.13 million in federal funding for initiatives at the STEM Center, visited the Center in July and received a briefing and tour. "Congratulations to VCSU on this major accomplishment that will lay the foundation for more science, technology, engineering and math education in North Dakota," said Senator Dorgan. "This is a long-term strategy to increase North Dakota's high-tech workforce to support the growing employment opportunities in the Red River Valley Research Corridor."

STEM Education is an emerging set of trans-disciplinary teaching methods and content in which students learn how to apply rigorous academic concepts in science, technology, engineering and mathematics to real-world problems. Its goal is to increase student engagement and ultimately increase the number and ability of students entering STEM-related careers.

VCSU has become a well-established leader in the field of STEM Education, having formed various strategic partnerships with

national leaders such as the National Center for Technological Literacy of the Museum of Science Boston, LEGO Education, the U.S. Department of Education, and others. Most recently, VCSU has delivered several workshops for K-12 teachers to prepare them with STEM curriculum and teaching methods.

EPSCoR Selects Four VCSU Students for GSRA Awards

Four students from VCSU were selected to receive Graduate Student Research Assistantship (GSRA) awards through the North Dakota Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (ND EPSCoR) program.

David Givers, ND EPSCoR co-project director, said, "The GSRA awards are very competitive, and only the best students in the state receive them. To have received four awards out of only six given statewide, VCSU should be very proud of its programs and its students in science, math, and CIS."

EPSCoR was established by the National Science Foundation and is now a family of competitive merit-based programs spanning seven federal research and development agencies: the National Science Foundation; the National Institutes of Health; the Departments of Defense, Energy, and Agriculture; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the Environmental Protection Agency.

ND EPSCoR implemented the GSRA program to increase opportunities for graduating seniors from the North Dakota University System baccalaureate universities to obtain M.S. and/or Ph.D. degrees at NDSU and UND. Each student's award provides an \$18,000 per year stipend for up to 24 months. Students who complete the program can be eligible for a ND EPSCoR Doctoral Dissertation Award.

The four VCSU students receiving the awards are Jacob Mertes (Omaha, NE), Michael Tomlinson (Rolla, ND), Ryan McCulloch (Valley City, ND), and Steven Fasching (Mandan, ND).

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Regional Colleges
Midwest