



# West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

## Higher Education News Clippings

Week of January 13, 2008

January 18, 2008

## Promise rule to change oversight right

By Phil Kabler

Lawmakers Thursday approved rule changes for the Promise scholarship that, among other things, removes legislative oversight in setting eligibility standards for the merit-based scholarship program.

Under the legislation creating the program, the Promise Board can raise minimum qualifying college entrance exam test scores and/or minimum grade point averages in order to assure that the number of students qualifying for the scholarships does not exceed available funding.

Currently, the board makes its recommendations for the next year's eligibility requirements to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability for its approval. Under the rule change, the legislative joint committee will give up that oversight.

Delegate Linda Sumner, R-Raleigh, opposed the change.

"As a legislative body, we're giving up our ability to set standards to a nonelected board," she said.

However, Senate Education Chairman Robert Plymale, D-Wayne, said that, as he understands the governor's proposal to change Promise to a forgivable loan program, the oversight commission would lose all oversight authority for the program.

In his State of the State address, Gov. Joe Manchin said he would ask the Promise Board to draft rules requiring Promise scholars to work in West Virginia following graduation, or repay the scholarships.

To date, legislators have not been enthusiastic about the proposal, which would require final approval by the Legislature.

The rule change approved Thursday also makes a number of other changes in the Promise program, the most notable being an expansion of the program's leave of absence policy.

Previously, Promise scholars could retain their scholarships during leaves of absence from college only for medical reasons or for a death in the family.

That policy prompted a lawsuit on behalf of a Mormon student who lost his scholarship after the Promise Board denied a leave of absence for his religious mission.

The new policy adds a variety of acceptable grounds for leaves of absence, including military duty, study abroad, volunteerism, extreme financial hardship, and other “extraordinary circumstances beyond the student’s control.”

# CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

January 17, 2008

## Economist says West Virginia has good jobs, but needs skilled workers

By George Hohmann

One of West Virginia's top economic analysts believes Gov. Joe Manchin is correct in saying the skills of the workers in West Virginia must be improved and good jobs are available in the state now.

During his State of the State address last week, Manchin said, "If I've heard it once when out talking to businesses, I've heard it 100 times - 'We need more skilled workers and we need them to be trained for the jobs of today, not the jobs of yesterday.' We know we have the hardest-working people in the world; now we just need to make sure we also have the best-trained."

The governor outlined a series of initiatives aimed at upgrading the skills of the workforce.

Tom Witt, director of West Virginia University's Bureau of Business & Economic Research, said workforce development is going to be one of the state's most critical needs.

"I think the governor correctly understands that you can't attract new business if you don't have a skilled workforce," he said. "I'm one who believes a comprehensive community college system focused on the needs of business is essential to economic growth. Not everyone wants to get a four-year degree. There are many technical, skilled jobs that can be obtained through a community college and a technical college. Any investment we make that will enhance that type of training is, I think, well overdue."

Although most of Manchin's speech was directed at the state's 1.8 million residents, perhaps his biggest sales pitch was aimed at the 1.2 million state natives living elsewhere.

Manchin highlighted the fact that the state's average unemployment rate was 4.6 percent last year, "the lowest unemployment average in the state's history." He also emphasized that the number of West Virginians working last year averaged 778,269, "the highest number during a year ever recorded."

Speaking directly to natives who have left, Manchin said, "Regardless of your field of expertise, we need you, and your intellectual capital, ingenuity and work ethic, now more than ever."

Manchin told his in-state audience, "Unfortunately, we are all guilty of teaching an entire generation that they couldn't find a good job in West Virginia, so don't even bother trying. Well, that's absolutely not true today, and now our challenge is to reverse these thoughts and show those who have left that this is the perfect time to come home."

Manchin said that to get the word out, the state is going to start a "Come Home to West Virginia" campaign this year.

Witt said Manchin is correct: the state needs its natives to return.

West Virginia has been gaining between 1,000 and 3,000 residents a year since 2001, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. However, "When I look at population growth and our labor force participation rate, the potential workforce is going to start declining in size," Witt said.

The West Virginia 2008 Economic Outlook, written by WVU economist George Hammond and released in October by WVU's Bureau of Business & Economic Research, predicts population losses in younger age groups and population gains in older age groups over the next five years.

The 65-and-older age group is forecast to grow the fastest, especially after 2010.

"That's largely a function of baby boomers retiring," Witt said. "The question is, who's going to take their place in the workforce?"

Witt believes that the decline in the labor force over the next decade caused by demographic changes will tighten West Virginia's labor market, "boosting wages relative to other regions of the United States, providing additional economic incentives for individuals to return to West Virginia.

"What's particularly of concern is the fact that we have the lowest educational attainment level in the country as measured by the percentage of the population with a college degree or better, and many of the individuals who will be retiring over the next decade are some of the more highly educated individuals," Witt said.

"The jobs they currently have are going to have to be filled by people with equivalent education backgrounds. Those job vacancies will be attractive to people who got their education in West Virginia's colleges and universities and moved elsewhere."

There's already a labor shortage in some sectors. Manchin said there is a statewide shortage of workers in allied health fields, from nurses to dental assistants, emergency medical technicians, pharmacy workers and surgery technicians.

"We have a lot of different types of communities and opportunities," Witt said. "There is a lot of turnover in some sectors, such as health care, and we've got to make sure we have people trained. We see within the demographics and the aging of our population, health care jobs will continue to expand."

Some of the aerospace companies clustered around the North Central West Virginia Airport at Bridgeport also have reported difficulty in attracting employees.

"The thing about an expanding economy and job opportunities is, people have more options," Witt said. "Employers who want to compete have to be sensitive - they have to pay competitive wages and benefits. This is compounded by the fact that the younger age groups in West Virginia are declining or stable, so everyone is competing for the same individuals and many of those individuals see that with a Promise Scholarship, an opportunity might lie in getting a four-year degree."

Furthermore, "Young adults have a different view of the workforce," Witt said. "They're less attracted to companies that try to offer traditional salaries, fringe benefits and work environments. They'll be changing jobs seven, eight or ten times in their lifespan, so they're looking for more opportunities to be creative."

Witt said people might have different reasons for returning to West Virginia.

"One motivation we see is parents aging in place and children wanting to get closer to take care of them in their retirement years," he said.

"We're also seeing a potential for people to start second careers. With the growth that's occurring in certain parts of the state, the ability to start a new business or second career will be enhanced.

"One of the nice things about people going elsewhere is, they get exposed to emerging technologies and new lines of business," Witt said. "They can bring that information and expertise to West Virginia and start new businesses or fill the needs of current businesses here."

An annual study by United Van Lines showed West Virginia registered an inbound migration trend in 2007. "People who employ moving vans tend to be higher-income individuals," Witt said. Therefore, the United Van Lines study "suggests to me that higher-income individuals are moving into the state. What part of the state is not clear but it's probably the eastern Panhandle, Morgantown, north-central West Virginia, Charleston and Huntington - where you tend to find higher income levels and more economic opportunities.

"Some may be attracted back to West Virginia because of the growth of second home communities," Witt said. "We do have areas of the state with second home developments and those areas tend to be more attractive to higher income individuals."

## MU Plans for \$15 Million State Allotment

### Governor proposes using state funds to enhance research at two universities

Story by Paul Darst

HUNTINGTON -- One of the announcements in Gov. Joe Manchin's State of the State address is expected to be a major economic shot in the arm for Marshall University and the Huntington area.

Marshall's share of a \$50 million, one-time allotment will be used to help establish the Marshall Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, President Stephen J. Kopp said.

"We support the governor's bill wholly," Kopp said. "It demonstrates a tremendous vision on (Gov. Joe Manchin's) part."

Marshall will receive \$15 million, while West Virginia University will receive \$35 million. Each institution will have to match the money dollar for dollar. None of the money, from the state or private donors, will be spent, Kopp said. Rather, it will be used as an endowment.

Under the MIIR plan, interest from that endowment will be used to bring scientific researchers to Marshall, he said. Within five years, each researcher would be required to generate half of his or her salary from grants or contracts. Although the researchers would work with students, they would not be tenured professors.

"Our plan is to not spend all of the interest earned," Kopp said. "We'll save it and grow the principal."

Kopp first proposed creation of the MIIR about one year ago. The model projects that a one-time investment of \$36 million would lead to 115 new jobs during the first year, 399 jobs within five years and 1,066 jobs by the end of the first decade.

The model further projects an increase in state tax revenues because of the MIIR. In the first year, the annual taxes from a \$36 million investment would be \$577,645. By the fifth year, that increases to \$2 million, and by the 10th year it increases to \$5.4 million.

The MIIR will be centered in the \$48 million Robert C. Byrd Biotechnology Science Center, Kopp said. The new building contains state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment.

Marshall decided to pursue a biotechnology research institute because of the potential for the future of those kinds of technology. The institute will focus on bio-robotics, nanotechnology, genomics and bio-manufacturing.

"If we make this one-time investment, with little residual impact, it will keep giving back to the taxpayers," Kopp said.

"There is virtually no risk because it's not going to be spent," he added.

Both Marshall and WVU will have an incentive to raise more than \$15 million and \$35 million respectively, Kopp said. If one institution does not raise the prescribed amount of private funds, the state funds can be allotted to the other university, he said. But they still must match the state's money dollar for dollar.

The MIIR would not only be a catalyst for growth of the biotechnology industry in West Virginia but also an important teaching tool for Marshall students, Kopp said. It would be instrumental in the growing area of undergraduate research.

"It's a fairly new concept," he said. "In the past, (undergraduates) had to seek research opportunities."

Legislators now are working on a draft of the bill granting the money to the universities. Based on the feedback he has received, Kopp said he believes the bill will pass this session. Although it likely wouldn't take effect until July 1, Marshall officials are working to establish the MIIR.

"We're already gearing up for the next steps," he said. "We're operating on the assumption that it will pass. The concept of opening this type of enterprise is a tall order."

January 17, 2008

## Universities Tie Spending to Work Force Development

Story by Walt Williams

CHARLESTON -- Two proposals by Gov. Joe Manchin to pump money into the state's higher education system to encourage work force training and business investment are getting a thumbs up from university leaders even as they ask for more funding than what already has been set aside.

Manchin, in his State of the State Address Jan. 9, unveiled two spending initiatives that he said would help diversify the economy and prepare the state's work force for the demands of a 21st century workplace.

The first was a one-time appropriation of \$50 million to start a "Bucks for Brains" endowment that would be used to stimulate research and development at West Virginia University and Marshall University. It is based on a program in Kentucky that state officials said has proven effective in bringing new business into the state.

The second was a one-time appropriation of \$30 million for two job training specialty centers at the state's community and technical colleges.

Both make up only a part of the \$460 million the governor is proposing spending on higher education in his budget. And while college leaders are satisfied with the initiatives, they told the House Finance Committee Jan. 14 that the governor's budget wasn't enough to cover all their needs without making tuition hikes.

"We need to develop programs," said Jim Skidmore, chancellor of the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia. "We don't have them now, (and) we don't have the capacity to develop those programs."

Officials from both the state's two-year and four-year institutions are asking for more money to help make their programs financially more accessible to students, particularly non-traditional students such as working adults. They also said the money would help them acquire equipment and resources needed to train a skilled work force.

Skidmore pointed to an occupational needs survey conducted by the college system that found about 70 percent of the state's manufacturers that responded said they had a shortage in qualified job applicants. Thanks in part to a large number of people now nearing retirement age, the state likely will need 10,000 employees in manufacturing, 2,700 in energy and 6,000 in mining during the next two years, according to the survey.

The community college system is seeking \$17.4 million in ongoing funding for the coming fiscal year. The Governor's Office has suggested about \$6.2 million, although an

additional \$3 million may be available for work force development, according to Skidmore.

It also is asking for \$10.2 million in one-time money for equipment upgrades, marketing and an allied health program expansion. The governor's budget proposed only funding the Allied Health program at \$7.15 million, although that would be in addition to \$30 million for job training centers.

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, which oversees the state's four-year institutions, is requesting \$249 million to cover basic operating expenses in the upcoming fiscal year. The governor has set aside more than \$235 million for the university system.

The \$13.8 million difference between what the university system is requesting and what the governor has budgeted would require a roughly 4 percent fee increase for students if the gap isn't closed, said Brian Noland, chancellor of the HEPC.

Among the university system's budget proposals is a 3.5 percent increase in salary for faculty and staff, which would cost \$16.8 million. Noland said the raise was on par with what other universities throughout the region were offering.

The university system also is seeking \$15 million in new funds for financial aid. Specifically, university officials want \$13.3 million for the higher education grant program, \$816,000 for the PROMISE scholarship program and \$1 million for the HEAPS work force program.

The university system would use the investments to increase access to higher education as well as make changes to the grant program to target adult students, Noland said.

As for the \$50 million for Bucks for Brains, he pointed to Kentucky's program as an indication of how successful it could be. Since that state's program started, research efforts at the University of Kentucky have generated 44 startup companies that employ 870 people at an average salary of \$61,000, he said.

Federal research and development investments at the research universities increased from \$76 million to \$210 million annually, and total research expenditures grew from \$161 million in 1998 to \$324 million in 2006, he said. Corporate research and development investments increased from \$105 to \$310 million

Kentucky invests significantly more in its program, but it has been around longer. Noland said the \$50 million being proposed was a good starting point for West Virginia.

Lawmakers on the House Finance Committee took no action on the budget proposals at the hearing and only asked questions about particular budget items.

# Charleston Daily Mail

DAILYMAIL.COM

January 17, 2008

## Manchin says transfer of Dow gift to WVU back on track Administration changes, liability cited for holding up donation

by George Hohmann

Gov. Joe Manchin said Dow Chemical Co.'s donation of land and a building at the South Charleston Technology Park to West Virginia University is back on track.

Last August Dow donated 58 acres and Building 740 in the park to WVU. Manchin presided over the gift-giving ceremony at the Capitol. Among those present were Allan Fowler, who at the time was head of Dow's West Virginia operations, and David Hardesty, who at the time was president of WVU. Both have since retired.

Dow valued the donation at \$25 million.

Jim Guidarini, Dow's new West Virginia site leader, told the Carbide Oldtimers' Club Tuesday that although it is commonly believed that the donation is completed, the fact is, "it's close but not quite done. I think we're a couple of months away. I think Dow bought Carbide faster than this donation."

Manchin said he met with the key people Monday morning in his office. "We got it back on track," he said. "We have a time certain for this to transfer. The target date to have all of the transactions completed is April 1 unless there is a snafu, then there's a 30-day grace period."

"We went through administration changes with President Hardesty leaving," Manchin said. "There were so many things. I told the people at Dow the new president (of WVU, Mike Garrison) had a lot on his plate since he took office. They laughed like you or I would. We were trying to get everybody back on the same page. We had a good meeting and got everybody back together."

"When the project was first brought to me, Hardesty and everybody was so cooperative," Manchin said. "I can't praise Dow enough. I think this is a great opportunity for the Kanawha Valley and the state."

Manchin said that from the start he was concerned about environmental issues. "Dow knew they would be liable for environmental issues forever, not WVU and not the state. It was a matter of just trying to get through the wording, the interpretations.

"There are new players with Fowler gone, Hardesty gone," Manchin said. "Everybody wants to get this completed. Everybody is very positive about it. We got it back on track. I think everybody is working in a forthright and cooperative manner. Dow and WVU and we want this to work. There were some misunderstandings on language and responsibilities and I think we've worked through that."

The April 1 date "is a reasonable time to get it all done," Manchin said. "Everybody thinks it's doable. Dow has been working in good faith for over a year. This needs to come to fruition."

Manchin said those attending the meeting in his office or by phone included state Commerce Secretary Kelly Goes; WVU President Garrison; the legal representative of the WVU Research Corp., which is the entity that will officially receive title to the property; Curt Peterson, associate vice president of research at WVU; Alex Macia, legal counsel and vice president of legal affairs for WVU; Andy Fusco, a lawyer representing WVU; Guidarini of Dow and David McClure, Dow's real estate manager.

"This thing is very much on track," Manchin said. "There's not a doubt in my mind these good intelligent people will work this out."

"It comes down to insurance, how to do it, what the underwriters want," Manchin said. "They're working through it."

WVU spokesman Bill Case agreed. "It's everybody's intention to do this," he said Wednesday. "There's definitely an intention on the part of the university to occupy the property and conduct research there but we must get through these details and complete all of the things required by the donation agreement."

## State superintendent kicks off student forum at Cabell tech center

By BILL ROSENBERGER, The Herald-Dispatch

HUNTINGTON -- State Superintendent Steve Paine said he understands so clearly the importance of 21st century skills that he believes getting feedback from students is crucial to the educational system transition.

On Wednesday, Paine kicked off a four-stop tour at the Cabell County Career Technical Center, where he spoke with students from more than six counties. He told them their input was key to understanding how children are learning in a highly technological and digital world.

"We haven't gotten to our most important constituents, our students," Paine said, adding that he already has input from teachers and administrators. "I think we're doing a great job of teaching students for the present-day world, but we have got to adjust the system to prepare (students) for the future."

Paine sat in on the two round-table discussions, asking questions and listening to students talk about the ideal classroom, what they like about their schools and what they don't like about their schools.

Many students said their ideal school would include online classes, more hands-on learning and teachers who understand and are willing to infuse technology into their teaching.

That coincided with some of what they didn't like. A few said they have teachers who refuse to use technology, even dismissing calculators in math class. Paine brought up a methodology that was started in the late 20th century, but only got out, "Nineteen," before Kanawha County student Matt Brumley interrupted.

"If it's 19-something, it's outdated," he said.

Paine also asked students what classes are outdated and could be eliminated to make room for more relevant courses. Most of his responses were to combine classes rather than eliminate. And when he brought up dropping drivers' education, students said their parents like the insurance discounts.

When it was over, Paine said the students' feedback would be important to the future of West Virginia Department of Education. And students were happy to have the opportunity.

"I think it's important to have the students' voices," Brumley said, who added that he hopes his 7-year-old brother will see the much-needed changes by the time he graduates.

January 16, 2008

## State official resigns from WVU probe; panel to be reformed

by The Associated Press

MORGANTOWN -- A state higher education official has resigned from the panel that will investigate whether West Virginia University gave Gov. Joe Manchin's daughter a master's degree she didn't earn.

Bruce Flack, vice chancellor for academic affairs for the Higher Education Policy Commission, agreed to step down Tuesday because of the WVU Faculty Senate's objections, Provost Gerald Lang said.

Many educators worried that Flack was too close to the Manchin administration, and Lang said Flack understands those concerns.

"He is fully respectful of the sensitivity of the Senate, and therefore chose to remove himself so there's no way that the commission's interest will be compromised," Lang said.

Lang met with Faculty Senate leaders over lunch, informing them he would accept their recommendation to add three external members to the panel investigating the executive MBA degree awarded to Heather Bresch.

The Faculty Senate will nominate and approve those new members, so Lang could not say how soon the process will get under way.

"I think it's imperative we move as quickly as we can," said Faculty Senate Chairman Steve Kite, who hopes to have the new panel in place by Jan. 28.

However, Kite said he's uncertain whether that time frame is realistic.

Potential members must be identified, approached for their willingness to serve, then brought before the 114-member Faculty Senate for consideration.

The senators voted 46-34 Monday on a motion to remove Flack. They supported the inclusion of professors Michael Lastinger and Roy Nutter, both of whom have previously served on the Faculty Senate.

"The other panel was fine, but the concern that I heard from the Senate was how would this look outside the university and outside the state," Kite said. "This will be a panel that should hold up under any scrutiny."

The committee is charged with investigating allegations reported by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that WVU officials rewrote records to award Bresch a degree in 1998, even though she only completed 22 of the required 48 credit hours.

Bresch, 38, works for Mylan Inc., a Canonsburg, Pa.-based pharmaceutical company with a lab in Morgantown. Its chairman, Milan Puskar, is a Manchin benefactor who also donated \$20 million to WVU in 2003.

Bresch has insisted she earned her degree.

Lang said his initial charge to the investigators was not substantially different from what the Faculty Senate wanted because it encouraged the panel to bring in outsiders as they saw fit.

"In general, we had the same goals," he said. "We ended up accomplishing them in slightly different ways, but we ended up at the same place."

Kite said he was pleased by Lang's acceptance of the Senate's recommendation and grateful to Flack for any time he'd already spent on the investigation.

Brian Noland, chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission, called Flack "a man of impeccable personal and professional integrity who would have led a fair and impartial review."

His resignation "is in no way a reflection on the review process and certainly does not undermine the ability of the remaining panel members to fully exercise their duties," he said in a statement.

January 16, 2008

## Out-of-state students vital, official says

By Phil Kabler

Out-of-state students will become increasingly vital to West Virginia colleges and universities as the numbers of state high school graduates plunge over the next few years, state Higher Education Chancellor Brian Noland said Tuesday.

“Quite frankly, it’s one of the ways we’ve been able to maintain our system,” Noland told the House Education Committee. “As the number of in-state high school students ebbs, it’s likely we’ll become more reliant on out-of-state students.”

The number of West Virginia high school graduates is projected to drop to about 16,400 by 2014, down more than 2,800 from 2000.

That will work out to about 1,500 fewer in-state freshmen enrolling at state colleges and universities each fall, Noland said. He said the drop-off is a factor of an aging and relatively static population in the state.

In order to maintain enrollment, Noland said state institutions will need to enroll more out-of-state students.

For the fall of 2006, the overall out-of-state enrollment was 29 percent. West Virginia University had 44 percent out-of-state enrollment, followed by Shepherd University at 43 percent.

WVU hit a milestone this fall, as the number of out-of-state freshmen exceeded the in-state freshman enrollment for the first time.

Noland, who himself was an out-of-state student when he attended WVU, said the benefits of out-of-staters are twofold.

First, he said, they contribute to the local and state economy while attending school in West Virginia.

“That’s tax revenue generated by these students being on campus,” he said.

Second, he said a “decent number” of out-of-state students remain in the state after graduation — about 15 percent to 20 percent, according to one study.

Noland said that’s important considering that West Virginia has the lowest percentage of college graduates in the country — and would need an influx of 100,000 college grads just to reach the average for Southern Regional Educational Board states, let alone the national average.

Noland said the state doesn’t lose money educating out-of-staters.

“The total cost of instruction for out-of-state students is included in the out-of-state tuition,” he said.

Nonetheless, out-of-state tuition is still a bargain compared to the costs of in-state tuition in states such as New Jersey and Pennsylvania, he said.

January 16, 2008

## Changes to delay WVU inquiry

Head of panel to investigate Bresch MBA resigns after faculty vote

By Veronica Nett

The head of the committee investigating whether West Virginia University manufactured a degree for Gov. Joe Manchin's daughter left the panel Tuesday, a day after WVU's faculty said he should.

More people will be added to the committee, a move that one WVU official said will slow down the investigation.

Bruce Flack, vice chancellor for academic affairs for the state Higher Education Policy Commission, agreed to step down after WVU's Faculty Senate voted Monday to recommend his removal from the panel investigating the executive MBA degree awarded to Heather Bresch, Manchin's daughter.

"I think [resigning] was the appropriate step under the circumstances," Flack said. "I very much respect the position of the Faculty Senate."

The faculty worried that Flack, as a staff member on a state agency, was too close to the Manchin administration. Flack said Tuesday he understands those concerns, and that he did not view the Faculty Senate's actions as a personal affront.

"I also wanted to do what I can to protect the independence of the Higher Education Policy Commission on this issue," he said.

"It's important to know, people on the Faculty Senate, in their remarks, did not question [Flack's] integrity or objectivity in this matter," WVU Provost Gerald Lang said. "They were just concerned that a member on the staff of the Policy Commission might not best serve on this committee."

The other two members of the panel are WVU professors Michael Lastinger and Roy Nutter. Lang said he has asked Nutter to replace Flack as the panel's chairman.

In their 46-34 vote Monday, WVU faculty also recommended that three people without any connection to WVU or state government be appointed to the panel.

Lang said he met with Faculty Senate leaders Tuesday and will accept their recommendation to add external members to the panel. He said the committee always had access to outside sources, and the power to add more members as they see fit.

The Faculty Senate will nominate and approve the new members — a process that Lang said will "absolutely" slow down the investigation.

WVU mathematics chairman Sherm Riemenschneider said Faculty Senate leaders "certainly didn't have any names in mind." He and Jim Harner, chairman of the WVU

statistics department, want people on the panel who are independent of WVU and state government. They also prefer investigators who live and work outside the state.

“The problem is finding someone who is willing to commit the time,” Riemenschneider said. For that reason, a retired college professor or administrator might fit best, he said.

He believes it might work best if Faculty Senate Chairman Steven Kite calls for recommendations. Faculty could e-mail and suggest who might serve on the panel, he said.

Riemenschneider said a dean of a business or law school or chairman of some other professional school might be the ideal investigator.

“[It] doesn’t necessarily have to be one of those people,” he said.

Harner pointed to experienced college professors and administrators.

“It would be good if they understand the academic process and higher education,” he said. “But again, I don’t think that would be a requirement.”

The committee is investigating the WVU College of Business and Economics’ decision to retroactively grant Bresch a degree in business administration in October, even though WVU’s official records showed she had completed only 26 of the required 48 credit hours.

Bresch is chief operating officer of Mylan Inc., a Canonsburg, Pa.-based pharmaceuticals giant with a lab in Morgantown. Its chairman, Milan Puskar, is a Manchin benefactor and also donated \$20 million to WVU in 2003 for its athletic department and scholarships.

WVU officials and Bresch maintain that she did complete the necessary credits in 1998, but the degree was not granted earlier because of a series of clerical errors. Neither has been willing to provide Bresch’s transcripts.

## Bresch panelist removal sought WVU faculty wants objective investigation

By Veronica Nett

MORGANTOWN — West Virginia University's Faculty Senate said Monday that the head of the committee investigating whether the university manufactured a degree for Gov. Joe Manchin's daughter should be removed.

The faculty voted 46-34 Monday for the removal of Bruce Flack, vice chancellor for academic affairs for the state Higher Education Policy Commission. They also voted to recommend that three people without any connection to WVU be appointed to the investigation.

"[We] support the efforts to determine whether or not Heather Bresch completed the [degree] and, if not, who was responsible for the breach of trust," department chairmen from WVU's Eberly College of Arts and Sciences wrote in a letter in support of the motion.

"However, the conclusions of the Panel must be accepted by the public and this will not be possible unless the Panel is viewed as being independent of WVU and the State government," the letter reads.

The letter said the investigation was "essential to maintain the academic integrity of West Virginia University."

Bresch, Manchin's daughter, chief operating officer of pharmaceuticals giant Mylan Inc., which is based in Canonsburg, Pa., and has a lab in Morgantown. The company's chairman, Milan Puskar, is a Manchin benefactor and donated \$20 million to WVU in 2003 for its athletic department and scholarships.

In October, the College of Business and Economics retroactively awarded Bresch a master's degree in business administration, even though WVU's official records showed she had completed only 26 of the 48 credits needed.

WVU officials and Bresch maintain that she did complete the necessary credits in 1998, but the degree was not granted because of a series of clerical errors. Neither has been willing to provide Bresch's transcripts.

On Jan. 2, WVU Provost Gerald Lang tapped as members of the audit committee Roy Nutter, a computer science and electrical engineering professor and a former chairman of WVU's Faculty Senate; Michael Lastinger, a French professor and former Faculty Senate chairman who sat on the university's Board of Governors; and Flack. Lang appointed Flack as chairman of the committee.

Once the investigation is complete, the panel will present its findings to the Faculty Senate, WVU's Board of Governors, the Policy Commissioner and the public.

Jim Harner, chairman of statistics with the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences, said Flack should not help write a report that will eventually be reviewed by the Policy Commission, of which Flack is a member.

The public and national, state and regional media have repeatedly questioned the impartiality of the panel, he said.

“This is not a reflection on [Flack]. That is not the issue,” Harner said. “I don’t want to see any doubt as to what comes out of the panel.”

To replace Flack, the faculty’s motion asks for the addition of three members independent of WVU and all state governmental entities, and who are preferably from outside West Virginia. The motion also asks that the Faculty Senate appoint the new members.

Lastinger said the panel has already begun its investigation, and the motion may force the panel to backtrack or stop its work.

“I’m here to listen. I do not take this motion personally, but it will not be helpful,” he said.

Lang said Monday the investigation is an academic matter and one that should be conducted from within WVU. The university’s faculty has a long history of investigating itself and issues concerning students and grades, he said.

“[This is] a matter of academic integrity within the university,” Lang said.

Mathematics Chairman Sherm Riemenschneider presented the motion to the Faculty Senate. Nutter and Virginia Kleist, associate professor of management information systems with the College of Business and Economics, abstained from voting.

Kleist said about 70 percent of the business college’s faculty and staff supports a panel of external and internal members. But she cautioned faculty not to jump to conclusions about what actually happened and who is responsible until the panel has completed its investigation.

January 13, 2008

## Wesleyan hoping to expand 'Idol'-style scholarship contest statewide

By Veronica Nett

West Virginia Wesleyan College has added an "American Idol" twist to its Wesleyan American Scholarship Program.

The college, along with Mount Clare radio station Magic 106.5, is offering a full scholarship to one high school senior who gets the most votes from the station's listeners. The four-year scholarship is worth about \$90,000.

Listeners have until Thursday to cast their votes after judging 30-minute-long video interviews with 12 finalists and their parents, which are posted on the radio station's Web site.

This is the second year for the reality-show-like scholarship. The contest is open to high school students in 16 counties across the state.

To apply for the competition, students submit an application and essay online. Wesleyan selects 25 contenders, and scholarship sponsors and radio officials then narrow the field down to 12.

"The competition is a combination of three things," said John Halford, market manager at Magic 106.5 owner West Virginia Radio Corp. "The college has a snapshot, the sponsor has a snapshot and the public has a snapshot, and the winner is the one who rises and wins each of those things."

The competition isn't just about academics, said finalist Jennifer Collins of Ritchie County High School. It lets the public judge a finalist's personality and other personal or academic achievements, she said.

So far, about 43,000 votes have been cast, Halford said. The station's listening area covers about 300,000 people, he said.

None of the finalists is likely to walk away empty-handed, Halford said. Wesleyan has been working with them to make sure they have access to every available grant or scholarship, he said.

The first runner-up will get a \$5,000 scholarship and the second runner-up a \$2,500 scholarship along with other awards and grants from the college.

Next year, the radio station plans to expand the competition into the Charleston area, Halford said.

The ultimate goal is to expand it statewide, he said.

Other than Collins, the finalists are: Kayla Bartlett of Philip Barbour High School, David Cutright of Buckhannon-Upshur, Lindsay Dawson of Bridgeport, Tiera Floyd of Braxton County, Jason Huffman of Buckhannon-Upshur, Danielle Kelly of Elkins, Samantha Kovar of Liberty, Jacob Rumer of Morgantown, Jacob Steele of Philip Barbour, Rebecca Stewart of Lewis County and Natasha Turner of Elkins.

Sponsors include Colombo & Stuhr PLLC, BioLife Plasma Services, MVB Bank, West Virginia Radio and Wesleyan.

January 13, 2008

## Art museum likely to go into new building at WVU

By Bob Schwarz

West Virginia University will still get an art museum, but it may not go into the soon-to-be-vacated Erickson Alumni Center.

When WVU officials first announced the art museum — after years of behind-the-scenes preparation — two years ago, they said it would go into a renovated Erickson Center, which will become available once a new and bigger alumni center opens this fall.

“The project has evolved,” said Bob Bridges, the university’s art curator. “We now know the condition of the Erickson Center, and the high cost of converting it to a museum space.”

Now the museum appears headed into a yet-to-be-built building beside the Erickson Center, Bridges said. Under that scenario, the Erickson Center would become an ancillary space that would house the museum offices, a meeting room, a lecture hall and café.

The Erickson Center’s temperature and humidity control systems cannot be readily transformed to museum quality, Bridges said.

A museum requires 72 degrees constant temperature and 45 percent constant humidity. When the temperature outside the Erickson Center changes, the moisture inside tends to condense on the walls and windows, Bridges said.

The university has penciled in \$6.3 million as its contribution to the Erickson Center renovations and a second building that was to house WVU’s rare books collection and provide storage space for the museum’s art. Now that second building will house the museum’s exhibit space as well, Bridges said.

Bridges envisions some sort of passageway, possibly an atrium, that would connect the two buildings.

The College of Creative Arts has committed to raise \$6 million to \$7 million for this project, which will serve both the university and the region, Bridges said. Dean Bernie Schultz and the college’s new development director, William Coates, have already raised some of that money.

The university sent out a request for architectural proposals, heard from about two dozen interested firms and received 14 proposals, Bridges said. One came from the firm of post-modernist architect Michael Graves, who designed the Erickson Center and has first refusal rights on any redo.

Built in 1986, the Erickson Center was an early work for Graves, who also designed the O'Reilly Theater in Pittsburgh's Cultural District and the Walt Disney World Dolphin and Swan hotels in Orlando. Graves has done multiple renovations/additions at both the Carlos Museum at Emory University in Atlanta and the Newark Museum in New Jersey.

The university has chosen three architects as finalists and all will come to Morgantown for interviews on Tuesday, Bridges said. He isn't saying who is on the short list or whether Graves is one of them. Expect the university to make an announcement soon after the interviews.

The finalists, who are competing for a job that involves renovating one building and designing another from scratch, understand the budget limitations, Bridges said.

"I think it will be a very interesting building," Bridges said. "We have the only building on campus by a big-name architect and now we have an opportunity for an architect to come in and respond to that building."

The architect will work up plans for the Erickson Center so that crews can move in and begin renovations as soon as the new alumni center opens near Ruby Memorial Hospital, Bridges said.

Bridges expects both the museum and the redone Erickson Center to be ready by late 2009.

Bridges, who had hoped to have a museum director by mid- or late 2007, said that process is moving forward. Bridges heads the committee that will soon pare those candidates down to a short list.

Both Charleston and Huntington have art museums, but the state's flagship university has long lacked one.

For more than two decades after the Creative Arts Center opened in 1968, WVU's only art exhibit spaces were two 1,000-square-foot galleries, renovated in 1995 and renamed the Maseros Galleries.

Space for displaying art has increased since then. When WVU built a new library, a renovated old library added the James Horner Davis Family Galleries, totaling about 750 square feet. Stewart Hall, where WVU's president and vice presidents have offices, gained a small mezzanine gallery. An expanded president's house now includes an art gallery where exhibits rotate.

The university has the world's largest collection of art by Monongalia County native and WVU graduate Blanche Lazzell, who won lasting fame for her pioneering work with the white-line color woodblock print. (A New York collector has more woodblock prints, but WVU has a broader range of her work, including many oil paintings.)

WVU's total art collection includes more than 3,000 pieces, including some from art professors — those have been welcome additions — and others from graduate students, Bridges said. "Once the museum becomes established, we'll focus on having a museum collection. The other work won't be [sold off]. We'll also have a university collection."

Works from the university collection could be used as a teaching tool for art students or for display around campus, Bridges said.

Donors, especially two who already give to the Clay Center, continue to give art for the museum, Bridges said. "Harvey Peyton comes through with a few works every year. He's still excited about the museum." Gina Puzzuoli-Miller, who has also donated art to the University of Charleston's Erma Byrd Gallery and the Huntington Museum of Art, continues to give, too.

Various donors have given works by West Virginia artists active in the mid-20th century, Bridges said. "These are all things that are museum-quality pieces."

Bridges said he has high expectations. "It's very exciting. Just the nature of museum architecture is very exciting. I'm very hopeful that we will have a renovated building and a new building that will be nationally recognized."

January 13, 2008

## Earth-friendly, money-saving measures growing at colleges

By The Associated Press

Millions of dollars are being poured into eco-building and other environmental projects to update West Virginia's higher education facilities, reflecting a national movement to "go green."

Among other upgrades at West Virginia University, a \$28.8 million facelift at Brooks Hall has given the building a new, environmentally sound "green roof."

A small plain of greenery tops the roof, growing from layers of soil enclosed in a waterproof membrane. School officials say the vegetation will extend the life of the roof by 50 percent and provide better insulation to reduce heating and cooling costs.

The building also enjoys lots of natural light through energy-efficient windows, and is part of a network of programs at WVU, including recycling efforts, light-bulb exchanges and construction upgrades.

Officials say the reason for implementing these Earth-friendly practices is due to an unprecedented demand from students, faculty and staff.

"For the first time in my career, and I've been here a lot of years, it's the first time I've seen this kind of unified interest and support, across the board and everyone really wants to improve things," said Joe Fisher, WVU's assistant vice president of facilities and services.

Beyond being better for the Earth, a financial bonus exists when it comes to many green updates: pay now and save on energy costs later.

In that regard, Fisher said one of WVU's best moves was contracting with Siemens Building Technology. The company's projects reduce campus energy use by evaluating and updating inefficient equipment, such as HVAC or lighting systems.

And, essentially, they do it for free, Fisher said.

The company's deal with WVU guarantees that it will be paid out of the university's energy savings over the next 15 years. If the school saves more than the company's fee, WVU gets to pocket the difference.

The first phase of the project is complete on WVU's Evansdale campus. The entire campus will be covered in about five years.

Fisher hopes a universal policy will be completed this spring that addresses sustainability efforts campuswide. The movement has created demand for a new job at WVU: sustainability coordinator.

The position is currently vacant, but Fisher says he's looking for someone to oversee the school's various green projects. The coordinator would create a framework for the campus' environmental impact, with a hand in academic areas, student affairs, facilities, transportation and parking.

There are ways that WVU has been ahead of the game. The university's PRT system transports more than 2 million students a year between the university's two campuses.

“We don’t even have a bus fleet,” Fisher said. “So, that is a lot of pollution reduction right there.”

Transportation is one area where WVU was praised by the 2008 college sustainability report card issued by The Sustainable Endowments Institute. Overall, the report gave WVU a C-minus. The study focused on 200 of the country’s schools — those with the biggest endowments. WVU has a \$471 million endowment.

WVU has only been included in the nonprofit organization’s study for one year.

“More schools are taking action on sustainability measures, in part reflecting increasing concern about climate change and the realities of rising oil and gas prices,” said Mark Orlowski, the nonprofit group’s executive director.

Greg Adolfson works with West Virginia’s colleges and universities to help them improve their sustainability programs.

Statewide, there is “not a lot, but there are some efforts going on,” said Adolfson, who works at the Department of Environmental Protection.

Like WVU, Marshall has paper and beverage container recycling programs for everyone from professors to tailgaters.

“We’re doing what we can, when we can, as things become economically feasible,” said Lalena Price, a spokeswoman for Marshall University.

Price said Marshall is taking other steps, such as purchasing Earth-friendly cleaning products or recyclable carpet squares.

Gov. Joe Manchin is asking lawmakers to approve a proposal this session that would allocate \$7 million in excess lottery funds to a revolving loan for colleges and universities who want to upgrade energy programs.

Adolfson said it’s also time to revive the state’s Collegiate Environmental Network, a program started several years ago to “build a network of the state’s 30-plus colleges and universities” interested in sustainability. The hope is the school would then help their neighboring K-12 schools implement recycling and other green programs.

“However, DEP has realized that it’s obvious that government needs to be just a little bit more involved because the group really hasn’t grown any since its inception,” Adolfson said.

This summer, the DEP wants to rework the Collegiate Environmental Network to depend on professors instead of students. The program can then avoid dips and surges that mirror the interests and passions of students from year to year, Adolfson said.

Campus liaisons could make more consistent use of a \$1 million state grant program.

“For a college, you can get \$50,000 to \$100,000 for college litter grants,” he said. “There’s a pot of money that you can use to help you support your recycling program, and eventually do more for your campus.”