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PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK NO. 21 Summer 2014

The St. Louis area weather certainly has been merciful this summer, and that is a fortunate scenario considering how busy all of us have been this season. At most levels of living things, health is associated with a moderately high level of activity. Lindenwood has a prime example of that natural law during June and July, with delightfully populated open-registration days and appreciatively patronized early-check-in intervals.

Soon the sun's rays will lengthen noticeably, the ferocious Lindenwood Lions football team will be toppling opponents (starting on September 4*), and we will be wending our way through streams of excited students traveling to and from their fall classes. Then the leaves will begin their marvelous fall light show. I thought about writing lyrics for a seasonal song that starts with "It's the most wonderful time of the year . . .," but it occurred to me that that musical line might already have been used in another context.

**Note: The first home football game will be held on September 11, versus the Pittsburg State Gorillas.*

Update on Student Government Bills

As circumstances allow, decisions continue to be made and actions continue to be taken on Student Senate bills. The new building directories our students requested are beginning to appear in classroom buildings around campus, and I must say they are as attractive as they are useful.

Fresh paw-print crosswalks will be painted this summer or in early fall.

It will be a while before three large campus maps will be mounted in certain strategic locations at the St. Charles campus. We are still working on that project.

We also reviewed the request for a campus-wide paging system and decided not to proceed with that project at this time because (a) the proposal would be prohibitively expensive to implement (in the upper six-figure range) at a time when we are trying to hold down students' tuition charges and (b) Lindenwood's Office of Public Safety and Security has been progressively improving our Emergency Response System, which includes both a very good text and email notification

procedure and detailed emergency response instructions for all buildings.

The request for a further expansion of residence hall visitation hours has been put on hold pending the development of a student honor code, which we feel must be a part of the visitation program. You probably know that students and faculty members have been working on an honor code; perhaps we will see a draft of their proposed system this fall.

Finally, several new meal-plan options will be in place this fall for both residential students and commuters – as requested. That was another very good idea. Much credit is due our student senators.

It's the Lindenwood Way

Employee Picnic Much to everyone's delight, this year's annual employee picnic, which was held on July 23, was the best one yet. Although most of the food consumption and fellowship transpired in the Evans Commons, the weather was so uncommonly cool and pleasant for this season that a lot of us mingled and chatted outdoors, in intentionally close proximity to the ice cream truck. The four LU pedal boats were a hit again this year on the lake behind Pfremmer Hall, and

there was the usual stellar lineup of games and prizes. The grand prize, a 40-inch flat screen TV, was won in a random drawing by Marquita Bowers-Brown, who is a Lindenwood alumna and one of our many superb adjunct instructors. Speaking of those instructors, at least 250 of the nearly 800 picnic participants – the highest total ever, by the way – were our adjuncts and their family members. It was great to have them join us this year, and we hope their participation will become a regular part of this modern-day tradition at Lindenwood.

Lindenwood’s In-House Legal Counsel, Eric Stuhler, and his family are responsible for planning, preparing for, and spearheading the implementation of this wonderful occasion each year, and many of you lent them a hand in making this happen. Eric, I know, shops all year long, with much “benevolence aforethought,” for the best possible bargains on the many gifts distributed at the event. Eric, Debby, and family, we can never thank you enough for bringing us Christmas in each and every July. Many thanks are also owed the all the rest of you who constitute the LU picnic workforce.

Adjunct Instructor Workshop We rely upon and appreciate our adjunct instructors, who have been an enriching part of the teaching and learning culture at this University for decades. Those colleagues bring a diversity of experience and applications from a large number of

perspectives and domains in the everyday world. Their alternative views and business-world applications of concepts are invaluable because they complement the more mainstream and traditional conceptual and theoretical frameworks offered by our full-time pedagogues. A few years ago, we launched a regular practice of providing annual orientation and training workshops for our adjuncts. This year's session was conducted for nearly 500 participants in the J. Scheidegger Center on July 26. The instructors started their morning with a complimentary continental breakfast, during which there were many opportunities to get to know one another as well as to meet several of our administrators. I personally enjoyed becoming acquainted with or reconnecting with several dozen of our adjuncts and addressing the whole enthusiastic group in the Lindenwood Theater. Afterwards, several expressed their appreciation of the various handbooks and informational flyers we provided for them at the gathering. I wish to thank all of these loyal instructors for giving up a Saturday morning to learn more about Lindenwood and their jobs here; as well, I want to congratulate Deb Ayres and Brittany Brown for setting up and executing what appeared to have been a very effective workshop.

Facilities Updates

Here are updates regarding Lindenwood's facilities projects, most of which were mentioned in the spring *Notebook*:

1. The new men's residence hall at the Belleville campus is under roof and within brick walls, and interior work is well underway. We hope it can be opened for collegiate inhabitants in October. The building, which is just beautiful, was named this summer. It is the Fred J. Kern Men's Residence Hall, in honor of one of the Belleville campus' greatest benefactors. A dedication ceremony was held near the building site on July 19.
2. Our Belleville campus is installing a lighted, NAIA-regulation soccer field on a large parcel in St. Clair County that used to be the location of the Harmony Elementary School.
3. Erection of the track-and-field grandstand behind the Hyland Arena at the St. Charles campus has hit a snag owing to a necessary delay in the sealing of the structure's foundation, but it should be ready to use soon after the start of rugby season this fall. I predict that one result will be even better attendance and even more raucous spectator engagement at this year's home matches.
4. Cobbs Hall is now air-conditioned!
5. At its May meeting, our Board of Directors approved the proposal to construct a 100- thousand-square-foot Learning Resources Center and Library at St. Charles. Preliminary architect's sketches

show as many as 15 state-of-the-art classrooms, multiple collaborative learning spaces, and high-tech amenities throughout. The preliminary drawings suggest that the building will likely have several façade and roof changes and large artistic glass panes on both its front and its back. In short, it will be the new jewel of our beautiful St. Charles campus – indeed, the most magnificent structure on First Capitol Drive. Its promise to facilitate and potentiate our students’ learning and developmental experiences is unlimited.

6. As you have noticed, mandatory periodic maintenance work is being conducted all across campus. The tuck-pointing of Roemer Hall (which is needed every few years to prevent leaks and crumbling exterior walls) is obvious and will noticeably improve the building’s appearance when finished in August. Road and parking lot resurfacing and re-striping, which is every bit as necessary as tuck-pointing, is one of the larger physical plant jobs that our Campus Facilities Office has undertaken this summer. One has to admit that the new blacktop and paint look sharp and tidy.
7. The eastern portion of our St. Charles campus is starting to approach its potential now, as the retail-business sector of that property continues to undergo development, something we had planned for so long. The huge new Schnucks supermarket

building and the associated parking lots and landscaping lend an air of beauty and excitement to the neighborhood. Crown Optical and the CVS pharmacy are also far along in their construction, and other shops will follow. Of course, DESCO, not Lindenwood, is the developer of the shopping center, which is known as **University Commons**. Nonetheless, the development will benefit the University by generating modest lease income for us and providing a “Campus Town” for our students and area residents. This Schnucks plans to sell Lindenwood spirit wear and, perhaps most exciting for some of us, will contain a Café too! The Café will have wireless Internet access and will be designed to be a place where patrons can relax and enjoy casual moments with their friends or browse the Web for school, business, or pleasure. This is actually the kind of store and synergistic University-to-store relationship I had envisioned and hoped would materialize. Schnucks will have its grand opening on the morning of August 6.

New Staff Advisory Council

On July 1 Lindenwood University established a **Staff Advisory Council**. The council will provide for the integration of staff

perspective by increasing communication with that sector of the Lindenwood University workforce. Council representatives were elected to serve as a conduit for staff and administration, engage staff in fulfillment of the Lindenwood University Mission, and identify operational and institutional issues and solutions for change.

Better Living through Cyber-Improvements

Lindenwood's Chief Information Officer, Shawn Haghghi, has reported that this summer his IT team is replacing the older, slower wireless access points in some of the residence halls with new Cisco units that will appreciably accelerate students' Internet connectivity. Other improvements include replacing 4-to-7-year-old workstations with new ones at several campus locations as well as outfitting a couple of Macintosh labs with new computers that can handle the latest software in the graphics-based communications majors that we offer. New installations affecting Lindenwood's IT infrastructure and electronic security systems are also going in this summer and fall.

Taking Assessment to a New Level

Dr. David Wilson is our Associate Vice President for Academics and Chief Assessment Officer. As indicated in his title, his chief duties center on managing and improving Lindenwood's general assessment program. More than that, however, he aims to advance Lindenwood's assessment system to a premier level – that is, to make our assessment methods and results package a prime example for American higher education. In pursuing that charge, he is backed by the full support and authority of both Vice President Weitzel and me.

Assessment differs from grading. **Grading** serves to formally judge and evaluate the individual student's performance in a class and can be influenced by variables not related to the level of student learning and development. **Assessment** measures what students as a group learn or develop and the amount of learning or development that takes place. It calibrates the effect and effectiveness of a curriculum or program irrespective of the formal grading process. It asks the question, “How did the students change and by how much on average, in comparison to the objectives of a curriculum or program?” Under most circumstances, it is not sensible or appropriate to use letter grades to represent assessment.

A good assessment operation provides summary statistics that inform academic, student-development, and administrative departments and offices – all of us – regarding how effective our services and procedures are and what components of our service need to be improved. It is then up to us to “close the loop” by trying out new strategies, tactics, and procedures to make the results of our work even better in the following term or year. The process is continuous and should lead to continuous improvement.

Our regional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, has asked us to improve our assessment practices and expand assessment beyond the classrooms to every program and office within Lindenwood University. That is the overall assignment that Dr. Wilson is responsible for managing. However, as he will tell you, Lindenwood is not stepping up its general assessment activities primarily to accommodate the HLC. More importantly, a superior assessment program will appreciably enhance everything we do and how well we serve our students. That is the goal of this whole initiative and the reason that I expect everyone at Lindenwood to be enthusiastically involved with it from this day forward. This system-wide commitment is something that we certainly want foster for both the University and the students.

Congratulations Corner

J. Scheidegger Center Program What a magnificent lineup of shows we have for 2014-15 at the J. Scheidegger Center! Indeed, many patrons are referring to this year's schedule as the best ever. We can thank Fine and Performing Arts Dean Joe Alsobrook, Scheidegger Center Marketing Director Chad Snider, and outside vendor Contemporary Productions for their expert work in engaging the professional performers and student troupes for this year's series. Several of the shows were effectively sold out in July.

2013-14 Was a Banner Year for Institutional Advancement Lindenwood's fundraising topped \$4 million in Fiscal 2014, which ended on June 30. What is more, that total was the highest we have ever had when unsolicited bequests (i.e., unexpected benefits from someone's final will and testament) are removed from the aggregated money raised. Under the new **Linden Grove Society** initiative, our annual fund skyrocketed, reaching a 150 percent *increase* over the previous year. The University also set a record on the number of donors, with more than 2900! The next closest year was 2010, which saw approximately 2100 LU benefactors. Finally, the alumni giving rate rose to 13.8 percent, which is also a record. Congratulations are in order for Vice-President Susan Mangels and her IA team for their excellent work.

More Lindenwood Scholarship The new editions of the *Lindenwood Literary Review*, edited by Professor Beth Mead, and *Arrow Rock*, sponsored by Associate Professor Spencer Hurst, came out in July. The *Literary Review* contains essays, fiction, and poetry created by accomplished writers and scholars from around the country, and it is published by The Lindenwood Press. *Arrow Rock* contains works of poetry, art, fiction, and nonfiction produced by Lindenwood students. Both publications are superb collections. My hat goes off to professors Mead and Hurst for their talent and dedication to literary and artistic excellence.

Athletes of Ancient Greece? Again this past winter, Lindenwood's women's basketball team achieved the coveted ideal of the ancient Greek scholar-athletes: simultaneous optimization of both mental and physical performance. Our Lady Lions had not only a very strong season on the court but also the third highest team GPA among all levels of collegiate basketball in the country, according to the Women's Basketball Coaches Association's list of the top 25 teams. Their team grade-point average was 3.759. We are truly blessed to have these coaches and student-athletes representing this University. Ladies and coaches, you make us maximally proud!

In Closing

I wish you a pleasantly memorable late summer and will look forward to having you join Lois and me at our many traditional fall events – especially Homecoming. Let's make this another golden year in Lindenwood history!

JDE

July, 2014