TETON THUNDER

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Fall 2011
Right now, the future is brighter than ever for your financial growth and you need advisors who see the right opportunities.

Our wealth management team offers well-designed, carefully crafted plans to fit your goals and comfort levels. Raymond James Financial Services complements American State Bank’s Trust Department services. Together, we identify the right opportunities in today’s economy to help you reach your goals—and far beyond.

Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC, an independent broker/dealer, and is not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC, any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, are not guaranteed by the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. American State Bank and Trust Company is independent of Raymond James.

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For many students looking to enter college for the first time, the focus often falls on class registration and the novelty of starting a new chapter in their lives. However, there is another very important factor that, while overlooked in priority, remains one of the most important hurdles students face in their continued education... how exactly to pay for it all?

We sat down and spoke with Tess Verlinde, a student at Williston State College, who is looking to begin her third year within WSC’s nursing program. We asked her to recollect her own experiences and to offer any advice for other students looking to enter the collegiate ranks.

WSC: When you first thought about going to school, did the money question come up about how were you going to pay for this?

Yes and no. I was brought up to understand the value of a dollar. I had a job throughout high school and eventually, before leaving for college, bought my own car using the money I had previously earned. That being said, when you are a typical 17-year-old, living at home with your parents, who pay for things like groceries and other miscellaneous expenses, you are lulled into a false sense of how much money you actually need for things. I also had the idea that I was going to work while I went to school. Unfortunately, I had to abandon this plan for the sake of focusing on my studies and getting good grades.

WSC: Looking back, would you have done anything differently when it came to financially planning for your education?

In a word, definitely. While in high school, I knew there were loans and scholarships available, however I became complacent and never followed through with applying for a lot of them. Looking back I would have applied for more scholarships.

WSC: Any advice you would give to a student looking to enter WSC?

Save as much as you can and only spend it on what you need. Simply put, use your money wisely. Explore all of your options and take advantage of scholarships when they become available. Apply for financial aid. There are a number of options available for students to look into. Take the initiative because it’s your future!

WSC: How have scholarships helped you?

There was a time not so long ago that I thought I might have to put my nursing education on hold because of the cost. I had mentioned this to one of my instructors, who in turn, passed on my story to the financial officer on campus. They did some investigating and found a scholarship opportunity that I was qualified to apply for and this allowed me to continue with the classes I needed.

I'm living proof that scholarships truly can and do help!

WSC: What are the benefits of a scholarship?

Plain and simple, it’s money for your education that you don’t have to pay back. With my school loans, I’ll have to eventually pay that back. Scholarships afford you the chance to get an education without saddling you with debt once you graduate. Don’t get me wrong, many scholarships can be difficult to get, but when you apply yourself and end up qualifying for one or more, it feels great!

WSC: How happy are you to be able to finish your degree as a result of a scholarship?

I’m so glad…and relieved! I can’t thank WSC enough. All I did was mention something to an instructor and that set the wheels in motion. I really feel that’s what makes this campus special. With its smaller size, a student really has easy access to the right people that can help make a difference.
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Mail your donation to P.O. Box 1286
Williston, ND, 58802
Welcome aboard!

$50 - $99
A contribution of $50 promises students an affordable education, keeps you in the loop on exciting developments and events and helps provide our communities a new generation of trained leaders. You will also receive a mug.

$100 - $999
Make a gift of $100 - $249 and receive two mugs and a tote bag as our thanks. For $250 - $999, we’ll send you two mugs, a tote bag and a first aid kit.

$1,000+
Join the President’s Circle for a gift of $1,000 or more and enjoy a relaxing dinner with WSC President Dr. Nadolny, two mugs, a tote bag, first aid kit and a travel bag.

The Williston State Teton baseball team enjoyed a very rewarding season this past year, including a run in both the regional and divisional tournaments, finishing just short of the World Series. Head baseball coach Shawn Cote is pleased with the accomplishments achieved during the spring 2011 season and is also hopeful for what the upcoming year will bring for a new team.

Last March the Williston State Tetons opened the season with a tournament in Arizona. There they faced some of the best in the nation including high ranked teams like Mesa and Gateway Community Colleges. They left Arizona with a record of three wins and five losses and headed home to face teams in their conference. The Tetons played great ball during the conference games finishing in second place behind Miles City. Six players made the All-Conference Team and Scott Jameson was named conference MVP. They moved on to the regional tournament with an overall conference record of twelve wins and six losses. They played through the regional tournament undefeated and finished as Region XIII champions, qualifying the Tetons for the district tournament in Boone, Iowa. Coach Cote was honored as Head Coach of the Year at the regional tournament and ten players made the Region XIII All-Region Team.

At the district tournament they played tremendously and made it to the final game, the qualifier for the World Series. Despite a thunderous effort, the Tetons were defeated, ending their spectacular season just shy of a World Series run. Teton player Scott Jameson was honored as the only WSC player on the All-District Team. They finished the season with an overall record of 22 wins and 19 losses.

Coach Cote is hopeful for a similar outcome next year, however the team has a lot of work to do before repeating such high accomplishments. Only seven players from last season’s team will be returning, meaning over twenty will be new to the Teton roster. Cote and his staff have been busy recruiting and shaping next year’s team this summer. “You never really know how things will work out until you get the whole team together,” Cote says, anxious to see results during the fall season.

The Tetons began practice in late August. In the fall season the Tetons will play 12 to 18 games, giving them a chance to build another outstanding team for the spring season. Maybe the 2011-2012 team will not only make a run in regionals and divisionals but also in the World Series!
Sudden Wealth

What would you do with an extra $10,000? Maybe you’d pay off some debt, get rid of some college loans, or take a much-needed vacation. What if you suddenly had an extra million or 10 million or more? Whether you picked the right six numbers in your state’s lottery or your dear Aunt Sally left you her condo in Boca Raton, you have some issues to deal with. You’ll need to evaluate your new financial position and consider how your sudden wealth will affect your financial goals.

Evaluate your new financial position

Just how wealthy are you? You’ll want to figure that out before you make any major life decisions (e.g., to retire). Your first impulse may be to go out and buy things, but that may not be in your best interest. Even if you’re used to handling your own finances, now’s the time to watch your spending habits carefully. Sudden wealth can turn the most cautious person into an impulse buyer. Of course, you’ll want your current wealth to last, so you’ll need to consider your future needs, not just your current desires.

Answering these questions may help you evaluate your short- and long-term needs and goals:

• Do you have outstanding debt that you’d like to pay off?
• Do you need more current income?
• Do you plan to pay for your children’s education?
• Do you need to bolster your retirement savings?
• Are you planning to buy a first or second home?
• Are you considering giving to loved ones or a favorite charity?
• Are there ways to minimize any upcoming income and estate taxes?

Now that your wealth has increased, it’s time to re-evaluate your estate plan. Estate planning involves conserving your money and putting it to work so that it best fulfills your goals. It also means minimizing your taxes and creating financial security for your family.

• Is your will up to date? A will is the document that determines how your worldly possessions will be distributed after your death. You’ll want to make sure that your current will accurately reflects your wishes. If your newfound wealth is significant, you should meet with your attorney as soon as possible. You may want to make a new will and destroy the old one instead of simply re-evaluating your estate plan. Estate planning involves setting up a trust to protect their interests and control the distribution of their assets after your death. You’ll want to make sure your will accurately reflects your wishes. If you decide to give or lend any money, put everything in writing. This will protect your rights and avoid hurt feelings down the road. In particular, keep in mind that:
• If you forgive a debt owed by a family member, you may owe gift tax on the transaction. If you pay a school directly, you can give an unlimited amount to pay for someone’s education without having to pay gift tax (you can do the same with medical bills). If you make a gift to charity during your lifetime, you may be able to deduct the amount of the gift on your income tax return, within certain limits, based on your adjusted gross income.

Impact on investing

What will you do with your new assets? Consider these questions:

• Do you have enough money to pay your bills and your taxes?
• How might investing increase or decrease your taxes?
• Do you have assets that you could quickly sell if you needed cash in an emergency?
• Are your investments growing quickly enough to keep up with or beat inflation?
• Will you have enough money to meet your retirement needs and other long-term goals?
• How much risk can you tolerate when investing?
• How diversified are your investments?

The answers to these questions may help you formulate a new investment plan. Remember, though, there’s no rush. You can put your funds in an accessible interest-bearing account such as a savings account, money market account, or short-term certificate of deposit until you have time to plan and think things through. You may wish to meet with an investment advisor for help with these decisions.

Once you’ve taken care of these basics, set aside some money to treat yourself to something you wouldn’t have bought or done before—it’s OK to have fun with some of your new money!

Impact on insurance

It’s sad to say, but being wealthy may make you more vulnerable to lawsuits. Although you may be able to pay for any damage (to yourself or others) that you cause, you may want to re-evaluate your current insurance policies and consider purchasing an umbrella liability policy. If you plan on buying expensive items such as jewelry or artwork, you may need more property/casualty insurance to cover these items in case of loss or theft. Finally, it may be the right time to re-examine your life insurance needs. More life insurance may be necessary to cover your estate tax bill so your beneficiaries receive more of your estate after taxes.

Impact on estate planning

Now that your wealth has increased, it’s time to re-evaluate your estate plan. Estate planning involves conserving your money and putting it to work so that it best fulfills your goals. It also means minimizing your taxes and creating financial security for your family.

Note: Experts are available to help you with all of your planning needs. If you don’t already have a financial planner, insurance agent, accountant, or attorney, now would be a good time to find professionals to guide you through this new experience.

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Williston State College will be getting a face-lift in coming years. Recent additions to the WSC campus include the new residence facility, Frontier Hall, and a new Sitting Bull statue in front of Stevens Hall. However these new additions only mark the beginning of the campus beautification process.

JLG Architects of Grand Forks has been working with Williston State for roughly three years and has designed the master plan for the college. The goal of the project is to make WSC feel more like a college campus, while creating more parking spaces. They will accomplish this by removing the large parking lot in front of Stevens Hall and the newly built Frontier Hall and replace it with green open space, recreation areas and walkways connecting the buildings. Lonnie Laffen of JLG Architects explained that when people picture college campuses they think of green walking spaces in between buildings, and with the addition of Frontier Residence Hall this August, a beautiful walkway and the college campus feel desired will be accomplished.

To begin the project at Williston State, JLG Architects interviewed students, faculty members and community members about what they wished the WSC campus provided. They found the most common response from those interviewed was a desire for WSC to look more like a college campus. Many people even compared the current campus to a Wal-Mart parking lot, referring to the parking lot in front of Stevens Hall. From these interviews they compiled a list of top ten things desired on the campus. “The beautification project covers six or seven of those ten issues,” said Laffen.

After the beautification project is completed the first impression of the campus will no longer be that it resembles a parking lot. The campus will remind visitors of a place of higher learning than a department store. The finished product will provide a much-needed connection between the new residence hall and Stevens Hall and an appreciated outdoor activity space for students.

Work this year in the master plan includes the construction of a new science wing and an iconic statue of Lewis and Clark. They broke ground for the new addition to Stevens Hall on July 20th of this year and it will be completed by the fall of 2012. The new residence hall, Frontier Hall, opened its doors on August 25th.

The beautification project provides an exciting look at the future of Williston State College. As the college grows, Williston State will continue to find ways to provide lasting education to all of its students. To find out more about the WSC Master Plan check out the JLG Architects website at www.jlgarchitects.com.
The perfect hockey team would have fast, skilled forwards, large, strong defensemen with great slap shots; and goalies with catlike agility and lightning reflexes. The final piece of a successful hockey team is the head coach who must mould the players into a team that approaches the game with a positive attitude and the will to win.

On paper, any team can look great, but it is that ability to capitalize on the strengths of each player that will turn the team into a competitor on the ice. For Seamus Gregory, Head Coach of the Williston Teton Hockey Team, there was another challenge, recruiting the first team. “I was appointed in May so I’ve had a little over two months to recruit an entire hockey team because this is our first year,” shares Gregory. But Seamus (pronounced shay-mus) feels that there is a lot of good hockey players that slip through the cracks every year at the high school or junior hockey levels. These players will fit in the WSC Hockey Program very well.

“Every year there are a lot of high school and junior hockey players that are trying to get to the next level, which is collegiate hockey; but they may not have gotten a look or may need another year to mature on the ice and in the classroom. We here at Williston State fit the bill quite nicely for that player/student. We will offer them a great education. Our school it still gives you that sense of a small private school. The new buildings, Frontier Residence Hall, Western Star and Career Center and the Science Building addition, are evidence that our college is growing. That is significant for recruits and parents to see, especially when other colleges are downsizing.”

It was that excitement that drew Seamus Gregory to Williston. Originally from Conception Bay, Newfoundland, Canada, Seamus grew up playing hockey on Newfoundland’s east coast. He played a majority of his junior hockey career in New Brunswick, Canada finishing up with the Fredericton Falcons in 2001. Before Williston State he was the Interim Head Coach at Lake Forest College (Division III MCHA). He is engaged and will be married June 26th, says Coach Gregory, “and we’ll compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association.” Fans will recognize regional foes like Dakota College, Minot State University and North Dakota State University. They will also get a chance to see the Teton compete against teams from Montana, Minnesota, Arizona and Canada. They will play 28 regular season games.

“30-35 very talented young men will soon be students on the campus of Williston State College, and that’s important from an enrollment perspective. Our program will bring not only new life to our college, but also students from many walks of life to our college community and continue the momentum of growth that we are experiencing.”

Williston State will also be a great stepping-stone for local hockey talent, with a chance to mature and grow physically while playing college hockey. “At 16-17 (years old) you sometimes aren’t mature enough to make life decisions. Players are forced to make a decision to jump into some level of junior hockey, stop going to school full-time and chase a pipe dream of playing Division I. Junior hockey in the United States and Canada is very strong, and I’m a former junior hockey player, but academically we (Williston State) will offer them an alternative,” continues Gregory.

They play here for two years, get a great start on a four-year education or graduate with a degree in one of our programs. Then they can make a decision to move on to the next level, whatever that is.”

“... and Career Center and the Science Building addition, are evidence that our college is growing. That is significant for recruits and parents to see, especially when other colleges are downsizing.”

Selling hockey players on coming to Williston State has become significantly easier with the addition of the new residence hall and other improvements made to the campus in the last three years. “Students are impressed once they tour campus,” says Coach Gregory, “it is a small school community, not overwhelming. Although it is a state school it still gives you that sense of a small private school. The new buildings, Frontier Residence Hall, Western Star and Career Center and the Science Building addition, are evidence that our college is growing. That is significant for recruits and parents to see, especially when other colleges are downsizing.”

Seamus arrived for his first visit to Williston during the aftermath of the April snow storm, which had left the city of Williston without power for a number of days. Still, the whole community welcomed him and made him feel at home. “I like the people, college and the city. I knew that it was a unique opportunity to start a brand new hockey program and I’m very grateful I was the person they selected, it’s a dream come true.”

As Seamus Gregory looks at his calendar, opening day of camp, October 1st, is not all that far away. “We open at home against Dakota College at Bottineau on Wednesday, October 26th,” says Coach Gregory, “and we’ll compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association.” Fans will recognize regional foes like Dakota College, Minot State University and North Dakota State University. They will also get a chance to see the Teton compete against teams from Montana, Minnesota, Arizona and Canada. They will play 28 regular season games.

“And probably most important,” shares coach Gregory, “... and Career Center and the Science Building addition, are evidence that our college is growing. That is significant for recruits and parents to see, especially when other colleges are downsizing.”

History will be made when the Williston State College Men’s Hockey Program takes the ice in October, and Coach Seamus Gregory will be proud to be an integral part of building the legacy that will come after that.
“We have been part of Williston State College since day one,” shares Pat Sogard. The “we” he refers to is American State Bank, an institution founded in 1906. “The college was a Community College down at the old Central High building. We’re not sure of the exact story, but American State Bank either donated machines (business machines like typewriters and adding machines) or we donated money for them to purchase machines.”

Pat and Tamara Davidson-Sogard are now the third generation of the Davidson family at American State Bank. Their commitment to the community is as strong as it was back in 1906 when W.S. Davidson Sr. founded the bank some 105 years ago. Joining the Sogards for this interview were Noel K. Hanson, Board of Directors; Ken L. Heen, President and CEO of American State Bank; and Debbie Richter, Marketing Officer. Their common theme was the commitment that American State Bank has to Williston State College and the community of Williston.

“Helping out and supporting Williston State College is just something we have to do,” continues Pat, “we know that the college and hospital are important to keeping our community thriving and vibrant.”

It would be hard to list the many donations that American State Bank has made to Williston State College over the years. But most recently the bank has made major donations to the nursing lab, the alumni room in “The Well” and now the beautiful new scoreboard at Rabon Field, the new home of Williston State College Teton Baseball.

“In the old days, there are stories about American State Bank providing funds for payroll to keep the college running,” adds in Noel Hanson, “but financial support is only a part of giving back to the community. Our people are also active, both Ken (Heen) and Tammy (Davidson-Sogard) have served on the Williston State Foundation Board.”

“We recently conducted a survey and found out that over half of our employees are WSC alumni,” said Debbie Richter, “that kind of tells you how important the college is to the community.”

“And of course the college needs the support of businesses like ours to survive,” said Ken Heen. Ken is also an alumnus of Williston State College. He was a member of the first class that occupied the first building on campus.

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American State Bank
Continuing a Legacy of Community Pride

“We are trying to set an example for other businesses, too. We all need to support the college as it is part of what makes us a major city in the state.”

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And what do they think of the recent developments on campus? “WOW!” says Pat Sogard. “In the past three-four years they have been doing things right. They now have a vision for what the campus can be. It really looks like a college campus.” And the improvements have helped in recruiting efforts at Williston High School, as 40% of the class of 2011 will attend Williston State College. “The new plan for the college makes people sit up and take notice. They ask themselves, why would I not want to be a part of that?” says Noel Hanson.

“From our perspective,” adds Pat Sorgard, “we need to support the college and the community. Our bank exists and grows because of the community and we continue to donate and contribute. That’s an important part of what we are at American State Bank.”
Moving you in the right direction.

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Behind the Scenes

Andrea Heller
WSC Bookstore Manager & Director of Student Auxiliary Services

In this edition of the Teton Thunder, we would like to turn the spotlight on Andrea Heller, WSC Bookstore Manager and Director of Student Auxiliary Services.

I was born in Germany as my father was an American diplomat abroad. My mother is French so I grew up speaking two languages. Due to my father’s work, we also lived in Iran, North Africa and the United States. When my father retired from the CIA we moved back to Europe and settled in Switzerland. I spent many happy years growing up in a small ski resort, going to school and working for the local tourist office. While in Switzerland, I met my future husband, Jon, who is from Williston. I remember asking my dad where North Dakota was and him wondering why in the world I needed to know. After graduating from high school I went to college in the South of France at the University of Aix-Marseille where I received a degree in French language and literature. Immediately after graduation, my family and I moved back to the states where we lived in Washington, D.C. However, that city did not suit me! I still felt very European and wanted to move back to Switzerland. Jon, however, had a different idea. He convinced me that I would love living out west in Telluride, Colorado where he spent his winters. He said it was more like Switzerland, and he was right. After we got married, we moved to Williston, where we’ve been for the last 35 years.

Jon and I settled on his family’s farm where we raised our two children, Jay and Sara. I was fortunate to be a stay at home mom while they were growing up and loved living on the farm. However, we went through some very difficult years in the 1980’s. Realizing I needed to go back to work, and knowing there was not much demand for a French degree in Williston, I decided to go back to work, and knowing there was not much demand for a French degree in Williston, I decided to go back to school. I remember being scared as I walked through the front doors at Williston State College because I was already in my late 30’s and wondered who goes back to school at that age! I enrolled in the Information Processing Specialist program and got to work! My fears were quickly erased because I had the best teachers who encouraged me to push myself. I quickly completed some of my classes and started helping Ken Quamme teach some of his. I was his first student worker. As time went by, I was convinced that I did not want to leave WSC, and that I wanted a permanent job at the college. Then, as a student worker one summer, I was assigned to do inventory in the bookstore by myself as the current manager was ill and was unable to come back to her position. As the fall semester was about to resume, there was some panic because nobody had ordered textbooks. I told my supervisor, Lester Olson, that I could do the job. Luckily, he was not aware I was totally clueless as to what to do! Books miraculously appeared on the shelves by the time classes started and I eventually got the job as the bookstore manager.

I have been the Bookstore Manager for 22 years, and as of July 1st, I am the new Director of Student Auxiliary Services. Along with the bookstore I will be overseeing our cafeteria. With the new residence hall, WSC anticipates an increase in enrollment, so food service will be an important part of my new duties. Without the support of the fantastic employees in both areas, my job would be difficult! We work well together and I am so thankful they are all a part of our WSC family!

Each semester she teaches around five to six math courses. WSC only has two or three math majors so many of her classes are filled with students who are completing requirements for other majors or are math minors. “I have taught just about every math class there is,” comments Melanie, who has taught everything from Beginning Algebra to Differential Equations.

Over the last ten years Williston State has become Melanie’s home. She has fallen in love with the community of Williston and the college alike. The math and science departments at WSC are top notch, in her opinion, and she feels blessed to have the opportunity to work with the other faculty members.

With about 20 years of teaching experience, Williston State College Assistant Professor of Math Melanie Herman teaches with a deep passion for math and for her students. She makes it her goal to share with students her excitement for math and desire for learning.

Herman was born on a family farm 25 miles north of Kenmare, North Dakota. After graduating from Kenmare High School, she decided to continue her education at Minot State University where she received a bachelor of the arts degree in computer science and mathematics and a bachelor of science in education. In 1997, she also received a master’s degree of mathematics from Minot State University.

Melanie first realized that math and science were her strong suits when she was in high school. In her first semester after graduating from college she did some computer programming work. Although interested in computing, she did not find it particularly fulfilling as her job consisted of sitting at a desk, alone. She missed interacting with people, which is one reason she chose to pursue teaching.

Melanie’s first teaching job was in Columbus, North Dakota, where she taught seventh through twelfth grade math and tenth grade computer classes. She then moved to Sidney, Montana, where she taught high school math. While living in Sidney she met her future husband, whom she married in 2007. Today they have a three-year-old son. After living in Sidney for nine years she found she missed North Dakota and her family so she began to look for positions in the state. In 2001 the opportunity Melanie was looking for presented itself when Williston State College was looking for a new computer and mathematics instructor. Melanie got the job and has been a resident of Williston ever since.

When teaching math, one of the most difficult challenges Melanie faces are students who have had poor experiences with the subject. “It’s difficult to get students excited about math,” Melanie says, “but I’m up to the challenge!” She loves the interaction she gets to have with students on a daily basis, for example those light bulb moments that come when students finally understand a concept they have been struggling with.

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For many in northwest North Dakota Herb Parker is a familiar name. The football stadium at Minot State University is named after his father, Herb Parker Sr. But the music career of Herb Parker Jr. can be traced back to a band called “The Embermen Five.” The band was started in Minot around 1965 with Herb Parker Jr. as lead singer and songwriter. The Embermen Five recorded several singles, but arguably their best was “Fire In My Heart.” One of the reasons the band broke up is that Herb was a senior music student at Minot State University. Leading the MSU music department in those years were John Strohm and James Jurens. One highlight of his college career was marching in the Rosebowl (Tournament of Roses) parade in California. After college Herb Parker Jr. taught music at Minot High School for five years. He then left and went to Oklahoma City where he performed in nightclubs for four years, returning to Minot to teach music at Bishop Ryan High School before moving to Williston in 1981.

In 2008 Williston State College was ready to expand their Fine Arts program and the availability of Herb Parker Jr., along with the WSC Foundation’s support for an expanded fine arts curriculum made the goal a reality. But unique to the program is the combination of the Williston community based fine arts groups with the WSC choir members who audition for the Chorale. This group meets on Mondays from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M. Williston State also has a Concert Choir that meets twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday, from 3:00 to 3:50 P.M. This group normally has between 25 and 30 performers and “changes every semester,” said Herb.

The Select Singers round out the choral offerings at Williston State. This group of 12-16 college students auditioned for a spot in the group and will perform a wide variety of music including swing, popular songs from musicals, pop and lighter music. This group meets immediately after concert choir, practicing from 4:00 to 6:50 P.M. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The WSC Concert Band consists of all college students and meets from 3:00 to 3:50 P.M. on Mondays and Wednesdays during the first semester. This band is also the “pep band” that performs at college athletic events. “The community and college wanted a pep band because it makes a big difference at the games. I started with 18 students and had the right instrumentation to field a pep band,” explains Parker, “but the band, like the choir, is always changing. We adjust to the instrumentation that we have.”

During the second semester the WSC Concert Band combines with the Williston City Band to form the WSC Community/City Band. The combination results in a band of 25 plus performers that meets on Thursday nights from 7:00 to 8:45 P.M. “The students get to learn from some very experienced musicians,” said Parker. “They also see that music continues on beyond their college years and is still fun.”

Students can continue to play during summer semester too, as students are encouraged to continue to play with the Williston City Band. The band has several concerts outdoors in the Virgil Syverson band shell, as well as other scheduled performances in venues like nursing homes.

To round out the Fine Arts program, the college and community have combined to form the Williston Orchestra. This group consists of about 35-40 performers, as well as the Williston Strings, a smaller group of about 15-20 strings. The Williston Orchestra practices on Tuesday nights.

“Both the community and college benefit from the Fine Arts partnership,” says Parker. “The college offers free tuition to those community members who participate in the combined groups. And from a college standpoint, the WSC Foundation has really helped out a lot by providing scholarships to students who play in the groups even if they aren’t music majors.”

Even though his schedule is fairly full, Herb is able to offer private lessons through the college to those who are interested. “Anyone can enroll at Williston State and take private lessons. We added private lessons in voice, piano, brass, woodwinds, strings and with the addition of Chad Askim, percussion.” Chad also teaches class guitar and jazz combo.

With a very full plate and several goals still ahead, how long will Herb Parker Jr. be able to keep up the pace and stay with the program? “I’ll stay here as long as I’m in good health,” says Parker.

For Williston State College and the entire Williston community, the growth of the Fine Arts program at WSC is certainly music to their ears.
Williston State College provides global experience

Williston State College gives students the chance to experience cultures from around the world, on campus in North Dakota. Every year they educate anywhere from 16 to 30 international students who come from a diverse set of cultures and countries from around the world. They are also finding new and exciting ways to bring international culture to North Dakota students and residents. For Williston State, it is exciting to host international students because it brings a piece of the diverse world to the students of WSC.

The opportunity to have international students enrolled at WSC really enriches the campus. Vice President of Student Services, Jan Solem, explains that international students make the campus more global. “Many of our students who have grown up in small town communities have never been exposed to other cultures,” she explains. “International students add a more global experience to WSC. They also give the Williston community an opportunity to see a culture different from their own.” This past year WSC has enjoyed having 16 international students from five different countries. The number of students varies each year. Some years fewer than 16 international students have attended, while in other years there have been almost 30 enrolled. A diverse spectrum of countries has been represented at WSC, including Australia, Cameroon, Greece, Ghana, Germany, Norway, Bahamas, France and more.

Williston State College does not currently recruit international students, so many of those who attend have found WSC on their own through the internet, or coaching connections. Solem emphasized that the international students that attend WSC have just as diverse of backgrounds and life stories as they do cultures. Some of WSC’s international students have attended high school in the U.S., while others are from impoverished countries with little opportunity at home.

At Williston State, international students have the chance to receive the same quality education WSC offers to every one of its students. They also offer English language courses so international students having difficulties with the language can learn along with others experiencing similar troubles.

New programs and developments in bringing international students to WSC have many, like Solem, excited about the future. For example, this year marks the beginning of a partnership between a community college in Japan and WSC. As a result of this partnership, three Japanese students will be attending Williston State in the fall. It also makes Solem hopeful about what this will mean for the future of international studies. “This partnership opens many doors for WSC students.” Solem also described a mentorship program between American students and international students that is in the works. A program like this will allow a U.S. student to mentor an international student and help ease them into the culture of the campus, community and country.

International students provide a great cultural opportunity to the students of Williston State College. They not only add to the diversity of the campus, but also give American students a chance to be exposed to a more global perspective. With the continuing development of international programs at WSC the college is growing more global, providing more chances for students, international and American alike.

As the Western Star Career and Technology Education Center, or “CTE” building opened it’s doors on Williston State’s campus, an era of educational learning in the region began. “The growth of the oil industry in western North Dakota has generated an incredibly high demand for workers with specialized skills,” states Patrick Hatlestad, Director of the Career and Technical Education Center. “It is our goal with this new facility to provide the educated students to meet the demands of employers in the region.” Hatlestad broke down the various programs currently offered through the CTE building, briefly touching on each program’s individual curriculum.

Welding Technology: Hatlestad explains, “here students will learn the basics of welding. Instructors will have them study and master over eight welding styles. Upon completion of the program, students will walk away with their certification and become immediately employable. We are also offering a high school course that is a basic introduction to welding, and is available to select area high schools.” Hatlestad states, “Students can take classes online from their respective high schools and a representative from WSC will visit each school to administer tests in person.”

Residential Carpentry Technology: “What is great about this program is that the Williston State College Foundation goes out and purchases an area home. Students then go to the residence and receive hands-on training as they remodel and eventually resell the house for a profit. This then allows for the purchase of yet another home for students to work on as the process continues,” explains Hatlestad. “We are also currently looking to expand at some point and hope to one day offer both a plumbing and electrical program to students.”

Automotive Technology: “Students receive hands-on training and in class theory in their college courses, and upon completion of the program, are awarded basic certification stating that they are proficient in brakes, transmissions and other automotive specialties,” says Hatlestad. “Again with this program we also offer an introductory course in high school students, which runs two hours a day, five days a week, for two semesters. Our hope is to gain the attention of younger students and get them thinking about possibly taking their training further at the junior college level.”

Electronics: “Currently this is strictly a high school course,” explains Hatlestad. “We have a cooperative agreement with Ebel Integrators where students get a basic overview of real world scenarios, from basic home installation and electronic networking to office networking. At this time we are also working towards establishing a two-year curriculum for a junior college level course for students looking to gain the marketable skills to enter this field.”

Computer (Basic Fundamentals): Hatlestad states, “here students are exposed to some of the basic fundamentals of the computer. They learn how the computer works and participate in troubleshooting simulations. They also learn the basic hardware configurations of today’s machines and gain a better understanding of each individual component’s purpose.”

“Many times students are not set up for a four-year program,” he states. “What we’ve been encouraging is what we call a “Two plus Two” program, where students enroll and complete their original two-year degree. Then go work in their related field for a time, gaining much needed experience. Then later on, should an employee feel they need more training and education, move to finish their final two years and complete a four-year degree.”

“Many smaller schools lack the materials to diversify their curriculum,” he says. “But through Williston State College’s CTE programs we can offer that to them online. We provide the theory and demonstration and can work with them to enrich the lives of area students as they transition towards the working world. For us it’s a win-win situation. We get a great spot of the art facility here on campus and local schools get the curriculum they need. Most importantly the students get the education they need to succeed.”
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Missing Alumni L - Z

If you or someone you know is on our Missing Alumni List, please contact the WSC Foundation office so we can keep you updated with everything that is happening at WSC.

Office: 701-572-9275

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