A campus conversation

In 2007 a controversial and highly publicized sexual misconduct case roiled the Washington and Lee campus, prompting President Ken Ruscio to establish a seven-person task force to study the issue and make recommendations for changes. The task force held forums with groups large and small. A campus survey was taken. The workplace environment and student culture at W&L were dissected and discussed. Everyone on campus and many off were asked to contribute. Rod Smolla, then Dean of the Washington and Lee Law School, chaired that working group.

“Last fall, as Furman prepared to launch plans to develop a new strategic plan, Smolla turned to the model that worked so well at Washington and Lee. Today, you would be hard pressed to find a person on campus—student, faculty or staff—who has not been touched by the university’s strategic planning process. Many of us have attended a forum, completed a survey or posted a suggestion on a discussion board. Some have authored proposals.”

In all, 82 forums have been held involving hundreds of faculty and staff. Fifty-four percent of staff and 87 percent of faculty completed a survey. Discussions about the strategic plan and what direction the university might take under a new president have been the dominant topics at staff meetings, in the faculty lounges and in the dining hall.

Less than five months on the job, President Rod Smolla announced the 16 members of the strategic planning committee, a group that would collect information and spark campus conversations. Since early December the committee has met more than 20 times and devoted more than 100 hours to the project. The mining for information and opinion has been wide and deep. And there have been frank discussions about the university’s strengths, shortcomings and direction. While all topics have been on the table, enrollment, diversity, student life and financial issues have been recurring themes at many forums.

“It has been proud of the level of openness and inclusiveness of this process,” says Smolla. “We have wanted every student, faculty and staff member to participate in this.”

(Continued on page 8)

Show me the money

“Cash, Coins and Collectors” on display

The exhibit “Cash, Coins and Collectors” opened at the James B. Duke Library in late February to an enthusiastic crowd of the curious as well as the numismatically inclined.

The opening marked the first time the library has held a currency-focused event, and the first time it has shown this particular set of moolah—the creme de la creme of a collection formerly squirreled away in the dark recesses of Special Collections and Archives.

The “collection of collections,” bequeathed to Furman by nine generous donors, boasts 74 pieces ranging from ancient coins to Confederate bills and currency from more than 18 countries. At the opening, exhibit-goers were treated to coin-collecting expertise dispensed by Craig Caldwell, a former history professor at Furman, and Don Kilburg, one of the donors.

The oldest currency on display comes from Furman’s World Coin Collection (donor/donors unknown) and dates to 336 to 280 BCE. The coin depicts Alexander the Great dressed as Hercules and offers a glimpse as to how people in power wanted to be perceived by the masses.

Diverse in geographic origin and age, the exhibit ranges from the Olga Marie Nilson Collection, featuring Mexican coins from the 20th century, to the Ianho Collection of ancient Roman coins from Israel and Egypt.

Originally scheduled to end in May, the exhibit will now run through mid-August. As Caroline Vereen, intern in Special Collections and Archives, says, “This collection represents a physical link with humanity’s past. It connects Furman to the world around us and those who came before us in an exceptionally tangible way.”

(Continued on page 8)
Changing lives

Service learning program connects student tutors with area elementary schools

One of Lindsay Gerzel’s first assignments as a volunteer tutor at Armstrong Elementary School was to teach young children how to read. It was a daunting task, but Gerzel was determined to help.

“Empowering students is my passion,” she says. “Seeing the impact of a tutor’s help on a child’s life is one of the most rewarding experiences I’ve had.”

Gerzel, a senior majoring in psychology, is one of several students who have volunteered as tutors at Armstrong Elementary School. The program, known as the Furman Reading Program, was established in 1988 and is one of the most successful service-learning programs at the university.

The program pairs students with children in need of extra help with reading. The students, who are called reading partners, meet with their assigned children two times a week for 30 minutes.

“I felt very happy, very thankful for the opportunity to be able to make a difference in a child’s life,” says Gerzel. “It was truly rewarding to see the progress they made.”

For some of the students, being a tutor was a way to give back to their community. For others, it was a way to gain valuable experience in education.

“Through the program, I was able to develop my teaching skills and gain confidence in my ability to work with children,” says Gerzel. “It was a great learning experience.”

The program has been a success, with over 90 students serving as tutors each semester. The students have helped many children improve their reading skills and gain confidence in their ability to learn.

“Seeing the children improve is the most rewarding part of being a tutor,” says Gerzel. “It’s a great feeling to know that you’re helping someone in need.”

For more information about the Furman Reading Program, contact the Service-Learning Office at 294-7503.
New Employees
Enison Elizabeth Anthony... Admissions
Farida Barkat... Human Resources
Fayre A. Cauthen... Athletics
Mary Elizabeth Duggan... Development
Antoine Goss... Athletics
Stephanie Howard... Art
James Joon... Athletics
Brent Koppelman... Athletics
Kiley Logg... Football
Norma McKenzie... Football
Sandra Melody... Housing
Mark Nelson... Football
John A. Queen... Housing
Daniel Popik... Men's Soccer
John Sik... Athletics
Scott S. Smojar... Athletics
Aubin Somers... Athletics
Jenifer Somers... Athletics
Joey Speicher... Athletics
Jody B. Windham... Athletics

Sociology
Kolb Ken... Sociology

Theology
Nelsen Brent... Theology

Arts
Jennings Jo... Athletics

Natural Sciences
Ryan Lee... Chemistry

Business & Acta
Bruce Clemens was lead author of “Caregivers of Environmental Interventions: A Reliable Typology,” published in the International Journal of Sustainable Management.

Chemistry
Brian Gaskins and Anne Hagstrom conducted research on the relationship between the Dihydroxy biosynthesis of Heliocarpus and 3-hexanone.

Geography
John Kemp has accepted the position of chair of the Environmental Studies Division in the School of the Environment at Northeastern University.

History

Library
Janet Varner presented at the Association of College and Research Libraries Conference in June this spring.

Music

Philosophy
David Shaver appeared with Robert Thomas of Columbia University, and other experts on the new public television documentary Asian and Islamic Religions: A Divine Encounter in America. Shaver was one of two experts research using Magic Leap and National Geographic’s “Vision” on the film’s production.

Science
Kiltofte Idella Glenn presented “Creating Opportunities for the Development of the Multicultural Affairs Office” at the President’s House.

Sports
Cilia Hill (left) and Development (upper right) scored the soccer ball during a face-off. Kenny Reeder came to benefit both the environment and tourism in the Lion. The tournament, which raised more than $3,000, was organized by men’s soccer coach Doug Allmon and the Athletic Service Corps. Games were played throughout the day on April 15.

Technology
Kemp John, who will be in Atlanta in December, presented his talk titled “Visualizations and National Identity” at the British Museum.

Theology
Koppelman David was a featured guest performer at the Third Practice Electroactive Music Festival in Rochester, Va., in November, and at the Florida State New Music Festival in Tallahassee in January. Koppelman’s duet with Ruth Neville, “dual solos,” was invited to perform at the University of California-Santa Barbara and the University of California-Los Angeles, in January in San Diego, as part of the Southwest Symphony Association meeting in Las Vegas, and “Religious Groups as a Force in Politics,” the Southern Regional Faculty and National Identity” at the British Museum.

Business
Columbia Business School announced that Tobi Lapidot, head of the School of Business and Economics at the University of Haifa, had been selected to participate in the Business and Economics program in Malaysia.

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Facilities Services

We welcome three new departments to our business unit. University Police, the Post Office and Digital Express will now also work with our Facilities Services. During the coming months, we will explore efficiency gains that can be realized from these new working relationships.

Rebecca Fell has joined Facilities as our warehouse manager. He will be responsible for the operation of Central Receiving, the stockroom, and even the operation of our table and chair setups. He is filling a much needed role in our management team, and we are pleased that he is at Furman.

We have received a new move in the low priority building as a gift from a very generous donor. Currently, they are in residence at the grounds building. An unfortunate encounter with the big snail (it is nesting season right now, and they can be pretty testy) left the smaller female badly injured. They were moved to the lake until nesting season is over and cooler heads prevail. Thanks to Sherrice Wright, head snail wrangler, and Annie Queen, pianist for the scientific team, for their expertise in dealing with these invertebrates.

The solar panel installation projects at Stone Science Center greenhouse, Lay Physical Education and Facilities Services are nearing completion. These are being partially funded by U.S. energy grants and designated funds. We are also planning to begin Phase I of the North Village Geothermal Energy project in May. This project will take several years to complete, but will render us much energy savings.

The library's Digicenter was honored by being a finalist for the Innovision Technology Award in May. This summer, we will be engaged in several major initiatives to provide more direct access to library resources, guides and tutorials in response to our current customers when it’s time to re-subscribe, and campus members will be able to navigate our online resources with greater effectiveness in view of the rapidly changing information environment. The recommendation is that students, faculty and staff work on re-testing the library to make sure the library is an effective tool in their academic endeavors.

The past few months have been a source of great pride for the entire Dining Services team. In February, Executive Chef Adam Fennell received the opportunity to test for two Pro Chef Certification, one of the highest distinctions for a chef. Not only did he receive his accreditation, but he finished both tests with an elite status, matched with Chef Isaac Toller and Nikki Brown. skill and creativity, set Bell Tower catering apart from other caterers in the Upstate.

In addition to Aden's testing, he, DHI Manager Jill Tramontana, and DHI Production Manager David Urbanik completed the regional ACE Competition. The ACE competition is an “Iron Chef” style competition with chefs from all across the Southeast. This past year, we had the honor of hosting the challenge at Furman. University faculty, University students, and local restaurants participated. This is an exciting competition that offers an array of sustainability programs, including master planning, campus development plans, and campus food programs. Furman’s entrance into the ACE competition is the first step in developing innovative campus and community-based research related to sustainability.

Furman’s Duke-ENDOW Sustainability Summit

Collaboration is critical to sustainability efforts at Furman and throughout higher education. Sustainability is uniquely poised as the sole area of offering corporate sustainability to post-secondary institutions, departments, faculty and staff, and competing colleges. One of the keys to success is to build the foundation of sustainability has been its partnerships with other universities.

Perhaps the most effective and rich collaboration has been formed by the Duke ENDOW (Endow) Foundation created by James B. Duke in 1924. Since its inception, the fund, headquartered in Charlotte, has proven to have supported four institutions of higher learning: Davidson College, Duke University, Furman, and Johnson & Smith College. University President, Beth任何, has been instrumental in the efforts of our students and faculty to understand the potential benefits of sustainability.

The Future of weight loss kick-started

During the first eight weeks of the intervention, participants experienced remarkable progress. Some lost anywhere from six to 17 pounds, and claimed that they had reduced their cravings for high-fat, high-calorie foods.

For many of our students, this was the first time they had successfully attempted to manage type 2 diabetes with prescription medications, one participant was able to dramatically lower his blood glucose and hemoglobin A1c; at the end of the intervention. His participation resulted in dietary changes, increased physical activity, improved blood pressure, and he was able to remove his medication for diabetes.

Our office is now a key part of the Furman community and is growing. Staff and faculty, dependents and students are asked to conform to a new initiative. We are here to provide for the students and their families. We are here to do whatever it takes to help our students.

We will be sending out e-mail updates to our current customers when it’s time to re-subscribe, and campus members will be able to navigate our online resources with greater effectiveness in view of the rapidly changing information environment. The recommendation is that students, faculty and staff work on re-testing the library to make sure the library is an effective tool in their academic endeavors.
Strategic Plan  Continued from page 1

At Washington and Lee, Smolla encouraged candid discussion and transparency, a process that eventually helped to soothe the campus rhetoric and led to the adoption of a moderate sexual misconduct policy that many in the student body could embrace, said Dawn Watkins, Dean of Students Affairs at W&L.

"Before this, all we were hearing was the activist voice," she said. "We learned that it was a loud but small voice."

Strategic plans play vital roles at colleges and universities, institutions that generally shift course in a pragmatic and deliberate fashion. If a small business is a speedboat, most universities are aircraft carriers.

At Furman, strategic plans have had lasting impacts. They define and prioritize objectives and shape resource allocation and institutional identity.

The 1998 strategic plan, "Furman 2001," established engaged learning as a priority and called for a slate of capital improvement projects. The last strategic plan, approved in 2004 and updated in 2007, paved the way for revising Furman’s academic calendar and curriculum. Earlier this month, Smolla presented the strategic planning committee’s preliminary report during two well attended town hall meetings. The 16-page document touches on many topics including academic excellence, engaged learning and community relations.

At the presentations, though, Smolla allocated a good portion of his time to discussing the need to enhance student life by building traditions, investing in athletics, and improving intramural and club sports. "We are real light on traditions here," he said.

While maintaining a robust academic work ethic, Smolla said most agree the university needs to “offer students the opportunity to have some space so they can examine where they are, where they are going and why.”

Another recurring theme was enrollment. Reviewing the number of applicants at peer institutions, Smolla said most agree the university has much work to do in marketing and enrollment efforts.

"A waste of resources by anyone at any cost needs to be considered. The notion that fluff brings about an attraction to the sort of clientele we want to attract is way off track. Our strategic plan should focus on bringing the greatest diversity of scholarship and cultural exposure."

—Frank Powell

The number one priority is preparing students for their educational responsibilities in a globalized era as being in the top one percent of citizens entrusted with a college education. Professors are responsible for demonstrating and demanding vocational integrity and conscientious living."

—Shelley Martin

"The strategic plan definitely should have a focus on diversity among students, staff, and faculty. It should provide opportunities for discussion and collaboration between Furman and the greater Greenville community."

—Cindy Youssef

"We have been engaged. We have been sustainable. I think it would be nice this time if we could learn to have difficult conversations in a civil way because we are bad at that.”

— Danielle Vinson

"We have been engaged. We want to be as a university. For me personally, one of the key aspects is the balance between our mission as a teaching university and an increased focus on research. The goal is to determine how those two things can be balanced and work together to further our overall mission as a university."

— Kyle Longest

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— Danielle Vinson

“Before this, all we were hearing was the activist voice,” she said. “We learned that it was a loud but small voice.”

“We are not nearly as selective as we should be,” he said. “We have a huge amount of work to do to get a much more robust applicant pool.”

“With an eye toward attracting 10,000 applicants and “repackaging financial aid to attract a more diverse student body across a range of characteristics,” Smolla said the university would devote more resources to marketing and enrollment efforts.

With the preliminary report presented to trustees April 16, Smolla says he wants to give the university community time during the summer to “digest” the plan. The strategic plan, he said, will be fine-tuned early next fall and presented to trustees in October.

More on the web: http://www2.furman.edu/about/StrategicPlan/