PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST

A report from President Barry M. Maloney
October 2016
Introduction

President Barry Maloney’s five-year anniversary at Worcester State University provides an opportunity to reflect on progress that WSU has made during that time. As the immediate past chair of the Board of Trustees, I have participated in annual and comprehensive evaluations of the president. I can say with great pride—and as anyone who has been on the campus recently will tell you—the WSU of 2016 is not the same campus President Maloney inherited five years ago.

Today, WSU is experiencing a period of stability supported by wise fiscal management that has allowed the institution to plan for priorities like improving retention and graduation rates, tackling rising costs as state budgets remain tight, and addressing the declining high school student population. Furthermore, there is a vitality and positive intensity to university work that is driving demand for new ideas, new ways of thinking, and new ways of educating students. Everyone expects more from themselves and each other.

That is welcome news for the Worcester State community as well as the community at large, many of whom got behind the youngest president in the Massachusetts state university system, unsure of where that journey might take them.

It has taken us far, indeed. This report outlines some of the successes of WSU under President Maloney’s leadership.

Sincerely,

Ronald R. Valerio, Class of 1975

WSU Board of Trustees (2005-2016; chair, 2011-2016)
Today’s WSU: a Student-Centered, Vibrant Campus

2011
• Students were often frustrated with enrollment, registration, financial services, etc.
• Website was outdated; did not serve as a recruitment tool.
• WSU was a “commuter” campus in every sense.

2016
• Enrollment Management Division has been established.
• Full-time retention director has been hired and Academic Success Center established.
• Website is redesigned.
• A 24/7 campus life is emerging.

We offer:
• A student-first Academic Mall for one-stop shopping for financial aid, registrar, advising, and accessibility services;
• A campus life that includes a new 600-seat dining hall, new evening eating options, wellness programming, fitness, intramural and recreational sports opportunities; and
• Expanded library hours, at students’ request.

Student Success Efforts = Student Gains

Our Succeed in 4 initiative kicked off in 2011, under a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, which provided the start-up funding for changing the way we do business. Since then, every relevant department across the university has engaged in the effort to eliminate barriers to graduation that are within our control.

These efforts are paying off. They have resulted in increases in both retention and graduation rates.

Retention Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Worcester State</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduation Rate (6-year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Worcester State</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-13</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-16</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, today’s WSU is a student-centered, vibrant campus where student success efforts have led to increased retention and graduation rates.
Opportunities for Learning Outside the Classroom

In the 21st century global economy, our graduates must be prepared to work with people around the world and with those from diverse backgrounds. Worcester State draws its students primarily from Central Massachusetts, and 96 percent come from the Commonwealth. Worcester State has increased “study away” opportunities by 160 percent since 2010. Our civic engagement efforts have earned us the Carnegie Foundation’s designation as a Community-Engaged Campus.

2011
- Few options for Study Away
- Civic engagement dispersed
- Limited student research and internship opportunities

2016
- 160% growth in Study Away
- Binienda Center & “Community Engaged Campus” designation
- Internship and undergraduate research opportunities growing

Students’ Graduate Outcomes Positive

The University’s most extensive Outcomes Assessment Report was completed in the summer of 2016, surveying 2015 graduates.

The average salary in that first year out of WSU is $40,357.

91% were either employed or in graduate school—or both—within 6 months of graduation.

2011
- 140,000 HOURS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2016
- 162,198 HOURS
  - 345 Placements
  - 275 Partners
  - 2,450 Students

In 2011:
- $40,357 in hours of community engagement

In 2016:
- 162,198 hours of community engagement
  - 345 placements
  - 275 partners
  - 2,450 students

$40,357 in hours of community engagement

91% were either employed or in graduate school—or both—within 6 months of graduation.

16% Employed
25% Employed & Graduate School
10% Graduate School Only
9% Seeking Employment

Five Years of Leadership and Progress | 5
Investing in Academic Excellence

New Faculty

Since 2011
• 17 new full-time positions were created.
• 90+ faculty have been hired — close to half of WSU’s full-time faculty.
• New hires have terminal degrees.

Big Data concentration in Computer Science
Mathematics for Elementary Education 1-6
Liberal Studies
Industry-sponsored education programs via Center for Business and Industry

In addition, two new master's degree programs are in the approval process pipeline. They would be the first new graduate programs offered at WSU in eight years.

New Academic Programming in High-Demand Areas

New Faculty Fall 2016

Five Years of Leadership and Progress | 7
Fundraising Doubled

Worcester State’s donations and endowment growth in the past five years earned the University twice as much as the previous five-year period.

The University’s largest single gift in its history ($3M) was donated by Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan ’55, USMC Ret., in 2014. The University gratefully named its residence hall after him when it opened in September of that year.

Capital Campaign Succeeding

The University’s “Change Lives” capital campaign launched publicly in May 2015 and was nearing its goal of $15 million.

Scholarships and Endowment Growth Aid Student Success

The first-year to sophomore year retention rate for scholarship recipients: 100%.

The graduation rate for first-time, full-time undergraduate scholarship recipients in the 2008 cohort: 15% points above the WSU rate.
A Period of Stability

Worcester State is experiencing a period of stability supported by wise fiscal management and sound oversight from the Trustee, Foundation, and Alumni boards that has allowed the institution to plan for priorities, such as:

- Continued re-investment in academic programs and more than 20 graduate programs;
- Becoming a state leader in Latino/a education initiatives via the Latino Education Institute at Worcester State, to address the needs of one of the Commonwealth’s largest growing populations;
- Strongly supporting sustainability initiatives, including installation of on-campus electric car chargers; and
- Fully funding Strategic Plan initiatives and implementing the multi-year plan.

Sound Fiscal Management

- Moody’s ratings excellent and audits clean
- New efficiency measures and revenue raising
- Energy conservation and sustainable practices:
  - LED lighting
  - Net metering to save roughly $500,000
  - Solar arrays heat water for Wellness Center

Inclusively Developed Strategic Plan Underway

The university’s strategic plan was developed with input from all stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, which approved it in 2013. Two goals and progress toward meeting them:

1. Cultivate a Vibrant and Collaborative Campus, one that offers an open exchange of ideas, and that promotes inclusiveness, civility, and integrity.
   - Implemented a “Talent Management Plan” and cultural competency trainings.
   - As part of President Maloney’s Five Points of Action Toward a More Inclusive Campus Climate:
     - The Ethnic Studies concentration rolled out in Fall 2016.
     - We have increased opportunities for cross-racial interaction.
     - 30% of the 2016 faculty hires hail from diverse backgrounds.

2. Promote Academic Excellence and Innovation.
   - The Worcester State Foundation has committed $50,000 a year for WSU’s Honors Program.
   - New faculty conduct research and are leading study away opportunities.
   - Support continues for the annual Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity event.
   - Investments in new faculty lines, is keeping our faculty-to-student ratio low.
The campus invested in a decade-long plan that has transitioned Worcester State fully from a commuter college with a small percentage of resident students, to a university with a substantial residential population and 24/7 campus life that will benefit commuting and residential students alike.

Buildings that Help Students Thrive

The campus invested in a decade-long plan that has transitioned Worcester State fully from a commuter college with a small percentage of resident students, to a university with a substantial residential population and 24/7 campus life that will benefit commuting and residential students alike.

2011
• LRC Building, other student buildings, and related service offerings needed attention.
• New residence hall and dining facility were in the planning stage.
• Leasing arrangement with owners of Temple Emanuel limited WSU’s use of the facility.
• New Wellness Center was in the planning stage.

2016
• Library building and library hours have been revamped and expanded, and the Student Center was renovated, making it more inviting and student-centric.
• Sheehan Residence Hall, with a 600 seat dining hall, was completed and housing hundreds of students by Fall 2014.
• Temple Emanuel — now May Street Building — and the associated auditorium and parking lot are now owned by the Worcester State Foundation for use by the University.
• The $52.6 million Wellness Center is operational, with expanded programming.

“Expectations are high by everyone for everyone.” — Former Board of Trustees Chair Ronald Valerio

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