

progress

in Higher Education

Chancellor's Corner

Greetings!

These are exciting times for higher education in Ohio. All Ohioans can take pride in the fact that our 14 public universities, 24 branch campuses, 23 community colleges, and more than 200 adult workforce education centers and training programs across the state – which together serve more than a half-million students – are working together as the University System of Ohio.



They are doing it in partnership with education stakeholders around the state – communities, business and industry, faculty, students, trustees, governmental agencies, philanthropists, private colleges and universities, and more – who are united in the goal of raising the education level of Ohio's workforce.

By following the roadmap contained in Ohio's 10-year Strategic Plan for Higher Education, which calls for graduating more Ohioans, keeping them here, and attracting more talent to the state, we are on our way to building the highest quality, student-centered, flexible system of higher education in the country.

We have moved quickly in the six months since I delivered the plan to the Governor and General Assembly. Every element of the plan is moving forward. This newsletter notes some of this progress and shows how Ohio's historic investment in higher education has helped the Strategic Plan get off to more than an excellent start.

Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut

Seniors to Sophomores Program Is Off and Running



Students from Brush High School, the first in their school to participate in "Seniors to Sophomores," gather with their high school guidance counselor during their second week of classes at Cuyahoga Community College. From left (clockwise) Basia Tanori, Neris Klimas, Guidance Counselor Karen D. Jones, Elliott Gibson, Ashley Markiewicz, and Kamry Wilson.

Of all the recent higher education initiatives, none generated more interest than Seniors to Sophomores, the innovative program allowing qualified high school seniors to study on a University System of Ohio campus, not only completing their final year of high school but earning a tuition-free year of college credit as well.

It is no longer a dream. This fall, the first of what is hoped will be many Ohio high school students began making Seniors to Sophomores a reality.

When it was unveiled by Gov. Ted Strickland in his State of the State Address earlier this year, the dual enrollment proposal was little more than a concept, but it began taking shape quickly after school districts, colleges and universities across Ohio showed an enthusiastic willingness to participate. In April, Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut awarded 49 "early adopter" grants of up to \$100,000 to school districts and partners interested in implementing Seniors to Sophomores pilot programs. These planning grants went to rural, suburban and urban districts large and small.

Continued on page 3

Keeping a Promise to Veterans

Expanding educational opportunities for veterans, a key goal of the Ohio's 10-year *Strategic Plan for Higher Education*, got a major boost in July when Governor Ted Strickland signed an executive order creating the Ohio GI Promise, which guarantees in-state tuition rates at Ohio colleges and universities to eligible veterans and their families, no matter where they are from.

The Ohio GI Promise, coupled with the new GI Bill passed by Congress, which offers full scholarships at in-state public schools as well as generous textbook and housing stipends, means that eligible veterans of the U.S. Armed Services will be able to attend college here essentially for free. Ohio is the first state in the nation to make such a sweeping offer to veterans.

The executive order also establishes the Ohio GI Promise Council, which will be responsible for marketing educational opportunities in Ohio to veterans nationwide, and for making sure Ohio's schools have the best possible programs and services available for veterans. A Web site (<http://uso.edu/opportunities/ohioGIpromise>) and Hotline (1-877-VETS-OH-1) were established to provide information to interested veterans.

The Ohio Board of Regents and the Ohio Department of Veterans Services will host a November 12 conference bringing together officials from every institution in the University System of Ohio to examine best practices for providing services to veterans. Also attending will be representatives of the U.S. Military, the National Guard, the American Council on Education, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and other local and regional veterans' organizations.

The Board of Regents is working with the American Council of Education to certify all Ohio colleges and universities as "Servicemember Opportunity Colleges." Schools with this designation pledge to accept all ACE-approved college credits earned during military service.



Governor Strickland greets members of the Ohio National Guard who joined him at the 7-8-08 signing of the executive order establishing the Ohio GI Promise.

The University System of Ohio's commitment to welcoming veterans not only honors their service to the nation, it serves the interests of the state of Ohio. Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut noted that the *Strategic Plan* calls for attracting talented out-of-state students to study here, and stay on afterwards, so the Ohio GI Promise dovetails perfectly with the state's larger economic development goals.

"Veteran students bring maturity, motivation and leadership with them," he said. "They are precisely the kind of students Ohio needs in its colleges and universities."

Ohio G.I. Promise Statewide Conference on Veterans Services

November 12, 2008
Columbus, Ohio

One-day event on giving back to our veterans by building the best network of veteran-friendly, on-campus services in the country. The University System of Ohio will provide the tools necessary for veterans and their families to get the most successful education experience possible. The conference asks "Where are we now?" "What are best practices?" "How will we ensure credit transfers for work done in military service?" and more. Sponsored by the Ohio Board of Regents and the Ohio Department of Veterans Services.

Seniors to Sophomores Program Is Off and Running *From page 1*

Despite the tight time frame, many of these districts completed arrangements to send academically eligible students to their University System of Ohio partner campuses during the 2008-09 academic year. Although exact figures will be reported at a later date, projections show that several hundred students will participate this year. These students are the pioneers in a program expected to be widely available to high school seniors in coming years.

To highlight a few, Columbus City Schools, which established Seniors to Sophomores partnerships with The Ohio State University, Columbus State Community College, Ohio Dominican University, Franklin University, Capital University, and the Pickerington Campus of Ohio University, will send more than 20 seniors to study at college this year. The City of Akron Schools will enroll a similar number of students at the University of Akron. The South Euclid-Lyndhurst City School District teamed up with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District and Cuyahoga Community College (CCC) to design and pilot their program, which puts close to 20 high school seniors from Brush High School and Cleve-

land Heights High School on the CCC-East Campus for the full academic year.

To qualify for Seniors to Sophomores around the state, high school students must pass the Ohio Graduation Test, successfully complete three years of English, plus Algebra II or its equivalent, and score college ready on the college partner's entrance assessment.

"With Seniors to Sophomores, we found out that great colleges and universities are willing to stand up and take a chance on students who are willing to step forward . . . that great school districts across our state see the potential in their students... that parents around the state believe in their kids and know that their kids can achieve beyond anything, anything that anyone has ever thought."

- Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut

The benefits for participating students are obvious: Seniors to Sophomores will save them both time and money in earning a college degree, lopping off one full year of study and all the costs associated with it. The program also should appeal to students who feel they need more of a challenge than high school provides. Early indications are that a high percentage of those enrolling are the first in their families to attend college.

The State of Ohio's interests are served as well by making college more affordable and accessible for good students who one day will graduate and help contribute to Ohio's revitalized economy.

More than 30 University System of Ohio colleges and universities are partners in pilot programs designed to bring Seniors to Sophomores students to campus for a tuition-free freshman year.

University System of Ohio Partners

The University of Akron
Belmont Technical College
Bowling Green State University - Firelands
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati State Technical & Community College
Clark State Community College
Columbus State Community College
Cuyahoga Community College
Hocking College
Kent State University East Liverpool
Kent State University Salem
Kent State University Stark
Lorain County Community College
Marion Technical College
Miami University - Middletown
North Central State College
The Ohio State University

The Ohio State University - Mansfield
Ohio University - Chillicothe
Ohio University - Eastern
Ohio University - Lancaster
Ohio University - Pickerington
Ohio University - Southern
Rio Grande Community College
Shawnee State University
Sinclair Community College
Southern State Community College
Stark State College of Technology
Terra Community College
The University of Toledo
Washington State Community College
Wright State University
Zane State College

Measuring Up to the Best

Without accountability, claims of academic excellence are just that – claims. If Ohio’s public universities are to achieve the excellence envisioned in the 10-year *Strategic Plan for Higher Education*, their progress must be objectively evaluated and measured.

A major step toward realizing that goal came this year with the enrollment of all 14 state universities in the Voluntary System of Accountability, a measure called for in the *Strategic Plan*. The VSA is a program run by a nationwide consortium of colleges and universities. The performance of each VSA school is evaluated on a wide range of measures, allowing the public to compare the data with other schools around the country. Although individual institutions were already VSA members, Ohio is one of the first states to have all its public universities participate as a system.

Since joining the VSA, several Ohio universities have already provided the consortium with data that has allowed for their VSA profiles to be posted at www.voluntarysystem.org. Once all Ohio’s profiles are complete, the VSA assessments, along with other specific accountability measures called for in the *Strategic Plan*, will be compiled into an Ohio College Portrait for each school. These Portraits will be available on the University System of Ohio website, and will offer easily understandable, standardized information about each school (in such areas as price, financial aid, degree programs, retention and graduation rates, campus safety, student satisfaction and student learning outcomes), allowing prospective students to make apple-to-apple comparisons and find the perfect educational environment for themselves.

The University System of Ohio’s goal is not merely to claim excellence – but to prove it.

Ohio’s 30-Mile Promise

The question is fundamental to higher education in Ohio: How do we graduate more Ohioans? And the answer is equally fundamental: By making college more affordable and accessible.

Achieving those complementary goals is a major thrust of the 10-year *Strategic Plan*. Its “30-Mile Promise” declares that high-quality associate and bachelor’s degrees will be available within 30 miles of every Ohioan, and the cost of these degrees will be among the 10 lowest in the nation.

That’s a tall order, but the University System of Ohio is making great strides toward turning it into reality.

Fortunately, the infrastructure was already in place, thanks to Ohio’s extensive network of community colleges and regional campuses. The community colleges have forged a growing number of bi-lateral partnerships with University System of Ohio universities, in which community college graduates are guaranteed enrollment in the university for their third and fourth years, with all credits earned for their associate degree fully transferable. They are also entering into “2+2” agreements where students can earn both associate and bachelor’s degrees from two different institutions while remaining on the same campus. The savings a student will enjoy by combining a community college and university education makes this one of the lowest-cost paths to a bachelor’s degree available anywhere.

Among the “2+2” and bi-lateral partnerships announced so far:

- Lorain County Community College offers more than 40 different bachelor’s and master’s programs on its campus through partnerships with Bowling Green State University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, Ohio University, The University of Akron, Youngstown State University and The University of Toledo.
- Sinclair Community College has established on-campus or on-line partnerships with Central State Community College, the University of Cincinnati, Miami University, The University of Toledo, Wright State University and Ohio University.
- Lakeland Community College has partnerships with Cleveland State University, the University of Cincinnati, The University of Toledo and Kent State University Geauga.
- Columbus State Community College has partnerships with Ohio University, The University of Akron, Miami University and The University of Toledo.
- Cuyahoga Community College has partnerships with Central State University, Miami University, Ohio University, The University of Toledo and Youngstown State University.

In addition to the University System of Ohio partnerships, a number of community colleges have established similar agreements with private universities and colleges in Ohio. And all across the state, discussions are underway among University System of Ohio schools to create even more of these opportunities.

By linking Ohio’s fine institutions into a cooperative network, and initiating initiatives such as lowering the cost of textbooks, a college education will truly be within the geographic and financial reach of every Ohioan who desires one.

And the 30-Mile Promise will be a promise kept.

Investment in Excellence Aims to Re-claim Ohio's Innovative Heritage

In the early years of the last century, Ohio was a world-renowned cradle of technology, invention and innovation. Now, two new programs of the *Ohio Innovation Partnership* totaling nearly \$250 million in scholarships and research funds – which will be leveraged with private funds to a half-billion dollar investment – seek to return the state to its former position of prominence.

Ohio Research Scholars Program

“If we all did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves.”

- Thomas A. Edison
(1847-1931)

In a collaboration between the University System of Ohio and the Third Frontier Commission, grants totaling \$146.5 million were awarded through the *Ohio Research Scholars Program* to 11 collaborative partnerships, made up of University System of Ohio schools, private universities, and industry that the state believes will have the most impact on advancing Ohio's

global position in technology commercialization. The grants provide funding for the schools to recruit world-class research faculty in the so-called STEM disciplines: science, technology, engineering, math and medicine. The state's investment will bring a total of 26 new research scholars and teams to Ohio campuses, and will provide funding for cutting-edge research projects that have special focus on long-term regional economic development, as well.

The largest grant, \$27.5 million, went to a partnership led by the University of Cincinnati and includes the University of Dayton and The Ohio State University. The money will be used to form a research cluster studying power and propulsion, and will fund the addition of five senior research scientists at the three universities.

In announcing the awards with Lt. Gov. Lee Fisher, who chairs the Third Frontier Commission and also directs the Department of Development, Chancellor Eric Fingerhut noted that the *Ohio Research Scholars Program* advances the 10-year *Strategic Plan for Higher Education* by attracting world-class scholars and researchers to the state, helping to create the centers of excellence on Ohio's campuses called for in the plan. And, he added, the program aligns perfectly with the state's economic priorities, for from such research will come the jobs of tomorrow.

“If we all worked on the assumption that what is accepted as true is really true, there would be little hope of advance.”

- Orville Wright
(1871-1948)



CHOOSE OHIO FIRST SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Investing in the future is also the motivation behind the *Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program*, which, like the *Ohio Research Scholars Program*, is part of the *Ohio Innovation Partnership* created by the General Assembly to increase Ohio's global competitiveness.

In this, the first year, of *Choose Ohio First*, a total of \$50 million was awarded to public and private schools in Ohio for scholarships aimed at keeping the state's most promising students here. Over the next five years, *Choose Ohio First* scholarships are expected to produce more than 5,700 graduates in the fields of science, technology, engineering, math and medicine, or STEM education disciplines.

Ohio's first wave of *Choose Ohio First* scholarship recipients have been recruited and are on Ohio campuses this fall. With the state's investment, they may someday join esteemed Ohio innovators before them – the Wilbur and Orville Wrights, Charles Ketterings, Thomas Edisons and Garrett Morgans – to lead once again Ohio and the nation in advancing designs and ideas that transform economies, markets, and lives of the citizens of the State of Ohio.

Ohio Skills Bank: Building Ohio's Demand-Driven Workforce

The State of Ohio is working to build a single, integrated adult education and workforce system that is directly responsive to the needs of Ohio's employers. This is taking shape in the form of the Ohio Skills Bank, an initiative designed to improve the linkage between regional workforce supply and employer demand, and which is a cornerstone of Ohio's 10-year *Strategic Plan for Higher Education*.

As industry has changed over the years, employee skills requirements have changed as well, and businesses struggle to find qualified workers to fill positions. With support of the leaders of the state's business community and higher education system, the Ohio Skills Bank is linking industry demand to workforce supply in the state's 12 economic development regions. Demand for employment in each region is being measured against the supply of students and programs available, and the programs offered will be adjusted accordingly.

"The Ohio Skills Bank is producing the demand-driven workforce the state has promised Ohio industry," said Chancellor Eric Fingerhut. "By better aligning workforce training and skills development with the needs of employers doing business in the state's most critical industries, we have the opportunity to transform Ohio's adult education system into a demand-driven engine of economic development for the state."

"The future of jobs growth in Ohio is in investing in our regional strengths and in making sure we have the most educated, highly skilled workforce possible."

- Governor Ted Strickland

University System of Ohio Reaches Year One Milestone

Re-launches Web Site, Celebrates Its Colleges and Universities

The University System of Ohio reached its one-year anniversary in August and marked the milestone by re-launching its Web site at www.uso.edu and highlighting accomplishments achieved by its colleges and universities over the course of the past year. The site contains new tools for current and prospective students involving affordable textbooks, early college credit programs, grants and scholarships, college and university profiles and more. There are downloads, web videos, and a news tracker, which shares college and university news across the System. A separate section details the *Strategic Plan for Higher Education* and provides an Educational Attainment Dashboard designed to measure progress made by higher education in Ohio over the next 10 years.



www.uso.edu

University System of Ohio Makes College Textbooks More Affordable

If the University System of Ohio is to achieve its goal of making college more affordable, the discussion must include the cost of textbooks. For most students, a visit to the campus bookstore is a painful experience, and for some, the cost of textbooks is actually a financial barrier to college itself.

To address this issue, Chancellor Fingerhut convened a Textbook Affordability Symposium in April, bringing together students, faculty, bookstore managers, publishers, and key civic and community leaders. Participants discussed ways of reducing student out-of-pocket costs for college textbooks and related materials.

The symposium is already paying dividends to Ohio college students. In August, the University System of Ohio entered into an agreement with the nation's six largest commercial publishers to offer Ohio college students significant discounts on electronic textbook purchases. Effective immediately, students purchasing eTextbooks through the Ohio Textbook Portal at <http://textbooks.uso.edu> qualify for a University System of Ohio discount. Students can also purchase discounted digital material, such as articles, cases, stand-alone textbook chapters, and other copyrighted materials, as supplements to the textbook.

Two other new programs will reward University System of Ohio faculty who find innovative ways to reduce the price of textbooks for students across the system. The University System of Ohio Textbook Affordability Grants program makes \$250,000 available to faculty teams who develop, build, and package collections of course materials offered free to students. The University System of Ohio will fund as many as five projects up to \$50,000 per course offering.

Ten outstanding faculty members at Ohio public institutions who have already developed course materials that passed savings along to students will receive the first set of University System of Ohio's Faculty Innovator Awards. Ten winners will be chosen from nominations by students, administrators, and other faculty members to receive cash awards of \$1,000 each.

It is expected that the discounts on electronic books and the monetary rewards to faculty members will lead to a new business model, providing consumer-driven savings for students over the long-term.

Bringing Promise and Opportunity to the Mahoning Valley

Ohio's not-so-secret weapon in its higher education arsenal is its excellent network of 23 community colleges. And if Governor Strickland's target of 230,000 new college students in the next decade is to be met, community colleges will lead the way by offering affordable tuition and flexible programs and class times to serve both traditional and non-traditional students alike.

Until now, the Mahoning Valley was the one major area of the state into which the community college network did not reach. That is about to change. Plans are on track to expand community college education there and could possibly begin operations in the fall of 2009. What will it mean? Very simply, it will mean more degree holders finding better jobs and making more money, raising both educational attainment and per capita income levels for Valley citizens and its neighbors.

Credit for the rapid progress must go to an Implementation Committee formed with support from the Raymond John Wean Foundation of Warren. This group, made up of state and national community college education experts and local educational, civic and business leaders, is establishing the framework that will bring community college education to the area.

The committee has met regularly since May and by year's end will recommend a name for the community college, create a comprehensive strategic vision, suggest a governance structure, ensure the college can deliver services and programs in the most cost-effective way, and identify the right certification and degree-granting programs for the region.

The expansion of the community college system into the Mahoning Valley is welcome news for all Ohioans because it advances the state's overall goals for higher education. But for Valley citizens, the benefits will be even more tangible and personal, by allowing them to improve their lives through the opportunities only a college education can provide.



Next Issue...

Driving Ohio's Economy

College Credit for
Workforce Training

Ohio's Flexible,
Affordable, High-Quality
System

...and more.

Ohio

Board of Regents

Ted Strickland, Governor
Eric D. Fingerhut, Chancellor

University System of Ohio

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University System of Ohio
Ohio Board of Regents
30 East Broad Street, 36th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 466-6000

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

High expectations for higher education

4.3.08 - State Higher Education Chancellor Eric Fingerhut isn't kidding when he says his 10-year plan to improve Ohio's university system "isn't a wish list." . . . Fingerhut isn't just wishing that universities become more focused and efficient. Now their performance will be measured by 20 indicators and their funding will be tied to their overall success rates, not just increasing their enrollment. Further, each university must declare its distinctive mission and identify its own "Centers of Excellence," which won't be duplicated elsewhere.

The Columbus Dispatch

Cutting the book bill

5.3.08 - The high price of college textbooks often is the subject of many complaints but rarely of any action. Students and their parents grimace, shrug and continue to shell out \$800 to \$1,200 per year per student for books, and college officials have done little to bring the cost down. Credit Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut with bringing proper attention to the issue by convening students, professors, bookstore managers and publishers at a symposium this week at Columbus State Community College, where he asked schools to search for innovative ways to reduce students' expenses.

Dayton Daily News

Our view: Ohio has deal for vets heading to school

6.15.08 - Gov. Ted Strickland has a proposition for new vets: Even if you're a nonresident, come to our state, and we'll make you an "honorary Ohioan," effectively allowing you to attend for free any of the state's public colleges or universities on the federal GI Bill. The governor's first-in-the-nation offer to post-9/11 veterans broadens the pool from which the state can attract students. Called the Ohio GI Promise, the plan extends to out-of-state veterans the benefit of paying in-state tuition rates.

THE PLAIN DEALER

Building Ohio's Economy - State grants over \$143 million to get top researchers

5.21.08 - Ohio took a bold step Tuesday in its efforts to bolster its economy and the research at its universities, granting more than \$143 million to attract world-class scholars. The state's Third Frontier Commission and University System of Ohio want 10 university collaborations to get the money so they can woo researchers and their federal research grants and staff members to Ohio.

CantonRep.com
A Service of The Repository, Canton, OH

Fingerhut wants to bridge gap between high school, college

6.19.08 - The bridge between high school and college hasn't been so easy to cross for many students in Ohio. One of the goals of the University System of Ohio's 10-Year Plan for Higher Education is to make that bridge easier to traverse.

WYTV
Youngstown

Community college coming to region

5.5.08 - This afternoon, Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric Fingerhut announced plans to open a local Community College by the fall of 2009. The move is part of the governor's desire to increase the state's college enrollment by more than 200,000 within ten years — and help business development.