Strategic Planning Advances Wilkes Mission

Strategic planning is an ongoing process at Wilkes University, enabling us to assess where we’ve been and chart a clear course for the future. Like any successful organization, many of our achievements in the last decade have grown out of our strategic plan, Vision 2010. The plan’s success was affirmed by the University’s recent re-accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Indeed our Middle States Self Study focused on evaluating the impacts of Vision 2010 on Wilkes. I am happy to say that our Middle States visiting team applauded the exceptional work of Wilkes’ faculty, staff and students in making Vision 2010 a reality.

Many goals were achieved from Vision 2010, but the most noteworthy referenced by the Middle States report include increasing undergraduate and graduate enrollments. We also made improvements to the salary structure for our faculty and staff, enabling us to recruit and retain the best people. There have been significant improvements to the campus infrastructure, including the addition of University Towers, the University Center on Main and the Barnes and Noble bookstore.

Successfully completing one strategic plan means it is time to launch another. A strategic planning team recently completed a year-long process that yielded a new plan, Vision 2015, that was adopted at our June 2010 trustees meeting. The process to develop it was both inclusive and transparent, providing every member of the University community with opportunities to provide input.

Vision 2015 outlines goals in five areas:

• **Build Great Programs**, which includes focusing on excellent teaching and scholarship and developing high-quality academic programs.

• **Build The Wilkes Team**, with a focus on working together with open communication and shared governance.

• **Broaden Our Horizons**, which will focus on a global and diverse experience on our campus, engagement with alumni, community and career partners.

• **Recruit, Retain and Graduate Students**, which will be accomplished by offering an affordable and accessible education.

• **Exercise Financial Stewardship**, focusing on effective acquisition, allocation and utilization of resources.

The Alumni Association recently has completed its own strategic planning process that supports the University’s plan. The Association’s five-year strategic plan emphasizes building relationships with graduate alumni and current students. A primary focus is to provide opportunities for alumni-student mentoring.

With solid plans in place, Wilkes will build on its strengths, advance its mission and chart an ambitious course. We welcome your comments as we embark on a journey to becoming the unquestioned leader of higher education in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Dr. Tim Gilmour
Wilkes University President