20 VI5ION

TWENTY-FIFTEEN

LOOKING BACK WITH PRIDE
LOOKING FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE

Wilkes University is at a critical point in its history. Our traditional source of students, high school graduates, is projected to decline by over 7 percent in the Mid-Atlantic region by 2015. By the same token, market studies suggest that there are significant opportunities for growth in demand from adult degree-completers, professionals needing further education at the graduate level, and ethnically diverse students from both domestic and international sources. Our region is on the cusp of a major economic renaissance with the development of the Marcellus Shale Gas Play. Wilkes has an opportunity to take the lead in issues related to responsible energy development and environmental stewardship.

The recession has put a strain on our budgets, with long-term federal and state support likely to decline. Accountability is becoming increasingly important, from assessment of student learning to the return on investment of a college education. Technology, as an enabler for student learning and greater administrative effectiveness, provides significant opportunities to increase both the quality and accessibility of all programs. Greater transparency and inclusion in decision-making is needed to gain community support for the changes Wilkes will have to make to ensure success in the years ahead. These issues, along with many other external and internal pressures to improve, create complex but exciting opportunities and challenges for Wilkes University.

The University Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) believes that Wilkes is ready to address these opportunities and challenges with strength and conviction. Vision 2015, our new strategic plan, will prepare Wilkes to become the higher education leader in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

20 VISION

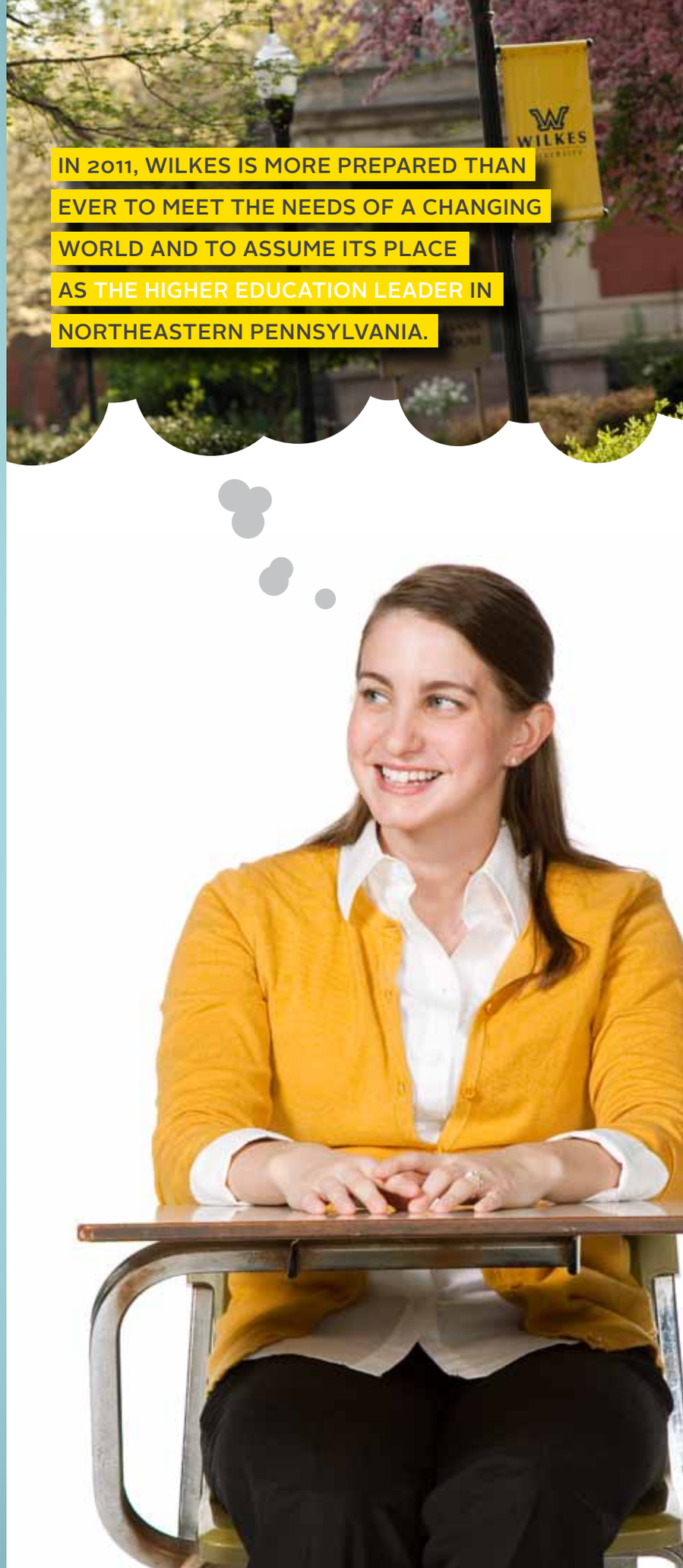
TWENTY-FIFTEEN

Wilkes University is proud of its solid tradition of responding to changing times, circumstances, and the needs of its students. From its beginning as Bucknell University Junior College in 1933, Wilkes provided a chance for a better life to the youth of Northeastern Pennsylvania. That promise remains today and has been expanded to include adults seeking to improve their professional careers through undergraduate degree completion and graduate study.

Wilkes impacts our community in many ways. Our programs graduate talented professionals who enter the region's workforce as pharmacists, engineers, nurses, business leaders, scientists, and teachers. Wilkes is recognized as a leader in undergraduate science education, having been awarded a prestigious grant from Howard Hughes Medical Institute and recently invited to submit a proposal for a second grant from the Institute. The expanding need to manage the region's natural resources has given rise to the establishment of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research of Northeast Pennsylvania, which received federal funding to monitor ground water quality in the region and provide scientifically based information on gas exploration, drilling and distribution. The Wilkes Community Conservatory provides programs in the performing arts to hundreds of community members each year. Wilkes collaborates with various groups to document local history through the Wyoming Valley History Project. The University's speaker series inspires both students and the community by hosting internationally known speakers several times a year.

The University Center on Main, the University's administrative hub, and University Towers Apartments stand as a testament to Wilkes' commitment to revitalize the City of Wilkes-Barre. Wilkes also partnered with nearby King's College to launch a joint bookstore in the center of Wilkes-Barre. These additions added hundreds of daily visitors to the city, enough to support several new businesses. Wilkes-led organizations like The Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development and the Small Business Development Center contribute to the region's economic development. Grant funding, such as the $15 million generated between FY05 and FY09, is yet another way that Wilkes has contributed to the region's development.

Responding to the demographic shift of the college-going population, Wilkes has met the demand for adult education by growing graduate programs by more than 150 percent over the last decade and increasing undergraduate enrollment by 28 percent during the same time frame. More than 100 students from 21 countries now study at Wilkes. Growth is not just local; about 60 Wilkes students travel abroad each year as part of their studies. Wilkes has a collaborative program with Punjabi University in Patiala, India, and is delivering doctoral programs in educational leadership in Oman. Online programs enroll students from across the country. The Instructional Media program enrolls students from 42 states and Canada, and the Master's in Creative Writing is one of the largest low-residency programs in the country.



IN 2011, WILKES IS MORE PREPARED THAN EVER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A CHANGING WORLD AND TO ASSUME ITS PLACE AS THE HIGHER EDUCATION LEADER IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

WORKING TOGETHER TO PLAN FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

VISION 2015

From the outset we, the University Strategic Planning Committee, developed Vision 2015 in the Wilkes tradition of harnessing change to drive University growth and progress while meeting the emerging needs of our students. The importance of consultation, collaboration, and inclusion in setting goals was paramount in our work. Our membership included a broad representation of University constituencies, allowing us to communicate with the University community at each stage of the strategic planning process.

OUR VISION

Vision 2015 draws from the Wilkes mission statement, values, core strengths, and operating model. As part of our work, we revisited these components and revised them to ensure that they provided a solid foundation for service to current and future students.

We updated the University mission statement to highlight our longstanding tradition of providing a strong liberal education to our undergraduates, as well as our ongoing commitment to community engagement:

WILKES UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

To continue the Wilkes tradition of liberally educating our students for lifelong learning and success in a constantly evolving and multicultural world through a commitment to individualized attention, exceptional teaching, scholarship and academic excellence while continuing the University's commitment to community engagement.

We serve students through our core strengths of excellence in academic programs, scholarly activity, partnerships and mentoring. Our primary focus is upon the learner, and we are guided in our thoughts and actions by our collective values of mentorship, scholarship, diversity, innovation and community. These building blocks create a solid foundation for Vision 2015.

20 VI5ION TWENTY-FIFTEEN

WILKES UNIVERSITY WILL PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES THAT BOTH TRANSFORM STUDENTS AND DEVELOP INNOVATIONS THROUGH SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES THAT LEAD TO NATIONAL RECOGNITION AND SHAPE THE WORLD AROUND US.

MOVING FORWARD TO REALIZE VISION 2015

Our Committee, in consultation with the University community, developed an action plan to focus on continually meeting learner demands, mastering key processes, growth and development of key competencies, and supporting our vision financially. Continuous improvement in these areas will ensure an experience for students that is truly transformative, that positively shapes their lives, and-by extension-positively affects those around them.

1. LEARNER DEMANDS

As our understanding of the changing needs of our learners grows and we move to serve new groups of learners, we must respond to their changing educational requirements. The University must respond to all of our learners with programs and services that address their needs, while remaining true to its historic commitment to learners and their success through the provision of rigorous and highly personalized programs. The SPC views the following to be crucial learner demands in the years ahead:

a. Excellent teaching and scholarship,
b. Distinctive and flexible learning structures,
c. Welcoming, supportive, sustainable, safe University community,
d. Global and diverse experience,
e. Engagement with the alumni, community and career partners,
f. Affordable and accessible education.

2. PROCESSES TO MASTER

To respond to the changing needs of these learners, engage our alumni,and serve our community, we must master these processes:

a. Build the Wilkes team,
b. Develop and operate high-quality academic programs,
c. Recruit and retain students,
d. Foster scholarly activities.

3. COMPETENCIES TO GROW AND DEVELOP

To master these processes, we must develop our collective competency as a community in the following areas:

a. Build great programs,
b. Work together with open communication and shared governance,
c. Broaden our horizons.

4. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Finally, we must address the following organizational needs, which are essential to the long-term success of Wilkes:

a. Fundraising,
b. Effective internal allocation and utilization of resources,
c. Maximization of existing revenue sources and development of new revenue streams,
d. Financial stewardship.

If we can work together as community and address these four critical areas, we can assure Wilkes' long-term success and become the leader in higher education in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS TOWARD THE VISION 2015 GOALS

No plan becomes a reality without demanding goals and measures to gauge their attainment. As we have done in the past, we will track our progress on our shared goals and work together as a community to reach them. To provide a sense of our ambition for Wilkes, we share these major goals for the four overarching initiatives defined in Vision 2015.

1. LEARNER DEMANDS

a. Using a variety of locally developed and standardized assessment instruments defined by the faculty, Wilkes will measure the learning outcomes of its students. Steady improvements in test scores are projected through 2015.
b. By 2015, Wilkes will increase the number of credit hours delivered through online/hybrid courses by 50 percent; special effort will be made to increase these offerings in the undergraduate program.
c. By 2015, Wilkes will double the number of students studying abroad each academic year.
d. Wilkes will seek to continually increase student satisfaction.
e. By 2015, Wilkes will substantially increase the number of alumni engaged with the University through mentoring, giving and event attendance.
f. Between 2013 and 2015, Wilkes will hold its annual tuition increases to a minimum in efforts to keep a Wilkes education affordable to students.

2. PROCESSES TO MASTER

a. Wilkes will measure satisfaction with professional development opportunities through 2015, in line with our goal to continuously develop and support a strong faculty and staff.

b. Wilkes will increase first year student retention as well as the five-year graduation rate through 2015.
c. Wilkes will track baccalaureate alumni perception that Wilkes contributed to their preparation for employment in a desired career through 2015.
d. Wilkes will achieve the following enrollment goals:
   - Build strong first-time freshman enrollments, while increasing the proportion of diverse and foreign students who make up these enrollments through 2015
   - Increase transfer student enrollments by 50 percent by 2015
   - Increase evening, summer school and degree completion enrollments by 50 percent by 2015
   - Increase graduate enrollments by 15 percent by 2015
e. Wilkes will double extramural funding of research by 2015.

3. COMPETENCIES TO GROW AND DEVELOP

a. In order to serve our learners, current and future, we will continuously improve our capacity to deliver great programs.
b. In order to serve our employees, Wilkes faculty and staff will be challenged and supported to take advantage of opportunities that develop their professional skills. This will involve the development of a stronger human resources organization that will define a new strategy and funding approach for developing Wilkes faculty and staff for the future. This should be a major University funding priority.

4. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

a. A key to Wilkes' long-term success is developing the financial strength necessary to achieve its vision. There are two key elements to developing this strength: first, increasing our capacity to raise the funds we need to operate, and second, managing our resources more effectively. This work has begun with the building of the FY12 Budget and will continue with the construction of a projected budget to FY15 that supports the realization of Vision of 2015.
b. In recent years, Wilkes has built capacity in its development function. These efforts, which require time to come to fruition, are beginning to yield results. Wilkes is currently engaged in a capital campaign to raise $20 million by 2013 to support the construction of a $32 million science building that will house its biology, chemistry and environmental engineering and earth sciences departments.
c. With regard to resource management, the University has developed the Integrated Management, Planning and Resource Effectiveness, or "IMPROVE," process that requires and provides incentives for University colleges, departments, and divisions to develop plans to increase revenue and use resources more effectively in their areas of responsibility. Components of the process include incentives for development of new revenue sources and financial savings.

Wilkes University is fully prepared to move forward toward 2015 with confidence and agility. It will be guided by its proud history and traditions, its readiness to be responsive and innovative in meeting student needs, and its recognition that setting ambitious strategic goals and working collaboratively to achieve them is essential to success in the challenging higher education climate of today-

AND TOMORROW.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Strategic Planning Committee Members
Joseph "Tim" Gilmour, Chair – *President*
Reynold Verret – *Provost*
Paul Adams – *Vice President for Student Affairs*
Loren Prescott Jr. – *Vice President, Finance and General Counsel*
Mike Speziale – *Dean, College of Graduate and Professional Studies and the School of Education*
Linda Winkler – *Dean, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*
Jennifer Edmonds – *Associate Professor, Jay S. Sidhu School of Business*
Jane Elmes-Crahall – *Professor of Communications Studies/ Faculty Affairs Council*
Ming Lew – *Middle States Liaison/Associate Professor of Math and Computer Sciences*
Kathleen Makuch – *Associate Professor, School of Education*
Mary McManus – *Associate Professor of Pharmacy*
Rodney Ridley – *Associate Professor/Director, Engineering and Physics*
Adelene Malatesta – *Director of Athletics*
Amy Patton – *Associate Director, Admissions*
Robert Swetts – *Manager of Capital Assets, Facilities*
Rebecca VanJura – *Director of Events, Advancement*
Erin Hardiman '11 – *Graduate student*
Alyssa Fusaro '11 – *Undergraduate student*
Kaitlyn Martin '11 – *Graduate student*
Derek Nye '11 – *Undergraduate student*

Strategic Planning Project Coordinating Team Members
Jack Chielli, Project Manager – *Executive Assistant to the President*
Vernon Harper Jr. – *Associate Provost*
Brian Bogert – *Director, Information, Analysis and Planning*

Past Members of the Strategic Planning Committee
Thomas Baldino – *Professor of Political Science*
Petra Carver – *former Vice President for Finance and Support Operations*
Anita Ruskey – *former Manager of Administrative Support, Office of the President*

WILKES
UNIVERSITY

84 West South Street • Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766
www.wilkes.edu