Property Transfer and Establishment of the University’s Agricultural and Environmental Research Station

West Virginia State University (WVSU) took ownership of the West Virginia Rehabilitation Center on June 17, 2013, when the property was officially transferred by the West Virginia Department of Administration. The transfer was approved by the State Board of Public Works. The State Department of Education once controlled the state-owned facility, but it was later transferred to the Department of Administration. The center previously provided on-site vocational and rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. In 2007, client services were stopped at the site, but the Division of Rehabilitation Services continued to use the center as the central hub for the agency until 2011.

The nearly 20 acres of property adjacent to WVSU contained 15 buildings and extended to more than 430,000-square-feet of space. The decision to take over the facility was the result of the institution’s efforts to expand campus. University officials envisioned that academic growth, especially in the areas of science, engineering, nursing and technology transfer, were driving the need for expansion of the campus. Thus, they saw this acquisition as ideal to accommodate the University’s growth and, in turn, expected to spill over to the economic growth of the state and region.

Since the transfer of the property in 2013, all the buildings and physical land have been thoroughly assessed by specialized crews, including architectural, engineering and asbestos specialists. The results of these studies led to the demolition of the majority of the dilapidated buildings, which started to take place in 2014. Only a few structures will remain at the site, including the former administration building, which has been renovated, along with other structures that have historical value and will be preserved and rehabilitated as funding opportunities arise. In fact, the University is already actively seeking additional federal funding to support rehabilitation efforts. Other remaining structures are scheduled to be raised in order to make room for new programming.

To date, WVSU is physically expanding its Agricultural and Environmental Research Station as well as its Extension Service footprint to this property. A comprehensive plan for the property has been developed and is reflected within the University’s 2016 approved Master Plan. As aforementioned, this site is making possible the expansion of land-grant research and extension programming which otherwise would have been more difficult. The photo below depicts an aerial view of the campus, with the acquired property noted.

Relocation of WVSU’s Agricultural & Environmental Research Station and Establishment of the Integrated Research & Extension Building
Upward Bound on Upward Swing at WVSU

A familiar face is leading the recently restored Upward Bound program at West Virginia State University. Krystal Tolliver, who has been involved with the program for two decades, has been named Director of TRIO Student Support Services, which administers the Upward Bound academic enrichment program to middle and high school students in Kanawha and Logan counties.

“We are excited to get back into the schools here in Kanawha and Logan counties and provide this much-needed support to students,” said Tolliver.

The program helps to prepare students for college through services such as after-school tutoring, summer learning sessions, campus-based classes, resume building, college applications and additional assistance. WVSU serves more than 100 students from Capital, Nitro, Riverside, St. Albans, Sissonville and South Charleston high schools in Kanawha County, as well as Logan High School in Logan County.

Tolliver said the program is in a rebuilding period following the retirement of longtime director Barbara Cary, as well as a loss of funding which was restored in August.

“We are getting back into the schools with which we’ve had long, successful relationships,” Tolliver said, adding that Cary was instrumental in the program’s success for so many years and still volunteers. “We are in a bit of a transition now, but this program is so important, and we haven’t had any problems rekindling those relationships in the schools.”

WVSU’s Upward Bound program, she noted, is one of only a few in the nation in which participating students can receive high school credit for participating.

“Our goal is to make sure we help these kids be successful in high school, get into college, graduate and become productive members of society.”

Upward Bound is a program of the U.S. Department of Education and has been operational nationally since 1965.

Relocation cont’d

Establishment of the Integrated Research and Extension Building

Since 2014, the University has been concentrating efforts on renovating and opening one of the later-constructed four-story administration buildings known as the F. Ray Power Building. The renovation of this existing building will integrate both research and extension programming, which will become the Integrated Research and Extension Building. This 32,000-square-foot building renovation was expected to provide the much-needed laboratory space to accommodate the growth and future expansion of WVSU’s agricultural and environmental research portfolio, as well as other multiuse spaces for instruction, workshops, meetings and events, including classroom space and a demonstration kitchen for innovative extension programming.

On October 24, 2014, architectural and engineering (A/E) services were procured to investigate the status of the building and those other properties immediately adjacent. Since its closing in 2011, the property suffered numerous acts of vandalism, including the destruction of electrical systems and plumbing through the entire area. An assessment conducted by a local electrical firm (Nitro Electric) estimated that damages to this building alone, due to vandalism, amounted to over $170,000 in electrical systems. In early 2015, the University procured services to install temporary electricity at the building

so that a thorough investigation could be performed by specialized A/E contractors. This investigation, conducted between May and October of 2015, revealed that existing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems were, for the most part, outdated; therefore, installing new systems was more economically efficient. The investigation also revealed that the building was structurally sound to be renovated. To that fact, in November 2015, architectural services were formally procured, and a contractor was selected to perform interior selective demolition while all building (renovation) specifications were also assembled. In March 2016, through a request for proposals, the University selected a general contractor to perform the planned renovations for this facility.

As of fall 2018, the newly renovated facility is nearing final completion. The building provides five brand new research laboratories on the third and fourth floors. These labs are being used to conduct research associated with aquatic toxicology, bioenergy, plant genomics and horticulture, and soil science. Each lab has access to two new offices. As of early October, three research scientists, along with their post-docs, technicians and students, who had been temporarily located at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park in South Charleston, have relocated back to campus and occupy this building. All the renovation work is scheduled to be fully completed by mid-November of this year.

This facility also offers multipurpose amenities on this first floor, including a brand new auditorium (94-seat capacity), a multipurpose classroom, a dual conference room, a kitchen classroom, a microscopy room, a walk-in cooler and an additional soil laboratory. The second floor is currently shelled and is ready for future renovation to accommodate additional academic and research programming. In fact, plans are underway to use this space to enhance research related to the University’s new chemical engineering and forensics programs.

This nearly $7 million building renovation has been funded through federal support, including the United States Department of Agriculture’s 1890 Facilities and 1890 Research Programs, the National Science Foundation’s Expanded Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, and the U.S. Department of Education’s Title III-B Program. Other federal agencies, such NASA, and private support are also being explored for additional funding to fully complete the renovation.

Future endeavors at this site include the establishment of a greenhouse and horticultural complex; renovation of two additional historical buildings; establishment of arboretums and walking trails; site infrastructure development, cleanup and beautification projects; and demolition of the remaining dilapidated buildings.
**Jackson Named Director of Title III Programs**

Eric Jackson has been named Director of Title III Programs and Budget Office at West Virginia State University.

Title III Part B is a federal allocation providing funds to strengthen Historically Black Colleges and Universities in terms of physical plants, financial management and academic resources. At WVSU, the Title III office also oversees HBCU Masters funding, which provides financial support for graduate programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

“The basis for Title III is to encourage enrollment and retention by supporting robust programs, facilities and resources,” Jackson said. A large part of his position, he said, is to review requests for Title III funding support and ensuring that expenditures are allowable under the program’s guidelines.

Recent projects that have been supported through Title III include laboratory upgrades in Hamblin Hall, the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience program, the Student Success Center project, and upgrades to the soon-to-be-opened Integrated Research and Extension Building, located at the former West Virginia Rehabilitation Center.

A 2005 graduate of the University, Jackson has worked with Title III programs for 10 years, most recently serving as associate director of Title III.

Formerly under the WVSU Research & Public Service administrative area, the Title III office has been moved under the Office of the President, while maintaining fiscal responsibility through the WVSU Research and Development Corporation. The office is located in 111 Ferrell Hall on campus.

**WVSU Welcomes Visiting Scholar to Appalachian Freshwater Initiative**

WVSU R&D Corp. has welcomed Dr. Fernando Rojano Aguilar as a Distinguished Visiting Scholar to work on the University’s Appalachian Freshwater Initiative (AFI).

The AFI initiative is a statewide endeavor supported by the National Science Foundation focusing on understanding, mitigating and remediating risks associated with water resources of a basin with intensive interaction among cities, ecosystems and industry.

The multidisciplinary project includes such experts as biologists, ecologists, chemists and geologists working alongside environmental and civil engineers aiming to address issues related to contaminants in superficial water, including assessment of water resources under climate change scenarios.

Aguilar’s role assists with modeling of toxicity and biological assessment of superficial water.

“My interest has been the applications of cutting-edge engineering tools that can assist in comprehensive analysis and assessment of biological systems,” Rojano Aguilar said. “I’ve worked mainly in the area of computational fluid dynamics as a versatile technique to solve complex problems that commonly require integration of several type of phenomena.”

Rojano Aguilar received a bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Chapingo, Mexico, a master’s degree in Automatic Control at the University of Querétaro, Mexico, and a Ph.D. in Biosystems Engineering from the University of Arizona.

Before coming to WVSU, he was appointed as an academic researcher at the Institute of Ecology in Mexico.

Rojano Aguilar’s appointment will run from September 2018 through February 2019. He will be housed in the newly renovated Integrated Research and Extension Building.

**Grants and Contracts Highlights**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grant Name</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Principal Investigator</th>
<th>College/Unit</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<td>CPS</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
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<td>National Science Foundation</td>
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WVSU R&D Corp.
News Updates and New Hires

During the third quarter of 2018, the WVSU Research and Development Corporation had the following visits/audits and reviews from different organizations.

**Financial Audit:** Hayflich, PLLC, was on site to conduct an annual audit of financial information for Fiscal Year 2018. Included in this audit was the review of revenue and expenses related to the grants received by the Corporation. The audit and release of financial information will be completed within the final quarter of 2018.

**USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture Civil Rights Review:** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) completed a review of Extension and Research programs related to R&D’s compliance with civil rights regulations.

**NIFA State Liaison:** The State Liaison for NIFA visited to provide a program update, tour labs and research sites of NIFA/AFRI grantees.

**NIFA Financial Review:** NIFA conducted a review of grants awarded from 2013 to 2016. A tour of WVSU campus and research facilities was completed to demonstrate the work being performed as a result of NIFA-funded grants.

**Workers Compensation Audit:** Brickstreet Insurance reviewed employee job requirements to ensure proper coverage in relation to annual workers compensation payments.

**New Employees:**
- Mr. Joseph Davenport, Safety and Chemical Hygiene Officer
- Dr. Shannon McGhee, Director of Retention and Student Success
- Dr. Purushothaman Natarajan, Bioinformatician
- Dr. Fernando Rojano Aguilar, Research Associate, Appalachian Freshwater Initiative
- Mr. Ricardo Figueroa, Administrative Assistant I
- Ms. Ana Karen Gatica Toledo, Spanish Language Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Imani Tyson, Title III Office Administrator

WVSU Extension Service Highlights

**Center for the Advancement of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (CASTEM) and 4-H Program Highlights**

- For Fiscal Year 2018, youth programs have reached over 2,281 K-12 students through partnerships with local schools, West Virginia University Health Sciences & Technology Academy (HSTA), and Boy and Girl Scouts, as well as on campus activities.
- During the summer of 2018, WVSU 4-H and CASTEM hosted five unique summer camps:
  - Topics included Environmental Science, Rocketry, Plant Science, Introduction to Science Inquiry and Exploration of Native Wildlife.
  - Post-survey results from these programs show an increase in student interest in science. One hundred percent of parents across all programs stated their children shared what they learned with them after camps.
- CASTEM has offered five classes during the academic year (Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018) hosted on campus in the Aerospace Education Laboratory for homeschool students.
  - Topics have included Ecology, Robotics (Intro and Advanced), Chemistry and Forensic Science.
  - Post-survey results show that these classes increased students’ knowledge as well as their likelihood to pursue STEM fields.

**Community Economic Development Highlights:**

- Fayette County Extension Agent Adam Hodges just completed murals on the corners of Main and Oak Hill Streets in downtown Oak Hill. One mural depicts Main Street in the 1920s, and the other is a painting of Main Street in the 1960s. This was a community project where residents were part of the discussion, and business owners gave their employees release time to help paint the mural. Discussion continues to do more murals around town.

**Family and Consumer Sciences Highlights**

- The WVSU Healthy Grandfamilies program, which provides information and resources to grandparents who are raising their grandkids, recently celebrated some national recognition, including a recent publication in the peer-reviewed Journal of Extension and a feature story conducted by CBS News. The program is conducted as a series of discussion sessions on relevant parenting topics, followed by three months of support services from a licensed social worker.

**Agriculture and Natural Resources Highlights**

- Children, Youth and Families At-Risk - Sustainable Community Revitalization in Appalachia Through Children’s Hands (SCRATCH):
  - The SCRATCH program was moved to Raleigh County. The program was successfully established in Cranberry Elementary and will provide content during the summer months at the YMCA summer camp.
- Urban Forestry
  - This program continues to provide residents with support for urban orchards, including care, maintenance, tree selection and site preparation. WVSU has again been awarded the distinction of “Tree Campus USA” by the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- Southern Ag Incubator
  - Agents have continued to work with the Elkhorn Towers community to install a food garden for residents. In addition, WVSU is providing support for McDowell County Career and Technical Center in Welch, including technical assistance to their growing facilities. An advisory board was established for this program and an independent consultant has been hired to evaluate the program’s progress. Vegetables grown in the experimental facilities were distributed to local residents.