

**NORTHWEST COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

December 9, 2024

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** President MS. TARA KUIPERS; Vice President/Secretary MS. DENISE LAURSEN; Treasurer MR. BOB NEWSOME; and Trustees MR. JOHN HOUSEL, MR. R.J. KOST, MR. SHANE OGDEN, and DR. MARK WURZEL.
- MEMBERS ABSENT:**
- OTHERS PRESENT:** MS. LISA WATSON, President; MR. DAVE ERICKSON, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. TOM HAVRON, Vice President for Student Services; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MS. DIEDRE ASAY; MR. ERIC ATKINSON; DR. ALAN CHILDS; MS. ANNA CRAGOE; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; DR. DAVID FAY; MS. TRACY GASAWAY; MR. MARK GRANT; MS. JEN LITTERER-TREVIÑO; MS. CAREY MILLER; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MR. BURT REYNOLDS; DR. SCOTT SEVILLE; MS. LISA SMITH; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; DR. UKO UDODONG; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MR. ZAC TAYLOR, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. KELI BORDERS, Executive Secretary to the President and Board of Trustees.
- CALL TO ORDER:** President Tara Kuipers called the regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees to order on Monday, December 9, 2024, at 4:04 p.m. in the Yellowstone Building.
- OATH OF OFFICE** Ms. Diedre Asay, Foundation Technician, and Notary Public administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Trustee Shane Ogden.
- MISSION MOMENT** Eric Atkinson, Associate Professor of Biology and leader of Northwest expressed his appreciation to Dr. Alan Childs, who led the INBRE program before his retirement.
- Eric stated that INBRE stands for IDeA Networks for Biomedical Research Excellence. He is passionate about the program, which introduces freshmen, sophomores, and dual-credit high school students to scientific research in Wyoming.
- Upon invitation from Eric, Dr. Scott Seville, Professor and Chair of the UW Department of Zoology and Physiology Director of INBRE, stated he works at the University of Wyoming on the Casper College campus. He has been involved with INBRE since its inception in 2002. The National Institutes for Health fund INBRE, which is concluding a five-year funding cycle. There is a strong indication that the program will be funded for another five years. This funding is crucial as it allows the program to continue its activities, which include supporting research and education in the biomedical field.
- Dr. Seville stated that the INBRE program has two primary components: one focuses on developing research infrastructure and faculty at the University of Wyoming to compete for external grants, while the other emphasizes educating the next generation of biomedical researchers. This dual approach is essential for building a sustainable research environment in Wyoming.
- Dr. Seville stated that INBRE allocates approximately \$500,000 annually to support activities at the community colleges; Northwest College receives roughly \$100,000 each year in supplemental funding to run the program on its campus. This funding is used for curriculum improvements, faculty development, and student research opportunities. Competitive programs for faculty to apply for additional funding highlight the program's commitment to fostering innovation and research.

An important aspect of the program is its focus on experiential learning, where students engage in research projects as part of their coursework. This hands-on experience is crucial for developing research skills and understanding the scientific process, from formulating questions to presenting findings. Dr. Seville emphasized the importance of mentorship in these projects, which enhances student learning and engagement.

Dr. Seville stated that an essential aspect of INBRE is collaboration between faculty across the state and at the University of Wyoming, which facilitates knowledge exchange and access to advanced research equipment. This collaborative spirit maximizes resources and expertise, benefits students, and enhances research outcomes.

Dr. Seville provided an overview of the INBRE program's objectives, challenges, and achievements and highlighted the importance of funding, collaboration, and experiential learning in building a robust biomedical research infrastructure in Wyoming. He is enthusiastic about the program's future, its impact on students, and the significance of such initiatives in fostering scientific inquiry and professional development in the region.

A APPROVE THE AGENDA:

President Watson requested the agenda be amended to move the distribution of Disclosure of Interest forms to the February meeting to align with the

A motion was made by Trustee Kost and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

New Website Review

President Watson added that it was an excellent opportunity to discuss the fruition and completed without debt, and to tour the building.

President Watson stated that the College prioritized developing a new website as part of its strategic work. She is pleased with the end product and hopes it serves current and potential students well. She encouraged Trustees to investigate the new design if they had not yet had the opportunity.

Carey Miller stated that the project took almost two years, beginning to end, and was not without challenges. This is the fourth website redesign she has undertaken, and it was one of the largest. It included a new system, a new design, and much research. Her team worked diligently on the project and worked with department representatives to ensure the information on the new website was accurate.

Carey stated that while the old website was very news and event-centric, the new strategy is that prospective students are the primary target audience. From the home page, individuals can begin their application and explore costs and financial aid options. The home page also features happenings on campus and ways to navigate to other areas, such as academic and student support services, transfer planning, etc.

One of the most exciting features is the ability for prospective students to explore all Northwest College programs and their associated costs. Various tools are available to filter their search. In addition, a new module linked to Lightcast provides students with employment outcomes, such as occupations related to programs of study and salary information.

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