

Expanding the learning horizon

As Whitman students see the bigger picture and make their mark in the world, the college looks vigilantly and expansively toward greater learning opportunities on campus and far beyond.

(At right) Exploring the same path taken by many migrants as they cross illegally from Mexico to the United States was a “surreal” experience, said student photographer Andrew Propp '10. He and other Whitman students traveled to the border in late May. At a campsite on the U.S. side, they shared a meal and engaged in discussions about the complexities of immigration with activists and other college students. “You think about the people,” Propp said. “What’s pulling them (to the United States), what’s pushing them back and what lies ahead.” Propp photographed Becky Avila '09 as she pondered some of the same questions at a quiet spot outside the campsite.

Andrew Propp '10



July 2006



Timothy Kaufman-Osborn, Baker Ferguson Chair of Politics and Leadership at Whitman College, is named interim dean of the faculty.

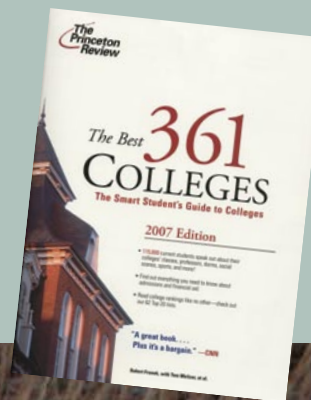
August 2006

A *New York Times* survey cites Whitman College as one of 20 hidden academic treasures in the country.



The New York Times

Dan Vernon, associate professor of biology, receives a \$360,000 National Science Foundation grant to support his lab and fund summer research internships, and U.J. Sofia, professor of astronomy, receives grants from the Hubble Space Telescope Science Institute and the Washington NASA Space Grant Consortium to further study interstellar dust.



September 2006

The *Princeton Review* and *U.S. News & World Report* give the college superior marks and glowing evaluations in their surveys of undergraduate schools.

Donors, campus community members, alumni and friends help dedicate the \$10.5-million, 38,000-square-foot Baker Ferguson Fitness Center and Harvey Pool.



The President's Report

When the initial news arrived in May, the count was eight. Before we knew it, the total was 10 — a record 10 Fulbright scholarships awarded to Whitman College students and graduates in one academic year.

Records are gratifying, but there is a more important kind of recognition at work here. The external

acknowledgment by the Fulbright Program tells us something vital about the *internal* character and chemistry of Whitman College. It is a reminder of the vision of this institution, the talent and tenacity of our students, the knowledge and commitment of our faculty, the counsel of

our staff and the example of our alumni, who have set the bar for those who follow. The awards reflect how our students grow and who they become as a result of their four years of study at Whitman.



President George Bridges

Each year at Convocation we are reminded of that chemistry — that collective Whitman heart, if you will — and the accord by which this community carries out the college's mission. "Convocation," as many of you will remember from Latin, means "calling together." It is a reminder, in our common pursuit, of traditions that we value and actively practice: cooperation, open exchange, mutual respect and commitment to education in all its forms. And at the end of each year — Commencement — we see the results of our shared purpose, on campus and in the world.

In his Commencement address to the Class of 2007, the distinguished American economist Jeffrey Sachs remarked that Whitman students have already commenced — commenced to make their mark in the world.

For example, **Thuy Dao '07**, a meticulous researcher and the first person in her family to graduate from college, is now in her first year of a Ph.D. program at Johns Hopkins University on her way to becoming a scientist. **Aisha Fukushima '09**, **Moabi Garebamono '09**, **Laura Hanson '07** and **Thomas Miller '07** spent their summers addressing human-rights issues as Humanity in Action diversity fellows here and abroad.

Likewise, our faculty continue to garner awards and recognition. Doug Juers and Ginger Withers received grants from the National Science Foundation. Phil Brick's Semester in the West made national news on NPR and in *The Christian Science*

Monitor. Elyse Semerdjian received a Fulbright research grant to study the Armenian communities in Lebanon and Syria. Aaron Bobrow-Strain published a book on immigration and the politics of food. Robert Tobin edited a book on the Eurovision Song Contest phenomenon. Importantly, these are just a sampling of faculty achievements in the past year.

We've begun a new chapter in academic leadership with the arrival of Lori Bettison-Varga as the college's new provost and dean of the faculty. Lori is nationally recognized for her advocacy of undergraduate research and innovative scholarship, and well-versed in the national debate on undergraduate learning. She brings a combination of intellectual agility, abundant energy and collegiality to the workplace, and we are delighted to have her with us.

Associate Dean of the Faculty Tom Callister was immersed this past year in a crucial project for the college: our 10-year accreditation report. It is a vital document in Whitman's future and a testament to the collaborative process that has served the college so well for so many years. The self-study is a benchmark for the college as we chart its future along the latitudes and long traditions of the college. I look to this self-study not only for its purpose in serving the needs of the accreditation committee but also as documentation of the efforts that all of our constituents contribute to keep Whitman true to its values and mission.

"Advancing opportunities for exceptional teaching and learning in the liberal arts has never been more important."

— President George S. Bridges



Framework for the future

Higher education in the main is in the midst of a sea change, and the competition for faculty and students has never been keener among the top schools in the country. Advancing opportunities for exceptional teaching and learning in the liberal arts has never been more important. Whitman students must learn at the leading edge.

"An understanding of the diverse cultures of the world ... should be an essential component of the 21st century education of our nation's students," notes the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program. "Broader global awareness ... will, in turn, lead to more effective U.S. foreign policy,

greater security from terrorism and economic resilience in the increasingly competitive world of trade."

In our advancement of exceptional learning opportunities and environments for our students, we look expansively toward increased opportunities in student-faculty scholarship and research, a multicultural campus, new modes of experiential learning and enhanced residential life. Possibilities include:

- *Increased student-faculty scholarship and research.* Learning partnerships are remarkable, transformative experiences for students and faculty alike. A sample of this year's Perry, Abshire and Dublin awards underscores the enormous education in Whitman's tradition of faculty-student collaborations. **Wesley Matlock '08** and Associate Professor of Anthropology Gary Rollefson are investigating Chalcolithic open-air desert sanctuaries in Wadi Rum, Jordan. **Ellen McCleery '08** and Associate Professor of Biology Chris Wallace are examining the cellular mechanisms by which information from individual experience is stored in brain cells. **Jessica Marks '07** and Professor of Religion Jonathan Walters are exploring the conversion by Westerners to Tibetan Buddhism through the lens of ethnic Buddhists.

- *Global campus.* As globalization shapes more and more of our everyday lives, Whitman in the 21st century must

October 2006

American Civil Liberties Union President Nadine Strossen delivers the William O. Douglas Lecture on the subject of "Abuse of Power: The Assault on Civil Liberties after 9/11."



Robert Sickels' documentary, "The Beehive," airs on Seattle PBS affiliate KCTS-TV. It also is booked for five more film festivals across the country. Sickels is an associate professor of rhetoric and film studies.

November 2006

Construction of the Fouts Center for Visual Arts begins.



An all-day symposium on race and community organized by students with the help of 60 Whitman faculty draws more than 1,000 Whitman students, faculty and staff.

December 2006



Mark Pigott, CEO of PACCAR, Inc., visits campus to address "Information Technology in Today's Business."

January 2007



Lori Bettison-Varga is named provost and dean of the faculty, effective July 2007.



Whitman climbs four spots to No. 12 on the Peace Corps' Top 25 list of producers of volunteers among small schools.

The President's Report

continue to evolve as a *global campus*, an academic community in which students and faculty of myriad backgrounds and experiences can assess, critically and collectively, the various networks of a global society — research, commerce, technology, environment, culture — and the roles they play in it. Our goal is to make the global campus a defining feature of the college through new curriculum tailored to collaborative scholarship across disciplines, expanded language instruction, a center for global studies and increased opportunities for study away from campus.

- **Experiential learning.** A center for experiential learning would accomplish at least two objectives in our evolution: It would support faculty in their efforts to develop learning experiences outside the classroom, and it would provide a nexus for internships, community-based learning, career-centered programs and Whitman Study Abroad.

- **Enhanced residential life.** A vibrant residential life program is part and parcel of the learning experience at Whitman. How do we improve on a model that *The Princeton Review* ranked first in the country in “happiest students” among 366 colleges in the country? One answer is new living spaces modeled on the academic interests of students complemented by additional staff support in the Academic Resource Center.



The value of scholarships

Our vision of the future for Whitman may well reinforce, in some circles, the school's reputation as one of the country's “elite” colleges. If “elite” distills the quality of our education and the preparedness of our students to lead the world, the label is appropriate. But this college is not — nor has it ever aspired to be — elite in its selection of students based on social class and financial means.

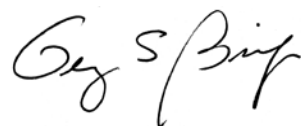
Higher education is under siege as a result of rising costs and, consequently, increasing tuition and the need to provide adequate financial aid to students and their families. While the value of such an education is often lost in the dialogue, we cannot overlook the fact that four years of learning at the country's top colleges — Whitman included — is beyond the financial reach of many deserving students. We must find more money to enhance, not merely maintain, our capacity to provide full access to Whitman for students from lower-income families and underserved populations.

When he was president of this college, Stephen Penrose noted that “Poverty is no handicap and wealth no crown of glory.” That belief still holds true at Whitman. The college continues to operate by the tenet of access to education for all — students of all racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds — and we must expand that promise. We know that

a Whitman education is a great equalizer in the greater human scheme. It is essential that the college build upon its valued tradition of providing access to the tremendous education that we offer.

“Whitman is a place that allows students to breathe in many ways,” *The New York Times* noted last year in a survey of American colleges. “It's a place where a student can shape a very individual learning experience in a rigorous academic environment.” If you're a Whitman alumnus or alumna, these words may stir any number of reminders of your own years at the college, when the freedom of inquiry and the thrill of discovery made you feel fully alive and authentically yourself. We must ensure that our current and future students receive the same gift, experience the same expansion in their hearts and minds, so that they, too, are inspired to lead the world after — and sometimes even before — they leave Whitman.

To all of you who are involved with Whitman through your time, talent and financial gifts, I thank you sincerely. It is through your partnership that the college will continue to thrive and produce Fulbright scholars, earn national recognition, prepare students for a lifetime of leadership and thoughtful world citizenship, and more.



Gifts and major grants boost college priorities



Jake Ginsbach '09 works at the computer linked to the new gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer in the instrumentation center as Frank Dunnivant, associate professor of chemistry, observes. (See Page 48 for related information.)

In 2006-2007, Whitman College received 6,094 gifts from alumni, marking the 24th consecutive year in which 50 percent have contributed to the college. This level of alumni support sets Whitman apart from other colleges and reflects the degree of confidence that our

graduates have in the educational experience offered at the college.

Contributions from alumni, parents and friends totaled \$9,294,505, supporting ongoing programs and funding many significant improvements on campus.

Among the many noteworthy

outcomes of our donors' gifts this year, funding for the new Fouts Center for Visual Arts was fully secured. Construction began in January; the center will open next fall.

A record was set by parents of Whitman students, current and past, who gave more than \$800,000 this year to a variety of important initiatives, including the Fouts Center.

Several new endowments were established this year, including a \$1.5 million professorship in economics named in memory of trustee and Whitman parent Ralph Rittenour. (Read more about the Rittenour Professorship on Page 56.)

Two major grants were secured through the joint efforts of faculty and the development office that will advance Whitman's science programs dramatically. One award will fund an X-ray diffraction instrument for research and course work. The other provides start-up support for a new instrumentation center and related curricular developments. Equipment in the new center includes two state-of-the-art spectrometers. Both grant improvements will allow for more collaborative research between faculty and students and provide students with competitive skills for graduate schools.

In the Whitman College tradition, we build on past excellence in pursuit of more ambitious goals. The partnership of alumni, parents, friends and foundations in 2006-2007 provided another solid step toward a bright future for Whitman students.

February 2007

Whitman marks Martin Luther King Jr. Day with the Matthew Shepard Lecture by Louvon Harris, sister of hate-crime victim James Byrd Jr., a panel discussion and a candlelight march from downtown Walla Walla to campus.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., noted environmental lawyer and son of the late U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, speaks to a packed house of students, faculty, staff and Walla Walla residents. “This college has a high commitment to environmental advocacy,” Kennedy tells the audience.



March 2007

Colleen Seidelhuber Willoughby '55 leads the 20th Women in Leadership Symposium.



April 2007

Kiplinger's magazine ranks Whitman No. 25 on its list of the nation's top 50 “best value” liberal arts colleges, based on academic quality and affordability. Also, *The Princeton Review* ranks Whitman No. 7 of “best value” private colleges in the U.S. for 2008.



The 2007 edition of the daylong Whitman Undergraduate Conference features 31 panels and nearly 200 students.

May 2007

Under head coach Jeff Northam '88, Whitman's men's tennis team produces its best season in two decades, advancing to the Round of 16 of the NCAA's Division III National Championships.



The President's Report

Key indicators document college strengths, growth

The demand for a Whitman education continues to grow. Applications for the Class of 2011 grew by 8 percent, with more than 3,000 applications received. The desire to study at Whitman is due in part to the high level of satisfaction of the college's recent graduates. More than 91 percent of the Whitman Class of 2006 graduated, the first time that the college's graduation rate has surpassed 90 percent.

Whitman once again finished the year with a balanced budget that reflected the ever-changing landscape in liberal arts education and Whitman's focus on student learning.

Capital markets were kind to college endowments in 2006-07. Whitman's investment return on the endowment was 18.56 percent for the 12 months ending June 30, 2007. The endowment plays a crucial role in providing access to a Whitman education for all qualified students. Last year the endowment contributed more than \$14 million, or nearly one-third of the general operating budget. The endowment supports financial aid, faculty salaries, Penrose Library and various programs on campus.

Whitman's facilities continue to be a key asset in recruiting and retaining students. The Baker Ferguson Fitness Center and Harvey Pool, which opened



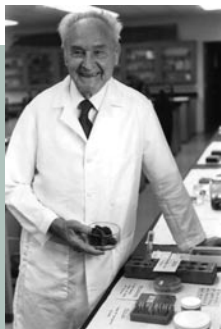
Daniel Bachhuber '10

As Commencement speaker Jeffrey Sachs noted, Whitman students do not wait until they graduate to begin making a difference in the world through environmental and humanitarian activism.

in the fall of 2006, have been well-received by all constituencies. Existing buildings are well-maintained by the physical plant staff. The college continues to have no deferred maintenance due to the fiscal discipline demonstrated in the Life Cycle Reserve Program and the oversight of the Life Cycle Committee. During the summer of 2007, 30 Life Cycle projects totaling more than \$1 million were completed.

“Whitman is a ... place where a student can shape a very individual learning experience in a rigorous academic environment.”

— *The New York Times*



Beloved Professor of Biology Emeritus Arthur Rempel passes away on May 1, 2007, at the age of 97.

Three hundred sixty-seven students become alumni at Commencement. Jeffrey Sachs, widely regarded as the leading economic adviser of his generation, delivers the Commencement address and receives an honorary degree, along with alumna Paula England '71.



June 2007

Led by Professor of Forensics Jim Hanson, the college debate team caps a brilliant year of competition with the No. 1 ranking in the country in combined policy and parliamentary debate.

