



WHITMAN COLLEGE

March 25, 2015

Dear Student,

A few weeks ago, the Whitman College Board of Trustees approved the College's budget for the coming academic year. This budget includes a modest increase in tuition and fees for 2015-16: tuition will be \$45,770, room and board will be \$11,564 and the Associated Students of Whitman College (ASWC) fee will be \$368. Financial aid packages for returning students currently with need-based scholarships will be adjusted, as appropriate, to reflect these changes.

As is our tradition, the campus Budget Advisory Committee developed critical elements of the 2015-2016 budget. The students, faculty and staff who comprise the Committee review and provide feedback on budget plans and requests for the year. Setting tuition levels that are as affordable as possible while also ensuring that we have the resources needed to improve upon the quality of our programs and services is an institutional imperative and therefore one of the Committee's primary responsibilities. I am proud to report that tuition increases last year and this year were lower than any in the previous decade.

When preparing the annual budget, the Committee must take into consideration the rising costs of College operations, Whitman's ability to absorb those costs or implement other cost-saving measures, the scholarship needs and concerns of Whitman students and their families, and our desire to improve the College's programs, services and facilities incrementally. Reconciling these important but competing interests often proves challenging.

Investing in our Students and their Experiences at Whitman

Each year we rely on tuition funds and gifts from donors to support current programs, strengthen academic departments, advance our co-curricular programs in student affairs, and maintain and improve the Whitman College campus. We also rely on funding to support our employees through competitive salaries and benefits, providing modest increases tied to meritorious performance and to industry wage benchmarks. In the coming year we will utilize these funds to add:

- Eleven new tenure-track faculty members in the fall, including professors in the departments of Religion, Chemistry, and Mathematics (the last is the first of three new faculty members specializing in Computer Science) and finally, a professor whose position spans the Departments of Anthropology and Environmental Studies.
- A staff position to support the mathematics and computer science laboratories.

- A full-time Director of Health Professions Advising to ensure that students interested in pursuing careers in the health professions have adequate advising support.
- A new Assistant Director of our Intercultural Center to better support the needs of our diverse student body.
- Added support for providing students with paid internships or faculty research opportunities during their time at Whitman.
- Increased funding for programming on multicultural and diversity issues on campus.
- Support for developing and completing an overarching diversity plan for Whitman College.
- Continuation of a four-year longitudinal study of student intellectual and personal growth.
- A student leadership development program and other services to enhance the personal development, health and safety of students.
- An interdepartmental wellness group to examine campus mental health and health issues.
- The third phase of Whitman's wireless network upgrade.

As president, I have very few priorities higher than careful stewardship of the College's finances. Although we continue to implement cost-saving measures wherever possible, many of our operating costs have risen considerably over the past decade and will continue to rise. Thankfully, the College has grown revenue to address rising costs by (most notably) increased fundraising and endowment returns. This revenue, particularly that issuing from the endowment's annual payout, underwrite many of the College's operating and instructional costs not covered by tuition. In doing so, the endowment returns help mitigate the need for significant tuition increases.

Whitman alumni, parents and friends continue to support our *Now Is the Time Campaign* with extraordinary generosity. Gifts this past year have allowed us to add new faculty positions to expand the curriculum in the ways mentioned above. Student experiences are also being expanded by gifts that fund a growing number of internships (almost 140 last year) and collaborative research opportunities with faculty (almost 70 in the last year). Whitman's financial aid program continues to receive support from generations of alumni who seek to make a life-shaping education available to future generations; these gifts have allowed Whitman to increase its overall commitment to scholarships in the coming year. Gifts to these areas and many others enable Whitman to provide a better educational experience, and we are extremely grateful for that generosity.

I want to end this message by sharing with you some highlights and accomplishments of the past year that represent significant sources of pride for our campus:

- Whitman College named its 14th president, Dr. Kathleen Murray, who will assume the College's top leadership role on July 1, 2015.
- In 2013-14, 49 Whitman students and alumni earned post-baccalaureate and undergraduate fellowships, scholarships and grants in 23 unique programs; 14 undergraduates and graduates won several of the nation's most prestigious awards, including Fulbright, National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Rotary, DAAD and U.S. Department of State Critical Language prizes; 33 recipients received awards for educational experiences abroad, and Whitman was again named a "Top Producer" of awards by the Fulbright U.S. Student Program.
- Campus visits this year included lectures by former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, author Sherman Alexie, author David Sedaris,

astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, Washington Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu, filmmaker and founder of World Trust Dr. Shakti Butler and many other nationally recognized speakers, scholars, authors and artists.

- Athletic teams continued to experience success on and off the field of play. Senior Heather Johns was voted the Capital One[®] Academic All-American of the Year in Division III women's basketball shortly after being named the Northwest Conference Player of the Year. The men's basketball team registered its first 20-win season in 29 years, and men's swimming captured its first Northwest Conference championship. Last fall, we also added a varsity women's lacrosse team, which played its first conference game on March 15.

Obviously, Whitman is thriving and we are very grateful for the many alumni, families and friends of the College who provide very generous support for our programs and scholarship funds.

As always, I welcome your comments and feedback. If you have general questions about our budget, programs or the vision for Whitman College's future, you may contact me directly at 509-527-5132 or via email at president@whitman.edu. Also, please feel free to contact our Office of Financial Aid, 509-527-5178 or finaid@whitman.edu if you have specific questions pertaining to support for your student now or in the year ahead.

Respectfully,

George S. Bridges
President