

**Self-evaluation**  
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**2003-2004**

**Introduction**

This marks the end of my fourth year as president. Evergreen did some extraordinary work this year. For the past several years, we have worked against the backdrop of a declining economy and legislative budget reductions. Even so, we have achieved some remarkable successes. We enjoyed increased recognition for the quality of our academic work. We have significantly expanded our external relations efforts. We realized the funding and construction of Seminar II, conversion to a new information system, expansion of the Campus Children's Center, and dramatic increases in applications for admission and in private giving. The college did all this while continuing to focus on providing an extraordinary educational experience for our students. This year, we have been comparatively free from the prospect of legislative budget cuts. This freedom has allowed us to begin conversations about long-range planning for the future of the college.

**Goals**

Last summer, the college's Senior staff identified six themes for our work this year. A review of those goals shows the exceptional level of work done. It is especially impressive to realize that, in addition to the work captured here, the college also tended to the critical day-to-day tasks that keep Evergreen running.

*1. Promote active and effective student engagement, deep learning and leadership.*

Evergreen received some meaningful external validation. Our interim accreditation visit went very smoothly. Ernest Ettlich, our accreditation reviewer, noted that the college has done serious work toward ensuring that our graduates receive a good, general liberal arts education. The "Documenting Effective Educational Practices" (DEEP) project, which conducted two site visits at Evergreen, also published its final report this year, praising Evergreen's record of fostering student engagement. Its authors wrote this about Evergreen: "The faculty is deeply committed to the liberal arts, to teaching, to working collegially in an interdisciplinary mode, and to the academic values and processes that are distinctive and central to Evergreen. They are also intellectually alive, vital, and have a visible dedication to learning — something that, once again, is fueled by the form and substance of Evergreen's special curricular approach."

We did a good job of structuring the curriculum to meet the needs of students. We continue to over-build core and all-level programs to help ensure that first-year students can find a good fit in an academic program. The impact of the Beginning the Journey program was assessed, and the program was reconstituted for fall 2004.

The college took steps to renew its commitment to some of our core practices. The Narrative Evaluation DTF is completing its assignment and preparing to work with faculty team planning institutes this summer. In addition, a study group continues working to improve the processing of evaluations. Together, these two groups will help us ensure that narrative evaluations clearly and concisely document the learning that takes place at Evergreen.

We have made good progress in enhancing faculty development and vitality. In addition to our normal funding levels, we dedicated \$23,000 of the gift from Atlantic Philanthropies to increase the

sponsored research opportunities available to faculty, and \$42,000 to fund faculty summer institutes. We will direct the same amounts to enhance sponsored research and summer institutes next year.

Finally, we pursued several new academic initiatives: the Wuhan partnership, the Center for Community Based Action and Learning, Extended Education and the MPA Tribal program.

- Currently, it appears that our partners in Wuhan are unable to engage in a full partnership with Evergreen. While disappointing, the experience nevertheless demonstrates the international interest in Evergreen's pedagogy and our ongoing commitment to international studies.
- The Center for Community-Based Learning and Action gives the college an opportunity to pursue some goals we have long deferred for lack of funding. The Atlantic Philanthropies gift has given us the opportunity to begin the project. This initial funding has already proved to be a catalyst, allowing us to seek additional funding and leverage our strong traditions of service learning and bridging theory and practice. Both our students and our community will benefit from this effort.
- We have done very thorough and thoughtful work this year to explore the feasibility of an Extended Education program. This program would allow us to develop a revenue stream over which the college would have some control while also serving the needs of the community. A work group studied the issue carefully, consulted widely, and has proposed a cautious beginning that includes limited offerings this summer. With the experience of the summer offerings, the group will refine its proposal and this fall will ask the faculty to endorse a full pilot program.
- The first class of the Master of Public Administration program in Tribal Administration will graduate this week. Last summer, we asked the Higher Education Coordinating (HEC) Board to permanently fund the program using the state's "high demand" enrollment allocation. The HEC Board did not fund the proposal, but encouraged us to resubmit the proposal this year. We resubmitted the proposal last week and are hopeful that we will obtain permanent funding for the program.

## 2. *Strengthen faculty and staff vitality and quality of work life.*

Evergreen made significant enhancements this year to the professional development and training programs for both faculty and staff. I noted above the dedicated funding for faculty summer institutes and enhancements to faculty sponsored research. In addition, the Human Resources office has provided leadership in developing a professional development program for Evergreen staff. The effort began with an extended conversation at the fall Management Retreat on the nature of work and leadership at Evergreen. The project continued with a series of workshops on meeting facilitation, communication styles and leadership. This summer, Human Resources is organizing a series of staff summer institutes, including one with Barry Posner, whose work provided the framework for our leadership discussion last fall.

A successful search for a new provost was one of our most important goals. The Provost Search Committee worked hard to present the campus with an extraordinary group of finalists. Faculty, staff and students participated fully in conversations with the finalists and gave me the benefit of their thoughtful and candid assessments of the needs of the college and the strengths of the finalists. In the end, we learned a great deal about ourselves as an institution. I am extremely pleased with the outcome of the search. Don Bantz is approaching his transition in a methodical and reflective fashion. He brings to the position a deep understanding of Evergreen and a genuine willingness to try new ideas and expand his view of the college.

Both Evergreen's management and union representatives are devoting considerable time and energy to the collective bargaining process. Evergreen is bargaining as part of a large group of higher education institutions through the governor's office of labor relations. We will not know the full effect of the effort until the 2005 Legislature acts on the contract that is proposed.

3. *Update, clarify and integrate college planning functions to foster efficient and effective management of the institution.*

This year we experienced the benefit of the planning and management decisions made previously. Most notably, the campus witnessed the completion and opening of the Seminar II building. While a number of loose ends remain before the project is fully complete, we can all take pride in a new building that clearly supports our approach to teaching, reflects our commitment to the environment and demonstrates our dedication to being good stewards of the state's resources.

The implementation of the Banner system's finance module marks a significant milestone in the college's financial management. Many staff spent countless hours preparing for the conversion, which went remarkably smoothly. As we complete our first fiscal year with the new system, we are only beginning to see the benefits available to us.

We took further steps this year to make our campus food service operations solvent. I have been extremely pleased with the quality and service provided by our current food service provider, Bon Appetit. Nevertheless, the college cannot continue to spend several hundred thousand dollars each year to subsidize food service. Spending this kind of money to offset losses in food services is not in line with our college priorities. Evergreen published a Request for Proposals (RFP) for food service this spring. If the RFP process is successful, we will have a new food service contract in the fall. The long-term solvency of food services will require a more structural change. We are working with consultants to develop a long-range vision for financially sustainable campus food services.

For the first time in several years, the state auditor's annual review of the college found Evergreen out of compliance in a few areas. I am pleased that the college's staff responded to the auditor's finding in a constructive and energetic fashion, revising policies where necessary and working to better communicate policy expectations to college staff. By the time the auditors delivered their official report to me, almost all of the issues had been resolved. We will continue to focus on responsible financial management in the next year and look forward to the auditor's next review.

The College Budget Council (CBC) continued its work this year. The CBC process has served the college well. With the help of the CBC, the college has weathered a severe economic recession. This year, we used one-time resources to shore up areas of the budget that would otherwise have been cut. Because no further legislative cuts were required this year, the CBC has recommended that we cancel the 1 percent budget reduction that we had thought would be necessary. I have recommended to the Board of Trustees that we cancel the 1 percent cut, which we can do while continuing to set aside a prudent level of reserves in our base budget.

We made some real progress in long-range planning in three areas: technology, campus life and enrollment. Our Computing and Communications (C&C) staff led a grassroots, college-wide technology planning process this year: Information Technology Collaboration Hives (ITCH). The ITCH groups provided an intensely collaborative structure where faculty and staff from all areas of the campus could talk about technology priorities. Staff report that the process has been useful in helping prioritize the workload of our C&C staff. It should also prove useful in shaping a long-range technology plan next year.

A Campus Life work group was convened and has met regularly. The group completed a comprehensive survey of student needs, focusing on spaces and facilities outside of the classroom. The group will provide a final report to the campus in the fall. Its work recognizes the opportunities that we will have as the campus grows to improve the quality of life for both our residential and commuter students, faculty and staff.

The college's enrollment picture has greatly improved over the past three years: applications for admission have increased 27 percent. We are now in a position to begin thinking about the college's long-term enrollment planning. The Enrollment Coordinating Committee (ECC) conducted a thorough analysis of enrollment growth by studying the college's enrollment history and analyzing state and regional demographic projections. The state projects that more than 33,000 new higher education spaces will be needed to accommodate demographic growth. The college has a long-standing goal of enrolling 5,000 students as our contribution toward meeting this need. It is clear from the ECC's analysis that even under the most optimistic scenarios, Evergreen will fail to meet this goal unless we add new programs and/or reconfigure existing programs to meet the needs of students not currently serve. Last week, Don Bantz and I charged an Enrollment Growth Disappearing Task Force to recommend a new growth plan. The DTF will draw upon the ECC's work this year and the work of previous academic growth efforts at Evergreen.

4. Build a *Strategic Revenue Enhancement Plan* to strengthen, support and institutionalize efforts to cultivate, diversify and further develop robust college funding structures.

I described above two areas in which we have worked to improve the college's long-term financial health this year: work to develop an Extended Education program and work to create a financially sustainable food services program. The third area on which we have focused, and the area with perhaps the greatest long-range potential, is fundraising.

We have made some very significant progress in fundraising. In the past four years, private giving to the college has increased 41 percent. This year, we set some very ambitious goals. Staff and students are working hard to achieve these goals before June 30, and even if we do not achieve the goals, we will come very close. At the end of May 2004, the Foundation had already received gifts of more than \$1.4 million, surpassing total giving last year. We made some investments to achieve this goal. We upgraded the phone system that student workers use to call alumni to ask for gifts to the annual fund. We also significantly improved the quality of the alumni magazine and other college publications. We made important first contacts with a number of potential major donors to the college. Perhaps most importantly, faculty, staff and students across campus have shown a willingness and an aptitude for writing grants, meeting with donors, and explaining our programs and needs to friends of the college. I have had the pleasure of showing donors and potential donors through the Longhouse, the College Recreation Center, the science and computing labs, and the art galleries and studios.

Staff in my office organized 43 events attended by more than 2,000 people. These events aided in our fundraising outreach, our engagement with the local community and building community on campus. Events included the Jackie Robinson Scholarship Night at Safeco Field, the Faculty/Staff Convocation, the Scholarship Recognition Dinner, the holiday lunch, dinners for legislators, and the Dedication and Open House for Seminar II.

These efforts represent the first steps in an expanded effort to increase support for Evergreen. A college of Evergreen's size and distinction can accomplish still more through fundraising. Before we commit to a formal fundraising campaign, it is important that we conduct a careful assessment of our current efforts and our overall potential. This summer, a consultant (the Collins Group) will assess

our fundraising activities and readiness for a campaign. They have performed similar projects for Portland State University, the Tacoma Art Museum, and many other non-profit and educational organizations. This report will serve as a blueprint as we develop a comprehensive campaign plan.

5. *Improve our ability to learn and work effectively and respectfully across significant differences by promoting a campus climate that is supportive, safe and which celebrates diversity, by creating opportunities for respectful conversations about difficult issues, and transforming conflicts into teachable moments and responding to identified acts of intolerance.*

Evergreen has long believed in the importance of developing a diverse and inclusive institution where faculty, staff and students can work together across significant differences. At the 2003 Day of Absence/Day of Presence, a group of faculty and students spoke eloquently about the challenges, struggles and disappointments that confront them. In response to those discussions, a summer institute was formed last year to develop a grass-roots response focusing on racism at Evergreen and our responses to it.

The work of that group continued into this year. Two summer faculty institutes will focus specifically on issues related to diversity, and discussions on diversity will be incorporated into all of the summer faculty team planning institutes. A work group began meeting this spring to start developing institutional indicators that we can use to measure our progress. To further the campus conversation on race and racism, the Division of Students Affairs invited Aquila McCants, a diversity consultant, to campus to work with students, faculty and staff on issues of cultural sensitivity and living in a multicultural society. Ms. McCants facilitated the First Peoples' student retreat, guest lectured in an academic program, provided individual consultation to faculty and staff, and facilitated a workshop on cultural appropriations.

Our community outreach work also advanced this theme. The Atlantic Philanthropies grant supported "The Search for Peace" dialogues on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and "The Search for Equality" events commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. These series of events were truly impressive. More than 400 people attended each of the six lectures in the Search for Peace series, which were also broadcast around the state on TVW. Our faculty, staff and students in both Olympia and Tacoma planned these events, engaging members of the local community in serious dialogue. The partnerships that we formed, both with each other and the larger community, will continue to benefit all of us.

It is important that we carry this work forward into the next year. It is also important that we bring a college-wide focus to this area without dampening the many grassroots initiatives under way. I am asking the vice presidents and senior staff to give attention to forming specific goals related to diversity in the college's goal-setting work this summer.

6. *Provide visible leadership in state and national higher education policy.*

Evergreen continues to provide visible leadership in state and national higher education issues. In January, the trustees and regents of the state's six public four-year institutions met to discuss common issues. The Joint Governing Boards assembly helped to make a strong case for the needs and importance of public higher education. Our board of trustees was critical to convening this group and continues to work to keep the group active.

Although we are the smallest of the state's public four-year institutions, we continue to be very visible in the state's discussions of higher education policy. The Washington Center led study sessions this year for the House and Senate Higher Education Committees. As the HEC Board develops a new

statewide master plan, we have repeatedly voiced the importance of broadening it to specifically recognize the importance of the liberal arts and civic engagement.

On the national scene, Evergreen continues to be visible. I currently serve on the board of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and chaired a special meeting in April on the association's new diversity initiative, "Making Excellence Inclusive." The college remains active in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges. Many faculty and staff are active in their regional or national professional organizations. This spring, more than 20 Evergreen faculty presented at the National Learning Communities Conference, which drew people from across the country. This fall, we will host the annual conference of the Consortium of Innovative Experimental Colleges.

Next year, I will chair the Council of Presidents during what is likely to be a demanding legislative session. This work should allow us to continue making the case for the importance of the liberal arts and for Evergreen's role as a liberal arts college in the state's public higher education system.

### **Conclusion**

We have accomplished extraordinary work this year. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as president of this marvelous place. However, I remain disappointed in our lack of success in providing much needed salary increases to our staff and faculty. We are likely to continue to face a tight state budget for some time. While I believe I have been effective in serving the interests of Evergreen in the public policy arena, I continue to be frustrated that we have not been more successful in communicating the key role that a public higher education plays in the future of our citizens and economy. Even with these frustrations, I believe that as a college we continue to make great progress. We are better known statewide, we are serving a broader mix of the state's population, and our academic reputation continues to grow.

The coming year will bring some special challenges. Internally, we face major policy discussions about the growth of the college. These discussions and our decision will help shape our academic emphasis, the work demands on our staff, and the state's expectations of the college. We face the renovation of the Evans Library building. This effort will require extraordinary collaboration and communication over the coming year. I will be spending even more time next year in private fundraising. As we all recognize, private giving must be an even greater part of the financial future of the college. In the next year, we must continue to grow the Foundation Board of Governors and our relationship with private foundations.

Externally, I will continue to be an advocate for public liberal arts education. This fall we will see changes in both the executive and legislative leadership of the state. Those changes and the public's decision on future funding for higher education will dictate the climate in which we do our work in the next academic year.

Thank you all for your support this year. I would value your feedback on my work.