

**Self-evaluation**  
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Next week, I will attend part of the new faculty retreat, the seventh I will have attended as president. It is always a pleasure to meet the new members of our faculty, who are renewing our community year by year. All of us have seen many changes in the college and in the world since I joined in the new faculty skit seven years ago at Fort Worden.

Once again this year, I had an opportunity to participate in part of an academic program fall quarter. This year, it was *Growing Up Global* with Stephanie Coontz and Dan Leahy. The program gave me an opportunity to see the new generation of students coming to Evergreen and to learn about how global issues affect their lives and their view of the world.

This year, we have done significant work on updating Evergreen's strategic plan. The draft updated plan seeks to re-affirm Evergreen's mission as an innovative liberal arts college, respond to some of the changes in our environment, provide new focus on sustainability and diversity, provide a framework for clarifying our priorities, and lay the groundwork for our upcoming 10-year accreditation visit. We will use the summer to reflect on the current draft and consult with some external constituencies before asking the board to approve a final draft of the plan in the fall. The work of drafting the plan has drawn on the extraordinary work of several Disappearing Task Forces and committees, including the Diversity DTF, the Sustainability Task Force, the First Year Experience DTF and the Information Technology Collaboration Hive.

At the same time we are forming long-range plans, we have made some significant process on key strategic issues, including diversity issues. We now have in place a protocol for responding to incidents of apparent bias. The Lumina Grant allows us, in partnership with Grays Harbor College and other community colleges to significantly improve our service to tribal students, in effect creating a bridge program into our upper-division Reservation-Based Community-Determined program. I charged a group this year to review the use of the President's Diversity Fund. They have made recommendations to improve the strategic value of the fund. Our Longhouse is now nationally recognized for its work with Native American and indigenous artists around the world. That recognition has yielded a major new partnership with the Ford Foundation.

The work of the faculty and academic staff has been truly remarkable this year. The Agenda Committee and Deans organized a series of genuinely interdisciplinary, collegial conversations that delved into some critical and persistent issues: the curriculum, workload, planning unit structures and interdisciplinary teaching. At the same time, we hired 11 new faculty. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which probably comes closer to than any other survey instrument to reflecting Evergreen's values and aspirations, demonstrated again that Evergreen provides students with an extraordinarily engaging and effective educational experience. The NSSE affirms our continued role as a national model for effective educational practices. It demonstrates the good results of the extraordinary work done by both faculty and staff at Evergreen.

Students are at the heart of all we do as a college. I am pleased and impressed by the strong student leadership and commitment demonstrated by the formation of Evergreen's first recognized student government. Twenty-one representatives have been elected and will now work to reach consensus on the association's bylaws and agenda. I look forward to a new articulation of student interests and a coherent student voice in the affairs of Evergreen and in presenting issues to the legislature.

The physical transformation of the Olympia campus continues. The renovated sections of the library and computing center are inspiring. This fall, we will reach a significant milestone when the first phase of the project is completed and the library proper is fully re-opened. We can all be proud of the level of mutual trust, patience and understanding that we have shown throughout the lengthy renovation of the library building. It will require even more as we plan for the second phase of the project, applying the lessons we learned in the first phase.

A remarkable group of students and staff worked this year on the pre-design of for a renovation of the College Activities Building. The affirmative vote of the students this spring provides an opportunity for a long overdue renewal of this central building. We will ask the legislature next year to support the college's share of the project. The students' vision for the CAB supports community and advances our goals for sustainability. More importantly, it gives us an opportunity to work with students to redesign the primary student building on campus to meet their needs. Among other features, we expect the project will provide space for an additional, student-run food option. We are also undertaking another major lab renovation and, with the help of bond financing, a significant renewal of our residence halls. Taken together, all these capital projects promise a greatly enhanced environment for the students who are at the center of our college.

We continued this year to work on external relations and community outreach. The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Longhouse gave us a valuable opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to serving Native American communities. At the Tacoma campus, the third community fair provided an opportunity for education and community service as students conduct research on significant community issues and then share their findings and provide service to the neighbors in Tacoma. In Olympia, we have continued to engage our new neighborhood advisory board in dialogue. At the same time, we continue to engage the legislature and policy makers to articulate the value and the needs of Evergreen. Most recently, I joined with the five other presidents of the state's public baccalaureate institutions in making a statement to the Governor's Washington Learns commission, which is working to make recommendations that will set the stage for the state's commitment to higher education for the next several years. Our statement included clear messages about the urgent need to improve compensation for faculty and staff, to provide more support for low-income and first generation students, and to give the institutions some flexibility in managing enrollments.

This year, as a result of the vacancy in the Vice President for College Advancement, I spent much more of my own time and energy in fundraising. The Advancement staff, with the help of members of the President's staff, engaged in an extraordinarily high level of activity, and we raised more than \$2.1 million overall. We honored alumni Lyda Kuth and Kent Christman with the first Bud Koons Award, recognizing their long-standing, generous support of the college.

Both the Board of Governors and Board of Trustees achieved 100% participation in giving to the college. Along with members of the faculty, I attended alumni gatherings in Seattle, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Austin, and Washington DC.

The investments we have made in equipment and training to support the Annual Fund phoneathon began to show a real dividend this year. With more than \$420,000 raised for the Annual Fund so far this year, we have shattered past records and far exceeded our ambitious \$375,000 goal for Annual Fund scholarship support. The achievement is a testament to the dedication of the extraordinary staff and students who work on the Annual Fund. Alumni, parents, foundations and community businesses remain strongly supportive of Evergreen. My experience in Advancement this year, convinces me that private giving can play an increasingly important role in furthering Evergreen's goals.

While we have made significant progress in the goals we have identified for this year, it is important for me to note the most important challenge we continue to face. The work that our faculty and staff have done over the past several years is tremendous, but serious questions persist about our ability to sustain this level of work while providing a desirable quality of work life. These questions surface in many ways: for instance, in discussions about exempt salaries and working conditions, in conversations about the expectations and compensation of visiting and adjunct faculty, and the report of the Sustainability Task Force. Our continued success as a college depends on our ability to address these issues over the next few years.

A year ago in my self-evaluation, I noted the changing academic student market. The Enrollment Growth DTF in their report noted a number of these changes: the branch campuses are becoming four-year institutions, the community colleges were given funding to attract university programs to their campuses, and a pilot program for community colleges to award applied baccalaureate degrees was inaugurated. At the same time, state-wide enrollments are projected to show only marginal growth. In response to these conditions, the DTF recommended an investment in business and health-related programs for this fall. I want to acknowledge my decision to implement the DTF's recommendation despite the faculty's preference to delay for a year. The Provost and I did not make that decision lightly. It sometimes happens that it falls to us to make hard decisions. We weighed the careful work of the DTF, the clearly stated reservations of the faculty, and all that we personally knew of the rapidly changing political and enrollment environment. In the end, we chose a course that we believe is in the best long-term interest of the college.

A year later, the change in the student market appears to be occurring more rapidly than anyone predicted, with nearly 1,000 freshman applicants to the branch campuses and a nearly 13% drop in transfer applicants statewide. This decline in applicants could result in significant enrollment downturn for the college. As the enrollment picture becomes clear this fall, we will need to plan for possible budget adjustments and take steps to ensure that our fiscal management is inclusive, transparent, locatable and accountable. We are forming a group of Vice Presidents, faculty and staff to take part in this budget work.

Additionally, the faculty will have a vote on unionization in October. Regardless of the results of that vote, we will all need to commit ourselves to working hard to make our governance

structures at Evergreen work well. Confronting all of these challenges—creating a more sustainable work environment for faculty and staff, reacting to a rapidly changing enrollment environment, adjusting our internal allocation of resources in response to these needs—requires that we work together in an atmosphere of mutual trust founded on our mutual concern for the best interests of the college. Evergreen has done this in the past when faced with significant challenges, and I am confident that we will be successful in doing so again. The work of our DTFs this year, the formation of a new student government, and the incredibly engaged faculty discussions we had this year all show that this is already happening. I am optimistic that we will continue to gain the public support we need to confront the challenges before us.

I continue to find it incredibly rewarding to have the privilege of working in this great college, with such capable colleagues and marvelous students. Thank you for your continuing support.