



## **Strategic Plan Priority 4: Stimulate the Cultural and Economic Development of the Region**

As the premier educational resource within the region, Shepherd University's will provide economic and cultural development opportunities. Our current programs contribute to the community in terms of quality of performance, quality of production, and quality competitive athletics. Shepherd University is committed to enhancing these programs.

We will be proactive partners providing fresh opportunities by seeking resources and partnerships to support our capacity to continue our contribution. We dedicate our people and our resources to improving the community. Shepherd University will provide an academic structure that stimulates economic development. We must educate future leaders who will become cultural and economic civic leaders of their communities.

In order to be recognized as a premier university, Shepherd University must define itself in terms that bespeak our educational heritage, our commitment to first-rate teaching and learning, and our commitment to the academic success of our students. Symbols and ceremonies are vital to the creation, maintenance, and promulgation of an organizational culture.

These highly-interrelated priorities can be segmented into four categories for implementation. These four categories are:

- 1) the development of a definable culture for Shepherd University,
- 2) the enrichment of the cultural life of the region,
- 3) the stimulation of economic opportunity for the region, and
- 4) the enhancement of Shepherd's athletic reputation.

### **Culture and Heritage**

The most important attribute of a university is a culture that defines the university as an academic center. This culture must be recognized and definable both within the university and outside of the university. An annual event must be established (e.g. a Founder's Day Celebration, a Day of Reflection, or a Metanoia) that acknowledges our premier commitment to teaching and learning. This event must celebrate our successes in pedagogy, it must promote and encourage scholarship among faculty and students, and it must serve to link the university to the wider community in a fashion that continual persuades a wider world that Shepherd University is a premier institution.

The financial cost of this initiative is minimal compared to the returns. Advertizing, speaker's fees, celebration expenses, and sundries may amount to \$10,000 annually. The

cost in terms of human energy and personal commitment from administrative, staff, and faculty leadership to bend the culture of the university is enormous.

### **Cultural Enrichment of the Region**

Shepherd University's regional centrality in cultural opportunities is well-established and must serve as the center-point of our strategic development as a premier university.

Observers of academia, both lay and professional, are aware of the link between academic primacy and primacy in the arts. We must effectively utilize our strengths in this regard through the following initiatives:

1. Attract talented faculty and students by investing in first-rate academic spaces and performance/exhibition venues. This initiative is more completely developed in the facilities component of the strategic plan.
2. Provide scholarships, stipends and other funds to attract talented students to Shepherd's visual and performing arts programs. This initiative is more completely developed in the student-focused component of the strategic plan.
3. Create endowments that will increase the university's capacity to attract faculty who are recognized nationally and internationally. This initiative is more completely developed in the faculty and staff component of the strategic plan.
4. Build guest lecture and award programs around the university's 2 to 3 lead academic programs and use these to attract nationally and internationally renowned speakers to our top academic programs.
5. Broaden awareness of the university as a cultural center in the region through an expanded public relations program.
6. Create partnerships that maximize the resources of the immediate community in support the tourism industry (e.g. work with the C&O park personnel, local bed and breakfasts, the art department, and CATF to create excursion packages).
7. Fund opportunities for Shepherd faculty, students, and alumni to perform/exhibit in national and international venues and develop a public relations program that maximizes the recognition the university receives from these accomplishments.
8. Establish a university press.

### **Economic Stimulation of the Region**

Economic development activities serve the tripartite purpose of creating a regional economy

a) that reflects positively upon the university, b) that offers student development opportunities through co-op, externship, and faculty-led projects, and c) that provides professional development opportunities for faculty. We must develop a leadership role for Shepherd University with regard to economic stimulation through the following initiatives:

1. Fund release time for faculty and co-op opportunities for students to participate in developing the economic life of the region. Several of the following initiatives (e.g. incubator establishment, business mentoring) will require this level of time and commitment.
2. Work with regional economic development partners to assess existing and emerging opportunities for economic development. Utilize gap analysis to assess need for services and support programs to develop priorities and funding strategies. Examples of programs and services that may eventually be developed here include incubators, and small business development centers.

3. Develop capacity (including services, facilities and technology) for attracting faculty research funds, targeting especially those that support the current or emerging economic strengths of the region. Identified areas for immediate focus include health care and pharmaceuticals. Other areas to explore include emerging needs associated with the aging population, entrepreneurship, and information systems.
4. Provide faculty support and incentives to engage in curriculum renewal initiatives that will result in better alignment of academic programs with the needs of the region. This would necessitate funding grants to explore the regional economic community.
5. Create focused opportunities for students and faculty to engage in internships, externships, and sabbaticals in regional, national, and international businesses.
6. Develop regional and statewide recognition of Shepherd University's contributions and resources by encouraging the business department and other academic areas to host workshops, forums, and professional conferences that are broadly marketed.
7. Assess and communicate the impact of Shepherd's traditional academic programs on the regional workforce. Especially communicate the quantitative and qualitative contributions of the education, nursing, social work and accounting programs.
8. Provide partnerships in accessible graduate and continuing education programs to enhance the economic development of new business initiative within both the business and cultural communities.
9. Provide stimulus for new entrepreneurial and established corporations to relocate to this region with cooperation of government, education, and business.
10. Provide a business oriented incubator with an identifiable location to increase opportunities for the small business developer, the large corporation, and potential government relocation.
11. Provide stimulus for partnerships in government and business to increase grants and research contracts to the region.
12. Provide opportunities for both international relocation of businesses to the area as well as regional businesses to expand to international locations.
13. Provide expanding cultural and athletic programs that utilize current and future arts and humanities-based faculty and staff to improve the quality of life in the area.
14. Provide easy access to the Shepherd University environment with easy parking and shuttle services among the campus locations and develop the campus for pedestrian traffic. This initiative is more completely developed in the facilities component of the strategic plan.

### **Athletic Reputation Enhancement**

The Athletic program is an integral part of the University's educational mission by providing unique competitive learning experiences, a balance of academics and athletics, leadership development; as well as having an economic and cultural impact on the region by providing opportunities for community engagement.

1. Athletics should be fiscally supported in such a manner as reflects its value and relationship to the overall mission of Shepherd University and this support should come from both internal and external sources. Athletics must be fiscally supported with a budget that reflects Shepherd's unique travel needs within the WVIAC due to the University's location in the Eastern Panhandle, to provide for the safety of student-athletes and coaches, and to provide equipment to play a competitive

schedule. This will require budget increases of about \$ 305,751 over a five year period of time.

2. Athletics should recruit and employ coaches and other athletic administrative staff at competitive salaries to provide student-athletes with the best educational and athletic experience. Athletics must be able to recruit and retain quality coaches including minority coaches that are paid salaries that are competitive with other institutions based on national salary schedules. And, part-time coaches should become fulltime University employees to serve better the educational needs of our student-athletes. This will require budget increases of about \$ 804,673 over a five year period of time.
3. Athletics should recruit and retain student-athletes who meet all University and NCAA academic standards and continue to have a graduation rate and retention rate that is higher than the University as a whole. Athletics must be able to provide its student-athletes with additional financial aid in order to recruit the best possible athletes to compete for the University. This will require budget increases of about \$21,847 per student-athlete to meet the NCAA's Cost of Attendance figure. To be fully funded under NCAA rules would require an additional \$ 21,847,500 in financial aid awards.
4. Athletics should provide student-athletes and coaches with facilities for competition, practice, and educational purposes that meet national, state and association requirements, are safe and reflect Shepherd's leadership role in Division II athletics. Athletics must provide its student-athlete and coaches with facilities for competition, practices, and educational purposes that are competitive and reflect Shepherd's leadership role in Division II. New projects or renovations would include upgrades to the soccer field, tennis courts, baseball field, softball field, and Ram Stadium as well as upgrades to practice fields for soccer, lacrosse, and football at a cost of about \$5,604,000. And, an addition to the Butcher Center is needed to provide more classrooms, offices, labs, locker rooms, and weight and training facilities at a cost of about \$10,060,000.
5. Athletics should continue to comply with all University, WVIAC, NCAA Division II and Federal rules (including Title IX), policies, and guidelines. Athletics must continue to show progress in meeting Title IX requirements by providing "access" to athletic programs for students. This can be accomplished by adding additional sports for which there is a need that has been shown to exist. Women's Lacrosse is being added in 2009-2010 and Women's Golf and Women's Swimming will be added when budgets will permit. This will require a budget increase of about \$ 230,000 over five years.
6. Develop loyal fans, students, and alumni who will attend athletic contests and support the Athletic program of the University. Athletics must develop loyal fans, students, and alumni who will attend athletic contests and support the athletic program of the University. This will allow the athletic department to generate funding from outside sources with the assistance of the Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs staff.