State of the University, 2013

By Dr. Sam Kerr

In a recent newsletter, Dr. Ron Shape, our chief executive officer, outlined the recent geographic growth of National American University. This message will expand on Dr. Shape’s comments in the areas of academics.

New academic programs are being added to the professional and technical program inventory, including a pharmacy technician diploma program, an Associate of Applied Science degree in marketing and management, and a Bachelor of Science degree in health information management. These programs are in various stages of internal and external approvals. At the Rouache Graduate Center, located in Austin, Texas, we are exploring additional master’s level programming, as well as adding emphasis areas for our current master’s level programs in business, management and nursing.

We are pleased to have received full regional accreditation for our new education doctorate (Ed.D.) program and plan to expand this program in approved locations throughout the United States. In that regard, through internal and external environmental scanning processes, NAU’s Board of Governors determined that a significant need for an Ed.D. degree existed, especially in the area of community college leadership. As part of this scanning process, the board formed the NAU National Community College Advisory Board, which helped identify the critical need for preparing community and technical college leaders. Dr. Walter Bumphus, president and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges, previously determined that “[t]he data collected through ... research indicates that within the next five years, 45% of our current presidents will retire, and within the next ten years, we will lose an additional 25% -- for a total of 70% of our leaders.”

The university administration is also pleased that Dr. Lynn Priddy will join the university on October 1 as the new provost. As the university’s chief academic officer, Dr. Priddy will assume overall responsibility for academic programs, assessment of student learning outcomes, learner services, career services, and coordination of external and internal university academic matters. She will also foster collaborations with academic departments, programs, and key university departments and campuses to enhance the quality of education. Dr. Priddy has a distinguished career in higher education, including her service as the vice president for accreditation services at the Higher Learning Commission.

Finally, the university is in the midst of preparing its self-study as a prelude to the next comprehensive accreditation visit from the Higher Learning Commission. In that regard, the Commission will conduct a comprehensive reaffirmation evaluation for the university on September 22-24, 2014. A team of peer reviewers from the Commission will visit the central administration offices, as well as selected campuses and additional locations. National American University began its reaffirmation of accreditation self-study in March 2012. Accreditation assures and advances the quality of higher education, as the university demonstrates its willingness and commitment to quality and accountability.

The Commission provides public certification of acceptable institutional quality and an opportunity and incentive for self-improvement. All university campuses and departments, both academic and non-academic, will need to be active participants in the self-study process in order for the university to be successful in its review efforts.

The university’s most recent self-study was in 2007. Since then, the criteria for accreditation have changed to become more evidence-based. The focus has shifted to the university’s performance; the effectiveness of its processes and structures and allocation of resources in achieving its goals; the demonstration of academic quality to student learning, retention and completion; and the capacity to sustain educational excellence in the future.
ALBUQUERQUE, NM
Bernardo LaFontaine (Organizational Leadership, BS, 2012) lives in Oklahoma, working at Aerotek as a tactical engine records analyst contractor for Pratt & Whitney. He is currently enrolled in NAU’s Master of Management program.

ALBUQUERQUE WEST, NM
Blair Boyer (Business Administration, BS, 2007) “Going back to school had been on my mind for a while, so when my employer told me I needed to have a college degree in order to advance, I did it. I would not have been able to be a senior director of human resources without my education.”

BLOOMINGTON, MN
Allie Munro (Medical Assisting, AAS, 2012) “I was thrilled to learn about job options in specialty clinics, and I pursued an externship with a dermatology consultant group. I was hired even before I graduated. Thanks to the program coordinators and hard work, I had the skills and confidence I needed to land a job I wanted.”

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO
Curtis Newton (2006 Applied Management, BS, 2006) is a senior analyst for BIT Systems and lives in Aurora, Colorado.

COLORADO STUDENTS
Three NAU students were honored as “Colorado Students of the Year” for meritorious achievement in their fields of study. Cindy Engle (Healthcare Coding) from Centennial, Travis Sullivan (Business Administration) from Colorado Springs South and Pamela Karakusis-Smith (Nursing) from Denver will be honored at a dinner hosted in part by the Denver Post in September. Their selections were based upon personal commitment, performance, leadership and professionalism.

DENVER, CO
Dr. James Raidon, Denver’s academic dean announced that Pamela Karakusis-Smith, recent nursing graduate, has been selected as the 2013 Student of the Year in Allied Health-Clinical by the Colorado Association of Career Colleges and Schools. “I grew up around the medical profession and had high hopes that I could be as influential as my father who is a physician. My education was put on hold for a time due to life circumstances. Those in the nursing profession who helped me and my children were influential in my decision to earn my nursing degree.” Pam persevered through many challenges while at NAU but is a firm believer that perspective is everything. “A positive attitude can carry you through the most difficult times.”

ONLINE
Melissa Carr (Business Administration emphasis in Accounting, BS, 2012) lives in Emory, Texas and works remotely for the Regional Heart Doctors in Rapid City, South Dakota. “Getting an education was extremely important to me, I didn’t want to live a life struggling financially, I set my values high. Now I focus on my family and contribute to family income, I overcame a lot and am very proud of where I am today.” • Phillip Falcon (Business Administration, BS, 2011) lives in Albany, Minnesota, and is a program manager for Douglas Machine, Inc.

LEE’S SUMMIT, MO
Stacey Forte*, the Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) Chapter President for NAU in Missouri and Kansas, attended the National Convention in Anaheim, California, in June. She attended daily workshops and competed in events against others from 18-64 years old and met individuals from every state. She plans to continue PBL membership after graduation.

State of the University cont.

Reaffirming accreditation allows the university to provide evidence that it meets all the Commission’s criteria and all the core components of accreditation. The university evaluates itself against the criteria within the context of its mission, goals, purposes, academic programs and students. This evaluation is then compiled into findings, opportunities for improvement, and evidence in its self-study report. The university then submits its self-study to the Commission for evaluation.

Accreditation evaluations are conducted by peer reviewers - faculty, administrators, public members, and others drawn from within and outside of academe. The team of peer reviewers evaluates the university in terms of the criteria and other required elements (such as federal requirements) and writes a report that includes an accreditation recommendation. Accreditation evaluates an institution of higher education against its own mission, what it claims it accomplishes, and whether it does indeed accomplish what it claims. The team’s recommendation is subject to additional levels of Commission review and decision-making. The Commission’s Board of Trustees makes the final decision on reaffirmation.

The university remains focused on its mission and purposes as it continues to provide technical and professional programs to its students in a caring and supportive learning environment.

Dr. Sam Kerr has been with NAU since October of 2001. He has held a number of authoritative and administrative positions, and most recently he was appointed as the Chief Operating Officer for the NAU System.
“Major” Maverick Sightings

Major taking a ride with Larry
Major hanging out in Minne-TONKA!!
Major keeping Dr. Shape (CEO) company
Major joining NAU Grad Daniel Myers at his new job
Major keeping the kids company!
RAPID CITY, SD
The Rapid City campus graduated their first three BS nursing students (Penny Whaley, Nicole Weyer, Penny Bilben) and recognized them during a pinning ceremony preceding the commencement ceremony. • Paul VanderWoude received the distinguished service alumni award. Paul’s wife Sue VanderWoude, a former student, and several of his 1971 classmates including Dennis Garsjo, President of ’71 Student Senate, attended graduation and the reception. • Joseph Kirk (Criminal Justice, BS, 2012) was part of the Army ROTC program and received commission as a second lieutenant. • Chris Cronberg, a 1971 graduate, has retired as a health care administrator and 25 years as a hospital CEO. He lives in Nashville, Tenn. • A group of Rapid City’s 1990’s alumni returned for a Rapid City reunion. They met with former and current members of the faculty and staff, toured the new campus, and enjoyed a picnic together. Tanya Martens was the reunion group and event organizer. Rip Ray, a member of the group and a 1996 graduate, is living in Pierre. He is a senior revenue agent for the State of South Dakota. • Ralph Scissons, a 1951 National School of Business graduate, visited NAU in May.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
Todd Herseth, System Business Program Chair, was recently elected to the IACBE Board of Commissioners. This is the specialized accreditation body that accredits NAU’s business programs.

CULTURE CLUBS
The combined Culture Clubs from all NAU campuses including Online joined recently to raise funds for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. This was a joint effort and NAU’s first system-wide charity campaign. Through a combination of events, $10,749.88 was raised to help fulfill the wishes of children who have life threatening illnesses.

GRADUATE SCHOOL
Dr. Martha Ellis has been named as a professor and Dean of Graduate Faculty for NAU’s Harold D. Buckingham Graduate School at the Rouche Graduate Center in Austin, Texas. Dr. Ellis was previously an Associate Vice Chancellor in the University of Texas system. She will have primary responsibility for faculty administration and training and curriculum development.

NAU ALUMNI
In July 2013, the alumni office entered the 12,000th graduate alumnus into the alumni database. Matthew H. Olson (Information Technology emphasis in Management Information System, BS, 2013 – Online Campus) from Onalaska, Wisconsin.

Please stay in touch!
We have lost contact with too many alumni as a result of moving or other changes that have not been communicated with the university.

Your contact information can be updated online at: http://www.national.edu/alumni-information-form.

NAU FOUNDATION ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS
Rebecca Davis and Mitzi Austin received foundation awards for academic excellence and for achieving inspiration to their peers and their instructors. Rebecca Davis is a financial services representative for the Online Campus and Mitzi Austin is a regional career services staff member in the South Region for Oklahoma and Texas. Both are master’s degree recipients.

SIoux FALLS, SD
The Sioux Falls graduation event was attended by Dr. Coral Noonan-Terry, dean of the graduate school and Dr. Tasha Almond, graduate instructor, assessment and curriculum staff member. They are pictured with Sioux Falls graduates John Fieber (Master of Management, 2013) and his daughter, Shannon Persching (Criminal Justice, AAS, 2013).

ZONA ROSA, MO
A Zona Rosa group of ASN nursing students distributed 900 bottles of water and provided at least 50 nursing diagnoses relating to runner health/well-being at the Mother’s Day 2013 5K Run/Walk in Overland Park, Kansas.
Shelton Franklin
2013 Distinguished Service Alumni
2011 Colorado Springs Graduate
BS, Health Care Management

"I came to NAU when I was in the military because I wanted to become an officer. My main challenge was time management due to my rigorous work schedule, but thanks to co-workers and the staff at NAU, I succeeded. Since graduating, job opportunities have gone sky high. After getting out of the military, I became the radiology director at a local hospital. I am the first person in my family to graduate from college. Having my family come to my graduation has inspired me to continue my education onto a master’s degree."

Tiffany Christenson
2013 Distinguished Service Alumni
2010 Overland Park Graduate
Diploma, Practical Nursing

"Nursing was always a career goal of mine. It provides a way to give back, to be that one person who brightens someone’s day and provides a helping hand. Nursing is so rewarding. I am now the Resident Care Manager at an assisted-living facility. I oversee the nursing staff and work directly with home health agencies, hospitals, skilled facilities and doctors to provide the best possible care for our patients. Graduating from NAU helped me realize that I can do anything I put my mind to."

Michael Leising
2013 Distinguished Service Alumni
2010 Austin Graduate
BS, Applied Management

"I was in the Navy and I had been taking college courses over a seven-year period before I enrolled at NAU. I was tired of not having a degree and I made that my number one priority at NAU. I did all of this while working full time, coaching a high school baseball team, and being a devoted family man. Learning how to balance your time and your priorities is the key to success. I am now Research Engineer/Scientist Associate for the University of Texas J.J. Pickle Applied Research Laboratory."

Adam Lalim
2013 Distinguished Service Alumni
2011 Watertown Graduate
BS, Business Administration, emphasis Management

"In 2012, I purchased Northeast Area Appraisals, and I do real estate appraisals in the Watertown area in South Dakota. I do the majority of appraisals, along with three part-time employees. I serve on the Watertown Chamber Board of Directors, and I am an active member of the Professional Appraisers Association of South Dakota, and a former board member for Watertown Urban Renewal."

ATTN: ALL GRADUATES
Please continue to submit updates relating to career success and personal matters by using the alumni link on NAU’s website www.national.edu/alumni. This will allow the university to share information about you with other graduates.

Academic Excellence Scholarship Awards - Alumni 2013
The most senior academic excellence scholarship award is designated as the alumni scholarship for each location. Jimmy Childress, Organizational Leadership, Albuquerque; Racheal Anderson, Nursing, Brooklyn Center; Charles Devorak, Business Administration, Bloomington; Evan Hill, Accounting, Bloomington; Tamara Meloy, Healthcare Management, Independence; Anna Aday, Criminal Justice, Bellevue; Jennifer Park, Applied Management, Online; Amy Kolodziej, Medical Staff Services Management, Online; Rachael Hicks, Paralegal Studies, Zona Rosa.
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

2013 NAU GRADUATION
Multiple NAU Locations