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## Dr. Bardo's April 2015 Newsletter



### Your voice should be heard in Innovation Town Halls

Provost Tony Vizzini and I have been having some wonderfully informative discussions with faculty and staff members at the Town Hall Innovation Discussions that began March 31 and will continue into May. Our topics, selected by the deans, have already ranged widely, featuring discussions of innovative approaches to design, teaching, community engagement, human performance, sustainability and social inequality. In each case, the greatest value has been found in bringing together people from across campus that don't often get a chance to engage with one another in serious discussion

Yes, it's that collision thing I like to talk about. When smart, dedicated professionals get together outside the channels of their usual disciplines, intellectual engagement ensues.

I don't want to pre-judge the value of the complete series, but here is some of what has been widely discussed:

- Individuals and their constituent senates have tremendous power to drive change on campus; leadership doesn't require an executive title.

- These discussions are a catalytic stage in the journey towards innovation. They will inform and help shape the next stage of the university's strategy.

- Those who participate in these sessions are strengthening their campus networks and developing shared vocabulary and experiences that will serve them well for the innovation work to come.



More than 110 faculty and staff have participated in the first six town halls. If you haven't attended, I encourage you to do so. The complete list and signup can be found here, <http://bit.ly/1HHOEF8>

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## What I'm Reading - Brookings Report

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### **What Wichita can learn from Sheffield, England**

I've been tremendously interested in the Brookings Institution focus on innovation districts because I believe our Innovation Campus will become the hub of such a district, sparking economic development in South Central Kansas and beyond.

A recent Brookings article describes Sheffield, England, where close collaboration between the University of Sheffield and private companies has sparked a boom in R&D and advanced manufacturing. I expect WSU's recently announced partnership with Airbus to provide a model for many that will follow on campus and in the region.

Sheffield, like Wichita, has an innovation ecosystem that draws from a pool of talented workers and applied research. As in our plans for the Experiential Engineering Building and Community Maker Space, Sheffield provides access to industrial expertise, cutting-edge machines and, "ultimately, solutions to complex technological challenges."

Authors Bruce Katz and Kelly Kline, observe:

"At first blush, the dynamism we associate with innovation districts might seem to be at odds with the rigid, grinding processes that come to mind when we think of manufacturing. Even advanced manufacturing appears ill-suited for the mixed, spatially dense, often chaotic environment of innovation districts. Advanced manufacturing is often characterized by isolated, dispersed factories and facilities, large building floor plates (often single story), proximity to

traditional highway infrastructure for the efficient movement of goods, and a workforce that is more likely to be tethered to the factory floor than the networking opportunities at the local coffee shop.

"Yet, advanced manufacturing has mastered the innovation side of the innovation district phenomenon. Indeed, advanced manufacturing is one of the most innovative sectors in the U.S. and the U.K. To compete with lower-wage and lower-cost countries, advanced manufacturers in mature economies rely heavily on continuous innovation in products and processes via applied research; large capital expenditures in sophisticated plant, technology, and equipment; automation of the manufacturing process through robotics; and a highly skilled workforce."

You can read the complete article here, <http://brook.gs/1CeAhXi>

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## About this Newsletter

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### OUR MISSION

The mission of Wichita State University is to be an essential educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good. The President's Message is a monthly newsletter that highlights the university's progress toward fulfilling that mission.

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### CONTACT US

We would like to hear from you. Please send your comments and suggestions to [lou.heldman@wichita.edu](mailto:lou.heldman@wichita.edu)

1845 Fairmount  
Wichita, KS 67260  
[www.wichita.edu](http://www.wichita.edu)  
Tel: (316) 978-3001  
Fax: (316) 978-3093

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