As family lore goes, in the late 1800s my grandmother, her two sisters and brother slipped across the Canadian-American border looking for work in the mills around Boston.

They were young, Catholic, orphaned Irish-Canadians with no prospects. At that time, some people wouldn’t hire Irish people, and my grandmother found it was helpful to claim to be of English ancestry since her last name could be found on both sides of the Irish Sea.

She ended up getting a job as a “bolt carrier” in a sewing shop—she carried large bolts of cloth to the cutting table. She and her future husband went on to establish a business that employed many dozens of people in Cincinnati, Columbus and St. Louis.

I’m writing this to fulfill a promise I made to an impressive group of Wichita State students who arrived in our country as children, not knowing they had a place in history as part of a wave of undocumented immigrants who would spend years in the political spotlight.

I met with these students in my office recently, along with Teri Hall, vice president for student affairs.

The four WSU students are part of a group of 750,000 young people across the country who are registered in a federal program known as DACA – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

In exchange for registering, they have been given temporary relief from the possibility of deportation and are eligible for two-year renewable work permits.

Because this program was created by an executive order of President Obama, these students fear the program could be dissolved by an executive order from President Trump.
In that respect, they join those affected by the recent travel executive order and LGBTQ people who worry that their advances in recent years may also be reversed by federal action.

I want to make it clear that Wichita State stands with the DACA students and the others who add so much to the energy and intellect of our campus and the future of our democracy and economy.

We value, honor and respect the talent and perspectives that people of all races, nations and cultures bring to our campus.

I’m not one for signing petitions; I’ve seldom done so. But I’m proud to be among more than 600 college presidents across the country who have signed a petition originated at Pomona College in support of DACA students. It’s called the “Statement in Support of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program and our Undocumented Immigrant Students.”

You can read the language here. Whether you agree or disagree, I’d be interested in hearing your thoughts. Email me: president@wichita.edu.
Less than three years from its creation, OneStop Student Services has already outgrown its space in Jabara Hall and is ready to expand. Leading the charge is Lisa Hansen, director of OneStop.

Lisa has been director of OneStop since June 2015. She says she’s always thinking about what it’s like to be a student navigating the often scary process of enrolling in college.

OneStop works to answer the everyday, frontline questions, reducing processing time and increasing specialized attention in the functional areas of Admissions, Registration, Financial Aid, Student Accounts and Advising.

Lisa and her staff help to make sure the processes of those offices are easily understood by students. As it moves to a new location in Jardine Hall this spring, OneStop will expand its staff and services, most notably growth of OneStop’s advising and pre-enrollment services offered to first-year students.

Lisa says the goal is to create a convenient enrollment process for students in their first semester here and a common experience for all first-year traditional freshman students.
“I knew that if I was coming home, this was the only place I would want to come back and work.”

– Lisa Hansen

Their new location will move them closer to the offices they currently support that are already located in Jardine Hall – Registration, Financial Aid, Student Accounts and Graduate Admissions – and allow for more visibility of OneStop for students on campus.

“Our No. 1 goal is to serve the students,” says Lisa. “We’re just there to help them through the process.”

Lisa stays busy outside of the office, as well. She and her husband, Keith, are constantly on the go with Kolten, 6, McKinley, 4, and Benjamin, 10 months. And to add to the workload, the family will be closing on a new house at the same time as OneStop moves offices.

They are active in their church’s weekly bible study group, and she sings on the worship team. They also teach Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace class at least once a year together.

Lisa is a 2007 WSU graduate. Before coming to WSU, she worked in banking for nine years. After college, she worked as an admissions representative, office supervisor and assistant director in Undergraduate Admissions before moving out of state in 2013 for her husband’s job.

Thankfully, she quickly returned the next year to be a OneStop representative before moving into the director’s role.

She says she’s forever grateful she was able to come back to Wichita State.

“The day we decided we were moving back to Kansas, I got on the website and looked for positions open at WSU. I knew that if I was coming home, this was the only place I would want to come back and work,” she says. “I never realized how impactful that decision would be. My passion for helping others and serving this university is completely fulfilled by my job. The energy on this campus right now, and the positive changes that are happening, make it exciting to come to work each day. It truly is a great time to be a Shocker.”
Diversity Update: Black History Month, President's Diversity Council anniversary

I hope your semester is off to a great start and you are honoring our diversity! February is Black History Month and Wichita State’s one-year anniversary of the President’s Diversity Council. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee members for their hard work and commitment to diversity.

On behalf of President John Bardo and myself, we thank you for your service and look forward to another year of moving the university toward a more diverse environment. I look forward to sharing many experiences, and I encourage each of you to reach out to others from different cultures as we build a culture of inclusiveness.

During February, there are a number of President's Diversity Council and Office of Diversity and Inclusion activities we would like to share.

Of the many special events, Robert Weems, Willard W. Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History, will present the Black History Month keynote speech, "Whatever Happened to Black Insurance Companies? The Decline and Disappearance of an African American Community Institution," at 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, in 208 Hubbard Hall.

For more information, contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, 978-3034 or go to http://www.wichita.edu/odi.

“The time is always right to do what is right.”
— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Grant of the Month: Fuel-grade ammonia research

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Wichita State is developing a new technology that may affordably produce fuel-grade ammonia using only air and water as ingredients.

The project has received an $855,000 federal grant from U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)'s Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) – the first of its kind awarded to a Kansas institution as the lead.

Shuang Gu, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, is the principal investigator of the project, "Alkaline Membrane-Based Ammonia Electrosynthesis with High Efficiency for Renewable and Scalable Fuel Production."

The research team also includes two collaborative researchers: Stuart Licht, professor of chemistry at George Washington University and Wenzhen Li, associate professor of chemistry at Iowa State University.

The team will demonstrate a method for creating ammonia from air using a hydroxide-exchange membrane (HEM) powered by renewable electricity. Current methods of generating ammonia are energy-intensive and suffer from inefficiencies that drive up costs.

“Our recent breakthroughs in electrochemical materials enable us to demonstrate a novel technology with a great potential and a logical pathway of efficiently producing ammonia as liquid fuels from renewable energy sources,” said Gu.
The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, in consultation with University Academic Affairs and the college deans, has developed a university dashboard that intentionally gauges collective performance of WSU on representative meaningful metrics.

The highlighted metric for this month is intellectual properties disclosures.

The number of intellectual property disclosures relates to numerous WSU strategic goals, including the discovery, creation and transfer of new knowledge. The number of IP disclosures pertains to WSU’s mission of being an educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good. Intellectual property disclosures are one of the many outcomes associated with WSU’s emphasis on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Click on the graph below to see a more detailed breakdown.

**IP DISCLOSURES**

Number of intellectual property disclosure forms received, fiscal year.

![Graph showing IP disclosures from 2013 to 2016](SOURCE: WSU Ventures)
What I'm Reading: 'What's the value of a $10,000 degree?'

Even with scholarships and loans, cost remains a key barrier to higher education. Gov. Brownback’s State of the State message last month included a challenge to Kansas public universities to produce a $15,000 four-year degree.

That’s probably possible for a very committed student with the right combination of college credits earned in high school and community college, prior to attending a four-year Regents school.

Florida’s workforce-oriented bachelor’s degree programs are a model that suggests that lower-cost, less-selective pathways to a bachelor’s degree can serve students, at least when it comes to getting a first job.