



## President's Message: Preparing students for the world

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Posted: Tuesday, May 02, 2017 Posted: 2:30:24 PM CT

We recently bid farewell to professor Dharma deSilva, who died last month at age 83, still tremendously active in his 42nd year as a WSU faculty member.



Long before 2013, when the university adopted the Strategic Plan Vision of being “internationally recognized as the model for applied learning and research,” Dharma had that vision and was making it real.

From 1976, when he co-founded the World Trade Council of Wichita until his death, Dharma worked tirelessly on campus, in the local business community, and internationally, to make applied learning part of the business education curriculum.

His colleagues and his former students around the world speak with great affection and respect about his vigor and single-mindedness in creating opportunities for students to interact with professionals in ways that often led to job offers and thriving careers.

Connie Dietz is another WSU leader long devoted to the professional success of our students. During Connie's 22 years at WSU, most recently as executive director of the Career Development Center, she and her staff have built a strong ecosystem benefitting students and employers.

***Applied learning is the differentiator in the best experiences we can offer our students.***

As we prepare for Connie's retirement this summer, the executive team has been discussing work-based learning and the university's role in career development.

Part of the issue is vocabulary. Historically, we've used terms including internship, co-op and part-time job.

All those terms are inadequate for describing the best system that has actually evolved, giving students meaningful professional work experiences that relate to their career aspirations.

At the same time, companies, non-profits or government agencies benefit from the opportunity to form lasting relationships with students beginning as early as the freshman year.



Applied learning is the differentiator in the best experiences we can offer our students. If we can forge clear connections between classroom learning and workplace learning, we will equip our students with important tools for success.

Here's the definition of applied learning used in our 2016 accreditation documents: Applied learning occurs when students develop knowledge, skills and values from personal direct experiences that go beyond the traditional lecture or lab. Applied learning encompasses a variety of activities including service learning, undergraduate research, theses, dissertations and other creative (e.g., live performances) and professional services (e.g., practicums, internships, clinical rotations and cooperative education).

If you have examples of where this is working well, or suggestions for improvement, please send your thoughts to me, [president@wichita.edu](mailto:president@wichita.edu).

*The president's Newsletter will resume fall semester. Have a great summer.*

# Diversity Update: Candid conversations, expanded opportunities

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As the end of the semester approaches, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the past year and say thank you to the members of the WSU community, especially the President's Diversity Council that worked tirelessly to advance diversity and inclusion on campus and the greater community. This has been a wonderful year and we have had many candid conversations that resulted in many successes and expanded opportunities.



## Highlights from this year include:

- One-year anniversary of the President's Diversity Council (PDC)
- First Annual Positive African-American Student Leadership Conference with USD 259
- Developed an official pipeline and connection with all university divisions and colleges through the President's Diversity Council
- Celebrated first annual DiverseCity Week
- Kansas Hispanic Education and Development Foundation Scholarship Recognition Dinner to be held in May
- Established a scholarship with the Greater Wichita Ministerial League
- Wichita Business Journal's Leaders in Diversity Award
- Increased recruitment and diversity on the WSU cheer and dance squads
- Inter-organizational collaboration with the School of Music for "Ain't I A Woman"
- PDC / LAS Black History Month keynote address with David Embrick
- Climate Survey Collaborator
- State Tilford Conference Keynote Address
- Facilitated student-centered focus groups related to diversity related topics

Although all accomplishments are not included, all of the hard work is recognized, and I look forward to working together again in the fall.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Alicia Sanchez, director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, for being a 2017 Wichita Business Journal 40 Under 40 Honoree.

— **Marché Fleming-Randle, Ph.D.**  
**assistant to the president for diversity**  
**Wichita State University**

# A Shocker You Should Know: Kathy Downes

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Last week it was announced that Kathy Downes had been named dean of University Libraries. Kathy brings with her nearly 40 years of extensive experience, along with a fresh view and an eye to the future.

Kathy is responsible for the overall direction and development of library services, collections and facilities. This involves working with campus leaders, academic units, students, the community and library employees to ensure that the University Libraries is not only supporting the university's goals, but advancing them.

Wichita State is all about innovation, and University Libraries is no exception, she says.

“This is an exciting time given all the technological innovations that have provided new ways for people to conduct research, interact with information and engage in learning,” Kathy says. “Since coming to WSU, I’ve had the opportunity to be part of an institution that has never stopped advancing.”

Being a part of, and contributing to that growth has been deeply rewarding, Kathy says.

One of the advances she’s enjoyed most being a part of was when she served as library construction coordinator during Ablah Library’s expansions in the mid-1980s and late 1990s. The experience gave her an appreciation of architects, all of the building trades and awoke an interest in how environmental design can enhance educational experiences.

That interest continues to today. Kathy has recently been involved in restructuring Ablah Library’s public spaces to better support the ways today’s students study and use information resources.

While the basic role of the library hasn’t changed in her time here, Kathy says how they achieve their goals has.

Technological advances have provided opportunities for academic libraries to explore new modes of research and learning with their campus colleagues.

Advances in publishing and information systems have allowed libraries to provide access to a greater number and variety of information resources, as well as enhanced services unrestricted by the walls of the library.



But even with these advances, use of services in the physical library remains strong, she says. Last year, on the average, every 30 seconds a person walked into a WSU library facility.

Although she has stayed in Wichita since 1979, Kathy was born in the small coastal town of Newburyport, Massachusetts, into a military family. She lived in 10 states and Japan growing up.

She says she has great memories of her different homes, and each place has its own charm.

These days Kathy gets her traveling fix by exploring national parks. She's been to more than 25 parks and national monuments; favorites include Arches, Zion and Yellowstone national parks, as well as multiple parks in Colorado.

“For me, they are good places to recharge one's batteries.”

Learn more about University Libraries services at <http://libraries.wichita.edu/ablah/>.

# Grant of the Month: NASA Advanced Composites Consortium

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Four grants totaling more than \$225,000 have been awarded to the National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) as part of the NASA Advanced Composites Consortium.

Senior Research Engineer Waruna Seneviratne is the lead for the following projects:

- **Progressive Damage Analysis:** The research team will develop strength and life prediction analysis tools for complex advanced composite structures and standardize procedures for their reliable use. The framework and development of procedures will reduce design iterations and expedite building blocks of analysis and certification testing for advanced composite structures. Grant cost is \$100,549.
- **Rapid Tools:** The team will develop and validate design tools for producing more realistic and robust preliminary designs that are less prone to costly changes that lead to program delays later in the development cycle. Research includes evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of these tools for design criteria associated with damage tolerance, bonding and automated manufacturing processes. Grant cost is \$25,994.
- **Laminate Cure Defects Process Model Development:** The team will develop and demonstrate new computational methods to relate manufacturing parameters to defect formation, and connect to commercial design and analysis software to allow structural optimization, while resolving predicted manufacturing issues. The outcome of this research will lead to fewer manufacturing iterations and quality issues, better process control supporting product certification and improvements to preliminary design. Grant cost is \$37,581.



Gerardo Olivares, senior research scientist and director of the Crash Dynamics & Computational Mechanics Laboratory, is the lead on the following project:

- **High Energy Dynamic Impact:** Extensive use of composite materials in aircraft structures now requires analytical tools with the capacity to capture a range of deformation, damage and failure mechanisms for an expanded design space. In some

cases, such as high energy dynamic impact related events, the lack of fully validated and standardized analysis approaches has led to increased use of testing to evaluate the structure's response. This testing is expensive and time consuming, so a need exists for well validated analysis tools in which the overall strengths and weaknesses of the analysis methods are well understood and documented. The goal is to develop analytical models that accurately predict the physical response, damage and failure modes of large scale composite structures. Grant cost is \$62,851.

The NASA Advanced Composites Consortium is a public-private partnership that seeks to develop and transition technology to enable a reduction in the time required to develop and certify new aircraft structures that utilize advanced composite materials.

The consortium includes NASA, the Federal Aviation Administration, Aurora Flight Sciences, The Boeing Co., Collier Research, General Electric Aviation, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, Orbital ATK, University of South Carolina, McNair Center, United Technologies Corp., Spirit AeroSystems, Wichita State University and the National Institute of Aerospace.

# Metric of the Month: Businesses Launched

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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.

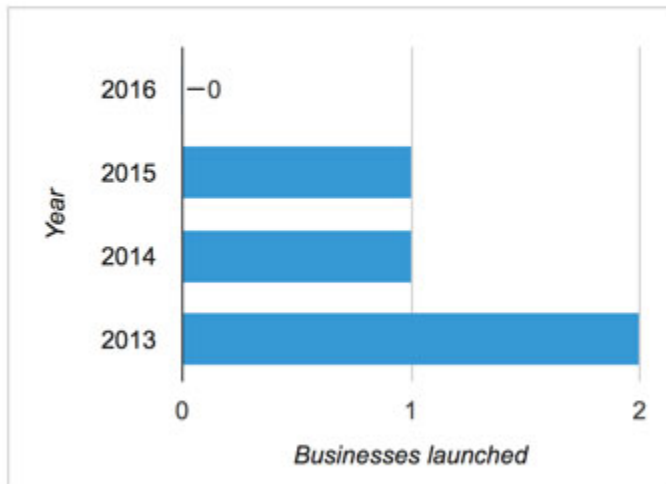
The highlighted metric for the month is businesses launched.

The number of new businesses launched relates to numerous WSU strategic goals, including the discovery, creation and transfer of new knowledge.

See the graph below for details.

## BUSINESSES LAUNCHED

Number of new companies launched with WSU technology



SOURCE: WSU Ventures

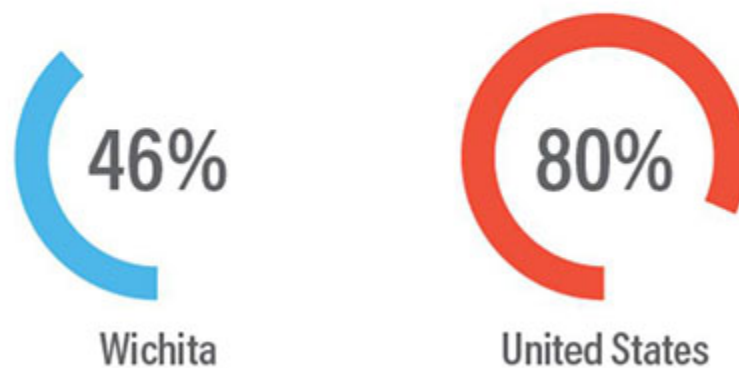


# What I'm Reading: 'Education and the Human Capital Challenge'

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Posted: Tuesday, May 02, 2017 Posted: 2:34:09 PM CT

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT GROWTH 1980 - 2014



There's no doubt Wichita has a formidable higher education community capable of competing with nearly any other city its size. But, according to the Chung Report, while the number of people graduating from high school and going on to college has increased across the country, Wichita has failed to keep up with its peer cities.

Recent research shows a decline in Wichita's educational attainment – statistics that track the highest levels of education attained by a specific population – compared with the national average. This is a reversal from the 1980s, when Wichita's percentage of residents with at least a bachelor's degree was 15 percent greater than the rest of the country's.

We aren't doing enough to provide opportunities to use higher education degrees in a productive, fulfilling way. If we can't offer these jobs for our graduates, other cities will.  
» [Read more about this trend and what can be done to stop it.](#)