

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY as an institution of choice include our students, faculty members, and an increasing variety of community constituents throughout our region of South-Central Kentucky, the state and the nation. The first four issues of *The Western Scholar* disclosed the variety of scholarly projects that are meeting these diverse needs, and this issue proves to be no different. Western continues to excel in making the match among teaching, research, and public service, as well as the operational and financial responsibilities that will ensure that "The Spirit Continues to Make the Master."

In this issue you will find stories about basic and applied research and creative activities in our academic colleges that provide insights into aging, the natural environment, buying habits, cave and karst applied research, relations between manufacturers and suppliers, change in the church, the humanity of Robert Penn Warren, railroads and Southern culture, and a dangerous parasite that we all need to understand. Following the stories, "Research Briefs" continues to show the diversity of our expertise by demonstrating how Western faculty members contribute to basic research, public school leadership, social work education, early interventions for our children, and assessing educational initiatives to increase learning proficiencies. Finally, Western has taken a significant step to facilitate scholarship by creating the Western Kentucky University Research Foundation, Inc. The WKURF's contributions are discussed as a success story that has huge potential to ease the way for faculty members, students, and the external community to uncover and exchange new knowledge for the public good.

Dr. Dan Roenker, Distinguished University Professor of Psychology in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, discusses his many years of research with a nationwide NIH-funded project that tests visual acuity in the elderly. The outcomes of his work with a team of researchers at a number of other institutions have been beneficial in increasing safety standards and re-formulating public policies.

From Ogden College of Science and Engineering, Dr. Albert Meier's leadership in Biology and the Biodiversity Center has resulted in the purchase of a large outdoor classroom and research area along the Green River in Hart County. Read about how it will enhance Western's academic endeavors and integrate the community into learning more about the environment and how to preserve it. His colleague in Biology, Dr. Cheryl Davis, discusses *Trypanosoma cruzi*, popularly known as the "Kissing Bug," which is the leading cause of heart disease and heart failure in Latin America. The research she and her students are performing to combat this insect is important since the "bug" has been found in the Southern region. In Ogden's Department of Geography and Geology, Dr. Nick Crawford's work with the Center for Cave and Karst Studies illuminates the region's underground world. His applied research and public service



work with his students is significant in assessing the impacts of humans on the environment and the impact of caves on all of us.

The Gordon Ford College of Business continues to be a leader in marketing and management research. In the Department of Economics and Marketing, Dr. Lou Turley's story about the "'Entertain Me' Generation" is of widespread interest for all consumers, especially those of us who frequent malls and sports venues, which is probably about all of us. He is an expert in helping us to understand why we go where we go and buy what we buy. His colleague in Management Information Systems, Dr. Zubair Mohamed, can tell you about the "push" and "pull" systems that get products made in the most cost efficient way so that we can purchase them at the mall or in retail stores. His story will help us better understand the fluctuations in our economy from the perspective of how production is managed and how goods are distributed.

Diverse interests characterize the stories about the scholarship of faculty members in the Potter College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Perhaps even closer to our spirit is the story about Dr. Carl Kell's research and writing in the Department of Communication about recent efforts within the Southern Baptist Convention to incorporate more diversity among pastors. This story is one of the push and pull between Conservatives and Moderates in what he has called a Holy War to better incorporate the diverse needs of society. In the Department of English, Mary Ellen Miller's leadership of the Robert Penn Warren Center attracts national attention among literary circles. Read more about Professor Miller's dedication to the Center and the truths that her work have revealed that can help us all see a clearer way. Her colleague in the English Department, Dr. Joe Millichap, exhibits a different fascination, although one no less literary, in his new book *Dixie Limited* about how trains have helped to define the South.

As an administrator who works daily with a variety of constituencies in the pursuit of knowledge, it has been a pleasure to introduce the intellectual vigor of our faculty that lies within this issue and perhaps supply some of the excitement the editors felt as we read through this unique combination of stories. This age is one of partnerships between disciplines and university-community partnerships, and I think that you will see these dynamic educational movements in the magazine. The theme persists throughout this issue of an unrelenting spirit and curiosity. As you identify this theme you'll want to read on and challenge yourself, as so many do here, to "put it all together" for your satisfaction.

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