

Dear Ohio State Mansfield Colleagues,

I trust that everyone enjoyed their extra-long weekend as we commemorated Martin Luther King's birthday this past Monday. This is always an important harbinger of our upcoming celebration of Black History Month, and this year's program holds a number of important and interesting events that I urge all of you to attend. Thanks in advance to the members of the BHM Committee for stretching very tight budget dollars in the process of putting together a solid program!

The past two weeks have been filled with a number of events that can serve both as points of pride and forecasts of future distinction. Our most recent Community Engagement Lunch was hosted two Mondays ago, focusing on our many connections to human and social services in the community. With our largest yet group of community members in attendance, the spotlight was trained on Mary Jo Hawk as she presented information about our current MSW program and our emerging Bachelor's degree in Social Work. In addition, with Director Bob Maxey in attendance, NCSC President Don Plotts and I were able to present a check to United Way for the over \$14,000 that was collected from Mansfield campus faculty and staff.

Along with several Mansfield staff members, I was able to take part in the First Year Experience Conference that was held two Wednesdays ago on the Columbus campus. There were two important takeaways from that meeting for me. First, Shari Petersen and her staff are generating widespread accolades for all of the great work they are doing with our incoming freshmen. Second, the needs of our campus change students likewise are gaining increased attention from Columbus campus representatives. Check out the brand-new website that was established as a response to regional campus brainstorming efforts at last year's FYE Conference: <http://fye.osu.edu/transfer/treventlist.html> .

This past Wednesday, all of the Regional Campus Cluster Advancement Teams met with Michael Eicher, Ohio State's new Senior Vice President for Development. A very spirited discussion ensued, with great emphasis on the special nature of the smaller campuses. Following that group conversation, Mike Eicher then met with the RCC Deans and Mike Boehm (Vice Provost for Academic and Strategic Planning) in order to further elaborate on certain themes that had emerged in the larger group. Particular attention was paid to the historically competitive nature that exists between the Columbus campus and the regional campuses for the same donors. As many of you know, there are a great many misconceptions surrounding our financial situation, with large segments of the population of the (erroneous) belief that we receive lots of fiscal support from the Columbus campus (when in fact we ship over \$800,000 a year to them). Unfortunately, a great many donors believe that when they give an amount of money to their favorite college or unit on the Columbus campus, some portion of those funds comes back to the regional campuses. Regrettably, nothing could be farther from the truth. And worse, if a Development Officer on the Columbus campus already has been working with a donor in our area, that previous relationship often as not makes them "off limits" to us and any future request for the support of a regional campus activity. I am very pleased to say that Mike Eicher believes this is a very misguided way of conducting the business of University

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Development, and he will be working with the Regional Deans to correct this and related issues and concerns.

In closing, I wish to say a big thank you to the members of the Ohio State Mansfield Board, who met with me last week for a retreat at the Gorman Rupp plant (and a big thank you to Jeff and Jim Gorman for the use of their spectacular facilities, who also will soon be getting our public thanks for a very generous gift to the Capital Campaign!). The appreciation that I wish to express to the OSU-M Board members is not just for a very productive meeting, but also for two years of solid support in service to our campus. Quite simply, we could not have accomplished anywhere near what we have without their guidance and feedback.

Last but not least, please sign up for our Mardi Gras celebration dinner (commemorating Ground Hog Day and Super Bowl Weekend as well) in downtown Mansfield next Saturday evening. We have planned for a great buffet dinner and amusing ourselves afterward with some karaoke performances, including (at least) one of my own! So plan on attending, tune up your vocal cords, stay warm and dry this weekend and GO BUCKS!