

Olympia Update No. 4 • September 29, 2006  
More Doctors, Dentists and Nurses for the Inland Northwest

## Universities Unite to Educate Future Health Professionals

A cost-effective solution for bringing more doctors and dentists to the Pacific Northwest was presented to the state Higher Education Coordinating Board Thursday by WSU President Lane Rawlins and UW President Mark Emmert.

Keeping with their tradition of keeping the research institutions working together, Emmert and Rawlins delivered their budget requests together before the board, sitting side by side. To punctuate their cooperation, the presidents described a program in which the University of Washington, Washington State University and Eastern Washington University worked cooperatively. Jointly, the three institutions request \$12.8 million for the first major expansion of programs in decades to educate resident Washington students to become doctors and dentists

The board will make a recommendation on this and other budget requests from the universities and send their recommendations to the Legislature and Gov. Christine Gregoire.

This joint proposal was also the subject of a work session earlier this week before the state Senate Early Learning, K-12 and Higher Education Committee in Spokane. The University of Washington was represented by Dr. Paul Ramsey, Dean of UW School of Medicine, and Martha Somerman, Dean of UW School of Dentistry. Also speaking were, Brian Pitcher, Chancellor, WSU Spokane, and WSU Vice Provost for Health Sciences, and Dr. Ron Dalla, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for EWU.

### How the Proposed Medical and Dental Program Works:

- ***The program will utilize WSU and EWU faculty at the Riverpoint Campus to deliver the first year of medical and dental students who have been admitted to the UW School of Medicine or the UW School of Dentistry.***
- ***Twenty first-year medical students per year will be educated in Spokane.***
- ***Eight first-year dental students per year will be educated in Spokane.***
- ***Students will take their second year of courses in Seattle at the University of Washington dental or medical schools and then return to the Inland Northwest to do residencies and internships.***

- ***This request is an extension to Spokane of existing, proven, UW cooperative programs.*** This request utilizes the successful cooperative WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho) Program operated by the UW School of Medicine. WWAMI has been working for years at WSU Pullman and other campuses in the participating states. The dental program is an extension to Spokane of the cooperative UW program, the Regional Initiative in Dental Education (RIDE).
- ***Most graduates will remain in the Inland Northwest to practice medicine and dentistry,*** based on the outcomes at other RIDE and WWAMI locations. That fills a high demand need for more health professionals in the Spokane area and rural communities in the Inland Northwest.
- ***It will be the first major expansion of medical education in 30 years for Washington students, the first major expansion of dental education in about 20 years.***

### **The WSU Nursing Request:**

In addition, Rawlins noted that Washington State University is requesting \$2.198 million to increase enrollments in Nursing through its intercollegiate program in Spokane, which serves EWU and Whitworth upper-division students in addition to WSU nursing students statewide.

- **15 nursing students** could receive instruction in Spokane through a new PhD in Nursing offered through the Intercollegiate College for Nursing. Nurses with PhDs are in demand, especially to become nursing educators.
- **30 new nursing undergraduate students**
- **20 new nursing master's degree students**

### **Here is how the operating budget totals for these proposals to create more doctors, dentists and nurses break down by institution:**

- The WSU portion of this state operating request totals \$9.46 million. Of the WSU total, \$7.35 million is to support expansion of UW Medicine and Dentistry in Spokane and \$2.198 million to increase enrollments in WSU Nursing.
- The University of Washington is requesting \$4.5 million for additional capacity to offer the Medical and Dental programs in Spokane.
- Eastern Washington University is requesting \$1 million in funding to help provide the program to educate dentists in Spokane.

### **Impacts on the construction budget:**

University of Washington is requesting \$7 general fund state dollars to create new capacity and will make additional investments with other institutional funds. WSU estimates it will need about \$500,000 to \$800,000 of its minor works funding for the program. EWU will be requesting \$152,000.

**Olympia Update is produced for persons interested in state government developments affecting Washington State University. For more information call: Larry Ganders, Assistant to the President, 360-956-2165. From WSU campuses, dial 8-2165.**