Dear Friends,

Happy Day After Groundhog Day! And I’m pleased to report that apparently, Payton Manning did see his shadow, and Denver is going to have six more weeks of winter. Here in Seattle, however, we all feel warm and sunny in our hearts!

**BCWI Results**

And great news! The BCWI results demonstrate that, just like Phil Connors (played by Bill Murray) in *Groundhog Day*, each year Northwest continues to learn and grow. The results show significant increase in scores and engagement! The overall average score increased from 3.56 in 2011-2012 to 3.75 in 2013-2014. The percentage of actively engaged employees increased from 24% in 2011-2012 to 38% in 2013-2014. Participative decision-making, a commitment to the University mission, and relationships with colleagues were all found to be strengths. The areas in which we received lower scores were not a surprise, particularly compensation and benefits. Although these areas are difficult to address due to the financial implications, the Compensation Committee continues to be committed to a compensation philosophy that emphasizes creating internal fairness and equity with peer institutions. So this is an area that we are definitely making efforts to address.

If you are interested in the full findings, the BCWI comprehensive report which details the departmental, demographic, and category results is posted on the Strategic Data Dashboard: [http://eagle.northwestu.edu/departments/strategic-data/data/best-christian-workplaces-institute/](http://eagle.northwestu.edu/departments/strategic-data/data/best-christian-workplaces-institute/).

**International Student Services**

The other big news on my front has to do with International Students. Over the last 10 years, NU’s international student population (in pre-university CELE, traditional undergraduate, and graduate programs) has increased from 11 students in 2004 to 70 this semester. This is a strategic area for future growth at NU; therefore, in order to better support this growth pattern, we are going to centralize the overall international student experience through the creation of a Department of International Studies within the Office of the Provost.

CELE, Student Exchange partnerships, and Study Abroad for NU students will also be coordinated through International Studies. The courses for CELE will continue to be offered through the Department of Language and Linguistics in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Department of International Studies will be led by Autumn Witt, as Associate Provost of International Studies, and Li Lowry will transition into a
new role as Director of International Student Services. Current plans are for the new department to be housed in the former CELE space in Rice Hall, which will allow a convenient proximity for supporting the academic needs of international students and for advising students for study abroad. These changes will be phased in this spring semester and fully implemented after June 1.

I am thrilled with what Autumn and Li have already done in terms of positioning NU as a great place for International Students. Just last week, a representative from one of our Korean partner schools made a point to visit our campus just to answer the question, “Why has Northwest become the favorite school for our exchange students?” This school sends 600 students a year to the US, and NU has moved to the top of their list! I believe this restructure will only strengthen what we are able to do.

**Church-based partnerships**

Finally, a quick update from our last newsletter, I am excited about the progress that we are making on our Church Partnership Program. We are currently working with our previous MHS sites to transition into the CPP, and have three churches preparing for a fall 2014 launch.

As always—please let me know if you have any questions. And blessings on our work and our school as we partner together to prepare our students to make a difference in this world for God’s kingdom.