Lunch and Presentation: What’s Up in the West?
Reports from Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, and Washington

Monday, November 5, 2007
12.00-1.30 pm
Longs Peak
What’s Up in the West? Reports from Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, and Washington

David Longanecker will lead a discussion with WICHE commissioners from Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, and Washington on how they are addressing health and allied health care workforce needs in their states.

Biographical Information on the Discussion Leader

David A. Longanecker is the executive director of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Previously, he served for six years as the assistant secretary for postsecondary education at the U.S. Department of Education, developing and implementing national policy and programs that provided more than $40 billion annually in student aid and $1 billion to institutions. Prior to that, he was the state higher education executive officer (SHEEO) in Colorado and Minnesota. He was also the principal analyst for higher education for the Congressional Budget Office. Longanecker has served on numerous boards and commissions and has written extensively on a range of higher education issues. His primary interests in higher education are: access and equity; promoting student and institutional performance; finance; the efficient use of educational technologies; and internationalizing American higher education. He holds an Ed.D. from Stanford University, an M.A. in student personnel work from The George Washington University, and a B.A. in sociology from Washington State University.

Biographical Information on the Panelists

Diane Barrans has been chief executive staff of the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education and the Alaska Student Loan Corporation – state agencies dedicated to promoting and supporting access and success in higher education for all Alaskans – since 1995. In her 25 years with the commission, she has served in a variety of operations and management posts. Barrans is one of three Alaska members of the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education and serves on its executive committee (she was WICHE Chair in 2005). She currently represents Alaska as chair of the State Higher Education Executive Officers’ P-16, Access and Diversity, Teacher Quality Committee.

Jeanne Kohl-Welles, a Washington state senator, currently serves as the Labor, Commerce, Research & Development Committee chair, after having served as Higher Education Committee chair for several years. She also serves on the Health and Long-Term Care; Rules; and Ways and Means committees; and on the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee; Washington State Institute for Public Policy Board; K-20 Network Board; and Washington State Arts Commission. Kohl-Welles earned her Ph.D. in sociology of education from UCLA and teaches courses on gender and education at the University of Washington.
taught in the California State University system and was assistant dean of women’s programs at UC Irvine, and an educational equity specialist for the U.S. Department of Education.

Robert Kustra is president of Boise State University, the largest institution of higher learning in Idaho; he took the helm as Boise State’s sixth president in 2003. His administration has been marked by an emphasis on upgrading admissions standards, improving the undergraduate experience, and increasing the number of graduate and doctoral programs. University milestones have included the creation of the Presidential Civic Leadership and Capital Scholar programs; record-setting years in total funds for research and sponsored programs; and the completion of several new academic, residential, and athletic facilities. He has played a key role in plans for a locally controlled community college in the Treasure Valley. He also hosts an award-winning weekly radio show, “New Horizons in Education,” on the NPR affiliate in Boise. Kustra previously served as president of Eastern Kentucky University, a comprehensive residential university of 14,000 students. This followed two terms of service as lieutenant governor of Illinois and a 10-year-long career in the Illinois Legislature, first in the House and then in the Senate. While lieutenant governor, he was appointed by the governor to chair the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Before entering elective office, Kustra held faculty positions at the University of Illinois at Springfield, Lincoln Land Community College, and Loyola University of Chicago, where he also served as director of the Center for Research in Urban Government. Throughout his career in government and politics, Kustra taught at the University of Illinois–Chicago and Northwestern University. Kustra received his bachelor’s degree from Benedictine College in Atchison, KS, his master’s from Southern Illinois University, and his doctorate from the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign; all of his degrees are in political science.

Joel Sideman was appointed to the position of executive director for the Arizona Board of Regents in 2004; he is also Arizona’s state higher education executive officer. He previously served the board in a dual capacity as deputy executive director (since 1995) and chief legal advisor (since 1991). Prior to coming to the Arizona Board of Regents, Sideman served as in-house legal counsel for the Roosevelt School District in Phoenix, project director for the Arizona Statewide Legal Services Project, and managing attorney for the Cook County Legal Assistance Foundation in Illinois. He received both his B.S. in business administration and his J.D. degree from Northwestern University.