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The University District in Spokane is home to Washington State University’s Health Sciences campus where WSU is creating the state of Washington’s second public medical school. It is also where WSU educates pharmacists, nurses, future researchers and others involved in the health sciences and health professions. WSU is invested in the U-District and an enthusiastic community partner in its continued development. More information at spokane.wsu.edu.

Congratulations to WSU Spokane researcher John Roll, PhD, for the continual outstanding academic achievement that led to his being named a member of the Washington State Academy of Sciences.

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Medical School (coming soon)
Nursing
Nutrition & Exercise Physiology
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TOGETHER WE WILL

At the University of Washington, we believe that our best work is done when we link arms. That’s why we’re committed to teaming with communities and institutions across our state, including the University of Washington School of Medicine-Gonzaga University Partnership. Together, we’re working to educate the next generation and nurture healthier futures for Washington — and beyond.

Discover how the UW is fostering collaboration:
w.edu/spokane
last year, The White House announced “Envision America”, a challenge for cities to become smarter by accelerating deployment of innovative technologies. Because of the efforts of The University District, Spokane was recognized as one of the top 10 U.S. cities best positioned to work together as a community to accomplish these goals. Earlier this year, I stood with delegates from Spokane along with representatives from New York, Chicago, San Diego, and the other winning cities. This recognition is yet another artifact of the collaborations in our community and the power we have to create something bigger, together.

Another memorable moment was welcoming Governor and Mrs. Inslee along with Mayor Condon, City Council President Stuckart and many other esteemed guests from our community to celebrate the largest single transportation investment in our state’s history. This funding is enabling multiple projects in and intersecting with The University District. These projects make new connections in our community and will not only determine how we move around our city and region, but also elevate and transform the very character of the city and the way we live.

I am deeply aware of the communities that continually shape me and know that as we develop The University District we are, at the same time, shaping the legacy of our city and its citizens. This is our opportunity to re-imagine our urban environment and how we want to live. Throughout this magazine, you will find many examples of the ways we are working together to transform Spokane. Collectively, the articles that follow amplify the opportunities for continued community collaboration and the promise of transformation.

It’s been 27 years since Avista helped lay the groundwork for the restoration of 770 acres east of downtown Spokane. At the time, few imagined that an abandoned rail yard could be transformed into the home of six institutions of higher education.

Today, the University District is an urban confluence of technology, learning and economic vitality for the entire region.

What’s next for Spokane’s University District? The possibilities are endless. And Avista is proud to continue to help shape that future.

Opportunity Awaits
Good urban connectivity derives from a commitment by leaders and leading organizations to collaborate, innovate and implement. The manifestation of that connectivity includes the implementation of The University District Gateway Bridge as well the coordination of ongoing development and communication interests between the organizations and partnerships of The University District.

How does connectivity evolve with the growth of The University District? The University District is poised to grow its employment and population base over the coming decade. While somewhat similar to past transformations, the current trajectory is unique in that it has tremendous capacity for economic development and intensification of land use. Meanwhile, technology is rapidly changing. Smart City initiatives, coupled with collaborative problem-solving in urban matters, will create novel solutions to support the vision of The University District. This constellation of opportunities makes it a momentous and transformative time to be associated with The University District.

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Karl Otterstrom
Director of Planning, Spokane Transit Authority
Board Chair, The University District

Putting on your day job hat, what does great urban connectivity look like in The University District? Connectivity is a means to an end. When I think of connectivity of any sort, I start with relative placement and proximity. In the case of The University District, it involves a confluence of people, ideas, amenities and institutions. Placement and proximity are important, but on their own do not result in exceptional transit connectivity.

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The bridge is the centerpiece of the visioning work that’s well underway. It’s approval is already paying dividends for Spokane.

Ben Stuckart
President, Spokane City Council
Board Member, The University District

By working with the legislature to fully fund The University District Gateway Bridge, the Council is creating opportunities for The University District’s growth to the south and enhancing revitalization near East Sprague. Also, completing Martin Luther King Jr. Way will increase the strength of our partnership and The University District’s opportunities in the future. We have never been more committed to the success of The University District!

Karl Otterstrom
Director of Planning, Spokane Transit Authority
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What does nothing short of a major urban renaissance in The University District look like to you? The University District has tremendous strengths in higher education and health care. New and coming transportation infrastructure and renewed economic vitality among surrounding businesses and neighborhoods has The University District poised to be a bellwether for state of-the-art transportation, leading-edge utility grid technology, smart and sustainable land use and development, thoughtful historic preservation, and entwined parks, arts and recreation pursuits. We have all the ingredients to make something truly exceptional and it’s exciting to see it coming together.

What’s the City’s role in The University District? The City is investing in critical infrastructure improvements that will jump-start other investment and create new workforce opportunities. One of those investments is the The University District Gateway Bridge, slated for completion in 2018 and the linchpin that joins—literally and figuratively—the city’s hospital complex to the south with the university/research and business/entrepreneurial communities to the north. The bridge is the centerpiece of the visioning work that’s well underway.

Do you think there’s value in including voices beyond our community in The University District development process? Our best outcomes have come from engagements with multiple inputs. Seeking other perspectives and lessons learned and encouraging the exchange of ideas are invaluable. The knowledge base to improve and strengthen Spokane goes beyond city borders. We can learn a lot from other communities about what has worked, what more could be done and what will deliver the most sustainable, livable, productive and prosperous Spokane.

David Condon
Mayor, City of Spokane
Board Member, The University District

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What makes Spokane stand out as a business location? At the top of the list is our willingness to work together as a community and understand that everyone benefits when we work collaboratively. The 2013 Tripp Umbach report defined the extraordinary opportunity Spokane has to realize $8.7 billion in regional economic impact through development of medical education, health sciences research and related business in Spokane. Now, with two schools of medicine in The University District—not to mention the assets of Gonzaga, RWJUH, Whitworth and the Community College of Spokane—we have a strong foundation on which to grow. Add to that world-class health care at local hospitals, advanced manufacturing capabilities, animal and food sciences expertise, bioinformatics and related industries, public and private capital, and nationally recognized smart cities initiative, and you’ll see what makes Spokane shine. Companies that look closely will be impressed.

Can we translate all these assets into real opportunities? Absolutely, but we need ongoing collaboration and strong support services such as incubators, mentoring programs, patent expertise, venture capital and infrastructure improvements. Part of Seattle’s resilience during the Great Recession was due to their highly collaborative life sciences ecosystem positioned near major research institutions in a revitalized South Lake Union. We can do our own version here, and reimagine the resurgence of the area between the South Landing of The University District Garryowen Bridge up to the hospitals.

What's the smart cities initiative and why does it matter? It's an important differentiator for Spokane, a living laboratory that reflects our intention to be on the grid and make it more relevant to customers, researchers, community activists, public officials, entrepreneurs, and even friends and neighbors—that is triggered by and in turn triggers more collaborations, and ultimately a more dynamic vision of a vibrant life and health sciences community. We have an amazing opportunity together to harness and leverage our collective energy and multidisciplinary expertise and make The University District a center of medical and entrepreneurial excellence.

Collaborators

Scott Morris
Chairman and CEO, Avista Corp
Board Chair, Gonzaga University

What do you see as the one key ingredient for success in The University District? Collaboration. It’s the cornerstone of our work at Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, and we see it in action every day. From our partnerships with Eastern Washington University, the Spokane Smart City Accelerator, the Spokane Teaching Health Clinic and Gonzaga University, we are consistently involved in and seeking authentic engagements within the community.

Why is collaboration so significant to you? Collaborations reverberate and cause a ripple effect. They transform the landscape and fortify relationships. We get so inspired by what we hear others are doing and by what we can do together that we feel compelled to extend these conversations to those who were not at the table.

How do you make “collaboration” happen day to day? It's all about cultivating an open, contagious, overlapping dialogue—between students, researchers, community activists, public officials, entrepreneurs, and even friends and neighbors—that is triggered by and in turn triggers more collaborations, and ultimately a more dynamic vision of a vibrant life and health sciences community. We have an amazing opportunity together to harness and leverage our collective energy and multidisciplinary expertise and make The University District a center of medical and entrepreneurial excellence.
Collaboration & Transformation

THE CONDITIONS OF TRANSFORMATION
Mark Robert Mansfield, PhD, Executive Director, The University District

A city is rarely static. Change, however, is not always synonymous with transformation. Even with over $740 million dollars in public, private and institutional investments in The University District in recent years, how do we realize more than a calculus of economic development? How do we seize this moment to realize our transformative potential? What is the condition for such transformation? Not just incremental growth or the addition of new structures to the built environment, but a profound change in how we live that improves our overall quality of life.

Over the past years, the University District Development Association has brought together community interests to engage these questions and, this year, led a series of visioning exercises to explore opportunities of transformation by fundamentally rethinking the principles, processes, and priorities of urbanism in Spokane.

Community Visioning
Building on the work of The University District Strategic Master Plan from 2004 and a history of collaboration, the visioning sessions brought together community members. In June, over a hundred local leaders and stakeholders contributed during a two-day workshop. In September, a public open house provided a forum to explore a series of design boards and share ideas about future developments. Additionally, the design boards and a feedback form were available to the public online.

This process has been fortified by connecting with a vanguard of leading ideas, emblematic of how The University District continually operates at the intersection of ideas and practice, research and its application. For example, in addition to our many local thought leaders, we collaborated with The Miller Hull Partnership, responsible for what is arguably, the world’s most sustainable commercial building—The Bullitt Center in Seattle. Architect Brian Court, principal of the firm, headed a team applying the integrated systems-thinking of this building at the scale of The University District. Similarly, Megan Saffitz, of the U.S. Green Building Council, has brought together a leadership team across programs related to wellness and health, land use, power systems and mobility design standards to inform district-wide principles for development. Recently inaugurated buildings in The University District promote the highest level of LEED Certification—the leading benchmark for sustainable design. The current visioning work aims to expand these “green” building principles, and other programs, to a district-wide and, ultimately, a city-wide agenda. Also noteworthy is Jon Snyder, policy advisor to Washington State Governor Jay Inslee and former Spokane City Council member, who has been an advocate for outdoor recreation and economic initiatives in Spokane that expand mobility options via a network of trails and paths.

One of the most intriguing aspects of this work is the opportunity to realize a future that transcends the market conditions of parcel-by-parcel investments in order to support a shared, community vision and strategy. Input from these sessions has been synthesized into exhibits (some depicted on these pages), that project an urban model that not only tends to the business of health, but also to a truly healthy city. As such, you will see in these images, the community’s expressed interest in expanding and providing better access to our river and nature, in prioritizing people first mobility, in reconceiving the asset of our public right-of-ways, and in converting concrete and asphalt, currently just for cars, into green corridors. Exhibits, such as the illustration on the cover of this magazine, project strategies for more walkable, connected neighborhoods, with greater density and more open green spaces (see the sidebar on the following page highlighting some of the principles, processes, and priorities shaping University District developments).

From Strategy to Practice
The increasing investments around the future South Landing of The University District Gateway Bridge underscores
Collaboration & Transformation

the value and foresight of the evolving vision and commitments to apply the strategies, from this ongoing process, to practice. Roger Woodward, with Avista Development, provided key support in furthering this visioning process. Currently, Latasha Hill, Senior Vice President of Avista Development, is securing the potential of these ideas, by mobilizing a catalytic development that is putting the strategies for transformation into practice. This development provides a new commercial hub for the expanding health-care and life science research sectors. It connects the research and academic campuses with the hospital complex on the lower South Hill, furthering the mission of The University District to engage many community stakeholders in a shared vision.

Right to the City

Each iteration of The University District vision is illuminating alternatives, bringing community stakeholders closer together and creating landmark developments, as evidenced by The University District Gateway Bridge and South Landing development projects, both expected to break ground in 2017. It stands to reason that transformation is most effective when plans come from a shared community vision. We have a profound opportunity to make and remake our city and, by extension, ourselves. This is our right to the city, a community led vision, the essence of true transformational urbanism.

As part of the visioning exercise, we captured community ideas through transcriptions, questionnaires, and on-line surveys. Combined, the ideas constitute representative exhibits used in this publication. Additionally, select ideas are noted here:

### District Principles

- Promote “people first” developments
- Safety and quality of life
- Mixed use; amenity rich
- Higher-density urban village living
- Environmental preservation and restoration
- Transportation improvements

### Processes

- Redevelop land use
- Paths of Progress – phased infrastructure investments
- Identify potential neighborhood formation
- Strategic co-location of synergistic interests
- Promote job growth-related development
- Support a range of housing options
- Create vistas and corridors to connect to the river
- Create urban parks
- Expand transit options
- Increase dedicated bicycle and pedestrian routes
- Reduce car dependency

### Priorities

- Reinvest property tax revenue in the area
- Construct quality public infrastructure to encourage private investment
- Achieve strong transit networks and Central City Line rapid transportation
- Create an integrated parking strategy
- Link network of trails, paths, and parks
- Increase river access and waterfront improvements
- Create pedestrian plazas and thoroughfares
- Expand the number of street trees and “green” areas

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Gonzaga intends to break ground in spring 2017 on the $50 million Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center, a transformative facility made possible by an extraordinary $5.5 million gift from the late Miss Myrtle Woldson. Final approval from Gonzaga’s Board of Trustees is anticipated later this year.

Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

Gonzaga President and University District board member Thayne McCullough said the estimated 350,000-square-foot, two-story building, expected to be completed by winter 2018, sets in motion a new era for Gonzaga’s leadership in the creative arts and the humanities while providing a magnificent venue for the entire community. The building and the Jundt Art Center and Museum will form the core of an arts village on the west side of campus, anchoring programs in music, theater, dance and the visual arts. The new building will face south toward the Jundt Art Center and Museum and the Spokane River. It will be located immediately south of the former Knights of Columbus building. The facility will feature a 750-seat performance theatre (including approximately 40 seats on the main level), a 150-seat recital/rehearsal hall for music and dance, a two-story lobby with box office, and dedicated space for instruction and projects involving a variety of open space arts disciplines—fostering experimentation and collaboration. Pfeiffer Partners of Los Angeles is the lead architect for the facility with BarnesWills Architects (BWA) of Spokane. The theatre and music consultant is Auerbach Pollock Friedlander of San Francisco. The building targets “Gold” certification from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

Gonzaga University and University District Communication Group Member

Right Place
H оme to six of Washington’s finest higher education institutions, The University District is an exciting success story for Spokane. Just a decade and a half ago, it was one of Spokane’s least-desired neighborhoods. Today, it’s a beacon of Spokane’s transition into a modern and vibrant city where place-based economic development is thriving.

Innovative businesses dot the landscape on both sides of the river. Thoughtful district-wide planning emphasizes walkability, creativity and a connection to Spokane’s natural beauty. Makerspaces, innovation centers and breweries attract the best minds in the region.

The Jensen-Byrd development is part of this trend and—with its unique connection to WSU’s growing health sciences campus—will further catalyze the ongoing evolution of The University District.

Since its construction by the Marshall-Wells Hardware Co. in 1909, what we now call the Jensen-Byrd building has been a beacon of Spokane’s transition into a modern and vibrant city where place-based economic development is thriving. A modern flexible floor plates and fully updated data, utility and comfort controls will bring the building well into the 21st century, while maintaining the exterior’s historical character and showcasing the architecture of the original Jensen-Byrd building.

A new office building will be construct-ed adjacent to the Jensen-Byrd building at the intersec-tion of Pine and Main. The two buildings combined will offer mixed office space accommodating the needs of the next generation of users. Perspective tenants may include those from the life and health sciences sectors (such as biotech, IT and pharmaceutical), collaborative office users, medical office users, and any company seeking high quality professional space with great flexibility and visibility in today’s marketplace.

When completed, the development will also include restaurants/foodie spaces, a rooftop conference center, retail and a fitness/health center, all surrounded by outdoor space and urban amenities. These features have all been selected in consultation with WSU so as to serve the university’s current and future needs while meeting the developer’s vision of the amenities that will make this a thriving focal point on campus—serving students, faculty, researchers and the entire Spokane community—all while creating a stronger connection between The University District and the Central Business District.

“As we launch a medical school and ex-pand our research infrastructure, public/ private partnerships such as this will allow us room to grow,” notes WSU Spokane Chancellor and University District Board member Lisa Brown. “This project embraces the best urban land use possible, positioning businesses between a top-tier research universi-ty and a vibrant downtown.”

“Our adaptive reuse of the Jensen-Byrd is all about honoring the past and celebrating the future,” says Dean Allen, CEO of McKinstry. “This is our home. Our Spokane office sits across the river within sight of the Jensen-Byrd, and our people are part of the phenomenal energy that embodies The University District. We’re excited to build something the community will be proud of that meets the needs of The University District, as many partner organizations, and the City of Spokane.”

The development team has held several outreach meetings to engage the community around plans for this important proj-ect. Updated plans are being made with this input. For the latest developments, see jensenbyrd.com. The development expects to open by early 2019.

O n the east edge of the WSU Spokane campus sits the recently opened Spokane Teaching Health Clinic (STHC). Built with $42.4 million in general revenue bonds approved by WSU’s Board of Regents, it features 54 exam rooms, as well as space for Eastern Washington University to bring in its physical and occupational therapy pro-grams.

The 42,000 square foot building had its genesis with the creation of the Spokane Teaching Health Center, a partnership forged in 2003 by WSU Spokane, Providence Health Care and Empire Health Foundation to address the shortage of medical residents in eastern Washington.

Now the STHC is home for medical residents to hone their skills. Initially, 69 medical residents are working at The Clinic; 30 in both family and internal med-icine; six in psychiatry; two in rural family medicine and one in sports medicine. A medical residency—for someone who has completed medical school but needs the required amount of training before practicing medicine independently—can last anywhere from three to seven years, depending on the specialty.

In addition to growing residency slots, the Clinic has a mission of integrating students and faculty from health sciences programs in the region into a team-based clinical environment, which is the future of health care.

With patients of all ages served, the STHC provides a rich learning envi-ronment and inter-professional teaching opportunity. Students of all health sciences back-grounds learn alongside each other to better understand how different specialties work. That approach reveals itself in WSU Spokane’s Health Care Team Challenge, where students of all health sciences areas are given a “patient situation” and are tasked with developing and explaining their approach and solution.

As the STHC grows and trains more residents and students who serve our community and beyond, it will be rewarding to demon-strate the return on investment to federal leaders who control the funding for medical residencies. It’s exciting to see our community working together to increase medical residency slots in our area to create a healthier population.
Our River

By Mark Robert Mansfield, PhD, Executive Director, University District

ECOLOGICAL ALLIANCE RIVER RESEARCH AND STEWARDSHIP

Established in 2015, with a mission to work collaboratively with students and community leaders committed to ensure the ecological integrity, biodiversity and resiliency of a healthy Spokane River ecosystem, the UDEA promotes resources and pathways for student and local participation in ecological projects. Like the larger mission of The University District, the strategy relies on engaged and expanded. Educational and community engagement opportunities could proliferate.

In recent months, the UDEA has gained momentum, thanks to the commitments, ideas, research and hands on work of students championed by the many river interests. Geneva Mayall, Executive Director of The Lands Council; and Loren McPaul, Executive Director of The Friends of The Centennial Trail, are promoting collaborative efforts to integrate leading research with the mission of leading non-profits, business partners, and officials of the City of Spokane and Spokane County. The work and teaching of professor Gregory Gordon, PhD, at Gonzaga University, is emblem of the organization's commitments. For example, Gonzaga students are working on several river-focused initiatives:

Community Outreach: Engaging nonprofits, residents and community leaders in the Logan, University District and Chief Garry neighborhoods to gather input to engineer better river recreation access points.

Youth Outreach: Developing programs to nurture the next generation of river keepers.

Olmsted's vision holds true today; the river is a key element of Spokane as a great city. Calling to mind the values and ethics promoted by professor, conservationist, environmentalist, and influential author Aldo Leopold, the Alliance is connecting and expanding the local efforts to re-engage the community; to know the river, to interact with the river, to develop anew a love and appreciation for the river; and by doing so, protect and steward the river.

The Spokane River flows through the heart of the city and is an influential feature to the local community. The river is a source of natural beauty, a place for recreation, and an important part of the local ecosystem. The UDEA is working to ensure the river's health and sustainability for future generations.

In the years that followed, Olmsted planned pathways along our river as part of a vision where Spokane was destined to be a great city. The legacy of this vision is sustained by the work of the University District Ecological Alliance (UDEA) - focused on the connections between our community and the river, to achieve the long-term, multi-generational success of our city.

As perhaps the most stunning, historically-rich and well-loved geographical feature in The University District, the Spokane River draws many to its banks. As we travel by foot, bike, board and kayak, we are struck by the possibilities to both enhance and sustain what we see. Riparian habitats could be cleaned up and native flora and fauna preserved. Recreational access could be re-magnified and expanded. Educational and community engagement opportunities could proliferate.

As the river flows through our community, the UDEA is working to ensure its health and sustainability for future generations. By working together. The growing support of The Alliance has increased the importance of the local efforts to re-engage the community; to know the river, to interact with the river, to develop anew a love and appreciation for the river; and by doing so, protect and steward the river.
I
n a bitter Spokane snowstorm in December 2008, nine
hearts seized for the first meeting of the newly
formed Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) of
Spokane County. As the first approved and funded entity of
its kind in the state, HSSA was established by the Washington leg-
islature to promote bioscience-based economic development in
Spokane County, and to advance new therapies and procedures
to combat disease and to promote public health.

Since that inclement winter day, HSSA has invested over $5.2
million in bioscience research and infrastructure funding that
has resulted in approximately 860 direct jobs and has attracted
an additional $26 million in external research dollars to the
Spokane region. Using conservative multipliers, this translates to
445 indirect jobs and over $50 million in economic activity
in the Spokane region. Using conservative multipliers, this translates
has resulted in approximately 160 direct jobs and has attracted
$2.4 million in external grants to the Spokane region.

Dr. Gary Pollack, Dean, WSU College of Pharmacy: Utilizing HSSA’s
Human Capital & Infrastructure Grant mechanism, Dr. Pollack
was able to recruit four top researchers to WSU and build-out
core lab space that is available for both public and private use.

Partners with Families and Children: This vital local organization
that deals with the health needs of children who have been
physically or sexually abused received an HSSA Access to
Healthcare Grant. HSSA funds are supporting services such as
children’s advocacy, specialized medical examinations, forensic
interviews, mental health services, parenting support, among

HSSA GRANTS SPARK RESEARCH, NEW INFRASTRUCTURE & INNOVATIVE CARE
By Susan Akele, Executive Director, Health Sciences and Services Authority and University District Communications Group Member

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others.

Spokane Prescription Assistance Network: This HSSA Access to
Healthcare Grant awarded aid the new statewide effort that
provides free and affordable prescription medications to those
who cannot afford to pay.

HSSA also recently added a new grant category that provides
consultants to assist small businesses and academic research-
ers with grant proposal writing expertise to acquire federal
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business
Technology Transfer (STTR) grants that HSSA might match in
the future.

Taken as a whole, these grants and grantees affirm that as an
organization, and as a collaborating community, we can do
anything. It will take many more years, even decades, to grow a
robust life sciences industry in Spokane County, but HSSA
intends to contribute to the regional ecosystem for many long
winners to come.

Iasis Molecular Sciences and Novion Technologies: With a total of
four Small Business Health Sciences Research Grants from
HSSA, these sister companies are working to advance technolo-
gies to minimize healthcare-acquired infection, tissue loss due to
chronic wounds and burn trauma, and wound infections associ-
ated with surgical procedures. See above image.

Dr. Katherine Tuttle, Providence Medical Research Center: With a
$200,000 Innovative Translational Research Grant from HSSA,
Dr. Tuttle was able to study end-stage renal care resulting in
improved patient care. Dr. Tuttle’s grant attracted an additional

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Dr. Katherine Tuttle, Providence Medical Research Center: With a
$200,000 Innovative Translational Research Grant from HSSA,
Dr. Tuttle was able to study end-stage renal care resulting in
improved patient care. Dr. Tuttle’s grant attracted an additional

With the prototype finished, Van Dongen’s technology is now ready for commercialization.

WSU Collaborations Advance Medical Research
By Helen Dudley, Washington State University Health Sciences Spokane

A s the primary research-intensive university in the region,
WSU Health Sciences Spokane is a host for new life
sciences discoveries and inventions. The presence of top-
notch researchers is a major asset as well.

“By bringing investigators of diverse research topics together in
one place, a research university is a catalyst for collaboration,
invention and commercialization,” says Hans Van Dongen, a
sleep scientist in the Eillon S. Floyd College of Medicine at WSU
Spokane.

WSU Health Sciences Spokane has the opportunity and obligation to dis-
cover new ideas, and Van Dongen’s new technology for drowsy driver
detection exemplifies this notion. It all started ten years ago when Van
Dongen’s research team was comparing the work schedules of truck
drivers to sleep patterns and driving performance. At the same time, Bryan
Vila—a professor in the criminal justice department—was conducting research
on fatigue and driving performance in police officers. Together, and in perfect “village” fashion,
Vila and Van Dongen secured funding for high-fidelity driving
simulators, which they used to collect data for their research
projects.

With the simulator data, Van Dongen and his team found signs of
fatigue in drivers’ lapses of attention, lane deviations and steering
wheel instability. They discovered that steering wheel instability
could be used to predict drowsiness in drivers. This discovery
opened up new possibilities for the development of a drowsy
driver detection technology that is a step up from what is cur-
rently available.

Van Dongen secured a patent for his technology in 2014. To com-
mercialize the technology, he sought out others within WSU
who have expertise in electrical engineering, user interface develop-
ment and research commercialization. Together with these col-
leagues at WSU’s campuses in Pullman, Vancouver and Spo-
okane, Van Dongen secured gap funding from the WSU Office of
Commercialization and matching funds from WSU Vancouver’s
chancellor to develop a prototype of the drowsy driver detection
technology.

With the prototype finished, Van Dongen’s technology is now ready for commercialization. The next iteration is already under-
way, based on a new idea for how to improve work schedules to minimize the risk of accidents due to fatigue. And with Seattle-
based Pulsar Informatics, Van Dongen’s laboratory is involved in the development of a new wear-on-the-forehead device for measuring sleep,
fatigue and health signs in around-the-clock work settings.

The cross-pollination that occurs naturally in WSU’s multi-
disciplinary research environment allows innovators like Van Dongen to thrive. This attracts more research, innovation and commercialization potential to Spokane.
This is just one example of WSU’s collaborations in Spokane. Others include: Ignite Northwest: Ignite is a business accelerator that helps established entrepreneurs evaluate their business
and find investors. WSU Spokane is one of its major partners and Ignite uses space on campus.

Spokane Teaching Health Clinic (STHC): The STHC was born out of a partnership among WSU Spokane, Providence Health Care and Empire Health Foundation. The partnership works to in-
crease the number of residency slots for training medical doctors.

Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA): HSSA provides funding
for core research laboratories on the WSU Spokane campus and promotes healthier populations and compliance with the Affordable Care Act.

WSU Office of Commercialization: The Office of Commercialization offers funding to help bridge the gap between research and com-
mercialization.

Pharmacy-Business Partnership: The College of Pharmacy in Spokane and the Carson College of Business in Pullman teamed up last year to help students earn both a doctor of pharmacy degree and a master of business administration degree in four years.
Many U.S. cities aspire to become centers of excellence in the sciences, and anticipate the economic benefits that are typically associated with this endeavor. The reality is that most will not achieve this goal. Not for lack of effort or even resources, but more often because the necessary levels of broad collaboration required for success are lacking. On the other hand, the Spokane community is uniquely positioned to achieve a prominent place in the national life sciences market in the next three to five years, due in great part to the levels of cooperation and collaboration that are the hallmarks of our region and most significant success stories to date.

A collective community has engaged business leaders, cooperative elected officials and great people. The latter cadre being particularly important as this reflects not only greatiness of character, but more importantly greatness of purpose. When exceptional people coalesce around a worthwhile goal, incredible things can be achieved. So, as we look out over the next three to five years, what are the local examples of cooperation and collaboration that will put Spokane on the national, if not global, life sciences map?

Let’s start with state policy that opens the doors for life sciences progress. A few examples come to mind such as the Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA), the first approved county funded HSSA which has invested around $5.2 million, and returned approximately $10 million in economic activity. Also, the essential legislative support for the new $50 million, 52,000 square-foot Spokane Regional Health District facility is an example of broad collaboration required for success are lacking. On the other hand, the Spokane community is uniquely positioned to achieve a prominent place in the national life sciences market in the next three to five years, due in great part to the levels of cooperation and collaboration that are the hallmarks of our region and most significant success stories to date.

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Co-optical: Four WSU students launched the startup to develop a non-invasive blood glucose measurement device.

H-Suite: A private marketplace for hospitals and surgery centers to partner to buy and sell medical products and equipment and reduce waste.

InsterMD: Founded by two registered nurses, InsterMD offers workplace telemedicine, a unique and affordable solution to a critical problem in Washington state.

Nexor Technologies: The company is focused on minimizing health care-acquired infections with its antimicrobial agent technologies.

A quantum leap in LSW’s potential impact across the state occurred earlier this year, when LSW received a $1.8 million grant from the state’s Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF) to help move innovations from “concept” to “market.” The LSDF grant allows LSW to scale its programs and deliver even more support to emerging companies in eastern Washington. For example, LSW staff is creating a commercialization “playbook” to start training entrepreneurs at the beginning of their commercialization journey, and is developing an online marketplace for resources and networking.

“The University District has the right resources and collective energy to drive forward a strong culture of innovation,” says Leslie M. Alexandre, DrPm, president and CEO of Life Science Washington. “We are excited to help grow and foster this spark of innovation through our work at Life Science Washington.”

Life Science Washington (LSW), the state’s life science trade association, is already alongside entrepreneurs and innovators across eastern Washington, delivering on-the-ground resources such as mentoring and business development support, and helping identify possible funding for up-and-coming companies.

LSW brings its WIN Mentoring Program and nonprofit angel network WINGIS to the area to help bridge the gap between discovery and commercialization. Additionally, a partnership with LSW and Ignite Northwest, established in 2015, laid the foundation for much-needed training and support for aspiring entrepreneurs and early-stage startups. Several Spokane companies have benefited from these unique programs:

InstantMD: Founded by two registered nurses, InstantMD offers workplace telemedicine, a unique and affordable solution to a critical problem in Washington state.
Riverpoint Pharmacy is one of the few local accredited pharmacies that can offer customized medications to safely meet patients’ needs. Our specially trained pharmacists also offer personalized consultations in:

- Weight Loss with the Ideal Protein Diet
- HCG injectable, sublingual drops and sublingual pellets
- Review of medications and supplements
- Pain management options for chronic pain and special needs
- Bio-Identical Hormone Therapy for Men

A Personalized Approach to your Health

Most women can expect to live at least one third of their life after menopause. At Riverpoint Pharmacy, our pharmacist, a Certified Menopause Practitioner by the North American Menopause Society, enable us to work closely with the patient and their provider to develop a custom hormone therapy that is designed specifically for them.

Your Treatment. Custom Designed.
A
to public transport
ation is essential to a successful mixed-use environment in The University District where people live, learn, work and play. Currently, Spokane Transit Authority (STA) has eight bus routes that connect to the area, and is continuously finding ways to improve service between The University District and other important destinations in the region.

Connecting Washington
Last summer, Governor Jay Inslee signed into law Connecting Washington, the largest transportation package in Washington’s history. This $8.8 billion transportation revenue and spending package will drastically improve transportation modes throughout the state. Thanks to the exceptional efforts of regional stakeholders and elected officials like Senator Andy Billig, Senator Michael Baumgartner and Representative Marcus Riccelli, The University District will benefit from an infusion of transportation capital that will enable smart urban development, and a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere more conducive to street-level commerce.

Central City Line
The Connecting Washington package includes $5 million to help fund the Central City Line (CCL)—a six-mile, all electric bus rapid transit route connecting Broadmoor’s Addition, Downtown Spokane, The University District and the Community Colleges of Spokane. Marching capital funding is anticipated from the Federal Transit Administration. Over the past decade, STA has worked with many stakeholders—The University District, City of Spokane, Downtown Spokane Partnership, Greater Spokane Incorporated, Arizona, local universities and colleges, neighborhood groups, Visit Spokane, and others—to develop a detailed plan for the new route that is estimated to provide nearly a million rides a year. As a companion to regular bus service, the CCL will offer earlier morning and later night service, frequent trips, convenient pre-board ticketing at permanent and distinctly branded stations (allowing for faster boarding), and overall reduced travel time. That’s good news for riders as well as for the local economy. The CCL is projected to directly increase land and improvement values by about $75 million over 20 years. It will increase foot traffic, and it will help with things like wayfinding, parking and traffic congestion. Having a transit system with these elements is critical to a competitive and growing economy—especially to appeal to a millennial workforce who will be retiring boomers and visitors to the downtown core. The CCL will have similar economic development benefits to a streetcar or light rail system, but at a significantly lower cost and with more flexibility to adapt to local events, changing weather and traffic obstructions.

As part of ongoing planning for the CCL, the City of Spokane and STA developed a Strategic Overlay Plan to identify transit-supported economic development opportunities and land use policy changes. The City and STA held three public workshops during the first quarter of 2016 to gather stakeholders and the public an opportunity to share their priorities and weigh in on these options. Set to complete in 2018, the CCL is scaled to meet the needs of our regional population, which is projected to grow by over 100,000 by 2040.

The University District Gateway Bridge
Additionally, Connecting Washington allocates $8.1 million of the bridge’s cost—to The University District Gateway Bridge, which allows cyclists, walkers and joggers to cross over the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) railway tracks. The bridge will be an important connection point between the CCL and STA’s medical shuttle service. Set to be completed in 2018, the bridge will activate the corridor between the south-side hospital complex and the six north-side higher education institutions: Community Colleges of Spokane, Eastern Washington University, Gonzaga University, WSU, Whitworth University.

Medical Shuttle Service
To supplement the connection between the CCL and The University District Gateway Bridge, STA plans to develop a medical shuttle service. Located at the bridge’s south landing, the medical shuttle will transport students, staff and patients from The University District’s health sciences campuses to the medical and hospital district on the lower South Hill. Individuals can also travel to the medical shuttle service via the CCL, which will have a University District station near the bridge’s north landing on Spokane Falls Boulevard. Commuters on Spokane Falls Boulevard can also get to the medical shuttle service for either the health sciences campus or the medical district will no longer need to go downtown to make their connections.

Looking to the Future
The projects outlined here are just some of the many projects supported by the CCL and they will help to advance regional economic development. The projects outlined here are just some of the many projects supported by the CCL and they will help to advance regional economic development. The projects outlined here are just some of the many projects supported by the CCL and they will help to advance regional economic development. The projects outlined here are just some of the many projects supported by the CCL and they will help to advance regional economic development.

What does a new vision for urban mobility look like in The University District?
When citizens who are blind or in wheelchairs can easily navigate The University District you know it offers good mobility for everyone. Good mobility is like a blood circulatory system. Abundant route options everywhere. We can’t be satisfied with bike paths or sidewalks on just one side of the river or just one side of the viaduct. Biking, walking and transit should have the same sort of options that vehicles have. And it’s not just good connections, those routes should be pleasant to take. That means good street-level storefronts, public spaces, and trees. The University District, at its core, is about promoting the health of our region through study and commerce. That value should be reflected in all aspects of its designs.

What do you believe is the single most important factor in accelerating people-first mobility options in The University District?
We need to stop hiding the cost of parking and moving vehicles. The enormous amount of land used for surface parking and street right-of-way could be earning us much more in tax receipts and community benefit if we build something on those parking lots and offer up more of our streets to shared uses. Streets and parking lots are expensive to maintain and have an opportunity cost when they are over built because they chew up land that could be used for other things. We don’t want people to just go through The University District we also want them to go to The University District. If we do that the whole neighborhood (and we should consider it a neighborhood) would be more people-first.

How can The University District bring together disparate stakeholders to focus on open space and pedestrian friendly environments?
You can do this if you stay true to a greater vision for The University District and if you demonstrate how a variety of stakeholders benefit. Local contractors will benefit from the construction. Rural communities will benefit from new scientific and medical partnerships. Citizens in East Central will benefit from a new clinic. Entrepreneurs will benefit from the proximity to high-level research. County government will benefit from increased land values surrounding The University District. The hardest part has really already been done. We just need to come together with a shared vision and see things through, or the economic opportunities we are reaching for will end up in other cities.

Why should a person who never walks, bikes or takes the bus support multi-modal streets?
Because the gas tax doesn’t go very far in repairing streets. Streets are heavily subsidized by property tax, utility tax, and sales tax. A great strategy for reducing congestion and reducing repair costs is to use more biking, walking and transit use. That’s a great benefit to you even if you never leave your car.

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had the privilege to visit Spokane and saw first-hand the incredible potential of this mid-sized city with a wealth of historic structures, a connective street grid and capable citizenry. Spokane is at a decision point that will affect its ability to live up to that potential for years to come. In my mind, the critical questions are: Is Spokane the kind of place where young, mobile, talented workers want to stay after they graduate? Will the Lilac City be able to compete with other mid-sized cities in the Pacific Northwest and beyond to attract a younger workforce and prosper for decades to come?

Of all college-educated 25- to 34-year-olds, roughly two-thirds looked for a job only after they chose the city where they wanted to live, according to census data. The surprising attributes sought by young job-seekers and corporate workforce developers are attractive walkable environments with good public transit.

I heard a story out of Indianapolis recently (a city facing similar talent retention challenges as Spokane). A younger resident testified in the statehouse about efforts to build a new system of bus rapid transit lines across the region. Lawmakers were told that, “selling a city without transit to millennials is like selling a phone without a camera.”

In “Core Values,” a study my organization conducted on the movement of companies across the country relocating to downtowns, businesses reported that current and potential employees want neighborhoods with restaurants, cafes, cultural institutions, entertainment, and nightlife as well as easy access by public transportation.

As our nation’s economy has slowly recovered from the recession, the areas around bus rapid transit stations from Las Vegas to Cleveland have seen faster middle and upper-wage job growth compared with other parts of those regions. In Eugene, Oregon, a well-designed bus rapid transit (BRT) line has brought strong economic benefits. In the three years after Eugene’s EMX BRT line opened, 42 percent of new jobs were located within a quarter-mile of the new BRT stations. A recent study showed a 4 to 1 return on investment of Eugene’s bus rapid transit line.

The possibility of similar success for Spokane will be up to voters this November. If voters approve this ballot measure, it will then be up to local leaders, planners and developers to help Spokane and The University District take full advantage of the Central City Line and live up to its full potential.

By John Robert Smith, Chairman, Transportation for America
A nail, some wire, a barberry.

We all remember this early science project and marvelled that each additional wrap of the wire amplified the result. We learned that something powerful can be made by assembling different parts in a thoughtful way, with the help of others and with a plan.

Today, we are building another magnet, The University District, which is poised to attract a new level of prosperity to the Inland Northwest region.

Starting with an Idea

The notion of an educational campus near downtown Spokane that would attract new development, research, commercial activity and talent had been around for many years; but it was during an economic downtown about 15 years ago that the idea gained traction. One or two wraps around the nail led to more until a plan to guide that idea gained traction. One or two wraps had been around for many years; but it was town Spokane that would attract new development.

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The redevelopment of the Jensen-Byrd property

A diverse mix of complementary health-related businesses nearby such as PAMM, Inland Northwest Health Services (INHS), Inland Imaging, Nuvodia, Maplewood Software, Healthcare Resources Group, Medication Review and H-Source, to name a few.

Reliable, competitively-priced infrastructure for power, water, natural gas, and water and waste management. The district also boasts access to a high capacity gigapop fiber network and an expanding public transit system.

Comprehensive entrepreneurial support via Greater Spokane Inc.’s Start-up Spokane initiatives, Inge Northcott’s business accelerator services, the IDEA funded wet lab and Tech Growth revolving loan fund, McKinstry’s Innovation Center, the new ToolBox makers’ space, and the Avista Center for Entrepreneurship at Spokane Community College.

The University District Development Association, is the embodiment of collegiality and collaboration among stakeholders, all working together to achieve mutual goals.

Clearly, much is in motion to build a commercially compelling and prosperous greater Spokane region. We are excited that The University District represents several wraps around the nail so our city can be more, sooner, for all who live, work, invest, visit and play here.

Making a Magnet

Roger Wadsworth, Consultant and Past Vice President, Avista Development

“Something powerful can be made by assembling different parts in a thoughtful way, with the help of others and with a plan.”

Designing Cities for the Future

By Kim Zentz, Co-Director, Smart City Initiative, Washington State University and University District Board Member

Globally trends are pointing to rapid urbanization, economic power shifts, more personalized health care, greater resource stewardship, increasing entrepreneurship, and technological breakthroughs. These vectors of change converge where people live—in communities of every scale. As more people move to cities, they expect safe, clean neighborhoods, access to reliable, affordable services, convenient mobility, and a healthy economy. Clearly we want all of these attributes for Spokane and Spokane's University District, but what can Spokane demonstrate for other cities? The answer is in a lot: By carefully applying available technology while informing decisions with available data, we can improve the efficiency and effectiveness with which communities—including Spokane—will plan for the future.

Collaborating for our Future

For a little over two years, an informal group including Avista, Iron, the City of Spokane, Washington State University, McKinstry and the University District Development Association have been imagining how Spokane's University District can serve as a proving ground for how cities address the shifting reality they face against these global trends. Recently, these partners signed a memorandum of understanding which brings a bit more formality to their vision and which will establish an organization focused on realizing these goals in The University District.

The result will be to establish The University District as a living laboratory to design cities for the future. The plan is to harness data to gain insights, empower people and solve urban challenges in new ways. The outcomes will enable healthier citizens, safer neighborhoods, smarter infrastructure, a more sustainable environment and a stronger economy. The broad goals of the organization are to improve the economy, environment and well-being of our community and to become a leader in enabling the design of cities of the future by creating a living laboratory for testing scalable and replicable smart city solutions.

Cities across the globe are working to use technology in new ways to help improve services and infrastructure for citizens and to help address urban challenges like energy and water usage, traffic and waste, as well as improving citizen engagement. By bringing together leaders in utility infrastructure, smart metering and communications, higher education, energy efficiency, population health, and urban planning to create a smart city solutions proving ground in the heart of Spokane, we will help establish The University District as an innovator in the effort to improve the quality of urban life.

The partners have applied for several grants and other opportunities to catalyze initial efforts. And we’re getting noticed.

National Spotlight on Spokane

In December 2015, Spokane’s effort was selected by Envision America to be one of the first ten cities in the country to participate in a yearlong program to catalyze smart city planning and project implementation. This designation recognizes Spokane as having the ingredients necessary to develop smart city technologies and strategies to tackle the challenges faced by cities around the world. Envision America is a national nonprofit organization focused on challenging America’s cities to become smarter by accelerating deployment of innovative technologies that tackle energy, water, waste and air challenges.

Spokane’s smart city initiative, now known as Urbanova, is based in the fixed footprint of The University District. Urbanova emphasizes the critical intersections between health, water, energy, food and the built environment in a way that no other city is yet positioned to realize. Focusing the scope on the District’s 770 acre boundaries, while leveraging the health sciences concentration of the campuses and the health-care core of the regional economy, creates a manageable, community-scale living laboratory that has the ability to enhance resident well-being. Further, with just under half of the District’s total acreage fully developed, there is tremendous opportunity for developers, entrepreneurs, researchers, community partners and corporate partners to prototype applications, solutions, and business models that can be replicated elsewhere. The potential possibilities are exciting! Learn more at www.urbanova.org.
Earlier this year, Spokane was fortunate to host Steve Case, Founder of America Online. In addition to his journey with AOL, Steve talked about how innovation and entrepreneurship are no longer confined to places like Silicon Valley, but are flourishing in cities across the United States. His recommendations for our region are to create a community of connectedness and to focus on two or three areas that play to our strengths.

At every point of the compass in our city, especially in The University District, you will see the entrepreneurial ecosystem booming. All of the critical elements to fuel an innovation economy exist here, including eight regional colleges and universities, access to capital, as well as a high growth companies who collectively employ thousands across technology, robotics, health and life sciences, advanced manufacturing and more. Our region has not only analyzed our strengths but also addressed any gaps in resources and services that could impede the growth of new and existing businesses.

Entrepreneurship is just one economic development driver in our region. Equally important is retaining a greater percentage of the newly educated workforce, many of whom previously relocated to larger cities for higher paying jobs. Regardless of whether graduates relocate elsewhere, our region remains focused on creating high growth companies across a multitude of industry sectors, which provide high wage jobs. A critical mass of companies and jobs will enable us to attract and keep top talent in our city.

Startup Spokane, a program of Greater Spokane Inc., is a gateway for our entrepreneurial community, providing a variety of services and resources for new business owners and startup teams including:

- Spaces for people to work, meet and share experiences such as co-working spaces, commercial kitchens, maker spaces, and research labs.
- Education across a multitude of disciplines, with entrepreneurship being taught as an interdisciplinary approach.
- Access to health and life sciences research led by our universities, public and private sector organizations.
- Incubators and accelerators for startups such as Ignite Northwest’s program for high growth technology, health and life sciences; Toolbox for product-based manufacturing startups; and McKinstry for second stage technology companies.
- Extensive network of mentors, advisers and industry specific experts providing assistance to startups facilitated by Startup Spokane.
- Access to capital via traditional/non-traditional financing options such as angel and seed investments, revolving loan funds, and venture capital.
- Service providers with an affinity for early-stage entities that provide countless hours of subject matter expertise and advice to emerging and growing companies.
- Regular networking and educational events to maintain a strong sense of connectedness and collaboration.

The University District, at the heart of Spokane’s research and entrepreneurial ecosystem, provides the perfect canvas for emerging high growth companies in technology, robotics, and life and health sciences. Intentional efforts to create, expand and recruit high growth companies to The University District will, in turn, attract housing, retail, hospitality and other service-based companies who will collectively enhance the work, live, learn and play environment in The University District.
UNPRECEDENTED PROGRESS FOR WSU HEALTH SCIENCES SPOKANE

By Lisa Brown, Chancellor, Washington State University Health Sciences Spokane and University District Board Member

SU Spokane was designated the university’s health sciences campus in 2010. But even before then, the health sciences had a large presence on campus—and that presence has grown in recent years, helping to transform Spokane’s University District into a hub of academic activity and an economic engine for the Inland Northwest for years to come.

The Health Sciences Building was opened on campus in 2002 and faculty from pharmacy and other programs were moved there from an office downtown. Medical students from the WWAMI program started on campus in 2008, and in 2009, the College of Nursing moved into the newly constructed Nursing Building. In 2013, the College of Pharmacy consolidated its Pullman operations to Spokane under the leadership of Dean Gary Pollack, and the College of Medicine was formed in 2014. At the end of 2013, the new Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences Building (see building at left above) opened and now three of WSU’s 11 colleges are headquartered in Spokane.

In 2015, the Washington State Legislature gave the university approval and initial funding to launch a medical school and, in a tribute to the individual who drove that initiative, the medical college was renamed the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine. Most recently, in 2016, WSU Spokane joined with Providence Health Care and Empire Health Foundation to open the Spokane Teaching Health Clinic on campus.

Clearly, the gains in health sciences education over the years are immense. But the advances in WSU health sciences research are equally admirable. In fiscal year 2013, WSU Spokane received $13.6 million in research grants and contract awards. For fiscal year 2016, WSU Spokane was awarded $29.1 million in external grant and contract awards, more than double the amount just three years prior.

Research on campus aims to solve the world’s health challenges. The College of Pharmacy is looking at ways to fight Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, ALS, prostate cancer and more. The College of Nursing—which welcomed new Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel in April 2016—tackles premature infant pain measurement, drug addictions, home health care safety and more. The College of Medicine—led by founding Dean John Tomkowiak—has world renowned sleep researchers studying the risks of sleep loss and how REM sleep impacts the development of young brains.

Turning research into commercial products and services is the next step in the university’s economic development role. Michael Ritger, who manages the University Center for Innovation on campus, helps researchers connect with local entrepreneurs to transform novel ideas and discoveries into new or expanded businesses. The center provides technical and applied research assistance and facilities access to innovators both on and off campus so they can gather additional data, test proof of concept ideas and advance prototypes. Glenn Prestwich, a visiting professor and expert in commercialization of university scholarship, also is helping researchers who want to turn their work into viable businesses.

Looking ahead, the development of The University District Gateway Bridge, which will link the WSU campus with the city’s extensive hospital complex to the south, promises that yet more opportunities for academic success are on the horizon.
As has been the case historically, medical school in Spokane, many of whom were motivated by a sense of service to the region. As they fill classrooms and flood the campus commons, quads and hallways, the sense of potential and possibility infuses the UW—Gonzaga University.

That is why I’m very excited that this fall, the UW and Gonzaga together will welcome the largest-ever class of UW medical students in Spokane.

In February, our two universities formalized an agreement to enhance and expand medical education and research in Spokane—building on the UW’s decades-long history in eastern Washington—through the formation of the University of Washington/Gonzaga University Regional Health Partnership.

For 25 years the UW School of Medicine has maintained the No. 1 ranking in the nation for primary care training in physicians’ practices in the Northwest (and one of only sixteen in the country). With the assistance of outstanding faculty, a rigorous curriculum, and hands-on internships, UW medical students and graduates are solving a wide range of thorny urban and community issues. Here are a few examples of recent UW student projects:

- Alarmed by automobile fatality rates on the Colville Reservation, EWU student Adam Amundson used a grant from the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to improve safety on the reservation’s roads and sidewalks.
- EWU students also are preparing a master plan for city parks in Coulee Dam, helping the City of Colfax with a historic preservation project, and partnering with Spokane’s East Central Neighborhood to create a ten-year revitalization blueprint. They also have collaborated with Spokane neighborhoods to improve pedestrian access and make traffic patterns less hazardous.

Service learning plays a large and crucial part in the education they will receive through the UW/Gonzaga partnership. Last year, for example, two of our first-year Spokane medical students started “Med for Ed” to engage first- and second-year medical students in community service projects. Projects like Walking School Buses, a program to help children safely walk to school to promote physical activity, and Sleepover for Science, a program to teach young people about the health sciences, are just a few of the opportunities through which students can make a tangible impact in the Spokane community.

The increase in the Spokane class size to 60 would not have been possible without funding from the Washington State Legislature. Additionally, 40 second-year medical students—the first class to experience the UW School of Medicine’s nationally recognized new curriculum—will move to the Gonzaga campus to continue their education.

Along with these 100 students experiencing innovative classroom training, hundreds more UW medical students will complete third- and fourth-year clinical training in physicians’ practices in Spokane and eastern Washington. This growth in medical education has the potential to make real, measurable improvements in the health outcomes in some of the most underserved areas of our state.

It all starts in Spokane’s University District, where EWU offers a Master’s degree in Urban & Regional Planning as well as the only accredited undergraduate urban planning degree in the Northwest. EWU’s Urban & Regional Planning faculty and students are improving our neighborhoods, our environment and our lives.

For many of us, urban and regional planning is invisible. We live in communities but don’t really understand how they work or how they can be changed. But, behind the scenes, EWU’s Urban & Regional Planning faculty and students are improving our neighborhoods, our environment and our lives.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF SPOKANE AND WSU NURSE TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

By Dr. Christine Johnson, Chancellor, Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) and University District Board Member

Community Colleges of Spokane, one of the largest community college districts in the state, has its district headquarters in the heart of The University District. This location is proving ideal for generating healthcare training partnerships with neighboring institutions.

Thanks to an innovative agreement between Spokane Community College (SCC) and WSU Health Sciences Spokane, nursing students now have access to WSU’s state-of-the-art College of Nursing simulation lab. Additionally, a new transfer agreement between the two institutions allows nursing students to pursue three years of nursing education at SCC, followed by one year at WSU in order to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. SCC has a similar fast track RN certification transfer agreement in place with Gonzaga University.

“Accessto the simulation lab for eight hours each quarter is fantastic,” says SCC nursing student Alexandria Straggi. “The WSU Spokane campus is beautiful, and it helps to get perspectives from both WSU and SCC instructors.” Fellow SCC student Anna Kuznetsov agrees. She appreciates the affordable community college tuition and the challenging curriculum. “I love it. I enjoy solving problems, so every day in clinicals feels like I’m discovering important evidence in a detective story.” Both Kuznetsov and Straggi plan to pursue the additional year after completing three years of study at SCC to earn their BSN. “SCC and WSU make our degree pathway clear and more flexible and that saves me time and money,” Straggi says.

With over 200 students enrolled, the SCC program trains a large majority of the nurses in the Spokane area. Add to that SCC’s nearly 200 graduates per year pursuing careers in medical assisting, health information management, dental assisting, vascular technology, pharmacy, invasive cardio-technology and respiratory care; as well as Spokane Falls Community College’s nearby 150 graduates in health programs such as addiction studies, gerontology, health/fitness, occupational therapy, physical therapy, pre-nursing, orthotics and prosthetics and hearing instrument specialties—and it’s no surprise that CCS is a vital force in the Inland Northwest health-care industry and economy.

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Outdoors & Active

UNIVERSITY DISTRICT RECREATION
By Jon Jonckers, Board Chair, Friends of the Centennial Trail

Step outside and blaze a trail.

From Riverfront Park to Mission Park, you will find dozens of unique recreational opportunities along the Centennial Trail that hugs the Spokane River through the heart of The University District. Runners and cyclists of every stripe gravitate to the scenic community path for exercise, but that’s only scratching the surface. The University District’s college campuses and abundant city parks spark dozens of outdoor activities, and it’s easy to see why.

In the spring, local college students ride longboards or skateboards to class. In the summer, stand up paddlers and kayakers glide up and down the river. For roughly eight months of the year, the Flying Irish Running Club promotes Thursday evening fun runs through the neighborhood. Charity walks and fundraisers occasionally crisscross the tree-lined boulevards and trails. There’s always something happening.

The Spokane River is at the heart of most of these activities, but The University District is connected to other trails and community paths. There are several bike lanes, plenty of parking at trailheads, and there’s even a boardwalk connecting The University District with Riverfront Park. When the future University District Gateway Bridge is complete, the Ben Burr Trail will become another treasured community path and a link to the South Hill.

Local businesses and eateries definitely cater to all of these recreational enthusiasts and calorie burners. Making plans to meet in The University District for a bike ride, a walk, or even a trip to the Jundt Art Museum is super convenient because The University District is a hub for so many other active pursuits. Public swimming pools, tennis courts and Hoopfest basketball courts are located at Mission Park. The aforementioned Centennial Trail extends all the way to Coeur D’Alene, Idaho to the east, and Long Lake campground to the west. There’s even rock climbing and mountain biking areas at John Shields Park and Beacon Hill less than 15 minutes away.

All things considered, the continued growth and the positive effects of recreation in The University District don’t show any signs of slowing down. A spirit of active collaboration between local businesses, city planners, and the college campuses testifies to their progressive thinking and their focus on creating a neighborhood with boundless recreational opportunity.
When doctors, nurses, and pharmacists work together, patients benefit. When tomorrow’s health care professionals learn together, we all benefit.

STCU is honored to support the Spokane Teaching Health Clinic and the University District. It’s a place where care meets collaboration.

Visit us at any of our branch locations, including STCU’s U-District Branch in the Schade Towers. Find the STCU commercial lending and business services team in Spokane’s Hutton Building.

Tom Johnson
STCU president and CEO
University District Development Association, treasurer and past chair