Together:
THE BUILDING OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Special thanks to the San Juan Foundation for helping to publish this 20th anniversary history of the College of Eastern Utah-San Juan Campus.
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Introduction: Setting the Stage

“We may affirm absolutely that nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion.” ---Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

W
riting organizational history can be as uninteresting as reading it. When the story hinges upon facts and figures, the human drama is placed on a back burner, never to be removed, never to gain prominence. By doing so, the institution appears inanimate, manned by automatons who are driven by forces that have little connection to people.

The history of the College of Eastern Utah—San Juan Campus is not this at all. From its inception, people in San Juan County have pushed for its growth and development and have done so with passion. The source and energy of that drive have become the single most defining characteristic of the campus, as dozens and dozens of individuals spent countless hours making the institution a reality. There is nothing dead, nothing boring about its history. It is the story of people who have folded in their own elixir of life that makes the process fascinating.

When this writing project began in the spring of 1997, there was initial discussion about how to write an honest portrayal of the past twenty years. Faculty and staff considered different options—recorded, transcribed, and bound taped interviews; a written, edited, collated summation of each individual's experience; or a single author's recounting of events. Each possibility had its strengths and weaknesses.

The group finally decided to combine all three. People pitched in, providing twenty-two interviews, each of which was an hour and a half or more (in a few instances, three or four hours) in length. Next, the tapes were transcribed and printed, creating a rich source of college history, otherwise unavailable, for future generations. These interviews captured the more human side of the experience often missing from the documents and articles written for public consumption.

Some of the people interviewed were either retired or retiring, while others lived in distant areas. It appeared to be the opportune time, indeed, a last chance in some instances, for them to assist in reconstructing what happened in those early years. While health prevailed and minds were sharp, the task needed to get under way.

There were a number of people outside the college who assisted in this collection and recollection process. Some wrote letters or recorded their memories and mailed them. The Office of the Board of Regents researched their files and minutes from meetings, sending what they had in a timely fashion. Old scrapbooks as well as campus, county, and Salt Lake newspapers filled in gaps of memory. Two authors of doctoral dissertations based on student research conducted on campus also helped paint a picture. Campus records added still another dimension. Thus, the research took many directions.

However, once the collecting process was completed, the next step was writing. One day during a luncheon appointment, President Grace Jones inquired if the writing of this history would reflect the true feelings, sometimes bordering on passion, that many of the staff and faculty feel towards the San Juan Campus. Others have asked the same question.

These issues of tone and perspective are important. What has emerged is a San Juan point of view supplied by staff, faculty, students, and community members. Obviously, not everyone's ideas are reflected here and not all of the information gathered has been used. What is presented is an overview of major events and at-
titudes that help explain what the San Juan Campus is all about. The reader will have to judge the success or lack of success in portraying an accurate picture.

The tone, for the most part, is upbeat not beat-up. Every institution, every individual has its "warts" and "pimples" that detract from an overall image. No one and nothing is perfect. As Hegel, 19th century German philosopher said, "It is easier to discover a deficiency in individuals, in states, and in Providence, than to see their real import and value." When one considers the accomplishments of this small, rural campus, there is an amazing amount of positive benefit and a relatively minor amount of negative results that have been derived over the past twenty years. This history is written with that in mind.

In a few instances, problems are also discussed. There has been no attempt to whitewash issues of an enduring nature. To do so is inaccurate and discredits the many positive things that have occurred. I assume responsibility for any mistakes in fact or interpretation that are in this book, but at the same time wish to express thanks to the many people who have spent time reading and correcting the manuscript. Without their help, this history could not have been written.

What, then, can the reader expect? Although the book is divided into six chapters for ease of reference, the elements of each chapter are interrelated with the other chapters—the story is one whole. Not every person, not every event could be included in a book limited in manuscript pages. What one finds is a representative sample, not an encyclopedic listing of all of the people, programs, and occurrences that have gone into making the San Juan Campus what it is today. Still, there is an impressive number of each of those contained within.

Hopefully, the final thought or impression that the reader will take with him or her is that this institution is here, not because of a single individual or group, but because of the efforts of many. No one ever dreamed the different directions the campus would take once given its initial breath. Even the most visionary of the early participants could not have imagined where the San Juan Campus is now. The process was a day-by-day, year-by-year unfolding rather than a flash of brilliance moved to reality.

If there ever was an underlying ingredient to a collective vision, it would have to be that the task could not be completed alone. Each chapter points out how this is true. Thus, the entire book's theme reflects the title while summarizing twenty years of history—that it was through working Together that The Building of a Community College occurred.
Chapter One

Genesis: From Dream to Reality

"I feel like I have been paid for a lot of years to dream—there's been some work to go along with that—but can you imagine having the opportunity to be paid to dream and see something now, that didn't exist, become tangible. I feel guilty sometimes when I get my paycheck."
—Lynn Lee

There is something in the human psyche that enjoys contemplating the possibility of moving the improbable or impossible to reality. The cliche of being limited only by one's imagination does not recognize the fact that the path that leads to success is often strewn with dozens of fatal failures. Still, persistence against the odds may bear fruit in some of the most unlikely scenarios.

Take the establishment of Blanding for instance. Located on roughly a twenty-mile-long and five-mile-wide mesa known as White Mesa, the town sits in the middle of the Colorado Plateau. Before the city was built, the Utes called the site “Thick Cedars”; to the Navajos, the general vicinity was “Amidst the Sagebrush”; and to both it was a good place for temporary grazing and camping, but there was little water to sustain much else. A more substantial use did not seem possible.

Walter C. Lyman, who explored the mesa in 1897, faced similar feelings from his contemporaries. For a number of years before and after his visit, the Four Corners region suffered from a series of droughts. Cedars (actually junipers), pinon pine, and sagebrush could survive in such a habitat, but to think of planting a Mormon farming community with its heavy dependence on water in such a location seemed imprudent to say the least. True, there was the possibility of bringing water from Blue Mountain to the north. Also true were the following: the limited financial resources of the settlers made this idea implausible; three years before, all of San Juan County had almost been turned over to the Southern Utes as reservation lands; and there were many local people who scoffed at the notion.

Still, Walter C. Lyman had a dream—literally and figuratively—during that September visit in 1897. One night, as he later explained, he had a vision that showed a large city perched upon the mesa where Blanding now stands. He wrote nothing that described what he saw, but what has become common knowledge among the residents of Blanding is that he believed the town would develop as an educational and cultural center for Native Americans.

This seemed like another impossibility given the fact that a quarter of a century of low-grade conflict and tension between the two cultures lay ahead. However, these problems were not enough to stop the fledgling efforts of a handful of individuals who believed a town could be raised out of the sage and cedars. In 1905, with water wending its way down from
the mountain in a crude ditch, the first settlers moved their families up on the mesa and into what would soon become the town of Blanding (then called Grayson). The rest is history with the city today supporting a population of around 4,000.

The story of Blanding’s establishment is instructive. Regardless of the fact that the conviction of its people sprang from religious roots, the results obtained against fairly stiff odds helped everyone—Mormon, non-Mormon, Navajo, and Ute alike. Cohesion of the founders as a group, a definite goal, hard work, and understanding how to use limited resources allowed a handful of workers to succeed. There were many who sat back and watched, while others stood in the wings and actively ridiculed. No matter. Everyone eventually benefited from the effort.

So sixty years later, when a group of determined individuals started to dream about how best to fulfill another need—that of higher education for both Native American and Anglo residents—they followed an already established precedent. Beginning in the 1960s, the political and cultural climate started to change. Up until this time San Juan County, in some respects, was considered the end of the world by most people. Geographic isolation could be overcome, in part, by building roads and establishing airports to tie the town to the Provo-Salt Lake City area three hundred miles to the north. The social and cultural environment was for many an even greater distance.

The population at that time could be split roughly in half. Native Americans, comprised primarily of Navajo residents, lived in the southern third of the county, while the small Ute community of White Mesa sat eleven miles outside of Blanding. The northern two thirds of the county held the white population and most of the schools and businesses. The San Juan River separated the north from the southern reservation lands in a type of Mason-Dixon line that was as much cultural and social as it was economic and political. Cracks in the caste system, however, started to fracture this long-standing division.

It was the 1960s, soon to be the 1970s. The hippie movement with its counterculture rhetoric; the growth of Black, Red, and Brown Power groups; and a federal government sensitized to the plight of impoverished people gave rise to a desire to correct society’s ills. President Lyndon B. Johnson’s “Great Society” became a vision that many future leaders accepted. Funding and programs followed. But there was no guarantee that money and resources went where they were needed most. Obtaining the help was at times as political and uneven as it was short-lived, while individual and group initiative needed to be strong and steady.

In San Juan County, where needs were great, the solution to many of its problems still seemed insurmountable. The county has historically, even to this day, remained the poorest in economic and educational terms in Utah. Although the white residents reflected the low income economy of rural Utah, it was the Native American population that suffered most. A 1973 report entitled, “San Juan County Navajos—Social and Economic Statistics,” paints this grim picture. Based on information garnered from the 1970 federal census, the study showed that
60 percent of the Navajos were unemployed, the median family income was below $3,000 (compared with the Utah average of over $9,000), and that 70 percent of the Indian families remained in poverty.

Living conditions were another strong indicator of the problem. Seventy-eight percent of the homes had two or fewer rooms, and given the Navajo tendency towards large families (62 percent of the population was under the age of 20, cramped conditions were obvious. Add to this that only 25 percent of the homes had electricity, 80 percent of the Navajos had to haul water one mile or more to their homes, and that death from gastroenteritis was 16 times greater on the Navajo reservation than in the rest of the state due to the lack of refrigeration and preventative knowledge. Physical needs far outstripped the resources.

Navajo education was in a similar plight. Less than 40 percent of Navajos aged 25 or older had attended school for a year or more, and of those who had, the average was less than six years. Less than 8 percent finished high school, while 2.5 percent of the males and none of the females had attended college. The younger generation was attending school longer than their parents, but they had a high school dropout rate three times as high as the state average. The report summarized the condition by stating, “The Navajo in San Juan County lags far behind the Utah population, the state rural popu-

lation, and the rest of the Utah Indian population in educational experience.”

Beyond state and federal attempts to meet the growing need, a Native American organization, the Utah Navajo Development Council (UNDC), joined the fight. Funded by royalties from the Utah Navajos' oil fields as well as other sources of income, UNDC began in 1968 and had developed a series of programs by 1971-72. Services in health, education, agriculture, and housing reached out to the people but were stretched thin over a large geographical area. Eventually, three health clinics, housing projects, programs in preschool and adult education, and agricultural endeavors attempted to address some of the problems, but the real solution of economic development needed to be attained on a grander scale. Education would play an important part in this.

Between the mid 1960s and early 1970s, a series of events and personalities coalesced and moved in the direction of higher education. Federal, state, and county organizations such as Social Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Service, the county commissioners, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs had offices in Blanding or Monticello. Overwhelmed by the task of improving the difficult conditions in the county, the individual agencies decided to meet on a regular basis to share cooperative solutions. They discussed programs that ranged from
road development and health care to increased school attendance, and from foster care to outreach counseling. Each agency brought to these meetings its own limited resources and differing views, but one thing that all agreed upon was the importance of education.

The San Juan School District shared its own talent and concerns in these meetings. At this time there were three elementary schools--Montezuma Creek, Bluff, and Mexican Hat--on or near the Navajo reservation. The teaching staffs were almost totally comprised of Anglo personnel who worked hard but suffered from a cultural and linguistic distance that showed up in high failure rates and low reading and math scores for the children. Indian parents wanted more Indian teachers (a rare commodity in those days) and greater self-determination in the schools. Pressure for change from the south started to build in the district offices in the north.

Just how much pressure became evident in the mid 1970s when this push for local autonomy resulted in a study concerning the needs of high school students. Busing them over long distances created a drain on time, money, and energy, not to mention being an extreme inconvenience. The study completed in 1974 recorded that there were 1,235 Indian students in the district, that 431 of these were in secondary education, and that half of those were being bused. Comparative distances traveled by Indian and non-Indian students showed that high schools were located in such a way that the average Navajo student traveled four times as far as his or her white counterpart. Many Native Americans spent the equivalent of 120 school days physically sitting on a bus just to attend 180 days of class.

Eventually from this situation came a lawsuit and the construction of two schools--Whitehorse High (1978) and Monument Valley High (1983). But that would come later. At this point (1969) the public school system was crowded and had very few Navajo paraprofessionals or professionals to work in the classroom. Many of the students did not speak English well, while some did not speak it at all. The need was obvious: somehow this cultural and linguistic gap must be bridged. Education could provide the main planking.

At about this same time, the Utah Navajo Development Council began its influential role in meeting Navajo economic needs. Its director, Cleal Bradford, began to search for ways of staffing clinics on the reservation. Nurses in San Juan County were scarce, but Navajo nurses with the language and cultural background to work in this unique setting were non-existent. Again, education appeared as a solution.

Beginning in the late 1960s, Bruce Shumway--Director of Social Services, Cleal Bradford from UNDC, Harold Lyman with Job Service, Joel Tate from Vocational Rehabilitation, Kenneth Maughn from the San Juan School District, Don Roberts from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and others agreed to work together by pooling resources to bring a series of pro-
grams to the county to address the needs.

What appeared to the people of Blanding to be a straightforward course of action once the money was in place was anything but simple to the large institutions of higher learning in the state. Numbers of students were small compared to normal campus activity. Time, travel, and commitment would drain faculty and staff for short-term programs. Utah State University, the land grant college with the mandate to meet rural Utah’s needs, was at the other end of the state with a newly established office in Moab. Most of the teachers in this fledgling program were flown in, but to try to extend their visits eighty miles to the south was not considered economically feasible. Thus, an article published in 1968 entitled, “College Courses Closer for San Juan Residents,” claiming USU’s flexibility if ten students could be enrolled for a class, proved premature. Although it would eventually teach a few sporadic classes and workshops in the county, at that point, USU felt no strong commitment. Higher education stopped in Moab.

Brigham Young University (BYU), however, mustered a good deal of enthusiasm. Starting in 1968, Cleal Bradford used federal grant (WIN—Work Incentive) money to pay for vocational training and community development both on and off the reservation. BYU provided their own, as well as local, instructors and hired a full-time coordinator. When the vocational program ended in 1972, BYU’s enthusiasm had not waned but had shifted to more academic courses such as the teacher development program. Funding, however, continued to be a concern. There was nothing inexpensive about bringing faculty to Blanding, managing the logistical aspects of the courses, and supporting administrative efforts. A less piecemeal but still unstable source of income appeared unexpectedly in the form of a brochure tossed into a school district wastebasket by a man named Lynn Lee. He had worked in the district as a teacher and principal, and beginning in 1967, as an administrator. Given the responsibility of working with disadvantaged children, Lynn was on the mailing list of programs serving that part of the educational system. He recalled that one day in the office he threw away a brochure advertising the benefits of the Career Opportunities Program (COP). By that afternoon he had reconsidered, rummaged through the wastebasket, and written for more information. A few months later, as he sat in a district meeting, the superintendent received a phone call and learned that the district had been awarded a planning grant for $50,000. There was only one man more surprised than the superintendent and that was Lynn Lee.

The first grant went into effect in 1970, training Navajos interested in obtaining their degree and teaching certificate in elementary education. Lynn was in charge of recruitment of students, operation of the program, and relations with institutions of higher education. Community, school, and government support skyrocketed the program to success. By 1975, 97 people, 95 percent of whom
were Native American, had participated with approximately one-third of them having already received their teaching certificate. Eventually, an estimated 50 percent achieved their goal.\textsuperscript{12}

Interest in other areas of education such as business administration, health delivery services, and counseling continued to grow. While the COP grant paid only for teacher training, other public funds paid for the continued involvement of BYU. The BYU coordinator in Blanding suggested the possibility of offering an associate degree in agriculture, bachelor's and master's degrees, technical assistance in health, as well as consultant services.\textsuperscript{13}

On the other hand, it also became apparent that developmental courses were necessary to move some of the students to a college level. The administration explored the possibility of credit and non-credit courses as an aid. UNDC bought a large cinder block building, constructed in the mid 1950s as a chapel for the Latter-day Saint (LDS) Indian Branch, and made it available for BYU classes at the exorbitant rate of one dollar a year, including heat, power, and water.\textsuperscript{14} The edifice even took on a new name—The Brigham Young University Office of Continuing Education—the staff being cautious not to call it a center.

Looks, however, were deceiving. By 1975, BYU was getting cold feet. The time invested in travel, even though subsidized, was taking its toll. Even more serious was the completion of the COP grant, as well as BYU's retrenchment from a widespread community college approach to education. All of this added up to a desire for withdrawal from commitments to higher education in San Juan County. In 1976, BYU cut the dingy adrift, with none of the larger educational institutions ready to tie on and come aboard.

Fortunately, steps had already been taken in a new direction. Lynn Lee, in 1976, had shifted from the school district payroll to that of UNDC. He was responsible for insuring that a program of higher education was available for the Navajos in the county. Other agencies, known collectively as the San Juan County Interagency, were equally interested and willingly supported these efforts for all of the county's residents.

There was, however, disagreement as to how services should be obtained. One faction believed that a small administrative office was all that was necessary to serve as a brokering agent with colleges to provide services. This had its merits in that it would not take a large flow of cash for administration or to maintain facilities. The other group felt it would be more prudent to come under the umbrella of one institution. There were two reasons for this. First, there was the possibility of eventually obtaining state funding as did other institutions of higher education. Increased credibility for grant proposals on both a state and federal level were also part of the thinking. Second, by belonging to an already accredited institution, the issues of transfer credits and an established reputation were already in place.\textsuperscript{15} The group decided that the latter course was best.

The next question was what college would take on this responsibility. Lynn, Cleal, and members from the agencies interested in education approached the College of Eastern Utah
in Price led by President Dean McDonald. He viewed the mission of CEU as being much broader than a junior college whose sole function was to prepare students for their last two years in a university. He fully embraced the community college concept that encouraged vocational and developmental, as well as transfer, programs. The college's location was also appealing. Geographically, it was the closest to San Juan County, fitting in with McDonald's vision of moving beyond a Price-based campus to encompassing all of southeastern Utah, as the college's name implied.\textsuperscript{16}

In August, 1976, the interested parties held their first official meeting in Blanding. They organized the San Juan Community College Advisory Board from a broad spectrum of county residents, including a person from Social Service, Job Service, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the White Mesa Ute community, and the Navajo Reservation. Dean McDonald caught the vision, vowing that CEU would “act as an independent agent coordinating all college programs within the county.”\textsuperscript{17}

The Advisory Board's candor, laced with a can-do attitude, encouraged McDonald to commit to a major effort in making the plan work. Job Service volunteered to staff a secretarial and custodial position from CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) public service money while UNDC, after a unanimous vote of approval, offered Lynn Lee's services as director on a half-time basis. Cleal Bradford also committed half of the Indian Branch building rent-free for classroom and office space. Joel Tate, through Vocational Rehabilitation, supplied an old trailer behind the main building for additional classrooms.

Soon others invested in the vision. The school district and other agencies provided vocational education money for Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) training, one of the first certificate/degree granting programs offered. The BIA began paying student tuition and related expenses, as did UNDC and Social Services. Workers from the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program joined the force as part of their assignment through the county commission. Everyone contributing realized that CEU in Price could not drain its budget to help and that the state would not recognize such an unorthodox institution since there was a moratorium on creating new campuses with expensive budgets. At least initially, this was to be a home-grown affair.

At this point, it is important to state clearly that there were two major forces providing impetus to the drive. Most people recalling this period of uncertainty mention the idea of having a vision of what was possible. No one ever dreamed that the story would turn out as well as it did, but everyone agreed that there was a potential, a possibility that something very good could be done. The second point is that of cooperation with a unified commitment not to fail. Lynn captured this feeling when he said, “To me, it was all of those people setting out to do something on their own, without interference, in a sense, without any support, nobody
telling them that they couldn’t do this or that. There was a spirit there among those people that there was no way that they were not going to see it succeed.”  

And so the ship was launched. Nineteen seventy-seven was the maiden voyage, the first full year of classes and the first year that Lynn worked as the director under the control of CEU not UNDC, following an agreed transfer of funds. Even though the college had come a long ways in a short time compared to the BYU years, no one rested easily. All the money coming to the San Juan campus was “soft” money, derived from grants or various agencies for different specific services. Student relations, community relations, agency relations, and CEU relations all revolved around providing a product that everyone felt worthwhile. There were many matters to please. Cooperation proved essential.

When President McDonald returned to the Price Campus, fired by a vision of future possibilities, he was doused by the cold water of reality. Some of the faculty and staff viewed their stepchild to the south as an expense and additional workload that was entirely unwelcomed. CEU had no experience in administering satellite programs of this nature; no money had been budgeted for this type of relationship; and there were major questions concerning how the new students were to be counted as Full Time Equivalent (FTE), the formula by which permanent funding is generated. And what about the needs of a very different student body? (In the early days of the campus, it was often 90 percent Native American.) For an institution that had felt its main mission was to prepare students for transfer to the University of Utah or Utah State University, this new role was unsettling.

President McDonald bore the brunt of the friction. He faced other issues on campus, this one becoming just another part of the problem in communication from portions of faculty and staff that resisted some of the radical changes being introduced. Eventually, there grew a coterie of resisters, euphemistically called the “Boy’s Club,” who sought to maintain the status quo. Their low, barely audible grumblings sometimes grew in pitch, fostering a less than helpful climate.

There were, however, those who actively supported the expansion and welcomed the challenge 200 miles to the south. Some excess furniture and office equipment arrived in pickup trucks along with discarded books from the main campus library. Staff and faculty members made occasional trips to help initiate office procedures,
work with part-time faculty, and review course offerings. Approval of teachers’ credentials became another important concern since CEU’s accreditation through the Northwest Accreditation Association could be affected by the outreach program in Blanding. Little wonder that there were reservations about this unproven entity.

Members of the State Board of Regents also raised eyebrows over certain issues concerning their latest acquisition. Navajos attending school at the new campus had mailing addresses in bordering states. After much discussion, the group agreed that they should be treated as legal residents, making them eligible for lower tuition rates. The Commissioner of Higher Education, Ted H. Bell, met with President McDonald and the San Juan Campus Advisory Board and urged them to seek legislative recognition and funding for the program. He also had caught the vision of what this program could become, but cautioned that a name change was in order from “campus” to “center.” A week later, members of the Board sat in the offices of Senator Omar Bunnel and Representative Mike Dimitrich, who added their support to the creation of a center.

Now that the campus was receiving some publicity, the question of Utah State University’s involvement in the area became the next topic of discussion. The proposal to establish an extension center in Blanding raised the issue of how it would interface with USU and its overall responsibility for extension services.

A separate institution under CEU’s control that was now requesting initial start-up funds of $65,200 made USU uneasy. Their representative to the regents believed that the Southeastern Center in Moab should be “expanded to an office in Blanding” but that the operation of the facility would be delegated to CEU. The issue resided in the flow of funds, which needed to pass through USU before arriving in Price to be sent down to Blanding. Since the San Juan Center was an unknown commodity and Utah State a well-recognized, powerful institution, the monetary issue was a foregone conclusion. From the regents’ perspective, a closely coordinated program between the two centers was far more desirable and efficient.

Yet, the regents failed to fund the 1976 and 1977 requests for San Juan money. Not until 1978 through 1982 did the funding flow from the legislature to USU then CEU and finally to the San Juan Center. The process was not only inefficient, but it never achieved its intent of drawing the Moab and Blanding centers together.

The two centers remained separate entities in both philosophy and management. Although CEU was supposed to be teaching the lower division courses and USU the upper division, the reality of it was that USU taught both, and neither campus maintained much of a dialogue. The San Juan Center, at the same time, served as a brokering institution for not only upper division and graduate level USU courses, but also those offered by the University of Utah, Weber State, and BYU. Finally, in 1982, Commissioner Bell saw that the pseudo-relationship between the two centers had failed and charged that funding for CEU programs go directly to the institution.

But if there was uncertainty and problems external to the San Juan Center, it was not reflected in the delivery of courses. In the first month of 1977, the San Juan County Title XX Office (funded by Social Service to enhance opportunities for welfare recipients) alone requested twenty lower and upper division as well as graduate level classes that would lead to a bachelor’s and master’s degree in social work. The school district’s program, administered by Carl Osborn, built a stable series of offerings for teacher training. A nursing program, taught by a VISTA volunteer and part-time faculty, moved Anglo and Navajo students closer to their goal of becoming LPNs. And full-time faculty from the Price
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Campus taught a mine training program sponsored by Job Service. Classes in business, cosmetology, reading, speech, and Navajo language added to the mix.

One should keep in mind that the vast majority of the lower division classes and some of the upper division and graduate level courses were taught by local instructors after having gone through an approval process. Al Trujillo, who eventually became the Academic Vice President in Price, recalled those early days and the adjunct faculty that taught courses. His attitude summarizes what others have expressed. Concerning the quality of the faculty he encountered, Al said, “By and large, I was astounded that they had that kind of talent in a community of that size. I really was. I was amazed, in fact, because there were some really well qualified people. I wondered how they got down to Blanding. And I don’t recall very many, maybe one or two, that the departments would say no to [for approval to teach classes].”

With this kind of support between school and community, it would not be long, even though funding remained tentative at best, that more full-time people would come aboard. Grants and programs brought on a team of administrators and counselors to help with recruitment, financial aid, and high school students considered at risk. Those who filled these positions—men like Jim Kindred, who spoke and wrote the Navajo language fluently; Bill Todachennie, a Navajo born and raised outside of Montezuma Creek; and Keele Johnson, from Eastland near Monticello—gave the program a county flavor and an in-depth understanding of how to best meet the needs of the San Juan Center’s service area. And they, like all in that small nucleus of workers at the college, had a strong commitment to do the job right, no matter what the cost. Their employment depended on results, not clock hours, and many recalled during interviews the tremendous expenditure in time that was required to succeed. Just how much will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Early in 1978, the academic side of this expanding program received its first full-time employee. Dr. L. Kay Shumway, another person raised in Blanding, returned home from a teaching position at Washington State University. Although he was unaware that a job would soon open for him, he felt a real love and commitment to the people of the county. He also had missed the home of his youth. Within a year of his return, he had landed in what is now the office of Dean of Instruction of the San Juan Center where he remained for nineteen years. Under his able leadership, learning took on an orderly move towards consistent excellence. In August of 1978, the first full-time faculty member, Bob McPherson, joined Kay. He was soon joined by other teachers, creating a small nucleus of instructors that had a large job ahead of them.

What lessons can be drawn from the genesis of the San Juan Campus in these early years? The most obvious point is that there was a tremendous need. But there were needs all over the state of Utah, and in terms of demographics, economics, and political clout, San Juan County was at the bottom of the barrel. One might argue that the Native American population caught the imagination
of the public and funding agencies, but there were many reservation areas both on and off Navajo lands and throughout the West that would have been more practical.

Rather, there was a combination of conditions and events that played a role in this dynamic process, but if there was one single initial factor, it had to be the cooperation of a few individuals willing to share a common goal. When recalling those days, Jim Kindred said, "I don't know of any place in the country where people have been able to duplicate what has been done in San Juan. I think a lot of it was because of a shared value system... plus there was a common interest in working together to help people. They also realized that there were limited resources they had to work with, and that if they could marshal these resources and tie them together in unique ways, they could create new opportunities and everybody would benefit."26 And

that is what happened.

Notes

3. For a more detailed account of the history and cultures of the county, see Robert S. McPherson, A History of San Juan County: In the Palm of Time (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1995).
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp 1-4.
8. Sinajini v. Board of Education case materials on file at the DNA Office, Mexican Hat, Utah.
14. Minutes entitled "Joint Meeting of BYU, UNDC, SJSU (San Juan School District) on Post High Continuing Education for San Juan County," 8 May 1974; Stanley A. Peterson (Division of Continuing Education) to Cleal Bradford, 26 February 1975, in possession of author.
18. Lee interview.
19. Al Trujillo interview.
20. Summary of Meeting held at CEU, 7 January 1977, in possession of author.
22. Minutes of the Utah State Board of Regents held on 23-24 June and 31 October 1977, in State Offices, Salt Lake City, Utah, pp. 369-370, 82-84 respectively.
25. Trujillo interview.
Chapter Two

Programs: The Commuting Community College

"Some of my earliest memories are of driving down to Montezuma Creek and teaching people down there until it seemed the middle of the night. I also taught a class in Mexican Hat, drove down there on a regular basis for I don't know how long. . . I used my pickup and wore it out traveling to Price or to classes, since we did not have a state car."—Kay Shumway

In 1978, the San Juan Center hired Kay Shumway to direct growing academic programs, the first full-time teaching staff, and a wide assortment of adjunct faculty. Lynn Lee provided some broad guidance and suggestions, both men agreeing that the college must reach out to the communities instead of requiring people to come on campus. This made sense for a number of reasons—the fact that it was a lot more practical to have one or two teachers travel than 20 students; there were not facilities enough to handle large numbers; and the belief that the college should provide community-oriented programs, tailored to specific needs.

This attitude of meeting local requests has played an important part in the growth and services of the college. A good indicator of success in meeting this goal is to look at the places the college has been at work. Over the past 20 years, classes have been offered in every school in the county (Monticello, Blanding, Halls Crossing, Bullfrog, Aneth, Montezuma Creek, Bluff, Mexican Hat, and Monument Valley). There have also been courses in the Navajo Mountain community, the correctional facility in Monticello, the Social Service buildings, health clinics throughout the county as well as hospitals in Arizona and Colorado, the Zenos L. Black Career Center, Edge of the Cedars Museum, private businesses, private homes, the San Juan River, and state and federal lands. What this represents in time and travel is best illustrated by some examples. When a faculty member, during a quarter, teaches a class twice a week in Monument Valley, he or she travels the equivalent of driving from coast to coast across the United States (over 3,000 miles). Some teachers do this almost every quarter.

Another example of the need to travel is exemplified in the college's offering of classes in 1978 at Navajo Mountain—a four hour drive or one-hour flight from Blanding. When one older woman, an aide at the boarding school, learned that college classes would be available in her community, tears streamed down her cheeks as she explained she never thought she would see this become a reality.

Since one of the instructors, Jim Kindred, had his pilot's license, he and a developmental English teacher offered two or three classes for a number of quarters in this remote section of the county. To get from the airstrip to the classroom, five miles away, was an interesting process. The first step was "buzzing" the dirt runway to make sure there were no sheep on it. Next, Jim
flew over the clinic, cutting the engines as a signal that someone should drive to the airstrip and pick up the passengers. After the plane landed, a vehicle arrived and took the teachers to the classroom and returned for them at the close of the evening. The return five-mile drive took them to a small, two-room bunkhouse next to the clinic where they rolled out their sleeping bags for the night. The following day, a trip to the airplane and an hour's flight home completed one "school day" for the teachers.2

This type of outreach program is characterized by flexibility and timeliness. Take another example, for instance, the mine safety training program instituted in 1979 to meet the needs of local miners. At the time, uranium and coal mining (in Kayenta, Ariz.) was big business. The federal government, through the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), however, required fifty hours of instruction in emergency procedures, ventilation, rib and roof control, and first aid before a person could be employed in the industry. Most miners had never had that type of training.3

The San Juan Center, with encouragement and some equipment from Price, jumped in with both feet. Staff members like Van Potter (hired as director of personnel relations) and George Jones (instructor) developed a curriculum that exceeded MSHA standards and which could also be used to help the smaller mines write their own safety programs, another legal requirement. Instructors taught some of the courses on campus, but many were held in the communities and at the mines. When necessary, Jones hauled a large trailer, serving as both office and classroom, to a site. If language barriers arose in places like Navajo Mountain and Montezuma Creek, Bill Todachennie, a financial aid counselor, assisted the instructor with a verbatim translation, so that there would be no misunderstanding.4

The program lasted for three years and closed
down when the bottom dropped out of the uranium market. During that time, Jones estimated three hundred people received their certificates of completion. Just as important as the certificates was the attitude that he encountered at the campus as he started teaching. Jones recalls, "Everybody [college administration] was concerned with what the students were actually learning, more so than in any place I have ever worked. They didn't care about how I taught the class, but what they did care about is that people were learning. That attitude impressed me as much as anything." Later he took classes at the college for his own education and found the same quality of caring carried over into the academic realms.

There have been other short-term programs provided in rapid response to local interests. Classes as varied as food preparation and restaurant management, welding, building trades, automotives, truck driving, solar energy, aerospace education, and secretarial enhancement have helped meet individual and institutional goals. The training held at Peabody Coal Mine near Kayenta, Arizona, is another good example of flexibility in delivering programs. The mine contacted the college, requesting help in upgrading secretarial skills. Gloria Barfuss, business instructor, flew into the Black Mesa airstrip once a week for two months to work with twenty secretaries, all of whom were Navajo. The program took on a bicultural flavor, covering topics such as telephone answering techniques, fostering human relations, creating an appropriate office environment—in both an Anglo and a Navajo setting. This was in addition to the basic secretarial skills of typing, filing, etc.

The importance of having autonomy in decision making and the flexibility to follow through have been important aspects in achieving success. What happens when these qualities are not encouraged is exemplified in the events concerning the Lake Powell Institute. Located in Page, Arizona, the Institute attempted to duplicate what had been achieved at the Center. Their administration requested a series of classes and workshops to expand their program and offered to reimburse the instructors and college for all expenses. Because these classes were to be held outside of Utah and were not on the Navajo Reservation, approval from both the
Utah and the Arizona Boards of Regents was required. The red tape and bureaucratic shuffling was enormous; by the time final approval had been obtained, the request had died a natural death.⁸

Flexibility is one thing, but stability in programs is another. The heart of the academic offerings on the San Juan Campus is comprised of the two year associate of science/arts/applied science degrees, business and computer certificate programs, and the licensed practical (LPN) and registered (RN) nursing programs. Each of these have their own separate history, but all of them share a common bond of being presented in a multicultural environment. Anglo, Navajo, Ute and Hispanic students have been richer for the experience.

One of the most prominent programs is that of nursing, the senior citizen of campus offerings. Beginning in 1975, this training emerged from a critical need within the county to staff clinics and hospitals on and off the reservation. The county commissioners, Utah Navajo

Development Council, and health care providers felt a heavy responsibility to serve the Navajo people in the southern end of the county and realized the only way that positions could be filled was to create a cadre of dedicated workers from the area. Through UNDC's efforts, the fledgling program took flight after receiving approval to enroll not more than twelve people in the instruction. For a few weeks, Cleal Bradford, UNDC Director, opened his living room for classes until more permanent arrangements were made in the old LDS Indian Branch Chapel (later called the “shirt factory”), and eventually the Zenos L. Black Career Center.⁹

The program was extremely dependent upon the quality of the instructors enlisted locally as well as from afar. Ingenuity and dedication compensated for the crude conditions, limited supplies, and cultural barriers that in most programs would have spelled a high rate of student failure. Dr. Kay Shumway, for instance, who had been on the cutting edge of genetic research at Washington State University, taught the microbiology class. He needed to demonstrate how bacteria grows. Lacking the traditional laboratory equipment, he used his wife's Presto cooker to sterilize the necessary media.¹⁰

Don Smith, another science instructor, borrowed glassware from Energy Fuels, the
local uranium mill. He did not have much else. In one class, he did not have tongs to hold a ribbon of magnesium, so he stuck it in the metal frame of a window and used it to hold the burning material. One of the tutors drove eighty miles twice a week in the evenings to teach in the Montezuma Creek Clinic after hours. And on a number of occasions, the entire program fell on the shoulders of just one registered nurse and a VISTA worker who also had a nursing certificate. Times were tough.

Add to this the problems of operating in a bilingual setting, and one can see the concern program administrators had insuring students were performing adequately. In order to do so, the San Juan Campus has had from the beginning programs such as Student Support Services, Talent Search, and other related offerings. The college has always considered one of its primary missions to serve the Native American population. With a student body population of non-traditional, first generation college students, the drop-out rate is usually high. Through these programs, approximately 85 percent are retained. Garth Wilson, Student Support Services Director, believes, "It all pays off. I think it helps them realize that somebody is caring for them and that if they start missing classes, somebody will be looking for them, to help and encourage them."

Reading, writing, computational skills, and, in some cases, speaking in a "foreign" language does not come easily to a second language learner. Everyone at the college recognized and were sympathetic to that fact, but it took a concerted effort in grant writing, obtaining volunteer as well as paid tutors, and maintaining an empathetic teaching staff to bring the entire pro-

Nursing class of 1978.
gram together. This combination of effort has been the salvation for many a student.

How well did these efforts pay off? Based upon statistics compiled on students enrolled in the nursing program between 1984 and 1996, approximately 25 percent (out of 164) were Native American.\textsuperscript{14} Figures from the earlier years would have increased this percentage since the program and funding was originally established to encourage Native American participation.

An even better evaluation of the success of the program is to see how many of these students passed their state board exams, a nationally recognized, objective accounting of whether a person is ready to become a nurse. Don Roberts, Vocational Development Specialist for the BIA, said that the San Juan Campus graduated, during its first year, more Native Americans who passed the state boards than all the other Utah schools with BIA-funded students over the preceding twelve years.\textsuperscript{15} This success has continued. For the past three years, 100% have passed their boards on the first attempt. In 1997, the first class from a newly established RN pro-

gram also graduated from the San Juan Campus. One third of these students were Navajo, 75 percent of whom had received their LPN from the San Juan Campus.

One anecdote from the early days illustrates why there has been a high rate of success. In 1978, a class of 13 students (seven of whom were Navajo) completed their course work. There was an additional student who had failed the exam twice before and was about to admit defeat but was resurrected for the last time by Alice Laurick, RN, a VISTA volunteer. After graduation, students and faculty outlined an intense schedule of review classes that would take them to the time of the “boards” in October.

One of the major problems of passing “boards” centered around the wording of exam questions, which was more of a test of reading acuity and the finer points of English than it was of practical understanding of nursing. Tutor and teacher developed special blocks of instruction to overcome this handicap, as well as working with the students on how to remain calm, how to work through a problem, and how to strengthen math computations. The day of the exam, when the students went to Salt Lake City, the

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\textit{Early nursing student checks out patient.}
two nursing instructors met at the campus. Although both were from different religious backgrounds, they prayed by name for each of the students. Regardless of what one believes concerning the efficacy of prayer, the concern and the love-of-teacher-for-student cannot be missed. One hundred percent—to include the woman taking the exam for the third time—passed.¹⁶

The associate degree programs have enjoyed a similar success because of the general attitude that the student is a consumer whose needs must be met. Kay Shumway, as academic dean, insisted on rigor in the classroom coupled with additional help and remedial work as necessary to help achieve success. The crux of the academic program in San Juan revolves around the English department. Reading and writing are central to all of the disciplines in the general education requirements. Thus, the teaching of English and the trends within this program have been indicative of what is happening campus-wide.

In the early days, the class schedules were filled with remedial course work. It was not uncommon to have 40 to 50 students taking English 60, a pass/fail course that could lead to English 70, 80 90, and 100 before a student ever took the standard freshman composition class. Instructors in the department—the largest on campus, underscoring again its importance—felt that most of the developmental students at that time were reading on a fifth grade level or below. When one student was asked what the purpose of writing was, instead of discussing communication, she thought it was for hand exercise.¹⁷ And she was serious. Whether these people should have ever been in college was never asked. Whoever walked through the door was what the teachers began to work with.

Over the years, the situation has changed. Today the remedial classes have shrunk to about 15 students instead of 45, and their average reading level hovers around the eighth grade. This improvement in incoming freshmen is attributed, in part, to better high schools and general preparation.¹⁸ The college still maintains a complete battery of remedial courses and has supplemented the teaching staff with a full complement of tutors, some of whom hold a four-year degree.

While the courses offered at the college fulfill the normal General Education (GE) requirements found in any higher education institution, there are a number of things that con-
tribute to their uniqueness. A culturally mixed student body, the geographic location, the rich prehistory and history of the area, and small class size have made it possible to provide personalized attention in unique programs.

One of the best illustrations of this is the Summer Experience program launched, literally, in 1979 under the direction of Kay Shumway. During the preceding winter months, as the cold wind and snow whipped around the trailers at the “shirt factory,” Kay led a number of discussions about how the college could utilize its location to do something out of the classroom with the students. There was no equipment—no vehicles, rafts, ropes, compasses, science supplies, camping gear—nothing with which to run an outdoor program. But the concept took shape and solutions followed.

Thirteen college credits provided the core that required half of the time in the classroom and half in the field to experience and apply what had been taught. Different years offered changes in classes which necessitated visiting a variety of locations. For instance, students taking Anthropology of the Southwest would one week be at Navajo Mountain in a sweat lodge and the next week sitting on a Hopi roof watching kachina dancers below; humanities credit took the students to the Cedar City Shakespearean Festival or the Santa Fe Opera; prehistory/history of the Southwest found the students down in Grand Gulch looking at Anasazi ruins and a few weeks later in Taos, New Mexico, at Kit Carson’s home.

There were, however, some rather standard events every year, among them the float trip on the San Juan River. The first year it was held, faculty borrowed two rafts from the San Juan County Sheriff’s Department. It was difficult to find a one-foot square of rubber that did not have patches or abrasion marks on it, providing a strong clue as to why they did not hold air too long. The National Guard loaned another raft and two pumps, the latter seeing untiring service. A canoe added to the flotilla, and Gilligan’s Island navy set sail.

Experienced navigators were at a premium. On the long stretches of water, between biology and geology classes on shore, no special skill was necessary other than bailing quickly after the water fights. But in some of the narrow stretches running between canyon walls,
real expertise was needed. On one occasion, the current, the height of the bank, and a fallen tree combined to submerge half of one raft and dump all of the carefully identified non-swimmers (sitting in the safest part of the boat) right into the current. Everyone was retrieved, but 56-year-old Miriam McCleery—one of the non-swimmers—declared it was one of the most frightening moments of her life. She did, however, complete the course and returned the next year to provide cookies and milk for the students and to wish them luck on the river.

Stories continue to abound from the Summer Experience program. Now in its eighteenth year and under the able direction of Don Smith, veteran of ten years, the program still draws a capacity (not more than thirty-five students) crowd. Each director brings his or her individual skills and interests, giving the program its unique personality. Some of the more active parts such as a two-day cross country hike with map and compass, rappelling, primitive technology skills, and backpack trips have been relinquished for calmer course requirements. But the spirit of adventure, incorporated into an intense intellectual experience, continues as part of the offerings.

The White Mesa Institute has a similar orientation that keys on local archaeology and history. Founded in 1983 by Winston Hurst (an archaeologist born and raised in Blanding) and Fred Blackburn (a convert to the country), the Institute formulated a series of goals to promote appreciation for the Four Corners region, educate the public, encourage care of Anasazi sites, and offer college credit for those desiring it. Like Summer Experience, the Institute has taken on a different personality with each new leader. What has remained consistent is the high quality of interpretive offerings from some of the best scholars in the United States. Many of the trips are held during the summer when professors from other institutions are available. Whether studying bighorn sheep, running the Colorado River, investigating old cowboy camps, or visiting Anasazi ruins in Chaco Canyon, the White Mesa Institute provides diversity in location and an opportunity for an older, out-of-county clientele to come to the campus.20

An even older clientele, but one just as interested in learning, comes to San Juan for the Elderhostel program, now starting its sixth year. The college offers two-one week programs
specific to this region. Approximately fifteen people attend each session of this nationally-advertised program for senior citizens. Anasazi culture, Navajo history, sacred geography, arts and crafts, and a traditional Navajo meal are part of these programs. A number of outside specialists are brought in to provide cultural insight and historic perspective for the group.

Little wonder that the Elderhostel program has consistently received high ratings in their final evaluations. A few examples follow: “All the instructors were great. Very interesting, and very, very dedicated.” “Particularly enjoyed going to sites where the average tourist never goes.” “Have a great deal to teach and do a marvelous job in conveying information.” “This week was one of the most outstanding Elderhostels I have ever attended.”

Another innovative program that was on the other end of the social spectrum from the Elderhostel group was the Blue Mountain Academy. Tauna DeGraw, a native of Monticello and graduate from San Juan Campus, was hired by the college to expand the program in Monticello. While she did an admirable job throughout the community, the inmates in the San Juan County Jail became a special interest for her. In 1989, she inaugurated what would eventually be called the Blue Mountain Academy that offered both high school/GED completion as well as college classes to the inmates. Funding for both programs came through the college, primarily from various grants.

At first the environment was intimidating. Heavy metal doors that locked with finality; a well-muscled, tattooed student body who were doing time for everything from drug abuse to rape and murder; and a malaise springing from the grind of prison life, seemed to forebode a program destined for failure. What happened for the next three years until the college program ended was, to some people, just short of a miracle.

The men who enrolled in the college classes were in prison for rehabilitation as much as they were to pay their debt to society. Time weighed heavily on their hands, and there really seemed no outlet for learning or creative talent. Thus, when the possibility of working on a degree appeared that would help them on the “outside,” many jumped at the opportunity. Prison officials screened likely candidates, determined how many students a makeshift classroom could hold, and set up a schedule that fit into the prison routine of constant surveillance.

In the meantime, Tauna made arrangements with the college to have full-time and ad-
junct faculty teach courses during the day and in the evenings. Some of the instructors were social workers, while others had never been “behind bars.” All, however, were briefed about emergency procedures and where the “assistance” bell was located in case of trouble. The guards also promised to remove anyone from the program if he proved to be a disturbing influence.

This may have sounded comforting to Tauna, but when she stepped into the classroom for the first time, one of the prisoners pointed out that he was between her and the “assistance” bell and could do whatever he wanted before help arrived. To the question, “What are you going to do about that?” she replied, “Flunk you.” The men laughed, and she gained their confidence, an important aspect in delivering this type of program.

The 15 prisoners appreciated what the college classes were doing for them. This became particularly evident when Tauna brought in (with permission) art supplies paid for by student financial aid based on college enrollment. The men formed a group, Inside Images, and started to paint and draw with real conviction. In addition to having a productive way to spend time in jail, they also released pent-up emotions. Their work proliferated, and soon they were looking for an outlet to sell their canvases and earn more money for supplies.

The group became increasingly well-known in the community. First, pictures were sold in the foyer of the jail to interested parties passing through the facility. Next, private businesses in Monticello held shows and sold individual pieces—in one instance, 13 pictures. Finally, the prisoners formed a program called “Art for A.R.T.” (At-Risk Teens) that took money from picture sales to support anti-drug and anti-gang activities. They even sponsored a group of Monticello High School students who were eligible to attend a conference on gang issues, but who did not have sufficient funds for the trip to Salt Lake City. Everyone was able to go thanks to the inmates.

The college program in the jail ended suddenly in 1993, although the high school/GED program is still in operation today. The problem arose when the jail transferred almost the entire class to another facility, a common practice in the correctional system. Although Tauna and local law enforcement officers tried to avert the disaster, the men left, wiping out the program. This prevented three of the inmates from graduating because they lacked a few more courses. When enrollment plummeted to one or two people, the college discontinued the program.

However, art continues to play an important part in the regular campus program. When Ruthellen Pollan joined the faculty in the winter of 1992, there was no existing art department. She added a new dimension of en-

Instructor Garth Wilson and student inmates.
thusiasm for the arts that spoke to all cultures but found a particularly strong welcome from the Native American community. Teaching in a wide range of media that included ceramics, wood, paint, pastels, and metal, she has brought both artistic theory as well as pragmatic marketing to her classes, held primarily in Monument Valley and Blanding.

Her success is evident. In 1994 the Bula Corporation sent its first royalty payment to the college and participating students for their role in launching the “Navajo Line,” a series of clothing designs created from Ruthellen’s classes. In addition, every year there is a major student art exhibit at the Edge of the Cedars Museum with cash prizes awarded to winners. One traveling exhibit has been displayed across the country in prestigious art galleries. A series of guest Native American and Anglo art specialists come and go from the campus on a regular basis, enriching the lives of students. And the Utah Arts Council has funded a series of programs and exhibits to encourage artistic expression in rural communities. Thus, Ruthellen has helped release, in a very concrete way, a talent or “eye” that is so prevalent among CEU students.

Another program that helped fill a local “gap,” this one being short term (1993-1996), was that of Bilingual Endorsement Certification. By 1992, the San Juan School District was embroiled in a series of lawsuits that had the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and other government agencies hovering in the wings to determine if the schools were complying with regulations on equality. Questions concerning facilities, the number of bilingual teachers employed, the type of curriculum, and county-wide expenditure of funds all came under scrutiny.

As the school district cast about for a solution, two things became very apparent—no one in the state had put together a bilingual certification program of the intensity required by OCR and no institution had the expertise to specifically deal with Navajo culture and English as a Second Language (ESL) issues as found in San Juan County. The college, however, had five members on staff who had ESL certificates and had worked for years in helping Navajo students...
with reading and writing. Some of these faculty members, as well as adjunct faculty, taught classes in reading and writing the Navajo language, were trained linguists, or specialized in Navajo history and culture. After determining the need and evaluating the possibilities, the school district decided to contract with CEU to provide the necessary services—and to do so as quickly as possible.

That was in 1992. By the fall of 1993, the college began offering the program, comprised of ten courses, in various communities within the county, geographically spread from Monument Valley and Montezuma Creek to Monticello. Teachers from the elementary and high schools as well as district staff took one or two courses each quarter in the evening after the normal work day was over. During a good quarter, enrollment in the program averaged 120 teachers. Classes in Navajo history and culture, linguistics and language acquisition, parental involvement, and teaching methodology emphasized practical application to accompany the theory.

As Utah became increasingly aware that the issue of bilingual education was a statewide concern, many of the universities along the Wasatch Front started to recognize the need. Working in conjunction with OCR and the State Office of Education, these institutions of higher learning eventually formulated a generic series of classes, less devoted to specific cultures and more focused on theory. Because of the heavy teaching load inherent in the already existing associate of arts/science programs, the San Juan Campus relinquished its role, having been a major participant in awarding sixty-five bilingual certificates with an additional fifty other enrollees still in progress.27

The latest development in academic programs is the introduction of distance learning facilities on the San Juan Campus. Funded by a $5.5 million Stars Schools grant, Title III grants, State Technology Initiative money, and private resources, a series of microwave stations service 14 classrooms spread throughout San Juan, Emery, Grand, and Carbon counties. The technology is state-of-the-art, providing new challenges to both teacher and student as a course is broadcast simultaneously to various sites. Teaching stations equipped with a laser disc player, VCR, overhead projection unit, and computer allow the instructor a wide range of presentation formats. In classes that would have normally enrolled 40 students, there may be three and four times that number now. The electronic age has arrived in San Juan.

Problems also accompanied the new system. Many students are intimidated by the technological aspects. They do not like being on two-way interactive closed circuit television. Picking up a microphone to ask a question is frightening. Teachers find less time for presentation because of the time spent in switching to sites. Most materials—written, audiovisual, or otherwise—must be adapted for use before
cameras, which can be very time consuming. Getting written materials (quizzes, tests, handouts, student papers) to the sites is done by mail and fax which takes extra time, planning, and effort. For the students, this means a delayed response compared to what is encountered in the normal classroom. And, finally, the system has occasional technological glitches that wipe out part of or an entire class period. Thus, with each innovative blessing comes an equally stubborn series of challenges.

Reviewing the past twenty years of accomplishments, one can see that meeting challenges is what has characterized the entire educational process at the San Juan Campus. From the beginning when nursing classes were held in a living room to the fully developed LPN and RN program in a specially designed classroom today; from harrowing travel on winter nights across reservation roads to the case of long-distance televised classes; and from a limited series of basic course offerings to a fully matured academic program with many additional classes unique to the region and its people, the Campus serves the population for which it was created. It will continue to be the “commuting community college,” whether on the road or the airways, reaching out to the people of San Juan.

Notes

5. George Jones interview.
Chapter Three

Relations: The Good, the Bad, and the Indifferent

“For eighteen years now, we have been having our own graduations and for most of those, we have had either the Commissioner of Higher Education or at least one member of the Board of Regents. They leave those commencement exercises as strong supporters of the San Juan Campus. They see the changes in people’s lives. They see especially the Navajo students, with a big smile on their faces, coming across the stage to pick up their diploma and the family support out there in the audience, with people taking pictures and shouting. They [the Regents] just catch the spirit of San Juan.” ---Kay Shumway

How can one summarize twenty years of relationships that span the State of Utah, the nation, and, in some instances, the world? Perhaps the best way is through an analogy that compares the San Juan Campus to a growing child. This young individual was adopted and raised in a family, in this case, CEU-Price, and matured as an active participant in the local, state, and national communities. As with any person, there were strengths and weaknesses, rights and wrongs that played across the years in these relationships. With continued growth and development came greater potential for accomplishment and conflict. Each trial and achievement, however, also brought solutions to problems and new goals for the future. Maturity in programs and relations resulted.

Chapter One has already outlined the earliest stages in the process of adoption and development of San Juan. Some of the faculty and staff on the main campus harbored reservations and misgivings as the new “child” entered the family circle. Questions concerning credentials, ability, academic standards, and an increased workload appeared to be just more of a strain for a college already working hard to preserve its own identity. Also, many members in key positions on both campuses were strong-willed and prized independence.

For the most part, relations between the two faculties have been very positive. Indeed, over the years both groups of instructors have actively shared ideas, feelings, and a camaraderie that is noteworthy. There has been very little sibling rivalry. The idea of sharing expertise between campuses frequently arose, but distance and time proved to be discouraging factors. Not until the implementation of the Ednet system has this possibility become a reality; now, teachers from either campus can appear on monitors in 14 different sites in four counties to share ideas with a culturally diverse, geographically distant student body. Technology has brought the faculty even closer together.

Similar feelings of cooperation have not existed to the same extent between campus administrations where money, power and autonomous decision-making created abrasions. As with individuals, one must realize that there are two sides to the story, and each side is convinced it is right. Returning to our analogy of a family, the president (father) has at times been at odds with the Price administration (mother)
over exactly what their adopted child should be doing. The child (San Juan), on the other hand, might agree with one or both parents, play one against the other, or call on the neighbors for support of its own plan. Regardless of the choice made, conflict and mistrust have arisen.

Before discussing the problems, one must acknowledge that without the Price Campus' help and support, ranging from accreditation to administrative assistance, the San Juan Campus perhaps would not have survived. There have often been shared hopes and goals. The Price Campus has furnished leadership and direction in an academic world where large universities and colleges struggle for position and power. On the other hand, the San Juan Campus has provided a series of grants such as Title III and Star Schools that the main campus would not have received. Cooperation in this environment has certainly been an important part of the twenty years of relationships.

Indeed, the Price Campus has recognized that the college has benefitted from the development of the San Juan Campus. The mutual sharing of programs and responsibility has encouraged dialogue for improvement that would otherwise not be achieved should either group be left out. Administrators from Price assisted in obtaining the new Technology Building, making it an institutional priority. And when classes have been televised over the distance education system, there has been a general agreement that the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) count would remain in the location of the students and not go to the teaching institution. Since the main campus offers more courses than San Juan, that has been a benefit to the students in the county.¹

However, there has also been an undertone of mistrust in the relationship. From Price's perspective, San Juan fostered five areas of contention as an outreach program. First, there was an increased workload that was not initially planned and budgeted for. In the earlier years, other questions revolved around accreditation where the main campus could be harmed if courses or the library facility did not meet appropriate standards. Teacher selection, centering primarily around adjunct faculty, needed to be approved through the departments, although there was little opportunity for its full-time faculty to work with them. At one point, the main campus also wanted to count FTE and tuition from certain specialized programs in order to help reach its funded target enrollment, thus generating more state and local revenue. Finally, the sheer distance and lack of daily dialogue,

The CEU-Price campus.

Lynn Lee working on proposal.
Chapter Three

punctuated by a number of unpleasant incidents, created an underlying feeling of discontent.²

The perspective from the San Juan Campus was different though parallel with five elements in its relationship with Price. First was the issue over expenditure of funds—especially those derived from grants. While most state money was specifically designated into line item categories, grant funds and state one-time funds shared between campuses provided more flexibility in developing special projects. Lynn Lee wrote the majority of proposals funded to serve both campuses, but the main campus utilized funds which had been planned for other purposes. For example, when special one-time funds for technology and library development came from the state to Price, little if any of it made its way to San Juan although it had been earmarked for both campuses.³

Another issue centered around the qualifications of adjunct faculty. The San Juan Campus prided itself on rapid response to local needs. Kay Shumway insisted on finding the best part-time instructors to meet those needs, but sometimes the pool to draw from was small. Almost all of those faculty received prior approval from the main campus. There were, however, one or two who, because of scheduling needs or a last minute cancellation, ended up teaching a class without prior approval.⁴ Price also believed that too much extra class time was scheduled to work with poorly prepared students, who were not ready for college. San Juan, however, felt responsible to improve these students' skills.⁵ Conflict resulted.

Another “lightning rod” of contention was what was known on the Price Campus as the “end run.” On a number of occasions, when the San Juan Campus had worked hard to obtain a program or a much needed facility, it was frustrated by political maneuvers on the main campus that prevented or slowed the approval process. In a number of instances, when this treatment appeared unjust, the smaller campus appealed to a higher authority for help, circumventing Price to achieve its goal. This “winning the battle but losing the war” attitude brought short-term relief but long-term, low-grade conflict that at times heated to a white hot clash.

Scheduling of Ednet classes on the microwave system has become a recent point of contention. The San Juan Campus feels that its students' and faculty's needs are often given low priority in the operation of the system. This has resulted in last minute changes at Price and a feeling that additional and better consultation could have made the end product for instructor and student more effective.⁶

A final concern is less tangible but has been bred over the years from this environment of conflict. The same feeling of mistrust found on the Price Campus was perhaps even stronger at San Juan, since for them it was a life and death struggle, not just a side show existing two hundred miles away. Kay Shumway captured the feeling when he reminisced about going to Price two and three times a month, leaving at five o'clock in the morning to make a nine o'clock meeting, then driving home exhausted in the evening. He explained why he did it: “There was always that feeling that if we did not fight hard, we would just disappear. We would lit-
erally just end; there wouldn’t be a San Juan Campus anymore. It was kind of a miracle in the first place and took the intervention of a president who made a very unpopular move to hook up with San Juan. We’ve had to fight ever since.”

These are strong words, reflecting equally strong feelings. Was there a basis? From the perspective of administrators at the San Juan Campus, the answer was “yes.” One particular incident, marking the low point of relations, occurred between 1983 and 1985 and reinforced the impression that the main campus did not respect the needs of the San Juan Campus. It began when President James Randolph, President MacDonald’s successor, initiated steps to collect the tuition and FTE for the benefit of the main campus.8

President Randolph argued that the enrollment, budget, and financial aid involvement of the San Juan Campus represented 10 to 15 percent of the main campus’ workload—an expenditure that was not recognized or reimbursed in the normal method of counting FTE.9 By mid December, Randolph outlined what he considered two possible directions in the conflict—either eliminate the San Juan Center as a line item funded by the state or sever its ties with CEU.10

Following some heated exchanges in correspondence, Lynn made the infamous San Juan “end run” and contacted the Commissioner of Higher Education to find out exactly what should be done, while Jim Harris, a CEU Institutional Council member from San Juan County, visited the Commissioner of Higher Education, Arvo Van Alstyne, after receiving permission from President Randolph.11 Harris asked for clarification of the situation—should San Juan be looking for a new campus to become attached to or move to independence? Van Alstyne settled the situation with a ruling in favor of the San Juan Campus, which created further strain between the two institutions and their relationships.12

This was the nadir of cooperation between the two campuses. Since that time, relations have greatly improved. Within a year of the big conflict, President Randolph took employment elsewhere, and Michael Petersen stepped into the president’s office in 1985. He was ideally suited for the task, having served as a teacher (even for a short while at San Juan), as academic vice president, as intermediary during some of the feuding between campuses, and as a longtime resident of the Price area. From his perspective, “Jim’s [Randolph] feeling towards the San Juan Campus had soured to the point that he even stopped going down there. When he did go down, he would simply wait until the absolute last minute to go into advisory council meeting and essentially sit there.”13 President Petersen was determined to smooth relations and he did. Feelings between campuses have since improved and perspectives modified. Even today, however, it is interesting to see how these events and attitudes are recalled. When members of the Price Campus have read the previous material, they have responded that it was too negative, stressing conflict rather than cooperation, and more inflammatory than accurate. Those on the San Juan Campus who were affected by the decisions felt it an honest rendering. The intent is not to determine who was
right or wrong, but to better understand where we have been in order to know where we are going. History and its interpretation provides a window of opportunity to do just that.

While other issues have arisen—centering around the triad of money, power, and decision-making—much of the mistrust has been swept under the rug as both campuses look toward the future. Now, San Juan has matured into a vibrant youth, whose programs are recognized statewide for the benefit they bring to southeastern Utah. Despite the emotions that arose over past conflicts, the institution has gained in some very positive ways by being challenged. While few people sought a fight or enjoyed it as it smoldered between the two campuses, some good things did come from it.

Lynn and Kay are the first to agree that when challenges to program development, academic credibility, expenditure of funds, etc. arose, a force went into motion that ensured compliance with regulations and excellence in programs. As much as they and others at the San Juan Campus felt confronted by opposition, the process served as an impetus to insure that the programs and their products were of a high quality. In Lynn's words: "Opposition, challenges, barriers—there have been a lot of those. But there have been very few of them that I would classify as negative. . . . The outcomes have been very positive. They have added strength and made our foundation more solid than it would have been if they had not existed. . . . But I think it is also important for people to realize that it hasn't been easy." 14

External evaluations by groups looking at the campus tend to agree with this statement. Starting with the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, which has had the responsibility over the years for the campus' accreditation, a very positive picture is painted. In 1981 members of this organization made their first on-site visit to San Juan. Although they recognized the tenuous position of classrooms and facilities that could be "lost if conditions changed" and a "small and inadequate" library, they were highly complimentary of the "exemplary" educational programs. Areas of commendation included "meeting the needs of Native American and other isolated students," "dedication of administrators and faculty," "the effective use of VISTA volunteers," and the "Center's outstanding example of synergism." 15

While this was the only on-site visit to the campus, and there have been many major changes since that time, interim reports reflect similar sentiments as both campuses have had their accreditation updated. The 1987 report recognized San Juan for its "strong sense of ownership," in its programs by faculty, staff, advisory council, and student body; for its courses and student services that were at "the same high level as those offered at the College"; and its "responsiveness to the community it serves." 16 Recommendations for improvement included moving the San Juan budget to a more stable footing through state funding, improving the library's "minimal holdings," and giving counselors more private space to conduct confidential interviews. Later reports reflect similar praise and suggestions.

By the end of 1987, the San Juan Center was legislating for a new name change that reflected its evolving stature as a campus. With maturity came increasing opportunity. From a purely practical point of view, the young college realized that it would never be fully funded by the state and independent of the "soft" money of grants and proposals. With so much
reliance on external money, it was critical that the college be able to use approved terminology recognized and accepted by agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, BIA, Navajo Tribe, and major corporations. The term “center” was not as easily understood as “campus,” and so CEU-Price and the Board of Regents accepted the new title.\textsuperscript{17} The ease of name change would not have been as palatable if there had not been a familiarity with what San Juan had already accomplished.

The secret to gaining support from agencies and groups such as these has been to invite them to the campus for on-site visits. In no place is this truer than with the Board of Regents. Powerful institutions like the University of Utah and Utah State University were given the economic and political attention they demanded due to size and budget. San Juan had neither the voice nor the presence to compete with schools of this nature. Early on, the administration in Blanding decided that the only way to make people on the Wasatch Front aware of programs south of Moab was to show them and garner support for a rural student body that had consistently been forgotten.

Beginning in 1982, the San Juan Campus had members of the Board of Regents in attendance at its graduations. Some came by appointment; others, like Clifford LeFevre, came consistently by choice and deeply felt conviction. Some were impressed by the large number of Native Americans receiving degrees, others by physical facilities, many of which were built without state funds, but all mentioned the respect and feeling generated by the occasion. And, when San Juan administrators attended meetings in Salt Lake, they were often asked about how the San Juan program fared in its development.\textsuperscript{18}

This two-way respect has characterized relations over the years. Deputy Commissioner Cecelia Foxley provided a positive example of sensitivity and a desire to meet on common ground when, during her 1992 commencement address, she opened with some introductory remarks in the Navajo language. What she communicated by her act was far more powerful than her words.\textsuperscript{19} A few quotations from letters received over the years illustrate a similar commitment from other state officials: “You know that the San Juan Center has strong moral support from staff in the Commissioner’s office. We admire your dedication to a righteous cause.” “Thank you for the invitation to be at your graduation exercise. . . . I think for the first time I really caught the spirit of the San Juan Center. As an analyst, perhaps I should never make that kind of confession, but I can’t help but be honest.” “We, of the Board of Regents, feel that of all the education that is taking place
in the State of Utah, the most dynamic changes in the lives of young people are occurring at this [San Juan] institution.\textsuperscript{20}

In addition to graduations, there were other opportunities for the Regents to learn about the college and the county. In April, 1988, a contingent of the Board flew to Blanding to participate in the ground-breaking ceremony for the dormitories and visit the region serviced by the college. Seeing the vast reservation lands stretching from Aneth to Navajo Mountain, the Regents understood more fully the role of an outreach, higher education program in an extremely rural setting.\textsuperscript{21}

A year later, Regent Michael Leavitt (soon to be governor), visited the campus and wrote of how he was impressed by the “fervor of commitment,” a “sense of genuine mission” which he “admired deeply,” and how he viewed “the sacrifice and ingenuity that has been used in assembling the campus [as] profound.” He closed with “count on me as an active advocate for what you are doing.”\textsuperscript{22} In 1996, he returned to the campus and was again impressed, this time by the Technology Building, the Ednet system, and their implications for higher education.

An all-time first occurred in 1992 when the entire Board of Regents and all of the col-
lege and university presidents in the state descended upon the San Juan Campus to hold their monthly meeting. They approved the Campus' master plan, including the recently funded technology building, and received a progress report on the Campus Endowment Fund that would provide financial support for everyone who wished to obtain a college degree in the county. Just as impressive as the financial programs was the address given by Navajo Student Body President Neal Wilson as he described his experience and problems on a large campus and how San Juan had been his academic salvation. The Regents recognized the campus' continuing contribution in Native American education.23

Much has been said about the San Juan Campus providing higher education to Native Americans in the Four Corners region. One might ask if the response from this community has always been positive; the reply would have to be “not always.” The Navajo people have traditionally placed a very heavy emphasis on formal education and obtaining skills. This view is rooted within their cultural beliefs. Therefore, it is not surprising that a college education is something worth obtaining for future well-being. The Utah Navajo Development Council's role of support was crucial in the beginning of the college's history, but by the early 1980s, there were those on its nine-member Navajo Advisory Council who felt Navajo Trust Fund money could be used more effectively elsewhere.

Many Navajo students did not agree. One woman said, “The UNDC says that the San Juan Center is not a priority, that it is not necessary for survival. But to me it is survival—you have to have an education. There is no way around it.”24 Others felt that the Council members had not listened to the people but were only thinking about using the money for their projects. One student testified to the Council that she would never have gotten her education without the college’s help. Still, to the board, there were more pressing needs. Although direct financial support from UNDC began to decrease, student financial aid from the Navajo Trust Fund continued to play a vital role.

However, there was a small group of Navajo people who felt that even this should be curtailed. During a meeting of the Utah Division of Indian Affairs Board (UDIA) on 19 June 1984, one of these outspoken individuals, who opposed the existence of the college, stated that it was turning out inferior students who did not do well when they transferred to Southern Utah University. Although the charge was momentarily embarrassing, it was enough to prompt some immediate research. The results were enlightening. There were 15 San Juan Navajos enrolled at SUU at the time, eight of whom had graduated from the Center. Their grade point average ranged between 1.90 and 2.57 with an average of 2.25. Seven others, who had not previously attended the San Juan Center, had GPAs ranging from .16 to 3.25 but averaged only a 1.72.25

A letter from the Vice President of SUU to the Chairman of the UDIA “made clear his position” concerning Navajo graduates transferring from the San Juan Campus. They were “more than welcomed” and “generally earn higher grades than their counterparts who come directly from the reservation.”26 SUU gave

Members of the UNDC Board of Directors.
five full-tuition scholarships each year to the San Juan Campus for students wishing to attend for their last two years. With this support, the charges raised in the heat of the moment were laid to rest.

This solid commitment of the college to teaching Native American students has never been lost from the view of local people and has strongly colored the early perceptions of what the college was about. So much time and effort were initially placed on delivering services in the south-campus enrollments reaching over ninety percent Native American—that many townspeople considered the San Juan Center an “Indian school.” Some did not realize that there were services available for their use, others felt that the educational experience would be “watered down,” while others feared that credits would not transfer to different institutions. According to Merry Adams, a fifteen year veteran teacher, “We were not legitimate. When we were teaching in an old church building and trailers, the community had a hard time thinking of us as a stable institution.’’

Kay Shumway reflected similar thoughts and added an historical perspective. The lack of initial acceptance by people in Monticello centered around long-standing rivalries between it and Blanding over money and control. When the college came along, it seemed just one more example of Blanding building a business that would not help Monticello, which traditionally had stronger ties with USU.

Kay would occasionally hear from county residents, “Do you think that will ever be a real college out there?” and “Well, do those classes count as real college classes?” He was hurt, knowing that although the facilities were not impressive, the staff and faculty were. To Kay, “It was a shame that having nice buildings meant you were a real college because a real college is a super good teacher on one end of the log and a willing, hardworking student on the other end.”

Over time, community perceptions changed. Part of the reversal stemmed from many of the mines closing in the county and the unemployed workers’ subsequent need for schooling. Once people started taking classes and found the experience rewarding and that credits transferred without a problem, word started to spread. When they returned to the community after going off to complete their bachelor’s degree, the college gained in credibility. Another help has been the concurrent enrollment of high school students who want to take some college classes while finishing work on their high school diploma. The tremendous savings in money as well as a positive academic experience spurred many to complete their associate degree in San Juan or at least get the first year of college finished before going to a major university. There has also been a lessening of tensions between Blanding and Monticello, and the college has seen an ever-increasing number of students from both towns in the classroom. What was once considered an “Indian school,” now has an enrollment that reflects the countywide demographic picture of roughly 50 percent Native American and 50 percent Anglo who come from every community.

Local town relations have gone through a similar cycle, moving from mild resistance to indifference and finally acceptance. As in any college town, when a new group of people are introduced into a stable community and bring with them different needs and attitudes, there are bound to be those who want to maintain the status quo. The San Juan Campus encouraged
people to receive an education, even if moving to Blanding became necessary. In the early predorm days, this meant renting in a town that did not have a lot of vacancies. Even after the dorms had been built for unmarried students, there were many families who still needed to rent, maintaining a constant pressure on transient housing.

Even more troublesome to a small group of neighbors was the news that the college had just obtained the DeLamar Gibbons’ residence at the end of a dead end street. All of the traffic associated with classes held from six o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock at night turned their quiet road into a buzz of activity. Parking became an issue, and after the dorms opened, college dances and Native American drumming and singing increased the commotion. Add an occasional fire alarm at four o'clock in the morning and the concern about the devaluation of property, and one can see how these problems affected relationships.

Fortunately, the college has been sensitive to these issues. Community members have served on the advisory council; parking space has expanded to the south, away from the residential area; dorm parents monitor student activities; and the college maintains an open door policy for anyone who cares to discuss a problem. The general discontent associated with the San Juan Campus entering a residential area has subsided.

The business community has also opened its doors to provide services. Some stores place signs in their windows in the fall, welcoming students to Blanding. The local theater provides discount rates on “CEU night.” The Chamber of Commerce and the Interagency Council help to foster a feeling of community. And many college programs are opened to participation by all.

From a purely economic standpoint, these positive relationships make good sense. Dean Gail Glover estimates that between a staff of 50 full-time, twice that number of part-time, and a student body of over 500, the college pumps into the local economy about $3 million each year. Add to this those sales not directly associated with the college but part of the spending of students and employees as they participate in community life, and one can see why merchants support an expanding campus. In 1985, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Greg Stringham, stated publicly, “The CEU-San Juan Center is becoming a great stabilizer in our local economy. The boom and bust fluctuation that has characterized our situation in the past will be smoothed out in part by the mere presence of the college.”

Another concrete example of the benefits derived from the college’s programs that will be discussed in Chapter Five is the impact of higher education on the students and the economy after they graduate. Touching upon just
one aspect—the nursing program—one can see the very real contribution this has made. Cleal Bradford, who has watched this program grow and develop, speaks by name of the graduates who work in the clinics on a daily basis throughout the county. LPNs, RNs, and Physician Assistants provide “health care that would have never existed otherwise.”

He attributes it to “the willingness of the Navajo people to lift themselves up and become more qualified” in order to help their people.

As one reviews 20 years of relationships—those that have been good, bad, and indifferent—there comes a feeling of accomplishment and pride. Even in some of the darker hours, strength and a more refined program have resulted. Struggles and problems sharpened the view, defined a position, and encouraged introspection. All of this was part of the maturing process that moved the San Juan Campus from an adopted, sometimes unwanted, child to a mature 20-year-old adult recognized for its special accomplishments by the higher education community throughout the state.

Notes

3. Lynn Lee interview with author, 29 May 1997, transcript in possession of author; Kay Shumway interview with author.
4. Al Trujillo interview.
5. Kay Shumway interview.
6. Kay Shumway interview.
7. Ibid.
11. Lynn Lee to James Randolph, 6 January 1984; Randolph to Lee, 11 January 1984, correspondence in possession of author.
17. “College Wants to Be Campus, Not Center,” San Juan Record, 4 November 1987, p. 4; Lynn Lee to Michael Petersen, Memorandum, 28 October 1987, correspondence in possession of author.
18. Kay Shumway interview.
25. Lynn Lee to Thomas Sawyer, Chairman UDA, 6 August 1994, correspondence in possession of author.
26. Sterling R. Church to Thomas F. Sawyers, 14 August 1984, correspondence in possession of author.
27. Merry Adams interview with author; Kay Shumway interview, transcripts in possession of author.
28. Merry Adams interview.
29. Kay Shumway interview.
30. Ibid.
32. Kay Shumway interview; Gail Glover interview.
33. “College a Boon to Local Economy,” San Juan Record, 31 August 1994, p. 5.
Chapter Four

Staff and Faculty: Can-do, Can-did

"In the beginning, I typed all of the class schedules and grants on a regular electric typewriter, so if you made a mistake, you had the fun job of doing it over again. I took care of the accounting for the money that came in and putting it in accounts. I was in charge of ordering all of the books and helped students with financial aid. And when we had a meeting, I would go in and clean the classroom. It was a many-faceted job, and that is probably one of the things I liked— it was never boring." --- Elaine Wright, Office Manager (1979 to 1985)

An educational institution takes on the personality of its staff and faculty, whether they are indifferent and lazy or concerned and involved. The San Juan Campus, born in poverty but raised on hope, could not afford to be self-complacent and sluggish, simply because there were no safety nets to catch the college if it slipped off the financial tightrope or failed to meet the public's expectation of quality. Therefore, hiring new employees came at a snail's pace and under tight scrutiny, insuring that the people who came would willingly share their talents plus invest sufficient time, usually well in excess of a forty hour work week, to fulfill their responsibilities.

What sprouted from this initial foundation was a staff and faculty who worked hard and took care of students. At times, anxiety tinged the concern as enrollments ebbed and flowed with each quarter. Kay Shumway remembers Friday afternoon staff meetings to brainstorm new ideas for improved services. ¹

Garth Wilson recalls how each fall everyone attended inservice meetings at the Blue Mountain Guest Ranch to discuss how to reach more students. At one point, the staff thumbed through all of the registration cards for every student who had ever taken a class, divvied up the names, and agreed to contact them about coming back to college. "That was a county-wide search for some of those people, but we were concerned about recruitment and retention back then. It has always been a major issue because of the size of the institution; a few percentage points could make a big difference." ²

The staff and faculty also assumed many responsibilities not normally considered part of a regular job description on larger campuses. At times, it seemed like everyone did everything. For instance, many people under Lynn Lee's tutelage helped with grant writing; all employees learned the rudiments of filling out financial aid and student registration forms; academic counseling was inherent in most jobs; and those who traveled to outlying communities delivered books to students, correspondence to adjunct faculty, and served as a conduit of information between the
Blanding campus and satellite teaching sites.

But perhaps the best way to understand the San Juan Campus, both in its infancy and now, is to take a closer look at how individual workers shared their talents to strengthen its programs. Obviously, not everyone who has worked at the college can be mentioned. There were and are so many people who have been diligent, hard-working employees, that without their services, the college would be a much poorer place. What follows is a representative sample of staff and faculty that illustrates the breadth and depth of commitment to something that is more than just a job. It is hoped that as a few people’s contributions are discussed, everyone associated with the college will take pride in his or her own part of helping the campus grow.

The first full-time employee to be hired after Lynn Lee was Jim Kindred who in 1977, assumed the role of Bilingual Specialist. His light blond hair and blue eyes belied the fact that he spoke and wrote the Navajo language fluently and, over the years, had formed solid friendships with Navajo people throughout southeastern Utah.

Although he taught a number of Navajo language classes for both native and non-native speakers, Jim’s main responsibility lay in the vocational area. Bilingual education had become a prominent, controversial topic in academic institutions, but the federal government supported such endeavors. San Juan County, with its large Anglo and Navajo populations, was a natural testing ground to train and employ workers who could communicate in both languages. Funds followed the theory, while Lynn saw Jim’s ability and enthusiasm as vital talents in closing the gap between the two cultures.

The college hired Jim to do just that. He determined Navajo employment opportunities in the Four Corners area, researched career vocational materials friendly to this student body, prepared bilingual materials, and developed a master plan for bilingual vocational education in San Juan County. His and Lynn’s interests focused on how quickly a student could graduate and enter the work force. Although academic quality was a concern in the earliest stages of development, Jim served as point man for the Center, moving in the direction of short-term vocational programs. He recalls, “I learned what a community college was. I learned what a junior college was. I learned what a trade school was. I learned what a skill center was. And I learned what the San Juan Center was, which
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was really a combination of all of these. It had more autonomy and self-direction than if we had tried to be any one of them.4

Jim wore a variety of hats during the four years he worked at the Center. Teacher, counselor, grant writer, program director, etc., demanded many long hours. His expertise in the Navajo language and culture eventually netted him a more lucrative position working for the Navajo Generating Station in Page, Arizona, so he left the college, making room for the next bilingual specialist, Garth Wilson.

Garth came from Fort Collins, Colorado, to the San Juan Center in 1980 as a coordinator of educational programs in Montezuma Creek. Having spent two years on the reservation where he learned to speak and write the Navajo language, he and his family felt at home in this small community. Little surprise that in one year’s time, he was able to move the program in this isolated community from a few students to 65, making it one of the largest teaching efforts by the college.5 Garth next moved to Blanding to work as Director of Student Support Services, which he continues to supervise to this day.

This is a federally-funded program designed to help at-risk, first generation college students survive in a foreign environment. There are three parts to this effort. The first is to increase retention. The program now serves 200 students in the college, the vast majority of whom are Navajo. The retention rate for most years is over 85 percent, a significantly higher number than the national average. Because many students need to take a full range of developmental courses, they may require an additional year of classes to help prepare them for the rigorous freshman level course work.

The second aspect of the program is to provide a full range of supporting services that include academic advisement, career counseling, financial aid assistance, tutor/study groups, and continual monitoring. The $220,000 grant also furnishes an English instructor, math instructor, full-time academic counselor, half-time career counselor, and part-time tutors and study group leaders. This is the backbone of the remedial work force that guides the incoming student.

The third area is graduation. Every year, approximately 40 percent of the students in-
volved receive their degree. Garth estimates that over the past 17 years, the average GPA for those graduating ranges between 2.4 and 2.6, though he is quick to point out that everyone learns at a different rate, in a different way, and brings a different background with them into this experience. Still, there is a common denominator underlying success—personal contact and friendship. Garth believes, “Students feel committed to their courses to the extent that they feel the teachers are committed to them... There may be all of these other supportive elements, but number one is that they have got to feel like you care about them succeeding.”

This program is itself an example of success, having been consistently funded every three years. During the last proposal submission period, it competed nationally with 1500 other proposals and was ranked in the top 10 percent. The college can now claim to have one of the oldest Support Services programs in the nation and has received a one-year bonus extension for its excellence. Its real importance, however, lies in the difference it has made in students’ lives.

Garth also shares his talents as a teacher. He has consistently been involved with the Summer Experience program and still offers Navajo language classes for native and non-native speakers. In 1996, he traveled to Siberia, Russia, with a small group of bilingual educators to share information in helping Athabascan (Navajo language family) speakers in an academic setting. Just as impressive are the sales of his Conversational Navajo Dictionary with workbook and tape which have sold over 35,000 copies. More than a dozen colleges and universities use it in their curriculum, including University of New Mexico, Northern Arizona University, Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Navajo Community College, Brigham Young University, University of Indiana, and Yukon College (Canada). Thus, Garth continues to make a significant contribution to the San Juan Campus.

Another person who has made important contributions, but in a different arena, is Keele Johnson, Director of the Talent Search Program. San Juan became involved with this program in 1981 and has had this federal grant funded ever since. Many of its goals are similar to those of Student Support Services—counseling, tutoring, career assessment, etc.—except that it targets primarily at-risk high school students and helps to prepare them to make career choices. For the college, this serves as a feeder program to guide and support these youth in an appropriate experience in higher education. All of the high schools in the county have counselors that serve in this program.
While Keele’s experience in Talent Search is somewhat tangential to the college, his counseling of students, teaching some classes, and continuous involvement in higher education has greatly influenced another aspect of his life as a Utah legislator. He attributes many of his accomplishments in this arena to the understanding he has gained in working with residents of rural Utah. He has been influential in passing laws concerning Native American marriages; clarifying tribal and state governmental relations; establishing state financial aid for pockets of poverty; and organizing a separate trust fund to develop governmental infrastructure, a scholarship fund, and money for cultural preservation.8

From Keele’s perspective, “I think we are training the future leaders of the tribe, and a lot of their problems can be worked out at the political level at Window Rock and with the BIA. As our students go to school, they learn how the political process works and how our society, that they are being forced to live in, works, and how the rules and regulations work. . . . I think you are starting to see these young Navajo people who are more educated showing greater leadership.”9 The college is an important part of developing this talent.

One Navajo person who exemplifies this leadership and has long been associated with the San Juan Campus is Bill Todachennie. He joined the staff in 1977 as a recruiter-counselor and has been involved with the college in some capacity ever since. His dedication to bringing education to the Navajo, in his words—”doing something for the people. . . . not so much for the money but just helping them to change their lives” has been the driving force behind his work.10

And “driving” is a good word. Jim Kindred tells of the time Bill got a new yellow pickup and was anxious to show his friend. After a while, Jim went out, looked the vehicle over, and was impressed with its newness until he looked at the odometer. He said, “Wow! What a great truck, but I thought you said it was new.” “It is,” Bill replied. “No,” Jim answered, “look at the miles on it!” According to him, there were an “outlandish” number of miles, which Bill had put on it since he had bought it. After a little figuring, Jim deduced that he was averaging 350 miles a day, driving like a “fiend” [meaning continuously], seeking students living anywhere from Aneth to Navajo Mountain.11 Bill has since
done some calculations and puts his annual mileage at around 90,000 miles with a new truck every three years.12

Travel was just the means of getting to the student. Once there, Bill helped the individual fill out 13 different pieces of paperwork, with forms for everything from a Pell Grant to Navajo Tribal Scholarship, and from a UNDC Scholarship to admissions forms. He usually talked with four to five students a day, many of whom lived on the dirt and sand-blown back roads of the Utah portion of the reservation. That is why he would drive up from his home in Montezuma Creek (approximately 35 miles from Blanding) a number of days each week, arriving at seven o'clock in the morning to get his work started. Sometimes he would finish it after closing hours before heading back down.

Because of his efforts and interest in education, Bill has held many influential positions on a local and tribal level. He has served on the national Disadvantaged Ethnic Minority Student Committee of the College Board, been a member of the Aneth School Board, presided as Chairman of the Montezuma Creek School Community Group, belonged to the Utah Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, worked for the Navajo Tribal Scholarship Office, and is presently serving on the San Juan School District Board of Education.13 He also played an important part in securing the Endowment for San Juan residents interested in higher education. Bill now is employed as the Project Director of Vocational Education for UNDC.

Gail Ammerman is another person who works with the Navajo people on the reservation, but in a different capacity than Bill. She has become the heart and soul of the college program in Monument Valley, which is a story in and of itself. In 1982, the San Juan School District completed construction of the Monument Valley High School. Within a year’s time, the college shifted from offering classes in the old uranium mill complex in Mexican Hat to the new high school, since there was now a focal point in that community, better facilities, and a larger population from which to draw.

An ex-VISTA volunteer, Mary Beth Quinn, started the college program, using a janitorial closet in the high school as her base of operations. She knew and loved the people in Monument Valley, established class schedules, recruited qualified teachers, and encouraged, counseled, tutored, and did everything conceivable to get students into the classroom.

A year later the program began to take shape. Gail Ammerman joined in assisting Mary Beth, the college provided an antique s, should-have-been-scrapped trailer left over from the “shirt factory” days, and UNDC agreed to share the facility as well as utilities. What a bargain. The windows were permanently stuck, so ventilation for the desert heat was from a door at each end of the trailer. They were two of the only things that opened properly. In fact, shutting and securing them was their contributing headache.

The trailer never was totally level. Gail described the experience of walking in it similar to maneuvering on the deck of a ship at sea—either going up or down. There were two offices, a small classroom filled with student desks and a large homemade formica top table, and a bathroom converted to a library with three or four shelves of discarded textbooks, novels, and an outdated encyclopedia.14 In terms of facilities, what the San Juan Center had encountered...
in the 1970s, the Monument Valley program experienced ten years later.

Still, the trailer was better than a janitor’s closet, and it was home. Certainly the mice in the trailer would agree that it was home, but on a number of occasions Mary Beth would stand on a chair or desk and command them to leave. Gail did not mind them too much until they built a nest in her old computer printer. Then she, too, agreed it was time for them to go. Although the trailer did not have blackboards, air conditioning, or much space, one thing it was ideally suited for was the student-run Halloween spook alley. With black plastic over the windows, a tunnel, and some skeletons, the participants converted the old hulk into a realistically haunted trailer while at the same time discouraging Gail and Mary Beth from leaving their offices to pass through the chambers of death.

In 1988, when Mary Beth left the area, Gail became a full-time employee and assumed total supervision of the program. The Monument Valley student body averaged between 40 and 50 students each quarter. Many of them were women who not only had responsibility for children, but also might have lived as far away as 20 to 30 miles. Child care was always an issue, and even when the program moved next door into a well-maintained, three-room trailer in 1989, there was never enough space to establish any kind of daycare facility. Normal college policy states that children are to be kept out of the classroom and are to remain at home. Gail has done what she can to enforce this rule, but on numerous occasions, she has had two or three children, armed with coloring books, in her office while the parent is in class.

That became one of her “extra-miler” duties. She also recruits students, helps fill out registration and financial aid forms, serves as a Talent Search counselor, teaches a study skills class, tutors, schedules classes, obtains instructors, and supervises a tutorial program. During the holiday season around Thanksgiving or Christmas, she can be found carving a turkey and directing a social for the students and their families. Add to this a daily, 50-mile-round trip to work, an estimated 30,000 miles a year, and one can see why Gail is such a busy and important member of the San Juan Campus community.15

Recognition must also be given to the unsung heroes who do not have a special program or geographical area, but handle the everyday office work that keeps the college functioning. The introductory quote by Elaine Wright at the head of this chapter illustrates the same type of commitment—that can-do attitude—found in every department of the campus. When she began working at the college in 1979, the operation was small enough, with around 100 students, that a handful of people did everything. Elaine handled all of the billing and received student payments and cashed their checks. One fear she had was that as the money flowed back and forth across her desk, she did not have a safe means to secure it. Eventually, the “cigar box”
was exchanged for a heavy duty safe.16

Ordering books was another challenge. The San Juan Campus has always struggled to determine how many texts are needed for a course. Too many and they have to be shipped back, too few and another order with freight charges becomes a burden. Financial aid and registration, counseling, typing proposals, and balancing the books filled her days. In 1980, Lil Brown joined the San Juan Advisory Council, Institutional Council from Price, and members of the Board of Regents came to the campus each spring for graduation, the college provided a special meal for the dignitaries. Elaine, Lil, and Nadine did most of the cooking, cleaning, and preparations. Elaine brought her best china and gold silverware from home, obtained flowers from her garden and that of her neighbors to decorate the high school stage for graduation, and sang at commencement exercises. Until she left in 1985, she wholeheartedly committed her efforts to building the campus and its programs.

Staff members were not the only ones who knew how to entertain. One also finds in the faculty the same unselfish concern for students and the college. Gloria Barfuss, business teacher, is a good place to start. She began as a full-time instructor in 1978 and retired in 1992. During that time she dedicated her efforts with the students as much to personal development as professional expertise. At any given time, she would have 20 to 50 secretarial students, 60 percent of whom were Native American,

Elaine Wright, "chief cook and bottle washer.”
cycling through her one-and-two year certificate programs.

Especially in the early years, Gloria encountered students who were not familiar with many things taken for granted by the dominant society. For example, some had not been exposed to proper telephone answering procedures, others with how to greet the public, and still others understanding cultural differences. In order to change this, Gloria spent a lot of time introducing social concepts in game activities and through parties. This type of sharing and interaction is an important part of Native American culture.¹⁷

She chose both an after-class setting as well as special holidays to work her magic. For instance, during lunch break, there was time to teach the students what a casserole was, with everyone bringing in some ingredient for the finished product. Her business procedures class of around 20 students went to her house for a full-course dinner. The table was set with her best china, a bewildering number of knives, forks, spoons, and plates, and a series of pamphlets and fliers on etiquette, telling what to do when. After the meal, Gloria increased her popularity with an exam on what the students had learned. At the end of the quarter, people brought food for “catch-up” day before final grades were determined. Students could then stay for hours, completing any missing assignments.

Sometimes Gloria obtained the cafeteria in the Blanding Elementary School, had a dinner for her students and their families, and, at Christmas time, managed to have a Navajo-speaking Santa Claus (Garth Wilson) hand out bags of candy and nuts to the children. Sometimes, the students taught her. During one between-class lunch, they challenged her to take on a few moves in clogging. One student exhibited her skill in go-go dancing. At other times, traditional Navajo foods appeared on the table. For one Thanksgiving dinner, the students cooked the

turkey Navajo-style in a pit lined with rocks. More than food and fun, these activities communicated a sharing and warmth that brought students, teacher, and higher education into a winning combination.

Winning combinations can also come from people who encounter an environment that is diametrically opposed to what they are used to. This was the case with Merry Adams, who left the rolling green hills of Kansas in 1981 for the high country desert of San Juan. Merry was a writer by love and an English teacher by trade. The San Juan Campus was seeking a good English-as-a-Second Language (ESL—developmental English) instructor; she applied, was accepted, and arrived in August to start classes the next month. The change in the land was as dramatic as the change in her perspective, as reflected in her writing. According to Merry, “It was like there was a sudden rip in my life. What existed before it, was totally different than what came after it, and mending that ripped fabric took a long time.”¹⁸

She diverted much of her creative talent away from writing and into teaching. Although comfortable with literature and composition,
she had to put forth a major effort to prepare for what she encountered in the classroom. Some of the students had not graduated from high school, read on a fifth grade level, and had never developed study skills. Eventually, Merry grew accustomed to her pupils’ needs, just as much as she became enamored with the landscape, reaching the point where she loved and understood both.

That is why both often appear in her writing along with her family, the homelands of Kansas, and personal introspection. Merry has received substantial recognition for her efforts. Her work has been published in two anthologies—*Tumblewords* and *The Utah Centennial Anthology*—and in literary magazines such as *Petroglyph*. The annual Utah Original Writing Competition has awarded her with first, second, and third place prizes and has had her assist them as a judge for the publication prize. Merry served for six years on the Utah Arts Council Literary Panel and has also been a discussion leader for the Speakers Bureau of the Utah Humanities Council. Thus, writing is her strength, whether in or out of the classroom, and is a talent she readily shares with all.

Another English Department member, accomplished writer, and researcher is Brian Stubbs. As a linguist trained by the University of Utah, Brian is continually exploring the breadth and depth of Native American languages found from the tip of South America to the frozen wastes of Alaska. He estimated one time, after listing all of the projects he would like to do, that he had about 900 years (give or take a few months) of work stretching ahead of him. That is why he is never seen without his language notecards, a sheaf of papers, or a book in his hands.19

His interest and expertise carry over into the classroom. He, like Garth, Merry, and Bob McPherson, holds an ESL teaching certificate, an important credential for the San Juan Campus. Whether instructing developmental courses, writing and research classes, or the Spanish lan-

*“He has competency in Navajo, Ute, Spanish, Hebrew, and Arabic, with an understanding of German, Aramaic, Sanskrit, ancient Egyptian and a half dozen Native American languages.”*
guage, Brian brings a wealth of understanding to the podium. He has competency in Navajo, Ute, Spanish, Hebrew, and Arabic, with an understanding of German, Aramaic, Sanskrit, ancient Egyptian and a half dozen Native American languages. He can definitely tell his students the difference between a transitive and intransitive verb.

Brian's work is also recognized far beyond the San Juan Campus. He has written seven articles, five of which have been accepted or are being reviewed by the prestigious *International Journal of American Linguistics*. He has also submitted or had published a similar number of articles in LDS publications. Never at a loss for something to do, Brian has four book-length manuscripts in preparation. His draft of *A Comprehensive Vocabulary of Uto-Aztecan Languages* is presently four times the size of any work previously published on this subject; the *Rio Grande Tewa: An Indexed Vocabulary* is the largest Tewa dictionary in existence; *The Language Puzzle of the Ancient Pueblo or Anasazi* explores the linguistic complexities of the Four Corners area; and *Language and the Book of Mormon* discusses linguistic matters relevant to this LDS scripture. As an instructor in an institution that emphasizes teaching not research, Brian has found his niche in both worlds.

One man, who can explain the natural phenomenon of the entire world—to include geography, geology, weather patterns, and solar systems—is Don Smith. A master teacher, Don brings to the classroom a doctorate in chemistry and 10 years of professional research in the private sector. Although this previous employment was primarily concerned with air quality standards, he also became intimately involved in testing water, petroleum, and uranium according to the Environmental Protection Agency's standards. He did this throughout the Four Corners region.

When Don became a full-time teacher at the college in 1982, he brought rich experience to his classroom. No other instructor has been more successful in turning southeastern Utah and the surrounding area into a laboratory of understanding than has he. His physical science offerings and the Summer Experience program are based upon class work and field trips that examine principles then practice. The students respond—even though he is notorious for producing a squirt gun in the summer or snowball in the winter to make sure no one is losing attention—and love his courses.

Over the years, Don has managed to employ six or seven pupils in field research while they earn credit. His extensive study in air qual-
ity around Page, Arizona, taught practical applications in chemistry, weather, and environmental issues. He also received two grants from the Minority Science Improvement Program (MSIP) which are a part of the Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). These grants have supported his taking 25 students to visit the power plant and chemistry laboratory in Page; a reclamation project at a coal mine outside of Farmington, New Mexico; and the University of Utah's medical engineering lab. They have also allowed him to tailor curriculum to Native American needs as well as acquire necessary science equipment for the laboratory.

Don's geology and astronomy classes take to the field regularly. He has been greatly assisted by local businesses such as UMETCO, the uranium processing plant five miles south of Blanding, and Mobil Oil in the Aneth area. His firm belief in seeing and working in an academic discipline carries over into the lab, whether using laser beams or standard chemistry experiments. He is truly a "man for all seasons," which is appropriate, because no one does more classroom traveling in all seasons than Don.

Brief mention must also be made of Dr. Bill Roberts, a life science teacher who worked part-time at the college in the early 1980s and as a full-time instructor from 1990 to 1993. During those years, he epitomized the best in providing rigorous course work mixed with love for his students. Bill taught his subject areas clearly because he concentrated as heavily on curriculum development and delivery as he did the topic. His overriding concern was to make it understandable without slighting the content. He spent countless hours in developing and testing what worked and did not work in his classes, carrying this dedication with him until his untimely death in 1993. Kay Shumway recalls that less than a month before an incurable illness took his life, Bill staggered into Kay's office, barely able to hold his head up, to report that his grades had been turned in and that he was satisfied with the pupils' progress. A plaque, given by the student body in his memory, hangs in the Science Building, testifying of his good life and the help he had provided.

The final person to be discussed—and here the cliche "last but not least" is totally appropriate—is Kay Shumway. No single person has had a greater impact on the direction and achievement of the faculty as a group than he. His academic background encompassed graduate work at Brigham Young University and Purdue, with post-doctoral work at the University of California-Davis, then UC-Berkeley, and a 10-year teaching stint at the University of Washington. When he returned to Blanding, he put this training to use, not in the research lab but as the dean
of instruction, supervising a diverse faculty. Although he worked as an administrator, he thought like a teacher.

During the 19 years of Kay’s involvement with the San Juan Campus, he practiced three cardinal rules. The first was that when an issue arose and a choice needed to be made, the deciding factor had to be what was best for the student. He was quietly intolerant of those who refused to do their best for the learner. A second principle was that instructors should remain unencumbered with administrative cares so that they were free to do what they did best—teach.

In keeping with this belief, he shouldered many responsibilities that could have been foisted on others, so that there was more flexibility in meeting student needs. Finally, he encouraged innovative ways of learning. This took the form of introducing new technology in the classroom, encouraging individual research and writing, and having teachers attend each year a discipline-specific conference to stay abreast of new developments in their field. For a college in a rural setting, this point of view has paid dividends, molding together a faculty that is creative and informed.

Kay’s legacy to the San Juan Campus, like those provided by others, derives from a personal commitment to something larger than the individual. The welfare of many often rests in the hands of the few. As the next chapter shows, the people of the county have benefitted on an individual basis as well as collectively because of the positive attitude of those who serve at the college. The hope is that when the next 20 years have rolled by, those who were involved may say, not only “can-do,” but “can-did.”

Notes

5. Garth Wilson interview.
6. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
12. Bill Todachanee interview.
15. Gail Ammerman interview.
18. Merry Adams interview with author, 22 May 1997, transcript in possession of author.
Chapter Five

The Students: Power to the People

“My sister Jane was not going to do anything after high school, just be a cowboy’s wife—she graduated from CEU, went on to a four-year college, got a degree, and is a very successful teacher in the Salt Lake School District. My sister Diane was a working mother in Monticello, went back to school, got her degree from the San Juan Campus, then moved to Salt Lake and received a bachelor’s and master’s degree from the University of Utah. She now has a very successful career in her chosen field. My younger brother Guy had absolutely no interest in going to college and just wanted to farm. He got into the LPN program and left valedictorian of his class. He has since earned his RN degree and is working in the nursing profession in Albuquerque, N.M. That is what the San Juan Center has done for my family. And it has done that for hundreds of other families.” —Jim Harris, Principal of San Juan High School

Much has been said in the preceding chapters about programs, staff, faculty, and relationships. Students, however, have held a constant place throughout the narrative, and rightly so. They are the reason for the college’s existence. This chapter summarizes 20 years of being in the education business and what it has meant to those who have participated in it.

When one considers the role that learning plays in the lives of students/graduates, the 1970s phrase, “power to the people,” aptly expresses the result. Education is empowerment. Whether speaking in economic, social, political, or cultural terms, it broadens perspectives, opens doors, and increases financial opportunity, that would not otherwise exist. The San Juan Campus has been doing this for a clientele who would not have education as readily accessible.

There are two ways to tell these students’ stories. The first is comprised of research and observations by the staff and faculty who have worked with them. Unfortunately, in the earlier years there was not much “tracking” of students as they flowed through the doors. Some graduated in two years, others took longer, and some did not graduate at all. Facts and figures from institutional reasearch are sorely lacking. Some of these gaps, however, can be filled through the second method of anecdotal response by the students. This source provides a rich body of information and comes closer to the “heart” of the educational experience.

What general characteristics has the student body had over the past 20 years? Initially, they were older, many of them with a family and job. Others were looking for employment or to increase their skill level. These students were considered non-traditional, not only because of their cultural and educational background as first-generation college students, but also because of their age, the bulk of whom ranged between the mid-to-late ‘20s and early ‘30s. For instance, during Winter Quarter 1983, only 43 percent of the students (153) were age 24 or below. In Fall Quarter 1996, the trend had diametrically reversed with 68 percent (345) falling within that category.”

“Education is empowerment... it broadens perspectives, opens doors, and increases financial opportunity, that would not otherwise exist.”
These figures mirror the general increase toward a more youthful, traditional student body.

The earliest graduates from the San Juan Campus were usually more mature and aware of what education would do for them. Take, for instance, Karolyn Romero, a member of the first graduating class, who received her associate in science degree in 1980. At the start of her educational experience, she was a single mother, working in the San Juan School District for minimum wage. She had taken classes sporadically from Brigham Young University, the University of New Mexico--Gallup, and Weber State, but had not been able to move anything to completion. She applied for an administrative position at the Utah Navajo Development Council, but without a degree, she was unqualified. People at the San Juan Center encouraged her to move forward with her plans, to look at each class as a step in reaching her goals.

Karolyn felt comfortable--not because of the cold trailers behind the "shirt factory" she remembers sitting in--but because of the friends she made and the teachers she met. Of her classmates, Karolyn recalls, "They were older, non-traditional students. Many of them were married and had children. So I think we felt very comfortable as a group of people who had come back to school and were trying to improve our lives through education."²

In addition to a friendly atmosphere, she found the courses challenging--just as much as the ones she had taken from the universities. Like so many students, she worked a full-time job, attended classes at night, and handled family responsibilities 24 hours a day. As for homework, she turned off the study lamp at midnight. Like attracted like, as Karolyn formed a pact with other students to insure that class notes and information could be obtained if one of the members was absent. Many of them got together in study groups to prepare for exams. To Karolyn, "It was a classroom effort. Some of the class members were there, willing to help you; the teachers were there, willing to help you; and there was no reason not to succeed as a student."³ She did succeed. She went on to get her bachelor's degree, is now completing her master's de-
gree, and is currently employed at the college as a counselor. Her experience as a student, as a Native American, and as a parent provides an invaluable perspective for those with whom she works. Karolyn tells them, “You need to look at the realities of life as you go down the road. You may end up by yourself or with children and need something to fall back on.”

Another part of the changing demographic picture at the college revolves around race. In the past, there was a higher percentage of Native Americans, primarily Navajos with a smattering of Utes and Hopis. The percentage has changed, not because the college is serving fewer (the numbers remain about the same or have increased—approximately 240-250 each year), but because there are now more Anglo people attending, especially high school students.4

During most quarters, between forty and fifty percent of the student body is Native American, making this campus unique in the Utah System of Higher Education. A recent article published in Community College Week listed CEU 15th in the nation in awarding associate degrees to Native Americans attending state and tribally-operated community colleges in 1994-1995. In 1997 on the San Juan Campus, 82 of the 87 graduates received associate degrees, 36 (44 percent) of whom were Native Americans.5 Thus, it is significant that these students are graduating at about the same percentage as their enrollment level.

When Mark Twain penned the words, “There are lies, damn lies, and statistics,” he commented not only on their ability to mislead, but also their versatility. When examining the San Juan Campus’ role in education, one needs to move beyond the facts and figures to understand the motivation of the student. Not as much has been written about the motivation of the Navajo college student as the Anglo American. Since Native American numbers make the San Juan Campus different in the higher education system of Utah, the following explains why they attend and what they hope to obtain.

One of the most prominent characteristics of the Native American student body is that the majority—over 70 percent—are women, a figure consistent throughout the past 20 years. The most recent calculations for the 1996-97 year show this trend continuing at 72 percent. A possible explanation for this consistency derives from the matrilineal culture of the Navajo. Women have always held positions of responsibility in directing the home while enjoying a certain level of economic independence. In the past, child-rearing, tending flocks and gardens, weaving rugs, and managing family businesses created a lifestyle based on accomplishment and stability as defined within traditional bounds.
call papers, strong papers of higher education. This also pertains to everybody, boys and girls. The boys will start thinking about women. If you think of a woman, think of one who is well-educated and has had a lot of schooling.”⁶

Another, more recent interview, revealed that a traditional mother was very much in favor of education. She told all her sons that they had to go to school to learn all they could.

She warned, “If you don’t get educated, it is like being deaf because you cannot live in a world where everybody is going in the direction of the white men.”⁷ She had never been allowed to go to school because she had to stay home to herd sheep and weave. She realizes now that education is important for her children to become self-sufficient in a changing world. “Navajos have to learn the Navajo way and use the white man’s way. If we lose our way of life, it is something we will have to live with, but we are handicapped if we don’t know English.”

Younger Navajo women reflect similar feelings towards education as they express an urgency to change their situation. The values of
the dominant culture are infused in their philosophy where education is equated with upward social mobility and material wealth. One woman, who works in Monument Valley and is a graduate of the San Juan Campus, believes that women are more aggressive because of their cultural heritage which places them in a position of power. The following statement sheds an interesting light on younger Navajo females' attitudes, as reflected by this counselor.

I find that the women are more eager and they take a challenge more than the men do. The men are more unstable. Maybe that is because of the culture. The women can identify with their role but as far as the men, what's their role? A long time ago they were the hunters; they were the providers, but now a lot of that is taken away. So where do they stand now? ... Ladies around here have more guts, are more determined, will step out and say I'll take it ... They are tired of feeling like they have not accomplished anything. 8

This desire to “accomplish” has been translated into the values of Anglo society—jobs, money, and influence. In the 1930s wealth was counted in sheep, rugs, and silver work; today it is signified by pickup trucks and technology as much as in food and employment.

Career planning, which had not been a

goal for some as late as the 1960s, is now a major consideration for many. A study completed in 1974 stated, “Neither the Navajo or the Papago are accustomed to thinking in terms of ‘careers’ or jobs. Most work is viewed as a temporary activity for the purpose of raising money quickly. There are few jobs on the reservation; many of these are temporary or seasonal.” At least in Utah, this statement is only partly true.

Today, more than ever, young Navajo men and women are taking the education and training offered by the San Juan Campus. Many of them later go away to school and receive four year degrees. As one Navajo graduate said,

“I'm a real career person. I want to get ahead because I've seen too much tragedy right down here in a relationship between man and wife. I'm a survivor. I want to accomplish what I want. If I'm going to survive, it is going to be me that puts me through. I never had the attitude of relying on anybody. . . I have a mind, and it is up to me to develop it, to learn as much as I can; it is my responsibility. Just like anything else, you exercise your mind like you exercise your body. . . . So it is very important to me to learn to get ahead. Education helps you get in a lot of places and get good jobs and a good life. I
don't like to be anybody's underdog. I like to voice my opinion and be a little important—at least be recognized—to say “I have an opinion and I want to be heard.”

Much of what this student said is substantiated through quantitative measurement. In the spring of 1991, 66 percent (66 females and 33 males) of the Navajo student population on the CEU-San Juan Campus answered a 57 response questionnaire concerning lifestyle and work aspirations. A brief summary of their replies shows how they felt. For instance, in three different categories 92 percent of the Navajo women felt it was either very important or extremely important to advance to higher level positions in a job, be paid well enough to live comfortably, and work with and meet new people. Only 24 percent believed it important to live near relatives and 39 percent to stay home; 17 percent wanted to do the same thing most of the time while 80 percent wanted to be creative and have work that required skill; 65 percent felt it very/extremely important to work with computers. When asked, “If by chance you had enough money to live comfortably without working, do you think that you would work anyway?” One hundred percent of the Navajo women said “yes” compared with 66 percent of the Anglo females. Thus, Navajo women have a strong work ethic that is still very much a part of their values.

Henning Olsen, a CEU instructor from Price, has completed a more recent (1997) study concerning the first-year, full-time Navajo student on the San Juan Campus. He interviewed 32 students, 21 of whom were female. From these students, the following picture is derived: two-thirds of them were planning to obtain a four-year degree; over half came from what they considered traditional families; 85 percent of them were unemployed; 81 percent were taking developmental courses during fall quarter (1995); and, based upon national norms, 61 percent were prone to have academic difficulty and drop out.

Why did they come to school and how did they feel about their experience once there? In higher-to-lower ranked order, the students answered that they chose the San Juan Campus because of: availability of scholarships and financial aid; a good chance for personal success; convenient location; advice of parents or relatives; and advice of a high school counselor, principal, or teacher. They also felt that they could maintain their culture and were comfortable in doing so. Olsen went on, “According to the Student Opinion Survey, the first-year, full-time Navajo students enjoyed their stay at the College of Eastern Utah. They had a favorable impression of the quality of education. They were satisfied with the course content, quality of instruction, attitude of the teaching staff, and classroom facilities. . . . They had few complaints and were happy with college in general.”

The Grade Point Average (GPA) of the thirty-two students for three quarters was 2.33.

As in any freshman class, there were those who did not return. In this survey, 11 out of the 32 dropped out of school. Four of them received failing grades because they “did not take school seriously” and two others because of alcohol. The rest took advantage of the open-door policy inherent in a community college to leave their studies for family concerns and to pay bills.

These figures are somewhat higher than Gail Ammerman’s estimate of the Monument
Valley extension in which 95 percent of the students are Navajo. She believes that in any given quarter she may lose between 15 and 20 percent of her students for similar causes. Especially prominent as a reason for her students not returning is the issue of employment. Jobs in the tourist industry are seasonal in nature and fluctuate with the economy, but offer ready cash for those trying to remain financially solvent. When opportunity arrives in the form of a tour guide position, the draw can be irresistible.

Vocational training and speedy employment are important drawing cards for many Native Americans. The Workplace Literacy Program has, as of May 1997, helped over 750 students sharpen their skills for the workplace. Although not part of the regular college program, this grant, funded twice by the federal government, is administered by the San Juan Campus to help either those who do not have jobs or those who are seeking to improve their ability.

Some of the training is held on campus, but more often, teachers go to a distant work site, assess the needs of the job with the help of the employer, then tailor a special basic skills package for the employees. At other times, graduates of the training are referred to various businesses requiring their skills. This training has been held at Towaoc, tribal headquarters of the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation; Fred Harvey Company at the Grand Canyon; Mobil Oil in Aneth; Navtech, a computer chip manufacturer formerly located in Blanding; the Four Corners Regional Care Center and the San Juan County Health Department; and at Navajo Mountain. Some individuals enrolled in these programs have also returned to campus to continue their college education.

Another characteristic that looms large in the Native American personality is the importance of family. When assistance at a four day ceremony is needed, when family members seek help with livestock chores, or an elderly person requires transportation to a distant hospital, everyone pitches in to lend a hand. Time, expense, and resources may be requested from the college student, regardless of his or her economic circumstances and time constraints. What that means in the classroom is that there can be a prolonged absence and an increased drain on the finances needed to get the student through school. Still, the family comes first.

On the other hand, strong family unity can be a direct benefit to the college. Take the Greymountain family, for instance. Their roots are embedded in the soil of Navajo Mountain
and have played an important part in that community's traditional livestock industry. However, as times change so do opportunities. Realizing the need to increase their employability in other careers, two of the Greymountains attended the San Juan Campus. Soon other family members joined them, but became homesick and decided to invite still more relatives to school in Blanding. Eventually, 17 were enrolled on the campus, taking classes in business administration, nutrition, elementary education, nursing, and carpentry. Grandmother Louise Greymountain “visited often, going from home to home, praising and encouraging her children and grandchildren to make the most . . . of getting an education.” Her desire to see the family prosper was harnessed in tandem with higher education. Other Navajo families shared similar experiences.

Enrollment patterns for Anglo students are somewhat different. There is a closer balance between the sexes of roughly 45 percent males and 55 percent females. Dramatic fluctuations in these percentages have occurred in the past because of the closing of certain industries such as mining, the uranium mill, and other male-dominated professions. Otherwise, the figures remain relatively consistent.

Besides the fact that most of the students are local, many come from an LDS background and an increasingly large number come from the high school. Most of these students share the same characteristics as those on most college campuses.

However, one thing that may be different is their experience attending the San Juan Campus. The multicultural mix found in classes, on field trips, and in social activities broadens the students' perspectives and provides an opportunity for interaction in a positive setting. The barriers of “we” and “they” are addressed early during a freshman’s experience in classes, where instructors consciously foster differing cultural points of view and discussion. A typical comment often heard from Anglo students is, “I have lived in San Juan County all of my life, but I never knew ‘they’ felt that way.”

Perhaps just as instructive has been the less formal learning that takes place after class. For instance, one year some of the dorm students felt that there was an evil presence in their building. The college paid for a Navajo medicine man to exorcise the spirit and bless the facility for continued use.

Native Americans and Anglos participated with reverence and a keen interest in the occasion.

Kay Shumway experienced another type of cross-cultural sharing. The weekends on campus are often slow for those who remain, while the majority of the students go home or travel.

Faculty and staff have often expressed concern, but unless there is a scheduled event, little else happens. Finally, Kay decided to do something about it. He and two other staff members went down to the dorms one Friday night and invited everybody to his house to play games and eat snacks. Family members entered in, students downed large amounts of milk, crackers, and fruit, and the games roared on until 11 o’clock at night. Kay noticed how different the Navajo response to certain activities was from that of an Anglo person. Shyness was a big part of it. Still, everyone had fun while sharing both similarities and differences from their cultural perspective.

Sometimes, this sharing can take a more
pointed form. Picture, for a moment, Tauna DeGraw's situation. When she started classes at the college in 1978, she was the mother of five children, living in Monticello, unsure of her ability to go back to school, and concerned about what the future held. After contacting the college to see if it was possible and getting a "You betcha" (she insists those words have been burned into her memory) from Kay, she enrolled in classes, receiving her associate degree with the first graduating class.

While Tauna emphasizes the positive difference the college has made in her life, she also recognizes the power of some of its unscheduled education. During one Summer Experience program, the students were learning some mountain man skills—building fires with bow drills, shooting black powder rifles, practicing tepee etiquette, and tanning hides. Part of this activity was to kill, dress, and cook a sheep. For some of the older Navajo students, this was a common task with prescribed methods that express respect and thankfulness to the animal that has given its life. These students taught different ways to prepare the food, but were careful to stress that nothing should be wasted.

When it came time to eat the animal, there were certain parts, such as the eyes and the cleaned intestines, that seemed distasteful to the Anglos. They made some comments to that effect which the Navajo students overheard. Tauna recalls,
“Since I was sitting with that group [of Anglos], I realized that the Native Americans categorized me with them. The Navajo students went into the tepee and put up two crossed sticks, which means ‘Stay away; we do not want you.’ When one of them came out, I went up and apologized, so they invited me into the tepee for the night. I think I was one of two Anglos, but we spent part of the evening telling stories.” Soon the group “wounds” healed, but Tauna had learned an important lesson, one that could be helpful in many situations.

Perhaps the most exciting ingredient as people learn and grow is to see the change in their lives. There is always a certain number of students who are expected to do well, and they do. But what about the dark horse, the one that is cast as too young, too old, too slow, too rebellious, too “different” to “make it in the real world.” There is a place for them at the San Juan Campus, too. They are the ones who are the most rewarding to watch.

Principal Jim Harris, who has worked in the San Juan School District for 27 years and has served on the San Juan Campus Advisory Council and the Institutional Council in Price, has noticed what the college has done for some of the high school students. There are always some who have trouble fitting into the academic or social setting and are searching for something else. He said, “The people who have found real success in college have varied from our brightest to some of our kids who have really struggled in high school. . . . One student who graduated this year left in the 10th grade as a young mother to-be and has completed all of her course work at the college.”

When asked what he attributed this change to, what exactly was the difference between the college and the high school, Jim believed it was the difference in expectations and social structure. Some of these students are just more ready to rise to the challenge offered by the San Juan Campus. He recalled another young woman with problems “who wouldn’t finish high school, and here she is within a credit or two of graduating her junior year; the college has been her salvation.”

Where do these young people end up later in life? Marlene (Salazar) Smith from Monument Valley can tell you. She graduated from high school in 1983, and, thanks to a counselor who told her “she would never make it in society with her GPA,” she immediately enrolled in college classes. At the time, Marlene lived in a hogan located three miles from the San Juan Campus extension, had a baby, and no transportation or job. She did, however, have determination, part of which came from her desire to prove the counselor wrong, part of which came from her wish to be an example for her six younger brothers and sisters, and part of which came from her parents, who urged her to get an education.

The pieces fell into place. Marlene received a job as a work study student at the college and earned $400 a month. Her family helped
with baby-sitting, work hours were tailored to her class schedule, and as for transportation, walking took time but no money. In 1986, she graduated with an associate degree, in 1993 a bachelor's degree, and by 1997 has all but completed her master's degree in Special Education. Two of her sisters (one of whom is also getting an M.A. in Special Education) and her husband (who is a computer network technologist for the school district) also graduated from the San Juan Campus. After all of this, one wonders what her former high school counselor would think.  

The same year that Marlene graduated, there was another woman from the opposite end of the county with opposite life experiences who graduated with her. Corrine Roring from Monticello was a senior citizen who thought she was past the age for formal education. As a young woman she had been exposed to some college work, but most of her life had been spent with her husband and three children farming.

Once the children had grown and left home and life had taken on a more leisurely pace, Corrine decided to enroll in college classes. She felt uncomfortable, not because of the campus or its instructors, but because she considered herself too old to learn amidst the sea of young faces. On more than one occasion, she would stop in to tell Kay Shumway that she was going to drop out, but by the end of the conversation, she charged out of the office, ready to complete the quarter. Despite the fact that she earned a position on the honor roll many times, there was always a little self-doubt, a desire to do better.

For three years she took classes in Monticello and Blanding. During that time, Corrine also worked at the college as a cooperative education coordinator, placing students in work experiences that could have a lasting impact on their lives. She “loved working with the students,” telling them, “If I can do it [get an education], anyone can.” While this may not be necessarily true, she brought a positive attitude and a different perspective into the classroom. Her life experiences became her contribution to her youthful classmates. Even today, when she sees some of them on the street, they “throw their arms around me” and the bond is renewed.

There are still other types of bonds or relationships that are formed on the San Juan Campus. When sisters Jenae and Yanua Adakai stopped in to the main office of the San Juan Center in 1978, they had already been approached about attending the college, but had little idea where life would take them. Jenae would soon be heading to the state of Washington to stay with foster parents and attend college, while Yanua was not sure what she wanted to do. However, by the time they had finished talking to Keele Johnson and Lynn Lee, they had decided to stay closer to their parents in Monument Valley and get their associate degree.

The women enjoyed the coursework, excelling scholastically while sharing their singing and performing talents. Both enrolled in the Summer Experience program where Yanua met her future husband. She graduated in 1982 and
Manuel Morgan met his future wife Yanua at CEU.

is now a professional artist, selling her wares throughout the Four Corners region. Jenae, who graduated from the San Juan Campus two years earlier, attended Brigham Young University, majoring in social work. During her stay in Provo, she performed in the “Lamanite Generation,” where she honed her skills as a performer, visited mainland China on a seven-week tour, and received counseling practice in her spare time. This last point is important. She was one of five Navajo counselors that the San Juan Campus maintained at all the major universities and most of the two-year schools in Utah to insure that San Juan County Navajo students were financially cared for and making subst-

stantial academic progress. These five student counselors received pay for their work, helping them to meet their own college expenses. After Jenae graduated from BYU, she attended graduate school at the University of Utah where she received her MA in social work. Thus, the relations and bonds that were forged so early in her life with the San Juan Campus continued to serve her well, long after she had left the county. She has since returned and is now working as a counselor in Monument Valley High School, sending the next generation off for their own experience in higher education.

The San Juan Campus over the past twenty years has provided a bridge to opportunities for thousands of students. Foundations have been laid, lives have been changed, and new directions provided by the staff and faculty. To identify what graduates have found once they leave the campus is another part of the story that will have to be told another time. Here, however, is a hint to the variety of contributions made by some of the alumni: Tom Austin, Chief of

Jenae is now a counselor at Monument Valley High.

CEU-SJC grads (clockwise) Mitchell Bailey, Tom Austin and Mary Jane Yazzie (with Bill Todacheenie and President Mike Peterson).
Police, City Manager of Santaquin, and published novelist; Helen Shumway, published author of biography; Clifford Mark (Navajo), Economic Developer for the Utah Navajo Commission; George Jones, radiologist; Mitchell Bailey, anesthesiologist; Sylvan Roberts (Navajo), Deputy Assessor for San Juan County; Mike Halliday, Blanding Chief of Police; Michelle Lyman, physician’s assistant; Marilyn Holiday (Navajo), Scholarship Director for the Utah Navajo Trust Fund; and Mary Jane Yazzie (Ute), Office Administrator for the White Mesa Ute Council. Hundreds of others could be added to the list.

As the college opens its doors at the beginning of a quarter, each group of new students enters with its own aspirations. While the ability to succeed rests upon their shoulders, they also find support from the staff, faculty, family, and friends who are a part of their lives. The classroom becomes the springboard, launching them toward their goals as many groups assist and encourage the students toward success. For the past 20 years, these combined efforts have built the legacy of the San Juan Campus.

Notes

3. Ibid.
10. Younger Navajo woman interview with author, 8 March 1984, tape in possession of author.
11. This survey was part of the doctoral research project of William L. Olderog, "Variations in Value Orientations and Work-related Values: A Study of Navajo and Anglo-American College Students" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1991). The major focus of this study was to compare and contrast Navajo and Anglo values rather than explore gender differences. Dr. Olderog, however, was gracious enough to provide me the rich raw data with which to explore variations between Navajo males and females as well as Anglo males and females. What follows is a brief overview of what his survey indicates.
13. Ibid., pp. 72, 81, 86, 89, and 91.
15. Ibid., p. 106.
16. Ibid., p. 106.
24. Ibid.
25. Marlene Smith interview with author, 1 August 1997, notes in possession of author.
Chapter Six

Funds and Facilities: Mirror of the Intangible

"Lynn was a visionary person...He was the quintessential 'what if' guy because he was always filling in the blanks or trying to put pieces of a puzzle together: Lynn was a master of an 'abundance mentality' as opposed to looking at scarcity where people only saw problems and limitations." ---Jim Kindred

The humanities and social sciences teach that architecture reflects the values common to its creators and the society in which it is found. While the San Juan Campus can make no dramatic claims to new architectural form, the buildings in which its programs have been housed over the past 20 years certainly reflect the interests and current status of the institution at a given time. In a sense, these buildings not only represent, but have become, a part of what the campus was and is to those who work there.

Consider, for a moment, the donated LDS Indian Branch chapel, more commonly called the "shirt factory" during the years of shared occupancy between the college and a sewing factory. Half of this building was the first official home of the struggling, nascent San Juan Center for Higher Education. As one entered the dark interior from the bright sunlight, the first thing to catch the eye was the maroon carpet that twisted in and out of a maze of offices. High ceilings and walls painted off-white or constructed of dark pine paneling gave an air of solemnity. Tall cabinets stretched to the ceiling with records and papers stuffed within. For over a year, a four foot long fish tank, brightly illuminated by a fluorescent bulb and filled with tropical fish, served as a visual centerpiece for the reception area. Unfortunately, all of the tank's inhabitants went "belly up" when the chlorine from the Blanding water treatment plant was not neutralized with chemicals.

Traveling down a narrow corridor, past a room that served as admitting office, xerox/copy machine haven, and counseling center, one next encountered the largest classroom in the facility. Crammed with long tables and folding chairs, the room had a seating capacity of about 35 people. Sunlight streamed through three large windows and reflected off the white walls, ceiling, and tiled floor. A blackboard at one end of the room, a sink and counter at the other, completed the classroom decor. Basic.

Along the corridor were two narrow bathrooms. One of them was frequently commandeered as a darkroom/developing area for film used as slides and photographs. A sign and closed door warned people to travel farther down the hall to the next one. But once the red developing light had been turned off and the door opened, the long strips of film, dangling from a line suspended over brown chemical bottles, fluttered in greeting as people returned to use the facilities.
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On the back side, perpendicular to the building, sat three white trailers surrounded by weeds and cheat grass. One was a mobile mining trailer on loan from the Price campus, another served as office space and curriculum development center, while the middle one doubled as an office and long classroom. Wooden planking between the trailers helped to keep feet out of the mud and vegetation out of the path. Rickety, wooden stairs or prefabricated metal steps provided insecure access into the converted mobile homes; all of the entryways needed constant shoring up as they sank in the spring mud or were pounded by footsteps.

Another trailer, a cast off from the 1976 Teton Dam flood in Idaho, sat across the gravel parking lot on railroad ties. The cost of this trailer? Whatever it took to haul it in--around $1200. Still, it was part of the campus, compatible with the rest of the architectural master plan, and provided space for a classroom, an office, and library. This last function was particularly important for an institution of higher learning, the books (donations from near and far) being arranged haphazardly on improvised shelves and strategically placed cardboard boxes in what had been a very small bedroom.

Funding from Job Service provided a part-time custodian, but any major projects were beyond his or her capacity. Each spring and fall, everyone--staff and faculty--descended on the facility to provide a Saturday morning facelift. Rakes, shovels, weed eaters, paint, hammers, and fistfuls of nails for the steps and walks, transformed the campus for another few months. It was strictly a do-it-yourself operation, but the pay was high--pizzas and sodas for lunch.

There were few expressions of sadness from the neighbors when rumors began to circulate that the college might move to the other side of town. To the people at the Center just the thought of owning their own campus seemed like a quantum leap in status. Not that there was any lack of dreaming about the possibility. And herein lies one of those ironies that is difficult to explain.

In the fall of 1981, Cleal Bradford and Harold Lyman invited Fred Halliday and Lynn Lee to go to the southwest corner of Blanding to look over a favorite picnicking and playground site of the old settlers in town. As they stood on an extended point that overlooked what was called "Whiterocks," the men spoke of its beauty and what a wonderful place to one day build a campus. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) owned the land which could be obtained under a Recreation and Public Purpose patent. The Center, with its meager budget, had no money to work with. Still, it did no harm to dream.

A few weeks later, Dr. DeLamar Gibbons, a general practitioner in Blanding for seventeen years, decided to leave Utah for a medical residency in Virginia. He asked Lynn if the college was interested in obtaining his home and property that abutted the Whiterocks picnic area. Lynn was astounded. Even if the college did have to pay the balance of the mortgage, amounting to $105,000, the 6,000-square-foot home and two-and-a-half acres of property were ideal for the start of a campus and provided space.
to expand. Dr. Gibbons, on the other hand, would receive a sizable tax write off, and his wife, Beppy, who served on the Center's advisory board, would feel she had made a substantial contribution to the campus.3

There were still some issues that needed to be worked out. Gibbons wanted to donate the property to a tax-exempt organization that

![West side of the Gibbons' home.](image)

allowed control to remain on a local level. A group of Blanding citizens, seeing an opportunity to advance the holdings of the Center, formed the San Juan Foundation for Higher Education, established a Board of Trustees, chose a local rancher named Fred Halliday as its president, and began devoting countless hours of donated service to a project in which they believed.4 (Fifteen years later, four--Carolyn Black, Fred Halliday, Craig Halls, and Cleal Bradford--of

![Front view of the Gibbons' home.](image)

the original nine members are still at work on the Foundation Board.) The funds from UDIA stipulated that this building could only be used or sold for educational purposes. At this same time, the Foundation began negotiating with the BLM for the adjoining 120 acres of land.

On 28 August 1982, the major players who made the transaction possible came together for the dedication of the building. Bruce Parry from the Utah Division of Indian Affairs, the organization that had contributed $80,000 towards the mortgage, was there. He commented, "I've never been in another place, except Alaska, where Indians and non-Indians get along so well together. . . . When we started talking about higher education for this area years ago, I thought 'This town is too small for that,' but I've learned never to discount dreams."5

Other speakers included Robert Billie, Board Chairman of the Utah Navajo Development Council; Calvin Black, a powerful San Juan County Commissioner; Mayor Cleal Bradford, whose ties with the city and the Foundation proved indispensable; Fred Halliday, President of the Foundation; and Ralph Coates from the College of Eastern Utah Board of Trustees.

![Dedication of the administration building included a ribbon cutting ceremony.](image)
Dr. Gibbons held the place of honor.

Nine months later the Center gave birth to another addition, this time the 120 acres of BLM land in or adjacent to Westwater Canyon and the Gibbons’ property. The government agency authorized a five-year development plan with eventual transfer for $2.50 per acre in order for the college to expand to the west and south. Plans included dormitories and a cafeteria; recreational areas; an outdoor amphitheater; and cultural sites that portrayed reconstructed historic lifestyles of the Navajo, Ute, Hispanic, and white settlers of the Four Corners region. Ed Scherick, BLM Area Manager, signed the agreement with the San Juan Foundation 13 May 1983, one of the luckiest Friday-the-thirteenths thus far for the college.

Less than a year would pass before the next building project began. Soon the campus would have over 350 students enrolled, 28 full-time staff members, and an operating budget of $1.5 million. The obvious question was how could the college get its student body out of cramped classrooms and widespread facilities into one central location. The answer—build on part of Dr. Gibbons’ property to the south. To do so required the San Juan Foundation to deed the land to the city, which allowed Cleal Bradford to approach the Community Impact Board for funds. The state approved the grant of an initial $100,000, adding another $35,000 later. Bruce Parry from the UDIA contributed $50,000, while the Foundation and other groups contributed lesser amounts or resources that eventually totaled $250,000.  

If the funding for the building appeared unorthodox for a state institution of higher learning, the construction was equally unique. Kay Shumway and other members of the faculty had maintained a steady interest in alternative fuel and heating measures made so popular in the 1970s. As this small nucleus of people attend-

![BLM officials authorize land deal with the San Juan Foundation. Those present included (l. to r.) Ed Scherick (BLM), Lynn Lee, Fred Halliday, Bruce Shumway, unidentified BLM official, and Carolyn Black (seated).](image)

![The proposed building featured a passive solar design.](image)

ded energy-related workshops in New Mexico and Arizona, passive solar energy ranked high on their list. They returned with a vision of what the sun and adobe bricks could mean in the construction, maintenance and heating of a building. No one else in Utah had even tried.

Ground-breaking, heralding the first construction on the campus, took place on 17 August 1984. Jeff Black, project supervisor for the city-sponsored construction, worked closely with the architect and college building trades instructor, Scott O’Neill, in laying out the 7,500-square-foot Science Building. The plan called for over 27,000 adobe bricks to be made from native soil, washed Bluff sand, and asphalt which
bonded and waterproofed the sun-dried brick. Workers then had to rotate each brick once it had been removed from its mold so that it would dry equally on all sides. To do all this, students in the building trades classes as well as work study students spent long hours shoveling the necessary ingredients into mixers, moving forms, and rotating bricks.  

The doors opened for classes in January, 1986. What the students saw surprised them. There were four large classrooms—one of which was a science laboratory sporting equipment obtained from a Minority Science Improvement Program (MSIP) grant. Another room was a computer lab filled with state-of-the-art technology acquired from a Title III grant. Walls and ceilings painted by staff and faculty during
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The completed building.

Christmas break, a library (though fairly barren of books), restrooms, and a spacious glassed-in corridor that collected the sun’s rays for heat, gave a collegiate air filled with promise. The students took pride in the structure, not just because it won a number of awards for architectural design and “outstanding energy-promoting building techniques,” but more importantly because it was “theirs.” Some of them had helped build it; all of them had anticipated it. Concrete evidence of the students’ attitude lies in the fact that the building has remained totally free from any kind of vandalism or abuse. Perhaps no other structure embodies so fully the various elements that have spawned the growth and development of the San Juan campus.

As the class sizes grew and needs increased, the Center’s administration next cast about for a solution to the problem of student housing and a cafeteria. In 1983, a local entrepreneur requested rezoning for an area near the college to build a 36 student dorm to rent. The city approved his request, but to no avail. Nothing was ever built.

By 1986, the situation was no better. A student survey indicated that 53 percent of the 249 students attending the main campus in Blanding believed that if dorm space were available, their relatives or friends would come to the school. Faculty and staff agreed that student housing must become a number one priority on the building list for the campus. No one from the private sector stepped forward with an offer, so the college turned to the San Juan Foundation to finance a dorm for 40 males, another for 40 females, and a cafeteria/general-use building to service the campus.

In order to do this, the Foundation needed a guarantee that the college would lease the facilities for 30 years, the estimated time it would take to pay off the loan. The money to make this payment would come from the monthly rental of $4,000. Because the college was not authorized to enter into leasing agreements that extended beyond a year, state approval had to be obtained. Regent Elva Barnes, who had come to Blanding to assess the need, summarized her and the Board’s feelings when she said, “The people in San Juan have already made the commitment to this project. They are the ones who stuck their neck out and moved ahead to solve this need. They didn’t even approach us until it became evident that, for legal reasons, they needed our approval for a lease. They have not come to us with their hands out, as is so often the case.” Not one of the Regents voted against the plan.

With this solid backing, the Foundation procured a $600,000 loan from Farmer’s Home Administration (FmHA), raised another $92,000 to complete the cost of construction, and signed
the lease with the San Juan Campus. Surprisingly, the college's neighbors never raised the issue of rezoning, which was later determined to be a moot point since state organizations are not subject to city ordinances.

The building of the structures took its normal course. There was one incident, however, that is still talked about by faculty and staff. For roughly seven years, the college was fortunate enough to have Boyd Bradford as its maintenance supervisor. Boyd loved to build and played a vital role in the heavy labor associated with the Science Building, the Four Corners Cultural Center, and other quarried stone projects around the campus. He is a large man, standing about six foot four inches without his cowboy boots and hat. The things he built took on this same rugged appearance.

When the college learned that some expensive blasting was necessary before a basement could be poured for the cafeteria, Boyd stepped forward, offering his services and citing his past mining experience as proof of his ability to move rock. He managed to get a compressor donated to drill the holes, crammed them with blasting cap and prel, and electrically detonated the charge. An approaching storm had prevented his placing loose dirt over the holes to keep the rock from kicking up; to delay would have caused the charges to misfire. Chunks of rock flew over the Administration Building 400 feet away and went through the clerestory window of the computer lab in the Science Building. The explosion shook windows two miles away. The contractor, however, had no problem fitting his cement forms into the hole.

The three brick veneer buildings opened for use during Fall Quarter 1988. Food services initially contracted with a local restaurant, then later hired a full-time cafeteria manager who taught food preparation classes and used her pupils and work study students to cook and serve the meals. The space below the cafeteria was first utilized as a classroom/computer lab, a small laundry room, and a bookstore. Eventually, the bookstore acquired all of that space.

Still, the expanding student body and staff needed additional room, and so in 1990 and again in 1992, the Foundation acquired two private homes near the dorms. Known as the
(Jon) Hunt and (Bill) Cook homes, the two buildings were turned into a counseling center and a student center respectively. Nineteen ninety-two also marked the height of ownership of property by the San Juan Foundation—seven buildings total. That same year, in order to get money for renovation and to make the facilities handicap-accessible, the Foundation deeded, at no cost, the Administration Building, the Science Building, and some land to the west for a future technology building, to the college and ultimately the state.¹⁷

*The cafeteria now provides a wide range of food services to students, faculty and staff.*

The San Juan Foundation played a key role in the development of the San Juan Campus.

It was now past time for a campus master plan. Since the beginning of the campus, the Foundation had independently shouldered the cost of obtaining property and building facilities. No doubt the Board of Regents appreciated the initiative and the fact that they had acquired a campus at little time and expense to them. On the other hand, they had been left out of the process and had little knowledge of what might happen in San Juan in the future. Because they had the responsibility to sanction certain aspects of campus operations, and since the Center was now receiving increased state funding, the Regents required a master plan to map out a future direction.

As early as 1989 the Regents expressed concern about this growth when the San Juan campus requested permission to purchase 1.8

*The proposed Instructional Technology Building.*

acres of land for a new technology building.¹⁸ Less than a year later, state and local officials revealed their deliberations in a master plan presented to the public for comment. Envisioned in the future were building projects that expanded the campus to the south and west along Westwater Canyon, away from residential areas. A technology center, library, physical education building, student center, and married student housing were all on a map drawn to scale.¹⁹ On 8 November 1991, following a year of discussions, both CEU campuses received official approval of their future plans that would remain unmodified for five years.²⁰ The construction of
the Technology Building and the amount of hard rock encountered along the canyon's edge would later force reconsideration of exactly where future buildings should be placed.\textsuperscript{21}

The Technology Building was the first structure on campus planned and built with state funds. As early as 1986, the necessity of some type of vocational building to house programs ranging in diversity from automotive classes to nursing, and from business to electronics became evident.\textsuperscript{22} The San Juan School District had already pioneered the path in distance learning by televising high school classes through microwave stations. The college piggy-backed onto this system for some of its classes, but also considered eventually owning its own system of originating and receiving classrooms.\textsuperscript{23}

By 1992, the dream was moved toward reality. The state approved $3.4 million to build a two-level technology building with 23,000 square feet of space. It did not come without sacrifice. In addition to the continuous effort of people on campus, President Michael Petersen willingly put institutional needs on the Price campus below that of San Juan and vigorously pushed for the building on the state level. Even more
dramatic were the efforts of Representative David Adams and Senator Mike Dmitrich in preventing a last minute initiative to shift the funds allotted for San Juan to a larger institution of higher learning. Both men worked hard on behalf of southeastern Utah and won a major coup, but for at least David Adams, it was politically a pyrrhic victory.24

Ground breaking for the new building took place on 23 March 1994. Minutes after the ceremony, construction began, but was occasionally delayed in the following months due to unseasonably heavy rains. Still, what was accomplished was exciting. The interior space of the building was based upon an open modular design copied from a successful project in Delta, Colorado. Computers, multimedia presentations, and distance learning lay at the heart of the building's nine classrooms.25 The state had provided the San Juan Campus the running start for a long leap into the 21st century.

But the old pioneering spirit was still alive. While the state paid for the building, what went inside in the form of state-of-the-art technology, represented the same communal efforts that had characterized San Juan from the outset. Lynn wrote two major grants—Star Schools and Title III—which had components that provided funds to equip one distance learning classroom from each grant—to the tune of around $160,000. Another $100,000 came from private fund raising. For instance, the nurses' lab and classroom received donations from hospitals and health care agencies on the Wasatch Front, from doctors practicing in San Juan, as well as addition-

![Students in new nursing lab.](image)

![The Ednet classroom.](image)

![Lynn Lee and Gail Glover received contributions for tech building from private and corporate donors.](image)

al local sources. Computers and other technology came from private donors varying in size from UMETCO and Energy Fuels (local uranium mill owners) to retired couples who came to the campus for a week during an Elderhostel program. The remaining $250,000 necessary
The completed Instructional Technology Building.

to furnish the new building came from state appropriations, joining the funds given by others who saw the value of the San Juan Campus.26

The dedication of the building on 21 September 1995 also captured what the school was about. Following the formal ribbon cutting ceremony in the morning, Buck Navajo, a 71-year-old medicine man from the Navajo Mountain community, offered a traditional prayer and blessing upon the facility. Given in Navajo (Buck speaks little English), he explained through an interpreter that the prayer was for all people, not just the Navajo, and that “it seeks the further growth of education for the young to live to an old age and to bring prosperity, protection and harmony to every individual.”27

President Mike Petersen spoke of this event as one of the most memorable experiences of his relationship with the San Juan Campus as a teacher, Academic Vice President, and President over the preceding 17 years. After describing himself as a person who thinks mostly in terms of budgets, facilities, and programs, he went on to say, “As I walked out of there [the room where the ceremony had taken place], I felt so blessed that I had participated. There was a feeling of spirituality about that. I think it was because people who had worked very hard on a common project from two cultures were symbolically coming together—it was a mass [church service] being led by one man from one of the cultures, but both cultures were feeling the spirit. . . . There truly is an underlying power to what has happened there [San Juan Campus].”28

Already the future is promising another facility. A local theater group, the Edge of the Seaters (EOTS), obtained funding for an Arts and Conference Center. Money came from four sources—Community Impact Funds ($110,166), the Economic Development Administration ($875,000), the City of Blanding ($62,500), and the EOTS ($20,000). The City approached the college about providing a place to build as well as operational and maintenance (O & M) fi-
nancial support for the facility. After a number of discussions, all parties concerned felt it to their advantage to pursue the offer. The college would seek O & M costs through legislative support and would share use as well as partial responsibility for the facility. Although negotiations are still in process, the center is scheduled to be built south of the Technology Building. Thus, the future growth of the campus continues to be tied to a community effort dependent on grantsmanship and outside funding.

And that is how it has always been—depending on grants and external funding. Indeed, another entire history of the campus could be written about the various proposals that have kept the operation solvent and allowed for expansion. One man—Lynn Lee—must take the credit for this, although he rarely speaks of it himself. Few people in the United States have had as much unbroken success in obtaining funds for a college.

In a sense, he stumbled into the whole business of proposal writing by chance. Although he had enjoyed some success in obtaining funds for the school district, this initial track record was "spotty." Around 1977, Dean McDonald went to Lynn to ask him what position he would like to have, now that the Blanding program was starting to grow. Lynn said he would enjoy counseling students and working with them in financial aid first, handling the academic programs next, and finally pursuing resource development. President McDonald thought about it for a moment, then told him there were other people who could fill the first two positions, but that the program really needed a good resource development officer. Lynn accepted the challenge.30

There were a number of elements that sped him along the path of success over the years. The most prominent were the qualities embedded in his personality. He loved a challenge and quickly mastered the art of pulling people and resources together to provide a solution. He believed that a lack of education lay at the heart of most of the problems faced by San Juan residents, and that through a united effort, the situation could be changed. In addition, the federal government had a keen interest in ameliorating poverty pockets in the United States, which fit in nicely with Lynn’s plan to help the people in the county. Thus, he understood the needs of the students—especially the Navajos and Utes—and where to obtain help.

He next conceptualized the plan and sought out the different pieces from programs and funding sources that would eventually support a full packet. Jim Kindred recalled what it was like talking to Lynn about a problem and possible solution: “I was always amazed by how I could be sitting with him talking about something, and he would kind of smile and all of a sudden . . . Lynn would say ‘Looky, if we do it this way, look at this.’ . . . And sometimes we would say no and he would wrinkle his brow and then say, ‘Well, what if we did it this way?’ He was constantly a ‘what if’ guy.”31

Lynn adopted the attitude that programs and aid should originate from San Juan instead of bringing in the “experts.” One story typifying why he felt this way comes from the early days of the campus when an “Indian expert” flew in to teach the “country folk” the real story about Native Americans. While on a tour
around Blanding, he asked about the dome-shaped mounds of dirt and was incredulous to learn that they were hogans and people were living in them. Lynn wanted to avoid similar problems of misunderstanding on a grand scale, where major decisions made outside of the country could be detrimental to services being rendered.

But Lynn is also quick to give credit where due. He attributes much of his success to a two-week workshop on resource development held in 1977 that opened his eyes to the finer points of proposal writing. Perhaps even longer-lasting was the resulting friendship and business relationship with Harvey Sharron, a founding father of the National Council for Resource Development (NCRD), a national organization for two-year college development officers.

From this relationship, Harvey Sharron became deeply attracted to the efforts of the San Juan Campus in bringing education to rural Utah. For twenty years he shared his expertise, brought his family to the college, and even had his nephew enroll in classes. Although there were many institutions vying for his attention, he maintained a special interest in southeastern Utah. From Lynn’s perspective, “The San Juan Campus, as it presently exists, would not be,” if it had not been for Sharron’s mentoring.

What all of this has meant to the campus is that there has been sufficient funding for maintenance and growth of programs. A few facts and figures here will help. When the campus really started to blossom in 1978, the budget from both internal and external sources amounted to $235,000 of which $205,000 was derived from grants. By 1983, the budget had increased to $1 million with approximately $700,000 from grants. In the 1994-95 school year, with the Star Schools grant funding distance education, an all-time high of over $4.5 million in grants had been obtained. Currently, the San Juan Campus’ budget totals over $4 million with $2.5 million from grants. Although Lynn has never totaled the entire amount of money obtained from proposals and is modest in talking about it, when pushed, he believed a conservative estimate to be in the range of $40 million dollars.

Two very different examples illustrate the extremes of what it took to achieve such success. The first proves the adage that “money begets money” and “success breeds success.” One time, after Lynn had established an excellent reputation in grantmanship, he was delivering a proposal to the federal regional office in Denver. The deadline had arrived. As he walked down the hall, a man called him into his office and told him that he had faith in his proposals. The man had $75,000 that were going to be turned back if he did not receive a fundable grant. He asked Lynn to write one and he did—there on-site and in long-hand—then handed it to the man. The San Juan Campus received the full amount.

The second example is far more typical of what it takes to succeed—a lot of work. Lynn counts involvement in obtaining a $6 million scholarship endowment for the residents of San Juan County as his greatest financial achievement. Eight years of phone calls and visits, many drafts, and some intense politicking eventually led to the acceptance by the federal government.
of a Title III Endowment Challenge grant from the Department of Education. What this meant to local people is that within 20 years, every resident in the county can receive funding for a free college education.36

Briefly, the government provided $4 million, directing the community to raise a $2 million match. As in the past, the San Juan Foundation led the way in identifying potential sources of local funding. Foundation Executive Director Cleal Bradford provided the leadership necessary to bring the project to a successful conclusion. Many organizations contributed, including the White Mesa Ute Council, Utah Division of Indian Affairs, Navajo Trust Fund, San Juan County Scholarship Endowment, San Juan Foundation, and the Calvin Black family. Representative David Adams sponsored a bill in the Utah Legislature that eventually provided $750,000 towards the total.

San Juan County added another $500,000 of local matching funds. In 1990, Commissioner Calvin Black initiated a scholarship program for San Juan students attending classes in the county. Annual Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) payments from the State of Utah were committed towards these scholarship awards. Once the need of matching funds for the endowment had been identified, Commissioner Bill Redd recommended that these PILT funds be advanced for that purpose.

Nearly three years after the PILT funds were turned toward scholarship awards, the commitment of matching funds for the endowment was finally met. The stipulations went into effect, that for the next 20 years, only half of the interest from the principal could be spent—and that, only for scholarships. The remainder of the interest is applied to the corpus.37 The endowment has thus created a legacy for residents to enjoy, free-of-charge forever college programs offered within the county, to include those brought in by universities outside the county. Little wonder that Lynn and others involved feel this is one of their most substantial contributions.

And so the story of funds and facilities goes. At the outset, it began as a bootstrap operation in which residents and organizations came together to create a hodgepodge of internal and external funding sources focused on achieving a goal. In a sense, the scenario has not changed—the goals have just become bigger and the results greater. From the “shirt factory” and donated trailers to a campus of eight buildings with a ninth pending; from a budget of $235,000 to $4 million; and from dependence on federal student grants to a $6 million locally controlled endowment—the college has done nothing but grow. Looking back over the past 20 years, one can only be proud of what has been accomplished by the dedicated work of many. Perhaps just as important is the fact that the funds and facilities mirror deeply the efforts and values underlying the institution.

Notes

2. Lynn Lee interview with author.
2. "Science Building Will Be Constructed at CEU San Juan Center," San Juan Record, 1 August 1984, p. 1.
11. "Rezoning for Student Housing in Blending Denied," San Juan Record, 21 July 1985, p. 1; Cleal Bradford conversation with author, 16 July 1997, corrected the misperception that the request was denied, stating that after further deliberations it was approved.
22. "Vocational Building Is Needed," College Clips From San Juan Campus, Fall 1986, p. 6.
29. "Blanding City, CEU, SJC, EOTS Join Forces to Make Arts Center Work," Blue Mountain Panorama, 30 April 1997, p. 8; "Arts, Conference Center to Move to San Juan Campus, San Juan Record, 30 April 1997, p. 1; Cleal Bradford conversation with author, 8 July 1997.
30. Lynn Lee interview.
32. Ibid.
33. Lynn Lee correspondence to author, 16 July 1997, in possession of author.
34. Budget Summary sheets on file in Business Office, San Juan Campus.
35. Lynn Lee interview.
A glimpse into the future must start from the present. Where is the San Juan Campus in 1997 and where will it be in another twenty years? There is little doubt where the college has been and what it has done for its students, but the second part of the question requires more than a crystal ball to determine what will happen. If the future is a reflection of the past, however, some very good things lay ahead.

This has been a landmark year for the San Juan Campus for a number of reasons. The College of Eastern Utah acquired a new president, Grace Sawyer Jones, who gained her most recent experience at State University of New York—College of Oneonta. She served there as vice president of multicultural affairs; that background fits compatibly with the mission of the San Juan Campus. Expressing her commitment to San Juan, she declared, “Everything that I feel and see here [speaks] of a group of people saying we have...an educational site that will be a place that sees students achieve.”

President Jones spoke at the June commencement exercises, another important event. Ninety-nine people received degrees and certificates, the second highest number in the history of the campus. Twelve of them, one-third of whom were Native Americans, were the first graduates of the San Juan Campus registered nurse program. Over 40 percent of the graduating class was also Native American, many of whom went on for their four year degree.

Following graduation, Kay Shumway retired, ending 20 years at the helm of the college's growth and development; in September, Lynn Lee followed suit. Both of these men played crucial roles in guiding the institution during what President Jones calls the “pioneer” phase. Gail Glover, Dean of Administrative and Student Services who has served in that position since 1992, was there to greet Kay's replacement, Don Larson, from Utah State University (USU).

Another addition from USU has been a small satellite campus adjacent to the San Juan Campus. This has made it possible for students to receive their associate degree from CEU and a bachelor's and master's degree in certain areas from USU without ever having to leave the county. The long-distance delivery of courses by both campuses will continue to mature, meeting the needs of more and more students. This synergistic relationship between the
two institutions has been and will continue to be a benefit to both, as well as to the residents of southeastern Utah.

It is too early to tell what these changes and additions in personnel and programs will mean to the San Juan Campus, but there is no shortage of ideas regarding what people would like to see happen. For instance, President Jones believes that developing educational opportunities for employment in tourism, hospitality, the environment, and economic development are critical. She foresees the San Juan Campus on the “leading edge,” primarily because of what she terms a “romantic faculty.” She continues, “I say romantic because they love the land, they love what they are doing, and they love with whom they are doing it.”

Gail Glover moved from the counseling and testing offices to that of dean of CEU-San Juan Campus.

Gail also looks to her area of responsibility and recognizes the tremendous need for a library and a student center to support growing enrollments. While accessibility of information achieved by computers has improved resources, the number of books in the campus library is far below acceptable standards. This has been an on-going need that must be addressed in the near future as both curriculum and students move to the semester system with increased opportunity for reading, writing, and research.

Kay, as he departed, also expressed concerns and hopes. He believes that the San Juan Campus is gaining in recognition with state groups that will help with business development. Along with that, the new Arts and Conference Center will attract people near and far to the campus for cultural and intellectual events, which has never before been possible. Hopefully, the tight bond of cooperation between city and college will become even tighter. At the same time, Kay sees some of the campus' flexibility to meet local needs diminishing. There are increasing layers of bureaucracy inside and outside the college, as in other institutions in our society, that slows down a rapid response to local requests. In some respects, this is good, since a short-term fix for a problem is not always the best. However, the ability to try new programs is slowed. Another concern centers around the role that distance education will play in removing the more personal touch of the classroom. Especially for Native American students, this can be a crucial point.

Lynn Lee, when asked about what lay ahead, waxed philosophical by looking at the past. To him, whatever happened before, happened because it was “right.” The same holds true for the future. He said, “Fighting against education, like fighting against motherhood and apple pie, is a losing battle. I haven’t been on the winning side because I’m better than anybody else . . . but because I was on the side that was right. And what is going on here is right.” That same conviction has characterized much of the campus' philosophy over the past twenty years.

But perhaps one of the most perceptive views of the college's role in the town of Blanding was told to Albert R. Lyman by Walter C. Lyman
that day in 1897 when he first envisioned the future. Albert reported that Walter said, "Its [Blanding's] most splendid development would come from its kindly service to the Indians. . . . It was not to be a place for making money, nor a home for those who think of money first, but to be a center of education. . . ." In a very real sense, that is what it has been in the past, and that is what it will be in the future.

Notes
2. Grace Sawyer Jones interview with author, 26 June 1997, transcript in possession of author.
3. "Nearly 100 to Graduate from CEU-San Juan Campus," San Juan Record, 4 June 1997, p. 1.
5. Grace Jones interview.