

A **HISTORY** of the
Western Interstate Commission
for Higher Education

Frank C. Abbott

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS

Prefatory Notes

For more than half a century the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has served the West well. Organized formally in 1951 as an intentional collaboration between state governments in the West, and launching an embryonic program of activities in 1953, WICHE has continuously and effectively served one mission: to expand access to high-quality higher education to the citizens of the West.

This history of the first 40 years of the organization, compiled and written by Dr. Frank Abbott, describes its origins and takes us from those early developmental years into its impressive growth and success under the leadership of Harold Enarson and Robert Kroepsch. It reports on the tumultuous and nearly devastating times at the end of the Kroepsch era, then describes the substantial accomplishments of Phil Sirotkin in restoring both focus and credibility to the organization in the late 1970s and 1980s.

This account helps those of us who know WICHE today to appreciate its long history of service to the West and, particularly, the unique contribution of each of its leaders. The West has changed dramatically during the past 50 years, and its system of higher education contributed mightily to that change. This history demonstrates how significant WICHE was in that evolution. It truly has been a remarkable 50 years.

No one could have captured WICHE's contribution to the West better than Frank Abbott, for no one knew the organization or the people involved better than he did. A long-time friend and still-valued colleague at WICHE, Frank lived this history. And as a historian he has been able to capture this story so accurately and interestingly. Thank you, Frank.

We are also indebted to Loren Wyss, who represented WICHE as an Oregon commissioner from 1984 to 1990 and served as commission chairman in 1989-90: he made publication of this history possible through a generous gift from the Wyss Foundation. Thank you, Loren.

May those of us who serve WICHE and the West learn from our predecessors, so that we might lead the organization equally well as we move into the future.

— *David A. Longanecker*
Executive Director, WICHE

Up front, a few things should be said about this history of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education – or WICHE (pronounced “witchy”), as the commission and its staff are known.

Perhaps the most obvious thing to mention is that the account traces events from the beginning, but not all the way to the present. For several reasons, the most compelling being the need for more time for the necessary research and drafting, the story runs for 40 rather than 50 years, through the administration of Phillip Sirotkin at the end of December 1989. It reports little about the years Richard Jonsen was executive director (1990-1999) or of David Longanecker’s administration in the new millennium. Surely at a future time these significant years will be added. When that happens we hope that the current effort will provide a sound foundation for the rest of the story.

A second point is that the account is based primarily upon documentation that, while “official” (in the sense that it has come chiefly from WICHE documents), has not always been complete. Happily, many of those most heavily involved have been both available and wonderfully generous with their time and memories in reviewing parts of the story that they actually experienced.

More specifically, I should say that the *outline* for this account has depended heavily upon the collection of minutes of the WICHE Commission and its executive committee, and the “agenda papers” which were the basis for the discussions and actions at meetings of these two governing bodies. Together, for each such meeting, these documents often exceed 250 pages; this indicates the likelihood that, because of the volume, the author may have missed information that would have improved this account, but it also shows that what *is* reported is quite solid. For most activities I was able to add information found in a quite complete set of WICHE newsletters, annual reports, occasional letters from the executive director to the commission, a periodic information sheet that WICHE provided its staff, correspondence of the executive director with the succession of WICHE chairs and members, the available files of many (but not all) WICHE

projects, and interviews with all of the former executive directors (including Bob Kroepsch, prior to his death in 1986, and his long-time associate Kevin Bunnell more recently) and other current and former staff. (I express my gratitude to these individuals in another place.)

I should point out that my account of Bob Kroepsch's years gives emphasis to the initial 10 of the nearly 16 years of his administration. I would explain this vagary with the observation that the nature of the WICHE program and of his administration became fully evident during his first decade in office, and with the point that it seemed appropriate to give emphasis to the origins and development of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) as the major effort and accomplishment of the later period. To bridge the period between the end of the first decade of the Kroepsch years and the arrival of Phillip Sirotkin, I have attempted in the account of the Sirotkin period to summarize significant developments for each program during that interim.

To limit the quantity of endnotes I have deliberately omitted many items that the context will enable the reader to trace in minutes and agenda papers of the WICHE Commission and Executive Committee.

I am sure that my employment at WICHE (1984-92), my consulting and volunteer associations with it from 1992 to the present, and the period of rather close association with it while I was executive director of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (1965-77) have led to both insights and biases to which the reader will appropriately be sensitive.

— *Frank C. Abbott*

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CHAPTER I

WICHE ORIGINS

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) came into being on November 29, 1951, when 14 commissioners from the five states that had ratified the Western Regional Education Compact met at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver to organize the commission and consider what to do next.

The compact itself had been generated a year earlier by the Western Governors' Conference at its November 10-11, 1950, meeting in Denver. It provided for WICHE's activation when five of the 11 eligible states and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii had formally adopted the compact. By November 1951, with ratifications in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah, it was time to call the first meeting of the commission, though eight of the eligible members had not yet acted to join.

It was five years since World War II had ended. Across the country, college campuses were swarming with veterans. The "G.I. Bill," the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, provided by far the largest student financial assistance program in the nation's history. It came into effect at a time when racial and class barriers endemic in American society were beginning to be challenged, in the wake of shared wartime experiences of men and women from all kinds of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. With assistance for tuition and subsistence provided by the G.I. Bill, hundreds of thousands of young men and women from all walks of life were in college, many of whom surely would not have been under prewar conditions. By the later 1940s many were seeking places in graduate and professional schools. Campus expansion to accommodate students at the undergraduate level had not always been easy, but it had been accomplished. Expansion of graduate and professional education was more costly and time-consuming. Particularly for those men and women who lived in states which sponsored no public schools of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and other professional disciplines, it was becoming increasingly difficult to gain admission to the professional schools of states that did.

It was in July of 1945 that George D. ("Duke") Humphrey, the former president of Mississippi State University, stopped off in Denver en route to Laramie, where he was to take up his duties as president of the University of Wyoming. Humphrey had a son who would be ready to enter medical school one year hence. Well aware that getting into medical school was no simple matter and that it was going to get even tougher, Humphrey met with University of Colorado Medical School Dean Ward Darley, to

establish friendly connections and, he hoped, lay the groundwork for his son's admission in the fall of 1946.

Out of these kinds of circumstances – national, state and regional, socioeconomic, educational, political, personal – the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education was conceived in 1950 and organized late in the following year.

Antecedent: The Southern Regional Education Board

A prototype for interstate collaboration in higher education had been created by the Southern Governors' Conference in 1948 and had begun operations in 1949. The Board of Control for Southern Regional Education – almost immediately to be known as the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) – provided an influential model as educators, governors, and state legislators in the West considered some of their common problems in the late 1940s. SREB continued to have an impressive, and readily acknowledged, influence.

Perhaps it should not be surprising that interstate collaboration in higher education began in the South. States south of the Mason-Dixon line shared numerous cultural, demographic, historical, economic, political, and other qualities. Clearly, they constituted a *region*, though perhaps with some questions around the edges.

Within that region, the idea of interstate collaboration had a long history. In higher education there were examples of resource sharing among institutions in medicine, veterinary medicine, public administration, teacher education, and graduate education. There were interlibrary projects. In this setting, a widely shared sense that the South's entire higher education enterprise had some catching up to do was further motivation for collaborative action.¹

Within and outside the South, the interstate compact – a formal agreement among legislatures and governors in two or more states, with congressional approval – is a device of American federalism that antedates the U.S. Constitution. Nine such agreements were executed in the colonial period and four more under the Articles of Confederation, virtually all dealing with boundaries. Provisions in the articles for interstate agreements or compacts were carried over into the Constitution. Provisions for congressional approval were included but are vague and often are not exercised when the objective of the compact deals with matters the Constitution reserves to the states (such as education). Since the 1920s there have been growing numbers of compacts in more and more fields.²

In 1947 the threatened closing of the Meharry Medical College in Nashville sparked political and educational concerns that led to the formation of the Southern Regional Education Board. The crisis at Meharry brought educators and governors to common ground – a circumstance that seems not always to prevail.

Meharry, an independent institution, was the major source of African-American physicians and dentists in the South and indeed in the nation. Several Southern states paid the college a fee for the professional education of their African-American residents. Southern governors were well aware of the Supreme Court decision of 1938 in *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*, which held that Missouri's provision of legal education for African-Americans out of state – through arrangements similar to those some of the Southern states were using in medicine and dentistry with Meharry – did not meet the “separate but equal” criterion then prevailing as law. The decision threw the dominant system of segregation in graduate and professional schools into question throughout the region.

At the annual Southern governors' conferences in the mid-1940s, the subject of possible regional arrangements in education had engaged the governors. At the conference in December 1945, Florida Governor Millard Caldwell urged states to adopt very broad policies that would admit residents of other Southern states to their colleges and universities without interstate payments of money. At that same conference, Governor Chauncey Sparks of Alabama suggested a “treaty arrangement between the states,” hinting at the kind of structure that eventually came into being with SREB. The following year a panel of five governors again discussed the idea that some formal structure for collaboration in higher education might be useful, though no action was taken.

In the mid-1940s Meharry was preparing approximately half the nation's African-American graduates in medicine and dentistry. For many years it had been sustained on grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and, later, from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, but five years of Kellogg support ended in 1947. Meharry's closure in the spring of 1948 was a serious prospect. Despite *Missouri ex rel. Gaines*, the college was providing a politically as well as educationally vital service in many Southern states. Governors were concerned for its preservation. At the Southern Governors' Conference in October 1947, after two years of conceptual talk about interstate collaboration in higher education, Governor Caldwell proposed and the conference adopted resolutions placing the conference on the record in support of steps to provide adequate facilities for higher education for both whites and blacks, as well as of the appointment of a committee of governors to follow up on that resolution.

Persons facing election to office every two or even every four years are motivated to act quickly. The committee of governors created by the action in October 1947 visited Meharry in January 1948 and a special meeting of the Southern Governors' Conference was convened three weeks later, at Wakulla Springs, FL. The conference discussed formation of an interstate compact for higher education, appointed a committee to draft such a compact that day, and nine of the governors signed the resulting draft the following morning. In effect, the Southern Regional Education Board had been created overnight. The pact would take effect when six states had formally ratified it.

But ratification would take some time. To avoid delay, the governors authorized the immediate formation of an interim body, the Regional Council on Education, to seek necessary funding and to initiate surveys of higher education in the signatory states. An inaugural conference for incoming University of Florida President J. Hillis Miller one month later, on March 4, 1948, provided the occasion for formation of the regional council. Within weeks the new council had attracted a grant of \$30,000 from the General Education Board to help it get started. The council turned immediately to recruiting a director, and Dr. John E. Ivey, Jr., of the University of North Carolina was on the job in new offices in Atlanta in September.

The history of the Southern Regional Education Board is one of broad research, policy development, and action in higher education and indeed, in education at all levels; but the compact document written at Wakulla Springs described a significantly narrower mission. If one judges by the language of the proposed compact drawn up at that meeting, the board was to be the vehicle “for the establishment, acquisition, operation and maintenance of regional educational schools and institutions for the benefit of citizens of the respective states.” Title to any institutions established would be vested in the board. Clearly, the situation at Meharry was much in the minds of the framers, even though there is evidence that many of them intended and expected a much broader program to be defined.

Three states completed ratification procedures in 1948 (South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana), but most of the legislatures did not meet in 1948; and 1949 would be as early as SREB could come into being. As the transitional regional council began meeting in 1948, it became evident that a number of amendments were needed in the compact, foremost among them a broadening of the language defining the purposes of the board and the functions and powers of its governing structure and officers.

At the regional council’s behest, the Southern Governors’ Conference, at its regular meeting in December 1948, amended the compact, adding to the board’s power the broad authority “to enter into such agreements or arrangements with any of the States and with educational institutions or agencies . . . to provide adequate services and facilities for the graduate, professional, and technical education for the benefit of the citizens of the respective State residing within the region (sic), and such additional and general power and authority as may be vested in the board from time to time by legislative enactment of the said States.”³

A perception that SREB had been created by the Southern governors primarily to preserve Meharry as a way to maintain segregated professional education for African-Americans continued to interfere with the work of the regional council. A resolution to express approval of the compact by the U.S. Congress was introduced by 27 Southern senators in February 1948 but was soon engulfed in controversy. Senate action was not pursued that year or the following year and congressional approval of the compact has not subsequently been sought.

Nonetheless, the question how the Southern Regional Education Board would relate to the maintenance of segregated systems of professional education urgently demanded an answer. The answer was provided by the courts in 1949 and 1950 in response to an effort by the State of Maryland to accommodate an African-American citizen, Esther McCready, in the nursing program at Meharry through the SREB student exchange program, in lieu of admitting her to the University of Maryland School of Nursing. McCready brought suit against the university in the Baltimore City Court. SREB officials met with the governor and other Maryland officials to request withdrawal of the university defense because “use of regional arrangements in this manner would endanger the future activities of the Board and throw it into racial politics.” When the university persisted, SREB formally intervened as a friend of the court, declaring that “it is not the purpose of the Board that the regional compact and the contracts for educational services thereunder shall serve any state as a legal defense for avoiding responsibilities established under the existing State and Federal laws and court decisions.” The Baltimore City Court found for the university, but the Maryland Court of Appeals reversed that judgment and put an end to the plea.

SREB now was ready to get down to the business for which it had been created.

Creating a Higher Education Compact in the West

When Duke Humphrey headed for Laramie, WY, to assume the presidential office at the university, he surely was aware that he was moving to “the West,” but it is unlikely that he thought of “the West” in the way he thought of “the South,” a region with shared history, economic interests, and demographic and cultural qualities distinctive in the nation. Across the country, the West was perceived variously: to many a Bostonian it was a vaguely defined area west of the Hudson; to the typical Clevelander, anything west of the Mississippi. To those living west of the Mississippi, it would depend: there was much more awareness that huge differences in many conditions of life were caused by variations in topography, soils, the availability and reliability of water, accessibility to transportation, long distances to almost anywhere, proportions of publicly owned land, the Spanish heritage or lack of it, and other factors. Surely, the West was an area of the country, but taken as a whole it was hardly a “region” distinguishable from other parts of the country because of pervasive qualities special to that area.

“The Duke” had left the South before SREB had been created but not before regional and national bodies had begun to talk about interstate cooperation in Southern higher education. As president at Mississippi State University, he had been a member of an advisory panel of the Tennessee Valley Authority on regional materials of instruction. He had been a member also of the American Council on Education’s committee on Southern regional studies and education, established in 1943 to promote resource-use education.⁴ He knew about Meharry and the financial and political, as well as educational, issues in

what was happening there. He had a strong personal interest in establishing ties between his new home state of Wyoming and its larger neighboring state of Colorado, from which educational services might be obtained if mutually advantageous ways could be invented to provide for them.

There was no equivalent to the “crisis at Meharry” to alarm and activate Western governors. There was not even an impending “tidal wave of students” threatening to besiege the existing higher education establishment – that would come 15 years later. There was, however, a growing pressure from the veterans themselves and their spouses for admission to graduate and advanced professional degree programs that many Western states had never developed. It was by no means surprising that six of the eight Rocky Mountain states and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii had created not a single college of medicine or dentistry or veterinary medicine. But in the later 1940s, this huge geographic vacuum led the states that did have such schools to begin to discourage residents of nearby smaller states from entering their programs, as they found it increasingly necessary politically to respond to pressures to admit their own residents. As the impact of that policy took hold, governors and legislators in “have not” states became motivated to explore alternatives. Duke Humphrey’s experience and his connections in the South proved to be truly relevant.

Both Humphrey and Ward Darley made opportunities, in 1946 and 1947, to inform their governors about what the two had learned from each other in July 1945 and to share preliminary thoughts about some kind of interstate collaboration. Darley also enlisted Dr. Florence Sabin, chairwoman of the subcommittee on health of Colorado’s Post-War Planning Committee. In fact, Darley credits Sabin with first broaching in public the idea of creating an interstate structure for collaboration in higher education.⁵ Governor Lester C. Hunt of Wyoming was a dentist by training and thus perhaps naturally interested; Governor Lee Knous of Colorado was equally responsive to Darley’s concerns. During the winter of 1947-48, Humphrey and Governor Hunt visited with Governor Knous and lay the groundwork for a Mountain States Governors Conference on Education for Health Services, held December 10, 1948, in the chambers of the Colorado House of Representatives. Governors Thomas J. Mabry of New Mexico and Herbert B. Maw of Utah joined Knous and Hunt as cosponsors. Some 40 state and higher education officials and professional society representatives from the sponsoring states were present.

In his opening remarks at the conference, Governor Knous stated explicitly that the purpose of the meeting was to determine whether facilities for professional education in health fields might be made available in the West through interstate cooperative relationships. Governor Hunt followed with the proposal that a committee be formed to create a definite plan. Ward Darley outlined ways by which states, though unable to spend their own funds to build facilities in other states, could legally defray the costs of their residents in schools in other states. Forming a committee made up of three

representatives of each state and urging the four sponsoring governors to invite other interested states to join in the effort, the four mountain states thus, in December 1948, took the first steps toward forming an interstate higher education compact in the West.⁶

President Humphrey and Ward Darley soon offered a real-life illustration of the benefits they expected to flow from a proposed compact. The Colorado Medical School had agreed to hold five places for residents of Wyoming and five from New Mexico in the class that would enter in fall 1949, and four from Wyoming and three from New Mexico actually did enroll, the students paying about \$2,700 to cover the costs. Officials of the three states formalized the plan at a second interstate meeting in Denver on November 2, 1949.⁷ Under the three-state plan, Wyoming and New Mexico students would pay resident tuition at the medical school; in addition, their home states would pay roughly \$2,000 for each such student to assure that Colorado would receive the estimated full cost of the education provided. Students would be expected to return to their home states for a period of practice, following graduation. The three states clearly viewed the arrangement as one that would serve only until a regional program could be put in place.

Only a few days after the three mountain states had formalized their agreement for this exchange of students, the Western governors convened in their 1949 annual conference in Salt Lake City. At their request, former Governor Millard Caldwell, now the chair of the Southern Regional Education Board, was there to review the circumstances that had led to formation of the Southern interstate compact, its purposes and expected benefits.

In the background at the formation of SREB in the South, and now of WICHE in the West, was the Council of State Governments, a body created in the 1930s to serve the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government. Championing “excellence in state government” generally and advocating for states within the federal system, the council cited as one of its major objectives the advocacy of “multi-state problem-solving and partnerships.” Its director, Frank Bane, and Elton McQuery, director of the CSG Western Regional Office, along with Stewart Wilson of the CSG staff, were consistent participants and supporters in the early steps toward establishment of the Western Regional Education Compact and of the Western Interstate Commission.⁸ In a report “published at the direction of the Western Governors’ Conference,” *Western Regional Cooperation in Higher Education, A Proposed Program*, the Council of State Governments recounts some of the background, describes the problem faced by Western states in advanced professional education in the health fields, and reports on the action taken at the Western Governors’ Conference in Salt Lake City in November 1949. At that meeting the governors “unanimously endorsed the principle of close interstate cooperation in higher education.” According to their formal resolution:

The Western Governors’ Conference believes that a cooperative plan among the western states is necessary and desirable and should be developed to provide more extensive facilities and training for the students of this region.

To this end, the Chairman of the Western Governors' Conference is directed to appoint a committee to develop such a plan and to submit it to the next meeting of the Western Governors' Conference for its consideration and for such action as it deems wise.

By action of the governors' conference in 1949, there was to be no overnight drafting of compact language by a committee of governors and sign-on the next day by governors present. The conference chairman, Governor Earl Warren of California, genuinely supportive of the idea, appointed a committee of five – Governors Knous of Colorado (chairman), Robins of Idaho, Mabry of New Mexico, Langlie of Washington, and Crane of Wyoming – to assess the problem and bring recommendations to the conference a year hence. These governors did not sit down to write a draft compact themselves – they asked each governor to appoint two persons to a technical advisory committee and one to a legal committee. The result was a technical committee made up of educators and a legal committee whose members were virtually all attorneys general and assistants.

Meeting in April 1950, the technical advisory committee followed a direction from the governors in deciding to focus on four fields (medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and public health) and to establish special committees to assess regional needs and available facilities in each field. That summer, all of the committees developed reports. The plan advanced by the technical advisory committee and the proposed compact drafted by the legal committee, together with the reports of the four special committees assessing needs and resources within the region, were submitted to the Western Governors' Conference in Denver on November 10-11, 1950.

The governors made minor changes in the proposals, and approved the program and the proposed compact language without dissent.⁹

The Western Regional Education Compact & WICHE

Subject to ratification by their legislatures and, in most cases, by the governors as well, the 11 states and two territories lying to the west of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico (but including those states) thus agreed to cooperate in carrying out the purposes of the compact. As described in Article VIII, those purposes were two:

- To enter into contractual agreements with states and institutions for services and facilities of graduate and professional education for citizens of the respective compacting states and territories. Following the proposals of the technical committee, the governors directed the new organization to work first on arrangements in dentistry, medicine, public health, and veterinary medicine, though expressly permitting “similar activities in other professional and graduate fields.”

- To “undertake studies of needs for professional and graduate educational facilities in the Region, the resources for meeting such needs, and the long-range effects of the Compact on higher education.”

The language proved to be sufficiently general to permit a broad program of research and policy development. The commission would report to the Western Governors’ Conference and to the legislatures of the compacting states and territories and might propose uniform legislation dealing with higher education in the region.

The compact would be activated and administered through the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. The commission would comprise three residents of each member state, appointed by the governor. One of the three must be an educator. The term of office would be four years and would be renewable. Each state would have one vote. The commission could appoint staff needed to carry out the purposes of the compact. Commission costs would be “apportioned equally among the compacting states and territories.” The compact would become operative and binding for states adopting it when five or more of those eligible did so, prior to July 1, 1953.

In *purpose*, there were strong similarities between the compact organizations in the South and West. Both were the product of concerns relating to graduate and professional education; both were to arrange for educational services on an interstate basis. The literal words of the Southern compact suggested that SREB was to plan, establish, and operate educational institutions, but not even in its earliest meetings was any such action seriously proposed. Arranging for a broad program of educational services occupied SREB from the outset. So it would also be for WICHE.

In *structure*, the two are similar in having a governing commission, the members of which are selected by the governors of member states, but there are differences of major significance. In the South, commissioners for each state are members of a team which includes, and takes its directions from, the governor himself or herself. For each state there is a legislator as well – a member who regularly is a leader within the legislative branch and who can represent the commission first-hand in legislative debate. From the very beginning when the crisis at Meharry commanded gubernatorial concern and action, governors have retained their dominating leadership role in SREB affairs within each state and within the regional program. For WICHE the governors constitute, collectively, a body of general oversight, to which the staff director is frequently directed, or given the opportunity, to report. Commissioners, with varying effectiveness, communicate with the governors of their own states. Through their Western conference, governors of WICHE states occasionally raise questions or assert interest in particular inquiries or actions to which the WICHE Commission and staff respond. Nevertheless, years may go by with little interaction between WICHE and the governors’ conference. It certainly is true that WICHE endeavors to keep governors well informed and is immediately attentive to any governor’s concerns, questions, and ideas. Yet it is unmistakably true that the structural

difference between SREB and WICHE with respect to gubernatorial leadership has direct and pervasive effects upon their programs and operations.

At the very beginning, the differences in structure led to significant differences in the manner and speed with which the two organizations became fully active. The Southern governors would truck no delay in activating SREB while awaiting ratification action in at least six states. They created and saw to the immediate funding of the Regional Council on Education, an “interim SREB,” so that its staff director could be hired and an office opened only 10 months after the compact-drafting session at Wakulla Springs. For WICHE only five state ratifications were required, and within a few months of the governors’ conference five were obtained. The commission was able to hold its organizing meeting only a year after the Western governors’ action. But five out of the eligible 13 states were insufficient to fund a staff and an office, and the organization lacked the stature or force that SREB and its gubernatorial leadership could muster in seeking the financial help of national foundations. When the initial five states chose their chair and vice chair in November 1951, they had to bargain with the Council of State Governments to provide a mailing address and limited staff assistance to help to get the remaining eight states and territories to join in. It was nearly two full years after organizing itself and nearly three after the governors had signed off on formation of a compact that the WICHE Commission had an executive director of its own, in an office down the hall from the one he had just vacated as dean of administration at the University of Oregon.

WICHE Gets Under Way

The governing structure created at the organizing meeting of the commission in November 1951 called for the entire commission – WICHE’s governing body – to meet annually; the first such meeting was to be held in August 1952. Effectively, the organization would be governed by an executive committee comprising the commission officers and one commissioner from each state that was not represented by one of the officers, chosen by each state’s commissioners. Realities of convenience and travel costs led the commission to grant the executive committee “the widest possible freedom . . . to determine policy and program for the entire Commission.” The executive committee would meet two or three times annually, and one of the meetings would be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the full commission. Dean O. Meredith Wilson of the University College of the University of Utah, a member of the technical advisory committee and a central figure in the earliest definition of the Western Regional Compact, was elected chairman and Tom L. Popejoy, president of the University of New Mexico, vice chairman. Executive committee members from the remaining states – Colorado, Montana, and Oregon – were chosen.

Two issues loomed for early action. Whether there would continue to be a WICHE depended upon getting the remaining states and territories into the compact as dues-paying members, and there was extended discussion of how to do this. Indeed, it was already clear that the processes of ratification and of obtaining appropriations to pay the membership fees involved different legislative committees and procedures – five states had ratified the compact, but only two had appropriated the membership fees that would make it possible for the commission to operate. In eight states both ratifications and appropriations were still needed.

The second issue, which was not unrelated to persuading the remaining states to ratify and fund the compact, was to activate the program for which WICHE had been established – the exchange of students in health fields between the “have” and “have-not” states. The commissioners noted that the five ratifying states were operating two medical schools (Colorado and Utah), a dental school (Oregon), and a school of veterinary medicine (Colorado) – all the fields that were initially contemplated for the exchange program except public health. With no agreements in place concerning numbers of students, costs and who would pay them, or operating procedures, at its organizing meeting the commission skirted the idea of starting the program in fall 1952 and resolved to implement it “at the earliest possible date.”

Frank Bane and the Council of State Governments (CSG) were prepared to go the extra mile to get the Western compact under way. For the calendar year 1952 Bane agreed that his Western regional representative, Stewart G. Wilson, would operate a commission secretariat as best he could. The commissioners wanted the council office to serve as “a clearing house agency as well as a survey and fact-finding agency.” The executive committee, in turn, agreed to take the lead in promoting additional state ratifications at the earliest possible times, with advice from the CSG secretariat as to appropriate contacts in the target states.¹⁰

The timing was unfortunate. In the early 1950s, across the country most state legislatures convened only every other year. In the West, Arizona, California, and Colorado had moved to annual sessions, but in every other state as well as the Alaska and Hawaii territories, there would be no legislative sessions until 1953. Arizona did ratify in 1952, bringing the total to six, but problems with appropriations remained.

When the commission convened in its first annual meeting in August 1952, there was little progress to show for the nearly two years that had passed since the decision of the Western Governors’ Conference in November 1950 or for the nine months since the organizing meeting of the commission in November 1951. Six – fewer than half of the eligible 13 states and territories – had ratified the compact; the newest member, Arizona, was not represented at that meeting. All in attendance were there at their own expense or at the expense of their employing institutions. A staff member of the Council of State Governments was giving what time he could to the tasks of arranging for meetings of the executive committee and commission, responding to inquiries, drafting by-laws, and

handling other matters. Members of the commission were well aware of the limitations. They approved an action of the executive committee directing the secretary to request \$1,000 from each member of that committee (presumably to be obtained from each member state through whatever legerdemain the member could invent) to underwrite commission costs in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1952. They also discussed and approved a budget plan for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1953, that would provide for a staff of two professionals and a secretary and for commission travel. The budget, aggregating \$42,000, would be raised through dues of \$7,000 from each of the then-member states. The executive committee authorized the chairman to seek funds from national foundations to help with administrative costs in the early years.

There was genuine concern to get the program of student exchange going. The commission's only woman member, Mary Condon, superintendent of public instruction in Montana, had chaired a committee on costs which the executive committee had set up at its meeting in April 1952 to "discover a fair and average gross cost in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine, and a fair average resident tuition." These would be used in negotiating places for students from "have-not" states in the professional schools of the region. The reports of costs reveal the profound difficulty the committee encountered at a time when educational costs had not yet become a fundamental concern of legislatures and therefore were of marginal concern to the sponsoring institutions. There were no common definitions of income or expenditure items; no rules for treating joint costs involving instruction, research, and clinic; no agreements for inclusion or exclusion of various grants, how to handle contributed teaching, and many other variables. In medicine, a U.S. Public Health Service study showed a range of costs in 70 U.S. medical schools from \$754 to \$8,257, with a median of \$2,285. The numbers that could be found in dentistry and veterinary medicine were even more tenuous.

The commission recognized that states would need to know what they would be expected to pay receiving schools for each of their residents. Condon's committee had proposed charges of \$2,500 for medicine, \$1,700 for dentistry, and \$1,200 for veterinary medicine – but Condon had urged that the reports and proposals should be understood as tentative, not final recommendations. When, in following months, several states negotiated for student places in potential receiving institutions, it became evident that support fees of \$2,000 in medicine, \$1,600 in dentistry, and \$1,200 in veterinary medicine would be acceptable, and with no formal action by the commission, these became effective for the program.¹¹

One reads with surprise in the minutes of this first annual meeting, that "the commission unanimously adopted a motion that its members would hold themselves available for any help that the Council of State Governments might ask of them in

connection with the promotion of the Interstate Compact in those states which have not yet ratified – but that the commission recognized that the primary responsibility in this connection would remain with the Council.” The last prior reference to obtaining the needed ratifications had been in minutes of the executive committee meeting that immediately followed the organizing meeting of the commission. Then it was the committee that had agreed “to embark on a promotional program,” with advice from the CSG secretariat. The annual meeting minutes presumably were written by the CSG secretary. Did this 180-degree turn reflect the preferences of CSG? The realities of the way things were working? Unfortunately, some 50 years later it is not possible to recapture authoritatively the mood of the commission and the nuances of working without its own staff. What cannot be in question is that it was imperative that additional ratifications and appropriations be obtained in the seven eligible states and territories in which legislatures would be meeting in 1953.

The commission reelected Meredith Wilson and Tom Popejoy as chair and vice-chair. Anticipating that before their next annual meeting a year hence, there would be money enough to begin operations in an office of their own, the commissioners authorized the executive committee to appoint a WICHE director and staff. They declared as the sense of the commission that the WICHE office should be located in Salt Lake City. And then they returned to face the demands of their own offices.

Opening a WICHE Office

When the executive committee next met early in February 1953, legislatures through the region were in session, and reports indicated that in all of them except Hawaii and Nevada there appeared to be forward movement toward ratification and funding the WICHE Compact. It was too early to know for certain, but the committee found it reasonable to expect that six states would pay their \$7,000 membership fees and make a barebones office operation possible. They discussed the qualifications they should look for in a director and agreed on a procedure under which Meredith Wilson – who continued as Utah’s representative but who had given up the chair when he took a job with the Ford Foundation in California – would assist the new chair, Tom Popejoy, in collecting and reviewing applicant files and sending copies to members of the executive committee. The committee would meet in two months to review files and arrange for interviews.

When the committee met in Salt Lake City on May 13, they found they could count on income of only \$37,500 in the fiscal year that would begin July 1, 1953. Six states had appropriated funds for dues, but Utah’s was for half the agreed-upon amount and Wyoming was a thousand dollars short. There remained some possibility of funds from Colorado and Idaho. They pared the director’s salary item from \$15,000 to \$13,000

and proceeded to interview three candidates, two of whom they were prepared to hire. They authorized their chairman, Tom Popejoy, to negotiate with William Jones and with Harold Enarson, in that order, at a salary that could range between \$11,500 and \$13,000.

William C. Jones had been dean of administration at the University of Oregon in Eugene for two years, following seven years as president of Whittier College in California. Prior to going to Whittier, he had been head of the Political Science Department at Oregon. Harold Enarson was a younger man, currently in the reform administration of Mayor Joseph Clark in Philadelphia. He had served in the U.S. Army, in the federal Bureau of the Budget, as executive secretary of the Steel Industry Board, and as special assistant in the executive office of the president. He had taught political science at Stanford and at Whittier College.

Bill Jones, more seasoned and better known in the West, signed on as WICHE's first executive director, with the understanding that office space would be made available by the University of Oregon, down the hall from his office as dean of administration. At a cost of \$500 for the furniture and equipment he was unable to borrow from the university, Jones opened his office in mid-June 1953, and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education was truly under way.

Two more states, Idaho and Wyoming, ratified the compact in their 1953 legislative sessions, bringing the number of member states to eight; but the states had not yet routinized payment of their membership fees. Well into the fiscal year that began July 1, 1953, from the eight ratifying states Jones still had received payments of the \$7,000 fee from only New Mexico and Oregon, and \$5,000 from Wyoming. Moreover, the two largest states in the region, California and Washington, along with Nevada and the Alaska and Hawaii territories, remained to be persuaded that WICHE was an enterprise worth joining and supporting. On the program front, it was critically important to activate the exchange of students in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine, but there was widespread confusion within the member states about what each state needed to do to determine the fields, if any, in which it would support its residents in the program; how to select the students who would participate; what kind of money it would take; and how and when, and by whom, that money would be supplied. And what other fields were there that might lend themselves to the student exchange model, or perhaps to collaboration in other formats?

With a staff director giving his full time to WICHE affairs beginning that summer of 1953, the WICHE program began to take shape. The annual meeting of the commission, held in Great Falls, MT, barely six weeks after Jones occupied his new office, provided the occasion for Jones to lay his proposed course of action before the executive committee and the commission. Formally launching the Student Exchange Program in the fall of 1953, he would work up forms for contracts with states and receiving institutions and meet with the deans of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine as

soon as possible. He would visit the Southern Regional Education Board offices to learn all he could about both the Southern structure and methods of operation and about its developing program. He would seek a place on the agenda of the Western Governors' Conference in November, and would arrange a number of conferences with others. To promote the compact he would author a pamphlet about WICHE.

The commission focused on getting the Student Exchange Program going. Many states were interested in extending the program beyond the three health fields now contemplated; mining, social work, architecture, and such specialties as landscape architecture and city planning, forestry, journalism, and others were mentioned. Mary Condon, Montana's superintendent of public instruction and a strong member of the WICHE Commission, was looking for an exchange "on some reciprocal basis" based on "institutional specialties" – a broad approach that WICHE was able to initiate at the graduate level and finally at the undergraduate level as well, some decades later. But the risks in pushing too fast were evident in comments of President Henry Schmitz of the University of Washington, attending the 1953 annual meeting as an interested guest from a state not yet in the compact. The message from Schmitz was: don't push student exchange too hard. Some states are going to prefer to initiate new programs of their own. That was a major university's way of saying that there were institutions which were ready, willing, able, and indeed eager, to add their own programs, given the necessary funding from their states.

Jones arranged a string of conferences at the end of October that brought the executive committee into working contact with a broad cross section of the WICHE constituency. On October 31 the committee met with the deans of medical, dental, and veterinary medical schools and with premed advisors to think through once again the procedures through which states could determine which of their residents might attend professional schools in other states, with support from their home states, and how that support money could be paid by one state to another. The executive committee met over its own agenda on the following day; then in the early afternoon, it hosted a group of college and university administrators – an important constituent group with whom the WICHE enterprise needed to be better acquainted. Finally, on November 2 the executive committee met with the Western Governors' Conference. As WICHE chairman, New Mexico's Tom Popejoy updated the governors on the status of the compact under its new director. Popejoy found it advisable to caution them not to expect WICHE to solve all their higher education problems – states "frequently" would have to fund their own programs, he said, however much WICHE might be able to help.

Jones created a whirlwind of activity that fall and winter. He had already met with a group of graduate deans from Northwest states, and in January 1954, he spent two days with graduate deans from 26 institutions throughout the region assessing graduate study in the West and the possibilities of interstate cooperation and resource sharing. He had explored with Ward Darley the interest of the University of Colorado

in organizing a meeting of representatives from the Rocky Mountain states to consider needs in dental education and, following approval of the executive committee, organized such a conference in January 1954. Out of that came his agreement that WICHE would compile further information about regional needs. He took steps to convene similar conferences in the fields of mineral engineering and marine biology, later that spring. He made contact with the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education regarding support for an educational television service project similar to one initiated, with the Ford fund's support, by SREB. He spent much time interacting with educational and governmental leaders in California, a state that he and others at WICHE were eager to have ratify the WICHE Compact, and with member states that were participating but that had not yet paid their membership fees. With the help of the public relations director of the Oregon System of Higher Education, he arranged for the publication of a newsletter, *Higher Education in the West*, four or five issues of which were published annually for more than a decade.

He also came to the conclusion that WICHE leadership was not for him. He had taken the position with the understanding that he could return as dean of administration at Oregon if he wished, and in the spring of 1954, he informed WICHE Chairman Tom Popejoy that he wished to do that. He had a successor in mind. It was Harold Enarson, the executive committee's choice for the WICHE director position – second to Jones – just a year earlier. When president at Whittier, Jones had known Enarson as a member of his faculty.¹²

The transition to Enarson took place quickly and easily. In the 1950s a “national search” could be conducted among a group of strategically placed commission officers who were known among their peers to be sources of information about eligible, up-and-coming candidates. The “search” could be handled by telephone and in a matter of days. The next meeting of the executive committee was June 26, 1954. By then the leading candidates had been identified and two had been brought for interview by the executive committee then and there. Indeed, two members of the committee who were unable to be present had expressed their votes for one of the two – Enarson. And so it was that early in the executive committee meeting in President Popejoy's office at the University of New Mexico, Harold L. Enarson was appointed WICHE executive director, subject to his decision within a week and to ratification at the commission's annual meeting in August. Bill Jones would remain in the position on a half-time basis until Enarson could take over, in mid-August.

At the executive committee meeting in June 1954 and again at the annual meeting in August, Jones was acknowledged and appreciated as an executive who had gotten the commission off to a good start. Reviewing his efforts, Jones acknowledged his hard work and its unfinished status in efforts to bring California, Washington, Nevada, and the Alaska and Hawaii territories into the compact. (He told WICHE Public Information Officer Jerry Volgenau that he had been “practically thrown out” of the office of

President Minard Stout of the University of Nevada, who took umbrage over Jones's visit to the governor, made before he had visited with him!)¹³ There was still a lot of work to do to launch the Student Exchange Program in the states clearly intending to participate and to explore other fields in which interinstitutional collaboration and sharing would be advantageous – but much had been started, in such areas as mineral engineering, marine biology, and other areas of graduate study. Jones had also studied the need for and potential of educational television.

Jones had spent some time with the Southern Regional Education Board staff in Atlanta, and he was impressed with the power the governors and the legislator members brought to that organization. In his final report to the commission he urged that ways be found to tie the governors more closely to the commission (earlier, to the executive committee he had suggested making them commissioners *ex officio*); and that in each state, the governor be urged to appoint at least one legislator to the commission.

On this critical point, Tom Popejoy, the commission chair, responded with “what he took to be the predominant view of the Commission.” WICHE was to be primarily a service enterprise, charged with three primary tasks: developing the Student Exchange Program; achieving better use of educational resources; and serving as a vehicle for relating to the federal government and to foundations on a variety of educational problems. He urged that leadership in these efforts must remain the primary responsibility of the educational community, that WICHE's best course was to persuade and not to attempt to coerce, and that its influence would grow as it produced tangible results.¹⁴

At the end of his year as WICHE's first executive director, William Jones, returning to his campus job at Oregon, had raised a seminal question about the composition of the commission's leadership and had made a suggestion that, if adopted, would profoundly affect program priorities and the very nature of the WICHE enterprise in the years to come. The WICHE chairman, a state university president who had played a dominant role in the initial shaping of the higher education compact in the West, had responded with what he knew to be the predominant view of those serving as members of the commission – a view that wanted to assure that control of the organization remained within the higher education community. The issue would return to the table frequently in later years.

CHAPTER II

THE ENARSON YEARS
1954–1960

The private reasons that William Jones decided to return to his old job at the University of Oregon are not in the record. It is possible, perhaps it is likely, that Jones was frustrated by the slow pace at which the new regional organization was accepted by the remaining eligible states and territories – and by the difficulty of getting member states to pay their share of the costs after they had agreed to do so. We know he was concerned that neither governors nor legislators had a role in commission affairs: he had noted the strong role of the governors in the sister agency in the South. In his parting remarks to the commission he had expressed his “conviction” that the commission must make itself an organization to which the governors and state legislators, as well as the institutional executives and civic leaders generally, would look for cooperative interstate action in higher education.

Other problems may have concerned him. The compact – the legal basis for WICHE operations – defined WICHE purposes in specific terms. The compact clearly intended that WICHE develop mechanisms through which residents of some states could gain advanced professional education in other states in the West. WICHE was to create a mechanism through which residents of states without medical, dental, and veterinary colleges, and perhaps schools of public health, could be accommodated in other Western institutions. The compact was clear in authorizing WICHE to extend similar arrangements to graduate and professional programs more generally. The new entity was charged, further, with studying the need for graduate and professional programs in the West, the resources available for meeting those needs, and “the long-range effects of the compact on higher education.” But at best, this statement of purposes did not envision and clearly authorize a broad program that could reflect the potential of interstate collaboration in higher education as a whole. On the contrary, the statement could be read to limit the organization to a single element in graduate and professional education.

The absence of other organizations that might illustrate the potential of interstate collaboration was another problem. For the nation’s founding fathers, the idea that the states might wish to work together on various matters was reasonable, but it also was potentially dangerous: given experiences under the articles of confederation, there was concern that states might gang up on the federal government. Provisions were included in the constitution for interstate agreements, but such agreements were made subject

to congressional approval. In practice, government in the United States gave no role to regional activity.

Jones's parting remarks to the commission reflected his belief that the organization needed to establish more clearly its links to its constituents – state legislators, college and university executives, civic leaders, and, especially, governors. The chairman had responded forcefully that higher education must not turn its immediate direction over to politicians.

This exchange on the occasion of William Jones's leaving the commission was a revealing exploration, early in WICHE's history, of one of the fundamental questions in public higher education: how can government at the same time exercise appropriate *control* over this publicly supported enterprise while guaranteeing the *freedom* that public colleges and universities require if they are to exercise the critical and creative functions that are their fundamental reason for being? As an agency the entire purpose and function of which was to make higher education more available and more effective, WICHE was as dependent on freedom from political intervention as the universities – and as dependent on governmental support. Reconciling governmental support and control on one hand, and freedom from political interference on the other, was a problem that would continue to be challenging for WICHE, as for higher education generally.

Harold Enarson Takes Over

We have noted that as president at Whittier, Bill Jones had known Harold Enarson as a junior member of his Political Science Department. Each man had been well impressed with the behavior of the other when a local businessman complained to the president about a public statement Assistant Professor Enarson had made. Jones knew that Enarson now was a valued assistant to Philadelphia's reform mayor, Joe Clark, following several years of administrative service at the White House and with the Wage Stabilization Board – a young man on the way up, for whom WICHE could be exactly right.¹

At Jones's last executive committee meeting on June 26, he reviewed his considerable efforts to launch a strong WICHE program. Pushing for further ratifications, he had been at work in California, Nevada, and Washington. He had met with the deans of Western graduate schools in January to advance the possibilities of program sharing. He had organized and led a conference on education in mineral engineering. Jones had explored with the Fund for Adult Education possible support for an educational television project in the West. He had arranged with the Joint Council on Educational Television and the National Citizens Committee on Educational TV to conduct statewide conferences in Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, to encourage public bodies to reserve the educational channels that had been made available. He had pursued, with representatives of the University of Colorado, Colorado Governor Thornton, and the dental association in that state, a request to the Kellogg Foundation for underwriting

for a study of dental education needs. He had visited the Southern Regional Education Board offices in Atlanta and the staff at Resources for the Future.

Six weeks after his June 26 appointment by the executive committee, at the WICHE Commission's 1954 annual meeting, Enarson was confirmed and assumed his position as executive director. To this young man with little campus administrative experience but with an already rich background in public administration at the local level and in the Executive Office of the President of the United States, it looked like a job with enormous potential.

Enarson was sure of one thing: nothing would come of WICHE unless it established a record of accomplishment, and soon. To do this was critical in gaining ratification by the five states and territories not yet affiliated, including California, with its well developed public higher education system and with a population as large as the rest of the WICHE states combined, and Washington, the second largest state in the region. Concrete achievements were essential also to keep all the WICHE states on board. Enarson was not impressed by language of the compact that might suggest a purpose that was less than the *potential* he foresaw. Years later he commented, "I always took a 'Justice John Marshall' approach and always sought to do about anything not plainly illegal or immoral."² He was happy to pick up the Student Exchange Program (SEP) and Bill Jones's initiatives in dental education, mineral engineering, and educational television – but he was alert to initiatives of his own.

The year 1954 was two-thirds gone when he arrived in Eugene. How long did he have to demonstrate WICHE's worth? Surely it would be necessary to be able to demonstrate significant progress by the annual meeting a year hence, and to point to solid achievements by the end of 1955.

The Student Exchange Program

An "exchange" of students from "have not" to "have" states, at least in the fields of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine, was to many the reason WICHE had been created. The reality was that in 1954, three years after WICHE's organizing meeting, the only "exchange" under way took place under the state-to-state arrangements worked out by Colorado with Wyoming and New Mexico before WICHE was in business. These arrangements had been extended to include Arizona and, in the field of veterinary medicine, Utah. WICHE claimed these bilateral arrangements as its "contract program," but in fact, WICHE had little to do with them – Enarson's working paper on SEP for the executive committee meeting in December 1954 confessed that he could not even produce a list naming the students participating in the program.

The problems in activating SEP were deep seated. One was that some states, within and outside the region, kept nonresident tuition purposefully low precisely in order to attract students from other states – so low that the SEP "advantage" to the student of paying resident tuition was of little or no real benefit. Another was that some states

found it advantageous to make their own arrangements with another state for places for their students, rather than to make them through a regional organization. The WICHE compact said nothing about such bilateral arrangements but it clearly did not give WICHE exclusive rights to interstate exchange. Still another obstacle was the lack of procedures for paying state funds, through WICHE, to universities in other states – procedures that state auditors would insist on being able to track.

Bill Jones had met with the professional school deans in October 1953 to try to establish student exchange rules and procedures. Enarson and WICHE Commission Vice Chairman Charles Byrne (chancellor of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education) did so again, immediately prior to the annual meeting in August 1955. Byrne, chairing that meeting, appointed a subcommittee of five of the deans to develop specific procedures for each of the several participants: the receiving schools should determine the numbers of WICHE students they would accept; the sending states should determine the numbers of students each would support in the various fields; and the institutions should rank applying WICHE students in the order of their preference, students being privileged to do the same for the schools they wished to attend. All this information should be supplied to WICHE by dates certain, so WICHE could get the information to the states, schools, and students in time to make the program work. At least, the target had been identified by the end of 1955 – but making it all happen on schedule was still far from accomplished.

Advancing Other Jones Initiatives

Dean Ward Darley of the Colorado Medical School was pushing for the establishment of a dental school at his medical center. Enlisting regional support, including an input of students from other WICHE states, was a strategy that appealed to him, and it appealed also to Bill Jones. The executive committee, of which Darley was a member, in November 1953 directed Jones to organize a meeting of representatives from the Rocky Mountain states to consider needs in dental education. Jones had cooperated with Darley, Colorado Governor Thornton, and others in submitting to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation a request for support for a dental study in Colorado. The foundation indicated interest if such a study were regionwide. Enarson promptly followed up with his own contacts both with Kellogg and with the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). At the meeting of the executive committee in March 1955, he reported that funding had been obtained from Kellogg along with expert personnel from USPHS to do a regional study, and that the work was under way.

Jones had reported to the executive committee on June 26, 1954, that a meeting of representatives of marine biology laboratories in West Coast states would be held at the University of Washington's Friday Harbor facility in August to explore the possibility of creating joint programs and resources in one or more of the laboratories. The meeting, with representation from California, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana (where there was a

laboratory on Flathead Lake), as well as Washington, actually was held just three weeks later. But no proposals for collaborative action came out of the meeting. In Washington there remained interest in further WICHE help – Enarson was asked by the executive committee, in March 1955, to appoint a committee “to determine ways by which neighboring states can utilize the resources of Friday Harbor.” There is no mention in the record of any further action. The experience in marine biology suggested that there was little WICHE could do in any given field, absent interest on the part of those in that field to do something in cooperation with others.

Much the same might be said about WICHE efforts to assure the availability of channels for educational television, or to deal with any of the numerous issues and problems surrounding the uses of television in college and university instruction. Nearly 50 years later it is easy to observe what a life-changing event the advent of television was in “educating” Americans – indeed, the world. In the 1950s, few educators would have denied the potential even though the potential had yet to be demonstrated. Would-be users were put off by the costs in relation to what seemed to be more immediate needs for funds. Bill Jones had arranged for WICHE to cooperate with the Joint Council on Educational Television and the National Citizens Committee for Educational Television in sponsoring conferences in three WICHE states to encourage action to reserve channels for educational use; but successful as those conferences appeared to be, there was insufficient support to bring about such meetings in other Western states.

Goaded by the certainty of television’s potential for education, Enarson in early 1955 employed Gordon Sabine, dean of journalism at the University of Oregon, to look into “possible WICHE activities in the educational television field.” Sabine’s report was presented in the working papers for the commission annual meeting in August 1955. Sabine was not an ETV booster:

The educational television picture in the United States never has developed as the proponents of the idea envisioned. The costs have been tremendous for educational institutions. The programming has not caught any large amount of audience fancy. The accomplishments of educational television have not been dramatic or consistent; rather, they have been all-too-often dull and only occasionally sparkling.

In Sabine’s view, the new medium was “crucially important to education,” but “whether the strictly educational station is the answer is definitely problematical.” He believed that WICHE needed to retain some presence in the field – his recommendation was that Enarson explore with Harry Newburn, president of the Ford Foundation’s Educational Television Center in Ann Arbor, MI, the possibility that WICHE serve as a regional promoter/distributor of educational films made available through the center’s extended services program for showing over commercial stations.

Sabine’s report was on the agenda for the executive committee meeting immediately preceding the 1955 annual meeting; presumably Enarson mentioned the subject in his progress report. As executive director he needed no further executive committee

authorization to follow up with Newburn; but the fact that the minutes of the executive committee meeting and the annual meeting fail even to mention the subject suggests the level of interest and priority accorded educational television in 1955 by members of the WICHE Commission.

Enarson Initiatives

Mental Health

The Western Regional Conference – the Council of State Governments’ (CSG) annual meeting of Western state legislators – in September 1954 had an in-depth discussion of mental health problems in Western states.³ A similar discussion at the Southern Governors’ Conference in November 1953 had caused the Southern Regional Education Board to undertake a regional survey of mental health needs and resources in the South. Enarson knew of the serious problems uncovered by that survey and the attention currently being directed to those problems by Southern governors and legislators. His political sensitivity told him that there was an opportunity for action that would help identify WICHE in the minds of the governors and at the same time activate universities in the region to provide services of major importance to state governments.

Enarson orchestrated for his first executive committee meeting on December 29, 1954, a presentation designed to gain commission approval for a WICHE survey of mental health needs in the West. He took pains that Elton McQuery of the Council of State Governments’ Western office was there to report the interest of Western governors and legislators. He arranged for testimony from the mental health consultants for the Denver and San Francisco offices of the U.S. Public Health Service. As envisioned by Enarson and McQuery, WICHE would take the lead role in defining and conducting the survey.

The strategy for the survey was devised so that, through CSG efforts, the governor of each Western state would have a hand in the action. Specifically, each governor was to appoint a survey committee that would gather information and analyze the results for that state. Enarson pointed out to the WICHE Executive Committee that “a regional survey may dramatize to the nonmember states that WICHE can be a constructive force, one they should promptly join and support.” The executive committee was fully persuaded: it authorized its director to submit a request for funding to the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), and given “reasonable assurance” that the governors would participate and that NIMH funds would be available, they authorized him to proceed to employ a director.

It was a field desperately in need of direction and support. Daniel Blain, medical director at the American Psychiatric Association, characterized mental health capabilities in the West in the mid-1950s:

For lack of manpower, whole programs lie in abeyance, clinical facilities are hopelessly overtaxed, and some, perforce, are closed to new admissions. Waiting lists are static. Key positions such as State commissionerships, Superintendentcies of Mental Hospitals, Directorships of Psychiatric Clinics, Professorships stand vacant for months and even years. Research, crying to be done, awaits the scientists to carry it out. Teaching and supervision, the key ingredients of programs which will vastly expand our human resources, are only sparsely available. The actual carrying out of preventive techniques is virtually a dream. Broadscale planning for the Nation, State, and Community takes on an Alice-in-Wonderland atmosphere for there are no real people to fill the slots in the neat organization charts that we conjure. So much is done by so few and our efforts are so thinly spread that total efficiency is inevitably of a low order.⁴

The mental health field itself was as yet hardly professionalized. According to a WICHE report, "State mental hospitals were staffed with physicians untrained in psychiatry, supported by staff members trained to varying degrees in a variety of mainly custodial subfields. In many states, mental health administration was subsumed within state corrections or public health departments and directed by non-specialized personnel." The fields primarily needing development were psychiatry, clinical psychology, psychiatric nursing, and psychiatric social work. Moreover, "meeting the region's needs in the area of mental health would require efforts that went beyond the limits of higher education to improvements in the quality of the mental health delivery system itself, including the quality of information and the refinement of administrative procedures." In this field it was impossible to separate training from practice.⁵

Following the executive committee's direction, Enarson gave the project priority attention. At the committee's next meeting in March 1955, he reported impressive progress. The National Institute for Mental Health had provided WICHE with a \$61,000 grant for a survey of training resources and facilities in psychiatry, clinical psychology, psychiatric social work, and nursing. The Council of State Governments had called a Western Regional Conference on Mental Health, held immediately prior to this executive committee meeting, which at the CSG's request had included an official representative of each of the governors. The conference commended WICHE for its initiative and requested that it "undertake a survey of mental health training and research and preventive programs in the West." The conference asked that each Western governor appoint a state mental health committee to conduct the survey within the state. It proposed that the findings for each state and for the region as a whole be completed in time for consideration by a regional conference of legislators *in the fall of 1955* and at the next meeting of the Western Governors' Conference, a timeline that overlooked the time requirements of such a survey and that had to be put off to mid-1956, but that must have been sobering to the educators in the group.

Within a month Enarson had concluded arrangements for C. H. Hardin Branch, M.D., head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Utah School of

Medicine, to direct the survey from an office in Salt Lake City. At the annual meeting in August 1955, Branch reported that committees ranging in membership from eight to 40 were at work in every state, and that to provide the information base for the study, 18 different questionnaires had been sent to 24,000 people in various aspects of mental health administration, training, and practice. Under its tight schedule the survey was moving along very well, Enarson reported to the executive committee in December. He, WICHE Chairman Frank McPhail, and project director Hardin Branch would be meeting with NIMH officials in Bethesda, MD, on January 16 to report progress and to lay the groundwork for additional funding.⁶

Nursing

At midpoint in the 20th century, registered nurses were prepared primarily in hospital schools of nursing. In the nation at large, only some 15 percent were graduates of collegiate schools of nursing.⁷ About a third of Western nurses were educated in collegiate schools – more than twice the average of the country at large – but more than half were prepared in hospital-based programs. Within the huge WICHE region there were only a half-dozen programs of formal training for leadership positions in administration, education, or practice. There was substantially no body of research.

As had been the case in dentistry and in mental health, SREB – which had appointed a Committee on Nursing Education and instituted a program to build a half dozen master's programs in the region – was a model for action at WICHE. In March 1955 Enarson obtained executive committee authorization to convene an appropriate group “to study nursing and advise the committee on what studies we might undertake.” The committee approved employment of a consultant to assist. Six weeks later, immediately prior to the annual meeting of the National League for Nursing (NLN) in St. Louis, Enarson met with a group of Western nurse leaders who had been convened by Vera Fry, professor of public health nursing, of the University of California, Berkeley, to discuss graduate education for nursing and how it might be encouraged within the region.

A few weeks later, following the advice of his St. Louis leaders, Enarson convened an interim advisory committee, comprising three deans of collegiate schools (Oregon, UCLA, and Colorado), along with the nursing program directors of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and U.S. Public Health Service. The committee concurred that the most pressing needs in nursing education in the West were in graduate education. It recommended that WICHE employ Helen Nahm of the NLN to survey Western institutions that had, or planned to initiate, graduate programs, and to propose creative approaches in graduate training. It was a strategically important time in the evolution of the profession, and NLN agreed to make Nahm available.⁸

Beginning in late October 1955, Nahm visited 20 of the 33 collegiate nursing schools in the WICHE states, talking with some 400 persons in or closely tied to the field. After the last of these visits on December 20, she prepared a report that served as

the basis for a WICHE conference on January 5-6, 1956, of a hundred representatives of collegiate schools of nursing, state health departments, state boards and state leagues for nursing, state nurses associations, federal nursing officers, and consultants from related fields. Participants were assigned to one of four task groups, each charged with probing aspects of nursing education and practice, including how universities could work together to develop doctoral programs in nursing; how to improve and develop further master's programs; how to strengthen baccalaureate programs both for practice and for preparation for advanced nursing education; and what continuing education was needed in the region and what programs and facilities were available, or needed, to meet these needs.

Three specific recommendations came out of the conference, which set the direction WICHE proceeded to take:

- WICHE should appoint a committee of not more than seven, to meet within two months for as much as a week, to translate the work of the conference into a plan of action.
- The action plan should begin with WICHE's establishing a Council on Higher Education for Nursing, composed of representatives of the collegiate schools of nursing, the first function of which would be to review proposals emerging from the committee of seven.
- An annual regionwide conference should be arranged, to be broadly representative of "those interested in nursing education," to serve as an advisory group to the proposed council and to stimulate new ideas.⁹

By the end of 1955, Enarson was working hand in glove with nurse leaders in the West to define a program that would support the progressive transfer of responsibility for nursing education from hospitals to universities and colleges and the strengthening of programs of graduate study and research to give leadership to professional nursing.

Research for Western Development & Graduate Training Needs

That summer of 1955, studies, conferences, and other exploratory efforts were under way at WICHE in dentistry, nursing, several fields involved in mental health, marine biology, and educational television. Enarson was very much engaged in building working relationships with executive, legislative, and educational leadership in 13 states and territories. He was also assessing the practical and political issues involved in choosing a location for WICHE's permanent headquarters. He was defining the qualifications to be sought in a professional staff assistant, if finances did not yet enable him actively to recruit for the position. It was a busy time.

As he reviewed the expanding commission agenda he could appreciate the response WICHE was giving to needs that had been highlighted by governors, legislators leaders in the profession of nursing, and others. But were there needs peculiar to the West that

WICHE was ideally structured to tackle, that simply hadn't been addressed because no one had chanced to bring them forward?

Enarson had some answers to that question. He had long believed that universities had been unduly slow to undertake studies of both the social and the technological problems encountered in economic development. Enarson advanced these views to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in December 1954. Research was truly "the miracle drug of the scientific age." WICHE, he suggested, "in seeking better utilization of educational facilities, may be able to crystallize new approaches in research for Western development."¹⁰

Enarson's interest in resource development problems and in the potential of multi-institution collaboration was reinforced by his friend Morris Garnsey, an economics professor at the University of Colorado. He advanced the idea again, with a specific proposal for WICHE action, at the commission's annual meeting in August 1955. In a working paper prepared for the meeting, he referred to a number of initiatives in the nation and in the West involving collaboration on resource studies but expressed the view that "no one knows for sure how to proceed and for the most part, universities and other groups are acting independently of one another." In this situation "the commission should seek in various ways to increase the efficiency of college and university research, particularly as it relates to the full development and use of the land, water, mineral, timber, and other resources of the West." He proposed that the commission establish a subcommittee of the executive committee to "shape up a specific course of action." He envisioned the possibility of conferences, establishment of research councils relating to specific issues or problems, such as forestry, or promoting a regional or subregional collaborative research agency focused on some particular resource problem.

He acknowledged that for WICHE, "the problem is to enlist the interest and support of the educational community." The objective was to engage universities in a cooperative research enterprise. WICHE was not structured to push a research program itself. Enarson counseled that "the only way to see if this can be done is to try it." The commission designated a subcommittee of the executive committee to give it a try.

Enarson advanced to the 1955 annual meeting a second major proposal for commission action. The compact charged the commission "to undertake studies of needs for professional and graduate educational facilities in the region." The commission did, indeed, have studies under way in dentistry and in the mental health fields of psychiatry, clinical psychology, and psychiatric nursing and social work; but as he wrote in a working paper for the annual meeting, "the majority of academic fields lie untouched." He pointed to the California "Restudy of Higher Education" and curriculum studies in other states, but these were focused on undergraduate enrollments and programs. "It is precisely in the graduate, technical, and professional fields where our needs are likely to be the most extreme and it is here that we face the toughest (and most expensive) problems of assembling staff and supplying adequate facilities." His conclusion: "There

is a need to assemble fundamental data which would be of value to the states and to institutional presidents but which they would not generally be able to obtain by their own efforts. This is a task squarely within the responsibilities of the commission.” Enarson proposed that he hire a consultant to help define the approach and assist with preliminary data gathering, and to develop a proposal for which foundation support would be sought.

Again, the commission asked its chairman to appoint a subcommittee to work with the director in “exploring with institutions and states the information now available and the need for further information” related to training in graduate, technical, and professional fields.

Within the academic community, little response to either of the two proposals was apparent. Enarson reported to the executive committee in December 1955, some four months later, that neither of these two initiatives, both having the potential to become major projects, were yet “off the ground.” He acknowledged that they would develop only if and as the institutions became interested in their objectives and were ready to work together with the commission. There had been some informal discussion of the proposals with foundation and federal agency staff.

Other Activities: Social Work, Recreation, Forestry

In December 1954 the executive committee had asked Enarson to explore social work and public health as fields in which the commission might promote better use of resources. In the summer of 1955, other duties (and lack of response in the field) had precluded follow-up in public health, but there were some results to report in social work.

With the assistance of the University of Denver’s director of social work, Emil Sunley, in May 1955 Enarson met with representatives of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and heads of public welfare programs in Arizona and Colorado to discuss graduate social work training. Following the meeting, deans of four other graduate programs in the region were consulted. There was a desire to work with WICHE on a number of matters. There was no interest in participating in the Student Exchange Program: low salaries in the field, compounded by an absence within the profession of clearly defined roles for workers having different levels of training, made it evident that there would be insufficient demand for such a program. But “joint action to upgrade social work as a profession” was definitely appealing. The deans welcomed the chance to link up with a regional agency that had ties to the governing authorities in each of the states in order to elevate the status of their profession. In a working paper prepared for the commission at the annual meeting in 1955, Enarson wrote that “their aspirations [are] completely in tune with the spirit and purpose of the Compact.” The commission authorized a meeting with deans of the seven Western schools offering graduate social work training and a representative from the Council on Social Work Education.

Enarson met with the seven deans and a representative of the professional association at UCLA that November. The deans reported without exception that their schools were operating below capacity in spite of substantial need in the region for social workers with advanced training. The problem was primarily that of low salaries and the related fact that many agencies employed workers with no professional training whatever. The group decided that a pilot study should be conducted in two states, one having a graduate social work program and the other, no such program. The study would seek to determine the numbers of graduates with social work training needed in the next 10 years, and the kinds of training needed. The pilot would proceed in Washington and Oregon under the guidance of a committee to be headed by Victor Howery, dean of the school at Washington. At the end of 1955 WICHE was committed to a pilot study of social work in the Pacific Northwest.

There were other proposals for the executive committee and commission that August of 1955. Enarson had distributed working papers outlining a "Proposed Cooperative Project of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and the National Recreation Association" and a study in the field of forestry. The former anticipated his working with the National Recreation Association in defining a study of the growing number of formal recreation programs and of college and university curricula and enrollments, in order to assess possible needs for programs and resources and to consider how cooperative action might help. In the field of forestry, WICHE interest was partially a response to successful efforts in the South, which had brought the accredited schools of forestry together in creating a uniform preforestry curriculum, forged agreement on requirements for admission to graduate programs, allocated areas of specialization among the schools, and provided for collaboration in both research and continuing education.

The commission asked Enarson to proceed with both efforts. In the minutes of the executive committee during the following year and in the minutes of the 1956 annual meeting, as in the newsletter and monthly reports to commissioners, there is no mention of further action in either field.

Assessing Enarson's First Year

While the WICHE program was being shaped up that first Enarson year, particularly in the fields of mental health, dentistry, nursing, and social work, WICHE was extending its reputation both within the higher education community in the West and among Western legislators and state executives. The workload – still handled by the director and a single secretary, though with an increasing number of consultants and project directors – continued to grow. As he planned his first annual meeting of the commission, to be held on August 8, 1955, in the Senate Chamber at the State Capitol in Cheyenne, WY, Enarson had reason to expect commissioners to be pleased with what had been accomplished.

For one thing, though it was hardly an accomplishment for which Enarson would take credit, California and Washington, as well as the Alaska Territory, had ratified the compact and would be represented at the meeting as official members. Their dues would increase the commission's fiscal capabilities, for staff and other needs, by 37.5 percent. For another, he was ready to resolve the somewhat touchy question of where WICHE would establish itself. At Bill Jones's request the office had been located initially on the university campus in Eugene, OR; but now that Jones was gone, it was understood that the office would be relocated. Salt Lake City had been a favorite of a number of commissioners in the early years, and it continued to appeal to some member states. But now San Francisco and Denver stood out as convenient transportation centers. Ward Darley, president of the University of Colorado, had made the "offer that could not be refused," of space at low or zero rent – on the Colorado campus only 30 miles from Denver's Stapleton Airport.¹¹

The executive committee would meet the day before the annual meeting. Prior to that meeting, Enarson arranged a conference with the deans of the professional schools in the Student Exchange Program, to be chaired by Vice Chairman Charles Byrne. For the meeting of the commission itself, as well as for the executive committee, he prepared 11 working papers, providing background and appropriate recommendations for commissioner consideration and action.

At the meeting of the full commission on August 8, he had members of the commission make the presentations on several projects and proposals. Frank McPhail of Montana reported on the status of the Student Exchange Program in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine. Ward Darley updated the commission on a survey of dental manpower. Alfred Popma of Idaho, along with Hardin Branch, the mental health survey director, reported the status of efforts relating to mental health. Despite the sharing, there remained a major role for Enarson, who described a proposed public information program, his efforts with nurse educators to define needed activities in that profession, and activities relating to social work, marine biology, forestry, mineral engineering, recreation, educational television, and other areas.

The commission responded with the authorizations Enarson wanted, but with less critical discussion than he would have liked. It voted to accept the offer of space for the WICHE office at the University of Colorado. It authorized him to proceed to convene the deans of social work programs and others, and to appoint the needed committees and arrange meetings with respect to graduate nursing programs. Similarly, it authorized the appointment of subcommittees to work with him on possible programs of research for Western development and training in graduate, technical, and professional fields. It approved his proceeding with the efforts in mineral engineering, forestry, and recreation training.¹²

Approaching the end of the agenda, the commission chose its officers for the year ahead. Frank McPhail, M.D., of Great Falls, MT, was elected chair, and Ward Darley,

the University of Colorado president, vice chair. It was the first time the WICHE Commission had elected as its chairman a member who was not a university president.

McPhail was universally respected within the commission and well known in his home state. He was a family physician, a man of quick intelligence and quiet demeanor. By 1955 he and Tom Popejoy were the only members of the commission who had participated in the organizing meeting back in November 1951. He was convinced that sharing in the development of higher education policy and in the use of resources was a needed and advantageous strategy for all the states. He was sensitive to the ways a policymaking body such as the commission could work effectively with its staff. Perhaps most important of all, he was – it seemed, by nature – dedicated to the broad interests of the public in a system of higher education that was responsive to the needs of people of all backgrounds; he was unmoved by the interests of any single institution, or even any single state. Enarson visited with him in Great Falls six weeks later to assess the status and future of the organization and to plan more specifically for the months ahead.

It was clear, at the annual meeting and as 1955 approached its end, that Executive Director Enarson was doing very well. Both he and McPhail were encouraged by the progress that had been made in the WICHE program.

Engaging Commissioners More Actively

Enarson and his administrative secretary, Marie Routh, lost no time in arranging and completing the move of the WICHE office to the university campus in Boulder. There was, in fact, little to move: most of the furnishings in Eugene were on loan from the University of Oregon. In late September 1955, with a collection of new furniture mostly its own, WICHE was operating from a suite of three offices on the third floor of Norlin Library at the University of Colorado (CU).

Despite the solid progress in bringing eligible states to membership and also in program initiatives in several fields, there were elements in WICHE's status and performance that concerned Frank McPhail and Harold Enarson. The most basic problem each perceived was that the commissioners, with the exception of a few members of the executive committee, were too little involved in WICHE affairs. Except for the mass of paper sent by mail, "WICHE" to the two dozen commissioners not on the executive committee, was a once-a-year experience. Enarson had prepared the annual meeting program that August of 1955 virtually without commissioner input. Since he had arrived, not one proposal for WICHE activities had come from members of the commission – all had been originated by or through the staff director. The participation of most commissioners during meetings was perfunctory.¹³

A second problem bothering both WICHE leaders was the continuing confusion as to the purposes of the organization. In a long letter in December 1955, Enarson responded to McPhail's observation that many commissioners were unclear as to what the commission should be doing. Any constitution or compact can be read in a broad or in a narrow way, and that was part of the problem. Within the commission there were both "liberal" and "strict" constructionists. Confusion about purposes was compounded by the fact that (in Enarson's words) the compact had been "sold (largely) as a device for meeting the doctor-dentist-veterinarian shortage." The founding group had been aided by the Council of State Governments, which, Enarson commented, had sold the idea to governors who, for the most part, lacked "any real understanding of what regional cooperation is all about." Moreover, the compact was written by lawyers in words that were legalistic and fuzzy. The consequence was confusion over priorities and readiness to respond to ad hoc interests and pressures, instead of the development of a reasoned program to face up to tomorrow's opportunities and needs.

A third problem bothered both McPhail and Enarson: the absence of regular, effective contact either by commissioners or by staff with the governors and legislative leaders in the Western states. Political leaders in the states simply were not active or much interested in WICHE activities.

Doctor McPhail initiated a "course of therapy" for these ailments at his first meeting as chair, a meeting of the executive committee in December 1955. The primary purpose of this meeting, held jointly with the professional school deans, was to address problems with the Student Exchange Program, but following the joint session, McPhail convened the executive committee separately. Allowing a few minutes of status reports from the executive director, McPhail turned to the matter of major concern to him – the commission's future plans.

McPhail said to the commissioners that it was time to take stock of the WICHE program, to "see if we could get agreement on the kinds of regional programs and activities most likely to meet the needs of the West in the next 10-20 years." He urged that each member of the committee give serious thought to the basic purposes of the commission and to its internal and external relationships. Members should assess critically each activity proposed for WICHE action. Was there truly a "felt need" that would give the activity priority for the time of the commission and its small staff? Committee members should be ready to discuss these matters in depth at the next meeting.

Enarson followed with a plea for greater participation of commissioners in planning and conducting commission affairs. WICHE could not be successful as "a central office operation." He questioned whether the recent annual meeting had been too tightly structured, inducing some commissioners to "go along" when they did not feel entirely ready to act. He acknowledged a lack of clarity as to WICHE purposes and priorities and

suggested that a policy committee might be needed to define the scope of commission efforts.

At the executive committee meeting in March 1956, McPhail continued his efforts to engage commissioners more actively. For this meeting, he and Enarson had introduced an all-day-Friday-plus-Saturday-morning schedule, permitting time for a lengthening agenda, and also for a social event on Friday evening to leaven relationships among commissioners, guests, and local hosts. In the Saturday morning session, McPhail led off by expressing his concern that members of the commission were not taking their responsibilities seriously enough. The executive committee's responsibility was not simply to assent to matters placed before them by the staff, but "to provide direction and leadership." He noted that steps had been taken – through expanding the time available at meetings, and providing activity reports at the end of each month – to help members discharge this responsibility. To increase member participation, he announced that the executive committee meeting next following, in June, would be a "no quorum" meeting to which every member of the commission was invited so that all might help plan the 1956 annual meeting and map out the commission program for the following year.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to reporting and taking action on projects under way or under consideration; but the minutes note that the commissioners from Idaho, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, and Oregon "were not able" to remain for the meeting Saturday morning. McPhail applied the whip in a "Special Note from the Chairman" at the end of the minutes: "It is difficult to accomplish our business when some find it necessary to leave before the conclusion of our work." He was not engaged in a popularity contest – he admonished his colleagues to come to the meeting in June "prepared to stay through the entire session."

The June 1956 meeting was held at a small lodge on the Oregon coast, 80 miles from Portland – a location likely to discourage early departures. According to the May 25 notice from the WICHE office, it was explicitly "not a routine business meeting." The objective: "To take a detached look at where we are going . . . Out of this should come a better sense of direction and some guideposts we can follow in designing a program for the future."¹⁴ McPhail's efforts to encourage participation of all the commissioners were only somewhat successful: four additional members from Washington, Oregon, and Montana were present.

For the critical review of WICHE purposes, programs, and priorities at this June executive committee meeting, at Frank McPhail's suggestion, Enarson prepared a "Staff Paper on WICHE Program Perspectives."¹⁵ For each of nine current projects he presented brief statements of status followed by his recommendations for further action.

On his list of nine activities, the first four were under active development and were of continuing priority: the mental health training and research survey; the dental manpower study; the project in nursing; and the pilot project in social work. The task of finding

outside funds for the first three was in various stages of development but, in general, moving ahead well; for social work, funding efforts, if needed, would depend on the report of the advisory group that was due at the end of summer 1956. Three activities were essentially dead; Enarson proposed that they be stricken from the agenda: in both forestry and mineral engineering or mining, there simply was no interest among those in the field to proceed with any regional action; and the National Recreation Association, from which the proposal for a joint study had come and which had agreed to submit a detailed plan (as well as to fund the study), had failed to respond.

Enarson's list concluded with two activities that should have been ongoing but with which problems were being encountered. Fundamental in WICHE's establishment, the Student Exchange Program was the first of these. In three years of effort to extend the embryonic program throughout the region, the obligations of "senders" and "receivers" had been clarified. Potential beneficiaries of the exchange were becoming aware of the program and the necessity that they take steps needed to obtain funding for state participation. For three years the program had been administered by the WICHE commissioners in each of the sending states. According to Enarson's notes, "Program still very uneven. Not well understood." In spring 1956, so many of the receiving schools and sending states missed their deadlines that WICHE had been unable to carry out its coordinating task. There was no question whether efforts to make the Student Exchange Program work would continue – to many, SEP was what WICHE was all about. But the program was proving difficult indeed to get up and running. Enarson's recommendation was that sufficient time be spent at the annual meeting in August to assure an understanding of aims and procedures by commissioners from all the states.

Finally, he listed research for Western development. It was proving difficult to arouse enough interest among research institutions in the West to keep his idea alive. Enarson sensed some interest among foundations, and a request for \$5,000 was pending to underwrite an advisory seminar with the University of New Mexico on its study of the San Juan River. He genuinely believed in the regional potential of this proposed program and recommended that WICHE continue to try to generate university response by publicizing a number of interstate projects dealing with regional resource problems.

Interestingly, he did not list at all another activity that he had proposed at the 1955 annual meeting, that relating to "training needs in graduate, professional, and technical fields." Whether this idea was too ambitious, or perhaps too amorphous, is not known. Some 20 years would pass before WICHE was able to initiate the Western Regional Graduate Program, a plan that opened admission to distinctive, advanced programs at advantageous rates of tuition and that was at least partly the kind of thing Enarson had in mind when he proposed a regional effort in graduate and professional fields.

Enarson also provided the commissioners with his own suggestions of "Program Possibilities for 1956-1957." He summarized the above and added several activities that had been proposed at the March executive committee meeting:

- ▶ Explore regional arrangements in library cooperation. University of Colorado Librarian Eugene Wilson was preparing a report for the commission on this subject.
- ▶ Explore regional arrangements in public health. This one would depend upon some expression of interest from the profession, and that was still lacking.
- ▶ Explore regional arrangements in teacher training for exceptional children. Enarson was to address a regional conference on the subject; this would give him an opportunity to test the waters in that field.
- ▶ The National Science Foundation supported summer institutes in the West for teachers in the fields of physics, chemistry, and mathematics. The institutes took place without the benefit of consideration within the region as to size, number, location, or content of programs. “If the opportunity develops,” he would seek support to encourage such regional planning.
- ▶ Arrange a conference of graduate deans in the West, to focus on the shortage of college and university teachers and on opportunities for regional cooperation in graduate work. WICHE should also consider producing a directory of doctoral programs in the West, or perhaps a brochure citing exceptional or unusual programs.

With the commission’s budget prospectively boosted after ratification of the compact by California, Washington, and Alaska in 1955, Enarson had requested and received authorization at the March 1956 meeting to employ a “second in command.” He put his assistant director designee, Richard G. Axt, to work on a background paper on professional education, which Axt presented at the June meeting of the committee though he did not actually join the staff until August. Axt came to WICHE from the National Science Foundation, where, as study director for institutional research, he had been responsible for surveys of scientific research and manpower as well as studies of government-university relationships. He had been on the staff of the Commission on Financing Higher Education and of the U.S. Bureau of the Budget. He was an original thinker and a capable researcher and administrator who could take on assignments for what could become major WICHE programs and develop them to the point at which they could sustain themselves financially.

One major topic for discussion at the June meeting was how to involve state legislators and the governors more effectively. McPhail and Enarson had brought Adron Doran, president of Morehouse College and a member of the Southern Regional Education Board, to the meeting to describe SREB’s legislative conferences and its contacts with Southern legislators.¹⁶ Enarson had primed the pump with a “Staff Paper on Organizational Issues Before WICHE,” and there was extended discussion of how legislators and governors could be more effectively brought into the commission’s work. Doran described SREB’s first and subsequent legislative work conferences, planned with the help of panels of legislators. Each of the governors, the dominating members of the Southern board, appointed five legislators to attend; states defrayed travel costs. The

committee approved a proposal that the commission establish an advisory committee of legislators to plan a WICHE legislative work conference for the spring of 1957. For commissioners who had steadily resisted closer ties to legislators, this was a significant initiative.

The executive committee proceeded to the related question of how to involve governors in the commission's program. There was an early consensus opposed to making them members of the commission, but a subcommittee was appointed to consider and report on the matter. After a short recess, the subcommittee proposed that the governors be formally invited to the commission's annual meeting in 1957 to discuss the question of their relationships with WICHE. The proposal was unanimously approved; but the idea was ultimately lost in other developments that for a time brought the governors and WICHE more closely together.

President Dwight Eisenhower had appointed a Committee on Education Beyond the High School, and that committee was planning five regional conferences to stimulate and to inform a second and even more ambitious series of conferences that were expected to follow in each of the states. The president's representatives were working with the governors, but they proposed that the three regional compact organizations might also have a role. Frank McPhail was quick to welcome the idea. At its June "retreat" meeting on the Oregon coast, the WICHE executive committee volunteered its cooperation.

Two other topics occupied the executive committee, one pertaining to graduate education and the second to undergraduate education. Enarson had included in the working papers for the meeting a "Staff Paper on Regional Cooperation in Graduate Work" – a revision of his earlier proposal of studies in graduate, technical, and professional fields.¹⁷ He was concerned that typically the graduate school is "at best a loose confederation of disciplines, at worst a collection of feuding principalities." He observed that new graduate programs arise as the seemingly natural product of specialization; and they are likely to be fully operational by the time the president of the institution learns about them. In these circumstances, what could WICHE do to encourage cooperation in graduate work? The executive committee declined to tackle the problem directly. It decided to recommend that WICHE sponsor a conference of graduate deans "to examine the problem of producing college teachers and the possibilities of complementary specialization at the graduate level."

The discussion relating to undergraduate education apparently arose out of concerns expressed by one or more of the commissioners. In the mid-1950s, the dramatic surge in college enrollments that followed World War II had abated, but the "tidal wave of students" that would result from fundamental demographic changes at the end of the war, sure to strike in the mid-1960s, was getting increasing attention. The minutes record a discussion of "the expected increase of college and professional school enrollments in the West, and of the desirability of WICHE compiling information which would help the states and the institutions plan to meet the increase." The discussion

culminated in a vote to authorize the executive director to “examine the feasibility of a study, in the Western region, of such factors affecting higher educational institutions or space utilization and needs [as] population and enrollment trends” and to present recommendations to the executive committee. The action was a strong move toward establishing at WICHE a program in higher education research and policy analysis, which in future years has come to be one of the regional agency’s primary responsibilities.

As the June 1956 meeting moved toward conclusion, the executive committee nailed down most of the content of the forthcoming annual meeting. There was a general recognition that the single-day meeting of the past was insufficient; the commission decided that the meeting should convene early Saturday afternoon (following a meeting of the executive committee), run through Sunday and adjourn Monday after a second near-full day. McPhail appointed a subcommittee which blocked out specific topics and speakers, then and there.

The executive committee meeting had been significant, with decisions that would bring WICHE to the center of a president’s conference that would bring together Western governors and movers and shakers generally to discuss current and prospective problems in higher education. Not incidentally, the conference would bring WICHE to some national attention as sponsor of the first of the regional conferences of the President’s Committee on Education Beyond the High School. The meeting had included a call for a legislative work conference that would initiate closer ties between state legislators and Western higher education. It had taken steps that would head WICHE toward fact gathering and the consideration of statewide and regional planning and policy development for higher education.

By the time of the annual meeting in August 1956, Harold Enarson had completed two years as WICHE executive director. Though the issues of commissioner commitment and participation and of confusion of WICHE purposes and priorities remained live issues, by late summer 1956 it was clear that WICHE had become well established and would continue to function as a significant player in higher education in the West. California, Washington, and Alaska had joined the compact, leaving only Nevada and the territory of Hawaii as eligibles which had not. The organization had moved to the University of Colorado. It was no longer a “one-man operation.” Though its core program of student exchange remained fragile, nine states were underwriting 213 students in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine in the fall of 1956. Its meetings were well planned and well attended. The commissioners seemed to be responsive; they had decided that the organization deserved two or even three days of their time at the approaching annual meeting. WICHE had widened its area of activity and influence with surveys in mental health fields, social work, dentistry, and nursing. It was now joining with the President’s Committee on Education Beyond the High School in planning a conference that would extend its identity among political, business, and educational leaders throughout the West.

WICHE Takes Hold

Indeed, the annual meeting in August 1956 proved to be eventful – but if Chairman Frank McPhail intended that it help clarify WICHE’s focus and priorities, he must have been disappointed. Consideration of Harold Enarson’s analysis of current projects and proposed additions, if any, was insufficient to receive notice in the minutes; but as we have noted, the minutes do record the addition of several high-interest assignments to the load the staff was already carrying, including collaborating with the President’s Committee on Education Beyond High School on a major regional conference in San Francisco the following April. In subsequent months, Enarson’s reports to the commissioners indicated that for both him and his new assistant, Dick Axt, this was close to an all-consuming commitment.

Not only that, Arizona and New Mexico were moving ahead with their plans to establish medical schools – a two-year school, in the case of New Mexico. Ward Darley, formerly medical dean and now president of the University of Colorado – later in the meeting elected WICHE chairman for the year ahead – moved that a special committee be appointed “to conduct whatever studies be necessary to enable WICHE to point the way toward the solution to the problems in medical education in the West.” His motion passed and soon was joined by another calling for a similar study in veterinary medicine.

Yet other ventures were approved. In the fields of both mental health and nursing, reports from surveys and discussions in the prior year had led to proposals to establish ongoing councils of interested educators, practitioners, and service providers to work on educational and research needs in the respective professions. The commission approved these proposals and directed the staff to pursue outside funding to underwrite them. In dentistry, the U.S. Public Health Service Division of Dental Resources had completed the survey that WICHE had defined. The findings were that “a severe shortage of dental care” loomed in all Western states unless steps were taken to train more dentists and hygienists. Darley reported to the commissioners that WICHE would ask each Western state dental society to study the USPHS report and send a representative to a conference in spring 1957 to translate the report into a program of action – another conference for the staff to organize.

WICHE would also help the graduate deans create their own organization to work on the perceived shortage of college teachers, needed to handle the coming “rising tide” of students.

That 1956 annual meeting was also the meeting at which the commission took initial steps in a role which, by the time Enarson left the organization in 1960, was seen to lie at the heart of WICHE purpose: exercising leadership in collecting and sharing information pertaining to emerging problems in Western higher education, and identifying policies through which states and the region could deal with these problems. In June, as we have noted, the executive committee had discussed “the impending tidal wave of students,”

and had asked staff to bring to the commission its proposals for WICHE action. At the annual meeting, the commission declined the notion of a WICHE-led regionwide study of the ill-defined problem but directed the staff to “encourage state and regional studies of enrollment and space needs.” It envisioned a WICHE role in compiling and sharing data throughout the region – a “clearinghouse” for information made available by state, regional, and national agencies.

As one step ahead in this proposed venture, the commission decided that in 1957 WICHE would hold its first conference of state legislators with college and university presidents, board members, and other leaders in higher education, to share information and policy options on topics of interest both to state legislatures and to the higher education community. The decision reflected an important extension of the clearinghouse role, from information gathering and dissemination to exercising leadership in the consideration of – and potentially, taking action on – implications for higher education policy. However, as it became clear that many legislators would be participating in the Western Regional Conference of the President’s Committee on Education Beyond High School in April 1957, this first in what became a series of legislative conferences was pushed back to 1958.

By late 1956, the fact is, WICHE was “on a roll.” A continuing expansion of commissioner attitudes as to the appropriate range of WICHE activity was apparent. WICHE funding, limited as it was from its membership, reflected its growing program: in 1956, income from foundation and federal sources surpassed income from membership fees. Only two years later nonstate sources were providing nearly double the amount supplied by WICHE members.

We should observe that growth in the range of WICHE programming was not universally advocated by the commissioners. Chief among those resisting what they saw as a relentless pressure “to grow, grow, grow; expand, expand, expand” was Utah commissioner G. Homer Durham – whose words these were – an articulate member who had joined the commission and its executive committee at the 1955 annual meeting. Durham could be counted upon for a literal interpretation of the WICHE compact in any discussion of new departures.

Homer Durham was given the opportunity, some years later when the executive committee met at Arizona State University – where he was then president – to give the committee his views on WICHE history, development, and rightful role. He had been a close observer of WICHE in its earliest days. In the beginning, he said, “great emphasis was placed upon the significance of the compact as a legal instrument.” But “a major development, beginning with the Enarson administration, has been the decline of the compact as a basic legal document underpinning, defining, and limiting the commission’s activities.” He pointed out that the U.S. Constitution includes, in the “necessary and proper” clause, a provision that has authorized the progressive evolution of powers among branches of the federal government. He had looked for any such a doctrine in the

Western Regional Higher Education Compact and had found none – an omission that, he suggested, might account for a tendency of governors and legislators to raise questions about “certain WICHE activities and organizational machinery,” not to mention increasing dues.¹⁸

Durham was joined in his literalist views from time to time by other commissioners, including some among the university presidents who resisted cooperation with other institutions as a means of resolving educational needs in their home states. Their position was that to accommodate growth in their own state, a new program in “x,” “y,” or “z” should be and soon would be established at their own institution. Supporting this view, Durham pointed out in the same speech that “nearly every state within the region is now far more capable of meeting its educational needs, including most phases of graduate professional education, than in 1950. . . . Ph.D. programs now thrive in all our states. . . . Where, then, sooner or later, will be the have-not states? The regional approach to problems of higher education is at best frustrating and difficult.”

Without pointing to Bill Jones, his predecessor, as he might well have done, Enarson assuredly would plead guilty to Durham’s allegations that he had not let the wording of the compact restrain expansion of the WICHE program. For Enarson, WICHE’s job was *to encourage interstate cooperation in higher education*, period. When, in 1955, he had occasion to describe the task of the commission he did so in remarkably expansionist terms:

To provide facilities for assessing Western needs in higher education and developing programs to meet those needs;

To negotiate and administer interstate arrangements for regional education services, acting as fiscal agent to carry out such arrangements;

To serve as a clearing-house for information on activities in higher education significant to the Western states;

To do research on institutional and regional problems related to improving higher education;

To provide a channel whereby educators can join together in working out overall long-range solutions to problems common to all;

To serve, when appropriate, as a vehicle by which colleges and universities may deal on matters of higher education with national foundations, industry, and the federal government;

And finally, to bring public officials and educators to a better understanding of mutual problems so that (a) the educational dollar is used wisely, (b) research, education, and service – the three essentials of higher education – are brought into sharp focus on the problems of Western development.

In Enarson's view, WICHE should do anything that an organization, created by state governments but not endowed with governmental authority – essentially a voluntary organization – could do to extend access to higher education and to improve its quality by helping states and higher education institutions work together effectively.¹⁹

Enarson had come to WICHE in August 1954. Two years later his stamp – not Homer Durham's – was heavily imprinted on the organization. True, when hired, he was committed to very much the image of the regional organization that the founding commissioners supported. And he shared the views and supported the efforts of the first executive director, Bill Jones. But it is appropriate and only fair to acknowledge that after two years on the job, Enarson had moved the new organization far forward, in directions that the reader will find have not changed markedly in more than 40 years.

The Western Conference of the President's Committee on Education Beyond High School

Both Enarson and Assistant Director Dick Axt were heavily engaged, that winter of 1956-57, in the planning and arrangements for the Western Regional Conference on Education Beyond the High School. Joining with the Washington-appointed conference steering committee, the WICHE executive committee became the policy group planning the conference. Acknowledging the role of the conference's chairman, Edgar Smith, a member of the national committee appointed by President Dwight Eisenhower, it remains true that the Western conference was very much a WICHE show. Enarson had shepherded development of the program, Axt managed the financing, and President Robert Gordon Sproul of the University of California made his Extension Division available to work with Axt in handling local arrangements. Axt had prepared a volume of working papers that conferees were to read prior to the conference; and WICHE edited and published proceedings only two months after the conference.

The president's call for a series of regional conferences on higher education, to be followed by similar conferences in the states, was timely. Within 15 years, it was clear from the numbers of children already in the education pipeline, higher education enrollments throughout the country would *double*. In the West, the increases would be even larger – in his summary at the conclusion of the conference, Homer Durham reminded the group that 18 years hence in 1975, there would be as many college students *in the West* as there had been *in the entire country* 18 years previously. And in the West, where public institutions carried a much larger proportion of enrollments than did their counterparts in the East and South, state governments faced a challenge of unprecedented proportion.

The Western Regional Conference was held in Los Angeles on April 10-11, 1957. Its 354 registered participants included seven governors, 29 state legislators, executive and legislative staff, college and university presidents, members of governing boards, and movers and shakers from the press, labor, business, and agriculture. They came from all the Western states and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii.

It was a working conference. Participants divided into 13 groups, each led by notables – chiefly governors and legislators – with resource people who included 18 college and university presidents, four deans, two professors of higher education, a superintendent of public instruction, and a state higher education executive officer. Each of the groups discussed a set of questions that had been posed by the national committee:

- What kinds of education should be made available?
- How many shall we educate beyond the high school?
- How can quality be maintained and improved in the face of increasing numbers?
- How can students be helped to choose and follow the educational program for which they are best qualified?
- How can we get enough qualified teachers?
- How can we provide adequate facilities and financial support?
- How can the institutions, the states, and the region plan the best use of our total resources?

The questions addressed were fundamental for every state and for the region as a whole. The conference provided a first occasion for political and educational leaders *together* to consider the higher education issues confronting them all, and to consider whence – if anywhere – help might come. The conclusion, widely shared if we can believe what Homer Durham and Harold Enarson heard, was that the states had a lot of work to do, alone and collectively, because higher education was not a function that should be left to the direction, or even to a large measure of support, of the federal government.

In addition to the two afternoons dedicated to discussing these questions, there were addresses and panels on several higher education issues – human and material resources, new approaches, two-year institutions (then nonexistent or new in most states except California), adult education, student financial aid, and state control of higher education.

Regarding state control of higher education: before the 1950s, across the country the question of how states should plan and direct their public higher education systems had hardly been noticed, either on campus or in the state house. “A unique feature of American higher education is the liberal extent to which each institution enjoys freedom in establishing and administering its own standards” – so spoke the National Education Association’s Ray Maul in 1958. But in fact, by the mid-1950s, state governments were becoming aware of rapidly growing demands for governmental services in education and other fields, and the increased costs that resulted. At the conference, WICHE’s old friend Elton McQuery, Western representative for the Council of State Governments, tried to put a positive edge on his anticipations of things to come. Could we avoid thinking of the issue as state “control” of higher education: “Can we think in terms of an important public responsibility that must be properly organized and administered?” McQuery

pointed out that since World War II, most states had undertaken comprehensive reorganizations, the central theme of which had been to “concentrate administrative authority in the governor and to provide him with the necessary staff agencies to handle personnel, purchasing, budgetary control, and the like.” Further, state legislatures had provided for their own staff services, including fiscal review agencies with full-time staff – staff that had not been considered necessary before, but staff that legislators were finding they could trust more than the advocates of particular agencies and institutions. Times were changing; and for higher education, facing huge increases in costs to the states, McQuery was saying that they were going to continue to change.

From within the higher education community there were other voices with a similar message. John Dale Russell was chancellor of the New Mexico Board of Educational Finance, one of the earliest of the state coordinating boards for public higher education. Lyman Glenn was a young college professor, at the time a consultant in the School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley, who was working on a book that would become the authoritative reference in matters of statewide planning and coordination, *Autonomy of Public Colleges: The Challenge of Coordination*.

Russell was low-key, but he forecast a change in the traditional posture of states toward public higher education. More than 40 years later, the changes Russell could see coming have transformed that relationship, many in higher education would say to the point of threatening to violate essential educational autonomy:

I have had a good many [college] presidents tell me that they had no problems in their institutions that more money would not solve. I am not sure that that is one hundred percent true in every case, or even in most cases. For, in a great many instances, what is needed to be mixed with the money is a little bit of insight into how what is now available might better be used as well as in the planning of what needs to be used in the future.

Glenn pinned responsibility for meeting these needs directly on state governments. He argued that states should have boards for planning and coordinating public higher education that would carry out three functions that, in turn, would result in more effective and more economical education: research and planning, budgeting and finance, and “planned allocation of functions and programs among the various colleges and universities.” Of 48 states at the time (Alaska and Hawaii attained statehood in 1959), only 14 to 18 (depending upon definitions) had agencies with responsibility for governing or in some way coordinating their public institutions of higher education. That meant that within the executive branch, in almost three dozen states, there was no individual or agency independent of the state’s colleges themselves to assess and to bring some influence to bear upon the state’s higher education needs and capabilities.

The McQuery/Russell/Glenn perceptions were hardly a dominating theme of the conference in April 1957. Nonetheless, Harold Enarson’s conference summary in the proceedings, looking ahead to next steps, reported that “each state should launch a long-

range study of its educational needs and resources to be used as a basis for planning ways to meet its problems.” And “the planning and study commissions should be permanent.” The accelerating growth of enrollments was still seven or eight years in the future, but discussions at the Western Regional Conference of the President’s Committee on Education Beyond High School indicate that the educational as well as the political communities were ready to acknowledge that significant changes lay ahead in the traditional relationships of states and public higher education.

The conference was an important milestone for WICHE. It mixed governors and legislators from most of the member states and territories with WICHE commissioners and staff members, giving the political people a concrete illustration of what WICHE was all about. It made it easier for WICHE, in the following year, to attract legislators to the first of what developed into a continuing series of work conferences that brought state legislators and educational leaders together on issues of common interest. It gave the organization stature when it approached national foundations, as it was doing with increasing frequency. It helped force universities and states to think of the possibility of interstate and regional action on problems that, acting alone, institutions and even states could do little about.

Other Developments in the Mid-1950s

Though Enarson and Axt gave absolute priority to preparations for the conference, following the expansionist ring of conversation and action at the 1956 annual meeting, other elements in the fast-growing WICHE program continued to demand attention. Axt took hold of the flagging Student Exchange Program – that “original WICHE program” that looked so good on paper but that seemed to encounter resistance on all sides. One of his first accomplishments was to write a manual that spelled out the obligations and time lines for each step and each party. Under Axt’s surveillance, problems were confronted and resolved. The program was functioning better and growing apace.

WICHE’s first major grant for ongoing support of program came from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation late in September 1956. Over a period of five years, the grant would underwrite a program director, a Western Council on Higher Education for Nursing (WCHEN), and an annual conference of Western nurse educators, all directed to the improvement of graduate education and research in nursing. There was in addition a grant for a three-year program of continuing education for practicing nurses. This happy development, of course, left Enarson with the task of recruiting a program director and helping organize the nursing council.

In mental health too, Enarson was making headway. The report of the mental health survey had been presented to WICHE in June 1956, along with recommendations for appointment of a council similar to that in nursing and a staff director. In February 1957, indeed, Enarson submitted WICHE’s request to the National Institute for Mental

Health for a four-year program in the amount of \$171,000 to give effect to these recommendations – a grant that was made the following month.

We have noted that there were also demands for follow-up of the report of the survey of needs in dentistry, and that Arizona and New Mexico were pressing for a regional study in medicine that they (correctly) assumed would bolster ambitions in those states for establishment of new medical schools. The commission had added a study of needs in veterinary medicine to this already lengthy list.

But the agenda was more extensive still. One item: at the Council of State Government's Western Regional Conference in September 1956, state legislators had become interested in manpower needs for a growing nuclear power industry in the West and had asked WICHE to study and report on these needs. Another: a prospective shortage of tens of thousands of college teachers to deal with the coming flood of college students continued to haunt Enarson, as he worked with the graduate deans to establish an organization that he hoped would tackle that problem. Still another: Enarson also was personally attracted to the idea of producing a film that would communicate to legislators and the general public the need for a vast expansion of higher education facilities, and for attendant support – a film that could be produced in studios at the University of Southern California but for which some \$18,000 would be needed.

Handling this expanding agenda meant more staff, and that, in turn, meant more financing from states or outside agencies. The problem was exacerbated by continued inability of the state of Washington to pay WICHE membership fees on account of litigation and appeals that ultimately went all the way to the state supreme court – by January 1958, the state owed \$21,000, and WICHE desperately needed the money.²⁰

That year, 1957, was one of solid growth, both in the programs already under way and in planning for steps that would lead to major program expansion. But it was also a year of near-crisis in funding, emphasized by the Washington litigation. The budget for 1957 had anticipated Washington's payment of two years' fees – \$14,000. When an appeal from a court decision forestalled payment yet again, WICHE committed its entire reserve in order to stay in business. It cut back on plans for newsletters and the annual report. To save \$600 in travel cost for the winter meeting of the executive committee, it decided to meet in Salt Lake City rather than in Arizona.²¹

But in truth, the money problem was more fundamental than the trouble with one member state. The WICHE program had outgrown the capabilities of its staff and support structure. That June, Enarson prepared an extensive analysis for the commission's finance committee.²² Twenty pages of the 22-page memorandum dealt with WICHE purposes, current programs, and "program development for the future." The paper was a comprehensive and candid assessment of activities that had been tried, the outcomes, the prospects, and the options for future development. It culminated in a two-page discussion of "staff, budget, and appropriations," and confronted the

commission with a decision about whether a significant increase in annual contributions of member states – which had stayed at \$7,000 since the organizing meeting in 1951 – should be adopted. Enarson pointed out that in 1957-58, more than half the authorized staff would be paid with outside funds. With most of the member state legislatures not meeting until January 1959, he argued that the commission needed to consider increasing membership fees at the annual meeting in 1957. And he eschewed a role for himself in advising the commissioners about what they should do – the kind of staff and program they were prepared to support was for them to determine.

An increase in the annual membership fee was not the only step to be taken. SREB fees, which had been \$7,000 per state in 1951, now stood at \$20,000, not counting a voluntary contribution of \$8,000 annually made by most of the member states for their Mental Health Program. And SREB had received, in December 1956, a multiyear grant of \$450,000 from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to underwrite a program of research on higher education problems that SREB would plan and coordinate, which would be carried out largely at the campus level.²³ Ideally, with respect to outside support, WICHE would repeat the SREB performance.

Enarson's memo for the finance committee outlined a number of areas into which he and Axt were eager that WICHE expand its efforts:

- Institutional research.
- Financing higher education.
- The college teacher shortage.
- Student counseling, in high schools and colleges.
- Public understanding and support of higher education.

In each of these areas, WICHE could help inform campus-level participants; convene them for the sharing of plans and outcomes; and help assure uniformity of procedures and definitions so that results could be compared across campuses. As authorized by the executive committee the prior April, both Enarson and Axt were in contact with Carnegie about a grant that would make this possible.

For the annual meeting in 1957, in an effort to draw commissioners more actively into consideration of the issues, Chairman Frank Van Dyke and Enarson divided commissioners into four committees of program review. In advance of the meeting, Enarson provided for each an extensive staff paper that drew heavily from his summer memorandum to the finance committee. There were program review committees on the Student Exchange Program, Studies and Special Programs in the Health Sciences, Studies and Special Programs in Higher Education, and Staffing and Financing. The committees met for as much of the second meeting day as they needed, then reported at the closing business session on the morning of the third day. One must infer from

minutes that record only “highlights” that the commission approved everything that had been proposed – including an increase in the annual membership fee to \$10,000 per state, beginning with fiscal year 1959-60.²⁴

An increase of 43 percent in the state membership fee was hardly trivial, even after six years with no increase whatsoever; but commissioners were well aware that after the increase, WICHE charges would be exactly one-half those at SREB. The ability of its Southern sibling to expand staff and financing as it did was a matter of no small envy at WICHE. The experience made the idea of bringing governors and legislators into the commission somewhat attractive, at the same time that commissioners treasured their relative independence from political influence.

But while waiting for the relief the increase would bring to the WICHE budget beginning in fiscal year 1959-60, the organization could begin to meet its pressing staff needs through help from outside the region. The grants from the Kellogg Foundation for the nursing program and from the National Institute for Mental Health helped but were earmarked for specific programs. Enarson sought nationally prominent persons for the directorship in both fields, an effort that was commendable but ill-fated at the salary levels natural to the Rocky Mountain West, which were well below those of the more competitive climates in the East and on the West Coast. More than six months after the nursing grant was announced, in the spring of 1957 he signed on Jo Eleanor Elliott as the nursing consultant. Elliott was a young research nurse at the Institute of Industrial Relations at UCLA and a former faculty member in nursing at that institution and the University of Michigan. For mental health he sought a physician, indeed a psychiatrist, in a field in which some of the country’s most challenging (and lucrative) professional opportunities were vacant because of a shortage of qualified eligibles. At length, trained in public administration himself and seeing in the Mental Health Program an opportunity for a generalist to get the program started – including recruiting for a professional director and organizing the advisory council – he hired as assistant director for mental health training and research a Wellesley College assistant professor of political science, Phillip Sirotkin. Both Elliott and Sirotkin were on the job in summer 1957.

That December, the Carnegie Corporation approved a four-year grant totaling \$224,000 for activities integral to the WICHE mission, a grant that was virtually a supplement to income from state membership fees in underwriting activities the staff wanted to pursue. Enarson believed that WICHE’s success in getting the grant was directly attributable to the success of the Western Regional Conference of the President’s Committee on Education Beyond High School.²⁵ The record makes it obvious that the grant provided a margin of support that contributed enormously to WICHE’s effectiveness during the next half-dozen years. The grant would support staff and studies, surveys, seminars, workshops, conferences, reports, and employment of expert consultants, relating to problems in Western higher education:

- ▶ Obtaining enough well-qualified college and university teachers.

- Financing increased capital and operating budgets.
- Statewide planning and institutional research.
- Public understanding and support of higher education.

Further augmenting the staff, Enarson announced in June 1958 the appointment of Terry Lunsford as staff assistant and of Hall T. Sprague as research assistant, both appointments made possible by the Carnegie grant. Lunsford was a University of Chicago graduate with a law degree from that institution; Sprague, a graduate of the University of Colorado with a master's degree and experience at the Rand Corporation. In Enarson's words, they were "bright, independent spirits." Their impact at WICHE was immediate, and impressive.

WICHE offices on the top floor of Norlin Library at the University of Colorado were cheap – Ward Darley had set the rent at \$650 a year – but increasingly tight as the staff continued to grow. Moreover, the library's needs for space grew at least as rapidly as did WICHE's. During the winter of 1957-58 Enarson was negotiating with the university for space in a building then under construction for the law school, at the south edge of the campus. In November 1958, WICHE occupied the ground floor of the Fleming Law Building. It gave the organization a space that was fully adequate to its needs for the first time in its history.

In late 1958, WICHE's stature and prospects appeared to be strong. Staffing both for program direction and for professional support was vastly improved from the days when a director and secretary covered the waterfront. The membership fee increase approved in August 1956 would produce considerably more income beginning the following July. The four-year grant from the Carnegie Corporation was underwriting not only an excellent research staff, it also supplemented WICHE funds for consultants, publications, travel for seminars and conferences, and workshops. To cap things off, Washington, in December, at last was able to pay its membership fee: \$28,000 for the current year and the three prior years during which litigation had forestalled payment. The commissioner for North Dakota's statewide governing board appeared at the annual meeting in 1958 with a proposal for his state's admission to the WICHE compact – evidence indeed that things were going well.²⁶

Probably it was a good time for trouble to show up. At the Council of State Government's Western Regional Conference in November 1958 – a conference regularly attended by state legislators, a few governors, and senior legislative and executive staff – a legislator from a state not identified in WICHE records introduced a resolution that was highly critical of WICHE. The resolution is not in the WICHE archives. Whether, as seems possible, it was part of the fallout from the membership fee increase, is not known; but Elton McQuery came to the December 1958 meeting of the executive committee to present a resolution that had been adopted by the conference, following discussion of the resolution originally introduced.

Actually, the resolution that came out of that discussion was not bad – perhaps it was even good. There had been legislator friends at the CSG conference who reported on their own happier experiences with WICHE. The resolution finally adopted was “neutral, perhaps even favorable in tone,” calling for each of the states to study the “purposes, activities, and financing of WICHE to determine whether the purposes and concept of the compact are being fully realized, and whether proper financial support is being provided.”

McQuery and the executive committee took the incident to demonstrate that WICHE communication with legislators needed more attention – that legislative work conferences needed to be continued, that commissioners needed to keep their governors and legislators informed on WICHE efforts and achievements, that perhaps the question of bringing legislators into membership on the commission needed to be revisited.

Fact Gathering and Policy Analysis

It was in August 1956 that the WICHE Commission first directed its staff to “encourage state and regional studies of enrollment and space needs” and to serve as a clearinghouse for distributing information. Indeed, in dentistry, mental health, and nursing as well as in human and veterinary medicine, staff had been collecting information and dealing with policy implications from WICHE’s earliest days. What was new was the orientation toward the broad problems of financing and operations that would be brought upon institutions and states by rapid enrollment growth, then bearing down upon higher education in the West. The regional conference for the President’s Committee on Education Beyond High School boosted a move in this direction. The Carnegie grant was well timed to provide the support with which the proposed role could be seriously addressed.

How states would finance the expected demands both for facilities and for huge additional operating costs was a question already troubling governors and legislators. Governor Steve McNichols of Colorado proposed to WICHE that it sponsor a workshop on financing higher education. McNichols was chairman of the Western Governors’ Conference; in reality, his “request” was a command performance. When Enarson found himself on a flight from Washington to Denver with Governor McNichols and his executive secretary, he was able to work out the agenda and assure that McNichols would host the meeting.

Remarkably, at the commission’s annual meeting in August 1957, Commissioner Homer Durham (whose narrow interpretation of the WICHE compact we have noted), reporting for the program review committee, *opposed* any such workshop. In his committee’s view, “the proposed study of financing higher education is entirely the problem of the state rather than of WICHE.” Happily, most commissioners felt otherwise; the commission approved going ahead with a workshop and arranged for cosponsorship of the regional associations of governors and legislators.²⁷

The legislative workshop, held in late April 1958, gave a strong push for WICHE to assert leadership in information collection and policy analysis. It was an influential group: among 130 participants there were three governors and 42 legislators. There were in addition seven state budget and finance officers and two dozen legislative and executive staff members. There were 13 college and university presidents and 20 others from academic and administrative roles in higher education, along with 20 consultants, guests, and WICHE staff.

The conference divided into six discussion groups, each comprising representatives from the executive and legislative branches and from higher education, and each discussed the same set of questions in two sessions of two hours each. There was no way participants could avoid confronting points of view they did not want to hear.

The conference advanced, and reinforced, themes that had been introduced to the WICHE constituency by John Dale Russell and Lyman Glenny the prior spring at the Regional Conference of the President's Committee on Education Beyond High School. State higher education systems should be diversified – within a state system, each institution should have its own well-defined role, and taken all together, they should range from two years of post-high school “terminal” education to graduate study leading to the Ph.D. To prevent “mission-creep,” institutions needed to coordinate their programs voluntarily, and if the necessary coordination did not occur, there must be a central board of higher education with authority to eliminate needless duplication.

In presenting budgets to governors and legislatures, institutions should provide statistics that described institutional performance, including information on space utilization, faculty-student ratios, per student costs, and use of faculty time. A uniform system of budgeting and accounting should permit executive and legislative analysis and comparison. On the other hand, governors and legislatures should not insist that college budgets conform precisely to those of other state agencies, and they should permit “reasonable flexibility” in the use of funds.

In sum, each of the states should develop objective standards and criteria for space utilization, teaching loads, class size, and other features of operations, through discussions by institutional representatives with executive and legislative budget agencies. Comparable fiscal and operational data must be provided, both for analysis within each state and for comparison with other institutions throughout the region. WICHE should work with states and institutions to develop such comparable data.

This first conference of Western legislators and higher education leaders in April 1958 reinforced the interest already evident at WICHE in higher education planning and policy development, and in the information needed at campus, state, and regional levels. In the years ahead, WICHE's program in these areas grew steadily.

Following up the Legislative Conference

The commission chair had passed to Vice Chairman Frank Van Dyke of Oregon in February 1957, when Ward Darley left the presidency of the University of Colorado to head the Association of American Medical Colleges in Chicago. Van Dyke had been speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives and, more recently, for three years a member of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education. Like an earlier chairman, Frank McPhail, he was troubled by the lack of significant participation of many commissioners in WICHE's work and also by the lack of public understanding of what WICHE was all about – especially on the part of governors and legislators. In his first report as chairman at the annual meeting in 1957 he suggested that the full commission meet twice rather than once a year – an idea that commissioners were prepared to support but that had to await a more adequate budget.

Also, like WICHE's first executive director, Bill Jones, Van Dyke was persuaded that the commission would be strengthened by having a legislator member from each state. There were at that time four legislators from three states – Colorado, Utah, and Washington; in Van Dyke's view, they were among the most active and helpful members of the commission. At its February 1958 meeting he asked the executive committee to think about amending the compact to add a legislator in each state, and in March he wrote the committee with a specific proposal in which he discussed the need, alternative ways to get the job done, and language for the amendment. The committee's response was to ask that prior to the annual meeting in August, he inform the commission of his proposal and ways of accomplishing this, as well as the possibility of making the governors *ex officio* members.

Frank Van Dyke was a respected, well-liked member of the commission whose background qualified him as perhaps no other to argue the merits of his proposal. But his recommendation never got to the full commission – that August the executive committee disposed of the matter. As reported in the minutes: "Following discussion concerning the consideration of the addition of a legislator as the fourth commissioner from each state, it was agreed that the commission should continue to operate as it is now constituted. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education will continue to cooperate with the Western Governors at every opportunity." Regrettably, there is no record of the debate on this significant question. The commission did approve planning for a second legislative work conference for the spring of 1959.

The record of discussions in the commission and executive committee of the issue of whether, as in the South, governors and legislators should be made members of the commission is, unfortunately, scant. We have noted evidence that the issue was very much a live one as early as WICHE's first year of operation, when Bill Jones was director. Enarson was well aware of the issue but considered it a matter for the commissioners to deal with – they were the ones who represented each member state.

Putting aside the quite different question of whether governors should be included, the rationale for bringing legislators to the commission was, of course, the advantage this would bring the commission in keeping legislatures informed and involved, minimizing the chances of exactly the kind of state-level concerns that had led to the introduction of a negative resolution at the Council of State Government's Western Regional Conference in 1958. It might also be observed that legislator members could have had a constructive impact in reducing the self-serving tendencies and paranoia that characterized the thinking of educator members from time to time. That is, having legislators at the table might help guard educators against themselves. But in 1958, as it had four years earlier, the commission decided it preferred the status quo.²⁸

One of the uses of the Carnegie grant, Dick Axt and Harold Enarson decided, should be to fund a series of seminars on topics of current concern in the region. The seminars would be designed to generate information and policy guidance, even though the meetings themselves would be very small. First, information on each topic would be compiled by WICHE staff and made available to seminar participants in advance; one or more national figures would be brought in to provide seminar leadership, and proceedings that would draw from the working papers and the seminar input would be produced and given wide distribution. Axt proposed the first three such seminars to the executive committee immediately following the first legislative work conference. The committee approved topics dealing with admission and retention of students; planning and financing physical facilities; and the economics of tuition. The committee suggested additional topics for early scheduling. Axt was negotiating with Terry Lunsford and Hall Sprague to join the staff as professional assistants, both of whom would work with Axt on this agenda.

The first seminar was held in July 1958, focusing upon admission policies for different kinds of institutions – a topic that was timely in many states where there were few or no community colleges and where former teachers' colleges were broadening their missions, programs, and service areas. In the mid-1950s, in most Western states there was a state university, a second institution rivaling the university which, typically, had been established as a land grant college, and a number of institutions that had been teachers' colleges and were broadening their offerings, especially in the liberal arts and sciences and in business. Two-year institutions were uncommon. Where they existed they were regarded as local institutions, not as part of the state college and university system.

In these circumstances, there was little basis upon which state legislators might differentiate among a state's colleges and universities in supporting programs at undergraduate and graduate levels. There was little understanding that, for example, programs in a profession like engineering were a better fit in some institutions than in others. There often were laws adopted years earlier that required all public colleges and universities to open their doors to any graduates of the state's high schools. When California's Master Plan was issued in 1960, sharply differentiating the roles and

admission requirements of the University of California, the state colleges, and junior colleges, public attention was called to significant differences among institutions that involved, or should involve, programs and levels of instruction to be offered, admissions policy, funding requirements, and other matters.

The July 1958 seminar to consider differentiation of admissions policies was timely. The discussions were summarized in the WICHE newsletter that fall, and proceedings appeared in February 1959.

Also at the leading edge of state policy development in higher education, the WICHE Nursing Program, with support from the Carnegie grant, held a seminar in November 1958 on the very new idea that registered nurses should be prepared in two-year programs in junior colleges, leading to an associate degree. Junior colleges were beginning to show up in states other than California. Only a few years later they were being established around the country at the rate of one a week.

An issue for higher education that was hot and getting hotter across the nation, as the competition for state funds grew more intense and as the certainty of greatly increased budgetary needs loomed ever closer, was how public college and university budgets should be compiled and processed within any state. Institutions with the largest number of alumni in the legislature always seemed to have an advantage. But collectively, there were more legislators with less advantaged colleges in their districts than legislators with powerful higher education constituencies. In the clash of interests, frustration levels were mounting among legislators who were pressured by as many as a dozen or even more institutions, each bespeaking its own needs and offering no objective information that could shed light on the strength or weakness of its case in comparison to others.

Legislators could see in the “foundation programs” by which they allocated funds for elementary and secondary education a possible model for higher education. “Standards, formulas, yardsticks” to guide college budgeting were of growing interest to legislators at the same time that most college presidents were certain that “formulas will as often confuse as clarify, will obscure needs rather than point them up, will inhibit rather than promote straight thinking about educational demands.” WICHE held a seminar on the use of formulas and yardsticks in higher educational finance in December 1958, with John Dale Russell, then head of institutional research at New York University, as the professor, and a dozen “students” who were university presidents and budget officers, legislative budget staff, and staff of state higher education agencies. Hall Sprague produced the proceedings two months later. The seminar featured presentations by spokesmen for higher education budget procedures in three states in which formula budgeting was well established – California, Oklahoma, and Texas – and two in which it was not – Colorado and Washington. The seminar and its proceedings were a timely contribution in the quest to budget for public colleges and universities in ways that were equitable and that supported publicly endorsed educational priorities.²⁹

Shortly after joining the staff, Sprague had an assignment from Axt that intrigued them both – a survey of what was being called “institutional research” (IR) in Western colleges and universities. The term was a relatively new one because it referred to what, with rare exceptions, was a new phenomenon on college campuses – studies undertaken by institutions of their own characteristics and activities.³⁰ The survey Axt had in mind would reveal not only the subjects of such studies but the ways in which institutions were organizing to plan and conduct such research. The apparent growth of institutional research was another reflection – along with the formula budgeting to which it was related – of the changing climate that college enrollments, scarce resources, and increasingly close legislative review and decision making were creating for higher education.

The survey was only the first part of Axt’s plan: its findings were to help set the stage for a major training conference on institutional research that WICHE would sponsor in collaboration with Stanford University in the summer of 1959. Before that path-breaking summer conference, a second legislative workshop was held in San Francisco in April 1959, again with the Western Governors’ Conference and the Council of State Governments’ Western Regional Conference as cosponsors. Again, the workshop focused on major higher education policy issues facing the Western states. As in the prior year, conferees were divided into discussion groups representative of the conference mix of legislators and educators, each to discuss four broad topics:

- A collection of state issues: what types of institutions should a state support? What kinds of programs are needed in each institutional type? How large or small should institutions be? Who should set tuition and how much should the student/parent pay? What information should be provided with request budgets and longer range plans?
- How can adequate access be provided for students?
- What needs to be done to provide for effective college teaching?
- What institutional research is needed and how it should be organized?

In general session addresses, senators from Colorado, Montana, and Utah reported on the status of higher education planning and coordination in their states. *Budgeting* was a concern of educators and legislators in every state, and WICHE linked to the legislative workshop a “Special Session on the Budget Process for State Colleges and Universities,” with eight presentations that ranged from trenchant remarks by Harold Enarson on public-sector budgeting (“Higher Education Budgeting: The Instinct for the Trivial”) to a “how to” description of “Standards and Formulas in Budgeting for California State Colleges.”³¹

The time was right for a focus on institutional research, however imprecise the definition of the term during the early years of its use was. In the 127 institutions that responded to Hall Sprague’s survey early in 1959, Sprague catalogued 602 current or

recent research studies in 10 areas of institutional activity: students, faculty, curriculum, enrollment, plant, administration and organization of the institution, admissions policy, teaching methods, finance, and relations with outside agencies and institutions. The studies ranged from sketchy to complex. Virtually all of the responding institutions were doing *something* they could call “institutional research”; few indeed were doing enough to need a full time person to help plan and coordinate the efforts.³²

The institute at Stanford, filling the week from Sunday evening, July 19, 1959, to Saturday afternoon, July 25, was a nonstop work conference with morning and afternoon sessions, not to mention 12 assignments of homework that were to be accomplished somehow – and only two free evenings! The timeliness and national significance of the workshop was attested to by the attendance. With each participant or his/her sponsor paying full cost, in addition to 17 leaders, there were some 140 present – double the number expected when the conference was first planned – from all of the WICHE states and 15 other states across the country.³³ Axt provided each participant with two binders of materials pertinent to the assignments with which the conference dealt – plus a bibliography listing 176 books and articles on the full range of conference topics. Men (exclusively!) on the leading edge of expertise for each of the topics made presentations and led discussions throughout the week. The topics covered the gamut of institutional operations:

- ▶ Purposes and organization of institutional research.
- ▶ Studies on student characteristics.
- ▶ Projecting enrollments.
- ▶ Analyzing class size, teaching load, and instructional cost.
- ▶ Budget analysis (three sessions, led by John Dale Russell).
- ▶ Research on the faculty and research by the faculty.
- ▶ Space utilization.
- ▶ Campus planning.

There was a session in which institutional research directors at the universities of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Colorado described the purposes, organization, and operation of the IR function

The institute was a notable milepost for WICHE as it defined its role in state and institutional planning. It turned out to be the first of a dozen summer work conferences on institutional research topics that extended well into the 1960s, cosponsored with the Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of California, Berkeley. The institute provided much of the grist for a series of brief reports produced in newsletter format in 1959 and 1960, “Vital Issues in Higher Education.” It led to the collaboration among WICHE and its counterparts in New England and the South, along with the American Council on Education, on a seminar in November 1959 attended by 60

people, on the measurement of faculty workload.³⁴ It inspired Axt's compilation and, in mid-1960, publication of a *Fact Book on Western Higher Education*, a loose-leaf production aimed to serve the growing number of officers engaged in institutional research. The *Fact Book* pulled together for the WICHE states some 85 pages of data on population, enrollments, institutions, earned degrees, student migration, faculty, and tuition and fees. Most of the data came from national sources, but some was produced in original WICHE surveys.

Advances in the Health Fields

WICHE's origins 10 years earlier had been rooted in the health fields. Both educators and governors saw opportunity to extend the reach of existing schools of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine to states that lacked such programs, to the advantage of all. In the face of approaching dramatic increases in population and in college enrollments, studies of available and needed manpower, and of programs of training and research, were soon under way in each of these fields and in mental health, nursing, and social work. Harold Enarson's earliest efforts with WICHE were largely consumed by a growing program in these fields, including arrangements for moving students across state lines but also probing directly into manpower and training needs, especially in dentistry, medicine, nursing, mental health, and veterinary medicine.

Recapitulating: in 1956 WICHE had released a report on Western manpower and training needs in dentistry, researched and written by the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) with the help of a large, WICHE-appointed advisory committee, and had attempted to put follow-up in the hands of dental societies in each of the member states. It had established close working relationships with leaders in the nursing profession and had defined a program that, with outside funding, would expand and strengthen provisions for training nurse educators and for improving research. In 1956 WICHE had sought and received a five-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation that would enable it to establish a representative council of nurse educators and practitioners and to add the staff needed to develop programs of training and research. This grant was soon followed by a three-year grant for continuing education programs. After extended effort to appoint a nationally recognized leader to organize the program, Enarson had signed up Jo Eleanor Elliott, a young, creative, and aggressive director in the spring of 1957.

In mental health, WICHE had begun to provide leadership in a field that, perhaps even more than nursing, was in the process of defining itself. Psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses – all were involved, but in roles and relationships that were not well defined. In this profession, workforce training needs in the West, as in the country at large, were confused. With support from the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), WICHE had taken the lead in a survey that in June 1956 provided a great deal of information about mental health training and practice in the West, but a program of action remained to be developed. We have noted that Enarson concluded

that, given severe shortages of professionals in this field, it would be extremely difficult to find an acknowledged leader to head up a program at WICHE and that his best strategy would be to find a generalist. In 1957 he employed Phillip Sirotkin, a quick and aggressive young professor of political science, to help define the program, recruit strong professional leadership, and organize a representative council of educators and practitioners.

In medicine, it had proven impossible to obtain outside funds for a study of training needs in the West, at the same time that there were strong concerns within the region about the lack of medical schools in most of the Rocky Mountain states. Both Arizona and New Mexico were urging such a study. Enarson was left with the task of finding volunteer help to pull together information from available sources. Goaded by physician members of the commission and assisted by a large advisory committee that included 17 physicians from throughout the region, finally in 1959 WICHE released a report on resources available and needed in medical education in the West. Manpower shortages seemed to be less acute in veterinary medicine. Using information from the U. S. Census Bureau, American Veterinary Association, and the three schools of veterinary medicine in the region (Colorado, Washington, and California), staff produced a preliminary report on veterinary medicine in the West, for the annual meeting in 1957. Commissioner William E. Morgan, president of Colorado State University – home of the region’s largest veterinary school – chaired an advisory committee of the deans of the three Western schools, to review the draft report and make findings and recommendations. WICHE published *Veterinary Medicine in the West* in 1958, based upon the preliminary report and committee review.

Within the programs for which Enarson had appointed staff leadership in 1957 – Jo Elliott for nursing, Phil Sirotkin for mental health, and Assistant Director Dick Axt, who took on the Student Exchange Program and the new programs in state and institutional research and policymaking – WICHE’s level of activity rose dramatically in 1957 and 1958.

Nursing

A Western Council on Higher Education for Nursing – WCHEN – representative initially of only the baccalaureate schools of nursing, had been organized and had its first meeting in January 1957. The U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) had made the chief of its nursing education branch, Faye Abdellah, available as nurse consultant until WICHE could make its own appointment. Abdellah and the council planned a number of continuing education programs and initiated efforts to obtain funds to support fellowships for graduate training. WCHEN organized itself in four “seminars” that covered the areas in which its program was to develop – undergraduate education, graduate education, continuing education, and research. After Jo Elliott arrived in July 1957, conferences and training activities in all four of WCHEN’s interest areas

were developed rapidly. In an annual regional conference, WCHEN brought its entire constituency together – from the colleges and universities, the hospitals in which most nurses were employed and most nurses still were being prepared, the state associations, and state boards of nursing – to review the problems and progress in the programs in which its practitioners would be prepared. The WICHE Nursing Program moved aggressively in a field in which state organizations were unable to exercise leadership that would extend beyond their own boundaries, and in which national organizations were too remote from states and regions of the country to address issues and needs that had not become acute problems in the nation at large.

Elliott and the WCHEN graduate seminar were concerned that in both nursing education and nursing practice, little research was being done and implications of the research that was available were not being recognized and implemented. The seminar and Elliott initiated three proposals for conferences to address the issues, in collaboration with university schools in the region. The three conferences were funded by the USPHS and held in 1957 and 1958. The University of Colorado School of Nursing conducted a series of seminars for faculty who were teaching research methods or guiding research. The school at the University of California, Berkeley, organized a major research conference – the first ever in nursing – to assist nurses in design and conduct of research in patient care settings. The School of Nursing at the University of Washington sponsored the third component, a regional conference to review current research programs and to identify areas that needed study. Out of this meeting came the first of a series of annual reports of newly initiated research that WCHEN continued to produce.

The role of the junior colleges in nurse training was an early WCHEN concern. Within the region, in 1959, 19 junior college programs were preparing registered nurses, 15 of them in California. The early junior college programs educating registered nurses were three-year programs, as were those in diploma schools. The first two-year program in the country had been created only seven years earlier, as a pilot to test the feasibility of thus shortening the time needed. Many questions remained about whether two-year programs were a safe and effective alternative.³⁵

WCHEN organized a seminar on the junior college nursing program in late 1958. The seminar not only probed the issues, it created a statement of “Criteria for New Junior College Programs” for the guidance of states and institutions. The criteria specified 11 “guidelines for a good junior college program” that lacked the sanction of government regulations or even of a professional accrediting body but that represented the best thinking of leaders in education and practice in the West and that WCHEN could urge upon approval agencies. The council’s undergraduate group soon did the same thing for new baccalaureate programs, spelling out guidelines that pertained to the community setting, institutional setting, facilities, faculty, students, and programs. Guidelines for new master’s degree programs were also published. These documents provided direction that was needed, both in higher education and in the profession,

and that was coming from nowhere else. Indeed, they helped give WCHEN national prominence.

Shortly after coming to WICHE in the early fall of 1957, Elliott conceptualized a comprehensive survey, to be undertaken in active consultation with WCHEN and its executive committee, of the characteristics and needs of nursing education in the West. WICHE published the survey report, "Nurses for the West," in 1959. It summarized certain data for the nation and extensive data for the region relating to population, nurse supply, and training facilities. It projected numbers of nurses needed in 1970 (11 years hence), finding that to maintain the current nurse-population ratio – which it regarded as an absolute minimum – the West would need, annually, an *additional* 2,000 nurses at the junior college or diploma level, 1,000 at the baccalaureate level, and 650 at the master's degree level. It went on to assess the expansion potential of existing programs and to propose "points of attack" through recruitment, expansion of current programs, opening new schools, and expanding programs of continuing education. It proposed specific action at regional, state, and institutional levels. It was the kind of analysis and prescription upon which Western states and higher education institutions depended in their own planning and for which they came to respect the Western Council on Education for Nursing at WICHE.

Mental Health

It was a coup for Phil Sirotkin and WICHE when Daniel Blain, M.D., medical director at the American Psychiatric Association in Washington, D.C., accepted the directorship of WICHE's embryonic Mental Health Program in the summer of 1958. Blain was a national and international figure in the field. Among other posts, he held teaching positions at the University of Pennsylvania and at Georgetown University medical schools. His time at WICHE turned out to be very brief, but he helped define a number of programs that gave important identity to the regional program. The stature he brought to the program helped make it possible, in the summer of 1959, to appoint as his successor an able young leader, Warren T. Vaughan, M.D., director of the Children's Unit at the Metropolitan State Hospital in Massachusetts and formerly director of the Division of Mental Hygiene in the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health.³⁶

Actually, Sirotkin had organized a kick-off meeting of the Mental Health Training and Research Council (the name soon shortened to Western Mental Health Council), held four months after his arrival, and with the council's advice and assistance, launched an active program of conferences and training. With NIMH support, a 10-week seminar of psychiatric training for physicians in general practice had been organized and would be offered in a dozen communities over a three-year period. At Pacific State Hospital in California, a program was initiated that provided career employees from WICHE states six to 12 months' training in the field of mental retardation. WICHE conferences had brought state hospital directors in the Western states together for the very first time, and

the hospital directors together with heads of university training programs for the first time. Out of one of these came the realization among hospital superintendents that each of the hospitals should have its own staff development program – but they needed help in determining what such a program should be. WICHE set about obtaining funds to underwrite a conference on staff development, to be held in spring 1960. It was also seeking funds to initiate a summer “work and study” program for college students in state schools and hospitals. Further, by organizing a consulting service, the regional program was encouraging mental health research in state hospitals and correctional facilities.³⁷

Promoting Action in the Health Professions

By summer 1959, WICHE staff, with the benefit of the regional studies that had been completed in dentistry, mental health, medicine, nursing, and veterinary medicine, had compiled information about current enrollments and capacity of available training programs in all these fields, together with assessments of needs in the next 10 or 12 years. All this information had been weighed by representative committees of educators and practitioners. From the U.S. Public Health Service and national professional organizations, warnings of impending national shortages of physicians, dentists, nurses, and others provided a backdrop for the findings in the West, where population was predicted to grow much faster than in the nation as a whole, and where a far larger proportion of college-bound students went to *public* colleges and universities than in regions in the East. Western states had always depended heavily upon the in-migration of practitioners in all these fields from the East, South, and Midwest. Now the numbers needed, together with the fact that more of the graduates of institutions in other regions would be in demand in those areas, challenged Western states to supply more of their own requirements.

It was a story that Harold Enarson was eager to tell the governors. He was able to make arrangements for himself and the commission vice chairman, Alfred Popma, M.D., of Idaho, to appear at the Western Governors’ Conference, which was to be held in Popma’s home state on September 24-26, 1959. Enarson marshaled his troops to produce “Meeting the West’s Health Manpower Needs: A Report to the Western Governors’ Conference,” to highlight needs in medicine, dentistry, nursing, veterinary medicine, dental hygiene, mental health, and public health.

It was a dynamite report. With no “ifs” or “maybes” it asserted that in medicine, the West needed 1,000 *more* places for students than the approximately 2,300 that were currently filled. For the 500 more that were needed immediately, this translated into a 25 percent expansion of each of the nine existing allopathic schools and the establishment of three new schools.

In dentistry, where there were six schools, there was a need for an additional 1,260 places for entering students – meaning the immediate expansion of all current schools and establishment of five new ones. In dental hygiene there were only four schools in the

region. The report asserted that hygienists, trained in two-year programs, could extend the services of dentists with major savings in both time and cost. It advised that the region needed 500 more places for hygienists, that all of the dental schools should be training hygienists, and that new programs should be initiated in both junior colleges and four-year institutions.

The shortages were more acute in nursing than in any other field. The need was for an additional 2,000 places in diploma (hospital) programs and in associate degree programs in junior colleges, 1,000 more in baccalaureate nursing programs, and 650 in master's degree programs, as well as additional persons trained beyond the master's level. All existing programs needed to grow, and new programs at all levels needed to be created.

There was some relief in veterinary medicine, where the region's current three schools were turning out nearly enough graduates and, with modest increases in enrollment, could meet the need.

That was by no means the case in mental health, a "derivative" field that drew its practitioners from other professions. Here, WICHE did not present specific numbers of additional places needed in medicine, psychology, nursing, and social work. It pointed out that with present facilities, to bring the numbers of psychiatrists to the standard in veterans' hospitals – hardly reflecting the profession's ideal standard – would take 29 years, and that was *with no consideration of increases in population*. For clinical psychologists the time would be 21 years. The report presented no data on public health, but reported that the situation in this field paralleled that in mental health, and that expansion of current programs and of continuing education would be necessary.

The report pointed out the benefits of the Student Exchange Program, which was accommodating some 300 students in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine. The program had demonstrably increased the number of students entering Western medical schools. It was providing an advantageous way of sharing facilities. The problem was that "when this sharing is a sharing of scarcity it is not enough. . . . *There will not be enough facilities to share.*"³⁸

The governors responded to the presentation with a request that the WICHE report be given broad distribution, and with two resolutions. The first asked WICHE to "explore proposals for further sharing of health education facilities, including proposals for regional medical schools, and to report their findings and recommendations to the next meeting of this conference." This response was hardly a gubernatorial call for action in their home states; but it did indicate that WICHE had the governors' attention. The second resolution was responsive to a study the Council of State Governments had completed, of needs in the West for better care and treatment of "special problem delinquent" juveniles. The report suggested that one *regional* institution associated with one of the universities might serve the region well, and proposed that the WICHE

Mental Health Council and the Council of State Governments study feasibility of such an institution.³⁹

The executive committee, meeting in November, was generally pleased with the governors' reaction to the health professions report. It spent considerable time discussing distribution of the report of the study in medicine, "The West's Medical Manpower Needs," just completed. But the minutes make it clear that the committee was unhappy with the specific requests the governors had made – "the added work upsets the WICHE budget." Moreover, the request to look into the possibility of a regional facility for problem delinquents would force staff attention into the mental health area, an area that was "of less central concern to the commission . . . than some other areas." For the committee it was confirmation of the commission's good fortune that governors were not people they had to deal with at every meeting! Yet governors could not be ignored. The committee instructed the staff to attempt to obtain foundation support to fund its response to the governors and for distribution of the medical report (Enarson obtained \$7,300 from the Commonwealth Fund for distributing and publicizing the medical report), and authorized it to expend up to \$7,500 of the reserve on these efforts if necessary.

There has been no systematic evaluation of WICHE efforts to get its member states to expand schools and to create new programs of professional education in medicine, dentistry, nursing, and mental and public health. Given the prior and parallel efforts of federal health agencies and national professional organizations in these years, it would be difficult to pinpoint credit or blame. New medical schools were indeed established in Arizona and New Mexico, but the extent of help provided by WICHE to the individuals and institutions in those states who had long been working to establish such schools is questionable. Enarson, who considered WICHE's efforts to expand facilities in dentistry a "limited success with some degree of failure," has said that the dental study helped lead to an additional school in California, and to the initiation of a number of programs in dental hygiene and dental assisting. But he was disappointed with inaction elsewhere in the region and especially disappointed that the creation of a dental school in Colorado – which, during Ward Darley's years had seemed like a sure thing – was suddenly off the table when a new president at Colorado turned out to be interested in other things.⁴⁰ WCHEN was a major force in developments in nursing in the West. Its efforts undoubtedly were among the many factors that led to the expansion of collegiate nursing programs, including advances to the doctoral level. WICHE's manpower studies and resulting efforts to encourage or discourage expansion of programs of professional education continued for many years.

Dealing with the Challenge of Television in Education

Television – perhaps *the* dominating force in human communication at the end of the 20th century – first made its broad public appearance at the close of World War II.

In WICHE's earliest years, the new technology was well known, but its impact on the communications media, and certainly upon formal education, was embryonic. Choices about investments in the new medium were being made that would shape the uses of television in education for years to come.

Inevitably, television remained in the WICHE picture because of its potential and its growing use in education. By 1958 more than 300 colleges and universities around the country were awarding credit for TV courses that ranged from the field of education to foreign languages and even physics. There were 34 educational television (ETV) stations from coast to coast and construction permits had been granted for 46 others.⁴¹ The annual meeting in 1958 was the occasion for a panel discussion that included a chemistry lecture – a televised demonstration – and a panel chaired by Ralph Steetle, executive director of the Joint Council on Educational Television, and that included Harry Newburn, president of the Ford Foundation's Educational Television and Radio Center at Ann Arbor, along with President Tom Popejoy of the University of New Mexico and Chancellor John R. Richards of the Oregon State System of Higher Education. Proceedings were published later in 1958.

But WICHE activities related to ETV continued to be sporadic. Jo Eleanor Elliott staged a significant demonstration of the use of television in continuing education at a conference at the University of California in January 1959. With the Radio Corporation of America furnishing equipment and personnel, nursing procedures in nine wards were tracked on closed-circuit TV for showing at the conference and to a group of 90 staff nurses at a nearby hospital – according to WCHEN, the first time television had been used to teach nursing care. At the executive committee meeting in March 1959 there was discussion of a WICHE summer program that would prepare “competent college teachers” to use television for credit courses, and the annual meeting later that year authorized fund raising for the purpose. James Armsey of Ford's Fund for the Advancement of Education met with the executive committee in November. He offered the not flattering advice that the WICHE request was about “three years too late,” but suggested possible Ford interest in a regional network or other forms of interstate cooperation.

Soon thereafter, in January 1960, the Ford Foundation extended a \$25,000 grant to enable WICHE to assemble information on interinstitutional practices and experiments in using television for education in the West; review the findings with educators and college and university radio-television personnel; and arrange interinstitutional agreements for televised instruction. Terry Lunsford would staff the project. At last WICHE had a small allocation that would help it become more involved with what had become a very significant new tool in higher education.

Collaboration in University Research

From his earliest association with WICHE, Enarson had been persuaded that Western universities could and should work together on research problems, especially those related to economic development – such as forest management and use, water, and mining – common to the West.⁴² We have noted that at the annual meeting in 1955 he advanced to the commission his idea that WICHE should take an active role in encouraging and assisting universities to collaborate on these problems, and the commission responded by authorizing a committee through which WICHE could do so.

A year went by. At the annual meeting in 1956, Enarson arranged a panel to discuss collaboration in research on Western economic development. The problem was that university presidents who were WICHE commissioners were not the people who did such research. The commissioners adopted another resolution to “continue to encourage the universities of the West in initiating cooperative research ventures relating to Western economic development.”

Yet a year later, in 1957, research scientists from 10 universities and research laboratories in the Rocky Mountain states got together in conjunction with a meeting of the American Physical Society to discuss the idea of forming a council that would promote the cooperative use of training and facilities for basic research in the physical and biological sciences. Who inspired and arranged for the meeting is not known, but WICHE was involved. The group designated several of its members to draft a charter and arrange a meeting early in 1958 to establish the council formally. Dick Axt worked with the group in preparing a “Memorandum of Agreement Establishing the Western Regional Science Council” and presented the proposal to the executive committee on February 1, 1958. The council was hardly the structure for planning and conducting collaborative research on practical problems of economic development that Enarson had sought, but after three or four years of jaw boning, it seemed to be a long step ahead. The executive committee authorized establishment of the council and commended the scientists’ initiative.

Enarson’s idea of a university research collaborative that would focus on practical problems of economic development in the West did not die, but it had great difficulty in coming to life. Another year went by. Evidently the scientists encountered difficulty in launching the Western Regional Science Council. Now, a committee of Rocky Mountain university presidents, headed by Tom Popejoy of New Mexico, with WICHE staff assistance was shaping a plan for a nonprofit corporation that would facilitate the use of existing and new science facilities.⁴³ Popejoy invited 20 Rocky Mountain presidents to an organizational meeting in Denver in May to create “ARMU” – the Associated Rocky Mountain Universities – to “increase and improve science research in the mountain states of the West.”⁴⁴ The presidents were enthusiastic about the effort. WICHE staff would continue to serve as secretariat until ARMU could set up an office and hire its own director.

ARMU offices were established in WICHE space in the Fleming Law Building at the University of Colorado. Robert V. Bartz was appointed executive director and was on the job in December. Bartz had been vice president of a Washington, D.C., corporation that was working on new physical science curriculum materials; he had held science administration positions at both MIT and the California Institute of Technology.

Bartz was determined not to be rushed into some research effort that was of great interest at the moment but that turned out to be of dubious value in a longer-range, planned program. He felt that the first months of a new organization are unique: “No other period offers the same potential for assessing the interests and powers at hand, or for developing in a conceptual way the complete spectrum of inherent opportunities, or the complete flexibility of movement.” He spent several months in talking with interested observers in the universities and state offices, and in June 1960 drafted a *First Annual Report*, embodying much of the conceptual thinking he had advanced to the ARMU Board in April. At that time, the board approved initial plans for interdisciplinary research programs that would deal with physical materials, weather modification, and the management of natural resources – fields that seemed to bridge the basic and the applied.⁴⁵

Activating WICHE’s Core Program – Student Exchange

We have noted that in WICHE’s earliest years, its Student Exchange Program was, *de facto*, primarily the product of bilateral agreements on the part of the University of Colorado Medical School, the Dental School at the University of Oregon, and the Veterinary School at Colorado State University (then the Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College) to make a number of places available for students from other WICHE states under the tuition arrangements provided under the WICHE compact. Forty-one students benefited from the program beginning in the fall of 1953. By fall 1956, the mechanics by which “sending states” would identify the residents they would support and “receiving schools” would specify the numbers of WICHE students they would accept, as well as the timing and process by which payments of state funds would flow, had been worked out with reasonable acceptability to all parties and had been formalized in a manual that Dick Axt had written. Three classes having been admitted, 201 students were enrolled. That fall, nine states were underwriting students in at least one of the three fields in which the program was operating. The number of public and private universities whose professional schools were receiving WICHE students was steadily increasing – whatever the actual cost of educating WICHE students might be, the \$2,000 state payment in medicine, \$1,600 in dentistry, and \$1,200 in veterinary medicine, in addition to the regular tuition paid by residents, was enough to encourage schools to participate.⁴⁶

Indeed, one of the bones of contention that remained to be worked out was whether, at the private schools, the state payments should be consumed 100 percent by the schools, or whether at least some of the amount should be credited toward the student's tuition payment. The private schools were pocketing the state payments with no questions asked. Over a period of years, these institutions were induced to provide some portion of the state payment for tuition reduction for WICHE students.

Another issue that proved difficult for the commission had to do with adding fields other than medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine to the program. At the time the report of the manpower study in dentistry was presented to the commission in August 1956, the Wyoming commissioners proposed the addition of dental hygiene to the Student Exchange Program; interest in that field was appearing in Idaho as well. To review this proposal, WICHE Chairman Ward Darley appointed a committee of deans of the region's four dental schools, with commissioner Willard Fleming of the University of California school as chairman.

Other groups had been seeking inclusion in SEP, including librarians, osteopathic physicians, physical therapists, and medical technologists. Chairman Darley asked Frank McPhail to chair a small committee to propose a general policy for the addition of fields to the Student Exchange Program. McPhail's committee responded at the December 1956 meeting with a policy proposal that would permit the commission to add fields at any time but would provide that any proposal that originated outside the commission would have to be advanced by one of the member states that was interested in adding the field. The executive committee was not ready to accept this; it adopted a substitute motion that the proposed policy be routed to all commissioners and considered at the next executive committee meeting.

The committee proceeded to receive the report of Commissioner Willard Fleming's committee on adding the field of dental hygiene. One might assume that, consistent with its action on the policy proposal for adding fields to the Student Exchange Program, the committee would have delayed action pending the outcome of executive committee action on a general policy. Not so: the Fleming committee's favorable recommendation was adopted – contingent upon the appropriation of funds to activate the program by one or more of the member states. The action was broadcast in the newsletter in January: "WICHE Broadens Exchange Program to Cover Dental Hygienists." But nothing happened; for a decade, neither Wyoming, nor Idaho, nor any other state appropriated funds to send their residents to dental hygiene programs in other states.

Within the medical profession in the 1950s, the acceptance of osteopathic medicine as being on a par with allopathic medicine was politically a "hot topic." At the April 1957 meeting of the executive committee, in the discussion of a "request for recognition of osteopathic training under the compact," and the proposed policy for adding new fields to SEP, "Dr. Humphrey moved that since this is of such regionwide concern,

that the report of the policy committee . . . be discussed at the annual meeting of the commission in August.”

Problems with the Student Exchange Program *other than* whether fields such as dental hygiene and osteopathic medicine should be added were complicating operations in many states. Sending states could not count on being able to rely on SEP in future years because receiving schools would not guarantee that some specific number of places would be reserved for WICHE students. The receiving schools, on the other hand, could not count on sending states to appropriate funds to cover a number of students that they could count on. From the vantage point of the student, because nonresident tuition in most states at that time was only slightly more than resident tuition, getting into the WICHE program was not a sufficient advantage to commit to that program. Another problem in some states was a seething resentment in the public professional schools that private schools were charging students their full tuition and pocketing the WICHE fee in addition, thus getting a bonus that the public institutions did not get.

Such issues turned out to be all-consuming at the annual meeting in 1957, and no new policies were adopted on any aspect of the Student Exchange Program. The commission deliberately set the role of the private institutions aside for the moment, and suggested that the public professional schools receiving WICHE students reserve a specific average number of places for them, and set their nonresident tuition at a level at least equal to their resident tuition plus the WICHE payment. It suggested that the *sending states*, by not later than 1960, provide appropriations sufficient to cover at least the average number of their residents who enrolled through WICHE each year. The staff was directed to conduct a thorough review of the program and to convene a meeting of sending states and receiving schools to encourage implementation of these proposals.

That meeting was held on January 31, 1958, immediately prior to a meeting of the executive committee. The following day the executive committee translated the discussion into a “Statement on the Student Exchange Program” that in low-key language observed that the program was, in general, working well; that it was particularly helpful to those states and schools that were participating in a substantial way; that there were, at the time, more places available for students than there were students whose states were supporting them in the program (that is, larger state appropriations in sending states were needed); that the receiving schools should provide some assurances that in the years ahead, they would continue to reserve places for WICHE students; and that certain operational adjustments should be made in the program.

Apparently this meeting was held at a propitious time; the discussions between senders and receivers seemed to be helpful. Reports at the annual meeting in August that year indicated that the program was working more smoothly; and a year later, that continued to be the case. In the fall of 1959, some 300 students from nine states would be participating in the program. Each of the three states sending the largest number of residents – Arizona, New Mexico, and Wyoming – had designated a university staff

member as “certifying officer” to administer the program. This had greatly relieved both the commissioners in those states and the WICHE staff. Importantly, most of the states were now appropriating enough dollars to cover substantially all their residents attending WICHE schools. The program did not, of course, relieve the problem that more training facilities in human medicine and dentistry were going to be needed. Staff urged that the commission study ways through which student exchange might be used to help states meet these needs.

The program was not perfect, but after a half-dozen difficult start-up years, many of the earlier problems had been made manageable. In fall 1960 there would be 342 students in the program; 11 states would be appropriating more than a half-million dollars to cover their students; five states were supporting their residents in all three fields. Whether to expand the program with new fields – including dental hygiene! – remained a question. And questions were being raised about whether the state payments, which had seen no increase since the program started in 1953, needed review and perhaps, increase. Student exchange had achieved adolescence!

Other Explorations and Efforts

Both for the Western states and for the WICHE Commission and staff, the 1950s were years for exploring what this new enterprise might do that would contribute notably to higher education in the West. We have amply noted that the commission had employed a director who was, in his words, open to “about anything not plainly illegal or immoral.” Almost anything could be tried at WICHE so long as necessary staffing could be provided or funds could be obtained to underwrite whatever staffing was needed.

Graduate Studies

From his earliest weeks in office, Enarson had been sensitive to the potential role of the graduate deans in WICHE’s program. He had met with West Coast deans on two occasions in 1954. The looming shortage of college teachers was of deep concern to him because the lead time required to prepare college teachers told him that the time to initiate action had already passed. At his first annual meeting, he had proposed a survey of “needs for training in graduate, technical, and professional fields.” Months passed and his proposal was finding no takers. He recommended to the executive committee in June 1956 that WICHE convene a conference of Western graduate deans “to examine the problem of producing college teachers and the possibilities of complementary specialization at the graduate level.” The committee advanced this proposal to the commission; and at its meeting in August the commission approved proceeding, with the direction that the deans would attend “at no expense to the commission.”

The conference was held one year later, in conjunction with a meeting of the executive committee and the full commission. The deans welcomed WICHE leadership.

Indeed, they proposed that WICHE sponsor an association of graduate deans that would function in close collaboration with WICHE. Their major concern was the impending teacher shortage; they recommended that WICHE undertake studies of the numbers and kinds of college teachers needed and provide annual updates for the colleges. They recommended other action looking to improvements in recruitment and in financial aid for graduate students and in salary levels for teachers. They had no interest in what the commission had referred to as “complementary specialization” – fact finding followed by negotiations over which schools would offer which programs and over arrangements for sharing specialized and often expensive resources.⁴⁷

The agenda proposed for WICHE by the deans could easily have consumed the efforts of the entire WICHE staff, and the commission was hardly prepared to agree to that – it appointed a special committee to consider the recommendations. Six months later the report of the “Committee to Review the Report of the Conference of Western Graduate Deans” came to the executive committee. In the interim, the Carnegie grant had been announced, one component of which had to do with the college teacher shortage. The committee subordinated the specific recommendations of the deans to the broader questions relating to college teaching. It did not look with favor on the idea that WICHE become primarily an agency for studies and surveys. The WICHE role would better have to do with sponsoring workshops and conferences, providing consultants, issuing useful publications relating to college teacher recruitment and preparation, and more effective use of teaching resources through curricular reorganization, provision of teaching and clerical assistance, and the use of audio-visual devices. The committee liked the idea of an association of graduate deans, provided it was established independently of the commission – the staff should be prepared to provide “a minimum of administrative and other assistance” to help get it started.

With the deans, Dick Axt defined and carried out a Western survey of specialized graduate programs; of admission standards, costs, and fees; and of the numbers, qualifications, and uses of graduate assistants. He also arranged for the organizing meeting of the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) in March 1959.⁴⁸ In the years that followed, WAGS developed purposes and activities of its own, linking with the national Council of Graduate Schools while maintaining informal ties with WICHE on programs of shared interest.

With or without the graduate deans, WICHE did not develop a program to encourage regionwide planning relating to graduate studies that would help assure the quality of the strong and avoid prolonging the life of the weak. Enarson understood the reasons: “The problem of reducing duplication is . . . one where a regional agency like WICHE could probably not achieve success, regardless of the approach used. People with vested interests do not want to discontinue programs. . . . WICHE has only the authority of persuasion. Since the WICHE governing board consists primarily of university

presidents, in effect we are asking the commissioners to reduce their own institutional programs.⁴⁹

Social Work

It was soon after Enarson became executive director that the commission asked for studies to determine whether the Student Exchange Program or other WICHE programs should be developed in the social work field. We noted earlier the survey and pilot study undertaken in the Northwest – in Washington, in which there was a professional social work program, and Oregon, in which there was not.

In 1959, Enarson had occasion to describe the outcome of these efforts. “The project petered out.” The man who had conducted the study moved on to other things. The report of the pilot study having been distributed to the heads of all Western programs, Enarson wrote the deans to ask for suggestions for next steps. The response “was so desultory that another meeting did not seem indicated.”

Lessons had been learned: the profession had not yet defined itself clearly. There was no linkage between the professional schools and the agencies employing social workers as to the knowledge and skills appropriate to employees at varying levels of responsibility. Moreover, there was no shortage of programs; and if a shortage were to develop, it would be easy to expand existing programs or to create new ones. The real problem was that positions in social work were not attracting candidates. The only people interested in an exchange program were those seeking students for programs already being offered.

With some differences of circumstance, WICHE had encountered similar conditions in marine biology, forestry, mining, and public health. It is hardly surprising that WICHE was often sought after by interests which knew they needed help.

Other Opportunities

We noted briefly, above, that legislators at the Western Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments, in fall 1956, had been impressed with the prospects of nuclear power generation in the West and with the requirements for trained operators, safety personnel, and others, and that they had asked WICHE to initiate a study of “educational needs and research relating to manpower for the nuclear energy fields.” Enarson reported to the executive committee in December of that year that since learning of this request, he had consulted with the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), Atomic Industrial Forum, and Stanford Research Institute, and had learned that AEC was conducting a manpower survey, the results of which it would be happy to share. What WICHE should do was a question – perhaps sponsor a conference that would pull together the higher education institutions, state governments, and industry. The executive committee authorized appointment of an advisory committee and asked it to report at its next meeting, in April 1957. At that next meeting there was a report that the committee was considering the areas of interest in a conference or workshop, and

possible sources of necessary funds; once again it was asked to report at the following meeting. But there is no mention of the subject in the agenda or in the minutes of that meeting or any following meeting. Where there was no one to push, it is understandable that ideas faded away.

Enarson was often troubled by WICHE's lack of a public relations capability. Early in 1957 he discovered the film program at the University of Southern California – commissioner Fred Fagg's institution – and was assured that the center there would be interested in collaborating in the production of “an educational film for the West” – however imprecise, our only definition of the idea. He presented the proposal to the executive committee in April 1957 and received authorization to proceed, but the project hardly rose to a level of priority in which progress could be rapid. The idea was revived when, in December 1958, executive committee members had the opportunity to see an 18-minute film prepared by the Southern Regional Education Board. The formal meeting had adjourned before the film was shown, but commissioners made it clear that Enarson should explore the possibility of doing such a film for WICHE. Enarson brought the matter up at the next meeting of the committee in March 1959. Again, there was support – the chairman, vice chairman, and director were authorized to proceed. And again, nothing happened. The simple fact was that it was more important for WICHE to build a record of accomplishment on a dozen projects that engaged important parts of the constituency than to spend time and money defining and making a movie about the job WICHE was doing.

Commissioner John Richards, staff director of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, put on the agenda for the executive committee in April 1960 the topic of “diploma mills,” self-proclaimed “educational institutions” that were happy – for a fee and little else – to “award” college and university degrees of any type or level. California had adopted some legislation intended to discourage such enterprises and the executive committee concluded that WICHE might properly take some action. It asked staff for a report on the nature and extent of the problem for possible consideration at the annual meeting four months hence.

The report was never made, for reasons that had nothing to do with the nature and extent of the diploma mill problem or the possibility that WICHE should do something about it. That early summer of 1960, the WICHE staff and commission were otherwise engaged.

End of the Enarson Years

A regular meeting of the executive committee was scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. on June 24, 1960, at the Jackson Lake Lodge in Wyoming. It proved to be a long day. The expected centerpiece of the meeting was a presentation by Phillips Talbot, executive director of the American Universities Field Staff, on the responsibilities of

American universities in international education. The centerpiece, in fact, was Harold Enarson's announcement that he wished to resign his position, he hoped not later than September 1.

Enarson had come to the job only a few weeks less than six years earlier, in August 1954. WICHE was a fledgling enterprise that had had competent but not fully committed direction for just one year. Moreover, it was an organization whose charter suggested but did not truly define its important purposes or potential, which awaited ambitious, imaginative, capable leadership. Enarson had provided that leadership and much more, not least of which was political sensitivity, and the organization had responded with impressive growth in the range of its program, the size and capability of its staff, and the commitment of its governing authority.

Throughout the United States it was a time of dramatic growth in higher education, and it is likely that members of the executive committee were not surprised that their young executive director was ready to improve his salary and career options by moving to a senior administrative position on a university campus where, in only a few more years, he would be well placed to assume a major university presidency himself. Enarson was going to become administrative vice president at his alma mater, the University of New Mexico. Among other duties there, he would have lead responsibility for the groundwork and establishment of a two-year medical school. For Audrey Enarson also, it would be going home again.

The executive committee took the actions that were obvious – it appointed a committee to carry on a search, and it scheduled a special meeting of the executive committee a month hence. By the time of that meeting, the search committee had met and had done a lot of telephoning. A number of candidates had been screened and two had been contacted. In fact, the search was virtually over; but the plan was that the executive committee would meet on August 7, in conjunction with the annual meeting, with the expectation that the new executive director would be appointed at that time.

Robert H. Kroepsch, a presidential assistant at the University of Vermont, had been appointed the first executive director of WICHE's counterpart in New England, the New England Board of Higher Education, upon NEBHE's establishment in 1951. He had visited WICHE on several occasions, knew many of its commissioners and was known by them as friendly, experienced in the circumstances of regional higher education compact organizations, articulate, and possessed of a broad New England accent. Though he and his wife, Ruth, exuded New England's ways, they had long been attracted to the West. Now, the opportunity to substitute an immense stretch of the country and Boulder, CO, for a small bit of geography, any of which could be visited in a day, and Boston, MA, proved appealing to Bob and Ruth Kroepsch.

At the annual meeting on August 8, Kroepsch, along with Bob Anderson – SREB executive director – and others presented a panel on interinstitutional cooperation,

pretext enough to get him to the meeting at WICHE's expense. The executive committee met on August 7 to make final arrangements for Enarson's departure at the end of August, and during the annual meeting the following day, to take formal action to appoint Robert Kroepsch in his place. Later in the meeting it appointed Associate Director Warren Vaughan to function in the interim before Kroepsch's arrival on October 10.

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, August 1960

On his last day at WICHE, August 31, 1960, Harold Enarson composed a memorandum to the commissioners. "It hurts to leave. . . . WICHE has been more than a job; it has been a way of life, an act of faith, a commitment to bright promises – even an obsession." It had been six years of long days and many long nights and weekends, but with Enarson's vigorous leadership, those years had brought remarkable changes in this new interstate venture.

In its early years, Enarson had observed in a thoughtful assessment he had prepared in 1959 for William J. McGlothlin of the Southern Regional Education Board, WICHE's program emphasis had been on, first, the exchange of students, and second, reducing program duplication, especially in health professional fields. In his view, the scope of the commission's thinking about student exchange had remained "very narrow" – only the original fields of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine were involved, and there had been no move – as there had been in both the South and New England – to initiate other forms of exchange under which undergraduates and graduate students in specialized fields could be helped to cross state lines for their education. As for reducing duplication, that was perhaps too much to ask of a voluntary organization: "People with vested interests do not want to discontinue programs." WICHE had no power to compel action.⁵⁰

On the initiative of WICHE's staff – Enarson was always sensitive to how little original thinking, or even helpful guidance, he received from commissioners – there had been a broadening of interpretation of what WICHE should be doing. "Balanced planning for the future" – planning for institutions and for programs that would fulfill special roles within overall state systems which, in turn, would reflect regional needs – that was the worthy goal toward which WICHE should work. "The face of education 25 years hence will not be determined by program reductions we make now. It will be determined by what we build from here on." Growth can be haphazard and independent or it can be planned and coordinated, and achieving coordinated, balanced growth "is the most urgent function of WICHE today." Hence, WICHE turned to such tasks as providing information on critical problems in higher education, to statewide planning issues, and to institutional research.

There had been a "deliberate opportunism" in WICHE program development and financing. Early on, WICHE operated with almost no staff and little money; it had to take advantage of the targets of opportunity that came its way. By 1960 the budget was

10 times the budget of six years earlier, and well over half the revenue was coming from outside grants. WICHE was gaining better control over its program.

Enarson was not without his own laments. There were problems in the very setting in which WICHE attempted to be useful. There was little to cause the colleges and universities of the West to think in terms of the *region*. When an institution has reason to look beyond the limits of its own power, it does not think of what a regional organization could do – it continues to go it alone. When federal agencies are involved, the same is true – they reach out directly to the states, or even to individual institutions, not to a regional agency to which they have no direct ties.

However comfortable he was with college and university presidents, Enarson lamented the parochialism presidents could bring to the table. If WICHE were responsible to legislators, the organization could function as a kind of regional “legislative reference service” and rise above institutional self interest. As it was, the presidents were the final determiners of WICHE policy and program. So “given the wide possibilities existing for interstate cooperation, we have barely scratched the surface. . . . The goal of regional education should be a system of regional complementary specialization in all professional technical graduate fields. We have not found a formula for doing this.” On the contrary, regional agencies have many masters and they must constantly “ride fence” and operate within areas of broad agreement.

Their best leverage, indeed, is outside money. “We have better support from Eastern foundations than from Western legislatures.”

But wait a minute, Harold Enarson! In 1960, WICHE was solidly in place as a player in higher education development in the West. The information it was producing in nursing and mental health, medicine and dentistry, and the thoughtful policy guidance it was generating in statewide and institutional assessment and planning, were having an impact on decisions that were being made in many of the Western states. The focus it was bringing to institutional research, and the help it was extending to institutional officers as to needed research subjects and techniques, was increasingly being acknowledged, indeed, throughout the country. WICHE was providing a forum for thrashing out problems that even a California could not resolve all by itself. Assuredly WICHE was part of the higher education establishment – it was dominated by university presidents whose interests were very different from those of legislators or governors, or even a slowly growing number of state higher education executive officers. If that meant that WICHE was unable to do some things, it remained true that WICHE was beginning to do many things that had not been possible before WICHE made them possible.

CHAPTER III

THE KROEPSCH YEARS
1960–1976

Robert Kroepsch had nurtured NEBHE – the New England Board of Higher Education – since its beginning in 1955, in a part of the country in which the higher education scene was very different from that of the West. Prestige is power, and in New England the prestigious colleges and universities were the old, private ones. In the West on the other hand, it was the public universities that were dominant in public esteem. Kroepsch thought the predominating role of public institutions in the West could improve the chances that a regional compact agency could play an important role in higher education.

Kroepsch did not come West with a “program” for WICHE. He came with experience in a kindred organization that, among other qualities, lacked authority to direct any participant to take any particular action. Kroepsch’s associate director, Kevin Bunnell, affirms that Kroepsch came without preconceptions for WICHE, that he felt that “we were engaged in an experiment.” It was a challenge; but some of the pressures that Enarson and his colleagues had experienced were relaxing: all 13 states were now members, for example, and the character of the organization was emerging more clearly. It was fun to see what the organization could do in response to needs that could and would be readily identified.

Bob Kroepsch’s style of leadership led him to employ men and women who understood the dependence of any bureaucracy upon fiscal, political, and other constraints but who were self-starters, had ideas of their own, and could develop the fiscal and other support required to translate their ideas into action. He was dedicated to achieving consensus on matters that involved more than a single decision maker. He knew it was essential that staff help formulate organizational goals and priorities and that staff be well informed about what was going on, and he was effective in providing the communications mechanisms needed to maintain such an environment. Within the staff there would be several leaders and centers of initiative and direction. For the most part they were unit chiefs who, as the administrative group (ad group), met regularly with the executive director and whose consensus he always sought to achieve before any major decision. Bob Kroepsch’s executive leadership would be more relaxed than circumstances permitted Harold Enarson’s to be.¹

Given these circumstances, the transition from Enarson to Kroepsch was easy. The program so well started would continue to grow, along many of the same lines. The relationships of the responsible commission and the staff would be little changed. As new people were hired, new programs would be defined, funded, and initiated.

The G.I. Bill had produced a “sea change” in public attitudes toward a higher education establishment that formerly had been, essentially, the reserve of the privileged. In the aftermath of World War II, Americans were learning that women and men of all conditions of background, color, and prior circumstances of learning could succeed in improving their prospects for employment and for life by continuing their education beyond high school.

Americans had also found that whatever their country did to advance opportunities for learning, other nations – including those in competition with American ways and interests – were capable of doing the same, sometimes faster and even more successfully than did Americans. Sputnik – Russia’s pioneering flight of a satellite into space in October 1957 – became a wake-up call both for scientists and for political forces in America that produced entirely new priorities for higher education. The National Defense Education Act, providing federal money for activities never before so assisted, was a direct result of the Soviet achievement. A growing public awareness that higher education produces major benefits for those who engage in it – and that the nation’s well being, and even its security, depended upon the work of men and women with advanced education – set the stage for major shifts of priorities, to the benefit of higher education.

The impact of these factors was compounded by the population boom that followed the war. The suddenly increased number of youngsters born in the later 1940s and through the 1950s began to reach college age in the early to middle 1960s. The result was a burgeoning *number* of people who were more than ever *oriented to go to college* at a time when public priorities were right for *providing the necessary financing* – including rapidly growing amounts of federal support – that would enable it all to happen.

Circumstances in which “everybody” went to college led to changes in the nation’s array of colleges and universities, which, in turn, made it possible for people of all ages and conditions of life to continue education after high school. Most notably, within a very few years, in many states, systems of community colleges were developed, offering two years of arts and sciences and a wide range of occupational subjects, both on campus and off, on a full-time basis or through virtually any other arrangement that would meet a student’s needs. There were changes in baccalaureate institutions as well. Teachers colleges became “former teachers colleges” as support made possible their expansion into the arts and sciences fields and, often, their entry into business and other areas. Aspirations for the name and status of a “university” became realistic. Older universities were able to gain the support needed to expand their breadth and depth of offerings and their ability to probe the myriad unanswered questions in fields in which they were engaged.

For the Western states, the new circumstances brought problems and opportunities both similar to, and quite different from, those experienced in other parts of the country. The number of students to be accommodated was disproportionately large, because of indigenous growth but also because the West represented a “target of opportunity” for migrants from around the nation. Moreover, distances between centers of population, the thinness of population in huge expanses of geography, the dominance of public rather than private higher education in the aspirations of would-be students, and the fiscal burdens placed upon states small in population and large in area (characterized in later discussions at WICHE as “the social cost of space”) – all these factors conditioned the role that a regional organization like WICHE should, could, and would play.

A Decade (and More) of Rapid Growth

Kroepsch wrote the commissioners on October 13, 1960, to report that he was on the job. He was spending the initial days getting acquainted with staff members and office organization and was “delighted with the spirit I find here.”

Office organization, with a staff of 19, was relatively simple. Harold Enarson’s associate director, Dick Axt, had left that summer to become research coordinator at Stanford University, leaving a vacancy in a key position in the organization and leaving the executive director as immediate supervisor of the program staff. Warren Vaughan, director of the Mental Health Program (and interim executive director between Enarson’s departure and Kroepsch’s arrival), and Jo Eleanor Elliott, whose title as head of the Nursing Program was “consultant,” were go-getters with well-demonstrated leadership capabilities, upon whom the executive director could rely.

Axt had given needed direction to the Student Exchange Program (SEP). Under policies and procedures that were negotiated with both sending and receiving states by the commission itself, the day-to-day administration of student exchange was carried out by “certifying officers” designated by each of the states and by a midlevel professional administrator who worked with Axt at WICHE. Axt originated and supervised several activities underwritten by the Carnegie grant, which he had helped obtain. Kroepsch needed an associate director to replace Axt. He or she would assume responsibility for conceptualizing initiatives in fields other than mental health and nursing and for getting them funded and started. He or she would take the lead on contacts with the commission and certifying officers on SEP and give direction to the widening range of activities supported by the Carnegie grant.

Kroepsch’s associate director at the New England board, Kevin Bunnell, was a former colleague of proven ability and compatibility, but Kroepsch was reluctant to tempt him away from New England, and not sure that the commission and others in the West would welcome *two* “Easterners” in the top leadership positions at WICHE. But as he canvassed others in the West, Kroepsch concluded that Bunnell would be exactly right

for the job. An interview that included Commissioner Al Popma, M.D., at the annual conference of the American Association for Higher Education in March 1961, sealed the deal.

One of Kroepsch's first tasks was the distasteful one of reminding the commissioners that the annual fee for member states, which had risen from \$7,000 to \$10,000 in 1959, was going to have to be increased substantially when funds from the Carnegie grant were exhausted in 1963. Kroepsch had raised the question of a dues increase when he was interviewed for the executive director position. Members of the selection committee had assured him that the commission intended to seek additional appropriations in the near future.² The Carnegie grant had been made with the expectation that WICHE would, when necessary, assume responsibility for the activities the grant had supported. Loss of Carnegie funds alone would require a membership fee increase of \$2,500 per state. Kroepsch reminded the executive committee about funding needs in a memorandum in November 1960. He did not request action immediately; the memo was intended as a basis for discussion because commissioners "must begin now to lay the necessary ground work and take appropriate action, if increased support is to be assured two years hence." The committee deferred the issue for resolution at the annual meeting in August 1961.

Under Harold Enarson's leadership WICHE had grown in program, staff, and financing, from the director alone to – when Kroepsch arrived – 15 identifiable programs, a staff of 19, and an annual budget of \$341,625. As they looked ahead to having to make the case with their governors and legislators for a large increase in WICHE dues, what did the guiding representatives of WICHE member states think of this new organization that was growing so well in the range of its programs and in its stature? Only weeks after his arrival, Kroepsch began to plan a survey of the commissioners to let him (and them) know what they thought on the question, "Where does WICHE go from here?" His memo to the commissioners with 26 questions seeking their views, primarily on programs and activities, was sent out barely six months after his arrival.

Perhaps his primary discovery was that most of the commissioners did not respond. He had indicated in the memo covering the survey that respondents could be selective in replying – and indeed, they were: most of the 15 who did reply skipped most of the questions. The lack of commissioner response would not have surprised Harold Enarson: WICHE was a staff-led enterprise. It would continue to grow primarily in response to proposals formulated by a staff that had its own ideas as to how to bring about WICHE development.

But Kroepsch was sensitive to the fact that ultimate control of WICHE and all that it did rested with the 39 commissioners, however dependent they might choose to be upon a staff that had far more time for the organization than did they. In the months following the 1961 survey, Kroepsch made plans for meetings in each of the WICHE states, where in addition to commissioners, he could visit with some governors, legislators,

and other persons of influence. In September 1962 he sent commissioners a discussion guide for these meetings, beginning with a “general philosophy” on WICHE goals and objectives, inviting identification of perceived higher education problem areas and identifying current and suggested new WICHE programs. Kroepsch began the outline with a reference to the Western Regional Education Compact and a comment that the compact “may be interpreted broadly or narrowly.” He noted that the bylaws indicate that the commission has chosen to interpret it “rather broadly” and went on to propose a statement of WICHE goals and objectives as broad as higher education itself:

WICHE’s goal: Through regional cooperation, to increase and improve opportunities in higher education for the young men and women in the 13 Western states, and thereby to advance the educational, social, cultural, and economic level of the region.

WICHE’s objectives: WICHE works toward this goal through the cooperative action of states and institutions. This action, which takes many forms, is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To improve the quality of higher education in the region’s colleges and universities.
2. To expand educational opportunities, particularly in programs preparing highly specialized personnel for those fields in which the West faces critical manpower shortages.
3. To assist with the coordination and expansion of interstate and interinstitutional cooperative programs so as to provide for the maximum use of highly specialized facilities and staff, and to avoid, where feasible, unnecessary duplication.
4. To improve educational administration and efficiency in the region’s colleges and universities.
5. To raise the public’s level of understanding of the role of higher education in our society, and of the need for adequate financial support.

This inclusive concept went far beyond the narrow interpretation of a Homer Durham. Kroepsch and staff prepared for commissioner review a further statement, “A Rationale for WICHE’s Programs, or Why Does WICHE Do What It Does?” The statement concluded with a delineation of WICHE objectives that elaborated somewhat on the five just quoted and added one, “To help colleges and universities appraise and respond to the changing educational and social needs of the West.”

By 1960, federal agencies had found that they could look to colleges and universities for research, training, and other services, readily obtainable with a grant or a contract. Funding was newly available to colleges through the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and numerous other pieces of legislation and agency initiatives. For national organizations the regional higher education compacts were convenient mechanisms for dealing with multiple institutions and states. Though there were instances in which federal agencies found advantage in working with individual states and institutions, there

were others where WICHE could save them time and money. During the first 10 of Bob Kroepsch's 16 years at WICHE, the number of specially funded programs in operation grew from 15 to 40, the staff from 19 to 90, and the annual operating budget from \$447,400 to \$1,372,734. Virtually all the growth was funded by federal agencies and private foundations.

With the dramatic expansion of enrollments in higher education in the 1960s and the attendant rise of state costs, questions were being raised in state executive offices and legislatures about costs and about management practices, questions that simply had not surfaced before. At about the same time, technological advances in electronic means of compiling, aggregating, and presenting data made possible the development of applications for higher education – as for other fields – that could inform if not answer questions that had not even been imagined in the past. As with other technological innovations that throughout history have made possible advances previously unimaginable – as examples, the printing press, the microscope, the steam engine, the telegraph, the automobile, and television – the computer was to pave the way for a comprehensive restructuring of human effort. Its potential impact upon both the advancement of learning and upon the management of the educational enterprise in the 1960s could only be imagined.

At roughly the midpoint of the Kroepsch administration, WICHE found itself better prepared to pursue the application of new electronic tools in the collection and processing of data for higher education management purposes than any other agency in the country. By 1968 the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems at WICHE was well established as the national leader in this field.

Indeed, the development of WICHE's Management Information Systems (MIS) and Planning and Management Systems (PMS) programs and the structuring of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems were the dominating events of the latter half of the Kroepsch administration. It may not be much of an overstatement to say that these were dominating events for all of higher education in the country. Under the circumstances, we will first review the growth and the significance of other WICHE programs in the 1960s and early 1970s and subsequently will address WICHE's early activities in state and institutional planning and management and their evolution into a role of national leadership.

Program Growth in the 1960s

Student Exchange Program

WICHE's Student Exchange Program in 1960 looked much like it had looked at WICHE's inception seven years earlier. Support fees in medicine, dentistry, and

veterinary medicine were unchanged. In the fall of 1960, 334 WICHE students were enrolled in the three fields – about 90 students entered the program each year.

SEP continued to be WICHE's core activity. Most of the commissioners were well acquainted with the program. Indeed, in most states one of the commissioners administered the program as a "certifying officer," receiving and processing applications from resident students for a certification entitling them to preferential admission and the privilege of paying resident rather than nonresident tuition. In states that were subsidizing large numbers of students, the duties of the certifying officer were being added to the duties of staff members in state higher education offices or on one of the campuses. For two decades, at WICHE, a single individual handled program administration in accord with policies that were defined by the commission itself. This individual regularly reported to the full commission, with some assistance from the associate director or, from time to time, the executive director.

In May 1963 WICHE arranged a "Conference on the Student Exchange Program" in San Francisco, with 19 representatives of schools of medicine and dentistry (veterinary deans and WICHE staff had met the prior year) and a similar number of representatives of 12 participating states, most of them commissioners and certifying officers. The group reviewed SEP history and discussed continuing difficulties in the operation of the program – most being problems of long standing. To make planning possible, the *receiving institutions* needed assurance of the numbers of students who would be supported in a string of subsequent years, an assurance that no sending state could provide. The receivers were frustrated by competition from peer institutions which made offers of admission before they could; by terms of the program that obliged them to give preference to WICHE students over other nonresidents while some of the other nonresidents were judged to be more qualified; by the fees paid them for WICHE students, which had not changed for 10 years and had become much too low; as well as by other matters. The *sending states*, acting through their certifying officers, needed information that proved difficult to get: for example, the date on which a student dropped out of a program; how many of a state's applicants might be admitted in future years; how to rank eligible applicants when there were more applicants than funds; and other details. Differing dates of admission made it impossible for a sending state to know how many of its residents were going to be admitted and hence eligible for payments that were dependent upon state appropriations.

There were other problems, from WICHE's point of view. The efforts of a number of the sending states to require their residents to return for some years of practice, sometimes in specified geographic areas, was inequitable in that no such requirements were imposed on residents lucky enough to find their desired program within the state. Such "indenture" discouraged some of the strongest candidates from using WICHE.³

Bound up as it was in operational features of its core program, the commission, as it appears in retrospect, had a limited view of the potential of student exchange. It did

not seek to add new fields to the program – it was 10 years after inception that dental hygiene enrolled its first students. Before the mid-1960s the commission had no interest in creating additional forms of student exchange through which residents of any of its member states might be accommodated in other states. How could this be? We have noted that in 1961, his first year on the job, Kroepsch circulated to commissioners a questionnaire that included a question about whether staff should be exploring ways by which entirely new programs might facilitate the interstate movement of students, and more specifically, whether they should be seeking to add fields to the existing exchange program. A response from University of New Mexico President Tom Popejoy – one of the individuals most responsible for defining a Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education 10 years earlier – reflected continuing doubts about interstate sharing. Popejoy asserted that there was no need for any such staff effort. Any state wishing to expand opportunities for interstate exchange, he said, could make its own arrangements with another state by paying “a simple differential fee.” Moreover, the scope of SEP should not be expanded because “it would destroy in some instances the initiative of the states in fulfilling their responsibilities for higher educational programs.” The implicit message was: WICHE, don’t complicate our efforts to grow our own campuses! In a board that was dominated by university presidents, contrary to Kroepsch’s hopes for regional approaches in higher education in the West, bold initiatives by an interstate agency might be too much to expect.

But on the possibility of expanding the meaning of “student exchange” in service to the region, Kroepsch persisted. While at NEBHE, he had initiated a program in which institutions in any of the New England states could name programs or courses in which they would accept as residents men and women who actually were residents of other states, provided such states extended reciprocal opportunities. Kroepsch ran this idea before the WICHE Commission in March 1963. Unlike two years earlier, the commission encouraged him to develop the idea more specifically. During the next few weeks he outlined the plan and reviewed it with interested states and institutions. The plan called for an exchange mechanism in which undergraduate, graduate, and professional students could be admitted as “resident” students in fields designated by the receiving institution. In addition to tuition at resident rates, these “Western Regional Student Program” (WRSP) students would receive admission preference after residents of the home state and before nonresidents from states outside the WICHE region. At its June 1963 meeting, the executive committee authorized staff to initiate WRSP.

At the next several meetings of the executive committee, there were reports that the number of institutions wishing to participate in the program was growing rapidly. Unfortunately, the program was of lesser interest to students – in the opening year (fall 1964), just two students enrolled. Response was not much better the following year. Apparently, the underenrolled courses that institutions were willing to open did not attract students from other states. After only two years’ operation, WRSP was terminated in 1966. At a time when nonresident charges in many states were low, reciprocity in

resident tuition in a restricted group of courses provided insufficient incentive for students to move out of state for college. The demise of the program was camouflaged as a change in name: now, WICHE would administer the Western Regional Collegiate Program (WRCP), a “program” that involved no more than collecting information each year and publishing a list of degree programs in which public and private colleges and universities in the WICHE region would accept nonresident students – with or without preferential admission status or any tuition advantage. WRCP’s annual listing by field of study turned out to be, for students, little more than a convenient way to identify institutions in which specified programs were offered. It too was abandoned, in 1969.

But the interest of a number of commissioners had been aroused in a program of interstate exchange that would offer tuition and other advantages for students and, at the same time, facilitate decisions in any state to eliminate certain programs that their residents could obtain in nearby states. Some of any institution’s programs might have ample room for more students, so it seemed logical that a certain balance of exchange might be possible. Utah Commissioner Merle Allen suggested such a program to the executive committee in March 1967. He characterized the difference between nonresident and resident tuition as a “scholarship” that – assuming a reasonable balance of exchange – would not require appropriations and a flow of funds across state lines. Staff was directed to pursue the idea.

Though doubtful about some of Allen’s assumptions and goals, Bunnell provided for the next meeting of the executive committee a background paper that described five approaches, all involving payment of *resident* tuition by a certain number of *nonresidents* but all posing a variety of complications, such as how and at what cost the program would be administered; the likely imbalance in the flow of students; the ongoing question of whether students would find the tuition advantage attractive enough to induce them to leave their home state; and others. The committee bucked the proposal back to staff for further study and for discussion by the full commission at its meeting in August 1967. The minutes of that meeting reveal a discussion that was often confused and often irrelevant and that, in any case, apparently put an end to consideration because no further reference to the idea appears in the record of future meetings.

On a smaller scale, a program for community college students was presented to the executive committee by Bunnell’s director of special higher education programs, Robert Altman, in December 1970, under which residents of participating states could attend, with the payment of resident tuition, the community college nearest the student’s home when that college was across a state line. Community colleges might also list as “regional curricula” any programs in which they were prepared to admit nonresidents at in-state tuition rates. Two states were ready to initiate the program and seven others were reported to be considering joining. WICHE staff was authorized to publish and distribute a brochure advertising the new program and to act as secretariat for participating states.



When the Western Regional Education Compact was being defined and initiated, committees were appointed for medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine to advise the commission as to the “support fee” the sending state was to pay, through WICHE, to the receiving institution. The committees gathered such information as they could about costs of education in each field. The commission was in agreement that for each field, a single amount should be determined that would be paid any institution receiving WICHE students in the given field, regardless of that institution’s calculation of its own costs. Apparently the fees decided upon were sufficiently large to induce the public and many of the private universities in the West to hold some places for WICHE students.

A decade later, in the mid-1960s, however, admission pressures upon schools of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine were so great that public professional schools were turning away qualified resident students while they were accepting even stronger applicants who were nonresidents. In the new circumstances, receiving institutions became more fully aware that the fees paid by WICHE states plus the resident tuition paid by the students was not sufficient to cover the actual costs of the education provided. For 12 years, student exchange support fees had been unchanged. At its March 1966 meeting the executive committee directed staff to assess costs and to bring recommendations to the committee in June and to the commission in August.

In June, staff gave the committee an extended report of the results of its cost survey of the four fields in the program. Though costs reported by receiving institutions varied widely, the lowest of them exceeded WICHE support fees by a considerable amount. The situation promised to wreck the program: taxpayers in receiving states were subsidizing residents of other states who, in fact, were occupying places that *ipso facto* were denied residents of the home states. With executive committee approval, at the annual meeting in August 1966, staff presented its cost analysis to the commission and three alternative actions for decision by the commission: raise the current fees as soon as possible; raise the fees but only after further study and a mail ballot; or don’t raise the fees at the present time. Recognizing the perilous status of the program, despite the financial implications for sending states, the commissioners voted without dissent to support an immediate increase in fees. Dealing with the specifics later in the meeting, on a state-by-state vote of 10-3, the commission approved the staff recommendation of a 50 percent increase of fees in the three original fields, to be effective in July 1967. The fee in dental hygiene would be unchanged. Increasing the fees by 50 percent was a bold move that was bound to be controversial. That a dozen years could pass without any acknowledgment of rising costs was, in part, evidence of a general lack of sensitivity to educational costs. It also characterized a disposition of the WICHE Commission to leave well enough alone.⁴

Addition of the field of physical therapy to the Student Exchange Program became an issue in 1968, some 15 years after the program had been initiated. There were in the West seven physical therapy programs – five in California and one in each of Colorado

and Washington. The shortage of practitioners was national in scope. Students in five “have-not” states organized a campaign that brought letters of support from state medical societies and hospital associations as well as from state physical therapy associations and state licensing agencies. The commission voted physical therapy into the program. A year later the executive committee approved the addition of occupational therapy and optometry.

In 1970, then, WICHE’s Student Exchange Program had grown substantially, though the broad outline of the program was little changed from 10 years earlier. At the end as at the beginning of the decade, all of its member states participated in the program, though Alaska was a “sending” state only and California was a “receiving” state only. In fall 1970 the Professional Student Exchange Program encompassed seven fields, whereas 10 years earlier there had been only the original three. The number of students had grown from 334 to 725. Support fees paid by states for their residents who were certified beneficiaries of the program had been increased for the first time, effective in fall 1967.

By 1970, SEP had overcome most of the policy and administrative problems that in the early years had slowed its growth and complicated working relationships between sending and receiving states. The commission’s readiness to expand student exchange through new mechanisms seemed to have grown.

Mental Health

WICHE’s founding documents made it clear that the Student Exchange Program was the motivating purpose in the organization’s establishment. The program in mental health education, continuing education, and research was WICHE’s first venture into new areas, as authorized by the Western Regional Education Compact and as encouraged by the Western Governors’ Conference.

Bob Kroepsch inherited a strong program for the support of education in mental health fields. The program was headed by an able young physician, Dr. Warren T. Vaughan, Jr. The Western Council for Mental Health, created to advise the staff and commission on program direction and priorities, provided a crucial link to state mental health agencies and institutions in all of the Western states.

A serious quantitative shortage in trained mental health workers was the primary issue facing the states in the 1950s, generating a need for upgrading the education of existing mental health staff, assessing the status of training and education in the region, and creating new opportunities and access to education for the mental health fields.⁵

Funds seemed to be readily available from the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), and the new program grew rapidly. When Enarson left in 1960, it included a summer work-study program for high school and college students, the primary purpose of which was to attract able young talent to the field (in the summer of 1964, 262 students completed this program); a series of 10-week seminars in psychiatry for

physicians who had no such training; opportunities for on-the-job training for as much as a year, and in a wide range of fields relating to mental retardation, at Pacific State Hospital in California; staff development conferences for directors of state mental hospitals and directors of schools for the retarded; and a research advisory service.⁶

Shortly after Kroepsch's arrival, a three-year NIMH grant in the amount of \$153,469 was announced, to support programs of in-service education for staff of public mental hospitals and schools for the mentally retarded. In May 1961, Jerome Levy was appointed to head this Staff Development Program in Mental Retardation; Levy had been chief psychologist in the Texas Division of Public Health. The program organized regional conferences for staff sharing of common problems and experiences; a visitation program that enabled staff to spend time in other institutions to learn of related problems and techniques; and training workshops conducted by visiting faculty teams in institutions remote from other centers of education and practice.⁷

However, despite significant accomplishments, the program did not develop without difficulties. Levy came to resent Kroepsch's unwillingness to allocate certain funds to the program and otherwise became estranged from the executive director, eventually verbally attacking Kroepsch at a staff retreat and, in December 1965, in an outburst at a meeting of the commission executive committee. Commission Chair Edna Scales, together with Kroepsch, were able to develop a *modus vivendi*. Funding for Levy's program ended in September 1965. He had submitted to NIMH in 1964 a proposal for establishment of a number of regional continuing education centers; but for reasons not found in the record, funding for a comparable proposal was not obtained until 1968. Levy moved to a faculty position at the University of New Mexico in 1966.⁸

At the time of Kroepsch's arrival in fall 1960, the core structure of the Mental Health Program – the director's office and council – was funded in part by NIMH and in part by an allocation of \$20,000 of WICHE funds derived largely from indirect cost reimbursements, including those generated by mental health. As of the spring of 1961 when Vaughan announced that he would be leaving WICHE that fall, NIMH funding for the director's office and council were scheduled to terminate in 1963, a circumstance that threatened WICHE's ability to recruit a successor for Vaughan and that had to be confronted without delay.

Kroepsch's 1961 survey of commissioner views as to the value of all WICHE's current programs and on the question, "Where does WICHE go from here?" included questions on the Mental Health Program.⁹ A dozen commissioners from eight states responded on questions related to mental health. Their comments, noted in the survey summary, reveal informed interest on the part of two or three responding commissioners and some recognition that the activity might be of particular interest to governors and legislators. From several, however, came questions about mental health's relevance to WICHE's purposes and about the willingness of member states to provide funding for the program. From Alaska: "Why is it a WICHE problem and not a public health problem?" From

two Hawaii commissioners: “Steer clear – this gets into aged welfare and governmental quicksand” and “This is a bottomless well.” From Wyoming, to the question of whether there would be support within the commissioner’s state for increasing the WICHE budget in order to keep the program going: “None, to my knowledge.” From an Oregon commissioner who was a state senator: “The states are in too tight a position financially to pick up any more projects.”

The concern of some commissioners about the appropriateness of WICHE activity in mental health fields was of long standing. At the annual meeting in August 1962 there was a motion to reduce WICHE underwriting of the program from \$20,000 to \$15,000 a year. The minutes record that this action was intended to signal a commission plan to reduce and, eventually, to eliminate WICHE underwriting for the program. (Significantly, though, this motion was defeated.)

In contrast to the skepticism of some of the commissioners, state legislators and governors continued to seek help from the higher education community in dealing with problems relating to human behavior. For several years the Western Governors’ Conference and Council of State Governments had been considering the possibility that a regional approach in juvenile delinquency might be advantageous. The topic was on the agenda at the conference in the fall of 1959. The governors decided to ask WICHE to consider creating an interstate facility or to identify some other approach that would assist in their efforts to deal with “special problem” delinquents.

In response to the governors’ request, WICHE Mental Health staff in 1959-60, through field studies, interviews, and a questionnaire, surveyed mental hospitals and schools and correctional facilities in the West. The findings were that state leaders in juvenile delinquency programs would not support establishment of an interstate facility to accommodate “special problem” delinquents, but there was a lot of support for collaboration on programs of continuing education and staff development. The Mental Health staff prepared a proposal to create regional centers to conduct staff development programs; the proposed program was funded by NIMH and activated under the direction of William T. (“Tom”) Adams, who was on the job at the end of 1961. During the next few years, under Adams’s able leadership, WICHE’s program of manpower development in juvenile delinquency grew rapidly.¹⁰

Other events in areas of human services were forcing commission attention. We have noted that Vaughan’s leaving made necessary a decision about whether the Mental Health Program would be continued after the grant supporting his office expired in June 1963. The executive committee was well aware that the program lacked commissioner support in several member states; but it recognized also that governors and state legislators had been the motivating factor in establishing the program in the first place. At its June 1961 meeting, on Kroepsch’s recommendation, the executive committee approved “in principle” the continuation of the program beyond June 1963, intending that the staff proceed with recruitment of a new director and understanding that in 1963 an increase

in WICHE financial support beyond the current level of \$20,000 annually would probably be necessary.

Within WICHE's NIMH-funded Staff Development Program in Mental Retardation, in the early 1960s, attention was directed to a lack of data needed for program planning and management, within institutions and equally within the structure of state mental health programs. In the South, under the aegis of the Southern Regional Education Board, the Southern Conference of Mental Health Statisticians had been established to identify data needs and mechanisms for data exchange. Following the SREB lead, WICHE staff arranged a meeting of statisticians and data collectors in Boise, ID, in August 1963, at which all WICHE member states were represented. The outcome was the development of a model data collection project that institutions would find useful for sharing knowledge and resources. The model was of immediate interest to the Research Utilization Branch at NIMH. Staff Development Director Jerry Levy, in fall 1964, put together a proposal for "A Regional Demonstration Project for Data Utilization and Program Analysis," which would build upon the model data collection project in mental retardation and provide for its integration within state or institutional data collection systems. The proposal called for initiating a similar system in a second area, such as special education or juvenile delinquency. A director at WICHE would provide leadership, but – borrowing further from SREB – a "Western Conference on the Uses of Mental Health Data" would be set up to represent state and institution participants and ultimately to take over the program. NIMH was indeed interested; it provided a quarter million dollars for a three-year program beginning in June 1965 and designated for membership in the Western conference appropriate representatives of its national office and of regional offices in Denver, Dallas, and San Francisco.

A four-day conference to consider interstate collaboration in areas of "special education" – programs for the visually and hearing impaired and for children with cerebral palsy – was convened in March 1961 by program development staff working under the Carnegie grant that, since 1957, had underwritten a range of WICHE program initiatives. The notion of staff was that within programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels, selected special education curricula in Western colleges and universities might be identified and developed as "regional programs." During the next several years, with support from the United Cerebral Palsy Research and Educational Foundation and others, WICHE forged working relationships with institutions and faculty in special education. By 1963 the effort was lodged in the Mental Health Program. In 1965, with funding both from the cerebral palsy group and the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, WICHE was operating, among its mental health and related programs, a special education program headed by James R. Galloway.

WICHE's juvenile delinquency program, under Tom Adams's leadership, was achieving national recognition. Adams was one of a half dozen planners of a national

Arden House Conference in June 1964 on correctional manpower and training. At the conclusion of the conference, with funding from the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, 90 people representing some 60 national and regional organizations concerned with corrections formed a Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training. By March 1965, with the joint commission still in formation, WICHE had become a major player in the enterprise, working with representatives of the American Bar Association, American Correctional Association, American Psychiatric Association, American Sociological Association, Council on Social Work Education, and National Council on Crime and Delinquency.¹¹

It was within this national framework that WICHE extended its efforts in corrections far beyond juvenile delinquency. It organized a three-day Institute on Correctional Manpower and Training at the end of March 1965, cosponsored by four national organizations and administered by the University of Washington. Participating were the Pacific Coast states and Montana. WICHE obtained the necessary funding from the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime.

Thus, in its Mental Health Program, by the mid-1960s WICHE was operating projects in mental health and mental retardation, special education and rehabilitation, juvenile delinquency, and corrections. Confronting manpower shortages and meeting training needs characterized them all. In March 1964 Frank Dell'Apa, who had been director of the Colorado Prison Association, was appointed associate director of the juvenile delinquency program; he gave leadership to what became a fast-growing program in the field of corrections.

WICHE's program in the mental health field had been initiated late in 1954. Ten years later, for the fiscal year 1964-65, six distinct National Institute of Mental Health grants provided \$265,011 for the operating budget in mental health and mental retardation, juvenile delinquency, and juvenile corrections. By comparison, \$171,819 was budgeted for the rest of WICHE's operations in 1964-65.¹² All of the WICHE states participated in at least one of the mental health programs supported by these grants; but states were providing no financial support for the program other than through their annual WICHE membership dues. In December 1964 the Mental Health Council, anticipating termination in 1967 of NIMH support for the director's office and for its own operations, proposed that states be called upon to pay an annual fee to fund mental health central staff and council expenses, none of which had been anticipated when the WICHE membership fee was set.

This proposal, which would, of course, increase costs to member states participating in WICHE, was advanced to the full membership of the executive committee. The proposition was certain to encounter opposition. Staff prepared an analysis of need and projections of income based upon various assumptions of fee income and program expense. Committee members were to undertake exploratory discussion of the idea within their own states. At the next committee meeting (March 1965) staff was directed

to seek supportive action from the Western Governors' Conference and at the annual meeting of state legislators.

Kroepsch succeeded in getting a resolution – of sorts – from the governors: that the Western Governors' Conference “recommends that the Western states give careful consideration to providing the necessary funds on a voluntary basis to continue assisting the states.” Kroepsch had reminded the governors of their request a decade earlier that WICHE move into the mental health field. Their resolution illustrates how lukewarm was their response to the interstate agency whose creation they had proposed in 1950, and which as recently as 1959 they had asked to find an interstate way to deal with “special problem” delinquents.¹³

WICHE staff, the Mental Health Council, and mental health officers in most of the Western states kept up the effort to gain support for the program. At the commission's 1965 annual meeting, the council reported commitments from New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah. A year later, Colorado was ready to help, though no Colorado dollars were as yet provided. Contributions from nine states were expected for the fiscal year 1967-68 and again for 1968-69; by this time the expected payment was well known and generally accepted, though several states continued to avoid paying their share. Decades later the Mental Health Program payment, which was doubled to \$15,000 in 1975, continued to be voluntary and subject to an annual hassle in several states. The added income was, nonetheless, sufficient to enable the program to continue.

In the West and in the nation at large, the 1960s were years of major change in the way states cared for the mentally disabled and the mentally ill. Humane considerations as well as biological and other technological advances made unacceptable a system in which people with a variety of mental problems were bundled together in hospitals, often in remote locations, with little or no provision for their return to their local communities. State hospitals for the mentally ill and schools for the mentally disabled would have to be maintained to deal with some manifestations of illness, but their populations would be dramatically reduced. Mental health services would have to be provided in local communities, in a variety of fields and facilities.

Encouraged and assisted by federal legislation, especially by the Community Mental Health Centers Act of 1963 (P.L. 88-164) and amendments in 1965, the movement to strengthen mental health services in communities throughout the country developed rapidly. WICHE's programs were, of course, affected by, just as they contributed significantly to, these developments. WICHE's Mental Health Program, including its work-study program, reached out to staff in local welfare agencies, community clinics, probation departments, and the like.

New approaches led to new perspectives as to how people with mental difficulties might be helped and as to the kinds of professionals who might be well placed to help. “Many of the mental health disciplines are in the process of change and redefinition

of their treatment roles,” wrote Dr. Robert H. Dovenmuhle, director of the WICHE program, in the WICHE newsletter in June 1965. Additional professional resources were found to be capable of helping in mental health fields – clergy, social workers, school teachers, nurses, guidance counselors, lawyers, and others, all of whom needed training for what for them were new and different kinds of service.

Jerry Levy’s staff development program – WICHE’s primary thrust in continuing education – had been funded for three years beginning in 1961 and was extended for a year, but came to an end in 1965. Support for continuing education efforts was no longer available. Levy moved on to a faculty position at the University of New Mexico in 1966.

Mental Health Program Director Dovenmuehle left in 1965 after one year in the job. He was, in fact, the fourth physician to come and go in the eight years since the program began. It was a time of shortage of physicians in the U.S. and, most certainly, of psychiatrists. WICHE had been successful in attracting a string of outstanding directors; it was less successful in keeping them. Now, Bob Kroepsch recruited Dr. Raymond Feldman, former deputy of the National Institute for Mental Health and director of a major project in the education of general practitioners at the American Psychiatric Association; he assumed office in June 1966.

In the 1950s the root of the problem in mental health had been an acute shortage of workers. Ten years later it was different. According to a review of the Mental Health Program in 1995, “In the 1960s, increasing development and recognition of mental health care as a profession, combined with the movement to reduce hospitalization and increase community-level care, brought a widespread need for trained personnel in addition to those trained in the existing professional disciplines. New, middle levels of mental health care workers were needed, and they needed to be trained in a relatively brief period of time to fill an increasingly diverse array of community-based service niches.... By 1971, it could be said that the quality of the workforce and its training had become the issue, rather than the sheer quantity of workers available.”¹⁴

With support from the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, WICHE sponsored in 1965 the Regional Institute on Undergraduate Social Service Education, which brought together some 135 representatives of such fields as mental health, mental retardation, juvenile delinquency, corrections, welfare, vocational rehabilitation, and others. It was the first of a series of such institutes for representatives of an array of “helping services,” as the institutes were named. The name “helping services” was chosen deliberately, in part because it suggested the possibility of a common curriculum, or at least of common elements in a curriculum that might lead to different areas of undergraduate and graduate specialization. WICHE, with Frank Dell’Apa (now director of undergraduate programs in the helping services) in charge, engaged in a major effort to establish the “helping services” as a new profession. The term would embrace “public welfare, vocational rehabilitation, corrections, mental health, mental retardation, poverty, and other appropriate social services.” WICHE understood that identifying

an appropriate curriculum for a field so broad and now scattered among numerous disciplines would require time as well as effort but committed itself to the effort. The commission authorized a continued series of institutes and, in 1968, subject to funding, a three-year program assisting community colleges in developing programs for mental health workers – this time with a second focus upon expanding opportunities for minority personnel.

At its annual meeting in August 1969, the commission decided it was time that it undertake a program-by-program review of what had become a far-flung program indeed. The established programs in student exchange, mental health, and nursing, and in a number of special areas, had continued to grow; and entirely new programs had been initiated in medicine and in higher education management, both of which had added dozens of new employees and were still growing rapidly. As we shall see in greater detail, a committee of seven commissioners (the “Sandison committee”) was appointed and charged with reviewing and evaluating a total of *56 separately budgeted programs* then comprising the WICHE program. Seven subcommittees were constituted and the 56 budgeted programs were divided among them; 22 programs in mental health and related areas went to three of the seven subcommittees, on general mental health programs, corrections and special education, and mental health data and social service education. A summary report and evaluation of the total program was to be in the hands of the commissioners by July 1, 1970.

The mental health subcommittees and the Sandison committee as a whole were well impressed by findings respecting all 22 programs. Despite the commission’s history of lukewarm support, there were few criticisms or suggestions. There were many assurances that the activities were appropriate for WICHE. Clearly, the commission was satisfied that the programs were needed and were well executed. It was a reassuring exercise for the commission, for the Mental Health Council, for Bob Kroepsch, and for the mental health staff.

Nursing

The Nursing Program was going strong when Bob Kroepsch came to WICHE in October 1960. Kroepsch knew that in his nursing consultant he had a go-getter; and he actively helped her go and get. Under the initial grant from the Kellogg Foundation, support for the nursing office at WICHE, the Western Council on Higher Education for Nursing, and the annual nursing conference was to terminate in 1963. In 1961, Elliott wrote a proposal for Kellogg for a second period of five years’ underwriting for: programs of nursing education; an update of the 1959 survey and development of a master plan for nursing education in the West; stimulation of research in both nursing education and practice; educational programs for administrators, and for their continuing education; and data collection and data sharing on topics needed for regional and institutional assessment and planning.

Elliott received commission approval to proceed with the renewal effort and, with Kroepsch, visited Kellogg Foundation headquarters that spring. A grant of \$191,000 for the requested programs during a second five-year period was announced in December. As provided in the proposal, the commission at that time authorized an increase in WICHE's annual subsidy for the Nursing Program from \$5,000 to \$9,000.

Within a developing profession, WCHEN – at first a body comprising nurse educators from baccalaureate and graduate programs only, and beginning in 1962, from associate degree programs – took the lead in study and debate on such core issues in nursing education as content of the curriculum and methodologies in teaching, research, and practice. In 1959 it initiated a research project, “Defining Clinical Content – Graduate Nursing Programs,” with support from the Division of Nursing, U.S. Public Health Service. The grant was renewed in 1961 for a five-year period.

From the earliest discussions of a nursing program at WICHE, the encouragement of research in nursing education and practice was a major emphasis. The publication of a compilation of reports of faculty research was begun in 1958 and, with growth of content and changes of format, continued annually. In the later 1960s federal support was obtained for a series of conferences held from 1968-73 on “Communicating Nursing Research.” When federal support for the program ended in 1973, WCHEN organized the Western Society for Research in Nursing (WSRN) to continue the conference program.

A three-year research study of “Nursing Content – Baccalaureate Nursing Programs,” supported by the U.S. Public Health Service Division of Nursing, was begun in 1963. Supported by the same division, in 1963 and 1964 a training grant underwrote a series of three week-long seminars for baccalaureate and a few associate degree faculty on improving instruction through the use of selected teaching tools and techniques.¹⁵

The second Kellogg grant included provisions for updating Elliott's 1959 plan for nursing in the WICHE region. The report from this second planning effort, “Today and Tomorrow in Western Nursing,” was published in the spring of 1966. In the intervening years there had been gains – the number enrolled in nursing programs had increased and the ratio of RNs to the population in the region had increased. The quality of programs for preparing faculty for nursing education was clearly better. Yet among the 13 WICHE states, only Colorado met the standard advanced by the U.S. Surgeon General of 400 nurses per 100,000 population. Since 1959 all of the Western states save two had improved the ratio of nurses in the general population, but in six of the states, that ratio remained below 300:100,000, far below the Surgeon General's recommendation. In five years there had been 15,900 graduates of Western nursing programs eligible to become RNs – but that number was just 700 more than the number needed to replace nurses leaving practice. As in the past, the West's demand for nurses had been fulfilled by the 24,000 who migrated from other states during the period. The study reported that the shortage of RNs was forcing licensed practical nurses (LPNs) to take on duties for which

they lacked appropriate education. It called for establishment of additional programs and expansion of existing programs; but it acknowledged a lack of faculty qualified to give leadership to such programs. After 10 years of WCHEN effort, the problems of nursing education in the West were far from resolved.

That WICHE, and more specifically, WCHEN and Jo Eleanor Elliott, had achieved a position of national leadership in nursing education was evident by the early 1960s. Bob Kroepsch had been invited to address 1,500 women and men attending the National Student Nurse Association in 1962; and Kevin Bunnell keynoted the National Health Careers Conference in September that year. Jo Elliott was one of eight nurse leaders honored at a March 1963 ceremony conducted by the commanding officer of the Sixth U.S. Army Recruiting District at the Presidio in San Francisco. In March 1964 Kroepsch received from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation a letter commenting that “WICHE appears to be the greatest dynamic force for nursing in this country at the present time.”¹⁶

At the spring 1964 meeting of the American Nurses Association, Elliott was elected ANA president and two years later was reelected to a second two-year term. At the annual meeting that year, the commission authorized Kroepsch to change Elliott’s title from “nurse consultant” to “director of nursing programs,” a step that in an age more sensitive to gender discrimination one would think long overdue.¹⁷ The WICHE newsletter in November of that year pictures President Lyndon B. Johnson greeting her at a Rose Garden ceremony for the signing of the Nurse Training Act of 1964. Perhaps the ultimate in commendation is to be copied: Elliott provided guidance in the creation in the Midatlantic states of a “WCHEN-like structure” in 1965.

Satisfaction in receiving the Kellogg letter commending WCHEN in March 1964 must have been tempered by the realization that 10 years of Kellogg support for the direction of the program – the office of the director and WCHEN – would end in June 1966, and that it would not be renewed. Obtaining foundation support for central office operations was difficult even for start-up years and virtually impossible to sustain for as much as 10 years. Kellogg funding for the Nursing Program’s central operations was stretched out through December 1967 – but it came to an end at that time.

Elliott and WCHEN’s chair, UCLA Dean Lulu Hassenplug, reviewed this approaching problem with the WICHE Executive Committee in December 1964. By resolution, the committee affirmed that nursing was a core WICHE activity. The resolution encouraged further efforts to find outside support for operations, but it provided assurance that WICHE would continue to support the Nursing Program beyond 1966. From the receipt of Kellogg’s second five-year grant for WCHEN operations, WICHE had provided cash and services annually to the Nursing Program of roughly \$6,000 in value. With termination of Kellogg funding in 1967, the WICHE contribution increased rapidly – it was \$12,357 in fiscal 1968, and it was \$59,896 in fiscal 1970. Indirect cost recoveries from private and federally funded projects in nursing were a fraction of the WICHE subsidy.¹⁸ In the next few years WCHEN instituted

charges for some of its publications, registration fees for various of its meetings, and a voluntary fee for participating programs. The voluntary participation fee relieved the WICHE budget of about \$10,000 per year, but it left unpaid overhead costs of several times that amount. Moreover, the goal of achieving financial viability through various charges and participation fees clashed with the WCHEN effort to gain participation of all the region's nursing programs – neither WCHEN nor WICHE were ready to seek mandatory participation fees. Funding would continue to be obtained for specific projects, and Elliott would find ways to cover much of the overhead expense as direct charges to funded projects.

In December 1966 Elliott presented for executive committee approval several proposals (all approved), whose funding would cover most of the cost of her office and the Western council for a number of years. A curriculum improvement project that would focus on the application of recent research findings to curricula in associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree programs was the most ambitious of these. The requested nearly half a million dollars was allocated by the USPHS Division of Nursing, and the program was initiated in 1967, completed in 1972. Also in 1967, funding from the same agency underwrote a three-year project to develop a research instrument for identifying differences in capabilities and performance of graduates of baccalaureate and associate degree programs. Another proposal was for a residency program for nurse administrators working at all levels of nursing education.¹⁹

Yet another proposal addressed WCHEN's long-standing goal of expanding and strengthening the capabilities of nurses for undertaking research, and the quantity and quality of research. In a formal review of its purposes and structure late in the 1960s, WCHEN acknowledged its intent to "increase substantially (quintuple) research efforts in the next five years, with clinical research being the top priority." Its proposal for support of a "Regional Program for Nursing Research Development" was funded in 1971. This innovative project brought together nurses from both clinical and academic settings and created teams of investigators. The intent was that this linkage would combine nurses experienced in the critical problems needing study with nurses with experience in conducting research. Thus, the conduct of research which had been considered a prerogative of doctoral scholars was now being proposed as an opportunity for promising nurses with promising ideas. Some called this democratization of the research process. Others called it the defeat of elitism.²⁰

The project was highly successful. Nearly 300 nurses representing all 13 WICHE states were reached by the program. Scientifically meritorious clinical nursing research was on the increase and the supply of those prepared to conduct such research was increased significantly. Nurse leaders from other parts of the country sought consultation with the hope of replicating the project elsewhere. WCHEN had implemented a new way to improve practice.

WCHEN was awarded a \$2.9 million contract in 1975 by the USPHS Division of Nursing – WICHE’s largest grant or contract to that date – for a three-year project for “Analysis and Planning for Improved Distribution of Nursing Personnel and Services.” The project addressed a comprehensive array of state, regional, and national issues. It brought the WICHE Nursing Program and NCHEMS into a close working relationship over a period of several years. One significant product was a model for projecting state needs and resources for nursing personnel. The model was used in many states in and outside the WICHE region and, for more than a decade, by the Public Health Service Division of Nursing in compiling data for its annual reporting to the Congress. After completion of this project in 1978, the Division of Nursing funded a project designed to increase nurse participation in health planning.

In 1968, WICHE again received funds for a continuing education program that had been initiated with a Kellogg grant in 1957 and carried on with support from the USPHS Division of Nursing, for nurses in leadership positions in administration, supervision, and teaching. Selected nurses attended three one-week courses in each of two consecutive years in one of eight schools of nursing, with financial support going both to the nurses and to the schools in which they enrolled. (WCHEN administrative costs were absorbed by WICHE.) By the spring of 1966, some 1,350 WICHE-area nurses had participated in this program.²¹

With the Mental Health Program, Elliott arranged for a meeting in the spring of 1967 of leaders in psychiatric nursing, to assess problems in education and practice in that field and determine whether WICHE could assist in dealing with such problems. Response came in 1970 when a three-year program, “Continuing Education in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing for Faculty in Associate Degree Programs,” was initiated.

Though the WCHEN program always focused on education and research, Jo Elliott was interested in education and research because of the impact they can have on nursing *practice*. In the late 1960s Elliott and WCHEN proposed to direct attention to current nursing practice in hospitals around the West. Laws, rules, protocols, and habits of long standing shaped practice, crowding out ideas and findings arising from research and from innovative leadership in some hospitals and schools. Now, a new baccalaureate nursing program at the University of Nevada and a senior nurse administrator in Phoenix were interested, along with WCHEN, in taking a fresh look at nursing service in hospitals – anything from constraints imposed by the traditional facilities or various hospital routines to the programs of education in which people were prepared for practice. The idea was to do for nursing practice much of what WCHEN had done for nursing education.

Elliott took a brief write-up of this ambitious proposal to the executive committee in March 1969. There would be three phases – exploration, design, and operation. Elliott was asking for authorization to proceed with the first two. The committee was full of questions. WICHE commissioners had long been wary of activities that would

extend beyond education into professional practice. The potential scope of this proposal would have implications for WICHE's role in many professions. Elliott and the Nursing Program had earned consistently high marks in assessments of WICHE activities – it was not easy to turn down a director whose program, in some of the member states, was the most familiar and highly regarded of all WICHE activity. At length the committee approved proceeding with phase one.

But the idea went no farther. When the proposal was ready for efforts to find funding, the administrative group – the associate directors and administrative officer, whom Kroepsch used as a cabinet on which he relied for judgments and of which Elliott was not a member – declined to clear it for submittal. For Elliott it was the most significant “lost opportunity” of her 23 years as director of the Nursing Program.²²

We have reported that during the year 1969-70 the Sandison committee carried out a searching review of the entire WICHE program. For nursing, the committee urged that “all possible encouragement be given to expand its very effective work.” True, the committee had some doubts about the proposal that WCHEN initiate a program to transform nursing practice – it recommended that the proposal be reviewed and clarified before the commission authorized moving ahead. But the report on the Nursing Program was a strong endorsement of WCHEN and its director.

Medical Education and the Mountain States Regional Medical Program

In the late 1950s there was no school of medicine in eight of WICHE's 13 states. In most health fields the Rocky Mountain states had imported a majority of their practitioners from the East, South, and Midwest. Now, while the West was growing faster than the rest of the country, other regions were employing larger proportions of the professionals educated within those regions. WICHE's Student Exchange Program, valuable as it was, did not increase capacity for educating doctors. The advisory committee for WICHE's medical manpower study was convinced that “an immediate and substantial expansion of medical education and research is essential.” Its report, *The West's Medical Manpower Needs*, was published late in 1959.

Enarson was himself genuinely concerned that a serious shortage of physicians in the West was rapidly approaching. Two months before submitting his resignation as WICHE director, in June 1960, he forwarded to the Commonwealth Fund a proposal for a grant of \$200,000 for a five-year program in which WICHE, through a medical education committee and in collaboration with its member states, would keep up to date the information needed for planning and action related to medical education; tie the information to each of the states and assist any of them with proposals for action; and foster and assist in studies and action for an interstate sharing of facilities and resources, particularly in states of smaller population and limited resources. The fund was interested in the problems of medical education in the Western region. One of its officers came West to discuss the proposal with WICHE staff, commissioners, educators, and others. Officers of the fund were ready to submit the WICHE proposal to their

trustees in November 1960, but Enarson's resignation and the arrival of a new executive director intervened. Kroepsch arranged for a three-month delay in fund action. At his first executive committee meeting late in November 1960, he received commission authorization to rework and resubmit the proposal, giving particular attention to eight states in the region that had no medical schools: Alaska, Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, and Wyoming.²³

Kroepsch's proposal, dated January 13, 1961, was essentially a restatement of Enarson's of April 1960, which clearly had found support at the Commonwealth Fund.²⁴ A staff at WICHE and a strong advisory committee would focus especially on states that had no medical school and no current prospect of developing one, dealing with the problem through pooling resources. Though focusing on "have-not" states, WICHE would support efforts that were under way in New Mexico, Arizona, and Hawaii to develop their own solutions. A second thrust would be to bring together each year a Western Forum on Medical Education – leaders in all the Western states representing medical practice, medical education, and state executive and legislative officers – to stay current on plans and actions around the region. Such a forum would, WICHE urged, challenge all the states to maintain efforts to deal with their own needs. And with the help of the grant, within WICHE a small staff would compile, keep current, and disseminate information needed for planning.

The Commonwealth Fund acted quickly, offering three years of support at \$25,000 each year, "to help states without medical schools to work out plans for meeting their medical education needs; to bring together leaders interested in medical education to determine the best courses of action to cope with the need for additional medical education facilities and for more physicians; and to provide for the continuous collection and interpretation of data on medical education and manpower needs state by state."²⁵ The fund added a suggestion that, if WICHE preferred, it would be pleased to make this grant part of its response to Kroepsch's mid-January request for efforts in "have-not" states – a request for \$200,000 to support major regionwide study and action over a five-year period. The commission rose to the occasion: it authorized Kroepsch to accept the \$75,000 offer with assurances to the fund that WICHE would continue to seek the additional support needed but would tailor the program to the \$75,000 amount if that proved to be necessary. The grant gave WICHE flexibility in supporting initiatives during the next few years, both in Boulder and in the field. Kroepsch elevated medical education to program status and expanded Associate Director Kevin Bunnell's responsibilities by making him also the director of medical education programs. Bunnell was well qualified for the assignment. His doctoral thesis had been an historical study of medical education in the United States. The four M.D.s on the commission were made a special committee to advise on the program.²⁶

Expansion of opportunity for medical education was a regionwide need, and though Bunnell was especially concerned about opportunity in states of small population and

limited resources, his interest and his efforts extended across the region. He reported in the April 1962 WICHE newsletter the status of planning, then actively under way, for a four-year medical school in Arizona and for a two-year school in New Mexico. A four-year school was in the planning stages as part of the new campus of the University of California at La Jolla, north of San Diego, and the school at UCLA had been funded for a near doubling of its class size. Colorado and Utah were well into an expansion of hospital and related facilities that would be followed by an increase of class size in those medical schools. Bunnell had been in Honolulu to assist in initial steps to study the feasibility of establishing a two-year medical school at the university in Honolulu. Alaska was in communication with the University of Washington, exploring the possibility of collaborative arrangements there.

Especially perplexing were the problems of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming, all states of limited population (Nevada and Wyoming each well under half a million in 1962) and without cities of a size that could provide the range and depth of medical problems essential for clinical training. Despite these limitations, there were political pressures, particularly in Idaho, Wyoming, and Nevada (which was impelled by rapid population growth and a strong economy) to establish medical schools. With support from two Commonwealth grants, Bunnell arranged a meeting in mid-September 1961 in Salt Lake City of representatives of state and national medical societies, university executives, and medical educators from throughout the region to discuss expansion of medical education programs. Out of the meeting came a resolution asking WICHE to take the lead in arranging needed studies and endorsing a WICHE proposal, first advanced in Enarson's April 1960 proposal to Commonwealth, that it convene annually a "Western Forum on Medical Education."²⁷

Staff and the executive committee followed up the Salt Lake City resolution without delay. Bunnell tapped the thinking of Ward Darley, now director at the Association of American Medical Colleges, and others at the American Medical Association. In December the executive committee approved Bunnell's proposal that WICHE convene leaders in medicine, executive and legislative offices, and the major universities in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Nevada, to consider problems of medical education common to the four states. The proposed meeting was held in mid-January 1962. A highlight was Ward Darley's discussion of ways through which a *regional* medical school might be created and operated – perhaps by a single state which would contract with others, perhaps through an interstate compact for the purpose, perhaps through an independent corporation. Darley had little to say on questions of sponsorship or location; he stressed the necessity of quality of faculty and curriculum, and said that what should start as a one-year program must have the realistic potential of developing into a full four-year program. In the final session the representatives of the four "have-not" states asked that WICHE seek funding for a study of the "needs of medical education of the region and the very best way these needs can be fulfilled now and in the foreseeable future."²⁸

Bunnell prepared for the Commonwealth Fund a revised proposal for a study that would focus on Idaho, Nevada, Montana, and Wyoming. He and the four commissioner-physicians comprising the medical education advisory committee met with Darley in Chicago to put the proposal in final form. It was approved by the executive committee in March 1962. The fund's approval and a grant of \$200,000 for the study were announced in May.

That four states might be able to pool resources and together deal with their needs in medical education was a new and different idea in medical education. Kroepsch and Bunnell recruited for the study directorship a nationally respected medical educator, Dr. James M. Faulkner, whom both had known as one of the original members of the New England Board of Higher Education when the two had been running that organization. Faulkner had been dean of the Boston University Medical School and had filled a variety of positions in medical education at Johns Hopkins University, Harvard, Tufts, and MIT. He shared Bunnell's long-standing interest in problems of rural medical services. He went to work on what became a two-year project in November 1962.²⁹

Bunnell arranged for the first Western Forum on Medical Education in May 1963; the meeting served to inform some 29 state officials and legislators, 78 practicing physicians, and 98 educators about Faulkner's study. With the help of a WICHE commissioner-physician in each of the four states, Faulkner arranged for the appointment by each governor of a state advisory committee of 50 to 60 persons from the health professions, education, the legislature, and other leadership positions. The committees met early to get acquainted with study objectives and methods.³⁰ An interstate medical school appeared as a significant "economic engine" in each of the four states; competitive aspirations were especially keen in Wyoming, Idaho and Nevada.

But Faulkner became persuaded by findings of the studies for which he had contracted that no one of the four states had, or would have within the next several years, the educational infrastructure, economy, or population to sustain a medical school, even if contractual arrangements could be made with one or several other states for sharing the financial burdens. In June 1964 he exposed his tentative recommendations to the WICHE Executive Committee. At the time, he was thinking along the lines of transforming one or perhaps more than one of the existing medical schools in the region into a "regional school" or schools, which would expand current capacity in order to accommodate residents of the four states, or some of them, under multiyear contracts. These contracts would provide for recovery by the expanded medical program of the full costs of each additional student – students would pay resident tuition and the sponsoring states would pay the difference. In September he cleared his statement of findings and recommendations with the advisory committees of the four states.

In the range of its inquiry and documentation of findings and recommendations, Faulkner's report, published in November 1964, was impressive. The consultants he had employed provided detailed reports and analysis of the economies of the four states in

relation to resources that Faulkner urged were required to support medical education. There were reports on medical manpower supply and demand; nursing education and practice in the four states; and other health and hospital resources. He discarded the notion that the four states, or some of them, should create a new regional medical school. He cited a half dozen conditions “necessary to the successful operation of a four-year regional medical school” – a teaching hospital of about 450 beds, enough population to fill the beds, accompanying doctoral programs in the biological sciences, good prospects for recruiting a strong faculty, appropriate geographic location, and assurance of needed financial support. But he concluded that these conditions “are not within reach at present, nor will they be in the years immediately ahead.”

In the end, Faulkner’s recommendation was, simply, that “each of the four states enter into contracts with Western medical schools to provide medical education for its residents through the legally qualified agency of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Under the contracts each state would pay the receiving medical school a sum representing the actual cost of providing a medical education for a stipulated number of students. The medical school, in turn, would agree to accept a stipulated number of students from that state,” provided they satisfied admission requirements.³¹

Reaction to the report was acutely negative in Wyoming, where the university’s president, Duke Humphrey, had been waging a vigorous campaign for a medical school, and in Nevada, where WICHE Commissioner Fred Anderson – a state senator who was also a member of the university board of trustees – was determined that his state have a school of its own. Indeed, preparatory steps had already been taken in some of the academic fields directly affected. But Faulkner’s report effectively put an end to the idea that one or several of the have-not states might create a medical school that would serve and be funded by these four states. Wyoming did establish contracts with the medical school in Utah and with Creighton University in Omaha. Wyoming and Montana continued to support their residents in the WICHE Student Exchange. In truth, the question of how to deal in an adequate way with the medical education needs of four sparsely populated states was still very much at issue.³²

Kevin Bunnell’s interest in problems of medical services in rural areas, and his (and WICHE’s) growing reputation for expertise in health education and services, aided by Jim Faulkner’s stint with WICHE, resulted in an increasing number of contacts between WICHE staff – particularly Bunnell – and health agencies in Washington, D.C., and foundations in the East, where WICHE interests and capabilities became well known. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson called for appointment of a national blue ribbon commission to consider what the federal government could do to address medical problems of the heart, cancer, stroke, and related illnesses. The prospect of a major federal initiative with funding for medical education was of immediate interest within the higher education community. At WICHE, Faulkner’s study was nearing completion as the initial feedback from the president’s commission began to appear. In executive

session at the annual meeting of the commission in August 1964, Jim Faulkner gave the commissioners and key staff a status report on his study. At the close of that meeting, a number of resolutions were proposed and adopted, one of which called upon the chairman to appoint an Advisory Council on Medical Education, to be composed of three representatives from each of Nevada, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, as well as from Alaska and Hawaii, if their commissioners so desired.

The council, duly established in late 1964 (and including Alaska and Hawaii), met in March 1965 in conjunction with the WICHE Executive Committee.³³ Following its meeting, Idaho Commissioner Alfred Popma, M.D., elected chairman, reported that “the council is prepared to explore the possibilities of obtaining funds through Federal legislation now pending to implement the expansion of facilities in the West for health-related education on the graduate level.” He requested approval of such activity, which was granted. It seems evident that establishment of the council was part of a WICHE strategy, coordinated by Kevin Bunnell, to take advantage of a federal program that was still being defined.

Recommendations of President Johnson’s blue ribbon commission were enacted in October 1965 as Title IX of the Public Health Service Act, P.L. 89-239. They provided for a major federal program of study and remedial action, initially funded for three years, relating to anomalies of the heart, cancer, stroke, and related diseases – a broad spectrum of medical problems indeed. Responsibility for implementing the program was vested in the Division of Regional Medical Programs at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In the winter of 1965-66 the division was beginning to support what became an array of more than 50 regional medical programs that stretched across the country. The regional programs were intended to assist practitioners through education, equipment, and technical assistance. The division approached Bunnell, inviting – urging – WICHE participation as a coordinating organization for programs in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming.³⁴

We have reported that Faulkner’s conclusions, which effectively would shut off the less populous states from developing their own medical education programs, encountered resistance in some of the four “have-not” states. Meeting in August 1965, the WICHE Advisory Council on Medical Education (ACME) featured a presentation by Dr. Robert A. Aldrich, professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington, who argued that Faulkner’s conclusions and views expressed at the Western Forum on Medical Education in May 1963 were “pessimistic for the future and narrow in scope.” In both, “the constant criterion for comparison was the classical great hospital and medical school complex found in large eastern metropolitan areas rather than facilities suitable for the West. Your need,” said Aldrich, “is to . . . create new concepts and to build new tools in education for the health professions.”³⁵ Aldrich urged that states without medical schools survey their own universities with a view to initiating in one of them a medical program that would start with a post-graduate continuing education program. This should lead

to the definition of “undergraduate” (post-baccalaureate) medical programs. Here, “there is an opportunity for really creative thinking.” Aldrich argued that there is a wide discrepancy between what is taught in medical school and what the physician does in practice. He argued that medical education would actually be improved by relying upon local hospitals for significant training: “The clinical years will probably cause you less trouble than anything else because you can utilize the medical resources of the state.”

It was a line of reasoning that, in the Rocky Mountain West, was easily persuasive. Forces in each of the four states continued, through ACME and otherwise, to urge further consideration of ways in which the states might, through collaboration, create their own programs of medical education. At length, WICHE responded with plans for a three-day “Symposium on Medical and Allied Health Education in Sparsely Settled States” in September 1967, which brought together 13 consultants, most of whom were engaged in experimental programs of medical education, and a half dozen representatives of the four states. The group included Robert Aldrich but did not include Jim Faulkner. It was chaired by Ward Darley, long-time WICHE leader and adviser on medical matters, former executive director of the Association of American Medical Colleges and now visiting professor of medicine and preventive medicine at the University of Colorado. The group put Faulkner’s findings and recommendations aside on the logic that “since the Faulkner report, there has developed a new climate for both medical care and medical education.”

A summary of the symposium discussion and outcomes was prepared by Bunnell and published in April 1968 as “Medical Education for Sparsely Settled States.” Early on, the meeting recognized that “financial and other limitations make it impossible for any one of these four states to develop a large teaching medical center similar to those in more populous states.” The discussion had to do with approaches that interstate collaboration might make feasible. There was a suggestion that several of the existing schools might establish a regional clinical training program in one of the four states to serve students from all four. Another suggestion was that there be a regional network of teaching centers tied to a new regional school, such as that suggested earlier. Another idea was to provide for clinical experience in community hospitals and other community health facilities. Yet another suggested clustering private and public health institutions and agencies around a university medical center to facilitate sharing of facilities and personnel.

Capping the discussion was a comprehensive proposal outlined by seminar chairman Ward Darley that would establish a “school of medicine” in a public university in each of the four states, with the first two years located on campus and the second two years, along with internships and residencies, in affiliated community hospitals. From each such school, an individual would be selected to serve on a regional committee that, with staff, consultants, and appropriate committees, would “determine the objectives and plan the curricula” that would be used in each of the collaborating schools. In addition to curriculum, the central committee would agree upon criteria to govern appointment

of faculty, establishment of hospital affiliations, selection of students, and standards for student advancement. “The principal ingredient of the proposal is that central planning would develop curricular content and related teaching methods and visual aids that could be used in common by all health and medical education programs in each participating state.” It was a radical program that seemed to challenge the long-established principle that each institution’s faculty determines standards for admission and for academic progress, curriculum content, and, certainly, what goes on in the classroom.

Symposium participants understood that they were dealing with aspirations and concepts, hardly with plans ready for work. But the ideas highlighted the problem of the four Rocky Mountain states and, to some degree, of other sparsely populated states around the country. Exploratory discussions continued. Bunnell was invited to address the American Medical Association Council on Medical Education in February 1969; his statement, “The Western Interstate Plan,” appeared in *JAMA*, the Journal of the American Medical Association, in November of that year. He outlined the Darley proposal, which he described as a “concept which . . . we are reluctant, yet, to call a plan.” He added: “The concept is in too early a stage of development for us to say categorically that it can provide medical education at less cost for each student than traditional modes. However, at this point, we believe that for the dollars spent the participating states can offer a quality of medical education considerably above what they could offer by going it alone.”

“The WICHE Plan” continued to be discussed within the region. So also were ideas being developed at the Medical College at the University of Washington for collaborative arrangements under which students could begin medical study in their home states in programs advised by faculty of the medical college, perhaps get parts of the more advanced studies at the medical college, then undertake clinical practice studies in major hospitals within their home states. Providing clinical studies in community hospitals was a feature of a program at a new medical college at Michigan State University, directed by a faculty member there, Dr. Robert Weston. Following the WICHE symposium, responding to local interest, the “WICHE/Washington/Weston plans” were discussed at a half dozen meetings around the West, featuring Kevin Bunnell of WICHE, Dr. Roy Schwartz of the University of Washington, and Dr. Robert Weston of Michigan State University.

In the early 1970s Nevada established a medical school at the University in Reno. Alaska, Idaho, and Montana worked out with the School of Medicine at the University of Washington a program that reflects much of what Jim Faulkner and Ward Darley had proposed. The program is known, simply, as “WAMI”—**W**ashington, **A**laska, **M**ontana, **I**daho. Through WAMI, students enroll in their first year of medical education at a university in their home state, take the second year at the University of Washington in Seattle, and their clinical rotations in selected, monitored hospitals within any of the WAMI states. They proceed to fulfill residency requirements in community hospitals

monitored by the University of Washington School of Medicine, normally within the resident's home state. Nine Alaska residents enrolled in the program in the fall of 1971. Idaho residents began in 1972, Montanans in 1973. The program was, indeed, a creative amalgamation of the thinking of Faulkner, Darley, Weston, Bunnell, and the dean and staff at the University of Washington School of Medicine. Administrative and financial arrangements were handled at Washington. It was that institution that gave the WAMI program credibility.³⁶



As the Faulkner study was being brought to conclusion and the new WICHE Advisory Council on Medical Education was being established, the federal program for heart, cancer, and stroke was being defined, enacted, and initiated. Late in 1965 the council met with representatives of Western medical schools to review their plans for programs in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming, under the new Title IX; it was the council's desire and intention that a four-state plan that would be coordinated by WICHE should mesh, not compete, with any initiatives originating within the states. At the executive committee meeting in March 1966, the advisory council requested and received approval to submit its proposal for a regional medical program, starting with a planning grant "to determine what educational and clinical facilities are needed in the region."

The plan developed at WICHE called for two sample surveys of needs, followed by interviews with a large sample of health practitioners in the four states. After these steps, specific operating programs would be proposed by institutions or groups within any of the four states for funding by NIH. In essence, the Mountain States Regional Medical Program (MS/RMP) was a program of continuing education, supplemented with some funds for facilities and equipment, all intended to bring current knowledge and technology to areas otherwise not well served.

MS/RMP would be headed by a physician – Kroepsch was happy to be able to appoint Alfred M. Popma, M.D., a WICHE commissioner since 1953 – and there would be a half-time physician director in each of the states, along with one or more assistant directors and a small research staff. WICHE would have general oversight and fiscal responsibility for the entire effort. Kevin Bunnell would be project coordinator. By spring 1966, plans were moving rapidly. When finally approved that fall, the grant for the initial year of the Mountain States Regional Medical Program was in the amount of \$876,855, effective November 1, 1966, through October 30, 1967. The entire WICHE budget for 1966-67 for 26 component programs not including MS/RMP was \$1,155,939 – only a third more. MS/RMP would nearly double the size of the WICHE staff – though virtually all its staff would be located in the four states. Shortly after the MS/RMP became operational, NIH appointed Bunnell to its National Advisory Council and later to its Regional Medical Program Review Committee, memberships that multiplied WICHE influence at both the national and regional levels. NIH support for MS/RMP continued for nearly 10 years.

As the program got under way following the initial surveys, state directors and advisory committees reviewed and approved proposals for operating projects, which then went to MS/RMP's regional director and committee prior to review by the WICHE staff and advisory council. All this preceded review and approval in Washington, D.C., by the NIH Review Committee and its National Advisory Council. The first MS/RMP "operating project" to run the gauntlet was an intensive coronary care unit in Missoula, MT, funded in March 1968. The purpose included extending coronary services in Missoula, but far more, it was to create a center for training and assisting physicians across this very large state – and throughout the mountain states' region – so that "a heart attack in Miles City [500 miles distant] could be handled as effectively as a heart attack in Missoula." Planning was in progress that spring for projects that soon were established in each of the other states, including a center for cancer therapy in Boise, stroke rehabilitation in Nevada, continuing education for nurses in all four states, statewide tumor registries, and others.³⁷

The number of operating programs in MS/RMP grew rapidly. It was to be expected that problems of communication and prerogative would arise. As grantee, WICHE had a fiduciary responsibility for the entire program. But planning for activities, and their immediate supervision, was carried out in state offices and in the office of the MS/RMP regional director. Many of the projects were expected to serve health personnel in all four states, but typically, activities were planned and implemented by only one of the state programs, leaving others who were expected to participate with the feeling that they had not been consulted. There were problems of communication between the regional office in Boise and programs subject to the immediate supervision of state directors or others. Some of the state offices were as remote from Boise as they were from Boulder, CO; then again, the Idaho state office was in Boise along with the regional office. Nevada's participation was increasingly problematic as it came to view RMP as a potential source of support for a two-year school in Nevada.

By the spring of 1971 the entire MS/RMP structure, including the role of WICHE, was in question. Title IX RMP legislation was under review in Washington; some changes were expected. Kroepsch focused his report at the June meeting of the executive committee entirely on MS/RMP, and the report was followed by two hours of executive session. Working relationships between MS/RMP and WICHE – more specifically, between Popma and Bunnell – had deteriorated. The program director (Popma) was a therapeutic radiologist physician (not to mention a WICHE commissioner) with years of experience in medicine; the boss at WICHE (Bunnell) was a young staff member with friends in high places, both at WICHE and at the National Institutes of Health. Kroepsch wanted to make no changes in organizational structure, pending NIH determination of the future direction and funding of the program. In the interim he would take a number of steps to improve communication and to clarify responsibilities at all levels.

The commission accepted Kroepsch's report, but it also directed its committee on administration to examine relationships of MS/RMP and WICHE and to report back. In August 1971, as the Popma/Bunnell relationship continued to deteriorate, the executive committee, goaded by Popma, changed direction – it asked the chair to appoint a special committee to advise on three questions: at one extreme, reflecting the views of MS/RMP Director Popma, should the program be completely separated from WICHE? At the other extreme, should MS/RMP be structured as a division within WICHE? Or, between the extremes, should the program be made more independent, making its regional advisory committee a semiautonomous board of directors?

The special committee, reporting at the December 1971 executive committee meeting, reformulated the questions somewhat. The chair, Commissioner Roy Lieuallen, reported his committee's recommendation that WICHE continue to sponsor MS/RMP – that so long as its primary objective was the improvement rather than merely the delivery of medical services, it was appropriate for WICHE to be the coordinator. The committee saw no reason to relocate the regional office from Boise to Boulder. And with little elaboration, it said that it would not recommend making MS/RMP structurally a part of WICHE. To the contrary, it proposed that responsibility for project review and approval be ceded by WICHE to the regional advisory group. Kevin Bunnell was a member of that group, but otherwise WICHE should exercise a "post-audit" kind of function. A commissioner from each of the four states should be named to the regional advisory group by the WICHE chair, to serve as nonvoting members. The proposal was approved.³⁸

A structure in which *program* was necessarily decentralized, while *fiscal control* was centralized was, inevitably, complex. Working relationships of the various offices and staffs were difficult. Frustrations inherent in the structure were compounded by dependence upon federal funding. As the end of the initially authorized period of support approached, in the spring of 1971, there were questions whether and for how long the program would be extended. It *was* extended; but two years later the president's budget omitted funding for the program throughout the country. For an agency with 56 centers pumping federal dollars into local economies across the nation, this did not by any means mean that the program was dead – and there were further extensions. Finally, in June 1976, federal funding was exhausted and Washington brought the Title IX program to an end. Operating units of the mountain states program had created a nonprofit corporation to continue some elements of the program that were financially viable.³⁹

The Mountain States Regional Medical Program was a large, complex, and significant venture. It generated ongoing programs of needed medical education and services in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming, states that, acting alone, had little prospect of establishing such programs. What MS/RMP brought the smaller states in specific operating programs may have made politically possible the state appropriations that

would be required to carry on a shared medical program like WAMI. And for WICHE, MS/RMP gave both staff and commission valuable, if often difficult, experience in conducting a major program in which virtually all of the action was at the local and state levels, while fiduciary responsibility necessarily was pinned on WICHE, the regional organization that made it all possible.

Other WICHE Activities

Student exchange, mental health, nursing, medical education – in 1960 these four major activities, all oriented toward health fields, employed most of the WICHE staff and consumed most of its budget. They were the core in the early years of the new regional organization – but as our review of the Enarson administration makes clear, by no means did the four satisfy all of the needs for regional action that were a challenge to an alert WICHE staff. We have noted that in 1958, Enarson and Associate Director Dick Axt brought in young researchers Terry Lunsford and Hall Sprague, with the responsibility for developing a wide range of programs funded by the grant from the Carnegie Corporation. By the time Lunsford returned to his graduate program at Berkeley in the fall of 1963, a division – Special Regional Programs – had been created, with Lunsford as its director. Lunsford was a key officer, with broad responsibility for the development of new programs of research and planning in higher education.

Within WICHE, in the Kroepsch years as in Enarson's, ideas for new projects were almost always generated within the staff – seldom did they come from members of the commission. Occasionally, projects originated with outside organizations. Whatever the source, typically the staff would bounce new ideas around within their own unit, including with their immediate superior, and with colleagues in related projects. Occasionally, one of the commissioners was especially interested in a given topic and the appropriate staff member or his or her superior might have informal discussion with that commissioner.

Kroepsch had no rules requiring that staff communication with commissioners, funding agencies, or others go through his office or the office of one of his closest associates; on the contrary, he encouraged entrepreneurial initiative within the staff, asking only that everyone keep the responsible officers informed.⁴⁰ Ultimately, the executive director or one of the associate directors would authorize the writing of a formal agenda item for review and action by the commission executive committee. Either prior to reaching this point, or at the point of establishing the agenda for the next meeting of the commission or its executive committee, the project would be reviewed in some depth at a meeting of Kroepsch and his major staff executives, the so-called “ad group.” Protocol called for approval by the commission's executive committee prior to formal submittal to potential funders; but as proposals multiplied in the later 1960s, formalities tended to relax. The minutes note occasional commissioner complaints

that fund raising was initiated before a proposal had been approved by the executive committee.

The growth of programming at WICHE seemed virtually exponential in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Quite naturally, some of the efforts were leading edge ideas and initiatives; some were of little enduring significance. Some produced definite and useful payoffs; some were disappointments. Collectively, they reveal WICHE as an enterprise that responded effectively to higher education needs and to opportunities for collaboration among states and institutions of higher education.

This account groups the wide range of activities initiated in broad categories of higher education needs: state and regional planning and policy; institutional planning, policy, and administration; issues of educational quality and efficiency; and access to educational opportunity. The account deliberately excludes from these sections a report of the predecessor activities and ultimate development of WICHE's Management Information Systems (MIS) Program in 1968, and of the evolution of that program through a "Planning and Management Systems" (PMS) phase on the way to becoming the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). An account of this development needs a section of its own, so portentous was this initiative for higher education throughout the country. In the following four sections the placement of projects is somewhat arbitrary – some could be reported in more than one of the groups.

State-level Planning and Policy Development

Manpower Studies

By 1960 WICHE had completed surveys of manpower supply and demand in seven fields: dentistry, mental health, social work, veterinary medicine, nursing, human medicine, and teaching for the disabled. It had compiled the results of most of these and presented an attention-getting report, *Meeting the West's Health Manpower Needs*, to the Western Governors' Conference in 1959, and in other ways had publicized the acute shortages anticipated by most of the studies. At its meeting in March 1961 the executive committee listened to the dean of the School of Optometry at the University of California, Berkeley, on behalf of the California Optometric Society, ask WICHE to undertake a supply and demand study for the field of optometry.

Within the health professions, optometry was a "hot topic." In medicine, vision science and medical practice relating to the eye had developed as a specialty, ophthalmology. The roots of optometry lay in optics; in 1960, optometry was largely addressed to refraction of the eye and the prescription of corrective lenses. But refraction was a service also performed by ophthalmologists, valued by them both for the refraction service and in many cases, for the glasses (and later, contact lenses) that they prescribed and in many cases sold. As optometry sought to improve and extend its capabilities to

enable optometrists to serve in a “primary care” role in diagnosing and treating anomalies of the eye, ophthalmologists saw what was happening as a new and “lesser” profession moving in on their territory.

Medicine was well represented within the WICHE Commission. There were no optometrists. Upon receiving the request from the Optometry School at the University of California, the commission, without dissent, authorized the executive director to explore the availability of funds for a manpower study in the fields of optometry and ophthalmology, providing that they obtain assurances from the optometric and ophthalmologic societies in the WICHE states that they would cooperate in the study. In a sense, the action was reasonable: manpower needs in either field would assuredly be affected by developments in the other. In fact, the action guaranteed that nothing would happen. To provide double assurance that that would be the case, the commission’s action asked the California Optometric Society to obtain these assurances – a request that in most states would mean that warring parties must join in a common endeavor that was of special interest to one of them. Kroepsch reported at the next meeting of the committee that there had been no response from the California Optometric Society; nor was there any further report at later meetings.

Economic Development

The Western Governors’ Conference in 1960 asked that WICHE arrange a conference on the role of the colleges and universities in the economic development of the West. In consultation with the Council of State Governments, WICHE responded by making economic development the subject of its third legislative work conference in November 1961.⁴¹

At the conference some 150 representatives of government, business, labor, and higher education listened to presentations by educational administrators that lauded the contributions of the universities to economic growth and urged adequate funding to make more such contributions possible. Governors, legislators, and other representatives of the political community argued that higher education institutions *as currently funded* should be more responsive to needs of their states for the kinds of research and education that would build economic strength. Conferees reportedly were impressed with the need for better communication and collaboration among the institutions and between the institutions and the states. Bunnell edited the presentations; proceedings were published in June 1962. Meeting a few weeks after the conference, the executive committee asked Bunnell to draft a proposal for WICHE follow-up.⁴²

Bunnell provided a nine-page working paper for the executive committee meeting in March 1962, which drew upon a summary of the discussions presented at the close of the conference and upon communications received from participants following the conference. He reported considerable interest in follow-up effort by WICHE, with differing suggestions as to what such effort should be. There was some support for the

notion that WICHE should organize and carry out a program of research that would feed regional and perhaps state efforts relating to economic development. Others saw WICHE in a role of coordinating the efforts of states and others, and a third group suggested an information clearinghouse function. The committee discarded the idea of a WICHE role in carrying on research; in its view, WICHE “should probably emphasize” coordinating and clearinghouse functions. It asked Bunnell to review the matter further with the Associated Rocky Mountain Universities (ARMU) and others and to report further.

Bunnell drafted a proposal for an information clearinghouse at WICHE, and identified 15 people representing the significant constituencies for such a service, including legislators, state economic development people, and educators who reviewed the proposal. In a report for the executive committee in June, he observed that the reviewers “displayed no overwhelming support for WICHE sponsorship of a comprehensive, regionwide clearinghouse,” nor did the review suggest potential agreement on any other role for the organization. Bunnell submitted an alternative proposal that would replace the clearinghouse idea with an office that would identify problems needing research, track research into these problems, and encourage coordination of that research. The executive committee response was to authorize appointment of a special committee to advise the staff on how best to proceed.

Search for a WICHE role relating to economic development in the region came to a halt during the winter of 1962-63. There were no ideas that satisfied more than a handful of the various parties, no group or individual whose interests and commitments led them to offer leadership on this topic. The subject was closed in March 1963 with Kroepsch’s report to the executive committee that “because of lack of agreement by governors, legislators, commissioners, and others as to what should be WICHE’s responsibility with regard to economic development, the staff has decided not to present any proposal to commit either staff or funds at this time.”⁴³

Economic Development Internships

Though not an outgrowth of a WICHE initiative or of its earlier efforts relating to economic development, a significant role with implications for economic development was undertaken by WICHE later in the decade. In March 1968, Kroepsch had a telephone call from the Department of Program Analysis and Economic Research at the U.S. Department of Commerce inviting WICHE direction of a regional program of internships for college students and graduates. Student stipends and program administrative costs would be funded by the department’s Economic Development Administration (EDA). Upper-class and graduate students would be recruited and placed in federal, state, or local enterprises for a three-month, hands-on educational experience. EDA had been funding such a program, administered by the Southern

Regional Education Board, and considered it highly successful: it wished now to extend it to the Western states. The SREB program director had referred EDA to WICHE.

Kroepsch took the proposal to the executive committee later that month. EDA would provide funding not only for the students but for a director at WICHE who, with EDA assistance, would line up potential placements and, through establishing contacts with colleges and universities in the Western states, receive applications from students for the internship opportunity. A concluding requirement of the internship was the preparation of a report that would be published by WICHE and made available to interested parties. The program would serve students by providing an educational experience under general surveillance of the college in which the student was enrolled – an experience that might well lead to an offer of employment. It would serve the college by providing an educational component for the programs of its students. It would serve EDA and the Department of Commerce as a recruiting device in their fields of interest.

In taking on the program, WICHE had nothing to lose and a good deal to gain. It had experience with internships, through an initiative launched by its Mental Health Program beginning in 1959. The proposal received executive committee approval in March 1968; funding was received in June, and a full time director, Robert Hullinghorst, was on the job that fall. Hullinghorst was a creative, aggressive builder. By calendar year 1974 there were 275 students in a program in which WICHE, in that year, disbursed some \$518,000 paid in by a half dozen governmental and other sponsors. As the years went by the program functioned well, with occasional protests from internship sponsors who happened not to like the project report published by their intern. Nonetheless, the program was well received and highly successful throughout the long Kroepsch administration.⁴⁴

Review of the Collegiate Press

John Minter was introduced as director of WICHE Special Higher Education Programs (SHEP) at the annual meeting in August 1965, replacing Al Knorr. The SHEP division in Bunnell's sector was especially charged with defining needs and generating proposals for planning and management projects beyond those originating in other divisions. Minter came with many ideas. Among them: at a time when students were challenging established ways on campuses across the country, he thought that presidents, deans of students, and others might find helpful an occasional collection of news items, editorials, and special features from student newspapers in the West and across the country. Bunnell agreed; Minter reported plans for the publication to the executive committee at its meeting on December 3-5, 1965.

The first issue of what a cover memo described as an "experimental" series of seven, was sent out on December 7 – a dozen legal-size pages of clippings from student newspapers in the West and a few from other regions, relating to evaluation in higher education. The second issue, in January 1966, was 18 pages, focusing on campus

communication; it went to some 700 addressees in the West, with an additional 300 that were purchased and distributed by the New England Board of Higher Education, WICHE's sister interstate compact. In the following months, other issues focused on student morality, the Greek system, and change in higher education. The publication was well received by the collegiate press but those in its target audience, college and university student and academic administrators, seemed less interested. Compilation was a substantial burden for staff; production and distribution of roughly 1,000 copies each month was costly in staff time and in mailing. After seven "experimental" issues the project was dropped.

It is notable that this new project was initiated after *informing* the executive committee that it was in the works. The committee was not asked for its approval despite the potential sensitivity of material almost sure to be included, or the impact of such a publication on the budget. The procedure in this instance illustrates both the positive working relationship that developed between staff directors and the commission and the reason that, from time to time, members of the commission objected to the way staff initiatives could come ahead of commission knowledge and approval.

Community Colleges

In the 1960s, colleges offering the first two years of a baccalaureate education – "junior colleges," as they were generally known – were common in California, and also existed in several other states. In California they frequently were part of the public school system – sometimes an add-on at the local high school. Under the pressure of students seeking an education beyond high school, and in response to the needs of business and industry for employees with post-high school training in a variety of occupations, the junior colleges were broadening their offerings and responding to a widening variety of community needs. They were also growing in number under legislation in many states that enabled school districts, acting alone or in concert with others, to form special districts to sponsor such institutions. Because of their association with public school systems – and perhaps because of reticence within the older higher education community to accept these new institutions, which were beginning to compete for students – there were in the early 1960s lingering questions about whether junior colleges were part of higher education or part of a public school system that extended only through grade 12.

WICHE commissioners sought guidance on issues that were expanding the number, size, range of curriculum, and popularity of community colleges – as the junior colleges were coming to be known. One of the nation's most respected authorities on the subject, Leland Medsker, then acting director of the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at the University of California, Berkeley, addressed the commission at its annual meeting in San Francisco in August 1966. The discussion that followed his remarks was evidence of the timeliness and importance of the topic. To bring the

community colleges into everyday thinking and planning for needs and for resources in higher education was an objective to which WICHE staff were increasingly devoted.

Associate Director Kevin Bunnell sought, in the following months, to define a program of continuing education for junior college teachers and administrators that would be located more conveniently for colleges in the mountain states than were existing educational centers in Los Angeles, Berkeley, and Seattle. He told the executive committee in June 1967 that the Kellogg Foundation appeared to have some interest in supporting such a new center or centers; but there is no report indicating any further action. In the fall of that year WICHE was pleased to help the American Association of Junior Colleges and the National Health Council sponsor a conference directed toward establishing two-year curricula in dental and medical technologies.⁴⁵

Kroepsch and Bunnell were determined to include within WICHE's sphere of action the rapidly growing field of community college education. They had an opportunity in early 1970, when John Minter left after five productive years to head the Oregon State System of Higher Education. Kroepsch appointed Robert Altman as director of special higher education programs, with the understanding that Altman would give primary emphasis to issues in the community college sector. He directed his attention immediately to two objectives: to establish a mechanism for the interstate exchange of community college students through waiver of nonresident tuition fees; and to encourage sharing of resources among community colleges in Idaho, Utah, Montana, and Wyoming.

In both areas Altman presented specific proposals to the executive committee that December, both of which were approved. A Community College Exchange Program would make it possible for students to enroll, at resident tuition, in the community college nearest a student's home even if in another state, or in a program designated by the receiving institution as a "regional program" (one in which it was willing to enroll students from other WICHE states, at resident tuition rates). Altman reported that two states had already "signed on" and that in seven others, the idea was under consideration. WICHE's role would be to act as secretariat for the enterprise, including preparing a brochure promoting the program and encouraging WICHE states to participate.

Altman's second proposal was based on a new federal program of support for "developing institutions," authorized in Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Sixteen (later 17) community colleges in Idaho, Utah, Montana, and Wyoming would comprise the "Mountain States Consortium," with WICHE as assisting agency, to "achieve better administration, instruction, and student services in the member colleges," especially colleges with students from low-income families. WICHE would plan and conduct workshops and conferences; arrange for campus exchanges and technical assistance as well as for exchanges between the campuses and industry; prepare a catalog of curricular offerings; and the like. The program was funded. After the first year, on a reduced scale the program developed, first with a three-quarters-time coordinator, then

with a half-time one. Federal funding came to an end and the program was phased out at the end of June 1974.⁴⁶

Altman's efforts with the community colleges after his arrival in February 1970 and his departure in fall 1972 came during years of rapid growth in the number of community colleges and community college systems in the West and throughout the country. During his brief years with WICHE, it seems fair to say that the community colleges came to be accepted as a part of the higher education system with which WICHE was concerned.

Pacific Rim Studies

Ian Thompson, a freelance writer and graduate student at the University of Colorado who was working on a part-time basis at WICHE, presented to the executive committee in March 1968 "a proposal that WICHE study the role of the American West in one of the world's fastest growing economic and social regions – the North Pacific Rim." Thompson defined the area of concern as including northwest Mexico, the Western United States, Western Canada, Russia, and Japan. Bunnell supported Thompson's proposal with enthusiasm; indeed, senior WICHE staff asked Thompson to make the formal presentation to the committee.

Thompson's proposal had been circulated with the agenda papers. Beyond the very general introductory statement quoted above, it provided no definition of what WICHE was to study. It argued that numerous "economic and social factors" made the region a homogenous one and presented reasons that it would become even more homogenous in the future. It suggested factors "which would make cooperative studies of benefit to the WICHE states," and proposed seeking foundation support for a comprehensive study by staff, followed by conferences, first of interested parties within the WICHE region and, subsequently, by similar participants from throughout the entire North Pacific Rim region.

The minutes state that there were some questions, but that the committee asked the staff to pursue the idea and report at the next meeting. Looking ahead to the annual meeting in August, which was to be in Honolulu, the chairman suggested that the idea be discussed there – a suggestion that was endorsed by the committee at its meeting in June.

In Honolulu the topic was considered at length. With one negative vote, the commissioners authorized the staff to explore further the development of a project that would focus on "cooperative and inter-cultural relations among the institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Basin," a region that – consciously or unconsciously – the commission had made vastly larger than the "North Pacific Rim" in the original concept. The focus of the studies and of the project as a whole remained fully as vague as before. Again, Thompson revised his statement of the proposal and at the following meeting, in

December 1968, the executive committee, with one vote in opposition, authorized the staff to seek funds needed to proceed with the plan.

There followed nearly two years of effort to fund a proposal that commanded substantial staff and commissioner support but that was highly amorphous, both as to purpose and approach. Thompson was not available to help; he had resigned shortly before the December meeting at which the staff was authorized to proceed.

Following the annual meeting in August 1969 at which there had been extended discussion of a decision in California to withdraw from the WICHE compact, the chair had appointed a special committee to undertake a detailed review of the entire WICHE program.⁴⁷ The Sandison committee, reporting at the annual meeting in August 1970, probably was pleased to have one WICHE “activity” – actually, a *proposed* activity – to recommend for termination: the Pacific Rim study. An extensive staff review and report to the committee formed the basis for the recommendation. The commission adopted the staff recommendation without dissent.⁴⁸

WICHE and the Day Care Problem

“We are in the initial stages of a massive child care program in this country.” So it seemed to Dutton Teague and colleagues in WICHE’s mental health staff in late 1970. “Currently, the Work Incentive Program under the Administration’s Family Assistance Plan, the rise in female employment, the increased activity of women’s groups, and the lack of resources for mistreated children, are providing the momentum for the development of day care centers.” Not incidentally, the director of the National Institute for Mental Health – chief funder of WICHE’s Mental Health Program – had recently announced that *children* would be the first priority of that organization.⁴⁹ The problem was that, in the West and nationally, critical areas of information needed for appropriate action were missing: “1) What are the opti[m]al conditions for early childhood education? 2) What are the most effective methods for teaching? 3) What do potential users see as needs, and what are the common denominators? 4) What educational and/or life experience qualifications should [teaching] personnel have? 5) What are appropriate licensing standards? And 6) What will it cost?” According to the proposal, with about \$130,000 that WICHE staff would seek, over three years WICHE would draw on the resources of the nation to respond to these questions and launch a program to support day care centers in the West.

The minutes relate that there was “considerable discussion” of this proposal that ranged over Head Start, the President’s Council on the Status of Women, and many other matters. In 1970, few proposals emerging from the staff were turned down by the commission. This one was. One can only surmise that the commission found it too much of a stretch to engage the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in a major effort to respond to the need for more planning and effort to deal with accelerating needs for better child care programs.⁵⁰

Developing the Concept of Limits to Growth

In the early 1970s a group of scientists and students at Harvard, MIT, and Dartmouth worked in cooperation, across academic disciplines, to analyze and achieve better understanding of the causes and future consequences of growth in the world's population and material output. The leading conclusion in their report "The Limits to Growth" was that "if present growth trends continue unchecked, the limits to growth on this planet will be reached sometime within the next one hundred years." That conclusion attracted attention within academe and among the general public.

For a dozen years WICHE had accumulated bits of money left from a small excess of income over costs of the annual summer College and University Self Study Institute, a program whose broad appeal seemed to fade by the late 1960s and which was terminated in 1971. There was nearly \$12,000 in the account.

The "limits to growth" concept seemed important both to Bill Bergquist, director of the Office of Special Higher Education Programs, and to his boss, Kevin Bunnell. They did not refer the matter to the Committee on the Future, however important it would seem to be for that future – that committee was not interested in reviewing proposals for WICHE action other than its own. But Bergquist and Bunnell did identify a number of priorities from the recent Delphi exercise to which their proposal was germane.

The idea was, simply, to employ for six months a consultant who had extensive experience in working with what they called "the limits to growth model" and with the postsecondary education community. The proposal placed before the executive committee in March 1974 named, but it did not describe or define, the "limits to growth model," other than to say that its "scope and content . . . defies disciplinary categories in higher education and challenges traditional instructional methods." The proposal was that with the assistance of the consultant, the SHEP office would provide information on programs and materials relating to limits to growth, assist in developing new materials, and assist a group of interested Western institutions in developing "a joint funding proposal for research using the limits to growth model." No funds were to be required other than those in the available account.

On the day before the executive committee meeting, the commission's several "divisional committees" for the overall WICHE program had met to review the appropriate items on the executive committee agenda. The discussion on limits to growth had split the general regional committee, but on an 8 to 4 vote, the executive committee approved proceeding.

Bergquist hired as consultant Lewis Perelman, whose prior connections with one of the Rockefeller brothers paved the way for an allocation of \$15,822 from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund for a four-month project "to study the implications of the 'limits to growth' for postsecondary education, in terms of goals, resources, and strategies for action." Bunnell got executive committee approval for the change of funding.

Perelman proceeded with the writing; but Bill Bergquist left WICHE in the fall of 1974. Perelman's report – addressed to the Rockefeller Brothers Fund rather than to WICHE – was ready for submittal in December 1974 and presumably was submitted. Difficult times for WICHE and for Bob Kroepsch were just around the corner. No further reference has been found to the proposal or to the report that would engage Western higher education in research and planning relating to “limits to growth.”

Institutional Planning, Policy, and Administration

Expected Shortage of College Teachers

The dramatic growth of college enrollments that was clearly going to challenge higher education and state governments by the mid-1960s was, in the 1950s, a major concern of colleges and universities because of the apparent need for additional teachers, as well as for facilities and other resources. For state governments the “tidal wave” meant major growth of higher education costs.

That was problem enough; but finding additional teachers was no simple matter, when increases in supply might not occur for close to a decade after increases were made in the inputs. Harold Enarson had given graduate education a high priority in his consideration of how the WICHE program should develop. At the annual meeting in 1955, the expected college teacher shortage was one of the areas he proposed for the commission's attention in 1956-57. The coming shortage of teachers was a major topic of the WICHE-sponsored President's Conference on Education Beyond High School in April 1957. The impending teacher shortage was one of the areas for which WICHE sought and received the multiyear Carnegie Grant in 1957. It was the backdrop for efforts in the later 1950s that led WICHE to arrange for what turned out to be the organizing meeting of the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) in March 1959.

That higher education faced a crippling shortage of teachers was a concern that would not go away. Kroepsch's survey of commissioner viewpoints early in 1961, shortly after his arrival, asked for their ideas for research, publications, or other activities related to the problem. The half dozen responses to the question provided little guidance; but with support from the Carnegie grant and two new staff members that the grant made possible, staff provided support for WAGS. WICHE handled publication of proceedings of the WAGS annual meetings; billing, collection, and accounting for dues and expenses; and other administrative matters. With WAGS's cooperation, early in 1963 WICHE initiated an extensive survey of graduate education in the West. The following winter, WICHE published reports based on the survey: *Graduate Education in the West* and *The College Teacher Shortage: What You Can Do* were distributed to some 9,000 governmental and college and university officials, the media, and other interested persons.

But funds from the Carnegie grant were fully expended in 1963, and WICHE relaxed its interest in a teacher shortage that seemed not to be a huge impediment. After four years of underwriting the WAGS organization with its own scarce “hard money,” WICHE terminated its support. WAGS survived, the member graduate deans gradually assuming the support services WICHE had provided. There followed a period of many years when there was little interaction between WAGS and WICHE. Perhaps part of the reason for this was that an acute “coming shortage of college teachers” seemed not to come. Somehow, as enrollments soared in the later 1960s, teacher positions were filled, albeit for many years in a market in which it was advantageous to be a teacher rather than a dean looking for strong candidates. WICHE attention turned to other problems and opportunities. Its initiative had led to the establishment of a useful forum for graduate deans and for confrontation of major problems in graduate education.

Improving Campus Planning and Performance

Out of Kevin Bunnell’s unit for general regional programs came three ideas that, in preliminary form, were put before the executive committee in December 1963. One proposed a four-year program of workshops, consultations, and publications that would strengthen institutional long-range planning. A second four-year program would promote study visitations of groups of 15 to 20 persons to institutions that were on the leading edge of activities in graduate education or other academic or administrative endeavors, with the objective of hastening the spread of promising new ideas and techniques among institutions that were isolated or otherwise slow to act. A third would seek to increase awareness within the higher education community of industry needs for an emerging group of practitioners: technicians, people trained for skills and services that stood “between the skilled craftsman or tradesman (plumber, machinist, carpenter) and the professional (engineer, physicist, scientist, dentist, physician).” The preliminary statement presented to the executive committee asserted that, contrary to the views of some educators, training technicians was a task for higher education rather than for the public high schools. Without offering a specific proposal, the staff suggested that it survey the field, identify potential leaders in training technicians, and assist those leaders in building their programs.

The executive committee, as was its usual pattern, approved the ideas for further definition and, in the case of the program of visitations, for seeking the necessary funds. Records of subsequent meetings do not reveal that funding was secured for any of these ideas.

Department Chairmen

One of John Minter’s early interests, after his appointment as director of special higher education programs, was to develop workshops for faculty members who served as department chairmen – a role for which higher education provided no training, despite the complexities of a position for which faculty members on the one hand, and deans,

provosts, and presidents on the other, had great but sometimes opposing expectations. Minter learned that the Institute for College and University Administrators of the American Council on Education shared his interest and, with that institute, arranged for a pilot workshop in Estes Park, CO, in May 1967. Attended by some 40 department chairs from Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming, the workshop generated interest and enthusiasm and led to a second, for 48 chairs from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, in Salishan, OR, in November of that same year. Inspired by the two workshops, a number of institutions conducted similar workshops for chairmen on their own campuses.

Indeed, the workshops generated such support that Minter was able, following the Estes Park workshop, to interest the Danforth Foundation of St. Louis in providing a \$100,000 grant to develop and carry out a program for training department chairmen. Minter learned that the grant had been approved a few days after the workshop in Salishan. It had happened so rapidly that a formal proposal for the program had never been developed and cleared by the executive committee. There was no wrist-slapping, either by the executive director or by the executive committee – the program was highly successful and welcomed accordingly.

But following receipt of the grant, recruitment of a program director consumed nearly a year. David Booth, who had been acting chair of the Sociology Department at Oakland University in Rochester, MI, was on the job in November 1968. During the next two years the program sponsored workshops, developed monographs on topics of concern to department chairmen, provided consultants for many campus training programs, and generally encouraged and assisted institutions to develop their own programs for helping more chairpersons than WICHE alone would ever be able to reach.⁵¹

Issues of Educational Quality and Efficiency

Educational Television

In the course of the Enarson administration, WICHE undertook a limited number of initiatives to consider the likely impact of television in higher education and the appropriate direction of its own action. In January 1960, only a few months before Enarson announced his decision to leave WICHE that fall, the Ford Foundation responded to WICHE's longstanding efforts to obtain underwriting for staffing that would permit a more active role; its \$25,000 grant for a two-year project enabled WICHE to allocate part of Terry Lunsford's time to exploring and defining how WICHE could identify needs for interinstitutional collaboration relating to television in higher education. But Lunsford left WICHE in July 1960. Enarson hired a consultant, Alfred Baxter, to carry on the educational television (ETV) exploration – and Baxter's work had barely begun when Enarson announced his own resignation. Pursuant to his contract, Baxter visited with ETV leaders in the West and around the country and presented his report to the executive committee in March 1961. He saw two options: WICHE could

employ a staff member well qualified to pin down needs within the higher education community and to define possible roles for WICHE; or on a lesser scale, WICHE could develop a list of consultants and use the remaining money from the Ford grant to make such consultants available to agencies and institutions in member states. The commission lacked enthusiasm for the more ambitious effort. Subject to the foundation's approval, it endorsed using the remaining Ford funds to provide consultant services.

The Ford Foundation did not cooperate. It had made its grant on the understanding that WICHE would be promoting collaboration among states and institutions and it stood by its guns. The WICHE Executive Committee had never expressed much interest in the topic. Bob Kroepsch's spring 1961 survey of commissioner views about current and possible WICHE programs drew 15 responses to the ETV question: eight counseled doing nothing with ETV, seven advised that WICHE had an interest and should be alert to ideas. After getting the Ford response, the staff recommended to the executive committee, in June, that the original Ford grant of \$25,000 be reconstituted with an allocation of \$9,000 from reserves. After a year in the East, Terry Lunsford was ready to return to WICHE and to pick up on the ETV project. The executive committee approved.

During the next two years Lunsford explored numerous ideas and options. He and Kroepsch met with the president of the Ford Foundation's National Educational Television and Radio Center in late September 1961, where the advice was: forget about creating a regional TV network – WICHE's best role would be to help identify appropriate instructional uses of television and to promote collaboration in implementing such uses. Lunsford participated in numerous conferences and meetings throughout the West and to some extent, throughout the country. He prepared publications on financing ETV programming, the federal Educational Television Facilities Act of 1962, and institutional and statewide ETV planning, and compiled and distributed other such publications. He organized a Northwest Conference on Television in Education for 57 educators and state officials from Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington in April 1962; and in January 1963, he organized a seminar on "Statewide and Regional Planning for Educational Television" in Denver, attended by representatives of statewide ETV planning groups in 12 of WICHE's 13 states. But as the grant period came to an end, ETV was fading from a radar screen on which it had never been very bright. Lunsford left WICHE once again in fall 1963, this time to pursue a doctoral program at Berkeley.⁵²

Four years went by when educational television was not mentioned in minutes of meetings or in periodic WICHE newsletters. At the annual meeting in 1967, the Federation of Rocky Mountain States was featured: the federation had been created by Western governors and at the time included the states of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. The head of its Educational Television Committee was there to seek WICHE collaboration and support of an effort, on behalf of the

Rocky Mountain states, to tap a new federal program for support of the development of educational television in the West. Four WICHE commissioners were primed to comment; they spoke, parochially, of ETV developments in their own states. That was it: there was no proposal of WICHE action.

Broadcast television was an expensive proposition, even if there was federal help. Faculties were scarcely aware of its possibilities for their traditional occupations. There were no prototype networks, such as the internet or state and regional video networks. To buy into educational television was to buy into a movement that was sure to cost money, with results that could in no way be guaranteed. In the 1960s neither the staff nor the WICHE Commission were sold on the idea.

Working with Libraries

From the mid-1950s, WICHE staff had occasional discussions with various groups of Western librarians, for the most part concerning perceived shortages of library personnel – shortages that prevailed despite an adequate or perhaps more than adequate number of library schools in the region. The problem seemed to be that the field simply was not sufficiently appealing to students to fill the available slots. As illustrated by pressures on WICHE to “do something” about a comparable situation in mineral engineering or in social work programs, there seemed to be little WICHE could do when there were too few student takers for the places available.

In 1967, however, WICHE became actively engaged with librarians within the region. New federal legislation provided for grants to state libraries to underwrite programs of continuing education. The later 1960s were years of ferment in libraries of all kinds. New technologies made possible more efficient ways of handling the acquisition, cataloguing, and managing the distribution of books. Devices for instantaneous communications made possible collaboration and sharing to a degree that had not been possible before. As the numbers of books and journals and serial publications continued to grow, with parallel growth in costs, libraries were being pressed to find ways to reduce other costs in order to maintain, or even improve, the quality of their collections.

The Wyoming State Library initiated in 1964 a series of annual continuing education programs that were appealing to librarians in Wyoming and surrounding states. After exploring the idea with WICHE, the Wyoming state librarian arranged for a meeting at the fourth of these sessions in June 1967 to discuss a possible interstate program of continuing education for working librarians. In addition to Wyoming, chiefs of the state libraries in Colorado, Idaho, and Montana were present, as were representatives of WICHE and of the Denver regional office of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A consultant who had been part of the Wyoming program, Peter Hiatt, a faculty member at the Graduate Library School at Indiana University, was also present. The group agreed that a program of continuing education for librarians was needed in

sparsely settled Western states and that WICHE should be asked to provide staff services to develop a program. To employ a director, funds should be sought beyond those to come from the state libraries. This proposed WICHE leadership role was submitted to the WICHE Executive Committee in August 1967; staff was authorized to proceed with the plan.⁵³

An assessment of continuing education needs and resources in Western libraries was a logical starting point for the new program. To head such a survey, SHEP Director John Minter needed a staff director and money for office support. Nearly a year passed before Minter had funding commitments from eight states that enabled WICHE to proceed. Three recognized leaders in library continuing education were offered the directorship but declined at the salary level offered. Minter persuaded the three to conduct the survey on a consultant basis. Their conclusions and recommendations were available in June 1969. The printed report, released in September, recommended an ambitious four-year program with a staff that would include a director, three program associates, and an advisory committee. Workshops, seminars, and other programs would serve library personnel at all levels. In its final stages, the program would encourage the transfer of continuing education responsibility to each of the participating state libraries.⁵⁴

The consultants did not include an estimate of costs, but by this time WICHE was fully committed to its library program. Bunnell signed a formal agreement in September 1969 with an *ad hoc* steering committee for the WICHE Library Continuing Education Program. *With its own funds*, WICHE would staff the search for a program director, including costs of travel for interviewees. Over a period of 18 months it would provide up to \$60,000 to support the new director until grant funds could become available.⁵⁵

That fall and winter WICHE pursued vigorously the search for a library program director. After continuing disappointments, Bunnell was ready in the spring of 1970 to meet the salary requirements of one of the leading candidates, Peter Hiatt. Hiatt was at work on October 1, 1970.

It was understood all around that one of the director's earliest tasks in the precariously funded program was to prepare proposals and obtain support to enable the program to proceed. Indeed, at the first meeting of the program's national advisory committee, in January 1971, Hiatt was "advised to devote all of his efforts to securing outside funds for the program."⁵⁶ Obviously, development of the program was contingent upon obtaining support beyond that committed by WICHE and payable by participating states. But an exclusive focus on fund raising in the initial year – actually, 18 months – left in question the usefulness of the organization to its state library funders. During the 18 months, Hiatt initiated interviews, letters of intent, or proposals to a half dozen national foundations and federal agencies, and others to a number of local and Western foundations. The only success came, at length, in 1972 when the Xerox Foundation committed \$12,000 toward program costs.

More than two years after Hiatt assumed the directorship, with some help from the Xerox grant, he was able to enlist five states (Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Nevada, and Washington) in the establishment and support of the Western Council on Continuing Education for Library Personnel, whose charter reflected the recommendations the consultants had made some three years earlier. During the next two years Hiatt and the council developed and conducted workshops and seminars on a half dozen topics, and produced numerous kits, presentations, and publications for continuing education for librarians, including managers, reference personnel, trustees, and others in all types of libraries.

In early 1974 Hiatt had the opportunity to become director of the School of Librarianship at the University of Washington; he left WICHE in March of that year. In spite of the considerable program he had put in place, within the library community there was a general feeling that the program had not fully achieved its objectives, in part because of the constant demands upon the director to seek financial support and perhaps also because of differences among member librarians and between some of them and Hiatt as to what the substance of a continuing education program should be.

The program underwent a rapid and pervasive change of focus under its new director, Maryann Duggan, a veteran leader in librarianship nationally. Duggan's background was in engineering and information systems – timely, in light of new technologies that were changing library practice across the nation. Duggan apparently had little difficulty in persuading the state librarians that the emphasis of the program should be shifted from continuing education to the development of library information systems. During her tenure of a little more than two years, her staff grew from two to eight as she sought and obtained more than \$230,000 of external funding for networking and information related projects.⁵⁷

The spring of 1976 was a time of major change in the structure and direction of the library program. Maryann Duggan announced that she would retire in July 1976. The program was active and funded and had employed managers well equipped to take on its direction. Reflecting the change in program emphasis, the council changed the program's name to the Western Interstate Library Coordinating Organization – WILCO. Activities would include continuing education, resource sharing, and library and information science research. WILCO took its program direction from the participating state librarians; WICHE provided administrative services.

In truth, the need for a regional library program at WICHE was increasingly in question. The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science of the Library of Congress and the National Council for Library Resources were actively engaged in establishing priorities for networking – a need that was truly national, not simply regional. The development of a national clearinghouse for continuing education in librarianship (the Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange) provided a national capability for dealing with needs that had led to creation of the WICHE

program back in 1967. Under the circumstances, the sponsoring state libraries were questioning whether what they perceived as unreasonably high charges for WICHE indirect costs were justified by the benefits delivered. They were discussing ways by which their collaboration might be continued without a WICHE affiliation.⁵⁸ When WILCO was able to transfer its Statistical Data Base Project to the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), it was virtually ready to cast off ties to WICHE. Indeed, WILCO was on its own in July 1977.

Education via Satellite

We have noted the consistent diffidence of the commission with respect to broadcast television. That diffidence had not evaporated when, at the annual meeting in 1967, the commission was addressed by a genuine enthusiast, the chair of the educational television committee of the Federation of Rocky Mountain States (FORMS), E. Wayne Bundy, ETV director at the University of New Mexico. For Bundy there was “very little reason to doubt that in a very few years there will be a synchronous satellite somewhere over the WICHE area capable of providing inter-connection of TV signals.” That capability would produce marvelous educational and economic results – for him there was, for example, “little economic justification for every educational institution in a state to teach several sections of freshman English.”

A few years later, early in 1971, the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) was engaged in placing in stationary orbit over the Rocky Mountains a satellite, ATS-F, for military and other governmental applications.⁵⁹ NASA, always conscious of its need for public support, proposed to make available for educational use a small portion of the satellite bandwidth. Through contract with the Federation of Rocky Mountain States, NASA lined up participants in the effort. Terrain in the Rocky Mountain West created numerous areas in which radio and television broadcast was ineffective. Use of the satellite would provide important opportunities for experimentation with educational programming. The Federation of Rocky Mountain States contracted the Education Commission of the States for assistance in pre-school and elementary/secondary education. Working with Kevin Bunnell and Robert Altman, director of Bunnell’s Division of Special Higher Education Programs, in the spring of 1971 FORMS discussed arrangements for projects for education beyond high school. Bunnell obtained executive committee approval to proceed with the discussions.

Early exchanges with the federation led WICHE to expect that an extensive program would be funded to test the potential of satellite communication for a variety of educational uses in the Rocky Mountain West. With advice from educational institutions and agencies, WICHE would identify specific experimental efforts, line up the teachers, and identify or create the needed materials for some 540 hours of broadcast television. The satellite was to be put in place in May 1973. It would be a mammoth undertaking – for the WICHE part of the program, SHEP and Bunnell gave the commission, in August

1971, a plan and budget that aggregated \$5,081,000 for a three-year period ending September 30, 1974. Under the proposal, WICHE would be hiring some 74 people, 10 of them to be in Boulder. At that meeting in 1971, the commissioners devoted a full session to satellite programming for higher education and for health.

But NASA's need of bandwidth for governmental purposes soon crowded out most of the educational dimension. For planning a program, Bunnell was able to arrange for far more limited funding (\$90,000) through the Lister Hill Center of the National Library of Medicine. He obtained executive committee authorization to work with the medical schools in Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico, on a plan to provide health education and services to practitioners, students, and consumers via satellite. The new medical college at the University of Arizona arranged with the Havasupi Reservation, located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, for two-way communication on medical problems. The universities of Alaska and Washington arranged for medical consultations at remote sites in Alaska. For WICHE, little came of the project. Bunnell reported to the executive committee in March 1973 that NASA had substantially curtailed its communications satellite program – the minutes report simply that “WICHE is no longer involved in coordinating satellite programs in health education.”

Mineral Engineering Education

With the exception of Hawaii and Oregon, degree programs in a field variously known as mineral engineering, mining engineering, or some small variation of those names, were offered in all of the WICHE states. In typical years, the Colorado School of Mines enrolled as many undergraduates in the field as the remaining programs altogether. That some of the programs should be terminated was a general assumption; but for the leading candidates for closure, the further assumption was that that meant somebody else. A plethora of mineral engineering programs within the region, and a relative dearth of students, was one of WICHE's very first concerns. Responding to the request of a number of leaders in the field, WICHE's first director, William Jones, put together a conference in May 1954 to discuss possibilities of interstate and regional cooperation and what the new regional organization might do to help.

Harold Enarson succeeded Bill Jones as executive director only three months after the conference. As we have noted, Enarson was much interested in natural resource development in the West and in the possibilities of interinstitutional collaboration in research in the field. Mineral engineering education fell within this area of interest. But two years after the 1954 meeting, there had been no response from three study groups established at the conference. Enarson presented to the executive committee in June 1956 a list of proposed activities for WICHE attention. Mineral engineering education did not make the priority list established at that meeting and the matter dropped from view.⁶⁰

A decade later the subject returned to the WICHE agenda when officials at the University of Washington and Washington State University expressed interest in a

regional student exchange program. The executive committee asked staff to investigate the possibilities. Following a survey and discussions with interested parties, staff proposed that a consultant or consultants be retained to do a regional survey to lay out the facts and to design procedures for developing interstate cooperation and student exchange. The commission approved the proposal and a budget of \$20,225 to be provided from the WICHE general fund.

Carl W. Borgmann, the advisor on science and technology at the Ford Foundation, and John W. Bartram, director of the budget at the University of Colorado, went to work in the fall of 1968. They reviewed their report in draft at a meeting with the 13 interested institutions in mid-June 1969; the final report was published in July.⁶¹

The problem common to all but three of the 14 schools in the region was low undergraduate enrollments. The consultants named three schools – in Alaska, Idaho, and Nevada – in which the economic problems caused by small enrollments were acute; and five more in which the negative fiscal impacts were only somewhat less – in Arizona, Utah, and Wyoming, as well as the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology and the Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology. For these eight institutions, Borgmann and Bartram said, there were three choices: continue as now; expand current efforts to increase enrollments; or discontinue the programs. In their view the third option was unlikely to occur for political reasons and, arguably, because little cost savings would result. The first option – continuing as now – they skipped over because “it is generally unsatisfying to choose [that] alternative.” That left option two: to do a better job of what all had been trying for years to do, which was to conduct more effective recruiting programs. They had two suggestions: that the eight states with low undergraduate enrollments agree to enroll mineral-engineering students from any of the eight, at resident tuition rates; and that the same eight states or any four or more of them organize a cooperative recruiting effort focused on the Midwest and East. They added a proposal that states such as California, Hawaii, and Oregon that had no mineral engineering programs or, perhaps, insufficient undergraduate spaces consider establishing scholarship programs for their residents.

WICHE took the lead in creating a memorandum of agreement that would open enrollment on a resident tuition basis to residents of the eight states identified by Borgmann and Bartram in any mineral-engineering curriculum that was not available in the student’s home state. In addition, WICHE published a promotional brochure and made copies available to schools in the participating states for recruiting purposes.

The “solution” that Borgmann and Bartram set aside – to discontinue programs, by implication through regional agreements that would enable residents of states that bit the bullet to enroll in out-of-state schools on a resident tuition basis – was never seriously discussed. The fact may seem to reveal a weakness of will on the part of the consultants and the regional organization. The fact is indeed revealing, not as to will but as to the sovereignty of states in mentoring their own educational systems. An organization like

WICHE may perceive what needs to be done – may even develop consensus among those involved about what *should* be done – but it cannot direct any state, institution, or person to do anything, however sensible. Only a state can determine what will be done with its system of education. And there, political forces come into play.

Denial of a Federal Request

Especially during later years of Bob Kroepsch's long service as executive director, the range of WICHE programs, the numbers of staff, and the size of budget were growing so rapidly that one may be surprised to learn that *any* proposals for new WICHE activity were turned down. In truth, however small the proportion of turn-downs, there were several. We should take note of one of them.

In December 1964, Alan Ferguson, director of the United States Office of Education's Fellowship Program authorized by Title IV of the National Defense Education Act, visited WICHE with a request and a proposal for help. Congressional action had made possible a dramatic expansion of the number of doctoral fellowships to be federally underwritten each year, from roughly 1,300 to 10,000. Incident to the expansion, the United States Office of Education planned a number of policy changes. For one, rather than making awards of stipends and cost-of-education payments to academic *departments*, the office would make them to *institutions*, a change that would increase materially the power of chief administrators to determine directions of growth of an institution's graduate programs. In addition, the office would deliberately strengthen selected institutions and departments at the expense of others.

Ferguson was looking for help with the difficult problems of selecting certain institutions and turning down others. Regional interests were among the factors with which the office had to be concerned, and the regional higher education compacts must have seemed to him to be a natural source of assistance. But for WICHE, choosing one institution rather than another could prove to be a life-and-death decision. There were strong reasons to help make these choices: from its earliest days, WICHE's purpose had been to extend both access and quality in Western higher education. This program would provide a powerful tool in pursuit of those objectives. Moreover, linking up with the U.S. Office of Education in a graduate fellowship program could lead to similar ties on other programs. But to empower a regional body to make decisions that would directly shape the growth of higher education institutions of its member states was not what the states had created WICHE to do. This was evident in the authority conveyed to WICHE in the compact, and in powers *not* conveyed. From WICHE's first days, the sensitivity of every state's commissioners to this fact simply underscored all commissioners' understanding of what WICHE could and could not do.

WICHE's response to Ferguson's proposal was, in Kroepsch's word, noncommittal. Kroepsch did not simply pretend that the proposal had never been made. He obtained a staff memorandum that reviewed succinctly the facts presented by Ferguson and the

considerations inherent in the proposal that staff had identified and discussed with Ferguson. He sent copies of the memo to the commission chair and vice chair (Willard Wilson, Hawaii, and Edna Scales, Oregon) with the comment, "We shall be interested in hearing your reaction to the implications of this memo, as well as any advice you may have for the staff with regard to similar requests." The record does not report any further action. Clearly, WICHE could not and did not move to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Western institutions and provide means that would strengthen some and kill others. That was something that absent extraordinary circumstances, no regional organization could do.

Issues of Access and Educational Opportunity

Education for the Aging and Technical Education

WICHE was sometimes approached for help by groups interested in particular higher education programs that would serve their needs. Three representatives of the Rocky Mountain Gerontological Association met with staff in December 1963 to explore ways by which WICHE might assist in the development of collegiate programs of training and research on aging. No specific program emerged from the discussion.

That same month, staff prepared for the executive committee a position paper defining "technical education," stressing the absence of training programs for technologies in the West and the need for technicians in a number of industries. Staff proposed that WICHE survey both the need for technicians in the West and the availability of programs to meet that need. Apparently, the executive director was concerned that commissioners recognize that education for technicians might, but might not, be regarded within the education and political communities as an appropriate college or university service. Staff defined "technician" as "a comparatively new breed of person who stands half way between the skilled craftsman or tradesman (plumber, machinist, carpenter) and the professional (engineer, physicist, scientist, dentist, physician)." In training programs for technical employment, "junior colleges, community colleges, and technical institutes all have a hand in it." Indeed, because of the scarcity of programs, "industry, in its despair, has established some of its own in-service training programs for technicians," as well as employing people prepared by the military for better-paid jobs in industry.

Concurring with the staff, members of the committee had no qualms about whether WICHE could and should concern itself about provisions for technical education then prevailing in the West. Without dissent it authorized staff to "explore areas of activity that might prove to be fruitful." But in the following months, no specific "technical education project" at WICHE was defined and funded. More significantly, staff activities across the board routinely included two-year institutions, as increasing numbers of them appeared in Western states.

Higher Education for American Minorities

In 1960, institutions of higher education in the United States were part of a culture that clearly was dominated by White Americans, though there was a growing public awareness of the fact that people of color – especially African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asian Americans – were also integral to the American dream. Within the nation taken as a whole, it was only in the mid-1960s that steps were beginning to be taken to guarantee for all citizens fundamental social and civil rights. It was in 1964 that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act provided a legal basis for a national policy that extended basic civil rights to all citizens.

There was some awareness that access to higher education depended upon a person's wealth: part of the argument for low tuition, even no tuition, in the public sector was the democratic one that not all students and their families could afford to pay college costs. But at that time the link between race/ethnicity and poverty were little recognized in higher education.

The first reference to any topic bearing upon American minorities that appeared in WICHE minutes or documents is the report of a presentation at an informal dinner immediately prior to a meeting of the executive committee in Phoenix in March 1966 by a former chairman of the tribal council of the Papago Indians, Thomas Segundo. Segundo's account of chronic illiteracy, school dropouts, and lack of any secondary education facilities on the Papago Reservation represented the first time the commission's attention had been directed to the subject of education in minority communities in the United States.

The experience triggered concerns within the staff. Over a period of months following Segundo's presentation, staffers from across the span of WICHE programs considered the implications for WICHE of circumstances such as those Segundo had described. A year after the Phoenix experience, Kroepsch presented to the executive committee a draft resolution that staff had developed, urging Western colleges and universities to take action in admissions and in student financial assistance that would help American Indian students achieve a higher education.

The language of the proposed resolution was sharp. Its opening clause began, "WHEREAS, the American Indians have endured the harshest poverty and been subjected to the cruelest of social and civil injustices during the last dark and sorrowful century in their proud history." The resolution dealt not with the circumstances of people of color generally but with the American Indian specifically. In response to Kroepsch's presentation of the resolution, there were statements of support from a number of commissioners; but the resolution was too pointed for several to endorse. A motion to adopt was tabled and staff was directed to pin down the dimensions of the problem in member states and to determine whether tribal leaders would welcome such a statement.

There were a number of states in the Rocky Mountain West whose commissioners gave little priority to any problems of enrolling minorities in the public colleges and universities in their states. Another year went by before the subject was returned explicitly to the commission agenda. At the annual meeting in August 1968, commissioners were assigned to a half dozen panels to lead discussions on as many topics, one of which was “higher education’s responsibility for the nation’s urban problems” (for consideration by the commission, higher education opportunities for minorities had become an “urban problem”). Following the panel sessions, at the business meeting immediately preceding adjournment, the commission asked staff to consult with appropriate state officials, including gubernatorial aides, to determine whether there was support for a WICHE effort to work with colleges and universities on “problems related to the urban crisis.”

By the end of the decade of the 1960s, in the country and in the West, minorities were no longer in the shadows. By 1968 and 1969, WICHE’s Mental Health and Nursing programs were both writing proposals for projects of training for service in minority communities, including bringing minorities into professional ranks.⁶² In 1969, the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) asked WICHE for help in a survey of activities in Western graduate schools that were aimed at enrolling minority students and assisting them in progress through graduate programs. During that year and in 1970, a committee appointed by WAGS together with WICHE staff and minority consultants brought together by WICHE conducted a comprehensive survey and published two reports, “Urban and Minority Centered Programs in Western Colleges and Universities, 1969-70,” and “Graduate and Professional Opportunities for Minority Students.” Indeed, in 1969, 1970, and on into the 1970s, at meetings of the commission and of the executive committee, concerns for minority programs and opportunities for minority students were invariably on the agenda. People of color were regularly included at conferences and, in the early 1970s, started to make their way onto the commission, with the appointment of a Hispanic commissioner, Clory Trafoya, and an African American, Representative Lenton Malry, both of New Mexico.

As the decade of the 1960s ended, issues of minority participation in higher education commanded priority attention on campuses across the country. In 1970 the annual WICHE/University of California Center for Research and Development in Higher Education’s summer institute topic was “The Minority Student on the Campus: Expectations and Possibilities.” The subject was important, timely, and sure to be controversial. CRDHE and WICHE included minority student and faculty leadership who were prepared to define and discuss “expectations and possibilities” as they saw them. Indeed, the statements of both students and faculty presenters provide evidence of a depth of despair and anger that accurately characterized many, probably most, campuses at the time. WICHE published the proceedings with concerns that some readers would find the contents offensive.⁶³

WICHE staff believed that its responsibilities in the matter extended well beyond the adoption of resolutions that urged action by others. Beginning in mid-1969 a task force drawn from all of WICHE's principal program units defined a program that would extend minority student access. The staff report called for adding a director who was a person of color, with financial underwriting for a year to define regional needs and an appropriate WICHE role. The initial plan would include at least one specific project for which funding would be sought to initiate the program. Associate Director Bunnell thought he had an indication of interest in one of the major foundations. In June 1970 the executive committee authorized efforts to fund the proposal. As submitted to the Ford Foundation late that summer, the proposal included a budget of \$182,415 for a three-year period. But the commission had agreed that the effort should begin immediately. Bunnell created a "search and selection" committee comprising three African American, three Hispanic, and three Native American members. Together, they employed Pat Locke, a White Earth Chippewa who had been a specialist with the Indian High Potential Program at UCLA, as the director of the new Minority Students in Higher Education program in August 1970.

Introduced at the annual meeting, Locke noted that the purposes of the program were twofold: to improve higher education access for all of the West's minorities; and to increase the relevance of existing curricula to the needs and backgrounds of minority students. She emphasized that though the word "minorities" applied to a very large number of ethnic groups, in the West it embraced principally Hispanics, African Americans, Native Americans, and Asians. She stressed the fundamental need to establish *trust* between and among minorities and the majority group and outlined an approach for the program that would begin to build trust by involving students, teachers, and community representatives in each of the four ethnic groups in a process of identifying and prioritizing what each group saw as the major issues in higher education.

Commissioners were given an intimate view of the tensions that had developed in minority communities, and certainly on college and university campuses, when in June 1971 a group of Chicano mental health workers arranged for a meeting with Commissioner John Mackie, a Colorado legislator who had just finished a term as WICHE chair. Mackie reported to the commission at the annual meeting that August, and presented a statement of their requests: more representation in the top positions on the staff; more Chicano commissioners; more programs for the benefit of Chicanos; and the addition of \$10,000 to the annual state membership fee as a means, along with federal and foundation funding, of supporting programs expressly for Chicanos. Commission discussion led to a response, which Mackie delivered to the mental health workers in a further meeting, that expressed WICHE concerns about higher education opportunity and stressed that WICHE's concern embraced all minorities. The response suggested contact with governors on the appointment of new commissioners.

But following Locke's appointment, a year went by with no progress in fund raising. As the fiscal year for which the commission had committed funds was coming to a close in June 1972, Locke presented four proposals for approval by the executive committee. All four concerned the American Indian community exclusively. At the annual meeting in August, Locke reported a "pending contract" with the Bureau of Indians Affairs (BIA). But seven months later, in March 1973, Bunnell could report only that funding efforts were continuing and that "there is hope of receiving funding for a proposal with the BIA."

During the year after Locke's arrival, the WICHE Program for Minorities in Higher Education acquired a new name with an appealing acronym – PRIME, Planning Resources in Minority Education. The new name was announced at the annual meeting in 1972. At the meeting, Locke assured the commission that though the project was starting with Native Americans, she was working to expand its programming to all ethnic minority groups.

But *de facto*, other than her contributions in creating WICHE's own affirmative action policies and program, Locke's work focused on establishing relationships with a growing number of Indian tribes. She had worked with a half dozen tribes that had community colleges located on or near their reservations to establish "educational centers" that would extend available studies beyond the high school level. Presidents of these community colleges had formed the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, with which she planned a program of consultation, training, and joint planning for the fiscal year 1973-74, with funding from the U.S. Office of Education and WICHE. She was of course well aware that for the 1973-74 fiscal year, WICHE had reduced its underwriting to cover only the first six months of the year. Finally, in March 1974 – after yet another extension of the WICHE underwriting – the Educational Foundation of America (EFA) committed approximately half of a 1974-75 proposed budget of \$87,861 to finance working with the consortium institutions and tribes in establishing educational centers on a half dozen reservations. The commission action accepting the EFA grant authorized seeking funds for the other half – soon provided by the Carnegie Corporation. As now funded, the program enabled Locke to work with some 21 tribes in creating learning centers that in many cases soon came to be recognized as "tribal colleges."

Pat Locke was a highly respected leader, both within the WICHE staff and on the reservations. Within a year of receiving the full funding, she was working with learning centers for 35 tribes in 11 states, including Michigan and Minnesota, outside the WICHE region. In June 1975 the executive committee approved seeking \$334,625 to enable PRIME to lead a project that would identify gifted Indian children and would enlist state and federal agencies to support their educational growth.

By the later years of the Kroepsch administration, WICHE was very much engaged in a project focused exactly on the issues that had been its objectives in the late 1960s: the expansion of access for minority students to higher education and assurance that higher education programs would reflect the interests and concerns of those students. The problem was that the WICHE program related to none of the minority communities except Native Americans.

Credit by Examination

In the late 1960s, the idea that learning was learning, no matter where it was acquired, became popular in higher education, along with the notion that it was possible to devise tests that would establish whether or not a person had acquired knowledge and skills without necessarily having sat in front of a lecturing professor for so many hours and weeks. The award of academic credit on the basis of demonstrated capabilities is common practice 30 years later, but in the late 1960s, it was a quite radical idea whose proponents were often alleged to be trivializing “real education.” The measurement of hours and weeks, including end-of-course examinations, had always been the standard on which academic credentials were awarded.

In 1970, on the basis of the interest of WICHE’s director of Special Higher Education Programs, Robert Altman, WICHE teamed with the College Entrance Examination Board to sponsor two conferences on credit-by-examination. In January and February 1971, conferences planned for 40 participants attracted 60 in Salt Lake City and 85 in Los Angeles without accommodating all who wished to enroll. After their success, a third cosponsored conference was scheduled for Seattle in April. Ultimately, yet two more were held.

At each of the meetings there were reports both of successful examination programs and expressions of concern that education could occur only in the classroom. But by the summer of 1972, it was evident that credit by examination, if not universally accepted, was here to stay. The June/July 1972 WICHE newsletter reported, “Life experience may count on the job. But until recently, it hasn’t carried much weight in college. That’s changing now. And credit by examination is the major reason.” The newsletter presented specific information about programs in various occupational fields and in prisons.

At the March 1971 meeting of the executive committee, Altman proposed, and the committee approved, subject to funding, a regional program in which a director at WICHE would work with institutions desiring to establish credit by examination. The proposed program was not funded, but WICHE’s conferences with the College Board, and similar developments across the country, had succeeded in introducing new ways of certifying the possession of college level knowledge and skills.⁶⁴

Meeting Women's Needs

Bill Bergquist, Altman's successor as director of Special Higher Education Programs, was stirred by several developments to consider ways by which WICHE might give support to institutions and programs attempting to respond to current interest in programs for women in higher education. One of these was the recent passage of the Higher Education Act of 1972, which called attention to elements in higher education that were prejudicial to women; another was the clear intent of laws and rules establishing affirmative action policies and programs. He drafted a proposal for the executive committee meeting in March 1973 that would authorize his office to collect and assess the current status of programs and services for women in Western colleges and universities; to develop and distribute informative materials based on this effort; and to conduct campus-level and subregional workshops to inform faculty and administrators in decision making roles about these programs and resources.

Clearly, the WICHE Commission needed a debate on these issues. There is evidence that Executive Director Bob Kroepsch had somehow been out of the loop in the presentation of this proposal to the executive committee – for example, he marked up his copy of the proposal to indicate that only belatedly had he realized that what Bergquist was proposing was in effect a full-time job, though Bergquist was not requesting an additional position. Kroepsch also objected to a statement that “the need for relevant educational experiences and expanded professional opportunities for women in higher education becomes imperative” as women's rights are expanded and their roles in society change.

But some of the members of the executive committee were even more aroused about a project that could be controversial and in which WICHE could be seen as promoting opinions and ideas that at the time were not universally accepted. The minutes record that “after considerable discussion and expression of reservations, it was VOTED to approve the program by a vote of 4 to 3.”

The hassle was not over. When the minutes were presented for approval at the next meeting, in June 1973, there was objection that though the item had received a majority vote of those present, it had not received a majority vote of the member states. The item was returned to the agenda for further action.

Again the discussion was long and emotional. Two women were among the 12 members of the committee who were present. The minutes are sober: “The staff was advised to treat this program as a controversial one, keeping in mind its responsibility is not one of advocacy, but one of information gathering and dissemination. It was also noted that although WICHE is identified with higher education in the West, its role is not necessarily as a solver of social problems.”

So be it! One of the women commissioners moved and the other seconded a motion to approve. The motion carried 8 to 4. Commissioner Richard Jones, chair of the joint

money committees in the Wyoming legislature, “requested that his dissent be recorded.” Scant as is the report, the history burns through.⁶⁵

Management Data and Their Use

In anticipation of a spike in enrollments immediately after World War II, administrators in higher education institutions and state agencies related to higher education became concerned about features of their operation that they had taken for granted in the past. Would the institutions be able to accommodate all the veterans and others seeking admission? Were available classrooms and laboratories adequate for the expected growth? Would there be enough qualified faculty? As they raised such questions and generated efforts to find the answers, a new term, “institutional research”(IR) gained specific meaning. Varied as was the scope and focus of IR from one campus to another, by the later 1940s a number of institutions across the country had identified and assigned responsibility for institutional research to specific persons or committees. States too, through the executive office and legislative inquiry and action, were raising questions that had not been raised before, about capacity, access, program duplication, efficiency of operation, costs. The appearance of computers began to facilitate, and thus to encourage, more research.

Late in the 1950s Harold Enarson and his assistant director, Dick Axt, negotiated support from the Carnegie Corporation that enabled WICHE to add staff to compile information and arrange conferences and work sessions to address policy issues in both institutions and states. In 1959 they initiated at Stanford what became a long series of annual summer work conferences (at the University of California, Berkeley), with a week-long session on institutional research that drew some 140 people from across the country – about double the number that had been expected.

The departure of both Enarson and Axt in 1960 momentarily interrupted WICHE attention to higher education research, but Bob Kroepsch and his soon-to-be associate, Kevin Bunnell, were no less aware of the need for information and planning and policy development. By the mid-1960s it was clear that computers were a force to be reckoned with – even though relatively few faculty members and administrators had developed much understanding of their capabilities and limitations.

Initiating a Program

When the director of Special Regional Programs, Owen A. (Al) Knorr, left for a position in the New York State Education Department in the summer of 1965, Kevin Bunnell replaced him with a young man, W. John Minter, whose experience was not long but whose ideas and capabilities – including his computer skills – were timely. Minter was skilled in listening and in acting upon the ideas of others. He was keenly interested in the role institutional research could play on any campus and in providing information

needed for statewide planning. Discussion at the executive committee meeting in December 1965 made it evident that staff interest in these matters was shared by the commission. In ensuing months, Kroepsch, Bunnell, and Minter all were involved in discussions with institutional research people and with such agencies and organizations as the U.S. Office of Education, American Council on Education, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and College Entrance Examination Board, identifying WICHE with others in a developing new world of information gathering, processing, and use in higher education.

In view of interest in several of the member states in the interstate exchange of higher education data and information, Minter and Bunnell invited higher education representatives to a session with consultants from a number of national agencies and organizations in San Francisco in late December 1966. It is significant that participants came at their own expense from 10 states. Seven were directors or staff of state higher education governing or coordinating boards. There were consultants from the American Council on Education and National Center for Educational Statistics of the U.S. Office of Education, along with the Southern Regional Education Board and American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. The discussion ranged over the kinds of information that institutions, their governing boards, and state coordinating boards needed, difficulties in the exchange of information, the necessity that there be common definitions of units of activity and expense (of which there were none), and procedures for data collection at the state, regional, and national levels. The group made suggestions for state action and for actions that regional agencies should take.

The WICHE Commission resisted projects that would move it into administration – Minter expressed the commission's reluctance about any role that would require extensive processing of data at WICHE. On the other hand, WICHE existed to promote collaborations that would help improve the quality and efficiency of higher education. He suggested that WICHE might be able to help in compiling a bibliography of state studies, provide for communication mechanisms that would help avoid duplication of studies, prepare a glossary of definitions and collection procedures that would help in the production of comparable data, identify the most critical needs for data gathering at the regional level, and the like.⁶⁶ The conference understood that WICHE staff would initiate follow-up and keep participants involved.

Minter arranged a second meeting of the group six months later, at which more than 20 institutions and organizations – again coming at their own expense – decided to organize a cost-benefit study that would use definitions and procedures of a pioneering study at the University of California. They established a design committee to define approaches for a common budgetary and financial information system for the West.

After several meetings, the design committee agreed on a proposal that was reviewed and adopted at a third meeting of the growing group of interested institutions and organizations in February 1968. There now were representatives from 11 states and

nearly three dozen colleges and universities, governing boards, state coordinating boards, and other higher education associations. Responding to concerns in Washington that the Management Information Systems (MIS) project avoid dependence on University of California efforts exclusively, Minter invited representation also from the Illinois State Board of Higher Education and the State University of New York. By now, WICHE had become “a vehicle by which the institutions and agencies set out to put their management houses in order.”⁶⁷

In March 1968, Minter and Dick Takasaki, the Hawaii member of the design committee, took the document “A Proposal to Design and Implement Management Information Systems with Common Data Elements for Western Higher Education Institutions and Agencies” to Washington for the U.S. Office of Education and the National Science Foundation, and to the Ford Foundation. It was a major proposal; the budget request was for a five-year period in the amount of \$1,112,207. In addition to the objectives suggested by the title, the proposal anticipated beginning the tasks of identifying institutional input-output indicators and arranging for instruction on systems analysis, operations research, program budgeting, cost-benefit analysis, and the use of simulation models. WICHE would coordinate the project with other regions and with national organizations that were interested in the activity but not ready to make specific proposals of what to do. Publications would make the project and its products available throughout the country. That the interest of institutions and higher education organizations in this project would be nationwide was evident from the outset. The U.S. Office of Education, which had been represented at the several planning meetings, was ready almost immediately: it announced that it would fund the project beginning less than two months later on June 1, 1968.

Management Information Systems

John Minter had brought together forces of higher education at the campus, state, regional, and national levels to take up an ambitious project that even in advance of its demonstration of what it would do in and to higher education, could be seen as having national significance. Because of the approach Minter and WICHE had taken, involving all the interested parties in defining what they wanted to do, then in agreeing on and creating a specific proposal for proceeding, WICHE gained federal participation and underwriting faster than a half dozen national organizations that at the same time were moving to define the need and, from their own point of view, the best way to approach it. Now, with the ample resources of the U.S. Office of Education behind it, WICHE was in position to move vigorously ahead.

An initial problem, of course, was to find the right person to head the project. With the help of many of those who had been so deeply involved in defining the task and creating the proposal, Minter and Bunnell canvassed the field. Some months went by without success. For a fourth time Minter convened the planning group in October

1968. The group was eager that the project be started; it asked that a steering committee be established. Kroepsch and Bunnell designated Minter as acting director of the MIS Program. Two months later Kroepsch's appointment as MIS director of Ben Lawrence, executive director of the Oregon Educational Coordinating Council, was announced. Lawrence would serve on a part-time basis until July 1969, when he would join the program full time.⁶⁸

In February 1969 Lawrence and Minter convened the group that had defined the program and that was, in effect, the "steering committee," soon to be established formally. The group designated two task forces drawn from the institutions and organizations represented – one to develop a "data element dictionary," the other an analytical task force with technical experience and skills that made it the logical group to develop procedures for information exchange. A month later the most active members of the planning group had been designated as members of the steering committee, which at its first official meeting distinguished four levels of participation – from observer (category I) to most committed and involved (category IV), with the understanding that institutions and organizations in groups III and IV were ready to send their representatives to meetings of task forces and others at the institution's expense, and to contribute their time to the project.

It was an exciting time for Minter, Bunnell, and Lawrence, who was winding up his duties at the Oregon Coordinating Council. At least a half dozen national organizations were actively engaged in building coalitions and programs with objectives similar to those that WICHE now had under way. Several of them, including EduCom, American College Testing, and the Education Testing Service, expressed interest in taking over the program. Federal agencies, particularly the U.S. Office of Education and National Science Foundation, were being importuned for support of the numerous related efforts. The two federal agencies proposed, with WICHE and the American Council on Education as cosponsors, a national seminar of leaders in management information systems, held in April 1969. The Office of Education was advising applicants that their proposals must be coordinated with the WICHE effort. A proposal of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers for development of manuals for assessment of space needs was funded by the Office of Education and assigned to WICHE for administration. Pressures to make the WICHE effort truly national in its activity and direction were intense from the outset.⁶⁹

In the summer of 1969, at the beginning of its second year, the MIS Program was actively moving ahead under Lawrence's full-time direction. By late August the MIS staff numbered 13 persons – and was growing. John Minter had left to take the position that Lawrence had vacated in Salem, OR. The *Data Element Dictionary*, now in six sections, was a top priority. Working with the National Center for Education Statistics, the MIS Program was also developing a glossary of institutional functions – a program classification structure. Discussions were under way to conceptualize and define a

resource requirements prediction model (RRPM) – a set of computer routines to aid institution managers in determining the future resource implications of differing policy and planning decisions. All were basic to the exchange of data, if the data were to have meaning. By the end of the calendar year, the first draft of the *Data Element Dictionary* was under review in the field; a preliminary edition of a program classification structure had been released; and for the comprehensive Higher Education General Information Survey, conducted by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE), a taxonomy of academic disciplines had been produced.

As John Minter's role as convener of interested parties in 1966 and 1967 had become more formalized when the project was funded effective June 1, 1968, it was apparent that even before a project director could be hired, an administrative structure was needed in which someone was responsible for providing direction and in which there were mechanisms for keeping the interested parties informed and involved. As we have noted, a steering committee virtually defined itself from among those who had been most active in the planning. Minter's role as facilitator and convener, and representative of the responsible financial agent, was consistent with the title he was given, acting director, when the steering committee first met. Technical people in the group were named to the analytical task force; and representatives of interested national organizations became members of a national advisory panel. When Lawrence became full time, he continued the structure that had emerged.

This structuring of MIS reflected Bob Kroepsch's way of doing business: he had found and appointed as MIS director an entrepreneurial administrator who knew higher education and the information needs of administrators. Kroepsch would lend his support, but in essence, in typical fashion, he would leave his new director alone and watch the program grow.

MIS did grow, rapidly; but it was not a typical WICHE program. It had generated not only interest across the nation but *concern*: institutions and numerous organizations wanted not only to participate but to be in position to control the development of the program if, as seemed possible if not likely, it led to unwanted legislative and executive intervention. Creating standards, structure, and procedures that would produce useful and comparable information would require unprecedented collaboration among institutions and state and national agencies across the country. From the political community if not from the institutions, pressures for action would be substantial. The difficulties of getting, and keeping, the interested parties on any coherent track would be daunting. Four months after Lawrence had become full time, Kroepsch was candid as he addressed the MIS National Advisory Panel. At first, he said, MIS had been envisioned at WICHE as a "rather modest pilot project." But as the project had begun to move ahead, "It has aroused a great deal of attention, interest, and concern at the national level. . . . Many other WICHE programs have had implications for the nation as a whole, but none of them to the extent that this one seems to." Indeed, Kroepsch conceded, "We have a bear by the tail!"⁷⁰

The fact was that WICHE – a regional enterprise with interests and constituencies that were overwhelmingly Western – was now funded to take leadership in addressing an issue that was of no less concern to institutions and state agencies in New England, the Midwest, or the South than to those in the West. The program would require national participation and support. The result – in the form of institutional and organizational encouragement that was genuinely nationwide – was a tribute to WICHE insight and initiative and a challenge unlike any it had faced in the past. WICHE would need to define its role and its relationships with this booming project in ways that were substantially different from the routine.

As the MIS Program grew in the year following USOE funding, the desire of institutions in other regions to participate in the program grew apace. And institutions and state agencies both within and outside the region were interested in developing tools and procedures for improving management, not merely for the exchange of demonstrably comparable information.⁷¹ Lyman Glenny's comments about the WICHE MIS Program illustrate opinions that were widely shared among informed observers and students of higher education:

I have said in several public meetings that this endeavor on the part of WICHE is probably the single most important project that is now being undertaken in the U.S. on the control and governance of higher education. It is not only important to improve the management capabilities of member institutions (I am certain it will), but it will contribute substantially to the protection of higher education from becoming just another unit in state central information systems. If higher education can develop its own common means of analyzing and summarizing important information across state lines, then state governments will not require institutions to conform to more parochial systems within each state. With the increasing amount of state intervention in higher education affairs, it seems important that we provide management information that will protect the integrity of our institutions. If the state were to adopt units of measure and methods of reporting information which are at great variance with informational ingredients essential to effective educational programming, higher education would be the loser as well as society at large.⁷²

Planning and Management Systems

In early 1970 Lawrence and Kroepsch advanced to the executive committee (and the committee approved) a proposal for significant change in the scope of MIS and for revisions in some of its operating policies. Effective at once, and in recognition of the fact that the program was affecting, or would soon affect, every higher education institution in the country, the program would be open to institutions and organizations throughout the nation. It would be concerned with the development of tools for dealing with management problems as well as with means for information exchange. Reflecting the expansion of objectives, the program name would be changed from Management Information Systems to Planning and Management Systems – “WICHE PMS.” WICHE PMS would become one of the major units of WICHE; its director would be

given status as an associate director. The former steering committee would be renamed the executive committee – it would continue to be *advisory* to the PMS director. The analytical task force would become the technical council, a group of major leaders in the enterprise who were experienced in the research and the computer hardware and software upon which the program depended. The PMS Advisory Council was added, comprising representatives of all level III and IV participants, to serve a vital function as a forum and “sounding board” and, generally, to provide for easy communication between staff and the most active participating institutions and organizations. The national advisory panel – with representatives from the American Council on Education, National Association of Collegiate Business Officers, College Entrance Examination Board, and others – was unchanged.

Essentially, the earlier provisions for governing the program were unchanged by this restructuring early in 1970. The new PMS Advisory Council would be a useful means of relating to the participating institutions and organizations, but it was given no role in the “chain of command.” The executive committee remained advisory to the director; the director in fact had a major role in appointing its members – though the letter of appointment would be signed by the executive director of WICHE. Both the PMS enterprise and its parent had to confront the reality that WICHE had fiduciary responsibility for the program at the same time that an increasingly national constituency of institutions and organizations – and major funders – had their own governing authorities and policies to satisfy.

The PMS program continued its rapid growth. A major, ongoing effort to train both academic and administrative personnel in the use of MIS/PMS products was initiated with a series of training seminars early in 1970. A task force was appointed to develop a faculty activity analysis – a methodology to categorize faculty effort and its distribution to various programs within an institution. In May 1970, WICHE-PMS teamed with a distinguished group of organizations – the U.S. Office of Education, National Science Foundation, Esso Foundation, American Council on Education, and University of California Center for Research and Development in Higher Education – to sponsor a discussion of the outputs of higher education, an early exploration of a target for National Center for Higher Education Management Systems activity. A \$500,000 grant was received from the Ford Foundation to expand research into higher education outcomes.



In June 1970, a far-reaching, cost-finding principles project on procedures to define methods for identifying, distributing, and allocating cost information to appropriate programmatic activities was initiated. Development of a student flow model and attendant analytical tools for using the model was initiated that fall. For use in the Office of Education’s Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), personnel classification manuals were prepared. Staff grew with the program – PMS staff numbered

22 in June 1970. It would have been substantially larger but for the contractual services the program obtained from WICHE – finance and accounting, publications, mail services, the library. In comparison, the entire WICHE staff had numbered 19 when Kroepsch moved into the executive director's office 10 years earlier.

Development of a higher education finance manual that would describe the program-oriented financial data required by administrators at institutional, state, and national levels was funded by the National Center for Educational Statistics, effective in March 1971. A project to review and develop a higher education facilities manual to replace a 1968 manual for the Higher Education Facilities Act was announced in August. In October, membership of a task force to develop information exchange procedures, defining the conventions by which data should be aggregated and arranged for exchange, was announced. In December 1971 the staff stood at 38.

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

Earlier in 1971 the Federal Interagency Commission on Education (FICE) had recommended to the U.S. commissioner of education that the WICHE PMS Program be made one of the Office of Education's regional laboratories and centers, an arrangement that would have financial and other administrative advantages both for the PMS Program and for WICHE. This idea had been advanced by a USOE site visit team as early as June 1970. The PMS Advisory Council and Advisory Panel, meeting in January 1971, approved the idea. There was a further USOE site visit in February, at which time there was extended consideration of whether this program, the national import of which was increasingly apparent, should continue to be located at WICHE. The site team's conclusion was that a change of "ownership" at this time might jeopardize the program's progress – that at least for the present, it was better to leave the proposed center at WICHE and take steps to assure that it would retain and serve its national constituency fairly.⁷³ Lawrence informed the WICHE Executive Committee in March that negotiations to bring about status as a center were nearly complete – and that the budget for the following year should increase by roughly two thirds. Establishment of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) at WICHE was announced in May 1971.

With WICHE-PMS about to become a *national center*, the administrative structure and operation of WICHE's higher education management systems program was certain to raise some questions. Ben Lawrence introduced the subject for informal discussion by the WICHE Executive Committee in March 1971. He placed before the committee for consideration in June a rewrite of "Policies and Procedures," a document describing the membership, functions, and authority of what continued to be called the "advisory structure," and operating policies for that structure and the staff. His June 1971 recommendations for revisions in "NCHEMS Policies and Procedures," incident to making the program a national center, were approved by the WICHE Executive Committee, effective immediately.

Again, as in early 1970, the structural changes were not extensive. The advisory council would continue to be made up of representatives of institutions and organizations from across the country which were participating actively (i.e., at levels III and IV) in the program. The functions and authority of the council were unchanged; it was a general assembly of participants and the primary mechanism for liaison between staff and participants. It was a communications mechanism. It had no policymaking role.

Within stated boundaries, program direction would be vested in the executive committee, a group of between 20 and 25, with the NCHEMS director, director of the technical council, and chair of the national advisory panel *ex officio*. In a legal sense, the boundaries on the powers of the executive committee remained formidable, however lightly they had always been policed. On paper, NCHEMS was part of the WICHE program, subject to direction of the WICHE Commission and its executive director. The NCHEMS Executive Committee would operate “within the limits of the guidelines for program development and determination (Section 10.000 [of the “Policies and Procedures” document]) and legal and financial responsibilities of the WICHE Commission.” Members of the NCHEMS Executive Committee would continue to be appointed by the executive director of WICHE, albeit in consultation, now, with the NCHEMS director, the committee’s retiring chair, and “a three man panel of their mutual agreement.” The “paper” limits in the authority of the program’s executive committee, its director, and the entire advisory structure were set out specifically: “Since the WICHE Commission may not delegate final responsibility for legal and fiscal matters, the WICHE Commission may deny permission for the center to proceed with any program, activity or action if, in its judgment it cannot accept the financial and/or legal responsibilities associated therewith.”

The “working echelons” of the operating structure were the technical council and task forces. The technical council would comprise no more than 12 members from levels III or IV participants, who would be chosen by the NCHEMS director with the advice and consent of the executive committee. Task forces would function as arms of the council. Their members would be appointed by the program director with advice and consent of the technical council, which would designate one of its own members as liaison for each task force.

There continued, finally, to be a national advisory panel comprising representatives of national organizations whose membership – college and university presidents, business officers, registrars, deans and others – had strong interest in NCHEMS’s work. These organizations were important in political communities, both within higher education and within the federal government.

Within this structure the role of the director was one that was at once ambiguous and powerful. He had an executive committee whose authority, as spelled out in “Policies and Procedures,” included the powers ordinarily associated with a committee so named, though with the caveat – on paper – that its powers relating to any program or action

that had financial or possible legal implications could be exercised only with approval of the WICHE Commission. Moreover, the director could not look to his executive committee alone for support and continuity in his job. In a legal sense, he served at the pleasure, jointly, of the NCHEMS Executive Committee and the WICHE executive director.

Successful operation of the program depended absolutely on the readiness of the WICHE Commission and executive director to acknowledge the *de facto* working relationship of NCHEMS and WICHE. Lawrence was “the principal liaison” between the NCHEMS Board of Directors and the WICHE Commission, the essential link both in communication within the NCHEMS advisory structure and in communications with WICHE. His quite special role made both WICHE and the NCHEMS advisory structure dependent upon him – upon his ability to keep both parties accepting of what the other was doing and planning to do. He had enormous influence within the WICHE staff structure and with WICHE’s executive director. At all meetings of the WICHE Executive Committee, he reported on the program that had brought national and even international fame to WICHE. Invariably, his proposals to the executive committee or the commission were presented “at the direction of my board,” or because “my board wants” such and so. Rarely did the WICHE committee modify or defer approval of Lawrence’s recommendations; never did they turn him down. Lawrence was, indeed, able to manage – some would say manipulate – the management structures of both NCHEMS and WICHE.

Within the structure that became effective in June 1971 – with a change in name for the executive committee to board of directors in December 1972 – the program operated for the next two and a half years.⁷⁴ NCHEMS was virtually on its own. To the ongoing potential of interference by a WICHE executive or by the commission itself, there was resistance both from some of the participating institutions and organizations and from the U.S. Office of Education. In addition, NCHEMS had developed great strength in its own right: though it was hardly a dog wagging a WICHE tail, it had become a companion dog. It was involving more and more institutions and organizations – some 860 by 1974. Its new products were appearing regularly. Its training program was helping spread their use rapidly across the country. Despite widespread institutional fear of misinterpretation and misuse of data, demand for data continued to grow and NCHEMS was making it possible to respond. For states and their higher education agencies the program was a success. In the administration of the program, in the early 1970s there was strong reason at both WICHE and NCHEMS to leave well enough alone.



NCHEMS at WICHE continued to grow, in programs, financing, and staff. Some growth was inherent in work on the projects already committed. But growth also came with activities NCHEMS was asked to take on by federal agencies, especially the U.S.

Office of Education, and as a result of new legislation. The Education Amendments of 1972, for example, extended the reach of federal programs of “higher education” to “post-secondary education.” This was much more than a change of name; it brought within NCHEMS’s purview such postsecondary institutions and programs as proprietary schools, of which there were some 8,000 in the nation, military schools, and other “nontraditional” institutions and programs. Of course, in such a change there were implications for most of the definitions, classifications, and procedures the MIS/PMS/NCHEMS program had already produced and consequent need for revising and otherwise extending the program. NCHEMS output to date, Lawrence reported at the WICHE Annual Meeting in 1972, totaled 13 technical reports, 20 general publications, 60 training seminars, 21 tests of various NCHEMS products, and three pilot studies.

The NCHEMS effort went forward in an atmosphere of urgency. Only a few years earlier neither institutions nor state executive and legislative agencies would have thought of having and using information that now was available or in the process of being made accessible. So eager were institutions to anticipate new NCHEMS products that they would commandeer and use materials that were still under internal development or review. The program was becoming more “political,” Lawrence reported to the WICHE Executive Committee in August 1972, as staff members, because of their technical expertise, were pressed by the spectrum of interested parties for their opinions and advice on questions that lay beyond the bounds of their responsibilities at NCHEMS. Lawrence and his staff attempted, through the advisory structure and a succession of national forums and assemblies, to keep the field informed about NCHEMS’s activities and their status. It was no simple task.

Growth in both size and complexity tested a structure in which the heads of the three operating units reported directly to Lawrence. In March 1972 he created a new echelon of direction. The major units would be Research and Development and Applications and Implementation; their heads would report to him. Within each of these units there would be a chief for each of the two component areas, who would report to the appropriate unit head. He added also an assistant director to support his own role.

It was in this high pressure atmosphere that Lawrence requested a year’s leave of absence, beginning in December 1972, to enable him to serve as director of the National Commission on the Financing of Post-Secondary Education. When that commission was established in the Education Amendments of 1972, Lawrence warned Kroepsch that it was likely to make some demands upon NCHEMS. That he expected the demands to include his own services as director seems likely but is not known. His new staff structure, together with location of the financing commission offices in Denver, seemed to make possible an assignment that had advantages for NCHEMS. Kroepsch recommended and the WICHE Commission approved the leave.

We have given some emphasis to the enthusiasm with which many higher education institutions and state higher education agencies greeted the WICHE MIS/PMS/NCHEMS program. But as Lawrence explicitly acknowledged in his annual report for 1971-72, the program also generated deep concerns and reservations, reflected by a few within the advisory structure and in some of the state legislatures.

Such concerns could be found from the beginning, when Arizona declined to participate in MIS. Higher education leadership in that state was unwilling to subject its data to interpretations that were beyond its influence. Reservations widely shared in higher education were expressed by Stanford University President Richard W. Lyman at the commission annual meeting in August 1973. Acknowledging that NCHEMS was “the most important developmental effort for management control systems for higher education” then in being, Lyman urged that the “product” of education was intangible, not reliably demonstrable through standardized testing (or, he might have said, the counting of numbers). In addition there was “the difficulty of relating inputs to outputs in any satisfactory way.” Even some legislators were wary of the program: Kroepsch reported to the executive committee in March 1972 that at a legislative workshop in December 1971, he was impressed that some legislators “who do not understand the products of NCHEMS” felt as threatened by them as did some college and university presidents.

Lawrence was sensitive to such concerns. In 1972 he had the Business Research Division of the University of Colorado Graduate School of Business do an impact study among some 100 colleges, universities, and higher education organizations. The findings were strongly positive: more than 90 percent of respondents were familiar with NCHEMS’ early products – the *Data Element Dictionary*, program classification structure, and resource requirements prediction model. The users viewed NCHEMS favorably; many reported that NCHEMS training and products had led to changes in their management practices. Using a Delphi procedure, Lawrence extended a similar survey in 1973 to some 6,300 persons, obtaining responses from 1642 people in 1295 U.S. and 16 foreign institutions. NCHEMS products were being used in a majority of the larger public institutions, less so in the private sector and in smaller institutions.⁷⁵ The following year, on recommendation of the NCHEMS board, Lawrence initiated a two-year, four-phase project “to analyze the outcomes of these concepts and products to see if their use has made a difference, and whether the results have been good or bad in terms of their effect on faculty and students.” In mid-1974 he employed Peggy Heim, on leave from Bucknell University, as director of evaluation.

On the basis of a number of comprehensive mail surveys Heim was able to affirm that the higher education community was well aware of NCHEMS. Most of the larger public and private institutions surveyed had already used at least one of the NCHEMS products. One or more staff of most of the largest institutions had participated in NCHEMS training sessions.⁷⁶

By the mid-1970s the NCHEMS program had achieved size and impact that could not be ignored by either friend or foe – not only people on campus but legislators, even governors. The scope of the entire WICHE program and the size of its staff were of growing concern to commissioners, especially in the smaller states where student exchange seemed to be the major benefit. At the end of the 1969 fiscal year the WICHE staff in Boulder stood at 64. Four years later, staff in Boulder totaled 144 of whom 60 were NCHEMS employees. NCHEMS, WICHE's largest unit, had caused most of the growth during the period.⁷⁷

The June 1972 request from the Western Governors' Association (coming well before the crisis of 1976-78) for information about WICHE's role and program, triggered in part by the pending increase of both membership and student exchange fees, was a result also of questions about NCHEMS. Did its activities go beyond the purposes for which WICHE was established? Would there be advantage – or disadvantage – in separating NCHEMS from WICHE? What effects had the NCHEMS program had within their own states?

In a meeting of governors' aides with WICHE staff and commissioners in December 1973, questions relating to NCHEMS were many. No detailed account of the discussion has been found, but it became apparent soon thereafter that gubernatorial interest had an impact on thinking within both NCHEMS and WICHE. The NCHEMS Board of Directors asked its executive committee to "review the WICHE/NCHEMS relationship and to consider what would be in the best interest for both organizations in regard to NCHEMS remaining under the aegis of WICHE or becoming separate from the WICHE organization." NCHEMS staff prepared for a meeting of its executive committee on March 10, 1974, a "WICHE – NCHEMS Relationship Study," discussing pros and cons of options that ranged from continuing with the present arrangement to shifting NCHEMS control to some other organization or establishing NCHEMS as a stand-alone nonprofit organization. The study focused on continuing the relationship with WICHE but with a shift of responsibility for program decisions to the NCHEMS board – a shift that the report noted had been accomplished in the Mountain States Regional Medical Program. The NCHEMS report gave some emphasis to the satisfactory nature of working relationships with WICHE.

Returning from his year as director of the National Commission on Financing Post-Secondary Education, Ben Lawrence reported to the WICHE Executive Committee meeting at the end of March 1974 that NCHEMS products were in use in virtually all of the 50 states. In fact, he said, the board and the staff believed NCHEMS's original mission had been accomplished. NCHEMS proposed a number of changes in name, composition, and function of units within the advisory structure – all approved with little or no discussion.

But more significant changes that would place the NCHEMS board and director clearly in charge of its program were being negotiated. At the following WICHE

Executive Committee meeting in June 1974, Washington Commissioner Jim Furman – who had served on the NCHEMS board for several years and was currently chairman – presented NCHEMS’s proposals for major changes in the distribution of authority and in WICHE/NCHEMS working relationships. The proposals would make the NCHEMS board fully and finally responsible for program approval and direction. The NCHEMS board chair would give the WICHE Annual Meeting a report of its own actions, *post facto*. Under the NCHEMS proposals its board would select its director, with the advice and consent of the WICHE executive director, reversing past procedure. Three officers of the NCHEMS board plus the WICHE executive director would evaluate the NCHEMS director; in effect, he or she would serve at the pleasure of the NCHEMS board. Members and chair of the National Advisory Assembly would be chosen by NCHEMS officers alone. The WICHE Executive Committee adopted these impressive changes unanimously, with no record of discussion.

The current proposals did not stray far from the relationships that had in fact prevailed for some time. It is hardly surprising that regional control of a national program that had unmistakable effects upon every state, indeed, upon every institution in the country, would prove to be unacceptable. That WICHE had been able to work the issues through to – for the moment, at least – the satisfaction of other participants and all the funders does indeed seem remarkable. It was accomplished because of the deliberate way in which the issues were faced and discussed with all concerned and doubtless because WICHE Commissioner Jim Furman happened to be chair of the NCHEMS Board of Directors. The abilities of Bob Kroepsch and Kevin Bunnell to accommodate the concerns and interests coming from other states are also notable. In presenting the agenda item to the WICHE Executive Committee, Furman pointed to the national impact the program was having and the “general interest in a more independent posture of the NCHEMS board” – at the same time that for a variety of reasons, many on that board did not want to sever the relationship with WICHE. The changes made in 1974 reflected a compromise of objectives that changed things little but that made acceptable a relationship out of which were coming changes in higher education management that probably were more pervasive than any made in the past.

WICHE Structure and Administration: Impact of Program Growth

Obviously, the steady growth of the WICHE program first evidenced during the Harold Enarson administration accelerated as the years went by. The scope of all of the “old” WICHE programs grew – Student Exchange, Mental Health, Medical Education, and Nursing. Programs were initiated and growth occurred equally in areas of institutional and state planning and policymaking that were supported by the Carnegie Corporation grant received in the year before Enarson left. The evolution of some of these programs into the WICHE Management Information Systems Program, and ultimately into the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

at WICHE, produced an enterprise of timely national scope and influence in higher education. Assuredly, during the first decade of the Kroepsch administration the “narrow constructionists,” commissioners who tended to see WICHE’s role as sharply focused upon an exchange of students in various professional programs, were routed completely. By the later 1960s the WICHE program was at least as wide as all of higher education.

The staff of 19 that Kroepsch inherited from Enarson in 1960 had, by June 1970, grown to 141; 51 of them were located in the Regional Medical Program offices in Reno and Las Vegas, NV; Boise, ID; Great Falls, MT; and Cheyenne, WY. In March 1971 Kroepsch reported to the executive committee that 29 new staff had been hired in the prior *three months*. John Staley, the administrative services officer, now employed three professionals and a dozen support personnel to handle finance and accounting, purchasing, personnel administration, library, telephone/reception, mailroom, and duplicating services. The annual budget, in 1960 an accumulation of 13 separate lines of income and expenditure, had grown to 38 such accounts, the great majority of them funded for specific time periods and specific objectives, by outside funds rather than by the member states. Reflecting the growth of programs, the agenda papers sent to commissioners for study in advance of the annual meeting (59 pages in 1960) in 1971 had grown to 201 pages – not counting auditor statements.

In March 1964 the organization that had initially camped out in the attic of the Norlin Library, then rented the basement of the Fleming Law Building, acquired a floor of its own in a new structure erected by the University of Colorado, in part to accommodate WICHE. It soon spilled over into additional space within that building; by July 1971 it would be in parts of four buildings.

As the decade of the 1970s began, growth continued at a pace that seemed still to be accelerating. At its meeting in December 1970 the executive committee reviewed 23 proposals for WICHE projects. It declined one and tabled another – meaning that it approved 21.

Other factors were affecting the atmosphere within which WICHE operated. The later 1960s were years in which, arguably, college students led the nation in protesting America’s role in the Vietnam War. They were years in which the American public was becoming more aware of a severe lack of civil rights and of social and economic opportunities for large sectors of the public. Limitations long enforced on women – as citizens, employees, professional practitioners, participants in public affairs – were being noticed and changed. (The commission itself reflected the change: of 39 commissioners, in 1965 three were women; by 1970 their number had grown to eight.) Not least, college students were protesting much about the curriculum and about teaching and administrative practices in the colleges and universities. Higher education’s stature with the general public was not enhanced by media attention. Higher education, and student unrest, were much in the minds of governors and legislators. The time had come when

higher education organizations, WICHE included, were not at all beyond questioning, criticism, suspicion, and derision.

In this climate, the commission's executive committee had been aroused, at its meeting in June 1969, to learn that the California Legislature had directed Governor Ronald Reagan to give notice that California was withdrawing from the Western Regional Education Compact. He had deleted from his budget proposal an appropriation for the annual WICHE membership fee. The coordinating council had been successful in having the money for the coming year restored in the bill; but the directive concerning California withdrawal remained. In the next several months, commissioners, particularly those from California, activated educational leaders and other WICHE friends to support continuation of California participation. The commission chairman, Representative John Mackie of Colorado, visited Sacramento to confer with the governor and members of the legislature. The broad effort was successful: the legislature withdrew its directive and the governor informed WICHE, in a letter dated July 20, 1970, of his pleasure that "California will be able to continue to participate in the cooperative effort of the thirteen Western states."

At the annual meeting in August 1969, the chairmanship of the WICHE commission had passed from a state higher education executive officer, Merle Allen of Utah, to John Mackie. Mackie, a friend of higher education, moderated the opening session on the topic "Higher Education: Present Problems and Future Solutions." From that session to the conclusion of the meeting a day and a half later, campus unrest, its negative impact on public understanding and support, the difficulties of providing for meaningful communication between the campus and the state house – such issues were never far from whatever topics were under review.

Commissioner Gordon Sandison had spent 11 years in the House of Representatives of the State of Washington and another 11 in the Senate, where in 1969 he was chair of the Committee on Higher Education. He knew higher education well, and was a strong friend of WICHE. In the closing session, the business session at the annual meeting, Sandison made a motion that surely he had reviewed with incoming chairman Mackie and doubtless with others on the commission: that the new chair appoint a committee "to review WICHE programs during the subsequent year," with a report that should go to commission members prior to the annual meeting one year hence. Discussion defined a committee of seven members who would "take a look at the objectives of WICHE and . . . at the perimeters of the organization for the future." Did the California threat of withdrawal from the compact lie behind the Sandison motion? After the fact it is logical to think so; but neither in interviews nor in agenda papers, minutes, newsletters, correspondence with commissioners, and other documents, did the author find evidence or even a guess that this was the case. It was a time when social institutions of all kinds came under question. It was the end of a decade, and of Kroepsch's 10th year – a natural

time for review of past efforts and identification of courses of needed action for the future. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Mackie soon appointed Sandison chair of the “evaluation committee,” henceforth always referred to as the “Sandison committee.” Together they set up seven panels of commissioners to review the 56 WICHE programs then in being or proposed: General Regional Programs; Management Information Systems and Legislative Work Conference; Medical Education; Nursing; Mental Health; Corrections and Special Education; and Mental Health Data and Social Services. The experience with the committee was a positive one both for commissioners and for staff, as members of the commission gained an in-depth acquaintance and understanding of activities. Each of the seven groups was chaired by a member of the Sandison committee. Each chair reported to the committee in April 1970; the committee submitted its own report at the annual meeting that year. The commissioners’ close look at each of the WICHE programs had been reassuring. The committee endorsed them all with one exception: as the staff had proposed, it recommended that the Pacific Rim Study – never funded and hence never initiated – be dropped.

The full commission reviewed each of the committee recommendations at that 1970 annual meeting. It agreed that the staff should organize a survey of members of WICHE’s several constituencies “to obtain their suggestions about appropriate and reasonable projects for WICHE to undertake.” The in-coming chair would be asked to appoint, annually, committees to serve in an advisory capacity to the staff in each of the three program divisions (General Regional Programs, Mental Health and Related Programs, and Planning and Management Systems) and a committee on administration would work with Kroepsch and the administrative services officer. A finance committee would be added as, fundamentally, a budget review committee. Outgoing Chair Mackie had appointed a committee on bylaws, which would also be continued.

The in-coming chair in 1970 was Rita Campbell, an economist and senior fellow at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University. Campbell was a quick, bright, self-assured, assertive person who was challenged rather than charmed by university presidents. Following the threatened withdrawal of California in the summer of 1969, Campbell was determined that she should become commission chair. Indeed, elected to the vice chair position at the annual meeting in August 1969, she established herself to become chair the following year. The unit chiefs – all male – reportedly were deeply apprehensive at the thought of having to work with her as chair. Kroepsch did not choose to fight when there was an option to get along; he calmed his associates with assurances that he and they “*would* work with Dr. Rita Campbell” and that they would manage effectively. He, and Campbell as well, did make it work – she left the chair, and soon thereafter the commission, with considerable respect within senior staff.⁷⁸

A month after assuming office Campbell appointed the six new committees which, she said, on a continuing basis would “review programs and the pre-planning

of programs.” The committees would indeed involve commissioners more deeply in program development and – as intended by some of the commissioners, certainly including Campbell – had the potential of enabling the commission to assert more control.

Campbell and Kroepsch arranged for the first meeting of the finance committee to be two weeks before the June 1971 executive committee meeting. It must surely have been a difficult meeting. A major problem was the fact that membership dues had not been increased for eight years, in spite of annual inflation that rose to double digits during the period. The economy in 1971 discouraged any request for a doubling of dues, an amount that could easily have been justified. But WICHE income from dues (\$15,000 per state) in 1971 represented less than 5 percent of the budget; virtually the entire operation was funded from grants and contracts, including the indirect cost reimbursements deriving from these. Stability was jeopardized in such circumstances. Another problem: in an operation comprising dozens of projects funded by foundations and federal agencies, reserves were needed both to cover possible audit disallowances on federal programs and occasional gaps in funding soft money programs. In committee chair Roy Lieuallen’s judgment, the level of WICHE reserves was inadequate and of great concern.

Since the commission had become fully operational in 1953, each year budget and other financial matters had come to the executive committee for debate and decision at its meeting in June. As approved by the executive committee, proposals went to the full commission at the annual meeting in August. One commissioner from each member state, chosen by the commissioners of that state, served on the executive committee and almost without fail attended its meetings. Now financial matters would come to a standing committee of which commissioners from only five states were members – the committee chair, the commission chair and vice chair, and two additional members appointed by the WICHE chair. That the issues had been considered in depth and recommendations formulated by a committee of five commissioners would discourage extensive probing or debate when the proposals came to the full executive committee, the only body other than the commission itself on which all member states were represented. The effective shift of responsibility for fiscal review *from* the executive committee *to* a small group of officers and others appointed by the chair moved control of WICHE financial matters strongly toward the chair and away from a body that represented all of the member states. The change had serious implications for an organization that depended heavily upon its commissioners to provide necessary communication with political and educational authorities in the member states.

Also coming to the executive committee in June 1971 was a report of the new committee on administration.⁷⁹ Campbell had appointed Gordon Sandison chair of that committee; she served as vice chair. The group had met following the executive committee meeting in December 1970. Kroepsch was deliberately excluded from the meeting. One may infer that after two days in the executive committee, some of the

members of the committee on administration felt overwhelmed by the extent of the executive committee agenda and also by what some commissioners felt was a dominant role regularly taken by staff in presenting issues. As it came to the executive committee in June 1971, the report of the committee on administration opened with the observation that “the rapid growth of WICHE has created a need for change by both staff and commissioners” in the way new programs were initiated and in the way current programs were administered. Staff should follow a procedure specified for advancing proposals for new programs in order to assure that the executive committee had the opportunity to review and act upon each proposal before there could be any implication of approval. Though in practice, over the years the executive committee had shown little inclination to turn *any* proposals down, such a procedure would at least make that possible.

Other statements in the report revealed resentment among some of the commissioners over the aggressiveness of staff in advocating proposals for new programs. The report admonished staff not to so dominate the presentation of proposals that there was little time for commissioner discussion. It stipulated that not more than two staff should be present at meetings of commission committees. At meetings of the executive committee, in fact, only the executive director and his four top associates should be present. Indeed, the committee asserted for the commissioners certain roles that could easily lead to intervention in administrative matters, such as a requirement that in the selection of members of advisory groups and of speakers at WICHE conferences and seminars – even in the hiring of professional staff members – staff should consult with the appropriate committees of the commission.

The committee on administration’s chairman, Sandison, offered assurances that the report of the committee was not meant to be critical of staff, that the staff was “doing an excellent job.” One would guess that few members of the staff were reassured.

It would seem that the real problem with which WICHE staff and commission were struggling was that the entire WICHE governance mechanism had been overwhelmed by rapid growth. By the later 1960s, little business was handled by the full commission: reports of current activities, review and approval of proposals for new programs, and many other matters were handled by the executive committee, a body that included just one-third of the commissioners. Annual meetings provided opportunity for the full commission to review major problems and activities, but – with only one annual meeting each year, and now with a finance committee doing the intensive review of financial matters – at least two-thirds of the commissioners were recipients of a “snowstorm of paper” but otherwise were little involved in WICHE affairs.

In fact, by the early 1970s, at no stage of review of most issues did even one commissioner from all 13 of the member states participate in a significant way. Finance committee review covered financial matters but did not purport to probe program and policy issues. On the finance committee only about half the member states were represented. Though the executive committee included one representative from each

state, the nature of its review may be illustrated by what the committee accomplished in two hours and five minutes at its meeting in March 1973: it heard, discussed, and approved proposals for 14 new programs, from Mental Health, Nursing, NCHEMS, and the Division of Special Higher Education Programs – proposals that involved requests for some \$3.1 million. It discussed the impending phase-out of the multiyear Regional Medical Program – a major employer of WICHE staff and contributor of reimbursements of WICHE’s indirect costs – as well as a proposed new component for the Student Exchange Program, insurance for staff, and other routine matters.

Kroepsch’s intention that his unit heads be entrepreneurs and the dependence for ideas and for leadership of the policy board upon staff obviously could lead to difficulties in commission/staff relationships. Kroepsch’s strong preference for governance by consensus produced a unity of view among staff that may have given commissioners an impression that staff was monolithic in relations with the commission. For staff the Kroepsch approach may have justified a pervasive belief that all WICHE activities were discussed with a broad spectrum of people. But the consultation did not always reflect the interests of, or include views strongly held by, some of the commissioners.

Kroepsch took a number of steps to help assure that staff could remain well informed about the rapidly growing organization. From his earliest days in the head office, before any program or policy commitments were made, he had routinely, faithfully, reviewed program and policy proposals with his administrative group – the “ad group,” comprising the associate directors, administrative services officer (in 1973 made director of administration and an associate director), and himself.⁸⁰ In early 1972 he created a staff council of eight, representing both the program divisions and administrative staff, to review and advise on various personnel and other policies of internal operation. Among other duties, the staff council met monthly with the ad group to facilitate staff-wide knowledge of developments. He initiated at the same time a biweekly news sheet, *The Inside*, for staff members.

By the early 1970s a good many of the commissioners were finding that WICHE meetings were not fun any more. A year from his stint as WICHE chair, still a commissioner, John Mackie wrote to his good friend Bob Kroepsch of his concerns about a lack of civility in the commission. He was disturbed that at the recent annual meeting, three of his colleagues had deliberately and with malice tried to “embarrass another commissioner.” The meeting of the executive committee the prior March, he wrote, “almost got down to blood letting.” Kroepsch responded that many WICHE programs now were so technical and complicated that “most of the commissioners do not feel ‘comfortable’ – that is, they do not feel that they are on top of each of these projects, and that they should be. The result is that they vent their frustrations in an aggressive fashion in areas where they do have some knowledge and know how.” Malaise within the commission was, no doubt, another warning of circumstances that demanded attention.

The report of the committee on administration was in some respects a revolutionary challenge to the WICHE *modus operandi*; but it did not revolutionize operations at WICHE. Pressure for addition of programs continued. Commission leadership changed annually – Rita Campbell relinquished the chair one year after assuming it and was succeeded by a long-time commissioner and strong WICHE supporter Frank Barrett of Wyoming. Barrett was not at all disposed toward making all the important decisions. Like Kroepsch, he was disposed to work for consensus.



Arizona Governor Jack Williams appointed his young friend W. O. (Fred) Craft, Jr., to the WICHE Commission in December 1971. Kroepsch sent Craft a letter of welcome in mid-December and an initial group of publications to begin the process of bringing Craft aboard. According to WICHE practice, he invited Craft to the next meeting of the executive committee to help acquaint him with the program. Craft attended the meeting in March 1972.

What preconceptions Craft took to the meeting we can only guess; but his reactions were strongly negative. He let Governor Williams know of his reactions and the governor asked this brand new commissioner for a report on the development and expansion of WICHE since Arizona had become a member in 1952. Craft's long-hand report is dated April 7, 1972. He quotes the language of the Western Regional Education Compact in its narrow description of WICHE's "first endeavor," the Student Exchange Program in three professional fields and possible extension to "other professional and graduate fields." Staff and some commissioners – Craft called them "WICHE expansionists" – had argued that WICHE's broad expansion of program "built a common law body of precedence from which WICHE could legitimately launch into areas other than as specifically outlined in the Compact." Currently, the full time staff numbered 163, one of whom was assigned exclusively to finding and developing new areas for the WICHE program. Craft's conclusions were provided with all the assurance of a self-styled expert who has had one exposure to his subject: "I feel certain that the current mammoth operations of WICHE were not envisioned by the founding Western Governors' Conference in 1949. Certainly it is time for a clarification as to WICHE's roll (*sic*) in the future particularly in light of the requested dues increase and hike in student exchange rates."⁸¹

Williams sent the letter to Oregon Governor Tom McCall, who headed the Western Governors' Conference that year. Kroepsch soon had a request from John Doyle, head of the Western Office of the Council of State Governments, for a report for the governors that would address Craft's observations and allegations.

Kroepsch reviewed his proposed response with the executive committee on June 17, made a few changes in accord with committee suggestions, and sent the letter off to all the Western governors. It was a brief but informative statement that reported WICHE's

origins and development. It pointed out how institutional, state, and, not least, legislative and gubernatorial interest had led to the addition of specific programs. It pointed out that, currently, *4 percent* of the annual budget came from state funds. It described the process and the criteria applied for any additions to the WICHE program. It referred to the future, including justifications for the increases in both membership dues and student exchange fees that were pending and would be effective in the following year.

But no written report could respond to all of the questions that arose from legislative and gubernatorial information and misinformation about WICHE. Commissioner Richard Jones, a state senator who was chair of the joint appropriations committee in Wyoming, had long believed that WICHE efforts should be directed primarily to student exchange. Reflecting on needs of his own state, he felt that other states dependent upon WICHE for opportunities to enroll in many professional programs shared his views. WICHE Chairman Roy Lieuallen appointed a special committee to review WICHE objectives and criteria for its programming. Reporting for the special committee in March 1973, its chairman, Glenn Terrell, said that the committee's review of WICHE objectives and program criteria "generally reflect proper commitments for WICHE"; that WICHE should assert leadership and not act merely because federal and foundation support was available; and that WICHE should give particular attention to ways the states of smaller population can contribute to regional needs, particularly student exchange.

If, as it appears, the WICHE Commission was reasonably satisfied that summer of 1973 that its program was both needed and appropriate, the governors at their annual conference in September 1973 seemed to have equally strong feelings to the contrary. Echoing the views of his legislator friend Richard Jones, Governor Hathaway of Wyoming pressed his views at the Western Governors' Conference, meeting on the Oregon coast. For Hathaway and for Wyoming, WICHE's primary purpose was to "facilitate the exchange of students in professional schools." But its staff is "practicing grantsmanship to the very highest degree." It is "replete with all kinds of activities." Earlier in the day the governors had agreed that their chief administrative aides should organize as a group, and now they directed the new group to review the purposes, functioning, and funding of WICHE.⁸²

Tom McCall of Oregon was presiding at the governors' conference. For his colleagues he affirmed that the review, conducted by "our most respected aides," was not to be an "inquisitorial commission." Its task would be to "take up an analysis of WICHE as to whether it is trending in the right direction and if not, what direction it ought to be going." It would be headed by his own administrative assistant, Robert Davis. Davis and Kroepsch arranged that the aides and appropriate WICHE commissioners and staff would meet following a meeting of the WICHE Executive Committee in December 1973. Specific questions the aides wished to address on the Student Exchange Program,

NCHEMS, Regional Medical Program, and Mental Health Program were conveyed to Kroepsch in early November.

The December meeting was altogether useful. It led to an invitation to Kroepsch and the commission to participate in the 1974 Western Governors' Conference, where Kroepsch and the chair and vice chair, Glenn Terrell and Bud Davis, spoke in an atmosphere that was congenial. Reporting at the annual meeting in August, Terrell passed on the request of several governors that commissioners extend their efforts to keep their governors informed about WICHE. Kroepsch was pleased and relieved at the reception given him and a half dozen of the commissioners. It was, indeed, a constructive end to what had seemed to have the potential of becoming a major crisis.

Within the commission in later 1974, members continued to struggle with a number of frustrations that had troubled commissioners for years and had been articulated in 1971, when the committee on administration initiated several policies intended to elevate the role of the commission in shaping the WICHE program. Thomas Tucker, M.D., was chair of the Nevada commissioners, and after seven years of having WICHE fill his mailbox, reviewed with his Nevada colleagues a series of proposals for reform. In mid-November 1974 he sent his proposals to Kroepsch and members of the executive committee for consideration.

Tucker led with the recommendation that the WICHE Commission meet twice each year rather than once – a proposal first urged by Frank Van Dyke of Oregon 17 years earlier and postponed until the budget was adequate! Other recommendations dealt with a still-perceived dominance of commission meetings by members of the staff, simplifying the minutes and crediting commissioners explicitly for their contributions, clarifying financial reporting as to hard and soft money sources, and a Tucker favorite – that commissioners traveling long distances in behalf of WICHE be permitted to travel first class. Now at last, the commission agreed that all commissioners needed to be together twice each year in order to be at least minimally informed and involved in WICHE affairs. The first such meeting would occur following the regular annual meeting in August 1975. Three less significant Tucker proposals were approved. It was a rare event for a commissioner to originate a proposal on any subject; Tucker's initiative gave a lift to his fellow commissioners, and the addition of a second annual meeting for the full commission was long overdue.



We have noted that in the spring of 1972, NCHEMS initiated a survey of some 385 higher education administrators, state officials, and a number of faculty and students, to assess its program in reference to higher education developments expected in the next five to 15 years. In pursuing discussions with the Western governors' aides in spring 1973, Kroepsch borrowed the idea and initiated surveys of commissioners, staff, and legislators on future issues and future needs in postsecondary education in the West. At the annual

meeting in August 1973 he urged that the outcomes be analyzed by a special “committee on WICHE’s future” that the chairman would appoint.

Glenn Terrell, president of Washington State University, succeeded Roy Lieuallen as WICHE chair shortly before close of that meeting. The following December, Terrell opened his first executive committee meeting with a strong statement urging establishment of a “committee for the future.” Through such a committee, he said, WICHE could undergo “a continual self-appraisal about who we are, where we have been, where we are now, and more importantly, where we are going in the years ahead.” Apparently Kroepsch intended that the proposal appear to be the chairman’s idea. The subject was not on the December agenda, but as the meeting was about to be adjourned, Kroepsch drew attention to the chair’s statement at the opening of the meeting and said that his senior staff believed such a committee would be valuable. Quickly, there was a motion and a unanimously favorable vote to ask the chair to appoint a “committee on the future.”

During the following weeks Terrell named a committee of eight commissioners. Kroepsch assigned John Cohen, special assistant for program development, to provide staff support.⁸³ Kroepsch envisioned for the committee a role as “think tank,” intended to be creative in advising the commission and its staff. But the committee’s scope and role were defined only by its name. Concerns of some commissioners about a WICHE program they regarded as all-encompassing and dominated by an entrepreneurial staff suggested that a clear and positive role for the committee might be problematic, at best.

Arrangements were made for an initial meeting on March 5-6, 1974. Terrell – chair of the commission – was recognized as the Committee on the Future’s chair. Staff had outlined a possible agenda, according to which the committee would first identify objectives and possible outcomes, then consider the ways through which it would work.

But before getting into such practical concerns, according to the minutes “the chairman suggested that the members spend time discussing WICHE’s past, reviewing its present programs and philosophizing about major problems and issues.” The entire afternoon was given over to the listing of dozens of issues in higher education that included concerns of institutions and their departments, states, the region, the nation. At its concluding session the next morning, the committee decided that it wished to define itself and its objectives over a period of time, though seemingly in exact opposition to that, it would identify a few areas of concern, and possible activities related to those areas, as projects to which the staff should direct its attention. More specifically, the Committee on the Future asked staff to provide, prior to its next meeting in mid-June, seven position papers (some of which, inevitably, were the hobby-horses of some of the committee members) on:

- ▶ Expansion of the Student Exchange Program into highly specialized vo-tech programs.

- ▶ Development of regional open university education for Western citizens through programs similar to the British Open University.
- ▶ Creation of a continuing education program for medical personnel faced with recertification requirements.
- ▶ Inquiry into the coordination of programs related to the environment, development of curriculum related to environmental issues, and exploration of a wide range of education and resocialization responses to the environmental problem.
- ▶ Examination of the broad issues involved in affirmative action, and collective bargaining in higher education (two papers).
- ▶ Presentation of a broad range of problem areas as identified by staff, as well as the major themes drawn from the commission and legislative Delphi surveys.

Reporting to the executive committee in June, Terrell stressed that his committee did not consider itself an “action committee,” that its members “regard themselves as ‘philosophers,’” and that it had thus far discussed five working papers prepared by the staff.

The papers Terrell referred to had been written by staff member John Cohen dealing with the environment, continuing education for physicians, a regional “open university,” collective bargaining, affirmative action, and a regional exchange program in vocational-technical fields. The committee had also looked over the outcomes of the surveys of commissioners and legislators and had requested additional working papers dealing with modes of delivery of continuing education, educational contributions to human services fields, minority manpower for health professions, the competition which seemed to characterize postsecondary education, and state-level budgeting procedures for postsecondary education. With 11 topics and papers now before it, in November 1974 the committee sharpened its definition of its purpose: the committee “should be concerned primarily with developing *new* program ideas for presentation to the executive committee.” It noted that four of the 11 issues were in fact already being addressed by WICHE programs and plans. The committee chose five to pursue immediately, focusing on the environment, collective bargaining, continuing education for physicians, delivery of continuing education, and a regional open university. Through staff work and at five meetings in 1975, the committee explored its own interest and that of other groups in the topics, appropriate priorities, possibilities for funding, and other matters.

But other events at WICHE were deflecting its plans.



Early in January 1975 President Gerald Ford signed the National Health Planning and Resources Development Act that combined the functions of the Regional Medical Programs (RMPs) and the Statewide Comprehensive Health Planning Agencies (CHPs), creating a new set of health systems agencies (HSAs). The HSAs were to be in operation

within 18 months, that is, by June 30, 1976, at which time the RMPs and CHPs would close. The Mountain States RMP Regional Advisory Council, which since December 1971 had run MS/RMP with little exercise of authority by the WICHE Commission, had determined that it would not seek reincarnation as a health systems agency; in the alternative, it would create the new, independent Mountain States Health Corporation to continue any of the programs for which other funding could be arranged. Thus, by July 1975 or soon thereafter, WICHE knew that its MS/RMP enterprise would soon be gone. After five years of uncertainty whether federal funding for the program would be continued even for the following year, resolution of the question in the negative was, at least, a resolution of the question. On the WICHE staff rolls, MS/RMP staff numbered 41 in June 1975 and zero one year later. To operate a small carry over program in 1976-77, WICHE contracted with the Mountain States Health Corporation.

Changes that were under serious consideration in 1975 and 1976 in the role of NCHEMS and its board of directors within the WICHE program and its administrative and financial structures were even more significant. We have traced the origins and explosive growth of a program that proved to be not only timely but urgent, not only in the West but in the country at large, and of progressive modifications made in NCHEMS and WICHE roles as both organizations sought to adjust their relationships to the realities in which the program grew. We have noted that in June 1974 the WICHE Commission approved arrangements under which NCHEMS was virtually independent.

As NCHEMS negotiated its budget with its federal sponsor, the National Institute of Education (NIE), in the fall of 1975, it became evident that NIE was planning to reduce the number of its educational laboratories and centers, with the possibility that none would focus on postsecondary education. By June 1976 NIE had decided to retain one center for postsecondary education, research, and development, and to make NCHEMS that center. The NIE decision was a tribute to NCHEMS, its board, executive director, and staff.

Commissioner Ray Chamberlain pointed out that there would be implications for the NCHEMS/WICHE relationship in the new development, and indeed there were. At the 1976 WICHE Annual Meeting, reporting for the planning and management divisional committee which had met the prior day, Roy Lieuallen presented resolutions that called for, as the minutes put it, “not a geographic separation, rather a programmatic separation” of NCHEMS and WICHE. Under contract, WICHE would provide space and administrative services that would range from communications and accounting to library, personnel, and affirmative action. It is possible that it was the effectiveness and the efficiency of WICHE’s support services, including contributions of John Staley, that led NCHEMS to remain within the WICHE structure as long as it did.⁸⁴ Now, WICHE would work with NCHEMS staff to define the national center as a corporation independent of WICHE. The concept needed immediate approval to provide time for its activation. Lieuallen could say with justification – as he did say in the meeting of the

divisional committee – that what was proposed was not a sharp change from the way the two organizations had operated since June 1974. Commission approval was unanimous.

Ten years after John Minter first convened interested individuals in a handful of Western universities and state agencies to discuss ways of developing reliable information about educational costs, WICHE was ready to concur that the impressive program – now engaging virtually all institutions of higher education in the country – should continue under its own, not WICHE, auspices. The separation would be complete on July 1, 1977.

End of the Kroepsch Years

The years 1975 and 1976 were momentous for WICHE for yet other reasons.

Bob Kroepsch's wife, Ruth, lost a battle of many months with cancer, in May 1975. Ruth had been no ordinary "boss's wife." Though any spouse can be significant in the work of a chief executive, Ruth was much more than a "social secretary" and personal advisor for Robert Kroepsch. There were no Kroepsch children, nor other close family. For both, WICHE was virtually as much their daily interest and concern as family can be. Bob Kroepsch simply did not take actions on behalf of WICHE without reviewing them with Ruth. In filling major staff positions, Ruth was part of the group brought together with final candidates. Her "sign-off" was essential. Her reactions on policies and programs and on relationships with constituencies all carried great weight with him. Perhaps other administrators operate in the same way; but if this is so, Kroepsch was unusual in that he talked about it openly. Members of the commission were soon as aware of Ruth's participation as were members of the staff. Ruth's death, for Bob, affected his professional life virtually as much as his personal life. In the long, sad months of Ruth's battle there had been ample time for both to plan for the inevitable. Bob had come to WICHE in the fall of 1960. In June 1975 he informed Bud Davis, chair, and Lenton Malry, vice chair, that he would retire in October at the age of 63, or as soon thereafter as the commission could bring in a new executive director. In a letter of June 27 he notified the full commission of his plans.⁸⁵

CHAPTER IV

THE SIROTKIN YEARS
1976-1989

At a special meeting of the executive committee on December 17 to 18, 1975, finalists for the WICHE executive director position were interviewed, and Phillip Sirotkin, executive vice president at the State University of New York at Albany, was offered the position. For Sirotkin it would be a “coming home again” – some 20 years earlier he had moved to Boulder to help Harold Enarson organize the Mental Health Program and recruit a director. Negotiations took account of the time Sirotkin needed to fulfill obligations at Albany; he would be on the job on June 1, 1976.

Welcome to the New Executive Director

The circumstances for Sirotkin’s acceptance were unusual. After he had said yes but before moving to Boulder, he had a telephone call from a member of the California Senate, Jerry A. Smith. Smith thought it only fair, he said, to let Sirotkin know that in light of what the senator had discovered at a WICHE legislative conference in early December and information he had received subsequently both from WICHE and from others in and out of the legislature, he had concluded that the organization had strayed far from the purposes for which it had been created. It had become bloated with federal dollars to do things most of which California was already doing better than WICHE could. In sum, the state’s participation was costing more than the benefits warranted. He had decided to introduce legislation that would withdraw California from the compact, and he had no doubt after his discussions with colleagues that the bill would pass. In Wyoming, he said, legislators were similarly put off. He wanted to alert Sirotkin that he very probably would have no job at all in the not-distant future.

Sirotkin was astounded. Neither the commissioners, when interviewing him and offering him the position, nor Bob Kroepsch had given him any inkling of problems with governors and legislators in any of the member states.¹

Smith did as he threatened to do – he authored a Senate bill early in the spring of 1976 to terminate California’s membership in the compact. With little discussion or delay, it passed the senate on a 30-0 vote. In mid-August 1976, seven members of the Joint Education, Health, and Welfare Interim Committee of the Wyoming Legislature visited Boulder for a first-hand look at WICHE.

But in neither state were the outcomes what Smith had anticipated. Following the visit to WICHE in August, the chair of the Wyoming committee told his colleagues and the governor that he had turned around completely. Indeed, the Wyoming committee was persuaded that the Student Exchange Program alone saved the state hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Virtually all of WICHE's other programs were federally or foundation funded and generated overhead payments that covered much of the cost of WICHE administration. Prior to the semiannual meeting of the commission in February 1977, the Wyoming commissioners had an updating session with the governor. At the commission meeting, Senator William Rector, one of the Wyoming commissioners, reported that the "governor made it evident that Phil Sirotkin has gained [the] respect of the governors and is the salvation of WICHE."²

The crisis in California was more complex and, as we shall see, took somewhat longer to surmount, but in the first few days in August, the assembly amended the bite out of Smith's bill – and many legislators and governors had become better informed about WICHE.

Relationships with Governors and Legislators

The crisis in California and concerns in Wyoming were not the only challenges the new executive director would have to face. By the later 1960s and on into the 1970s, changes were occurring in state governments that would have a significant impact upon higher education. Among other factors, a growing number and range of federally supported programs, often administered at the state level, were elevating the stature as well as the size of state governments. As the states took on more technically demanding functions, both the governors' offices and legislatures added staff having more technical competencies. And with demands for increasing financial support in their education, health, welfare, and other programs, states were becoming more cost conscious even as their budgets grew.

At WICHE, where program growth had been dramatic since the mid-1960s, circumstances were changing, too. We have noted that in June 1975, Kroepsch, its executive director of more than 15 years, resigned. Federal support for the Regional Medical Programs ended in 1975-76 and, as a consequence, WICHE staff dropped by 41 positions. There no longer were WICHE outposts in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming. NCHEMS – with its 65 employees (out of a total WICHE staff in Boulder of 164), in June 1974 had negotiated working arrangements that virtually ended WICHE oversight.³ It had taken a long step toward the total separation that both parties did in fact agree to, two years later.

There were other changes that directly affected funding for WICHE in the member states. In the Student Exchange Program, the fees to be charged sending states for each student, varying from field to field, were determined by negotiations every few years

with sending and receiving states. As costs of professional education in the various fields increased during the 1960s and 1970s, and as awareness of costs grew – fed by, and in turn feeding, the influence of NCHEMS – receiving institutions became more fully aware that they were subsidizing students from other WICHE states while giving them preference for admission over applicants from out of the region, who would pay full nonresident tuition. By 1974 the resulting problems could no longer be put aside. At the annual meeting that year the commission changed its policy for setting Professional Student Exchange fees from one of *negotiating* the rates to one of relating fees to the average *cost of instruction* in each field, a change agreed to reluctantly by the sending states because it would have the effect, in some fields, of doubling their costs. During these years of rapid inflation, and in view of the long lead time needed for increases that would require legislative appropriations, by 1975 it was time for serious consideration of another increase in WICHE membership charges and an increase in the Mental Health Program fee, not to mention the question whether a participation fee should be levied in nursing. In the 1970s, nothing could increase gubernatorial and legislative interest in WICHE faster than increases in any of these charges.

WICHE commissioners gave no sign that they were aware that the organization was moving rapidly toward a major crisis. At its annual meetings a commissioner from each state reported on developments within her or his state that might be of interest in other states. Summarized along with the minutes of each annual and semiannual meeting, the commissioners' reports include no allusion to gubernatorial or legislator concerns about WICHE. The minutes summarize the reports of the executive director and the chair at each meeting; there is no mention of the subject. We have noted that in 1974, Chairman Glenn Terrell obtained authorization to set up the Committee on the Future, a group of eight commissioners intended to identify and plan strategies for new directions or activities. The record makes no reference to a discussion within the Committee on the Future of a need for more direction from the commission or of the possibility that WICHE needed to upgrade its communications with its gubernatorial and legislative constituencies.

Executive Director Kroepsch, on the other hand, at his last annual meeting of the commission in August 1975 – virtually his last minute – spoke of a deep-seated concern:

In spite of all we do . . . we are continually putting out brush fires in the legislative branch of government (those who vote the money) and in the executive branch (those who appoint the commissioners and who give us validity). I have studied this phenomenon closely for the past five years and have discussed the problem in depth with many.

Kroepsch's concerns, if deep-seated, were hidden from others – perhaps even from himself. His discussions had included regional higher education executives in the South and New England. Kroepsch knew very well that SREB had five commissioners from each state, one of whom was the governor and another a legislator; that NEBHE's

board included two legislators from each state, one from each house appointed by the leadership. Both SREB and NEBHE had problems similar to those of concern at WICHE, he said, but the inclusion of elected officials gave them avenues for resolving these problems that WICHE did not have. In addition to gubernatorial and legislative representation on the board, SREB maintained a legislative council that included at least two legislators from each state, who convened twice each year to become informed about and to advise concerning matters of legislative interest. As for WICHE: “I am appalled at the lack of understanding our legislative leaders have of what WICHE is doing in their state – and at the amount of misinformation some legislators and governors have relative to what we are doing.”

But – on his way out – Kroepsch was short on recommendations and he was vague. “I would propose that a much closer relationship be developed between and among the commissioners, staff, legislators, and the governors and their staffs.” He recommended that “one of the three commissioners from every state should be a legislator,” without suggesting how this could be accomplished. Until there was “strong legislative representation,” WICHE should fund “a blue-ribbon council of legislators.” They would “bring their concerns to WICHE in an orderly fashion.” They would plan the legislative work conference. That fall he made essentially the same presentation to the Western Governors’ Conference and to the Committee on Social Services of the Western Legislative Conference.

The Saiki Committee

It seems probable that Kroepsch had informed Chairman Bud Davis about the nature of the remarks he was going to make at that annual meeting in 1975. Davis acted within an hour to persuade Senator Patricia Saiki, a commissioner from Hawaii, to chair an ad hoc committee “to study the improvement of legislative relationships, including the possibility of expanding the commission membership.” Senator Lynn Newbry of Oregon, Senator Gordon Sandison of Washington, and Jean Overfelt of Utah, all commissioners, served with Saiki. The chair presented the committee’s report at the next meeting of the commission, its first-ever semiannual meeting in December 1975. All members of her committee were present.

The Saiki committee recommendations would implement Kroepsch’s suggestions. The commission need not be expanded (expanding would require amending the compact, a process that would require legislative action in each state). But in each state the governor should appoint a legislator as one of its three commissioners. There should, in addition, be a legislative advisory committee.

Other steps should be taken to keep governors, legislators, and their staffs well informed: a periodical for elective officers should be initiated; the legislative fiscal officers should continue to be briefed on budget and other financial matters; special effort

should be made to continue contacts with legislators who had attended a legislative work conference; that conference should be held in the summer or fall rather than in December, in order to mesh better with legislative calendars; legislators should be invited to participate in meetings and activities of the commission's committees for each of the divisions (general regional programs, mental health, planning and management, administration); and top staff should visit the member states regularly, coordinating their visits with the state's commissioners and with governors' offices. The Saiki committee report advanced nine recommendations; Saiki offered and Sandison seconded a motion to adopt the recommendations.

Commissioners had lots of questions; several proposals were controversial. At length, the commissioners amended Saiki's motion: they would "accept" the report and refer it to the executive committee – *de facto* its decision-making arm – for further consideration at its next meeting, in March 1976. They stipulated that the report not be circulated until the executive committee had acted on it.

Circumstances for the discussion in March 1976 were significantly changed from those of the prior December. Chair Saiki – not a member of the executive committee – was not there. Sandison was the only ad hoc committee member who was a member of the executive committee and the only ad hoc committee member present. Under the new circumstances, the commissioners were prepared to accept several noncontroversial items but rejected all the more significant proposals – that the commission recommend gubernatorial appointment of a legislator as one of the three commissioners; that a legislative advisory committee be created; that a periodical for legislators be initiated; and that appropriate legislators be brought into the plans and activities of the several WICHE divisions. The fact was that the Saiki committee and its recommendations came to virtually nothing. A lopsided commission majority once again ignored the challenge and opportunity of assuring a strong voice for the public in WICHE affairs.

Conflagration: The Legislative Work Conference

A legislative work conference immediately followed the December 1975 semiannual meeting. Such conferences had been held more or less biennially since they were originated by Harold Enarson in 1958. They served to bring together with the commission and its staff a group of legislators, a few governors and executive staff, and both campus and state-level higher education executives. WICHE encouraged states to provide travel funds for their own legislative delegation but usually found it necessary to add some underwriting to whatever funding a state would provide. In December 1975 there were 172 participants, including WICHE commissioners and staff. The minutes report that 131 of them were there at WICHE expense.

The overall agenda had been developed by the staff with suggestions from an advisory committee of legislators from six member states. The committee agreed upon a theme, "On Target: Key Issues of Region, State, and Campus." Reflecting Kroepsch's newly

expressed concerns, according to the proceedings, a specific goal of the conference was “to promote a better understanding and clearer communications between WICHE and state legislators relative to WICHE programs.” The legislator advisors thought that an additional committee, comprising a senator and house member from each of the 13 states, should conduct the session at which WICHE was to be discussed; and so it was.

The conference was opened with a keynote address by the director of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, Donald R. McNeil. McNeil spoke to the theme – issues of concern for the region, the states, and the campuses – including accountability, state support of private institutions, adult education, legislative establishment of state coordinating mechanisms, the growth of regionalism, collective bargaining, and legislative involvement. McNeil affirmed that legislators needed information, had responsibility for assuring accountability, and had to do “responsible budget cutting.” Before coming to California, McNeil had been president of the university system in Maine. Perhaps he was still more attuned to his concerns as a university president than to the realities of the office of state higher education commissioner. In any case, his remarks about the role of legislators were inflammatory:

In my view, involvement becomes interference when the legislature impinges on the academic integrity of educational institutions; when decisions about governance, institutional management, academic policy, program planning, admission requirements, faculty duties, and other related issues are made not in the halls of ivy, but in the corridors of the state house.

Moreover:

The trend in legislatures is to acquire qualified staff. As staff capacity increases, legislators and their assistants tend to believe that they know more than educators about education. They begin to nitpick and they have a position on almost every educational issue. They develop a fascination for the minutiae of budgets, they pose questions of infinite variety and detail, and they meddle in administrative matters and in the approval not only of academic policies, but also of new programs. They instruct the educational bureaucracy on what to study, how to study it, and, at times, they come perilously close to suggesting what the results of the study should be.⁴

The conference – which proved to be, for many years, the last of WICHE’s long string of legislative work conferences – was closed with an address by Lee R. Kerschner, then assistant vice chancellor in the California State University. Kerschner’s topic was “Legislation and the Campus: The Relationship of the Political Process to Postsecondary Education – a Plea for Restraint.” This reader found Kerschner’s remarks direct and realistic but reasonable and fair. But the atmosphere of the entire meeting had been charged by McNeil’s opening address. In expressing himself, Kerschner managed to insult all of the parties, perhaps especially the legislators (he had little to say about governors).

One of the legislators had a different complaint: he found it objectionable that WICHE, an organization funded by his state (among others) and about which he

needed to make judgments, had paid his way to the meeting. This was the meeting that was Senator Jerry Smith's first exposure to WICHE and that inspired his effort to take California out of the compact. It led Representative Jack Sidi to a similar conclusion for Wyoming. Both were inspired not only by their own feelings but by what they saw as the prevailing view of legislators at the meeting. Overall, this conference was disturbing for all parties – especially for the legislators.

At its annual meeting in August 1975 – Kroepsch's last – the commission had discussed increases in membership, student exchange and mental health fees, and the initiation of a participation fee in nursing. It had deferred action on any fees, bucking the problem to the executive committee. But the likelihood that increases would be forthcoming had been made clear. Meeting a few weeks later as Pat Saiki's committee was pursuing its own review, the Association of Western Legislative Fiscal Officers asked its Montana member, John LaFaver, to organize a small group to conduct a review of WICHE so that "informed recommendations could be made to the several Western legislatures." The focus of the review would be "to examine the impending request for a dues increase that will apparently be asked of the 1977 legislatures" – an amount expected to be \$11,000 for each state, an increase of nearly 40 percent.⁵

While still in his position at the State University of New York at Albany, Sirotkin had attended the meeting of the executive committee in March 1976 and had been kept informed about a number of activities. He saw to it that steps would be taken to marshal support for WICHE at an August 2 hearing in the California Assembly on Senator Smith's bill to withdraw California from the compact.

With the concurrence of commissioners from Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Washington, and Wyoming who were state senators or representatives, Chairman Lenton Malry (a representative in New Mexico) on June 7 sent a letter supporting WICHE to Chairman John Vasconcellos and members of the Assembly Permanent Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education. A few days later Sirotkin met with that subcommittee and with Senator Smith to address a "brushfire" that seemed to have gotten out of control. It was fortuitous for WICHE that Glenn Dumke, chancellor of the California State University, was vice chair of the commission and would assume the chair at the annual meeting in mid-August 1976. Dumke was a vital force, working closely with Sirotkin, in preparing for the August 2 hearing in the California Assembly on Senator Smith's bill.⁶

Informing the WICHE staff after the August 2 hearing, Sirotkin reported that the assembly committee had in effect killed the Smith bill – it had adopted an amended version that eliminated language about withdrawal and called for a study and report on WICHE, with appropriate recommendations, from the California Postsecondary Education Commission. For the hearing, Sirotkin said, people had come to Sacramento at their own expense from all over a very large state. "They were positively eloquent in their descriptions of what WICHE programs had contributed to their lives, career development and current activities. It was a deeply moving experience . . . to hear these

testimonials of the benefits derived from WICHE programs.” The widely respected California legislative analyst Alan Post and his associate Harold Geiogoue had submitted data supportive of WICHE and a recommendation that the state not withdraw. The State Department of Health had submitted its own supportive analysis and recommended both to the governor and the secretary of the Health and Welfare Agency that they oppose the bill. Indeed, the Assembly Committee’s action ended the threatened withdrawal of California from the compact.⁷

WICHE and the Governors

With the resolution of threats in California and Wyoming, WICHE’s and the new director’s problems were by no means ended. The group commissioned by the Western Legislative Fiscal Officers Association, headed by John LaFaver, had met with WICHE staff in early December 1975. Kroepsch was a lame duck executive director. LaFaver did not announce his committee’s conclusions until after a meeting of the association membership many months later, in early August 1976. Sirotkin had assumed office on June 1. Just two months later LaFaver announced that “the fiscal officers agreed that WICHE had not presented an adequate case for the proposed dues hike and that a recommendation be made to each legislature that no dues increase be funded.”

Moreover, in July 1976 – one month after Sirotkin’s arrival and at a time when the California withdrawal was still a strong possibility – the Mountain-Plains Governors Association (governors of the Rocky Mountain states plus Nebraska and the Dakotas) met during the National Governors Conference. Their concern was the large number of multistate organizations with which they had to contend – there were “MSOs” on natural resources, agriculture, water, human services, as well as education. These organizations cost both money and their time and that of their staff. Some appeared to overlap in purpose and activity. Typically, they were headed by citizen boards and – of major concern to governors – some had a degree of independence from executive direction that could be an embarrassment. The governors asked their chief staff aides to constitute a task force on regional cooperation (soon known as the Task Force on Regional Policy Management) to review the 78 interstate organizations that had been identified, particularly as to their independence from the chief executive’s authority and as to their cost. Roy Romer, chief aide to Governor Dick Lamm in Colorado, was the task force chairman; Philip Burgess, an employee of one of the MSOs, the Federation of Rocky Mountain States, was the staff director. At the meeting of the Western Governors’ Association in September, at which Sirotkin appeared at the invitation of Governor Mike O’Callaghan of Nevada, the WGA chair, the tone of the discussion related to WICHE was confrontational – though Sirotkin reported to staff that it ended in a “somewhat neutral vein.” The governors added Idaho and five “Pacific Rim” states to the Task Force on Regional Policy Management so that all WICHE states were represented.

Meeting in October 1976, the task force divided itself into subcommittees for each of the various areas into which the MSOs could be classified. Kent Briggs, Utah Governor Matheson's chief staff aide, was appointed chair of the subgroup for education. On the basis of responses to a questionnaire the full task force had sent to all the MSOs, Briggs's committee decided that WICHE was the only one of 21 in the field of education that needed its review.

At WICHE, Utah in general and Matheson in particular were known to harbor doubts about the benefits of participation in the Western Regional Education Compact.

In the next month Briggs and his committee met once with Sirotkin and, in Salt Lake City, with Donald Holbrook, vice chairman of the commission who was well connected with Governor Matheson and staff aide Briggs. Holbrook found that Briggs and his committee were ready to recommend to the governors that by executive order or perhaps, amendment of the compact, WICHE should get out of all its activities except the Student Exchange Program. When Holbrook had been appointed to the commission four years earlier he had shared that view; now, he believed that most of WICHE's other programs were eminently worthwhile. He urged the committee to give the new director time to complete his own review and to respond to WICHE's critics.

Briggs's committee report would go to the full task force for review on November 22. Briggs met with Sirotkin on November 21 to review the draft. Sirotkin followed up on November 30 with a letter to Briggs, which, along with five pages of information and comments on statements in the report, conveyed Sirotkin's judgment that the report was "much more of a polemic against WICHE programs rather than a careful, systematically documented assessment." Briggs assured Sirotkin that the final report to the governors would take account of the factual errors Sirotkin had pointed out.

Holbrook had been effective: a number of changes were made to temper the tone and substance of the draft task force report. But there was plenty left that was of major concern for WICHE. According to the report: any recasting of WICHE mission and program by the governors should be delayed until two evaluation studies – one commissioned by WICHE and one by California, pursuant to Senator Jerry Smith's bill – had been completed. Briggs's subgroup added a stipulation that in the WICHE Commission's evaluation, "these programs [apparently meaning everything except Student Exchange] were not intended by the governors as within the scope of the WICHE Compact," an allegation flatly counter to the fact that the governors had asked for the programs in mental health and corrections and had de facto supported the others for years. Related to the issue of mission and program, of immediate concern was the task force recommendation that "states should not pay the projected \$11,000 increase in membership fees" until the governors had been able to act on the WICHE evaluation reports that were not due until March 1977, only three months before the increase in fees on which the 1977-78 budget depended. The budgetary impact, along with cutbacks already projected with the end of the Regional Medical Program, would be devastating

for the WICHE program. The report also said that WICHE should develop what amounted to a regional master plan for graduate, professional, and technical education, a clear example of gubernatorial direction and a daunting task even if there were an ample budget. The WICHE Executive Committee should be recast to provide for a stronger role for the governors of the member states. And an annual program plan for WICHE should be subjected to review by a proposed new permanent organization that would place the governors' aides in a position to exercise direction for these disparate MSOs.⁸

To put it mildly, the Briggs report was disturbing for Sirotkin and for the commissioners. It did include one statement that suggested that, with respect to the governors, the situation might not be hopeless:

The Working Group recognizes that there is support in several States for the termination [of the compact]. However, after reviewing the current situation, the Working Group feels a move toward termination of the compact would be premature at this time. . . . The WICHE staff has only recently come under new leadership. The new Executive Director, appointed in June 1976, was recruited in part because of his determination and promise to aggressively examine the WICHE mission and its related programs, projects, and activities, and to take appropriate steps to strengthen WICHE management and WICHE's value to the states. His first months in office have resulted in actions that are consistent with the promise.



At their meeting December 10, 1976, the governors adopted the recommendations of the Task Force on Regional Policy Management pertaining to the 78 multistate organizations. For the governors, the recommendations affecting WICHE were of less concern than some of the others, perhaps especially one that would terminate arrangements with the Council of State Governments for administrative services for the Western Governors' Association and establish an "umbrella" staff organization of their own, the Western Governors' Policy Office (WESTPO) by consolidating present offices of several of the multistate organizations. WESTPO would be controlled by a board of directors comprising member governors and their alternates. The alternates would be their aides – in effect, the task force already existing.⁹

We have noted the proposals affecting WICHE that came from the task force following the recommendations of the work group headed by Kent Briggs. The governors adopted these recommendations without change. Decisions on WICHE's role, and as a consequence, on its proposed increase in membership charges, would be deferred, while the organization was assigned a major new task of assessing needs and proposing ways to meet regional needs in technical, graduate, and professional education.¹⁰

From WICHE's point of view, the implications of the formation of a gubernatorial office to give direction to all the MSOs was at least as worrisome as the governors' specific decisions about WICHE. To Sirotkin it was evident that the action would represent a gubernatorial takeover of what had been created as a public service

organization responsible to governors but no less responsible to legislators, and one that could function only with the support of state higher education agencies and institutions of higher education. His strategy for avoiding a gubernatorial takeover was to enlist legislators who were, or had been, members of the commission, and others who were strong WICHE supporters, to insist, through their regional and national organizations, that WICHE was not an exclusively executive agency and that the governors must recognize an equivalent role for the legislators. Not surprisingly, his strategy and his efforts are not made explicit in the written record.¹¹

The Task Force on Regional Policy Management got to work on the restructuring the governors had agreed upon. The task force staff became the core staff for the new organization. WESTPO replaced the Western Office of the Council of State Governments as staff for the Western Governors' Conference – and dropped WICHE from its purview until the governors had redefined WICHE's role. A decision on role would follow their review of material due them March 1, 1977, including the "internal" evaluation that WICHE had commissioned, the "external" report that had been contracted by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), and other information that WICHE was to provide.

We have noted that the California evaluation was mandated in the amendment to Senator Jerry Smith's bill that effectively killed his effort to take California out of the compact. The California Postsecondary Education Commission had contracted with C. Bryce Ratchford for the study; Ratchford was an economist and a former president of the University of Missouri. By telephone and face to face, he interviewed 74 people who had reason to be familiar with WICHE. His interviewees were both supporters and critics, and included Senator Smith. His report, presented to CPEC early in January 1977, could hardly have been more supportive. After its review the California commission transmitted the report to Governor Brown, the legislature, and other interested parties, with a resolution recommending that California "remain a member of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education."

For its "internal" report, on recommendation of Glenn Dumke, now commission chairman, and the executive director, WICHE had contracted with Jerome Evans, formerly a member of the California Legislative Analyst's office. According to Dumke, "Californians know [Evans] well and have high respect for his research and investigative ability."¹² Evans's assignment was, within five weeks, to check out a half dozen WICHE programs with persons who had participated in those programs and report evidence of success or failure. Evans interviewed 80 people, for the most part by telephone.¹³ He was careful to state at the beginning of his report that he had been asked by the executive director to do an "informal, independent evaluation of a representative sample of the projects administered by WICHE in 1976-77." His report was highly favorable; but it opened with the caveat that he did not deal with two questions that were of concern to a number of people in several states: whether WICHE was continuing to serve the

purposes for which it was established, and whether the objectives it did pursue were worth the cost.



Backtracking several weeks: the full Task Force on Regional Policy Management had met on June 27, 1977. Briggs's work group on WICHE met the prior day to conclude its review of the Ratchford and Evans reports, the WICHE statement of mission, role, and scope, and other materials, and to complete its recommendations for the full task force. Task force recommendations would go to the Western governors at the end of August.

Briggs's group was troubled that neither Evans nor Ratchford had "address[ed] the major strategic policy questions and related financial issues that need to be addressed." Evans had acknowledged explicitly the limitations of his report in this regard. The working group decided that before it could submit recommendations to the governors, it would need to undertake its own fact-finding effort. For the task, WESTPO Staff Director Phil Burgess contracted with his friend Kenneth Olson, who headed the Olympus Research Corporation of Salt Lake City. The task force and Burgess specified the questions Olson was to address:

- ◆ To what extent have WICHE's administrative costs increased?
- ◆ How are these increases in administrative costs related to various WICHE program elements?
- ◆ How are state dues allocated among the various WICHE program elements?
- ◆ What are the major characteristics of the management and operation of the Student Exchange Program? More specifically, what proportion of state dues is allocated to the SEP; how many FTEs are assigned to the SEP; and what functions do these FTE's perform?
- ◆ Is WICHE's federal grant and contract procurement in competition with state agencies and universities in the region, or are federal grants and contracts with WICHE primarily for projects for which only multistate entities are eligible?

In a letter of contract with Olson on July 12, 1977, Burgess specified seven areas of information needed, relating to staffing, funding, and outcomes of the Student Exchange Program and other WICHE activities, including the procedures through which programs were planned and initiated. Olson was to have a preliminary report for the task force in a little more than a month, anticipating recommendations that the task force would present to the governors at the end of August.

For WICHE the Olson evaluation was the fourth to which it had been subjected in Sirotkin's first year. Olson's deadline of August 15 for completion of his preliminary draft proved insufficient; Sirotkin was given an opportunity to review the draft and to negotiate correction of factual errors and perceived errors of analysis and judgment just a week before the report went to the governors for action.

From a procedural point of view, the governors' consideration and action on Olson's report seem unreasonable and offensive. WICHE had been given virtually no time to review the draft, and the deadline gave Olson essentially no time to consider and act on WICHE comments. Nevada Governor O'Callaghan presided at the session at which the Olson report was on the agenda on September 1. WICHE Vice Chairman Donald Holbrook and Phil Sirotkin were present and had made known their desire to have a few minutes for comment. O'Callaghan expressly denied them the opportunity. O'Callaghan had made his disdain for WICHE (along with other multistate organizations and activities) – evident at Western Governors' Conferences for several years. Olson presented his report orally; he had been told authoritatively that there would be no WICHE response.¹⁴

Disturbing as the report and the governors' discussion with Olson were to WICHE representatives, the report included a number of comments that, together with the Ratchford and Evans reports, had a positive impact upon the governors. Olson noted some limitations of his own study and pointed out that both the Evans and Ratchford evaluations "found WICHE programs to be generally well operated by competent staff and with fairly high levels of satisfaction among those benefiting from the programs." Moreover, Olson was well impressed by "the competence and cooperation of all the WICHE staff who were interviewed."

The actions taken by the governors at their August meeting would mean further delay in clarification of WICHE role and scope, but for WICHE they represented a forward step. Specifically, the governors would ask the Western Conference of the Council of State Governments – an assembly of Western legislators – and the appropriate members of the National Council of State Legislatures, to appoint members to work with a committee of governors to redefine the scope and purpose of WICHE. The review would be "a first step in re-establishing the involvement of elected officials in WICHE as contemplated by the drafters of the compact," but it would be a joint effort of state chief executives and members of the legislative branch. Moreover, with several important stipulations, the governors accepted the 1977-78 WICHE budget – the fiscal year that had begun the prior July 1 – recognizing that the action carried with it their explicit approval of the increase in state dues. The directions of the governors would require that in accepting grants or contracts, WICHE would recover the full amount of overhead costs, except as the commission approved allocation of state funds deemed justified by the circumstances of the contract or grant. The following year's WICHE budget was to reflect this policy, as well as the outcomes of the gubernatorial/legislative review of scope and purpose. WICHE was also to place a moratorium on new programs pending completion of the review of scope and purpose by the joint committee of governors and legislators. WICHE was to submit future budgets "in a time frame consistent with state budget cycles," a circumstance that would be helpful but that governors and governors' staff knew to be of doubtful possibility because of differing state budget cycles.

In appointing a committee of governors and state legislators, inevitably there were delays, as there were in setting the date for a meeting. The committee first met on January 25, 1978. Governor Ariyoshi of Hawaii, chair of the Governors' Conference and a WICHE supporter, had appointed Governor Jerry Apodaca of New Mexico – also a WICHE friend – as chair. Governor Herschler (Wyoming) and Governor O'Callaghan (Nevada) were present along with a representative of Governor Dixie Lee Ray of Washington, Senator Ernest Dean of Utah, Senator Gladys Hansen (New Mexico), Senator Jack Ostlund (Wyoming), and Representative Jack Moore (Montana). Phil Sirotkin and Comptroller John Staley were also at the table.

At the meeting there was extended and constructive discussion of WICHE role and scope generally, and specifically of a number of programs, including Nursing and Mental Health; of costs of administration and overhead costs; and of the responsibility of both WICHE and the governors and legislative bodies to be in close, ongoing communication. The tone of the discussion was one of collaboration – Senator Dean spoke specifically of “a breakdown of communication between the governors and their appointed commissioners,” suggesting that blame lay with all of the parties.

Senator Dean joined a panel at the WICHE Semiannual Meeting a week later, with Sirotkin and Jerry Norris, who headed the Council of State Governments office that staffed the joint committee. The commission discussion, reported in six pages of minutes, was lively, engaging members of the panel and 10 of the commissioners. Norris sent a summary of the discussion to members of the joint gubernatorial-legislative committee with his own view that “the meeting went well.”

A liaison group of commissioners, six in all, were invited to the second meeting of the joint committee on March 29, 1978. Norris sent members three papers that Sirotkin had prepared: an overview of the WICHE compact; a proposal that Governor Apodaca had requested on steps to be taken to improve and maintain good communication between WICHE and the governors and state legislators; and a proposal that WICHE would present each year an outline for planning, programming, and project development that would include both a needs assessment and a four-year program and financial plan. It was a meeting that in the words of Commissioner Herman Ross “cleared the air.”

The joint committee proceeded to define its conclusions and recommendations:

- (1) The Compact should not be changed.
- (2) WICHE should develop definitions of the terms “higher education” and “post-secondary education” and identify the role of WICHE in reference to each. The results should be provided by May 15 in order to be reviewed by the joint committee prior to the annual meetings of the Western governors and legislators that summer.
- (3) The necessity for better communication was stressed. *Personal contact* was necessary involving commissioners, the executive director, and governors

and legislators. Specifically, at least annually the executive director and as needed, WICHE officers should meet with each governor and key legislators; commissioners should meet with the governor and key legislators prior to each annual and semiannual meeting to share information about proposals and developments; opportunity should be given WICHE to report current and proposed activities at annual meetings of the appropriate gubernatorial and legislative organization.

- (4) In each state, consideration should be given to the appointment of a legislator as one of the commissioners.¹⁵

The Joint Committee report went to the Western Governors' Conference and to the Western Conference of the Council of State Governments (legislators) in June 1978. Prior to the April meeting of the executive committee, Sirotkin had asked commissioners Roy Lieuallen and Bud Davis to draft proposed statements of WICHE scope and mission. Both drafts set forth a WICHE role that encompassed most of the elements of current definitions of "postsecondary education" along with those of traditional "higher education." As finally approved for the commission at that April meeting, the definition of the WICHE role in "higher education" to be advanced to the governors and legislators was:

Higher education, as defined by WICHE, consists of those programs offered by accredited colleges and universities and includes the following:

1. Academic, technical, and professional fields of study leading to associate, baccalaureate, and/or graduate degrees;
2. continuing education; and
3. vocational-technical education.

The joint committee accepted the WICHE proposal and made it part of its report as it went to the governors and legislators in June. All provisions of the committee report were approved in both groups. The approved role definition encompassed all elements of the WICHE program as it then functioned. The moratorium on new WICHE programs was ended. The crisis in WICHE status in reference to its crucial gubernatorial and legislative constituencies in its member states had come to an end.¹⁶

Moving Ahead with the WICHE Program

One might expect that after a high-pressure two years in his new job, Sirotkin would be tired of an organization in which the kudos were few and in which there were endless challenges from important places to demonstrate the agency's worth. WICHE's *potential* in fostering collaboration among higher education institutions and states was without limit. That such collaboration did not come easily to states and their higher education institutions only magnified the challenge. In his first two years, which almost

any observer would call hectic, Sirotkin enjoyed having the attention of legislators and governors and a chance to demonstrate WICHE's value and promise for the future.

Immediately after his June 1 arrival at WICHE, Sirotkin initiated steps to deal with criticisms he had perceived among legislators and legislative staff. There was a general perception that the WICHE program was "all over the map," without focus or even limitation to the West. Sirotkin asked Kevin Bunnell, with the help of a staff task force, to produce a statement of mission, role, and scope. He expected the process and its result to give needed direction to a staff that seemed ready to propose for WICHE almost any activity in higher education for which funding could be found. Bunnell's statement was reviewed by the Committee on the Future in February 1977 and with minor amendments, approved by the commission at its semiannual meeting that month.

Almost immediately, he initiated a reorganization of staff that terminated or changed the positions of three associate directors, making one the deputy director (George Lowe of the Mental Health Program); changing Kevin Bunnell's role as head of the Division of General Regional Programs (now terminated) to associate director for program planning, development, and evaluation; and eliminating the WICHE associate director status of the executive director of NCHEMS, which now was well along toward separation from WICHE. The changes lowered the walls between WICHE's major units, at the same time that having a deputy director added emphasis to the central direction of the enterprise. In the Student Exchange Program, Director Virginia Patterson was leaving; her assistant, William McConnell, would take over.

Subsequently the executive committee approved staff proposals of policy that reinforced the *regional* nature and responsibility of WICHE, and that required in every WICHE project a set of procedures for evaluation. At the 1977 annual meeting, the commission approved criteria and procedures by which staff and commission would establish priorities among programs and proposed projects. The commissioners in October 1977 discussed at length the options they had. Commissioner A. Ray Chamberlain, president of Colorado State University, suggested that with each annual budget proposal, WICHE include budgets for the four years that followed – a step that, however tenuous those future budget proposals might be, would give governors and their staffs a sense of the direction in which WICHE was headed. The idea for a four-year program and financial plan was implemented; it turned out to be an important element in the resolution of WICHE's crisis with the governors. Together with the termination of the Mountain States RMP and NCHEMS (and in due course, the library program, WILCO), these changes greatly reduced the number and spread of WICHE programs, a major change of direction from the Kroepsch years.

Meeting with the exempt staff soon after his arrival, Sirotkin observed that "our greatest weakness" is in communication with constituencies – or the lack of it – especially with legislators and governors. He would visit all 13 member states before the year was out, he said; he made it to seven of them in his first three months. "Impact

statements” – brief accounts of each state’s activity in WICHE programs, including names of individuals, were being prepared; in each state commissioners would find them invaluable in reporting on WICHE activities.

One of his more delicate tasks was to address a tone of homey informality that had been encouraged over the years among WICHE staff – a tone that helped make WICHE a pleasant place to work but that also raised some questions. From clerks to associate directors, there was an easy response to “office hours” – they were quite unpredictable. Attire was individual and informal, in years when there were public expectations of somewhat more formal dress in the workplace. Kroepsch and others usually wore beads – the Oregon governor, upon first meeting Sirotkin, volunteered that he was pleased not to see them on the new director. Sirotkin risked resentment when he informed staff that there had to be conformity with certain standards of presence and dress in the office.

Sirotkin was troubled that staff members identified with their particular units to the point of resenting assignments to help on other tasks. He asserted that staff positions “are fungible” – subject to change as circumstances required. It was a further challenge to staff, resented by some.¹⁷

Even in relations with the commission Sirotkin had to address some problems. Whereas staff were held to certain dollar limits for hotel and subsistence during official travel, commissioners were reimbursed for “actual expenses,” the amount varying according to individual tastes and extent of New England conscience. At his first executive committee meeting three weeks after his arrival, Sirotkin announced that commissioners in the fiscal year beginning July 1 would be reimbursed on the same basis as WICHE staff. Nevada Commissioner Tucker – who had a reputation as “big spender” – was infuriated that a staff member (specifically, the director) would tell a commissioner what he could spend when on commission business. After a nasty confrontation Sirotkin agreed that the commission should set policy for commissioners, that he would continue past policy for the time being, while two commissioners would review the matter and bring to the commission a proposal for travel policy.

As difficult as any of the tasks Sirotkin faced was to reduce numbers of WICHE staff. The last of the Regional Medical Program staff was gone at the end of his first month. Helpful as that was in reducing staff numbers, the approaching separation of NCHEMS – now being finalized by a joint NCHEMS/WICHE committee – would be even more significant. Within a year, WICHE staff would be reduced from 221 to about 80. But severe belt-tightening was also required within the “hard money” staff: at the April 1977 meeting of the executive committee less than a year after his arrival, Sirotkin reported that that group had been reduced by 15 positions, from 74 to 59, and that it was expected to number 49 by June 30.

Challenges, Opportunities, and Accomplishments, 1976-1990

In time of crisis, life goes on. Pressured as Phil Sirotkin was by events in California, the concerns of the state legislative fiscal officers, doubts about WICHE coming from the legislature in Wyoming, the misgivings of Western governors about multistate organizations in general and WICHE in particular, the new executive director had to attend to developments in the wide range of WICHE programs that he had inherited. There was, of course, the original program – Student Exchange – now including not only the original professional exchange but a Mineral Engineering Exchange that had started in 1970 and a Community College Exchange that began in 1971. Yet another, WICHE Scholars, had been started just a year before he came: an arrangement under which, for any of its member states, WICHE would contract with any other state or institution to admit undergraduate students in *any* field, the student paying resident tuition and the sending state paying, through WICHE, the amount of the nonresident tuition differential.

The Mental Health and Nursing programs were also active programs with staff members sensitive to needs in the two fields and with ideas for new projects. Mental Health included a substantial program in the field of corrections that continued to raise questions among commissioners as to whether this was a field in which WICHE should be engaged at all. With funding for many of their activities from federal agencies, both Mental Health and Nursing were nonetheless dependent upon a sizable amount of WICHE funding that was a challenge in every budget cycle. There were ongoing efforts to define and fund programs for minority students. There was the sensitive area of library collaboration – sensitive because the state libraries, the funding source for the program, were well along in their consideration of breaking off from WICHE and establishing an organization of their own. The program of internships in state and local economic development, mental health, and other fields was popular with both students and receiving agencies, but obtaining sufficient funding for the internships on a schedule that was workable was a problem year after year. And of course, there were and would continue to be new needs and new opportunities.

The Graduate Education Project

Sirotkin brought from New York an idea for “regionalizing” a program that was both statewide and institution-based at the State University of New York at Albany.¹⁸ The board of regents, a “cradle to grave” education authority in New York with powers that derived not only from the constitution and statutes but also from a hoary past that antedates formation of the State of New York, had initiated a program of review of doctoral programs in the public and private universities in the state. Its conclusions could force the termination of such programs – and negative conclusions were not rare.¹⁹ Sirotkin had modified the regents’ procedures appropriately for use in internal reviews at the university. Now it seemed likely to him that within the WICHE region,

universities and state agencies could cooperate in planning that would enable universities to strengthen further some of the stronger graduate programs and eliminate some of the duplicative or weaker ones. Everyone would win. WICHE's authority, unlike that of the regents in New York, was limited to persuasion; but WICHE could facilitate the process.

Both Kevin Bunnell and Bill McConnell were enthusiastic about the concept. Within weeks of his arrival the idea became a top priority. Sirotkin asked Bunnell to work up a proposal for consideration by the commission. Though more focused, the concept clearly was related to the planning that the governors had asked WICHE to do with respect to graduate, technical, and professional education. Within a few weeks Bunnell and McConnell had brought the two ideas together and were ready to share a draft of "A Program for Resource Sharing in Graduate Education" with a number of state and institutional reviewers. It was decided that a panel representing graduate schools, public and private universities, state higher education executive officers and the Education Commission of the States would be convened on December 7, 1976. The seven panelists were to consider whether there was "significant need in the West for increased regional cooperation and coordination in planning, developing, and adjusting graduate education." If the preponderant answer was yes, questions about priorities and about a possible role for WICHE were on the agenda.

The preponderant answer was yes. Following the December 7 meeting, SEP Director McConnell and Bunnell established an 11-member task force comprising the seven reviewers of December 7 plus a third graduate dean, a governor's aide, and a legislative staffer, with one additional university academic officer. McConnell now took the lead.²⁰

Sirotkin was attracted to the possibility that WICHE's sister regional agencies, the Southern Regional Education Board and New England Board of Higher Education, might wish to participate in a joint effort of sharing in graduate education, an idea that appealed also to Richard Millard, the higher education director at the Education Commission of the States. The four directors met in New York City in January 1977 and decided to explore "joint program activities." During the visit, Sirotkin met informally with program officer Alden Dunham at the Carnegie Corporation to discuss the concept. Dunham was clearly interested in the idea, especially if the three regions and ECS might collaborate. Ultimately that possibility was abandoned – it was difficult for three organizations, each with its own array of programs and priorities, and major distances between them, to get together on a complex project.

Sirotkin reported progress at a meeting of the executive committee in April. There now was a "Proposal to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the Support of a Program, Expanding Regional Cooperation in Graduate Education," which on May 31 Sirotkin sent to Alden Dunham for review. In June he and Bunnell met with Dunham, leading to significant revisions and to Sirotkin's formal submittal of the proposal at the end of July.

From WICHE's beginning, the commission's approval of a new WICHE activity had been based on an agenda item that set forth need, objectives, information on who had initiated the proposal, how the project would be developed, and budgetary requirements. Typically, commission action on the item authorized staff to "seek, receive, and expend funds." That authorization was a policy determination to be implemented by the staff. Staff would proceed to prepare and submit a specific proposal for one or more foundations. For a graduate resource-sharing activity, commission authorization had been given in February.

Now, the formal proposal having been submitted to Carnegie, some, and ultimately all, commissioners saw the final proposal. Several felt that its language overstated the role and authority of the commission to make decisions that would have the effect of shaping graduate programs in the universities within the region. At the annual meeting on August 12-14, 1977, Commissioner Glenn Terrell, who was president of Washington State University, led an attack. His institution had just undergone a program review by the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board – that was review enough! Terrell wrote Sirotkin after the meeting to get his concerns "on the record."

I do not believe there should be another layer of review, with recommendations for initiating, not initiating, continuing, or discontinuing graduate and professional programs, at the regional level, that were, and in their view, should be made at the state or at the institutional level.

In the general reaction to the proposed program there was strong objection also to a related provision perceived to authorize WICHE to prepare a regional "master plan" for development of graduate and professional education in the region. Arizona Executive Coordinator Larry Woodall warned,

We must never forget that the region is composed of individual states who jealously guard their independence in educational planning and who pursue state purposes which are funded by tax revenues derived primarily from the people in the respective states.²¹

In this vein, Commissioner Ferrel Heady of the University of New Mexico introduced a motion to prohibit WICHE from "recommending or approving proposed or existing graduate programs." While institutions or state agencies could seek WICHE advice as to the need for graduate programs, "Such advice would not be an assessment of the desirability of a particular institution offering or not offering a particular program." The Ferrel Heady motion was passed with a single commissioner in opposition.

To Sirotkin, WICHE's lack of authority to direct anyone to do anything was ample safeguard against making WICHE into a new superpower over the development of graduate education in the West. The discussion and the explicit amendment complicated the WICHE leadership he had envisioned.

In spite of the commission action that would limit the WICHE role, Sirotkin's sense of the urgency of getting the program started was so great that he provided support in the 1977-78 WICHE budget to hire a director and get the project under way. The proposal to Carnegie was based on the understanding that WICHE would start the program whether or not Carnegie made a grant – a grant would help expand the project and expedite its growth. That fall, he recruited a project director, Richard Jonsen, who was completing direction of a project on state policy and private higher education at the Education Commission of the States. Simultaneously, Sirotkin was able to announce receipt of a two-year grant of \$226,000 for the Graduate Education Project from the Carnegie Corporation that would enable WICHE to proceed with the project.

Jonsen was on the job in early October 1977. He set about establishing the project structure: an advisory council would include, collectively, SHEEOs, graduate deans, chief academic officers, trustees, members of the faculty, a graduate student, and both legislators and legislative staff. WICHE would compile and publish regional information about graduate education. Six “demonstration states” would plan and carry out projects. A Demonstration States Coordinating Committee, with one representative from each of these states, would conceive and initiate program activities. Five of the demonstration states would be in the Northwest – Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana; New Mexico would be the sixth.²² WICHE staff supporting the program soon numbered five, largely borrowed from other WICHE programs on a part-time basis. The WICHE role included administrative support for the council and committee and information gathering, analysis, and publication. The advisory council would keep all states within the region informed and encourage participation of additional WICHE states when any activity within the demonstration states appeared ready for such expansion.

In the final proposal to Carnegie, the purposes of the program were stated to be:

1. Develop a system for collecting Western regional data for planning for graduate education by the 13 states and by smaller groupings of states.
2. Develop demonstration projects in a six-state target area to test new forms of student exchanges across state lines, new methods of financing such exchanges, and new ways of sharing graduate resources.
3. Develop a graduate education information program, including an inventory of existing Western graduate programs and an “early warning system” to alert the region to all plans for new graduate programs in the states.

The program got under way almost immediately after Jonsen's arrival with initiation of information gathering and reporting. During the first year the program produced more than a dozen publications such as the *Inventory of Doctoral Programs in the Western United States*, a survey of enrollments, an initial year listing of approved, terminated, and adjusted doctoral programs. In a significant service to both institutions and state higher education agencies, staff conducted ad hoc surveys in any discipline for information

pertinent to institutional and state planning for proposed new programs, possible terminations, or modifications.

In the field, the program kicked off with a joint meeting of the advisory council and the coordinating committee at the end of February 1978. Early plans were made, concerns shared.²³ The project seemed to be, and in some respects was, off to a good start.

But as the months went by and the project completed its first year, there were disappointments. Sirotkin reported to the executive committee in November 1978 that the program “was moving more slowly than we had hoped. . . . We need to carefully avoid the appearance and the reality of WICHE attempting to establish another layer of bureaucratic control over statewide program planning.” The root difficulty lay in getting the Demonstration States Coordinating Committee to agree upon and initiate specific collaborative activities. An idea strongly advanced by staff, with encouragement from some of the six states, was that the six should admit residents from others of the six to their graduate schools on a resident tuition basis. There were problems: the idea would require legislation in most states, and it threatened the larger states with the best-known institutions with an “exchange” so lopsided that participation would be indefensible with their supporters. In a first year progress report to Carnegie in mid-December 1978, staff reported its conclusion that the idea was “not a feasible short-range possibility.”

Fortunately, Alden Dunham and the Carnegie Corporation had expected that progress would be slow. Carnegie renewed its support for an additional two years, in December 1979.

Indeed, after two years the demonstration states were beginning to develop some grassroots interest in the possibilities. They thought that WICHE might facilitate the exchange of faculty among institutions in the six states and asked WICHE staff to collect and publicize names of such faculty. They thought it would be useful to compile and publicize an inventory of “unique facilities” that could be available to faculty or students in others of the states. In 1979, staff created the WICHE Information Clearinghouse, drawing upon Graduate Education Project staff who had already initiated a number of information bases for the project.

Following Sirotkin’s suggestion to Commission Chair Roy Lieuallen, they also began to formulate a plan under which institutions would make some of their “unique” programs available to selected graduate students from others of the demonstration states on a resident tuition basis. The plan provided that each institution’s nominations of specific degree programs would be subject to review and comment by all other graduate institutions in the region – a rather elaborate procedure that, with other features of the program, staff hoped would “restrain growth in the number of programs in the region by increasing the visibility of those that already exist, and by broadening student access to them.” In mid-1980 they obtained commission approval to initiate WRGP, the Western

Regional Graduate Program; its first students would be enrolled in fall 1981. As the research universities in the demonstration states and the relevant state higher education agencies pursued these elements of the program, they welcomed interest in some of the other states. In June 1981 the commission approved expansion to states throughout the region, and the mechanics of that expansion – a two-year process – began.

The extended Carnegie grant would expire in November 1981. In October, Jonsen was able to announce a second extension, to 1984. Jonsen had established contact with the Northwest Area Foundation that summer with the objective of supplementing Carnegie support for the project.

Partly in anticipation of the expiration of Carnegie support in 1984, in 1983 the Demonstration States Coordinating Committee decided to transform itself into an ongoing “Academic Planning Forum.” The forum would comprise one of the academic vice presidents or provosts in each of the five states, to continue the consideration of graduate program developments in the Northwest. WICHE tested the idea with the university presidents and found the response to be positive. The Northwest Academic Planning Forum (NWAPF) first met in March 1984.

Jonsen’s contacts with the Northwest Area Foundation were promising but extended. The foundation had areas of interest of its own that were consistent with objectives of the demonstration states but that went beyond what the committee had been considering. In June 1983, WICHE announced a one-year grant from the Northwest Area Foundation to support the Academic Planning Forum in: continuing support of educational planning initiatives in five Northwest states; assisting in a task force exploration of ways to strengthen cooperative action in telecommunications; and encouraging development of graduate-level cooperative education and internship programs incorporating work experience with traditional studies. As the initial grant period approached an end, in 1984 the foundation provided support for an additional 18 months. Forum activities were directed to information exchange; assisting in “border cooperation” among proximate institutions in two or more states; sharing of expensive equipment; libraries; and student and faculty exchanges through, for example, the cross-listing of courses. By fall 1984 Graduate Education Project staff were calling formation of the Academic Planning Forum “the major accomplishment” of the Northwest Area Foundation project.²⁴

The Graduate Education Project had, indeed, in the course of seven years with major funding from the Carnegie Corporation and a significant investment of WICHE funds, evolved into several ongoing programs. Its data collection and publication had developed into a major activity, an Information Clearinghouse that served all of WICHE and its member states. The Western Regional Graduate Programs exchange activity soon spread to all of the states except California and became an ongoing component of the Student Exchange Program. The interstate planning and resource sharing efforts of the Demonstration States Coordinating Committee evolved into the Northwest Academic

Planning Forum, an effort maintained by the five Northwest states. One of the forum's activities was NorthWestNet, funded in an amount of \$1.8 million by the National Science Foundation to provide supercomputer services to public and private enterprises in the Pacific Northwest. The forum helped initiate what became one of WICHE's major activities – sharing in educational telecommunications. It completed studies of manpower needs and resources and of existing and needed programs in the fields of pharmacy, teacher education, Ph.D. physics, public history (graduate), and cooperative education.

For Phil Sirotkin and Dick Jonsen, whose hopes for the project in the Northwest and indeed, in the whole WICHE region, had been so high, there nonetheless were major disappointments. In his report at the commission's semiannual meeting in June 1987, with authorization of a new Western Undergraduate Exchange on the agenda, Sirotkin affirmed that despite elements of risk, the commission needed to take chances, to be "proactive." Some things did not work out as expected – he referred to the Western Regional Graduate Program as a fallback from a failed effort to get the Northwest states to wipe out the nonresident tuition differential for graduate students entirely – a move that he had seen as a major step toward encouraging states to collaborate in planning for graduate offerings. And the Academic Planning Forum: "The original concept was to get the Northwest states to participate actively in joint planning and decision making. We thought that they could share information very candidly about programs that were strong and weak, those they would like to strengthen and those they would like to eliminate. But we haven't been terribly successful in achieving such joint academic planning." Shortly after its creation the members of the Northwest Academic Planning Forum decided to eliminate the word *planning* from its name. Given the realities, Jonsen felt the change was entirely appropriate.

WICHE made modest claims for the program in the final report to the Carnegie Corporation:

Project staff have a new appreciation for both the time involved in establishing such interstate efforts and the enabling commitment of agencies like the Carnegie Corporation. The long-range effects of these efforts are not certain, but we believe that the structures are politically and philosophically well grounded and likely to be productive.

The Student Exchange Program

The core of the Student Exchange Program is the professional exchange, PSEP. When started in 1953 it operated in the fields of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine. When Sirotkin arrived it included 14 professional fields, enrolled 1,224 students, included 134 receiving programs in public and private institutions in 12 Western states, and involved some \$5.25 million from the senders that passed through WICHE to the receivers.

With PSEP there seemed always to be troublesome problems. “Support fees” were, naturally, always in contention. Receiving institutions and states expected to receive some monetary advantage for reserving places for students from other states; the sending states sponsoring WICHE students wanted to pay as little as possible for the privilege. When PSEP began, the fees to be paid by a state for each student in each field of exchange were set by the commission after some consultation with institutions as to the amounts that would be acceptable. Twenty years later, as we have noted, state finances and legislative and institutional interest in program costs had changed dramatically. In 1974 receiving institutions prevailed in the determination of appropriate charges – the commission decided that in each field, support fees would be set on the basis of *average cost of operation, including a sum for facilities*. Average costs in each field would be determined by a study to be conducted by WICHE among all receiving institutions. In general, receiving institutions were happy with the new fee schedule; but the sending states, facing increases that in some cases doubled their costs, began reducing the number of students they sponsored each year. Moreover, sending states sometimes contracted with states or institutions, within or outside the WICHE region, where professional programs accepted WICHE students on the basis of some presumed marginal cost that was considerably less than the WICHE fee. Conditions suggested that more bilaterals were on the way, as new programs outside the region appeared and competition for students intensified. With this growing threat, the WICHE exchange, with its major advantage in giving students a number of enrollment choices within the region, could be destroyed.

After only a half dozen years of cost-based pricing, staff was impelled by problems caused by rapid inflation and by an increasing competition for students to abandon a policy that based support fees on average cost. In June 1980, McConnell presented recommendations to the SEP Committee and the commission for adjustments that would take some account of inflation but would be tempered by consideration of cost implications for the sending states. The committee and the commission approved his new fee recommendations but directed staff to study the support fee issue in light of changing conditions – inflation, bilateral contracts, applications and enrollments, and other such factors – and to report to the commission in December 1980. McConnell’s report led to a formal change in policy to provide that henceforth fees would represent “a negotiated price or fee-for-service, rather than exclusively a cost-of-education approach.” Fees were to be adjusted annually or biennially to avoid large increases. The commission once again adopted a policy statement intended to discourage states from entering into bilateral contracts. Lacking authority to direct anyone to do anything, this was all WICHE could do.

Three years later the commission as well as the staff were ready to move even farther away from cost-based fees. Continued limitations in state finances together with inflation led the commission to ask staff to bring to it, a year later in June 1984, fee recommendations that would be based on those currently in effect, though “with such incremental adjustments as are deemed justified.” At that June meeting the commission

approved recommendations in which increases were minor. The SEP Committee established an ad hoc group to work with staff in drafting a rationale, a “conceptual plan,” for support fees for commission review and guidance in June 1985. That plan recognized that regular cost studies were a considerable burden for institutions as well as for WICHE and that the results continued to show large variations in cost from one school to another despite efforts to define and measure costs on a comparable basis. It found that a calculation of *marginal* cost was not feasible. The policy outcome was pragmatic: fees should “bear some proportional relationship to average full cost” and should be negotiated biennially in light of cost of living and other factors.

In June 1986, PSEP fields were divided into two groups: group A encompassing fields in which nonresident students were generally unable to gain admission to public programs in other states unless they came with the support fees associated with WICHE designation; and group B programs in fields in which generally, nonresidents had no difficulty in gaining admission. In the group B fields, from any given state there often were WICHE students who paid resident tuition and other students who paid nonresident charges – by the mid-80s substantially higher, a condition that raised issues of equity. In the group B fields, the basis for the WICHE support fee was made the average of the *differential* between resident and nonresident tuition. Under this policy, the state subsidy per student was substantially reduced in each group B field. The division into A and B categories was accomplished without controversy.

Student Exchange Program Coordinator Sandy Jackson joined the WICHE staff in 1975 as a secretary. She was promoted two years later to staff associate, an exempt-level position. Other promotions culminated in her appointment as coordinator of the Student Exchange Program in 1991. For over 20 years she had continuing “firing-line” responsibility for the Professional Student Exchange Program and for both the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) and the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE).

Veterinary Medicine

In the later 1960s and early 1970s student pressures to enroll in veterinary programs were even greater than were pressures to enter human medicine. In the huge 13-state WICHE region there were only three public and no private veterinary colleges. Application pressures were so great that the California school almost never admitted students from other than the home state and Washington admitted only a few. Colorado was receiving signals from legislators that it needed to cut back on nonresidents in order to accommodate more Coloradans. In several states in the East, Midwest, and South, new veterinary programs were being planned. Both Colorado and Washington were considering expansion. In both states, WICHE facilitated study and collaborative action.

In the two states, plans for expansion developed along quite different lines. Colorado State University needed a new teaching hospital whether or not it increased its class size, most assuredly if it was to continue to play a significant regional role. In both Oregon

and Idaho there was considerable interest in establishing new veterinary colleges. The veterinary school at Washington State – located only a dozen miles from the University of Idaho – had plenty of incentive to explore possible collaborative relationships in both Oregon and Idaho.

Colorado State University took early action to seek a commitment of federal support for a new teaching hospital and in the mid-1970s was rewarded with a reservation of \$5.1 million, roughly half the cost. With the prospect of a considerably larger entering class of Colorado residents, the Colorado Legislature appropriated \$2.8 million in the spring of 1976. The plan also envisioned providing 65 places for WICHE students, double the number previously available; it would make it clearly a regional resource. CSU negotiated arrangements with other states under which a specified number of their residents would be admitted each year and would pay resident tuition. Their home states, through WICHE, would pay an additional sum in order to cover full cost of education, including cost of facilities. The plan would relieve several of the Rocky Mountain states of pressures to establish their own schools – a far more costly alternative. On the basis of contracts with each sending state, CSU would issue bonds to provide the remaining funds needed to build the new hospital. CSU admitted its first enlarged class in fall 1976. Both WICHE and CSU were proud to proclaim that the veterinary program at CSU was truly a *regional* program.

Washington developed a different kind of regional enterprise, identified simply as “WOI” after the names of the collaborating states (Washington, Oregon, Idaho). We have noted that in the 1960s and early ‘70s, both Idaho and Oregon entertained ambitions to create their own veterinary colleges. The school at WSU acknowledged that interest as, in 1974, it negotiated with Idaho a plan under which a facility for the clinical years would be built in Caldwell, ID, so that Idaho residents (and residents of other states by their own choice) could do the upper years of the program in Idaho. Negotiations with Oregon provided that Oregon residents would do the initial year and some components of later years in a new veterinary school at Oregon State University in Corvallis, finishing up at Washington State or in Caldwell. Washington State and its Oregon and Idaho partners agreed to accept each year a number of WICHE students from other states. With the program at CSU, the two would roughly double the number of places available for students from Western states that had no veterinary programs of their own.

Quite naturally, both CSU and WOI became dependent for students not only from the home states, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, but from other WICHE states. Language in the appropriation toward costs of the new hospital, and by obligations under the bonds issued to provide the regional share of that cost, required CSU to recover full educational cost for each WICHE student. As costs rose dramatically in the mid- and late 1980s, several of the feeder states reduced the number of students they would support. To recover full cost of the veterinary program, CSU found it necessary to

admit a number of applicants from outside the WICHE region. The university was able to negotiate these numbers and tuition charges with WICHE, without disrupting the program. It was possible also to ease the problem of rapidly increasing support fees: with the help of the chairman of the Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council, State Senator Wayne Allard of Colorado, CSU obtained changes in legislation in 1989 that continued the support fee that year for a period of six years.



Bill McConnell and the Student Exchange Program were the generators of a number of new WICHE programs in the mid-1970s. Some grew out of McConnell's manpower studies and cost studies, others out of his sensitivity to a need for information or for collaborative action that WICHE was well equipped to undertake. He was a key collaborator in the developing Graduate Education Project and much involved in the spin off – and activation – of the new WICHE Information Clearinghouse. In anticipation of dramatic changes in birth rates across the country, in 1978 he initiated a major study to project for the Western states the number of high school graduates to be expected in the ensuing 17 years – a study that later was expanded to cover all 50 states, updated every four or five years since McConnell's first edition in 1979. The report became a basic planning tool throughout the country. Student Exchange had become so active a program that for the annual meeting in 1978 it had an agenda book of its own that included 11 items requiring commission action.

It was a profound loss, in August 1983, when McConnell suffered a fatal heart attack while on a family mountain climb. Two decades later his contributions to WICHE and to higher education in the West continue to be obvious.



Adding Fields in the Professional Exchange

Fields had been added to PSEP from time to time as one or more WICHE states indicated their readiness to support their residents in such fields. In these cases, WICHE staff surveyed member states as to their interest in participating, and when at least one state was prepared to pay the support fees, the commission would add the program.

In the field of osteopathic medicine, by 1980 Alaska, Arizona, and New Mexico had executed bilateral contracts for education of their residents. The states were interested in terminating those contracts if the field were added to the WICHE exchange. Similarly, in chiropractic, Alaska had reported interest from students and members of the profession, and inquired whether that field might be added in PSEP. Staff inquiries found that Alaska was fully ready to send its residents in osteopathic programs and a similar response was expected from New Mexico. In chiropractic, Alaska supported adding the field but an effort to obtain an appropriation for the purpose in 1981 failed in the Alaska Senate. Both requests came to the annual meeting in December 1981. Staff reported

that students had no difficulty in gaining admission to programs of chiropractic. Staff recommended that osteopathy be added, but with respect to chiropractic, said that “current circumstances in this field make use of the PSEP mechanism inappropriate.”

The great majority of physicians were trained in allopathic medical schools. There were relatively few practitioners of osteopathy in the West. The medical profession was divided in its tolerance of a group that some physicians considered to have inferior training. Few physicians recognized chiropractic as a field of medical practice at all. In the nation, only eight schools were approved by the Council on Chiropractic Education and another three had status as “candidates for accreditation.” Two of the accredited schools and one of the “candidates” were in the WICHE region.

The commission was split over the addition of osteopathy to PSEP. At length, a motion to approve the staff’s favorable recommendation was adopted by a 7-4 vote with one abstention and one state in which the two commissioners present were split so that no vote could be tallied. For chiropractic, the SEP Committee had supported the negative staff recommendation but with a change in wording to “use of the PSEP mechanism is unnecessary at the present time.” Physician Commissioner Bill McGregor of Montana sought to restore the wording the staff had proposed – that the commission “finds it inappropriate to add this field to the PSEP.” His motion failed 10-3 and the original negative motion carried without dissent. Osteopathy was the 16th field in which exchanges were available in PSEP.

Establishing the Western Undergraduate Exchange

Since the early 1960s, WICHE executive directors had encouraged staff to find ways in which WICHE could make its student exchanges available to undergraduates. We have noted during the Kroepsch years the effort to replicate in the West, with the Western Regional Student Program (WRSP), the exchange that Kroepsch had started in New England. We noted the initiation of somewhat limited exchanges for undergraduates in the early 1970s in mineral engineering and among community colleges in several states. WICHE Scholars – a mechanism through which states could send residents to any program anywhere (but which only a single state found it politically feasible to use) – had begun shortly before Sirotkin arrived. Sirotkin hoped for the kind of collaboration that he and Dick Jonsen tried to initiate in the demonstration states in the Graduate Education Project – he wanted all states to eliminate their nonresident tuition differential. The fate of that idea at the graduate level seemed to foretell its certain fate at the undergraduate level. Sirotkin was persistent: in his report at the commission’s annual meeting in 1980, he observed that WICHE programs in the past had pertained primarily to graduate and professional education and speculated that in the future, public concerns for higher education would emphasize access issues in undergraduate education.

In December 1985 Sirotkin learned that his new Utah commission member, W. Rolfe Kerr – recently appointed commissioner of higher education in that state – was

interested in finding ways by which Utah might make arrangements with Idaho and other states for across-border exchanges. Sirotkin called Kerr and followed up with a letter of January 29, 1986, to let him know that WICHE would be happy to join with Utah in sponsoring a meeting of interested state higher education executive officers in the Rocky Mountain states to explore ideas for expanding multilateral reciprocity. Kerr welcomed the proposal and added Colorado SHEEO Blenda Wilson to the sponsoring group.

The meeting was held in Kerr's offices immediately prior to WICHE's semiannual meeting in June 1986. At each state's expense, some 20 representatives of state higher education offices in nine WICHE states and Nebraska were present. SEP staff and the clearinghouse had compiled information about current reciprocal arrangements in the West, multilateral exchanges in New England and in the South, and a range of possible approaches. There was genuine interest in an undergraduate exchange mechanism in several of the states. The group asked that WICHE outline several possible approaches and reconvene the group. That second meeting was held in September, the participants now representing 12 states. The group believed it was on the track of a useful idea; it asked that WICHE staff, with a committee of a half dozen SHEEOs to be appointed by Sirotkin, develop a specific proposal for a multilateral undergraduate exchange, to be reviewed by the 13 WICHE states and presented to the commission in June 1987.

A proposal for a "Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)" was developed under direction of Bill McConnell's successor as SEP director, Frank Abbott. The advisory group agreed to several principles that would define the concept: each state would control the degree programs its institutions would make available in the exchange, as well as the numbers and qualifications of students to be admitted; students would pay resident tuition "plus some additional percentage of that rate," though less than the nonresident rate; the flow of students would be monitored by a regional committee and WICHE staff; and any state could, if it wished, limit the number of its own residents permitted to leave the state through the program. At the annual meeting in December 1986 the commission approved the concept, and at the semiannual meeting the following June authorized the program. WUE students would pay resident tuition plus 50 percent of that amount – a sum that without exception was substantially less than nonresident tuition. With the necessary advertising and processes of admission, the first students would enroll in the fall of 1988. On staff recommendation, the commission terminated the Community College and Mineral Engineering exchanges with the understanding that programs available in each would now be available in the Western Undergraduate Exchange. The shift would help solve such unreasonable imbalances in student flow as happened in the fall of 1986, when of the 409 students in the Community College Exchange, 395 were from Montana – in which state one nonresident was enrolled through the exchange.

In preparation for launch of the new program, each state that was ready to share in the program executed a "participation agreement" with WICHE outlining the

prerogatives and responsibilities of each. States would inform WICHE well in advance as to the programs they would make available to residents of other states that were participating in the program and of any restrictions they would apply. WICHE staff would compile the state listings in a bulletin each year; states would give the bulletin the widest possible distribution in high schools and colleges. Students would apply directly to the institutions and programs of their interest. Consistent with policies of the state concerned, admission or denial was entirely the prerogative of the institution. In the age of the computer the program could be handled by the current staff at both institutional and WICHE levels. The major new expense was publication and distribution of the annual catalog – a barebones document on newsprint, published at a cost that WICHE found it could absorb within its current budget.

In the fall of 1988, its opening year, the Western Undergraduate Exchange accommodated 640 students in 56 colleges and universities in 10 states. One year later the number of students jumped to 2,493, of institutions to 74, and states to 12. By fall 2000, WUE students numbered 14,099. Staff calculates that tuition savings to these students and their families amounted to \$57,406,931 in that year alone.

Developments in Health Fields

One might infer from the governors' action in creating the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education that their predominating concern had to do with the health professions – more specifically with the prospective supply of practitioners in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and public health – and with the difficulty residents of many of the states were having in gaining admission for study in these fields. For 20 years, WICHE's core program, Student Exchange, included only professions related to medical practice. One of Harold Enarson's first actions was to arrange for a comprehensive review of the field of mental health. Also in his first year he sought and received authorization to work with leaders in nursing to define needs in nursing education and practice in which the new regional agency might be of assistance.

When Phil Sirotkin arrived in 1976, both the Mental Health and the Nursing programs were highly active and well regarded throughout the region. Student Exchange still gave emphasis to professions in health fields, but forestry, librarianship, and law had been added.

Mental Health

Sirotkin was experienced in mental health issues at both state and national levels and was well acquainted with the WICHE Mental Health Program that he had helped define and initiate 20 years earlier. It now was headed by George Lowe, whom he knew well and in whom he had full confidence. Within weeks after his arrival he created the position of deputy director and appointed Lowe to the job. While deputy, Lowe continued to head

up the Mental Health – soon to be renamed Mental Health and Human Services – Program. During its 22 years of operation the program had undertaken some 50 discrete projects that included:

- ▶ Institutes, courses, and conferences to help mental health professionals and paraprofessionals update their knowledge of mental illness and its treatment.
- ▶ Research on mental retardation and special education.
- ▶ Programs to improve the collection and analysis of mental health data.
- ▶ Assistance to states in developing accountability tools.
- ▶ Assistance to states in developing mental health manpower information systems.
- ▶ Information for states about services needed by the chronically mentally ill and ethnic minorities, including strategies for meeting those needs and staff skills needed for serving those groups.
- ▶ Training programs for jailers and other corrections personnel.²⁵

Mental Health staff regularly initiated projects in collaboration with other WICHE units – Nursing, the Internship Program, Minority Education, and the Information Clearinghouse.

That the program had moved forward aggressively in the field of corrections troubled some of the commissioners. The concern was whether WICHE's role properly extended to criminal justice fields. In April 1977, while the commission was under heavy attack and its members perhaps more than usually sensitive to priorities, a proposal for a program of "continuing education for jailers" was before the executive committee for approval. At length, and after changing the proposed project's title to get rid of the term "jailers" and sound more "professional," the committee approved proceeding to seek the needed funds – but it also asked the Committee on the Future to review the scope and definition of the entire corrections program. The review was much welcomed by corrections staff, who found it difficult to work in an area they knew to be of doubtful status with WICHE governing authorities. The Committee on the Future asked a special committee of three to pursue the question.

Origins of the program in corrections may be traced back nearly 20 years to a request of the Western Governors' Conference in 1959 for help with a study of the possibility of creating a regional facility for dealing with problem juvenile delinquents. We have reported that WICHE's preliminary contacts in member states led to the conclusion that a regional *facility* was not a workable idea, but that a regional *training and research center* would be. The governors accepted the change. In 1961 WICHE obtained funding for a planning study and appointed William T. (Tom) Adams as director. Adams was an ambitious and capable administrator; under his leadership the juvenile emphasis was soon extended to other corrections problems. Now, some 15 years later in October 1977, the special committee of review reported that the corrections program was a strong one that in its view was clearly within WICHE's scope. Indeed, it said the activity should

be identified by the more inclusive concept and name “criminal justice.” An advisory council like that for mental health should be established. The report was endorsed by the full commission without dissent at its semiannual meeting in February 1978.

But under the pounding WICHE was taking in 1977 and 1978, the question continued to trouble Utah Commissioner Donald Holbrook and some of his colleagues – including Phillip Sirotkin. Appointment of the advisory council did not happen. Funds were obtained from LEAA, the federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, for a conference in June 1979 that would consider the WICHE role and a possible underwriting of a five-year criminal justice program. The conference produced broad support for the WICHE program, but still WICHE took no action. The issue came to the commission at its annual meeting in June 1980, more than two years after the commission had affirmed the field for WICHE development. Once again, proceeding with a criminal justice program was approved by the commission – but by a vote in which among the 13 states there were three abstentions and three negatives, thus with just seven in the affirmative. Probably impelled by the commission’s obvious reluctance to carry forward a program that had received major support from a number of federal agencies and was well received in the field, the then-director, Frank Dell’Apa, left WICHE at this critical time.

Circumstances were ripe for change. The fact was that Sirotkin had concluded that for the WICHE Commission, corrections simply was not a priority. Efforts continued to find funding for a couple of proposals that had been submitted earlier, but as they were unsuccessful and the Dell’Apa position remained unfilled, the Corrections Program came to an end.

In December 1976, probably reflecting NIMH interest in and support for programs of evaluation, the WICHE Mental Health staff initiated an ambitious, long-term project concerned with program accountability. It convened directors of state programs and legislators from the Western states to identify major issues of accountability that were of concern to them. The group identified 17 issues, the first being a need to specify criteria for measuring outcomes of mental health programs. WICHE then convened mental health administrators, practitioners, educators, legislators, and measurement specialists to consider which elements of mental health programs would indicate their effectiveness and to suggest methods for evaluating those elements. An accountability model was outlined, comprising a uniform but flexible cost-reporting system, a measure of psychological impairment, a measure of social disruption and one of client satisfaction, and a brief summary that placed program impact and cost data side by side. With WICHE coordination, Hawaii, Montana, Utah, and Washington put the model to test in 1978 and 1979, as the other WICHE states observed how the model functioned. Leadership in identifying data needs and developing systems for data collection and analysis continued to be a priority for the WICHE program.

George Lowe left the WICHE deputy director position in late summer 1979 and soon thereafter left WICHE; Graduate Education Program Director Dick Jonsen succeeded him as deputy director. Joe Alexander succeeded Lowe as director of Mental Health and Human Services.

In the mid-1960s, federal legislation had created the Community Mental Health Centers program through which, throughout the country over a period of time, many treatment programs were shifted from state hospitals to a variety of community organizations. As this shift occurred, priorities for the WICHE program of continuing education (and other support) changed significantly. Throughout the 1970s and '80s, staff gave high priority to:

- ▶ A range of projects focusing on community mental health services for minority populations and ways of increasing minority participation in practice and in leadership roles.
- ▶ Research and education that would improve state and community program evaluation. In June 1983 the commission approved a proposal that would create "templates" with which state mental health agencies could assess staffing issues and costs in community mental health organizations. In August 1984 it approved a proposal for developing automated data technology systems aimed at improving human services management. In December 1985 it authorized the initial phases of a project that would establish staffing patterns for the several kinds of professionals employed in mental health services and would study the impact of staffing on service quality and costs.²⁶

The Mental Health Program was a pioneer in promoting collaboration between state mental health programs and academia to address service, education, and research issues. In the 1980s the program conducted five regional meetings and published four reports on these issues. In response to a request of the National Institute for Mental Health and the U.S. Public Health Service, WICHE hosted a national meeting on the topic in January 1987. At the meeting, state mental health administrators and university representatives identified seven collaborative models and outlined a plan of action to increase university/state collaboration. The action plan called for continuing the meeting group for specific follow-up activities, and a second meeting was held the following June. The outcomes of the meetings were reported and an ongoing subcommittee helped stimulate increasing collaboration throughout the WICHE region and nationally, as part of the plan of action.

Increased collaboration led to the identification of specific human resource issues that required priority attention in both the institutions of higher education and in state and local mental health agencies. The issues included recruitment and retention of minority populations in the mental health disciplines; preparation of mental health professionals to work with persons with serious mental illness; preparation of staff to work with the growing elderly population; and making education and training more accessible in rural areas. To address these issues the Mental Health Program arranged a conference

on “Strengthening State Mental Health/Academic Linkages in the West” in Seattle in March 1990. Under the leadership of Meredith Davis, WICHE mental health director, the conference featured successful collaborative efforts relating to these issues. The report describing these linkages, published in September 1990, helped set the agenda for the Mental Health Program and for the WICHE states on into the 1990s.

The significance of the Mental Health Program in bringing higher education and professional practice together seems impressive. The fact remains that throughout its history, questions about the appropriateness of WICHE’s heavy involvement in the field continued to trouble a few commissioners, notwithstanding termination of the corrections program. The doubts were outweighed by support in the field (and among other commissioners) but must have concerned program directors, who also were challenged to keep the staff members they most wanted in the face of an almost total dependence for program activities upon “soft money” – funding derived from contracts and grants, the timing and continuity of which were anything but certain.

At the outset in 1955, clearly the WICHE Commission had supported the development of the Mental Health Program. In its core budget it provided funds to employ staff and support the program’s advisory council. But after 10 years the commission was ready to question dependence of the Mental Health Program on WICHE funds. The executive committee discussed the question at length in December 1964. WICHE underwriting that year was \$30,000. Operational support provided by the National Institute of Mental Health would come to an end in 1967. Participating institutions and states were an obvious potential source. The commission chose gentle words: “States wishing to continue their participation in the regional program should be offered the opportunity to join on a voluntary basis.” An annual state contribution of \$7,500 was “suggested.” All WICHE states would be welcome to continue in the program whether or not they made the suggested contribution.

Thus began a new relationship between WICHE and the Mental Health Program, in which benefits to the participating states were taken to warrant their responsibility, or shared responsibility, for continuation of the program.²⁷ Financially, Mental Health was on its own by 1970. Agency officials in many of the states, often with the help of the state’s WICHE commissioners, attempted to obtain the requested state funding, and typically in eight to 10 states succeeded either through appropriations or through allocations made by the appropriate state agency. As Sirotkin arrived in 1976, it was apparent that the program could no longer function on fee income of about \$75,000 annually, and in 1978 the state fee was doubled, to \$15,000. Initially, only a half dozen states paid the new fee. Though an active program of conferences, workshops, studies, and publications continued, financing was a continuing, serious problem.

In June 1985 the commission authorized Mental Health staff to proceed, prior to action of the commission, to seek up to \$25,000 for possible “technical assistance workshops” – freedom to submit proposals before commission review and approval. It

had extended an equivalent authorization to the Information Clearinghouse six months earlier. The two actions indicated substantial relaxation of the tight control of program that the commission had undertaken in 1978.

Despite tenuous funding, the program continued at what seemed to be “full speed ahead.” A report to the commission in June 1988 summarizing some of its activity during the prior year is impressive:

Meetings held during the year included a workshop to aid states in developing human resource development (HRD) plans and fundable HRD proposals; two task force meetings related to minority mental health concerns; a seminar for nursing leaders from state hospitals and university programs; a conference focused on integrating human resource data into state management information systems; a workshop on the states’ role in developing case management systems for severely and persistently mentally ill individuals; a national task force meeting on utilization of state management information systems to answer human resource development research questions, and a followup meeting of a working committee of this task force.

Nursing

In its 20 years during the Enarson and Kroepsch administrations, the Nursing Program had proved to be a national leader in nursing education at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels. Its program was innovative, active, well received. As Phil Sirotkin took up duties as WICHE executive director in mid-1976, the program was operating at full bore and its principal problem was its long-standing problem: finding funds to cover its administrative costs. Funding issues had been a concern of WCHEN, the nursing council, as well as of the WICHE Commission, for years. Indirect cost allowances for the *training* programs supported by federal agencies were far below actual costs. Many of WCHENS’s federal grants and contracts were for training programs, not for research. On these projects Jo Elliott included as much overhead as possible as direct cost line items, but substantial amounts of true costs went uncovered – WICHE picked up the bill. In Sirotkin’s early years when state legislative and executive agencies were especially sensitive about reimbursement of indirect costs, the inability of the Nursing Program to recover full overhead costs on training grants was a major problem.

But in spite of funding difficulties, the Nursing Program was not in jeopardy during the difficult years that greeted Phil Sirotkin. Indeed, healthcare people in California and elsewhere in the region were active and effective in communicating their strong support of WICHE to political leaders throughout the region. Many of the activities WCHEN initiated in the later 1960s remained in operation in the later 1970s after Phillip Sirotkin’s arrival.

New initiatives appeared. In the later 1960s the Nursing Program (and Mental Health) took the lead at WICHE in initiating programs addressed to increasing minority access and progression. With a three-year project on “Faculty Development to Meet

Minority Group Needs: Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Exchange,” the Nursing Program in 1971 began to give emphasis to the special needs of minorities in nursing practice and to the dearth of minorities in nursing education, especially in leadership roles. The project was funded by the Kellogg Foundation and was considered a genuine breakthrough by WICHE staff. It was followed in 1974 with a project, “Models for Introducing Cultural Diversity in Nursing Curricula.” By the time that project ended in 1977, minority concerns were embedded in all WICHE proposals and projects.

Bringing minority concerns into a program focus at WICHE was not an entirely simple matter. To head the new venture in nursing in 1971, WCHEN and Kroepsch had employed a strong candidate from California, a young African American woman, Marie Branch. In response to opposition from one commissioner, Kroepsch responded that there was abundant evidence of Branch’s excellent qualifications and that her appointment had been consummated. For WCHEN staff (and doubtless for staff throughout WICHE), Kroepsch’s decision was a powerful morale builder. Indeed, Branch proved to be a creative and effective administrator and a highly regarded member of the WICHE staff.

We have observed that during the 1960s and 1970s the number of nursing associate degree programs increased rapidly both in community colleges and in four-year institutions. Whether two-year people were adequately prepared for nursing practice was a matter of debate among employers and in both hospital and baccalaureate programs. Leaders in the nursing unit at the Kellogg Foundation convened *ad hoc* advisory committees in 1977, and again in 1979, to consider a role the foundation might play with respect to this issue. In December 1979, WCHEN advanced to the WICHE Executive Committee a proposal for a small planning grant to document needs and outline a program, probably of three years, to address the questions. Duly approved and then funded by Kellogg, the planning committee proposed a three-year project that would include a comprehensive survey and intensive work with teams from associate degree programs and counterpart health care agencies, in study and discussion of problems in both preparation and practice. Reports and recommendations for the profession would be the final product. During the early weeks it became clear that the project needed to include analysis of baccalaureate programs along with the associate degree programs – modifications that were approved by the foundation. The project was completed in December 1985. The issue has not disappeared within the nursing profession.

In the usual busy atmosphere of demanding current projects and of proposals to address new issues in nursing education and practice, in 1980 Jo Eleanor Elliott – approaching her 23rd anniversary as program director – accepted “the offer she could not refuse.” That summer she would become director of the U.S. Public Health Service Division of Nursing. At WICHE, Elliott had taken charge immediately and had led its Nursing Program to a role of national leadership in addressing many of the most

acute issues in the profession. Sally Ruybal succeeded Elliott. About a year later Sirotkin named Jeanne Kearns director. Kearns served through the period WCHEN continued as a WICHE enterprise and on into the years when its successor, the Western Institute of Nursing (WIN), functioned independently.

WCHEN and its director sought additional support at the WICHE budget meeting in June 1980. The effort was not immediately successful, but the commission asked Sirotkin to report at its next meeting the funding alternatives that were available for the program. The director set up a small advisory committee. It was testimony to the major place nursing held in the WICHE program that in December, Sirotkin recommended and the commission approved an allocation of \$50,000 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1981.

As nursing programs, agencies, and individuals in the profession found that they could raise substantial amounts of money on their own, operation as an independent organization became more attractive. In fact, WCHEN and WICHE leaders had been discussing that possibility for several years. In mid-1984, WCHEN appointed an *ad hoc* committee to make recommendations for the future. The “committee of seven” recommended that WCHEN “be phased out of WICHE by 1987 and that a new regional nursing organization designed to promote service and education as partners in the profession of nursing and furthering its role in health care, be created.” The recommendation was approved by the WCHEN Board in February 1985 and by the WICHE Commission in December of that year. The decision had been approved by an “about unanimous vote” of the full WCHEN Council in October. By July 1986, a year ahead of the original target, the leaders of the new Western Institute of Nursing (WIN) and WICHE were exchanging letters of appreciation and good will.

Optometry

We reported that early in the Kroepsch administration the commission was asked to do a supply and demand study for optometry and that it approved the proposal with conditions that virtually assured that such a study would not be undertaken. That was, indeed, the outcome. But the interest of some of the member states in bringing optometry into the Student Exchange Program kept the commission aware of the field. Optometry was, in fact, added to SEP and the first students enrolled in 1970-71. WICHE was well known in the three optometric colleges in the region (two in California and one in Oregon) as it was also in the state optometric associations.

In 1978, originating in the interest of Dean Willard Bleything at the College of Optometry at Oregon’s Pacific University, the American Optometric Association asked WICHE to undertake a study of the need for continuing education programs in the region. The executive committee authorized staff to seek the necessary funds. Through a process and for reasons not found in the record, WICHE staff (probably in collaboration with Dean Bleything) broadened the concept to a comprehensive study and

to the development of a regional plan for optometric education. Funds for the project were awarded by the HEW Bureau of Health Manpower's Division of Allied Health Professions in September 1978. The proposal called for assessing manpower needs and assuring educational opportunity.²⁸

WICHE established a project advisory committee that included four executives from the three schools in the region and 22 others, including practicing optometrists, presidents and chief academic officers of universities, a state legislator and legislative staff member, an ophthalmologist, state health officials, state higher education executive officers, representatives of state licensing boards and optometric associations, as well as the American Optometric Association and the director of the national Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry. The WICHE director was Susan Klein, Ph.D., a member of the Health Resources Program staff. This large committee met with WICHE staff four times in the course of the project, and it endorsed the concept and design of the resulting regional plan for optometric education.

The plan was a most ambitious one. Its analysis and recommendations covered manpower needs and educational access for each state, plans for a cooperative regional network of off-campus clinical sites for fourth-year students, steps to assure placement of students in areas of need throughout the region, and a much-enhanced sharing of resources among the three schools. Development of the plan called for coordination by a committee representing the three schools and a second committee representing the member states, with coordination at the regional level by WICHE. The program would be developed during a three-year period. Outside support in the amount of \$1,173,123 would be needed for the start-up, after which per student support fees (the amounts paid for each student that a state sponsored) would carry the program. The plan would indeed coordinate planning and educational resources for meeting needs throughout the region.

The proposed plan was systematically and extensively vetted in each of the 13 states, with leaders in the profession, higher education institutions, and executive and legislative branches of government. There were concerns about costs and some questions about the proposed arrangements for clinical sites, but in general, those who would be most affected signaled their support. A proposal for a program and funds for implementation was approved by the commission in May 1979.

But financial support to implement the plan was never found. Remaining funds in the study grant were exhausted by mid-1980. At the June 1980 meeting the commission authorized the executive director to set up an advisory council for optometry similar to the Veterinary Advisory Council, but in the absence of funding, interest in the plan became dissipated and no further action was taken. The author speculates that with additional time for the institutions to consider the plan's certain impact upon their own direction, the introduction of regional planning and action seemed excessively risky.

Dentistry

In June 1980 the Health Resources section of the Mental Health and Human Services Program, working with Bill McConnell of Student Exchange, requested and received commission approval to seek funding for a manpower study in dentistry. A representative committee of 23, including deans of the eight dental schools in the region, was established, but absent success in funding, the directors of Health Resources and the Student Exchange Program were left with the task of doing the manpower study themselves. When Health Resources director Susan Klein left WICHE in the summer of 1982, McConnell continued the project and brought it to the stage of review with the advisory committee, and then to publication, in March 1983.

As in optometry, the report was extensively reviewed with representatives of the executive and legislative branches of government including state higher education officers, with the schools, and with practicing dentists and their associations. The study in optometry had produced a plan for regional action that included specific kinds of interaction among schools and the states. In dentistry, the “elements of a regional plan” cited in the published report were goal-oriented rather than specific. Example: “Individual states without dental schools and individual dental schools should develop formal cooperative agreements whereby the schools will provide services to the states in such areas as continuing education, public dental health programs, services to special populations, and others which might be identified by the parties.” Despite extensive efforts to obtain the necessary funds, financial support for the plan was never found. In its absence, the project was completed with publication of the study report.

Other Projects

In an account even as extended as this one, it is not possible to cite every activity to which WICHE has given some attention, or even to “do justice” to a good many that are, at least, mentioned. Beyond the health fields, described above, three programs of major significance matured during the Sirotkin years: those that focused on education targeted to minorities, the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (WCET), and the Information Clearinghouse – later, the program of Policy Analysis and Research. Before getting to these, we should take brief note of three programs that made significant contributions during their active years, which for various reasons were not continued: the *WICHE Internships*, activities focused on the *community colleges*, and the role of higher education in *economic development* within the region.

WICHE Internships

We have reported above the establishment in 1968 of a program of “economic development internships,” upon the initiative of the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Agencies in other fields soon

observed the value of the program and joined in. Shortly before Sirotkin's arrival there were 275 interns and a half dozen agency sponsors from differing fields. The Reagan presidency brought progressive cutbacks in many federal programs, and in 1981, the original and major underwriter of the internships, the federal Economic Development Administration, was terminated. WICHE made efforts to continue the program with other sponsors, but it was not possible to maintain internships in a number sufficient to cover the substantial costs of program administration. The project director, Robert Hullinghorst, left in summer 1978 when the initial cutbacks occurred at the EDA. At the annual meeting in December 1981, the commission terminated the program, effective the following June.

The internship program was a popular one with higher education institutions within the region, which could benefit from the opportunity for practical experience for their students; with the many students who sought exactly such opportunities; and with the sponsoring agencies. The program was totally dependent upon support from outside sources and WICHE was unable to continue the internships when that support fell below costs.

Community Colleges

We have noted the rapid growth in the U.S. of the number of community junior colleges in the 1960s and noted also WICHE's initiatives early in the 1970s for a program of community college student exchange and for a collaboration in developing programs and administrative services among community colleges in Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. As community colleges became more common, the attention given these new institutions both regionally and nationally did not sit well with all commissioners and some legislators, who were troubled by an expansion of "higher education" to what came to be called "postsecondary education," embracing the community colleges, proprietary schools, and other privately sponsored programs as well. Concerns grew out of a likely competition for students and, certainly, of competition for money. Such reservations were part of the background for the action of the joint gubernatorial-legislative committee, which in March 1978 asked WICHE to propose definitions of the terms "higher education" and "postsecondary education" and to frame a statement of the WICHE role with reference to each. We have noted that, as approved, the WICHE role was broad; it would extend to virtually any educational activity beyond high school.

In February 1977 the Committee on the Future discussed and approved a proposal that WICHE develop a program of continuing education and other services for community colleges. At a time of widespread sensitivity to the scope of the WICHE program, the commission's executive committee wanted assurance that the intended beneficiaries were interested in having WICHE initiate such a program. At the next meeting, staff reported that its survey showed broad support for such a WICHE

program. The committee authorized staff to seek funding; but funding efforts were not successful.

Staff interest in the community college phenomenon did not diminish. Deputy Director Dick Jonsen, in fall 1983, arranged for presentations and discussion of the two-year institutions at the commission's annual meeting in December 1983 and for a staff paper to provide background and questions about a WICHE role. The panel and the discussion were lively and led to a direction to staff to bring in a proposal at the next meeting, in June 1984, of activities relating to the community colleges that WICHE should consider. Staff convened a representative group from the colleges, state higher education agencies, legislatures, and other areas, and developed a plan for a legislative work conference. The conference was held in September 1985 in collaboration with the Western Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments. In addition to a volume of working papers, conference proceedings and a summary report, *Community Colleges at the Crossroads*, were published.

But since that legislative conference, WICHE activities have not focused on community colleges as a special component in higher education. By the mid-1980s, community colleges had simply become an accepted part of higher education and of the WICHE program.

Economic Development

Back in 1960 the Western Governors' Conference asked WICHE to plan and arrange a conference on the role of higher education in the economic development of the West. In collaboration with the Council of State Governments, WICHE made the subject the theme of a legislative conference, held in November 1961. Staff efforts following the conference showed that the topic was easier to talk about than to act upon. Associate Director Kevin Bunnell worked with commissioners and representatives of some of the Western universities and some of the state economic development staff to define possible action programs that would appeal to both groups. No proposal appealed to more than a few reviewers; no commissioner had enough interest in the idea to assume leadership. In March 1963 Executive Director Kroepsch advised the executive committee that the absence of agreement had led him to give up on the idea of a WICHE economic development program at the time.

In the turmoil of 1976 to 1978, the conflict over the higher education role in economic development arose once more. The governors urged that WICHE "should consider assuming a role in the field of economic development and . . . this role [should] be given a high priority."²⁹ With or without reference to the experience of more than 15 years earlier, the commission proceeded in 1979 to set up an economic development subcommittee of its committee for the internship program and asked the subcommittee and staff to propose a program of action. The staff convened a group of more than a

hundred state and local economic development officers and educators to explore ideas for action.

Following that meeting, held in March 1980, based on suggestions in a survey at the conference, staff drafted proposals for continuing education for economic development staff; the compilation of data and provision of technical assistance to development agencies; and the building of linkages between economic development agencies and higher education institutions – the total of which seemed to the commission to take the WICHE effort too far, too fast. At its semiannual meeting in June, the commission modified one of the three proposals and authorized staff to seek support for a study of needs. The proposal was submitted to the Economic Development Administration at the time EDA was awaiting the outcome of congressional action that, as it turned out, terminated the agency. The WICHE Economic Development Program was alive but not well. There were delays as the EDA was closed out and as efforts were made to fund the proposal. A sum approaching \$50,000 that remained from the internship program enabled WICHE to keep the matter on the agenda.

Encouraged by Sirotkin, as reported to the commission in December 1981, the WICHE Information Clearinghouse staff turned the focus of the proposal to manpower needs in high-technology industries, specifically in engineering, computer technologies, and geophysical science. During spring and summer 1982, WICHE established a blue-ribbon Western Technical Manpower Council that was to produce a statement of technical manpower needs and proposals for action within the region and in each of the states. That statement would be the basis for a series of conferences that would focus on needs in each of the states. Sirotkin persuaded the CEO of Hewlett-Packard, John Young, to join Oregon Governor Victor Atiyeh (the governor designated by the Western Governors' Conference as liaison with WICHE), as cochair. It was a high-powered group of 41 that included the governors of Idaho, Nevada, and Washington, as well as Atiyeh, along with U.S. and state senators and representatives, state higher education executives, heads of universities and technical colleges, engineering deans and deans of business management, and executives from industry, banks, and the media. To bring more technical people into the project, a task force of 15 engineering deans was appointed, along with a 20-member science technical task force. Fund-raising efforts produced small contributions from a half dozen foundations and corporations to supplement the funds remaining from the Internship Program.

For the initial meeting of the council, Information Clearinghouse staff developed extensive background material, collected in a publication, *High-Technology Manpower in the West: Issues, State Profiles, Regional and National Efforts*. It outlined a policy statement for council review. Following the initial meeting it expanded the outline into a draft that became the council's report, *High-Technology Manpower in the West: Strategies for Action*, published by WICHE immediately after council approval at its second meeting in early January 1983.

There followed extensive efforts to schedule follow-up conferences in each of the states. Staff also canvassed members of the council and the two task forces concerning eight follow-up projects that grew out of council discussions. State meetings were, indeed, held in six of the 13 states during the next year; but plans and efforts to have conferences in the other states were not successful. Moreover, efforts to get an evaluation of the eight possible follow-up projects from members of the council had such limited response that staff concluded that the results were unusable. With project funding soon to run out, in September 1983 the program director, Holly Zanville, took a position with the Oregon State System of Higher Education. The thrust of the program toward high technology had gone as far as it was going to go.³⁰

For a year WICHE's Economic Development Program lay fallow. Early in 1985 WICHE's director of Student Exchange, Frank Abbott, added responsibility for the Economic Development Program. With others on the staff, in an economy rapidly becoming global, he was interested in the role of higher education in preparing young people for service in other countries, through language programs and through special centers for education, research, and service around the world. His report *International Programs and Centers for Instruction, Research and Public Service in the Western States*, intended for interested persons in business and government as well as in education, was published in 1986. The same concern led to a proposal for a "Western Program of Education for International Leadership," with a blue-ribbon Council on Education for International Leadership to assess needs in the region for education and research and to propose action programs to meet such needs. In June 1986 the commission approved seeking the necessary funds; but funding efforts were unsuccessful.

The mid-80s saw the Japanese leading the rest of the world in economic achievement and growth. There was increasing public interest and concern about elements of Japanese culture, education, industry, and other qualities that permitted such achievement. Staff became aware of a rapid growth of interest in Japanese language programs, in both high schools and colleges in the West. Japanese language programs were quite common in the coastal states, but there was growing interest throughout the region. Qualified teachers were scarce, and many of the available teaching materials were of unproven effectiveness. Staff proposed, and the commission approved, efforts to be made in collaboration with the National Foreign Language Center in Washington, D.C., to convene a seminar for WICHE member state education officers and school and college representatives to look at the complexities involved for Americans in the study of Japanese and at selected successful programs at all educational levels. Funding was obtained from the United States-Japan Foundation and the Japan Foundation; leadership for the meeting was arranged with the significant help of the National Foreign Language Center. The seminar was held in October 1990 with representatives from 10 of the WICHE states. Conference proceedings, *Japanese: Language, Culture*, were published in 1991.



The three programs just described were important components of the WICHE program during the Phillip Sirotkin administration. Indeed, the high technology manpower project was his proposal; he was key in its development. He gave strong support to efforts to engage community college issues more extensively within the WICHE program and to bringing an international dimension to efforts in economic development. Three other programs remain to be described that achieved major objectives during his administration and that continue to be important elements of WICHE effort.

Programs for Ethnic Minorities

By the late 1960s, the need for programs to address the severe underrepresentation of people of color in higher education within the region clearly concerned the WICHE staff. Both the Mental Health and the Nursing programs were actively at work to increase minority participation. In 1970, staff persuaded the executive committee to allocate “hard money” to kick off a minority program that, within a year or thereabouts, would need to find sufficient outside funding to continue the effort.

Pat Locke, who had been appointed to the new position and joined the staff in fall 1970, created a significant higher education program for Native American students; but despite WICHE intentions, there was no program whatever for other minority groups. Within the staff there was pride in what she had been able to accomplish within Native American communities, but awareness, even dismay, that there was no activity with respect to other minorities. Locke left WICHE at the end of 1977. Sirotkin obtained from the Ford Foundation a grant to permit convening two task forces of representatives from throughout the region to consider minority needs in higher education and to propose possible action. The task forces, each with 12 members representing differing minority populations, met in May and June 1978. Their recommendations went to the commission at the annual meeting in August of that year for an ambitious program that would include establishing a clearinghouse of information, research and policy analysis, training, and technical assistance.

At the time, WICHE had been under attack by governors and legislators for two years. It was a time when commissioners and staff alike were highly sensitive to the interpretations of a WICHE role that the Western governors had affirmed only a few weeks previously. With respect to minority education programs, Roy Lieuallen cautioned, “WICHE cannot and should not attempt to impose changes on institutions. . . . Program development for minorities and the recruitment of students is an institutional task in far greater measure than it is a WICHE task.” Nonetheless, in response to Sirotkin’s efforts, wheels began to turn for a more inclusive program. Before the end of the year, funds were being sought to provide for a WICHE clearinghouse of information on issues in minority education and to support minority graduate student research.

In the Mental Health Program a proposal was pending for developing curricula for innovative practices with minorities. In 1979, still unsuccessful in obtaining outside support, Sirotkin appointed Leonard Salazar director of a Minority Education Program that remained to be developed and funded beyond a start-up year, for which WICHE had allocated \$40,000 of its precious hard money.

In 1980, Salazar and a collaborative headquartered at the University of Washington, the Western Name Exchange, sought support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) to underwrite WICHE administration of the program. In the Western Name Exchange, members of a consortium of Western colleges and universities developed for recruitment purposes a list of minority high school students interested in higher education, the list compiled from information supplied by cooperating high schools. A three-year FIPSE grant that year was the first substantial outside support WICHE had been able to attract for its Minority Education Program. Salazar generated numerous proposals and conducted a number of forums on related topics; but outside support continued to prove elusive. WICHE extended its financial commitment through 1981. The situation did not change. In fall 1981, Salazar left to become assistant vice president for academic affairs at California State University, Fresno. WICHE's cumulative investment had reached approximately \$100,000. FIPSE underwriting for the Western Name Exchange – which covered only 20 percent of the program director's compensation – would come to an end in another year.

For the Minority Education Program the handwriting was on the wall. At its annual meeting in December 1981 the commission affirmed that whatever the difficulties, WICHE should have a "strong presence" in minority higher education. It was baffled by how to fund the activity and left the "specific organizational or funding arrangements" to the executive director. A year later a new project director was on board; more proposals were forthcoming and efforts continued to obtain underwriting for some of the proposals generated earlier. Support for the Western Name Exchange ended with academic year 1982-83; the program continued, with the institutions handling most of the work, with coordination at WICHE and with increasing dissatisfaction for all concerned. Institutions in the Western Name Exchange created their own organization to carry on the program in 1984.

In December 1983 the commission asked staff to bring it a recommendation for the Minority Education Program at its next meeting in June 1984. By that time, since its start in 1972 WICHE had allocated \$303,000 for the program. Throughout the period, with exception of the Western Name Exchange, outside support had proven difficult to impossible to obtain. Now, staff recommended, and the commission approved, terminating Minority Education as a separate WICHE program. Efforts in behalf of higher education for minorities would be incorporated in all WICHE programs.

The action did not terminate WICHE concerns and activities relating to minorities. In 1983, FIPSE had funded a proposal originated by the Information Clearinghouse and

the Nursing, Mental Health, and Internship programs for planning and coordinating efforts to smooth articulation of two-year and four-year institutions and curricula. The program was to give special attention to minority concerns because two-year colleges were a major starting point for minority students. When the Minority Education Program itself was terminated, Martha Romero, articulation project director, working in the office of the deputy director, was made coordinator of minority education.

Also on the initiative of the WICHE Information Clearinghouse, in collaboration with the College Board and the American Association for Higher Education, in April 1983 WICHE sponsored a major conference focused on changes taking place in the demographics of the Southwestern states – California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and West Texas. In conjunction with the conference, WICHE published a series of reports and, with the state higher education agencies, held conferences in each state to consider issues specific to that state. A proposal for a high-level policy committee to study and recommend state and institutional policies and actions relating to minority education in the several states led to appointment by the commission in June 1985 of the Regional Policy Committee on Minorities in Higher Education.

But by the end of 1985, provisions for coordination of WICHE activities relating to minorities were once again in doubt. In mid-1986 Romero would leave to join the staff of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The WICHE budget for 1986-87 was in deficit; there was no way to add \$30,000 to make it possible to replace her. At the semiannual meeting in June 1986, Sirotkin recommended that the office for minority education be terminated with the understanding that minority and equity concerns were integral for all programs. A committee of commissioners would continue to monitor needs and actions to assure that minority and equity concerns were operative in all that WICHE did.

WICHE did, in fact, continue to give emphasis to problems of minority access and progress during the later 1980s and on through the 1990s. The Information Clearinghouse – now named the Office of Research and Policy Analysis – provided the data and analysis supporting the 1983 conference and state follow-on meetings on demographic changes in the five states in the Southwest. In 1988, for each of the five states it published reports with demographic data and an account of developments. A major report by the office's Robin Zuniga, *The Road to College: Educational Progress by Race and Ethnicity* – an outgrowth of the quadrennial projection of high school graduates – was published in 1991. It was one of the country's earliest reports and analyses of data on elementary and secondary school minority enrollments, on high school graduates, and on other indicators of educational progression by race and ethnicity.

Educational Telecommunications

The advent of television after World War II had implications for America and for the world that were a challenge to the wildest of imaginations – and in no human activity

more than in education. The advent of computers a short time later was, all by itself, an equivalent, portentous technological advance that would change the world. WICHE commissioners and staff were well aware of the new phenomena and concerned about what WICHE could do to help higher education exploit their potential as fully and effectively as possible. We have noted that during the Enarson years, no appropriate role relating to television could be determined, in spite of efforts to probe the needs and aspirations of state and institutional constituencies. As Enarson was leaving, funds finally were obtained from the Ford Foundation for consultant help and for broad consultation with the field; but through the 1960s no clear direction was found. Early in the 1970s the staff and commissioners were excited by the prospect that WICHE would have a major role in a program being developed by the Federation of Rocky Mountain States – a multimillion dollar enterprise to plan and develop health and education programs for delivery by satellite. But not long after staff had become deeply engaged in the planning, cutbacks at the federal level began to limit the scope of the proposed program; and by early 1973, the prospect of funding for any role for WICHE had disappeared completely.

Early in the 1980s the time WICHE could assume leadership in planning for the use of telecommunications in higher education, and in encouraging and assisting interinstitutional and interstate sharing of resources, at last arrived. By no means did the commission or staff leap into the field: a survey undertaken in 1981 of constituent opinions about needed and appropriate WICHE activities showed nearly two-thirds of the respondents believing that “exploring the uses of contemporary educational technologies, such as telecommunications and computers, through regional demonstration programs” was “important for WICHE.” But this level of support placed it *seventh* among the dozen possible activity areas that the survey enumerated, a substantial but hardly compelling constituent reaction. Indeed, nearly a third of respondents labeled the idea “important but not appropriate for WICHE.” Staff had arranged for educational telecommunications consultant Ray Lewis to meet with the Committee on the Future in the course of the June 1981 semiannual meeting, and the exchange of views at that meeting led the committee to ask staff to prepare, for the annual meeting in December, a proposal for a regional survey of current uses of the new media, and any related issues that WICHE might address.

The staff response got the ball rolling at the December 1981 meeting. The Committee on the Future converted a staff proposal for a one-year survey project into an ongoing WICHE project and with commission approval, authorized seeking some \$240,000 for a three year start-up. Now the commission adopted telecommunications as a priority area for program development.³¹

By 1983 the commission was fully committed to a major role in promoting resource sharing in educational telecommunications. Staff appointed a committee of experts and in cooperation with the Pacific Mountain Network, drafted a plan for policy

development and resource sharing for which funding was sought. In response to a request of retired University of Colorado Professor Byron Lauer, who had for several years produced an annual catalog of televised courses throughout the country, WICHE undertook a project to compile and publish *THE Catalog: Televised Higher Education: Catalog of Resources*, to “provide an operational base for other proposed WICHE activities in telecommunications.” *THE Catalog* appeared in 1984. And in the Graduate Education Project the five Northwest demonstration states were seeking funds both to continue the Northwest Academic Forum and, specifically, to carry out a study of collaborative action in telecommunications in the Northwest. It was obvious that the Graduate Education Project survey might usefully be extended to all the WICHE states, and in December 1983, the commission authorized efforts to fund both. Dick Jonsen’s contacts produced a planning grant from the Frost Foundation in 1984 that, with additional assistance from Pacific Telesis and U.S. West, underwrote a WICHE/SHEEO regional conference in late 1986 on “Higher Education and the New Technologies: A Focus on State Policy.” *State Higher Education Policies in the Information Age*, incorporating conference presentations on telecommunications problems and policies, was published in 1987.

The policy conference produced a request that WICHE and the Northwest Academic Forum convene representatives from interested states within the region to consider the development of cooperative activities in telecommunications. That meeting, in December 1986, attracted 22 persons from eight states and led to a proposal that state higher education officers in the region be asked for “approval in principle” of efforts to create a telecommunications delivery capability – a multistate structure to promote regional information exchange and resource sharing – and to conduct pilot projects that would demonstrate the usefulness of educational technology. Nine SHEEOs responded positively, and in June 1987 a specific staff proposal to establish the Western Regional Telecommunications Cooperative was before the commission for action. The commission approved initiation of the project.

The proposal provided for two phases, the first of which was well under way through efforts funded by the Frost Foundation grant. In the first phase a telecommunications cooperative would be designed as to membership, structure, and financing, with the anticipation that when fully operational, the project would be self-sustaining. A second task during the first phase would be to examine options for connecting state and institution networks to develop a regional capability. The concept would then be presented to appropriate individuals and agencies in the WICHE states – including those in executive and legislative branches, institutional executives and technical people, faculty, and others. A needs analysis would be conducted and resources relevant to the needs would be identified. Finally, pilot projects for the cooperative would be designed with the understanding that initiation of specific projects would mark the beginning of the second phase and would be dependent on commission approval. At that June 1987 meeting it was funding for the first phase that the commission approved.

Much headway was made during the next year under direction of Deputy Director Dick Jonsen and with major, “firing line” work of staff member Mollie McGill. AT&T assigned two of its employees to provide help on both technical aspects and needs assessment. With cosponsorship of SHEEO and the Northwest Academic Forum, WICHE held review meetings in eight states and, in the years following, in the remaining seven WICHE states. A 30-member steering committee was established, which met in September 1988 and served as the initial decision body of the telecommunications cooperative until its own board of directors could be established. A three-year matching grant from U.S. West, and significant help from AT&T, the Annenberg Corporation, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting were critically important. In June 1988, without dissent the commission authorized establishment during 1989 of the Western Regional Telecommunications Cooperative and its solicitation for memberships, its receipt and expenditure of dues (which would range from \$250 to \$2,000, with corporate sponsors at \$5,000), and its designing and initiating pilot projects and seeking additional funds.

Indeed, the cooperative was under way July 1, 1989. At that time the search for a program director was well advanced. In late summer, Phil Sirotkin appointed Sally Johnstone, who had been director of the University of Maryland Center for Instructional Telecommunications in the University College; she was on the job in October. She reported in December that there already were 123 dues-paying members and that the first annual cooperative meeting had been held in November, with representatives of 150 members and potential members in attendance. At that meeting, representatives from outside the region petitioned for affiliation. The membership agreed and set the stage for expansion of the cooperative.

Commission support for completing the organization and activating the telecommunications cooperative was notably different from WICHE experience in other new activities. Almost invariably, new programs were difficult to fund, staff, and get under way. In the mid-1980s, Western educational institutions and state agencies were ready to support, with staff time and money, a sharing of resources that would expand and improve uses of television and electronic communication generally. The WICHE Commission encouraged staff action in completing the structure of the cooperative, recruiting members, collecting dues and spending money on a wide variety of activities its members wanted to develop. With Sally Johnstone’s leadership the cooperative membership and its program grew rapidly, reaching beyond regional – and national – borders.

Information and Policy Analysis

Both the preamble and the affirmative provisions of the compact establishing the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education suggest that WICHE’s major purpose is to help assure that, through interstate cooperation, adequate facilities and

programs of higher education are available to residents of each of the states. The relevance of *information* and of *planning* in pursuing this goal is acknowledged in a single paragraph of the compact that directs the commission “to undertake studies of needs for professional and graduate educational facilities in the Region, the resources for meeting such needs, and the long-range effects of the compact on higher education.”

In fact, from its earliest days such *authority* as WICHE has had has derived almost entirely from its ability to acquire and use information. In the beginning years, acquiring information seemed less important than addressing directly the kinds of problems that had led the governors to establish the compact. But reflecting Enarson’s sense of the need for better information to inform decisions involving both broad policy questions and current operational issues, when in his third year the budget permitted hiring an associate, he chose Richard Axt, who had been study director for institutional research at the National Science Foundation. The first of the regional conferences of the President’s Committee on Education Beyond High School, for which Enarson and Axt had been the principal staff, strongly reinforced Enarson’s conviction that WICHE must develop information pertinent to the impending dramatic growth of higher education enrollments and costs.

The commission itself was increasingly aware of the need for information and planning. We have reported that at the annual meeting in 1956 the commission directed staff to “encourage state and regional studies of enrollment and space needs” and to be a clearinghouse of information; that Enarson established and Axt pursued contacts with the Carnegie Corporation of New York for multiyear support to help underwrite such a program; that a four-year Carnegie grant was announced in December 1957. Within six months Enarson had appointed Terry Lunsford and Hall Sprague, young professionals who, together with Axt, multiplied WICHE’s capabilities in information gathering, research, and policy analysis many times. The week-long Institutional Research Seminar at Stanford in 1959, and subsequent seminars on management problems cosponsored with the Berkeley Center for Research and Development in Higher Education that it engendered, gave emphasis to this role of WICHE across the country.

By the time Bob Kroepsch arrived in 1960, the long anticipated “tidal wave of students” was fast approaching. Planning was a constant demand on every campus and within each state, and a regional organization could assist both. We have traced at some length WICHE’s initiative in establishing a regional management information program that by 1971 had become the largely federally funded National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) at WICHE. Truly nationwide in its reach in higher education, by the time Phil Sirotkin became WICHE executive director in mid-1976, NCHEMS was essentially on its own – a status it achieved fully when it became an independent corporation a year after his arrival.

Information gathering, analysis, and translation into policy implications continued to be at the core of WICHE responsibility. Every program – Nursing, Mental Health,

the new Graduate Education Project, and Student Exchange – had information needs that were handled by the respective staffs. In many cases the information pertained to demographics, enrollments, costs or other data that duplicated needs in other programs. There was much sharing of both information and staff across programs, but what was really needed was a central information service that could compile information of general application and buttress the capabilities of the individual programs – and serve the regional information needs of member states.

The idea of creating an information office was pushed by Bill McConnell early in 1979, and that spring Sirotkin approved Dick Jonsen's assignment of the Graduate Education Project's Norman Kaufman as coordinator of the Information Clearinghouse. McConnell's first edition of *Projections of High School Graduates in the West* became the first in an ongoing stream of Information Clearinghouse publications. The commission, at its annual meeting in August 1979, specifically acknowledged that while the work and the publications of the clearinghouse would present data, they should also identify and analyze the policy issues inherent in the data. The clearinghouse at first functioned under the policy guidance of the Committee on the Future. In June 1981 its status was upgraded to that of a WICHE *program* with Kaufman as director and with an oversight committee of its own. In December, Sirotkin commented that along with student exchange and manpower studies, the clearinghouse function was in the first priority for support among commission programs.

Under Kaufman's direction, and beginning in 1984, that of Charles Lenth, the Information Clearinghouse produced reports that backed up WICHE conferences and other policy discussions on changing demographics in Western states, tuition and fees, and policies relating to them; availability of complex or unusual facilities for teaching and research; representation of minorities in various levels and kinds of higher education; high school graduates studies (expanded to the 50 states, embracing private as well as public school graduates, and including projections of minorities); provisions for student aid, economic development in Western states; teacher supply and demand; education for pharmacy; and others. It published 10 studies in 1989 alone. It was quite clear to members of the commission as well as to the staff that information and policy lay at the heart of WICHE's purpose.³²

Making It All Work

There can be no question that during the Phillip Sirotkin years, *administration* at WICHE was effective – a judgment evidenced by WICHE's survival in the face of deep-seated questions that Sirotkin confronted aggressively and successfully upon his arrival; by the expansion of WICHE membership with three "affiliated states" (North Dakota in 1984, South Dakota in 1988, and Minnesota in 1989); and by his success during more than 14 years in shaping and guiding so complex an enterprise. There is no defined

role for regional governmental agencies in the U.S. federal system; their operation evolves from circumstances specific to the agency concerned. In WICHE's case, the 13 compacting and three affiliated states differ significantly, not only in their geography but also in their demography, economies, cultures, politics – and in their educational systems, provisions for operation of those systems, and in their needs. (Minnesota ended its affiliation in 1992, when it joined in the new Midwest Higher Education Compact.) Their institutions of higher education have widely different interests, within the region as well as within each state. They have needs that in no case are fulfilled to a degree that any of them finds satisfactory. In such an environment, to build and retain support for programs sponsored by others, but that no institution or state can carry out individually as well as it can in company with others, is a challenging task at best. Again, Phil Sirotkin gave effective leadership to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.³³

When Sirotkin arrived in 1976, the programs initiated during its earliest years relating to professional student exchange, the nursing profession, and the professions in mental health education and services were still active – though there had been major changes. When he left at the end of 1989, Student Exchange included undergraduate education, most graduate fields, and many more professions. Mental Health had been responsive to dramatically changing needs and opportunities and had developed additional sources of income so that it was self-supporting and enjoyed most of the privileges (and the costs) of fiscal independence. Disparate elements of the profession of nursing had learned that, indeed, nursing was *one* profession. In the program's maturity, it had staked out a life of its own. Beyond the originals, entirely new programs had been initiated. Some of them had served their purpose and were gone. Others continued to make WICHE a respected element in higher education in the West.

How did Sirotkin and his staff, together with three gubernatorial appointees from each of the very different member states, manage to gain the support upon which so ambitious a program depended? A college has a campus, a faculty, and students of its own who, as alumni, often feel indebted to the college – ready to repay some of the educational benefits they have enjoyed. To the public, on the other hand, absent constant educational effort, WICHE was and is just another governmentlike bureaucracy. It is nonetheless dependent upon the essentially voluntary participation and support its members are willing to provide in the face of innumerable other state needs. How, given Sirotkin's leadership, did the commission and staff organize and conduct themselves so as to carry out the programs we have described?

WICHE's Ties to the Member States

WICHE has no needs that are more essential than maintaining strong ties to each of its member states. Within each state, of the many constituents whose support it needs, none are more essential than the governors and state legislators. A state's commission members are the principal channel of communication. However personable and however

respected a WICHE director may be, it is the “home folks” who have connections within their states.

Sirotkin, like Bob Kroepsch before him, began building relationships with commissioners at the time of their appointment. At their first commission meeting there was an orientation session with him and key members of the staff. Incoming commission chairmen/chairwomen were invited to spend a day at the WICHE offices soon after their election, to become better acquainted with the operation and with staff. Indeed, WICHE executive directors were sometimes able to establish relationships with governors and executive staff that enabled them to discuss vacancies and possible candidates for the governors’ consideration.

Recall that at Kroepsch’s last annual meeting, the commission decided to meet twice rather than once annually. How this might affect commission operations remained to be determined. The existence of an executive committee and its near quarter-century tradition of reviewing programs and approving budgets had made it, and its membership of only one of each state’s three commissioners, the *de facto* body of ultimate decision making for the organization. To carry on WICHE business, that committee met at least twice annually in addition to meeting in conjunction with the commission. Three or four meetings a year enabled members of the executive committee to be well informed of problems. The difficulty was that even with some rotation of executive committee membership in some states, nearly two-thirds of the commissioners had no such experience. For most, a single meeting of the full commission each year was the total of their person-to-person exposure. During Sirotkin’s initial years, short timelines for action may have given this meeting structure some advantage. In his fourth and fifth years, with the full commission meeting twice, the executive committee met independently only once. In his sixth year Sirotkin and the commission made a shift: the full commission met twice annually for two, sometimes two and a half days, and no independent meetings of the executive committee were scheduled. It was a significant change. The new practice placed the full commission rather than one-third of it firmly in charge. Well in advance of the commission’s budget meeting, a finance committee would shape the proposed budget for action by the full commission. On the rare occasions when specific items needed immediate action, the executive committee could meet by telephone. Arguably, the change strengthened the role of each state’s three commissioners in keeping governors and legislators appropriately informed about WICHE issues, as it reduced the role of that commissioner who happened to be on the executive committee at a given time.

There were many other avenues by which Sirotkin could build and maintain effective contact with members of the commission, beginning with telephone calls (which are almost totally undocumented) and correspondence (files maintained for each commissioner have been useful in this study). In the summer of 1980 Sirotkin initiated what became an ongoing series of occasional letters to the commissioners – similar to

Bob Kroepsch's monthly reports. We have noted that agenda materials for the annual and semiannual meetings could number two hundred or more pages. Well into the 1980s, there were several issues each year of newsletters that went also to a wider audience, featuring major WICHE programs and activities. "Impact statements" were prepared and regularly updated for each member state, providing a specific and detailed account of that state's participation in WICHE activities. Each year an annual report provided a WICHE overview that went to the entire constituency. It is evident from occasional commissioner complaints that they received "a snowstorm of paper" which some of them felt unable to master.

Upon the whole, Sirotkin's relationships with commission officers and members were mutually supportive and positive. The record reveals no instances of disaffection of commissioners with their staff chief, despite the fact that he had to take appointment and dismissal and other actions involving employees, and some actions involving commissioners, that were politically or personally sensitive.³⁴

We have noted that clarification of the WICHE mission and role was one of a number of related, urgent needs when Sirotkin took office in June 1976, and how he and the commission responded to this need in the long controversy that was brought to an end in 1978 partly on the basis of a new role statement. Both role and program priorities were significant elements in the program and financial plan (PFP) documents that WICHE initiated for state political leadership in 1978. As had Bob Kroepsch, Sirotkin continued throughout his administration the practice of surveying the several WICHE constituencies every few years as to perceived needs in higher education in the West, and WICHE performance in relation to those needs.

A further word should be said about the program and financial plan. The first PFP was provided to commissioners in August 1978: a *Four-Year Program and Financial Plan* – 46 pages of narrative and 12 of budget tables. The commission reviewed the document and approved it for distribution to governors and legislators "for evaluation and comment." The PFP began with a brief overview of the geography, demography, and higher education systems in the West. The body of the plan presented a description of educational needs and of current WICHE projects and activities, including changes proposed during the four-year planning period, with respect to problems of educational access, manpower, effectiveness and efficiency. There followed a statement of proposed new programs. Program management issues were next addressed along with administrative support services. The budget tables presented an estimate of costs of nine program and administrative areas, for the budget year and each of the following four years. The program and financial plan had been compiled over a nine-month period by James Stockdill, an employee of the National Institute of Mental Health who was at WICHE for a year through provisions of the federal Intergovernmental Personnel Act. It was based on a great deal of study, discussion, and material from each of the areas of program and administration.

One may infer from the ease with which WICHE dues were collected for a number of years in and after 1979 that the PFP was well worth its cost in staff time. By 1982, however, some questions were being raised. The commission decided to limit the projection period to two years – projecting costs out four years was not realistic. Responses from the field – or, the lack of responses – raised other questions. The plan was a major drain on staff time and it seemed to be used little if at all in the offices for which it was intended. In June 1984 staff recommended that its production be terminated. The commission agreed without dissent. In 1978 the program and financial plan had been responsive to precisely the concerns legislators and governors had about WICHE operations – PFP had served its purpose well and was needed no longer.

While the commission occasionally received proposals for action directly, normally it addressed program and operations through its committees. The number and range of committees has changed every few years with the preferences of the executive director and commission chair and of course with the termination of some programs and development of others. For many years, in addition to the executive committee, there were two administrative committees – finance and communications – and a half dozen program committees (focused on student exchange, information clearinghouse, mental health, internships, minorities, economic development, and other areas). Most committee meetings occur during or in tandem with meetings of the full commission. Commissioners are given the opportunity to choose the committees on which they wish to serve, and with three commissioners from each state – and with committee meetings open to any commissioner – it has been possible for any state to remain connected to WICHE programs of particular interest to them.

It has been more difficult for the executive director (or any single commissioner) to participate in committee meetings as fully as would be desirable, because the number of committees made it impossible to schedule meetings that did not overlap with others. In December 1986 Sirotkin and Chair Arliss Sturgulewski announced a restructuring that provided for just three committees, in addition to the executive committee. They focused on student exchange; information clearinghouse and special projects; and mental health. While the number of WICHE programs had been reduced in the prior decade, each committee included related projects not necessarily implied by the committee name. The reduced number of committees made possible attendance of most commissioners as well as of the executive director at all meetings, a valuable outcome indeed. On any project, staff directors and key staff provide support for the related committee, and staff/commissioner communication is generally excellent.

Sirotkin, like his predecessors, sought opportunities to interact with governors and legislators of member states and to participate in the annual regional conferences of both. During his first two years, as we have noted, those relationships were close, if seldom fun. In more normal times it has sometimes been difficult to arrange for adequate opportunity at the annual conferences to keep governors and legislators up to date. The *performance*

by commissioners of their acknowledged responsibility to keep the state's higher education power centers informed is especially important.

State higher education executive officers (SHEEOs) had been identified in all of the WICHE states by the time of Sirotkin's appointment, and he made them an increasingly important link to the states. The structure, role, and authority of these offices have varied. Some were a better tie to the governor's office and legislative leaders than others, but in all states they had important ties to the public institutions and, in most, they were well placed to serve in contacts with the political agencies as well. When Sirotkin came in 1976, six of the then-13 member states were represented by their SHEEOs on the commission. Sirotkin used whatever influence he could bring to bear on gubernatorial appointment of commissioners to assure that the state higher education officer was one of the three appointees. When he retired, of the 16 member and associate member states, 13 were so represented. Sirotkin and other staff members attended the national SHEEO meeting each year, during which WICHE hosted a meeting for the Western members for an updating and exchange of views. On the policy advisory committees that were created for many of the WICHE programs, SHEEOs were almost always to be found. Frequently WICHE collaborated with the State Higher Education Executive Officers association – located in Denver – in sponsorship of conferences and other meetings and publications.

Though WICHE operations have related primarily to public higher education, in many projects, private colleges and universities have participated. In the Professional Student Exchange Program, numerous private institutions have accommodated significant numbers of WICHE students. In some WICHE projects – on nursing, mental health, and telecommunications – as well as at various conferences and work sessions and in other areas, they have been active. Occasionally, their presidents have served as commissioners. Representatives in the private sector have taken important roles in supporting WICHE on a number of occasions when the WICHE budget or one of its activities has come under attack in a member state.

The Internal Machinery

Throughout this account, running back to WICHE origins, the commission and its leaders have given unflinching evidence of their belief in the *quality* of the WICHE staff. Quality is not a simple matter to define, and after the most conscientious of effort to do so, one still must ask, "In relation to what?" Notwithstanding, instances of dismissal of staff have been exceedingly rare; instances of loyalty and cases of long service have been many. Clock watchers at WICHE have had little company.

Not surprisingly, then, staff morale has been a concern of the executive directors and commission leadership. Efforts have been made annually to keep staff compensation competitive with campus-level and other related jobs. We have noted the concern of the commission on an occasion when it resisted but finally accepted a Sirotkin recommendation that salary increases be skipped in view of budget constraints.

Commission concerns went directly to the likely impact of the action upon staff morale and retention.

Staff satisfaction with WICHE employment doubtless has been the result of a number of considerations, but one of them has been the degree to which directors have involved staff in shaping conditions of employment and, more broadly, in advising with respect to program. All of the executive directors have created structures for regular consultation with heads of the major units on significant matters of program or administration. We have reported Bob Kroepsch's reliance on his chief staff officers in the "ad group." Phil Sirotkin used a similar group of his "unit directors." An Administrative Policy Advisory Committee (APAC), representing the various offices of program and administration and of staff committees and others appointed by the executive director from both exempt and nonexempt staff, meets monthly and advises on internal administrative and management policies, salary and benefit recommendations, and other related matters. A staff council plans and administers a program of occasional staff picnics, parties, and celebrations – which are well attended and invariably affirmed as fun. The council sponsors other events in order to fund the social program. Grievances are dealt with by a staff committee according to policies and procedures described in a staff handbook; the need to use the committee has been rare indeed.

WICHE has regularly encouraged upward mobility within the organization. All vacancies are advertised for applicants within the organization before being opened to applications from outside. If an applicant within the staff is found qualified, the search process terminates. Advances have been frequent, not only within groups of nonexempt and exempt employees but from nonexempt to exempt classes. Women are majorities in both classes.

Annual budget building is accompanied by a personnel evaluation procedure in which goals for the year ahead are identified by and for each staff member and a written evaluation of performance in relation to the goals of the past year is prepared by each employee's supervisor. (The executive director is evaluated each year by the executive committee through a procedure that includes an invitation to staff to submit comments.) The supervisors' written statements are reviewed by each supervisor with the relevant employee and submitted to the personnel officer and executive director, with any comments the staff member wishes to provide. Staff salary adjustments are made "according to merit," a practice claimed by most agencies and institutions of higher education. The plan differentiates increases by categories of performance such as "satisfactory," "excellent," and "outstanding," where there are some general criteria for the rankings. The procedure is hardly 100 percent satisfactory to either evaluators or those evaluated, but it provides a valuable occasion for supervisors and those supervised to level with each other about mutual perceptions of goals and performance.

We have noted that another feature of employment at WICHE has been the relative informality of expectations regarding attire, presence in or absence from the office on

some established basis, working hours, and contact with the executive director and members of the commission. We reported that when he arrived, Sirotkin found the extent of this informality excessive and took steps to clarify and extend somewhat his expectations with respect to both attire and attendance. Most staff continued to find the atmosphere at WICHE quite relaxed and have been happy in that atmosphere.

While Sirotkin involved himself more than his predecessor in the development of WICHE programs and other aspects of administration, he too encouraged direct contacts of unit chiefs with members of the commission. His relationships with unit directors individually and in frequent meetings gave both him and the directors adequate opportunity to remain on the same track.

Sirotkin's action upon his arrival to initiate staff review of the current formulation of mission, goals, and priorities, together with the end of the Rocky Mountain Regional Medical Program in 1975 and the separation of NCHEMS, Nursing, and the library project WILCO from the WICHE structure, represented a significant narrowing of scope. The mission and goals statement that emerged in the difficult years 1976-78 further clarified staff as well as gubernatorial and legislative understanding of what WICHE does and does not do.

Space Requirements

After Sirotkin's arrival, with a shrinking program, WICHE was once again able to consolidate staff on the single floor it had first occupied late in 1964, early in the Kroepsch administration. With a lease renewal at the University of Colorado due in 1985, in a discussion of WICHE finances at the meeting of the executive committee in October 1981, a question was raised about whether WICHE should study the feasibility of constructing or acquiring a building of its own. Rental costs with the University of Colorado had risen to \$125,000 each year. Chairman Donald Holbrook asked the staff and finance committee to explore the possibilities.

The subject does not appear in committee or commission minutes until the report of an executive committee conference call on January 2, 1986. After long negotiation, the finishing touches were being applied for a new five-year renewal lease that was, in fact, executed with the University of Colorado.

But only two years later the staff was studying alternatives for action in June 1990, when the lease would again be up for renewal. At the annual meeting in December 1988, staff reported efforts directed at buying an existing building in or near Boulder or, possibly, joining with other organizations in creating a "public policy center" in Denver that, in addition to WICHE, might house other Denver area nonprofits, including the Education Commission of the States, NCHEMS, the State Higher Education Executive Officers, National Conference of State Legislatures, or others. Efforts to obtain foundation underwriting were under way by each of the would-be participants. Staff hopes were high enough to recommend that the commission authorize (and the

commission did authorize) the executive committee to act on either alternative, if action turned out to be necessary before the next meeting of the full commission in June.

But foundation support was not to be found, and bringing several nonprofits together on sharing a facility, in the absence of a significant foundation carrot, proved not to be possible. At his final meeting of the commission, Sirotkin reported that as affirmed in an executive committee conference call in October 1989, WICHE would remain in its long-time location, adjacent to the main campus of the University of Colorado.

WICHE Finances

In almost any enterprise, *money* touches virtually everything that the organization does. So WICHE finances have entered many times into the story of WICHE operations and activities – the impact of the Western economy on payment of WICHE dues and, especially, on dues increases; the impact of per student cost on the numbers of their residents states will support in the Professional Student Exchange Program; the readiness of states to pay additional fees for participation in the Mental Health and Nursing programs; policies that intend to maintain competitive staff salary levels and to adjust salaries and benefits each year – and in many other ways. We have not, however, reported practices of the WICHE Commission and staff, and relationships between them, in planning to assure sufficient annual *income* to cover annual *expenditures* and to assure fiscal health for the organization.

In this respect, WICHE fiscal planning was by no means blameless for the crisis that greeted Phil Sirotkin in 1976. Costs of ongoing operation as well as of a growing program had risen annually from WICHE's first year. Membership fee increases were rare, and there was no increase in membership dues at all between 1963 and 1973. Finally, for fiscal year 1973-74, dues were increased from \$15,000 to \$28,000, an increase of 87 percent. By the mid-70s inflation was in double digits – it was calculated at 35 percent during the two years July 1974 to July 1976. By mid-1975 – during the second year after the 87 percent increase became effective – it was apparent that another dues increase would be necessary within the next two years. That summer the finance committee recommended an increase from \$28,000 to \$45,000, another 61 percent. Aghast at the committee's recommendations, with severe cutbacks being made in state budgets back home, the commission returned the matter to the finance committee for a recommendation to the commission's first semiannual meeting in December 1975.

To its midsummer recommendation of an increase of \$17,000 (61 percent), the finance committee added a lesser alternative of \$11,000 (39.3 percent). The necessary cutbacks in operations would be more traumatic under the new alternative than under the first. The committee advised that annual or biennial increases would be less severe than less frequent adjustments, but made no specific recommendation to that end. Predictably, the commission recommended the \$11,000 amount. It was that lower recommendation that stoked the crisis in 1976-78 – surely the higher one would have

done no less. We have reported that eventually, in resolving the crisis, the \$11,000 increase was approved.

There followed a number of years when dues and support fee adjustments were made each year or two and were accepted by member states with little difficulty. But the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980 and his success in bringing about major reductions in federal governmental activity in favor of placing spending decisions with individuals and with states affected WICHE immediately, as federal agencies eliminated some programs of long standing and reduced their grants and contracts for others. Education is a state function. As Reagan policy shifted federal to state effort in medical, welfare, and other areas, higher education found itself with new and effective competitors for state funding. There were myriad impacts. A harsh example: tuition in the state of Washington's public universities virtually *doubled* between 1981 and 1982. The financial problem at WICHE did not go away. At its annual meeting in 1986, for example, the commission learned that, during the fiscal year by then half over, for reasons that could not have been anticipated a deficit of \$92,000 loomed.

The structure and staffing within WICHE for handling money matters – indeed, administrative matters generally (budgeting, accounting, publications, personnel administration, space, library) was remarkably competent, dependable, and stable throughout Phil Sirotkin's tenure. Bob Kroepsch had appointed John C. Staley chief financial officer in April 1966. Staley retired 32 years later in 1998 as controller. Staley served executive directors Kroepsch, Sirotkin, and Dick Jonsen with distinction and with the confidence and respect of the commission as well as the staff. It was a remarkable source of strength for WICHE that among the unit directors and the organizations with which WICHE worked most closely, there was no one at WICHE whose talents and integrity were more respected.

Staley's budget building followed the well-established principle that estimates of income should be conservative and estimates of expenditures liberal. But the recommendations he produced and that Sirotkin presented to the commission were invariably deficit budgets. Some on the commission were not comfortable with them. In presenting the budget for fiscal year 1985-86 to the commission, the finance committee's chair, Robert Huff (SHEEO in Arizona), admonished staff that "we cannot continue to operate on this type of budget." The committee asked for more discussion of the budget process at its next meeting.

Sirotkin described the process in a memo to commissioners that was background for the discussion at the December 1984 meeting:

What we have done to handle an obviously fluid and uncertain environment is to submit a budget based on conservative estimates of revenue, liberal projections of expenditures, and a reserve balance of no less than \$155,000. Then our practice is to monitor income and expenditures monthly and to present either a progress report or our adjusted budget to the commission in the middle of the fiscal year . . .

If there is a need to reduce expenditures either before or after that meeting in order to protect the reserve balance, we make those decisions based upon the program priorities approved by the commission and our best judgment about the required administrative services.

Sirotkin went on to document that during the prior 10 years the budget had always proved to be less in deficit than projected, indeed that five of the 10 years had ended in surplus, and that in every one of the 10 years, the actual reserve balance at the end of the year was substantially higher than the level projected in the budget approved by the commission. The procedure had been successful: it “ensure[d] fiscal stability and at the same time permit[ted] us to have the flexibility essential to manage WICHE in an effective manner.” The commission accepted Sirotkin’s explanation with a request that he “try to bring the budget estimates closer to the actual experiences of the past both in terms of revenue and expenditures.”

Staley’s budgets continued to show proposals that resulted in deficits, and the minimum reserve of \$155,000 continued to be preserved each year. Audit disallowances during the Staley years were minor and never affected the reserve fund.

But WICHE’s hard money budgets were always tight. During the 1980s there was no year in which WICHE finances left much breathing room for program initiatives or administrative flexibility. WICHE consistently has viewed the other regional compact agencies with some envy over their membership financing. In 2003, when WICHE dues were \$107,000, SREB annual dues were \$166,120, a difference that, in that year alone, for 13 states amounted to more than three-fourths of a million dollars in hard money. At NEBHE that year, dues averaged \$247,000. In NEBHE’s six states the difference amounted to \$840,000.

End of the Sirotkin Years

Fourteen years after Phillip Sirotkin assumed the directorship of the agency in June 1976, he announced that he would leave WICHE at the end of December 1989. A commission search committee went to work immediately. At Sirotkin’s last commission meeting that December, his colleague of many years, Deputy Director Richard Jonsen, advanced to the head office – a commission decision that Sirotkin had urged.

In remarks at that last meeting Sirotkin reminded commissioners and staff that the beginning had been rough. During his first few months he had to overcome a move in the California Senate to remove the state from the compact. During his first eight months there were three evaluations of WICHE by external sources, and during his first two years, eight such reviews. In eight years 1976-84, there had been 13 such reviews in member states! But “external evaluations have proved to reinforce the value of WICHE, rather than to diminish it.” Thanks to commissioners and staff, now “we are programmatically sound, financially strong, and politically stable.” WICHE had learned

well of the “critical need for constant communication, particularly with political decision makers, as well as the maximum involvement of our constituents in all of our programs.”

It was indeed a very different organization from the one he inherited. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, a project of major significance for the entire nation, had been created at WICHE and now had made a successful transition to operation on its own. Nursing had been helped immeasurably to crystallize as one profession, and to make advancements that without interstate collaboration would not have been possible. A WICHE-spawned collaborative effort among libraries had similarly been able to continue independently. Student Exchange had increased the number of its programs and, with the Western Undergraduate Exchange, was growing dramatically in number of beneficiaries. The Office of Research and Policy Analysis was engaged in one important area of study after another. The new Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications was growing rapidly in membership and in the range of its programs. WICHE staff numbers had changed from 220 in his first budget year to “about 30” by the time he left – all without, he believed, “diminution in the quality of our programs and services.”

The Sirotkin years had been challenging. They had been years of consolidation of effort but also years of achievement. As a creature of the Western states, in its maturity WICHE had become a well known and welcome contributor in higher education in the West.

SUMMARY & REFLECTIONS

When William Jones opened his office as executive director of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in 1953, the organization was ready at last to become fully active. Jones's service as vice president at the University of Oregon and as president of Whittier College in California represented extensive experience in both public and independent institutions in the West and know-how in organizing and guiding new programs.

Jones also had a model of what to do, what not to do, and in some degree, how to proceed, from the five years of experience of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), an organization with some features that differed from his new enterprise but that had much in common. Moreover, from staff members through Millard Caldwell, former governor and SREB chairman, SREB seemed eager to assist in the formation of a sister organization in the West. Jones had a lot of work to do to encourage additional eligible states to ratify the Western compact; to communicate WICHE purposes to higher education interests throughout the region; to begin to lay foundations for an exchange mechanism for students in several professions; and to consider other apparent needs for collaboration among institutions and across state lines.

But though he went to work with imagination and vigor, Jones determined rather quickly that developing this largely unformed and not very well-defined enterprise was not what he really wanted to do. After less than a year, he announced that he would leave when a successor could be found. Harold Enarson, a different person at an earlier stage in his professional life, quickly assumed leadership and pushed even harder in directions that Jones had taken and in new directions as well.

Harold L. Enarson, Executive Director, 1953-1960

Like Jones, Enarson visited with leaders at the Southern Regional Education Board to amplify his view of his options. Specifically, his initiatives in both mental health and nursing were inspired in part by SREB experience. But Enarson believed that WICHE could and should do anything that would strengthen higher education in the WICHE states and that a record of concrete achievement was prerequisite to WICHE growth and viability. Indeed, in his six years as director, Enarson established WICHE as an organization that was going to do far more than facilitate the movement of residents of one state into another for education in one of the health professions.

Early Days

University of Colorado Medical Dean Ward Darley, a member of the WICHE Executive Committee, wanted a dental school. Jones had started the ball rolling on a study of needs and resources in dentistry. Enarson pushed ahead with contacts with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and the U.S. Public Health Service for the necessary support. In March 1955 he was able to report receipt of funds from Kellogg and assignment of expert help from U.S. Public Health Service to get a regionwide dental study under way. Jones had arranged with the Joint Council on Educational Television and the National Citizens' Committee for Educational Television to hold conferences in three Western states concerning reservation of television channels for educational use. Enarson pursued these efforts. Early in 1955 he hired a consultant to study and report on possible activities in educational television in the West. The advice received was that the time for broadcast television for education had not arrived – a judgment with which neither Enarson nor the commission was prepared to disagree.

Enarson advanced several ideas of his own. He urged that collaboration among Western universities could produce important benefits in research on both social and technological problems in the development of natural resources. Another: the compact charged WICHE with studying needs for professional and graduate education. The commission asked him to explore strengthening of regional offerings in social work and public health. Beyond that, he pointed out, “the majority of academic fields lie untouched.” But on a budget that provided for little more than salaries of a director and secretary, an annual meeting of the full commission, and perhaps two meetings of the executive committee, there were severe limits in the ways the WICHE program could be extended.

Enarson was troubled that the coming “tidal wave of students” raised many issues relating to space, location of institutions, adequate numbers of teachers, funding, and other matters in which institutional and statewide planning were essential, and in which collaboration across state lines could make a huge difference. With the promise of greater income after three more of the eligible states joined in the compact, in 1955 he obtained commission authorization to employ an assistant director. He and Dick Axt soon added to the agenda a succession of activities that would elevate WICHE in regional higher education affairs.

Expanding Importance

Sponsoring the first of a series of regional meetings of Dwight Eisenhower's President's Committee on Education Beyond High School was the first of these. The conference brought to Western governors, state legislators, college and university presidents, foundation executives, and other policymakers an awareness of the new WICHE regional enterprise that they had not had. It gave emphasis to the very problems of institutional and state planning that concerned Enarson and Axt. The two proceeded

to develop a proposal for the Carnegie Corporation to support studies, surveys, policy seminars, workshops, employment of expert consultants, and staff to deal with critical problems in Western higher education:

- ▶ Obtaining enough well-qualified college and university teachers.
- ▶ Financing increased capital and operating budgets.
- ▶ Statewide planning and institutional research.
- ▶ Public understanding and support of higher education.

In late 1957 the corporation announced a four-year grant of a quarter million dollars for the program. With the Carnegie support, WICHE employed two young planning and research people who, with Axt, developed a series of studies, conferences, and publications on current issues and spread the word about the new organization. The program clearly lay at the heart of an expanded sense of WICHE purpose: exercising leadership in collecting and sharing information pertaining to emerging problems in Western higher education, and identifying policies through which states and the region could deal with these problems.

Continued growth of the range of WICHE activity was not what some of the commissioners thought necessary, or even appropriate. Some, especially among those representing higher education institutions, saw in the Western Education Compact a kind of “constitution” that authorized particular actions to exchange students in a few of the health professions, of studies pertaining to such exchanges, and little else. To those with this view, WICHE had a relentless urge “to grow, grow, grow; expand, expand, expand” – the words were those of the able and articulate Vice President G. Homer Durham of the University of Utah who had joined the commission in 1955. He put it this way in a speech to the commission a few years later: “A major development, beginning with the Enarson administration, has been the decline of the compact as a basic legal document underpinning, defining, and limiting the commission’s activities.” Some of the university presidents felt that some of the issues WICHE attacked were matters to be dealt with within each state and, specifically, on their own campuses. They did not need competition from a regional agency.

Determining the answers to such questions about the intended WICHE role was crucial in the early years. The literal words of the compact certainly did not define an all-encompassing program. But the WICHE compact could also be understood as a description of needs and, with some “for instances,” a mechanism to be employed. The potential of *collaboration* among institutions and states – which the compact clearly embraced – seemed boundless. Was it not reasonable to believe that the founders intended a comprehensive program even as their words referred to the upper reaches of graduate and professional study?

It would be reasonable to make that assumption; but the evident fact is that the founders gave little thought, hence little direction, to a definition of WICHE mission

and functions. The founders wanted a mechanism to exchange students in several high-cost programs. And so it was with appointees to the new commission.

Moreover, meeting for a single day once a year, the two-thirds of commissioners who were not members of the executive committee had precious little opportunity to consider possible regional implications of higher education problems in the member states and to support – let alone propose – activities through which WICHE could address those problems. It fell to the staff to identify needs and to propose actions that the commission could *monitor* but only nominally could plan and control. The staff, beginning with Bill Jones and continuing in Harold Enarson, attracted to WICHE by its potential, was ready and eager to take the lead. Their ideas and ambitions normally had enough appeal to enjoy some commissioner support; other members simply saw no reason to object.

Enarson believed that WICHE should do anything that an essentially voluntary organization could do to extend access to higher education and to improve its quality by helping states and institutions work together effectively. His statement of objectives, written in 1955, was *de facto* the guideline for the WICHE program. In Enarson's view, WICHE's task was:

- ▶ To provide facilities for assessing Western needs in higher education and developing programs to meet those needs.
- ▶ To negotiate and administer interstate arrangements for regional education services, acting as fiscal agent to carry out such arrangements.
- ▶ To serve as a clearinghouse for information on activities in higher education significant to the Western states.
- ▶ To do research on institutional and regional problems related to improving higher education.
- ▶ To provide a channel whereby educators can join together in working out overall long-range solutions to problems common to all.
- ▶ To serve, when appropriate, as a vehicle by which colleges and universities may deal on matters of higher education with national foundations, industry, and the federal government.
- ▶ And finally, to bring public officials and educators to a better understanding of mutual problems so that the educational dollar is used wisely and that research, education, and service – the three essentials of higher education – are brought into sharp focus on the problems of Western development.

On the other hand, the voice of a “narrow constructionist” continued to be heard from time to time.

Finance Matters

Enarson arranged for the first of what became a series of biennial “legislative work conferences” in April 1958, driven in part by the interest and help of Governor Steve

McNichols of Colorado, chairman of the Western Governors' Conference. A dramatic increase in college enrollments was fast approaching. Topic of the work conference was "Financing Higher Education" – a continuation of major themes that had been introduced at the regional conference of the President's Committee on Education Beyond High School. Speakers argued that each state should have a comprehensive array of institutions each having a defined role – running from two-year community colleges through universities offering graduate and professional programs. For the presentation of budget requests, states should develop objective standards and criteria relating to amounts and uses of space, class size, teaching loads, and other features of operation. Fiscal and operational data for comparable institutions should be provided. WICHE should be working with states and institutions to provide such data.

For WICHE, financing its own operating costs was a continuing problem. From the very beginning the commission has resisted asking member states to pay the costs of a strong organization structure. Annual dues were set at \$7,000 at the organizing meeting in 1951 – the amount originally charged in the South. It was *eight years* before WICHE dues were increased (to \$10,000), by which date at SREB they stood at \$20,000 plus \$8,000 for participation in the Mental Health Program. Again, at WICHE, after 1963 it was *10 years* before dues were increased, despite inflation that in some years reached double digits. Why the resistance to appropriate financing? As Harold Enarson said, "WICHE's roots are shallow." In the West, *membership* in a regional organization is to be questioned; *ownership* appears to be beyond understanding. Over the years both SREB and the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) income from member dues has far exceeded that for WICHE.

In what may have been a reaction to the announcement in 1958 of a forthcoming fee increase, an early warning signal of problems in one of the member states reached Enarson's desk from the Council of State Governments (CSG) later that year. At the council's annual Western Regional Conference in the fall of 1958, one state (not identified in the minutes) introduced a resolution that was highly critical of the new WICHE enterprise. Others present had a different view, and as the resolution was amended before adoption, it became relatively neutral – it called on the states to study WICHE programs, activities, and funding and to determine whether the organization was pursuing its goals. WICHE's CSG liaison interpreted the move as an indication that the commissioners and staff needed to devote more effort to communication with state constituencies. Possibly Bill Jones's proposal that legislators be made members of the commission needed another look?

Commissioner Frank Van Dyck, a former speaker of the house in Oregon, assumed the WICHE chair in February 1957 when Chair Ward Darley became head of the Association of American Medical Colleges in Chicago. Van Dyck believed that the commission would be greatly strengthened by having a legislator member from each state. There were only four such commissioners at the time, and Van Dyck's view

was that they were the most active and important members of the commission. Van Dyck was well liked; but his written proposal to the commission to take steps to add a legislator from each state was pushed aside by the executive committee in August 1958. Dominated by higher education leaders, the WICHE Commission remained not at all interested in further empowering state legislators in commission affairs.

With funds from outside sources for the Nursing and Mental Health programs and from the Carnegie grant adding to the activity it could support with its small “hard money” staff, the WICHE program continued to grow. Seminars of 10 or a dozen experts followed up by publications summarizing the facts, problems, and policies involved were held on a number of topics, including admissions policy in different kinds of institutions; sponsorship of two-year nursing programs in community colleges; and on “standards, formulas, and yardsticks” to guide college and university budgeting.

In the late 1950s higher education institutions were beginning to assign staff for work on “institutional research”(IR) projects to pin down the facilities and the human and financial resources needed in assessing management techniques and other features of institutional operation. Axt proposed a survey of Western institutions to determine the *subjects* under study on Western campuses, and *how such studies were being staffed, reported, and used*. Based on the findings, WICHE and Stanford University would sponsor a work conference for institutional researchers – a continuing education program that would spread the word broadly about some of the major research efforts then under way.

WICHE’s report of its pioneering survey, *Institutional Research in the West*, was published early in 1959. For a solid week in July that year some 140 “students” coming at their own expense from all of the WICHE states and 15 others – about twice the number originally expected – met in daily sessions that covered the gamut of institutional operations. The work conference was the first of a dozen such conferences that WICHE cosponsored annually with the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at the University of California at Berkeley. Proceedings of these working meetings spread across the country useful collections of data and thinking on a whole range of planning and management topics. The conferences established WICHE as one of the nation’s leading players in educational research and policy development.

Also by the late 1950s the Student Exchange Program – the name by which WICHE’s original exchange in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine was known at the time – was beginning to operate more smoothly. At a meeting of representatives of both “sending” and “receiving” states along with “certifying officers” (state gatekeepers) and WICHE staff, the senders and receivers developed better understanding of the needs and interests of each party, so that the program could function more effectively. In fall 1959 some 300 men and women from nine states were participating in the SEP.

Following Bill Jones's lead, Enarson encouraged the graduate deans to know each other personally and to know each others' programs. In 1955, his second year on the job, he proposed that WICHE activate the region's graduate deans to increase the supply of college teachers (a nationwide concern in higher education at the time, when hordes of students were expected during the next decade and when dramatic shortages of teachers were assumed). When this proposal seemed to be getting nowhere, in June 1956 he proposed a conference of the graduate deans "to examine the problem of producing college teachers and the possibilities of complementary specialization at the graduate level" – a suggestion that development of graduate programs might be made more rational through interstate planning and cooperation. The conference was held in 1957. Out of it came the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS), for which for several years WICHE provided staff services and with which, to the present, WICHE has collaborated on a number of projects.

In the later 1950s and throughout the 1960s, across the country higher education enrollments were pushing upward the size and the breadth of academic programs in many of the existing institutions, and the numbers of new two- and four-year colleges. Opportunities for advancement for young administrators as well as for faculty were many, and for an up-and-coming young administrator to stay in the same position for as much as a half-dozen years bordered on the exceptional. Harold Enarson announced, in June 1960, that he would move to the University of New Mexico – his alma mater – as administrative vice president when he could be replaced at WICHE. Enarson's candidate for his job was Robert Kroepsch, director at NEBHE. Kroepsch was known to several of the commissioners; the Commission soon made the appointment. Kroepsch went to work at WICHE in October 1960 after barely six weeks in which the Mental Health Program director, Warren Vaughan, served on an interim basis.

As compared to 1953 when Enarson had arrived, WICHE was in good shape. All 13 of the states eligible to join the compact had done so. The program and the staff had grown; the WICHE budget was 10 times what it had been in 1953. If growth had to come primarily on the basis of external support (which it did), it was a time when external support, especially from the federal government, was becoming common. WICHE had the forward-looking reputation of its articulate executive director rather than the limited outlook of some of the commissioners as to WICHE purposes and appropriate directions of growth. Governors and state legislators seemed generally to be satisfied with the return on their WICHE investment. The organization had flourished under Harold Enarson's direction.

Robert H. Kroepsch, Executive Director, 1960-1976

Well before "the coming tidal wave of students" arrived, the G.I. Bill and Sputnik had changed the landscape of higher education in the United States, including the federal

role in higher education. But the dramatic increases in enrollments certain to arrive by the mid-1960s assured for Bob Kroepsch the continuation, indeed acceleration, of pressures that had characterized Harold Enarson's administration.

During the Enarson years, higher education must grow, grow, grow. In Bob Kroepsch's years, inevitably WICHE must also grow, grow, grow. Kroepsch inherited a staff of 19 organized for budget purposes in 15 programs. After 10 years his staff numbered 141. The number of separately budgeted WICHE programs had grown to 38. In the fiscal year 1969-70 alone there were 68 new WICHE publications, the number of copies of each ranging from 100 to 21,000. Harold Enarson's annual budget had grown to nearly \$350,000; 10 years into the Kroepsch years, John Staley, WICHE's controller, was collecting and spending \$3,903,376, not counting an additional \$1,372,734 of Student Exchange pass-through funds. The growth was going to stay – the population had increased rapidly; enrollments were not going to decrease.

Enarson's associate, Dick Axt, had gone; Kroepsch needed a new assistant. He wanted to appoint his colleague at NEBHE, Kevin Bunnell, who he knew was committed to Kroepsch's values and ways of doing things, though he was reluctant to confront Western states and institutions with *two* New Englanders at WICHE. But after some casting about in his first few months and discussions with members of the commission, he decided to invite Bunnell in. Indeed, Bunnell remained closer to Kroepsch than any other member of the staff, over a period of 16 years.

Within six months, Kroepsch had developed for his commission members a survey intended to help them as well as him determine "Where does WICHE go from here?" The responses told him a good deal, not all of which he could have been happy to learn. There were 39 commissioners; there were 15 responses. Most of the responses omitted answers to many of his 26 questions. WICHE was a staff-led enterprise because there was no alternative – it was difficult to gain a level of commissioner participation that put them in charge.

Yet ultimately it was the commissioners who made the decisions. Kroepsch made plans for early visits to each of the member states where, with help of the commissioners, he could meet others with whom he would be working. A year after his arrival he sent commissioners a guideline for these meetings in which he made his own views explicit. The compact "may be interpreted broadly or narrowly," but the commission has chosen to interpret it "rather broadly." He articulated WICHE's goal as follows: "Through regional cooperation, to increase and improve opportunities in higher education for the young men and women in the 13 Western states, and thereby to advance the educational, social, cultural, and economic level of the region." His statement of WICHE objectives was not fundamentally different from Enarson's:

- ▶ To improve the quality of higher education in the region's colleges and universities.

- To expand educational opportunities, particularly in preparing highly specialized personnel for those fields in which the West faces critical manpower shortages.
- To assist with the coordination and expansion of interstate and inter-institutional cooperative programs so as to provide for the maximum use of highly specialized facilities and staff, and to avoid, where feasible, unnecessary duplication.
- To improve educational administration and efficiency in the region's colleges and universities.
- To raise the public's level of understanding of the role of higher education in our society, and of the need for adequate financial support.
- To help colleges and universities appraise and respond to the changing educational and social needs of the West.

Given Kroepsch's broad interpretation of the WICHE mission, his preference for imaginative unit directors who would pursue aggressively their own ideas about desirable program development, and apparent commissioner expectation that staff would be WICHE's driving force, it was to be expected that the WICHE program would grow, both along lines already established and in entirely new directions.

Student Exchange

The Student Exchange Program, the idea around which WICHE came into being, grew very slowly, both in adding professional fields and in creating new exchange mechanisms to serve other purposes. The commission gave no support to Kroepsch's effort soon after he arrived to create an exchange for undergraduates. When in 1963, he proposed a Western Regional Student Program (WRSP) patterned on the undergraduate exchange he had established in New England, commissioner response was more positive. WRSP was established; but there was little student participation. WRSP came to an end two years later, without adjustments by the commission that sought to make it viable.

In 1970 the commission approved a staff proposal for an exchange among a number of community colleges – a program that attracted some 200 to 300 students each year but that experienced such imbalances in student flow among states that it is surprising it lasted as long as it did.

Yet WICHE and the participating states and institutions in the professional exchange program developed policies and procedures that by 1970 were functioning well. That year the professional program enrolled more than 700 students in seven fields. It served 12 states by making places available in studies not offered by those states, a valuable service indeed. It was attempting to forge agreement on charges for services that would recognize the actual costs of such services to the receiving institutions, while making it attractive for sending states to use the program. After some 15 years, Student Exchange was serving well the needs for which the Western states had created WICHE.

Mental Health

The Mental Health program was a vigorous one throughout the Kroepsch administration. As a center for communication and for continuing education projects for practitioners in the several related fields, program staff members were always well informed about needs and well placed to initiate work conferences or other activities to meet such needs.

For example, from a project of continuing education for staff working with juvenile delinquents, the program moved over a number of years into a broader range of activities pertaining to corrections, and to the still broader field of criminal justice. The director of the WICHE Corrections Program, Tom Adams, was one of a half-dozen national leaders who planned an Arden House Conference in 1964 on Correctional Manpower and Training – out of which came a national Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training, in which, through Adams, WICHE was a major player. By the mid-1960s the WICHE unit was operating projects in mental health and mental retardation, special education and rehabilitation, juvenile delinquency, and adult corrections. In fiscal 1964-65 the Mental Health Program had a larger budget in grant money than the amount of the “hard money” budget of the entire WICHE operation.

In the mid-1960s the Mental Health Council faced up to the fact that National Institute of Mental Health support for its own operations and for the Mental Health office would come to an end in 1967 and that WICHE – already underwriting the program with an annual allocation of hard money, would have no way simply to replace the NIMH funds. SREB states had for many years paid an extra fee for participation in the SREB Mental Health Program. In December 1964 the council – representing all the participating states – approved a “voluntary” annual fee of \$7,500, to be paid WICHE by each participating state in and after 1967. Kroepsch asked the Western Governors’ Conference for its support of the fee in the summer of 1965 – the governors had, indeed, sought WICHE action to establish a regional program for juvenile delinquents. Their response was a resolution asking the states to “give careful consideration” to the request. Through the years some of the states have paid the fee and some have not. The fee, doubled to \$15,000 shortly before Kroepsch’s departure, generated enough support to enable the program to continue.

Despite the national recognition it has achieved in some of its activities, the Mental Health Program has been a feature of the WICHE program about which some commissioners have been uneasy. In the survey of commissioner interests that Kroepsch undertook soon after his arrival, he received a dozen responses to questions pertaining to the program. Of the dozen, two or three were clearly supportive. More of them, however, had questions. “Why is [mental health] a WICHE problem and not a public health problem?” one commissioner asked. Another called mental health a “bottomless well.” Yet another advised, “Steer clear – this gets into aged welfare and governmental

quicksand.” In the same vein, a motion was made (though it was not passed) at the annual meeting in 1962 to begin a phase-out of hard money support for the program.

True, when the commission undertook a review of the entire WICHE program late in the 1960s, three subcommittees made an in-depth review of 22 activities in mental health among the 56 budgeted programs at WICHE, and all were well impressed by findings with respect to all 22. It should be noted, however, that in this review the commission found little to criticize in the entire WICHE program. It named only one of the 56 separate WICHE activities as inappropriate – and that was an “activity” that was really a *proposal* on which staff had worked for two years but which was never initiated because no support funds could be found.

An incident that involved one of the Mental Health project directors should be noted because it seems to illustrate the way in which Bob Kroepsch worked with his staff. The director concerned was a bright but quick and prickly individual who had proven his effectiveness in defining the project he was to carry out, and in getting it funded. The director was enraged by a Kroepsch decision with respect to the allocation of certain funds to the project. At a staff retreat in the fall of 1965 the project director verbally attacked Kroepsch. Then and later, Kroepsch attempted to smooth the relationship on a person-to-person basis. But a few months later the director renewed his attack in a meeting of the WICHE Executive Committee. The man was not fired; Kroepsch enlisted the chair of the Mental Health Committee to help mediate a working arrangement between the two. The project director left WICHE when funding for his project ran out. Kroepsch thus retained an employee who continued to conduct his project effectively. The Kroepsch decision that led to the incident prevailed. Yet he tolerated behavior that was offensive, indeed subversive, out of a plenitude of generosity and readiness to extend the benefit of the doubt to a subordinate.

Nursing

The Nursing Program was a Kroepsch favorite. Its director, Jo Eleanor Elliott, was full of ideas and of energy, and the program was continually moving into issues that lay at the heart of nursing education and that called attention to WICHE as well as to its program in nursing. Nursing had its share of successes in finding financial support for the projects it wanted to undertake. Jo Elliott was wise in getting Kroepsch – Bunnell, too – to address the right nursing groups at the right times. That she was herself a recognized leader in the profession, well known as head of the program at WICHE, was obvious as she was elected president of the American Nurses Association, then elected for a second term.

There is no doubt about it: the WICHE Nursing Program rapidly gained nationwide eminence as it identified and promulgated standards for associate, baccalaureate, and master’s degree programs; as it stressed the need for graduate programs in nursing; and

emphasized the importance of *doing* research and of *applying research findings* in nursing education and practice.

WICHE might have retained nursing in its program indefinitely but for the impossibility of obtaining full reimbursement for indirect costs from both governmental agencies and foundations. Through the many years when WCHEN, the nursing council, and the WICHE Commission took the steps each could to build a profession that could sustain its own operation, working relationships were excellent. At length, though, WICHE's inability to subsidize the program in a sustained and continuing way led the nurses to go it alone. In 1986 the Western Institute of Nursing (WIN) was founded to function independently.

Medicine

It is difficult for many Americans to appreciate the expanse of Western states. Idaho, the smallest of the mainland WICHE states, is geographically much larger than the six New England states together. That fact, together with scarcity of population especially in the Midwest and Rocky Mountain areas, makes unduly costly and otherwise difficult the operation of medical schools. In 1960, only five of the 13 WICHE states operated such programs; in the vast Rocky Mountain region there were medical schools only in Denver and Salt Lake City.

Concern about a coming shortage of physicians was a significant factor leading to creation of the Western Education Compact. Medical practitioners were well represented among the first generation of commissioners. There was interest in getting the Student Exchange Program in medicine under way. Commissioner Ward Darley and others pushed for a regional study of needs and of resources of medical manpower. Both of Arizona's two research universities were already advancing themselves as *the* place for an Arizona medical school.

Enarson attempted to be responsive to the call for a study of needs and resources but was deterred by inability to obtain funds for expert staff. At length he was able to obtain help from a number of graduate students and the graduate dean at the University of Colorado and produced, late in 1959, a report, *The West's Medical Manpower Needs*, the product of his pick-up staff and advisory committee. One of his final actions before heading to Albuquerque in 1960 was to submit a proposal to the Commonwealth Fund in New York for \$200,000 to underwrite a study that would focus on medical education needs and problems of the large, low-population states within the region. By now, there was considerable activity: Arizona was serious about building a school of its own; Hawaii and New Mexico were considering the possibility of initiating two-year programs; Alaska had begun exploratory discussions with the Medical School at the University of Washington. In addition, a large school was under development at a new campus of the University of California at La Jolla; and the school at Los Angeles was being greatly enlarged. The schools in Denver and Salt Lake City had studies under way for expansion.

How best to cope with needs in Nevada, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, and in Alaska and Hawaii, remained in question.

The Commonwealth Fund announced, in May 1962, a grant to WICHE for a study of medical education needs and possibilities throughout the region. Kevin Bunnell's doctoral dissertation had traced the development of medical education; Kroepsch elevated medical education to WICHE program status and made Bunnell its director. Together, they persuaded Dr. James M. Faulkner, a nationally known medical educator, to direct a two-year study.

But Faulkner's findings and recommendations were not well received in Western states that had no large urban medical establishments in population centers well supplied with "clinical material" for the training of medical residents. In his view, none of the small-population states were in a position to create their own medical schools in the foreseeable future.

Developments in Washington, D.C., at the time were directly relevant. President Lyndon Johnson had appointed a blue-ribbon commission to recommend a federal initiative to support regional medical organizations across the country dealing with problems related to the heart, cancer, and stroke. The commission's recommendations were enacted in law in October 1965 and funded initially for three years. The administering office in Washington, the NIH Division of Regional Medical Programs, urged WICHE to coordinate activities of a "Mountain States Regional Medical Program" (MSRMP) for the states of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming. With the prospect of offices to be established in each of these states and hundreds of thousands of federal dollars for ventures that would spill over throughout the region, the WICHE Commission established the regional program and an Advisory Council on Medical Education (ACME) to interest itself both in MSRMP and in medical education issues more broadly.

During the next few years ACME, Bunnell, Dean Roy Schwartz of the Medical College at the University of Washington, and others discussed possible arrangements to initiate medical education programs on the campuses of small universities in each of the four states and to provide for instruction in clinical settings in medical centers or in community hospitals under suitable direction. Ward Darley had outlined a plan for establishing a two-year "school of medicine" in each of the four states, with the upper two years for clinical training in community hospitals in, or affiliated with, one of the region's established medical schools. The initial four years leading to the M.D. degree would be followed by internships and residencies in affiliated community hospitals linked to medical centers in the region. During the entire program representatives of the four two-year schools would comprise a committee that would "determine the objectives and plan the curricula," agree on criteria for appointment of faculty, and otherwise provide a measure of control as well as comparability of programs within the four states.

A concrete outcome of all the discussion was WWAMI (the initials of participating states Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) – a program that, beginning in the early 1970s, based its leadership at the medical center at the University of Washington. WWAMI enabled Alaska, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming to initiate medical education for their residents in-state and to assure that their students could complete a program of quality comparable to that of other accredited programs. Meanwhile, Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada, and New Mexico established medical schools on their own university campuses.

Other WICHE Programs

As WICHE had gotten under way in the 1950s, its staff devoted most of its effort to the Student Exchange, Mental Health, Nursing, and Medicine programs. Harold Enarson knew of the need for information and planning, at institution and state as well as regional levels, to enable higher education to be more nearly ready to accommodate the growing number of students then filling elementary and secondary schools. Members of the commission too – like the public more generally – were increasingly aware of the problems that lay ahead. During the 1960s and 1970s WICHE continued its focus on student exchange and on the fields related to medicine, but it became heavily involved in an ever widening range and growing number of projects. We have reported on some two dozen of these projects under the rubrics:

- ▶ State and regional planning and policy.
- ▶ Institutional planning, policy, and administration.
- ▶ Educational quality and efficiency.
- ▶ Access to educational opportunity.

Many of these proposals originated in Kevin Bunnell's Division of General Regional Programs, especially its Special Higher Education Projects (SHEP) unit – but they came from experience encountered across an organization that had an all-encompassing concern about higher education and that was sensitive to where money could be found to underwrite almost anything.

Management Information Systems: Establishment and Evolution

When Kevin Bunnell's director of special regional programs, Owen (Al) Knorr, left for a position in the New York State Education Department in the summer of 1965, Bunnell replaced him with a young doctoral student at Berkeley, W. John Minter. Institutional research and statewide planning had become topics of broad interest in higher education in the five years since the Dick Axt/Stanford summer work conference on institutional research. Increasingly, computers were being added in administrative offices and were being used for research and planning. Minter knew their capabilities. That fall and winter and extending on into 1966, Minter was engaged with Bunnell and Kroepsch in discussions with national organizations that shared WICHE's interest in

institutional management information for planning in higher education, at the levels of campus, state, region, and nation.

Minter and WICHE took the initiative in late fall 1966 to invite representatives of the American Council on Education, College Board, U.S. Office of Education, and other national and professional groups interested in sharing higher education information to meet in San Francisco in December 1966. Inevitably, WICHE picked up several assignments at the meeting and Minter convened a second such meeting in summer 1967, by which time the group was urging formation of a committee to outline alternatives for a common budgetary and financial information system for the West. The group established a design committee, comprising members from the organizations most interested. By March 1968, Minter and a member of the design committee were ready to take the committee document, "A Proposal to Design and Implement Management Information Systems with Common Data Elements for Western Higher Education Institutions and Agencies," to the U.S. Office of Education and National Science Foundation. USOE had been involved deeply in the planning process; it committed itself to fund at WICHE a five-year, \$1,112,207 project beginning in June of that year.

Management Information Systems (MIS) was a program whose time had come. With higher education enrollments and state costs beginning a steep increase, higher education information needed to be not only accurate but comparable from one institution and state to another and timely in reference to its uses. Need for management information was evident in institutions and agencies at all levels – campus, systems of institutions, states, regions, the nation – because all had responsible roles in higher education planning, funding, or managing. At a time of unprecedented growth and an ever-present condition of limited resources, all were dependent upon each other.

Management Information Systems grew rapidly in both program and staff. Soon, interest in participating was coming from states and higher education institutions across the country. The interest was not only in information; it was in the uses of information for management. Early in 1970, program staff proposed and the commission approved extending participation to institutions and states throughout the country, as well as a change in name to Planning and Management Systems (PMS). It was only a little more than another year before the program was clearly national in scope and had become a federally funded National Center for Higher Education Management Systems at WICHE.

From earliest conception, the program was a sensitive one. Institutions had shared information for years; but each had been able to maintain control over the content and conditions within which its information was shared. When asked for information by almost anyone, an institution's quite natural initial response was: "What do you want the information *for*?" The content and arrangement of the response could then be edited to take account of the information supplier's interests as well as those of the receiver. Absent common definitions for higher education phenomena, the resulting information might

be appropriate and useful, or it might not; nor was it always a simple matter to determine which was the case. As uniform definitions and data collection procedures were developed and adopted, higher education institutions could lose much of their control of their data, and conceivably, ultimately of their operations.

And once there was a *possibility* of data comparability, none of the interested parties could tolerate having anything else. Accordingly, MIS/PMS/NCHEMS grew very rapidly in scope as well as in staffing. What Bob Kroepsch had looked upon as a “rather modest pilot project” that would occupy two or perhaps three staff members had “aroused a great deal of attention, interest, and concern at the national level. . . .” Indeed, as he soon realized, “We have a bear by the tail!” WICHE soon was faced with the task of reconciling its *regional* sponsorship, concerns, and controls (such as they were) with the fact that the program reached into the most important and intimate operating elements in higher education at every level and throughout the nation. It would seem that WICHE stretched far indeed to continue to take responsibility for the enterprise.

But WICHE and NCHEMS found mutual advantage in maintaining a working relationship that, while placing WICHE in charge nominally, *de facto* enabled NCHEMS to develop under the direction of its own staff and board of directors. By 1974 the idea that NCHEMS was a WICHE activity was virtually a fiction.

It did remain a fact that it was WICHE that had brought higher education institutions and their organizations together, established relationships with funding agencies that made possible the rapid and extensive development of the project, and in the end produced new concepts and procedures for compiling information and for applying it to higher education issues that have revolutionized higher education planning and management. Creation of the MIS/PMS/NCHEMS program has proven to be one of the most significant developments in higher education management and planning during the 20th century. The experience gives evidence of the tremendous potential of regional collaboration and specifically, of the important role in higher education played by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

End of an Era

By the mid-1970s Bob Kroepsch had headed the WICHE enterprise for going on 15 years. Those years had seen an enormous growth in the nation's and the region's enrollments in higher education, in the numbers and kinds of institutions accommodating those enrollments, and in both state and federal involvement including financial support. Everything grew at WICHE – not only the Student Exchange Program anticipated by the founders, but by the 1970s, just about anything that was of concern or seemed to be an unmet need – or potential – in postsecondary education. In spite of a remarkably expanded program, WICHE continued to function with much the same management structure that it had from the beginning.

But the circumstances in which WICHE functioned were beginning to change. Termination of the federal Regional Medical Programs in June 1976 would end funding for all WICHE activities in medical education, an area that had been a central interest from the beginning. It would reduce WICHE staff by some 25 percent and put an end to “WICHE” offices in Boise, Missoula, Cheyenne, Reno, Las Vegas. Moreover, by 1975 the WICHE/NCHEMS relationship was changing rapidly and overtly enough for any observer to see. NCHEMS remained nominally a part of WICHE: it was housed there, its staff members were counted as “WICHE staff,” it procured virtually all of its administrative support from staff who were indeed part of the WICHE chain of command, but its program was planned and controlled entirely by a structure over which, *de facto*, the WICHE Commission and chief executive exercised no control.

Provisions for funding the core WICHE operation were precarious even as its impressive ability to find outside funding for program activities obscured the fact. For a decade of rapid growth in program and budget, beginning in 1964 WICHE let its membership fees – by far its major source of hard money – remain unchanged. When Kroepsch finally sought a dues increase to be effective in 1974, the request was for an increase of *87 percent* – more than enough, surely, to get the attention of the most supportive governor or legislator.

But the most difficult development for Bob Kroepsch and for WICHE was a very human one over which WICHE could have no influence whatever: in 1974, Ruth Kroepsch developed a cancer that was going to be fatal. By Bob Kroepsch’s strong desire and intention, Ruth had been an intimate participant and adviser in his decision making throughout his administration. Now in the sad time of her illness, Bob and Ruth faced the realities. Ruth urged Bob to take plenty of time after her death to decide upon his best course of action, both from his own interest and from WICHE’s. Colleagues assumed he was going to do that. Ruth died in May 1975.

Within a month, Kroepsch told his chair and vice chair that he planned to retire that fall or as soon thereafter as could meet the convenience of the commission.¹

Phillip Sirotkin, Executive Director, 1976 – 1989

The Bob Kroepsch era ended rather suddenly with Ruth Kroepsch’s death and Bob’s almost immediate decision to leave WICHE after some 15 years as executive director. Phillip Sirotkin was appointed as his successor six months after the resignation, though Kroepsch continued to serve until Sirotkin was on the job, a full year after Ruth’s death.

Though it was not apparent to commission members at the time, the situation at WICHE was considerably more complex than simply finding a director to replace one who was going to retire.

The world had turned. The time had come when the West's regional compact agency could no longer function as it had in the past. Since World War II, federal/state roles and relations had changed. State governments had grown, were better staffed, were more costly, more cost-conscious. Federal interventions in affairs traditionally left to states and localities, monetary and otherwise, had become common rather than rare. So with higher education: an activity that prior to the G.I. Bill had seemed to get along fine with little notice from any level of government, had come to demand the attention of governors and state legislatures for reasons political and fiscal. Higher education had become a major consideration in state planning and budgeting.

In light of Phil Sirotkin's inheritance, as he found it actually to be, it would seem that one had to be deaf, blind, and without capability for critical thought to believe, as the WICHE Commission seemed to believe at the time of Kroepsch's resignation, that the change of executive leadership would simply be routine. The fact was that WICHE was in an increasingly explosive situation because in expanding its program until it was as broad as all of education beyond high school – and more – it had gotten out of communication with those whose understanding and support were fundamental to its well being.

“Timing is everything.” Administrators know the truth of the statement; politicians live and die by it. Events that began to occur at about the time of Kroepsch's resignation eventually revealed the threat to WICHE's existence. We have noted that state appropriations for membership dues in the spring of 1973, though hardly a major item of state expenditure, were *87 percent* more than they had been two years earlier – a noticeable increase indeed. Moreover, at the annual meeting in 1974 the commission had approved a shift in the basis for student exchange fees. They now would be based on the *cost of education* rather than on the outcome of negotiations between senders and receivers. The result was going to increase per student fees dramatically, especially in the fields that attracted the largest numbers of students.

Then in summer 1975, a year since the 87 percent dues increase, the executive committee discussed an increase again: at a time of double-digit inflation, a staff analysis called for almost immediate action to approve a further increase of nearly 40 percent. There now were legislative fiscal offices in each of the states and their directors were organized. Their limited contact told them that WICHE was an organization of defined mission that had expanded its programs over all of higher education. At their meeting that summer they considered whether they should recommend that collectively their states oppose any increase in WICHE dues until their governors and legislators had an opportunity to review the organization and affirm its purposes and programs.

A legislative conference in December 1975, which WICHE hoped would bring legislators and educators together in confronting problems of planning and funding higher education, turned sour when the keynote speaker, a former university president turned state higher education executive officer in California, misjudged his audience and

the occasion and characterized state legislators as meddlers in affairs that should be left to educators – to people who, he suggested, knew what they were doing. The impact of this self-serving advice on participants was obvious and it was not good. From a WICHE point of view, the timing could hardly have been worse.

Sirotkin was made aware of impending trouble before he arrived on the job by a California state senator who promised to take his state out of the Compact and who warned that California would be only the first member state to do so.

And all this was not all. A month after Sirotkin went to work in June 1976 the Midwestern governors, a group that included most of the governors of WICHE states, met during a National Governors Conference over an agenda of their own, focusing on what governors were wont to see as an overabundance of “multistate organizations” – MSOs, creatures of interstate compacts or agreements under which states could work together on problems of shared concern. Typically, MSOs were governed by boards comprising representatives of the participating jurisdictions, appointed by the governors but often having their own sources of income and appointing their own staff. They were not easy for the chief executive office to control, or even to keep track of. For the governors, WICHE stood out as an MSO that cost them money but about which they knew little. As they discussed ways for the executive office to exercise greater control over the MSOs, they needed to consider what this WICHE organization was all about.

During his first two years at WICHE, Sirotkin dealt with investigations sponsored by the legislatures of California and Wyoming, the Western Legislative Fiscal Officers, a task force, and a joint gubernatorial/legislative committee that grew out of the concerns of the Mountains/Plains Governors. Neither members of the commission nor Bob Kroepsch had mentioned any such problems to him. True, at his last annual meeting in August 1975, Kroepsch had complained about lack of awareness among state legislators as to what WICHE was all about; but Sirotkin was not in attendance and in any event, the commission took no action in response. Fifteen years of unmitigated “success,” of growth of program breadth and depth, obscured weaknesses that were hardly noticeable until they had become threatening.²

Sirotkin proved himself the right person for the WICHE directorship at the right time. His convictions about the needs and potential for regional interstate collaboration and his energy and courage in dealing with governors and legislators inspired responses from commissioners and other WICHE friends that transformed threat to opportunity. The ultimate outcome of two years of review by a half-dozen states and organizations was approval by the regional conferences of governors and of legislators of a new statement of WICHE mission and objectives that reflected the realities of what WICHE had become in the course of some 25 years of meeting needs that were defined by the member states.

The experience left commissioners as well as staff with a new understanding of how WICHE needed to keep state legislators and governors involved. The WICHE structure

– three commissioners appointed by the governor representing each of the member states, and a staff that took its direction from the commission – *could* be a viable one; but whether it was depended on whether commissioners and staff *carried out* their particular responsibilities. A Utah series of inquiries in the early 1980s and a 1984 Hawaii inquiry by a legislative auditor seemed to reflect once again the principal concerns of 1976-78, but each was concluded with reports strongly supportive of the WICHE role.

The possibility that educators and political officers will talk past each other on matters of great importance to both remains all too likely. That educators believe they know what must be done, and know what support they need to do it, makes eminent sense to educators even if it makes no sense at all to the political officers. That the very real differences between the two will continue to appear from time to time is virtually certain.

Phil Sirotkin had been attracted to the WICHE directorship not because he was challenged by the opportunity to prove its value to doubting governors and state legislators but because he believed that states could develop stronger programs and more efficient structures by planning and working together regionally, or in groups within a region, rather than as independent agencies.

Specifically, upon his arrival, and despite demands on his time from California, Wyoming, and elsewhere, he proposed an ambitious project through which universities throughout the region would designate selected, strong graduate programs for further strengthening, to be funded substantially through termination of programs of secondary or tertiary rank. Indeed, WICHE would provide structures through which groups of states could plan and develop their graduate programs to serve regional rather than merely institutional needs. WICHE would encourage states to make their graduate programs more accessible through eliminating nonresident tuition at the graduate level. With WICHE leadership and assistance, on a voluntary basis, institutions would thus find it advantageous to strengthen specified programs and to terminate weaker ones. His concept for a Graduate Education Project, palpably idealistic, appealed to the Carnegie Corporation. Sirotkin had it under way with a full-time director, Richard Jonsen, only a little more than a year after his arrival.

But within months it was evident that key assumptions underlying the project needed to be withdrawn. Few if any of the states were prepared to subsidize educational costs for residents of other states. Nor would universities terminate programs that in the judgment of some were less than stellar. The Graduate Education Project was able, in the course of nearly a decade, to create channels for what proved to be useful communication on academic matters among a group of institutions in the Pacific Northwest; to lead WICHE to create a capability for ongoing research and policy analysis; to encourage development at WICHE of a telecommunications cooperative centered in the West; and there were other accomplishments. But for Sirotkin and Project Director Dick Jonsen, the project continued to be disappointing because it proved unable to overcome

institutional unwillingness to develop their graduate programs according to regional needs and capabilities that might threaten institutional growth.

There were some other disappointments during the Sirotkin administration. With considerable enthusiasm and apparent promise, WICHE defined and funded a study of optometric education in response to a request of the American Optometric Association, conveyed through one of the optometric deans in the region. The study was to eventuate in a regional plan that would address optometric needs in each of the WICHE states and would anticipate considerably enlarged areas of collaboration among the region's three schools of optometry in addressing those needs. The project proceeded under the aegis of a large advisory committee representing the schools as well as practitioners and state and national organizations. It eventuated in a plan for regional development and service that was endorsed by the institutions and by state organizations of practitioners. It was a pioneering outcome: no other profession had any such plan for matching of educational resources and professional needs. Its implementation required underwriting of a bit over a million dollars. The plan died when it proved impossible to obtain the funds. Not long afterward a similar effort was carried out in dentistry, and with the same outcome.

But Sirotkin's optimism was rewarded with successes as well.

Veterinary Medicine

Veterinary medicine was a field in which there was an acute shortage of student places in the West – at a time of unprecedented pressure for admission in most of the health professions, veterinary medicine stood out as especially difficult. When Sirotkin came to WICHE, studies were in various stages of development in the three Western states with schools of veterinary medicine, and in Oregon and Idaho, which were considering establishing their own schools. Colorado had proposed an expansion that would provide space for 65 WICHE students along with a larger number of Coloradoans. It had obtained both federal and state commitments that would cover approximately two-thirds of the cost of a new hospital that was central to the plan. It remained for Colorado State University to find support for the remaining one-third of that cost.

WICHE worked closely with CSU to develop formal agreements with eight states within the region that enabled the university to borrow the remaining funds and proceed with the project. In a genuine sense, there now was a “regional” school of veterinary medicine. WICHE also assisted as the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho formalized plans for “WOI” (using their respective initials), under which those three states addressed their own needs for student places in veterinary medicine and made a number of additional places available for students from other WICHE states. Taken together, the results ended pressures in other states to create yet additional schools.

Undergraduate Exchange

Sirotkin continued to wish for a comprehensive program of exchange of undergraduate students in which each state would accept residents of other collaborating states at resident tuition rates. However, he recognized the experience with the Graduate Education Project as an indicator of the fate of any such proposal.

The Western Undergraduate Exchange, initiated in 1988, left to the participating institutions the determination of the programs they would offer and the number and qualifications of students they would accept. The only significant uniform requirement was that tuition charges would be 150 percent of an institution's regular resident tuition charge. The difference between that rate and nonresident tuition in all states was significant. The program developed immediately: it attracted 640 students in its initial year and in a decade the number approached 14,000.

Distance Education

The Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (WCET) is, of course, a major success story at WICHE, initiated after some 25 years of assessment of educational television – of trial, rejection, and further study. By the end of the millennium WCET included 246 member institutions and organizations in 43 states and eight foreign countries, about half being baccalaureate/graduate colleges and universities and the others including some 30 statewide systems of higher education, nearly four dozen two-year colleges, and 21 corporations. WCET had achieved self sufficiency – it was completely self funded as to program and administrative services, which it purchased from WICHE.

WCET has provided a vital forum for exchange of information and ideas among policymakers, educational and technical professionals, and corporations relating to the incorporation of technology in teaching and learning. It has developed principles of good practice for electronically delivered programs that have been adopted by the regional accrediting associations in the U.S. and are being used in other countries. With NCHEMS, it has developed standards for costing analysis of technology in higher education. It has assisted dozens of states and campuses in assessing and planning for their distance-learning needs and resources. It has organized the first *regional* multistate distance-learning programs.

Information & Policy Analysis

During the Sirotkin years the Policy Analysis and Research unit advanced notably toward becoming in a real sense the heart of the WICHE operation, a center of information and policy consideration for WICHE but also for higher education in the West and indeed, for the wider high education community. That WICHE should be a center for information was evident to the commission as early as 1956, when it so advised the staff. The Carnegie grant (December 1957) helped Harold Enarson and

Dick Axt initiate numerous projects that identified WICHE with higher education policy analysis. With the establishment of the Information Clearinghouse in 1979, staff members were assigned exclusively to the information/policy role that had been a central function of WICHE from the beginning.

At the beginning, the emphasis was on information and its distribution through publications, workshops, and conferences. But information *connotes* policy – one can hardly look at information without conjuring matters of policy; nor can one contemplate policy without information. The dual emphasis is evidenced in WICHE's range of publications, including the annual *Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West* and mini-fact books for each state; a regular publication of *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*, which has grown in depth of reporting and analysis, most recently with projections by family income; periodic bulletins and e-mail updates; SPIDO, an online resource for laws, regulations, and other policy documents across a number of policy areas and for the 50 states; and numerous other resources.

The Policy Analysis and Research unit also identifies and illuminates policy issues through annual forums within the WICHE region; technical assistance provided to individual states at their request, involving key leaders in small high-level meetings (normally, three or four annually); collaborations on a great variety of matters with other organizations, such as the Education Commission of the States, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, American Council on Education, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; and commissioned papers and other work on a wide range of issues, underwritten by foundations and government agencies. The Policy Analysis and Research/Information Clearinghouse function continues to look ahead to changing needs and opportunities and capabilities in higher education, and to implications for WICHE service.

Some Concluding Observations

For most of the history of higher education in America, there was no WICHE, not even a thought that a regional organization for voluntary cooperation among institutions and states might play a useful role. Indeed, education beyond high school was not a governmental activity of intense interest to most Americans. But in the later 1940s and in the 1950s, higher education acquired a more obvious role in public life as a result of a war that touched much of the world, and virtually everyone living in the United States.

Education had turned out to be a major determinant of social and economic and technological advancement. Colleges and universities became major players in state affairs as the ultimate result of federal and state legislation that provided new responsibilities for higher education institutions and significant financial assistance to them for buildings, student financial aid, scientific research, and other activities. By mid-century, the atmosphere in which public and private institutions of higher education

managed and funded operations was quite different from what it had been when only a small proportion of college-age youth went to college and when state and federal funding for higher education was a far less noticeable part of state and federal budgets.

By the late 1940s the impact of the federal G.I. Bill on schools and colleges in many professions, especially those related to medicine, made further state action imperative. States that had public schools of medicine, dentistry, or veterinary medicine were receiving far more applications for admission than they were able to accept. Many of them had admitted substantial numbers of residents of other states, but political pressure was being brought upon them to get rid of the nonresidents and increase enrollment of residents. The result: more and more residents of states that had no public programs in medicine and other professions were unable to gain admission to such programs, and pressures were being brought upon those states – often of low population and limited economies – to create such schools whatever the academic feasibility and the cost.

In the South, in the depression and in the war years, states and institutions of higher education had initiated collaborative working relationships in a number of fields. When opportunity for medical education became seriously restricted, Southern governors in 1948 created a mechanism, soon called the Southern Regional Education Board, that would encourage states to join in formation of new schools, expand existing facilities, exchange students, and otherwise address needs that many of the states could not manage individually. In this action SREB provided a model and notable inspiration for similar action in other parts of the country.

The West was next – the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, WICHE, came into being formally in 1951; it was fully active in 1953. NEBHE, the New England Board, began operations in 1957.³ According to provisions of the formal documents adopted by the Western governors, WICHE was to concern itself primarily with facilities and programs in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and public health, and with studies relating to needs and resources to provide them. However, WICHE's underlying purpose was to strengthen interstate and interinstitutional collaboration and resource sharing in higher education.

It seems inevitable that as states and higher education institutions became acquainted with each other's needs and capabilities, they would find advantage in working together to address dozens of issues. In the West as in the South, the new regional body rapidly expanded its sphere of action. From the beginning its constituencies, both political and programmatic, identified needs that they believed WICHE should address. Staff leadership was highly competent and committed.

After a single year stint of the first executive director, William Jones, the head office during the next 38 years was occupied by only three individuals. To recap briefly and offer some observations on these three chief executives:

Harold L. Enarson was young and new to higher education administration, but experienced in public administration at both federal and local levels. He was full of ideas about a regional effort in higher education. Under his leadership WICHE membership soon included all eligible states, and the program expanded dramatically to include other professional fields (nursing and mental health were cases in point), and institutional and statewide education and research in higher education planning and administration. Fundamental questions about operation of the new enterprise were considered and resolved, such as determining the respective roles of the governing board (the WICHE Commission) and the staff, the responsibilities of each state's three commissioners, the directions WICHE program development would take, and many others. It was a critically important six years, during which Enarson shaped the organization along lines that would be evident even some 50 years later.

Robert H. Kroepsch became executive director in 1960 and served until spring 1976. Bob Kroepsch was the kind of boss that many able and ambitious people seek – he looked for persons of talent with ideas and with people skills who could translate ideas into action. He believed that decisions about program operations should be made by program directors and that credit belonged where the talent that produced the desired results resided. He had impressive people skills himself.

WICHE accomplishments during the Kroepsch administration were impressive indeed. The Student Exchange Program was developed to include more than a dozen professional fields that were of huge benefit to hundreds of students and to every member state. In matters of both education and research, the Mental Health and Nursing programs achieved leadership roles throughout the Western region and well beyond. Staff members were full of ideas for projects directed to access for students underrepresented in higher education; to improving the quality of higher education programs and the skills of its teachers and administrators; and to sharing strengths among institutions and among states. The development of management information programs, culminating in the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, was a contribution of enduring national and international importance. All this was accomplished with a staff led by one who vested both responsibility and reward in those he had chosen for leadership. Bob Kroepsch was in tune with the times in which he served at WICHE. In higher education, everything was growing.

At the same time, one must question how much to fault Kroepsch, the commission, and the WICHE staff for a crisis that seriously threatened WICHE's existence immediately following his resignation. Assuredly, the crisis had many sources, but a major one was the huge extension of the WICHE program and, in contrast, the limited knowledge and understanding that had been built within member state governments of what WICHE was all about. As a long-time supporter of Kroepsch has observed, he and others on the staff (and in the commission) were more sensitive to contacts with academics than to contacts with the politicians.⁴ Assuring gubernatorial and legislative

understanding in the member states of what WICHE is, does, and does not do was and remains a core challenge for the commission and its executive director.

Phillip Sirotkin assumed the executive director position in June 1976. After he had accepted the position, and months before his duties at the State University of New York permitted him to give major time to his new job in the West, he found that steps had been taken in California – a state with more than half the population of the entire WICHE region – to terminate its membership in the compact, and that legislators in Wyoming (a very different state) were sending similar signals. Similar moves on the part of the association of Western legislative fiscal officers, and of the Western governors, were soon to appear.

Sirotkin addressed each group immediately and directly. In all cases he found ignorance of WICHE purposes and activities at the bottom of the problem, and he not only extended his own efforts but drew upon others who could be more effective than he – another “newcomer from the East” – in filling the gaping holes in understanding of what WICHE was created to do, what it did, and what it did not do. Wyoming Sen. William Rector, a commission member, reported to the commission in February 1977 – nine months after Sirotkin’s arrival – that at a recent meeting his governor had “made it evident that Phil Sirotkin has gained respect of the governors and is the salvation of WICHE.” The judgment was premature; the bashing of WICHE by other organizations of political officers had only started. But the final outcome in late 1978 indicated that, if premature early in 1977, it was accurate when the bashing finally stopped.

When he resigned at the end of 1989, Phil Sirotkin could point to other significant accomplishments through the Graduate Education Project, the Western Undergraduate Exchange, and the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, the development of a truly regional educational capability in veterinary medicine, and other areas. During the administrations of these three executive directors, WICHE developed a broad and varied program that has extended far beyond any program that would be inferred from a strict reading of the compact.

It is notable, though, that as the crisis was resolved in 1978, the regional conferences of the governors and the state legislators approved a definition of WICHE’s role that included everything the accredited colleges were doing or might do. There were *reasons* the WICHE role should be broad. A major such reason is that, quite naturally, among the Western states there are differences in needs for higher education services – no single program or severely limited array of programs could serve all member states sufficiently well to meet the needs and retain the support of all.

In WICHE’s very first year of operation, the executive director urged that each state name one legislator, a “representative of the public” to the commission, in order to help bring balance to a body that was dominated by university presidents and others with strong ties to higher education. The issue has been a recurring one, as commissioners

have sought to be responsive to the public interest while preserving a dominant role for educators in WICHE affairs.

That dominance and urge for control have been evident in numerous instances, perhaps most obviously in the commission's treatment of the recommendations of Commissioner Patricia Saiki's committee (comprising mostly state legislators) but also in the commission's long-standing doubts about sponsoring the Mental Health Program, and especially its Corrections Program; the planning for a legislative conference in 1975 that ignited the "conflagration" inherited by Phillip Sirotkin; and arguably, the reluctance of the commission itself to come to grips with needs relating to minority education. In more recent years, as more governors have been appointing legislators and State Higher Education Executive Officers as commissioners, the influence of state governments (as compared to state universities) has grown and the balance of educational and statewide interest seems more viable.



As these concluding observations are written, federal, state, and local governmental budgets are in deficit to a degree that is unprecedented. Governments are compelled to avoid new commitments and to cut back on earlier commitments – steps that threaten organizations like WICHE that have no assured income base apart from payments of their members.

The times test WICHE and its peers, and the outcomes of those tests cannot be surely foreseen. Yet WICHE looks to the future with well-developed understanding of its role among its constituents and an appreciation for its capabilities that augur well for the future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A**The Western Regional Education Compact**

**Entered into by and between the States and Territories signatory hereto,
to provide acceptable and efficient educational facilities
to meet the needs of the Western Region of the United States of America.**

Article I

Whereas, the future of this Nation and of the Western States is dependent upon the quality of the education of its youth; and

Whereas, many of the Western States individually do not have sufficient numbers of potential students to warrant the establishment and maintenance within their borders of adequate facilities in all of the essential fields of technical, professional, and graduate training, nor do all the states have the financial ability to furnish within their borders institutions capable of providing acceptable standards of training in all of the fields mentioned above; and

Whereas, it is believed that the Western States, or groups of such states within the Region, cooperatively can provide acceptable and efficient educational facilities to meet the needs of the Region and of the students thereof:

Now, therefore, the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, and the Territories of Alaska and Hawaii do hereby Covenant and agree as follows:

Article II

Each of the compacting states and territories pledges to each of the other compacting states and territories faithful cooperation in carrying out all the purposes of this Compact.

Article III

The compacting states and territories hereby create the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, hereinafter called the Commission. Said Commission shall be a body corporate of each compacting state and territory and an agency thereof. The Commission shall have all the powers and duties set forth herein, including the power to sue and be sued, and such additional powers as may be conferred upon it by subsequent action of the respective legislatures of the compacting states and territories.

Article IV

The Commission shall consist of three resident members from each compacting state or territory. At all times one Commissioner from each compacting state or territory shall be an educator engaged in the field of higher education in the state or territory from which he is appointed.

The Commissioners from each state and territory shall be appointed by the Governor thereof as provided by law in such state or territory. Any Commissioner may be removed or suspended from office as provided by the law of the state or territory from which he shall have been appointed.

The terms of each Commissioner shall be four years: Provided, however, that the first three Commissioners shall be appointed as follows; one for two years, one for three years, and one for four years. Each Commissioner shall hold office until his successor shall be appointed and qualified. If any office becomes vacant for any reason, the Governor shall appoint a Commissioner to fill the office for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Article V

Any business transacted at any meeting of the Commission must be by affirmative vote of a majority of the whole number of compacting states and territories.

One or more Commissioners from a majority of the compacting states and territories shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Each compacting state and territory represented at any meeting of the Commission is entitled to one vote.

Article VI

The Commission shall elect from its number a chairman and a vice chairman and may appoint, and at its pleasure dismiss or remove, such officers, agents, and employees as may be required to carry out the purpose of this Compact; and shall fix and determine their duties, qualifications and compensation, having due regard for the importance of the responsibilities involved.

The Commissioners shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses from the funds of the Commission.

Article VII

The Commission shall adopt a seal and by-laws and shall adopt and promulgate rules and regulations for its management and control.

The Commission may elect such committees as it deems necessary for the carrying out of its functions.

The Commission shall establish and maintain an office within one of the compacting states for the transactions of its business and may meet at any time, but in any event must meet at least once a year. The Chairman may call such additional meetings and upon the request of a majority of the Commissioners of three or more compacting states or territories shall call additional meetings.

The Commission shall submit a budget to the Governor of each compacting state and territory at such time and for such period as may be required.

The Commission shall, after negotiations with interested institutions, determine the cost of providing the facilities for graduate and professional education for use in its contractual agreements throughout the Region.

On or before the fifteenth day of January of each year, the Commission shall submit to the Governors and Legislatures of the compacting states and territories a report of its activities for the preceding calendar year.

The Commission shall keep accurate books of account, showing in full its receipts and disbursements, and said books of account shall be open at any reasonable time for inspection by the Governor of any compacting state or territory or his designated representative. The Commission shall not be subject to audit and accounting procedure of any of the compacting states or territories. The Commission shall provide for an independent annual audit.

Article VIII

It shall be the duty of the Commission to enter into such contractual agreements with any institutions in the Region offering graduate or professional education and with any of the compacting states or territories as may be required in the judgment of the Commission to provide adequate services and facilities of graduate and professional education for the citizens of the respective compacting states or territories. The Commission shall first endeavor to provide adequate services and facilities in the fields of dentistry, medicine, public health, and veterinary medicine, and may undertake similar activities in other professional and graduate fields.

For this purpose the Commission may enter into contractual agreements--

(a) with the governing authority of any educational institution in the Region, or with any compacting state or territory, to provide such graduate or professional educational services upon terms and conditions to be agreed upon between contracting parties, and

(b) with the governing authority of any educational institution in the Region or with any compacting state or territory to assist in the placement of graduate or professional students in educational institutions in the Region providing the desired services and facilities, upon such terms and conditions as the Commission may prescribe.

It shall be the duty of the Commission to undertake studies of needs for professional and graduate educational facilities in the Region, the resources for meeting such needs, and the long-range effects of the Compact on higher education; and from time to time to prepare comprehensive reports on such research for presentation to the Western Governors' Conference and to the legislatures of the compacting states and territories. In conducting such studies, the Commission may confer with any national or regional planning body which may be established. The Commission shall draft and recommend to the Governors of the various compacting states and territories, uniform legislation dealing with problems of higher education in the Region.

For the purposes of this Compact the word "Region" shall be construed to mean the geographical limits of the several compacting states and territories.

Article IX

The operating costs of the Commission shall be apportioned equally among the compacting states and territories.

Article X

This Compact shall become operative and binding immediately as to those states and territories adopting it whenever five or more of the states or territories of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Alaska and Hawaii have duly adopted it prior to July 1, 1953. This Compact shall become effective as to any additional states or territories adopting thereafter at the time of such adoption.

Article XI

This Compact may be terminated at any time by consent of a majority of the compacting states and territories. Consent shall be manifested by passage and signature in the usual manner of legislation expressing such consent by the legislature and Governor of such terminating state. Any state or territory may at any time withdraw from this Compact by means of appropriate legislation to that end. Such withdrawal shall not become effective until two years after written notice thereof by the Governor of the withdrawing state or territory accompanied by a certified copy of requisite legislative action is received by the Commission. Such withdrawal shall not relieve the withdrawing state or territory from its obligations hereunder accruing prior to the effective date of withdrawal. The withdrawing state or territory may rescind its action of withdrawal at any time within the two-year period. Thereafter, the withdrawing state or territory may be reinstated by application to and the approval by a majority vote of the Commission.

Article XII

If any compacting state or territory shall at any time default in the performance of any of its obligations assumed or imposed in accordance with the provisions of this Compact, all rights, privileges and benefits conferred by this Compact or agreements hereunder shall be suspended from the effective date of such default as fixed by the Commission.

Unless such default shall be remedied within a period of two years following the effective date of such default, this Compact may be terminated with respect to such defaulting state or territory by affirmative vote of three-fourths of the other member states or territories.

Any such defaulting state may be reinstated by: (a) performing all acts and obligations upon which it has heretofore defaulted, and (b) application to and the approval by a majority vote of the Commission.

WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**B Y L A W S****ARTICLE I****Description, Goals, Program Objectives, Program Criteria,
Operating Principles, Affiliated States****Section 1. Description**

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a public interstate agency that operates under the Western Regional Education Compact. The Compact has been adopted by the legislatures of thirteen Western states, signed into law by their governors, approved by the Congress of the United States, and signed by the President. The Compact calls for the governor of each of those states to appoint three Commissioners to oversee the development of WICHE programs and to assure that the Compact is carried out for the benefit of the citizens of the West. Other states in the Western region may become affiliated members of the organization when mutual interests exist and when it would benefit WICHE to enter such arrangements.

Higher education, as defined by WICHE, consists of those programs offered by accredited colleges and universities, and includes the following:

- a. Academic, technical, and professional fields of study leading to associate, baccalaureate, and/or graduate degrees;
- b. Continuing education;
- c. Vocational-technical education;
- d. Distance-delivered education.

Section 2. Mission

The fifteen member states of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy among states and institutions, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life.

Section 3. Objectives

WICHE seeks to accomplish its mission through a variety of activities that have the following objectives:

- a. To extend the availability of quality higher education programs among Western states.
- b. To identify emerging issues, trends, and problems affecting higher education.
- c. To provide research, analysis, and reporting of information on public policy issues of concern in the WICHE states, and to provide opportunities for discussion and strengthened understanding of these issues among policymakers.
- d. To promote collaboration within higher education and among the educational sectors, the government sector, and the private sector.
- e. To identify the broad array of technical, programmatic, and financial resources available in higher education and to link those resources to the needs of the region.
- f. To serve as an informed and objective representative of higher education before Western governmental and education leaders.
- g. To help increase the participation and success in higher education of underrepresented and underserved populations.

- h. To promote the use of new and effective technologies, models, and methods in higher education.
- i. To strengthen the linkages between higher education and the economy, including workforce requirements and government services.
- j. To encourage Western higher education cooperation with other regions and, where appropriate, across national boundaries.

Section 4. Program Criteria

The name of the agency implies certain criteria:

- a. Western. That the program has significant implications for people and institutions in the Western states, but may have implications for other states as well;
- b. Interstate. That the program has significant implications for more than one state, usually a group of states, with interstate and interinstitutional cooperation implied;
- c. Commission. That the program is sponsored or co-sponsored by the Commission and has its approval;
- d. Higher Education. That the program has a significant component related to higher education.

Section 5. Operating Principles

- a. Programs and projects shall receive formal approval of the Commission according to procedures the Commission has established and may, from time to time, revise;
- b. Requests for services originating with or endorsed by the governors or legislatures of the compacting states shall be given priority by the Commission and staff.

Section 6. Affiliated States

States geographically in the Western region but not signatories to the Western Regional Education Compact may be afforded status as affiliated states in accordance with policies and procedures approved by the Commission.

ARTICLE II Membership

Section 1. Members

The membership of the Commission shall consist of three residents of each member state, at least one of whom shall be an educator engaged in the field of higher education. The Commissioners from each compacting state shall be appointed by the governor thereof as provided by law in such state. The Commissioners from each affiliated state shall be selected as determined by the state. Commissioners may be removed or suspended from office as provided by the laws of the states from which they shall have been appointed.

Section 2. Tenure

The term of each Commissioner shall be four years. Each Commissioner shall hold office until a successor shall be appointed and qualified.

Section 3. Vacancies

If any Commission office becomes vacant for any reason, the Secretary-Treasurer shall inform the appropriate governor, and request the governor to fill the office for the remainder of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE III

Meetings

Section 1. Meetings of the Commission

The full Commission shall meet twice each year. Meetings of the Commission shall be held during the months of May or June and November or December on the day and at a time and place set at least one meeting in advance of the meeting to be held. All members shall be given written notice of the meetings of the full Commission at least sixty (60) days prior to the full Commission meetings.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairman or upon request of the delegations of three or more states, provided, however, that all members shall be given at least thirty (30) days written notice as to the time and place the special meeting is to be held, unless such notice is waived by the written action of a majority of the whole number of member states.

Section 3. Attendance at Meetings

Commissioners shall attend two meetings of the full Commission and all special meetings of the Commission each year. When conditions develop which will prevent their attendance, they shall notify Commission headquarters as soon as possible.

Section 4. Quorums

One or more Commissioners from each state of a majority of the whole number of member states shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 5. Voting

Each member state represented at any meeting of the Commission is entitled to one vote.

Section 6. Agenda

Items of business requiring action at the meetings of the Commission shall be limited to those appearing on the agenda, which shall be mailed to the members not less than ten (10) days in advance of the scheduled meeting. Whenever possible, working papers and staff recommendations on these items shall accompany the agenda. Nothing in this bylaw shall prohibit the Commission from adding items to the agenda of any meeting if no action is requested thereon at that meeting.

Section 7. Executive Sessions

Executive sessions of the Commission may be held at the discretion of the Chairman or at the request of any three Commissioners present and voting. The Executive Director shall be present at all executive sessions. The Chairman, with the approval of a majority of the Commissioners present and voting, may invite other individuals to attend.

Section 8. Special Executive Sessions

Special executive sessions, limited to the members of the Commission, shall be held only to consider the appointment, salary, or tenure of the Executive Director.

ARTICLE IV

Officers, Terms, Duties

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Commission shall include a Chairman and a Vice Chairman. The Executive Director shall be the Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 2. Election

The Chairman and the Vice Chairman shall be elected at the regular Annual Meeting and shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting, or until their successors are elected and qualified.

Section 3. Duties

The officers shall perform the usual duties of their respective offices, including the following:

- a. Chairman. The Chairman of the Commission shall serve as Chairman ex officio of the Executive Committee, shall call and preside at all meetings of the Commission and of the Executive Committee, shall prepare agenda for these meetings, shall appoint the appointive members of all committees, and shall be an ex officio member of all Commission committees, with power to vote. In the intervals between meetings of the Commission and of the Executive Committee, the Chairman shall represent these bodies.

At the next meeting of each body, the Chairman shall report to members all action taken on their behalf. All such acts of the Chairman shall be taken subject to ratification by the Executive Committee or the Commission, according to their respective jurisdictions. Upon retirement from this office, the Chairman, if still a WICHE Commissioner, shall serve one year in an advisory capacity on the Executive Committee without vote, but shall have a vote if elected a regular Executive Committee member.

- b. Vice Chairman. In the absence of the Chairman or in the event the Chairman is present but desires the Vice Chairman to do so, it shall be the duty of the Vice Chairman to perform all the duties of the Chairman. The Vice Chairman shall be an ex officio member of all Commission committees, with power to vote, and shall assist the Chairman and Executive Director in liaison with executive, legislative, and other public bodies. The Vice Chairman shall be the Chairman-Elect and shall succeed the Chairman in office. In the event that there is a vacancy in the office of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall serve as Acting Chairman until the full Commission, at its next regularly scheduled meeting, can take formal action to designate the Chairman.
- c. Secretary-Treasurer. The Executive Committee shall appoint the Executive Director to act as its Secretary-Treasurer to keep minutes of all meetings of the Commission and its committees, and it shall be the duty of the Secretary-Treasurer to send copies of the minutes of all Commission and Executive Committee meetings to the governors and transmit a record of attendance from their states. The Secretary-Treasurer shall file, index, and preserve carefully all minutes, papers, and documents pertaining to the business and proceedings of the Commission and its committees; shall act as custodian of all funds of the Commission; and shall keep proper accounts concerning the disposition of all such funds. The Commission shall cause the books of account of the Commission to be audited annually.

Section 4. Bond

The officers shall execute such bond as may be required from time to time by the Executive Committee. The cost of such bond shall be charged against Commission funds.

Section 5. Delegation of Authority

The officers are authorized to enter contractual agreements and sign documents on behalf of the Commission. The Secretary-Treasurer is further authorized to sign contracts, grants, and other agreements that are necessary for the effective operation of WICHE.

ARTICLE V**Committees****Section 1. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of one Commissioner from each member state, with committee members selected by their respective state delegations by whatever procedure each delegation may

determine. The Chairman of the Commission shall serve ex officio as Chairman of the Executive Committee but shall have no vote unless representing a state. The Vice Chairman shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee without vote if not already designated an Executive Committee member from his or her state.

Section 2. Powers of the Executive Committee

Except as otherwise provided in the Compact, during the intervals between the meetings of the Commission, the Executive Committee may exercise all the powers of the Commission. The Executive Committee may fix its own rules of procedure, and it shall keep a record of its proceedings and shall report these proceedings to the Commission at the next regular or special meeting of the Commission.

Section 3. Attendance at the Executive Committee Meetings

Members of the Executive Committee shall attend all regular and special meetings of the Committee, and when unable to attend, shall arrange for one other Commissioner from their respective states to attend as their official representative with power to vote.

Commissioners who are not members of the Executive Committee shall be invited to all meetings of the Executive Committee at their own expense, with voice but no vote.

Section 4. Conduct of the Executive Committee Meetings

The provisions of the following listed sections of Article III shall also apply to the meetings of the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Quorums

Section 5. Voting

Section 6. Agenda

Section 7. Executive Sessions

Section 8. Special Executive Sessions

Section 5. Special Committees

At any meeting the Commission may authorize the creation of such special committees as it deems necessary and appropriate and may fix their size, duties, and tenure.

Section 6. Committees

Members of Committees shall attend all regular and special meetings of their committees, and when unable to attend, shall arrange for one other Commissioner from their respective states to attend as their official representative with power to vote. Committee meetings may be convened via conference call or other electronic means.

ARTICLE VI

Director and Staff

There shall be an Executive Director and such staff as may be deemed necessary by the Commission. The Commission's office shall be established in one of the compacting states as may be determined by the Commission.

ARTICLE VII

Finance

At the direction of the Executive Committee, the Executive Director shall submit a proposed annual budget for the consideration of the Commission. The Commission shall act upon such proposed budget at its Semiannual Meeting.

ARTICLE VIII**Changing Bylaws**

Any bylaw may be adopted, amended, or repealed by the affirmative vote of a majority of the whole number of member states, provided, however, that notice of the proposed action shall be included in the call for the meeting at which they are to be considered and that copies of all proposed changes shall be sent with the call to all members of the Commission.

ARTICLE IX**Suspension of Rules**

At any meeting of the Commission or its Executive Committee, any rules laid down in these bylaws may be suspended by a vote of two-thirds of the whole number of member states for any purpose not inconsistent with the provision of the Western Regional Education Compact. This article does not apply to Article VIII.

Bylaws adopted August 11, 1952; revised August 14, 1961; December 5, 1964; March 27, 1965; August 9, 1971; August 14, 1975; August 13, 1977; February 3, 1979; December 5, 1980; June 15, 1984; June 17, 1989; December 2, 1989; June 13, 1992; December 6, 1997; and May 22, 2000.

APPENDIX B

WICHE MEMBER STATES**Ratification of Western Regional Education Compact
Year and Legislative Action**

<u>1951</u>	Colorado	Laws of 1951, p. 768
	Montana	Laws of 1951, Chap. 216
	New Mexico	Laws of 1951, Chap. 138
	Oregon	Laws of 1951, Chap. 516
	Utah	Laws of 1951, Chap. 36
<u>1952</u>	Arizona	Laws of 1952, Chap. 104
<u>1953</u>	Idaho	Laws of 1953, Chap. 248
	Wyoming	Laws of 1953, Chap. 106
<u>1955</u>	Alaska	Laws of 1955, Chap. 164
	California	Laws of 1955, Chap. 1694
	Washington	Laws of 1955, Chap. 214
<u>1959</u>	Hawaii	Laws of 1959, Chap. 253
	Nevada	Laws of 1959, Chap. 74

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

<u>1985</u>	North Dakota
<u>1988</u>	South Dakota
<u>1990-92</u>	Minnesota

APPENDIX C

WICHE Chairpersons

1951 - 2005

Year	Chairman	State	Occupation (when elected chair)
1951-1953	O. Meredith Wilson	Utah	President, University of Utah
1953-1954	Tom Popejoy	New Mexico	President, University of New Mexico (1948-1960); Retired
1954-1955	George D. Humphrey	Wyoming	President, University of Wyoming
1955-1956	Frank L. McPhail	Montana	Physician
1956-1957	Ward Darley	Colorado	President, University of Colorado
1957-1958	Frank J. Van Dyke	Oregon	Attorney
1958-1959	Fred D. Fagg, Jr.	California	President, University of Southern California
1959-1960	Richard A. Harvill	Arizona	President, University of Arizona
1960-1961	Alfred M. Popma	Idaho	Chief, Department of Radiology, St. Luke's Hospital, Boise
1961-1962	C. Clement French	Washington	President, Washington State University
1962-1963	Charles Armstrong	Nevada	President, University of Nevada
1963-1964	Dermont W. Melick	Arizona	Physician
1964-1965	Willard Wilson	Hawaii	Secretary, University of Hawaii
1965-1966	Edna Scales	Oregon	Member, Board of Managers of the Oregon Congress of Parents & Teachers
1966-1967	William R. Wood	Alaska	President, University of Alaska
1967-1968	Gordon Sandison	Washington	State Senator
1968-1969	Merle Allen	Utah	Director, Utah Coordinating Council of Higher Education
1969-1970	John Mackie	Colorado	State Representative
1970-1971	Rita R. Campbell	California	Senior Fellow, The Hoover Institution
1971-1972	Francis A. Barrett	Wyoming	Surgeon
1972-1973	Roy E. Lieuallen	Oregon	Chancellor, Oregon State System of Higher Education
1973-1974	Glenn Terrell	Washington	President, Washington State University
1974-1975	William E. Davis	Idaho	President, Idaho State University
1975-1976	Lenton Malry	New Mexico	State Representative; Director of Cross Cultural Programs, Albuquerque Schools
1976-1977	Glenn S. Dumke	California	Chancellor, California State University System
1977-1978	Herman C. Ross	Montana	General Practitioner, Veterinary Medicine

Year	Chairman	State	Occupation (when elected chair)
1978-1979	Patricia Saiki	Hawaii	State Senator
1980-1981	Donald Holbrook	Utah	Attorney; Member, Utah State Board of Regents
1981-1982	Kerry Romesburg	Alaska	Executive Director, Alaska Commission of Postsecondary Education
1982-1983	Patrick Callan	California	Director, California Postsecondary Education Commission
1983-1984	Patricia Geuder	Nevada	Assistant Professor of English, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
1984-1985	J. Russell Nelson	Arizona	President, Arizona State University
1985-1986	Arliss Sturgulewski	Alaska	Alaska State Senator
1986-1987	John Fuhr	Colorado	Veterinarian, Broadview Animal Clinic
1987-1988	William Rolfe Kerr	Utah	Commissioner of Higher Education, Utah System of Higher Education
1988-1989	Loren Wyss	Oregon	Independent Investment Counselor
1989-1990	Jones Osborn	Arizona	Arizona State Senator
1990-1991	Terry Roark	Wyoming	President, University of Wyoming
1991-1992	Lee Vickers	Idaho	President, Lewis-Clark State College
1992-1993	Steve Snow	Utah	Attorney
1993-1994	Richard Kosaki	Hawaii	Special Assistant, Office of the Governor
1994-1995	Audrey Alvarado	Colorado	Executive Director, Latin America Research and Service Agency
1995-1996	Paul Page	Nevada	Vice President for Development, University of Nevada Reno
1996-1997	Diane Vines	California	Dean and Professor, School of Health, California State University; Vice President, Academic Development, California State University Institute
1997-1998	Lyle Hillyard	Utah	Attorney & State Senator
1998-1999	Frank Besnette	Arizona	Executive Director, Arizona Board of Regents
1999-2000	Everett Frost	New Mexico	President Emeritus, Eastern New Mexico University
2000-2001	Emily Stonington	Montana	State Senator
2001-2002	Tad Perry	South Dakota	Executive Director, South Dakota Board of Regents
2002-2003	Charles P. Ruch	Idaho & South Dakota	President, Boise State University
2003-2004	Don Carlson	Washington	State Senator
2004-2005	Diane Barrans	Alaska	Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

Appendix D**WICHE Executive Directors**

William C. Jones (deceased) ♦ June 1953-August 1954

Harold L. Enarson ♦ August 1954-September 1960

Robert H. Kroepsch (deceased) ♦ October 1960-June 1976

Phillip L. Sirotkin ♦ June 1976-December 1989

Richard W. Jonsen ♦ January 1990-June 1999

David A. Longanecker ♦ July 1999-present

Background Briefs**William C. Jones (deceased)
June 1953-August 1954**

William Jones was appointed executive director of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education upon its activation in 1953. He served from June 1953 to August 1954, when he returned to his position as dean of administration at the University of Oregon. Jones had come to the university in 1941 as a political science professor and retired there in 1969. At Oregon he served also as dean of administration, acting dean of business administration, and acting president. He began his teaching career at Willamette University in 1929, came to Oregon in 1941, and served as president of his alma mater, Whittier College, in California from 1944-51, before returning to Oregon.

**Harold L. Enarson
August 1954-September 1960**

Harold Enarson became executive director of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in 1954. He served in the U.S. Infantry in World War II. In the 1940s and early 1950s he served in the U.S. Bureau of the Budget, the White House, and as a public member of the Wage Stabilization Board. He was executive secretary to Philadelphia Mayor Clark in 1953-1954. Enarson's undergraduate education was at the University of New Mexico. He has a master's degree from Stanford University; his Ph.D. is from American University. Enarson left WICHE in 1960 to become academic vice president at the University of New Mexico. He became president of the then-new Cleveland State University in 1966 and president of The Ohio State University in 1972. Following his retirement at Ohio State in 1981, he became senior advisor at WICHE and has served as professor, consultant, and advisor in New Mexico, New York, Minnesota, New Jersey, Utah, Hawaii, Alabama, Colorado, North Dakota, and elsewhere.

**Robert H. Kroepsch (deceased)
October 1960-June 1976**

Robert Kroepsch became executive director of WICHE in 1960. Since 1956 he had been executive secretary (chief executive officer) at the New England Board of Higher Education; he also served for 10 years at the University of Vermont as registrar and later, dean of administration. Kroepsch served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II. Prior to his military service, for nearly 10 years he taught English and served as a high school principal in Melrose and Pembroke, MA, and in Glens Falls, NY. Kroepsch earned his bachelor's degree at Bates College and Ed. M. and Ed. D. degrees at Harvard University.

Phillip L. Sirotkin**June 1976-December 1989**

Phillip Sirotkin was appointed WICHE executive director in 1976. He had been academic vice president and executive vice president at the State University of New York at Albany since 1971. He came to Albany from Washington, D.C., where he had been associate director of the National Institute of Mental Health. He was executive assistant to the director, California Department of Mental Hygiene, 1960-63. When an assistant professor of political science at Wellesley College, in 1957, he had come to WICHE as assistant director to assist in conceptualizing and activating the Mental Health Program. Sirotkin's baccalaureate degree is from Wayne State University; his master's degree and Ph.D. in political science are from the University of Chicago. Upon his retirement in 1990 he became senior advisor for the Midwest Legislative Conference, with responsibilities for proposing and initiating the Midwest Higher Education Commission (MHEC). He has continued to serve the MHEC as well as WICHE as senior advisor.

Richard W. Jonsen**January 1990-June 1999**

Richard Jonsen was appointed WICHE executive director in 1990, after 11 years as deputy director. He had joined the WICHE staff in 1977 to help design and direct a project to extend interstate resource sharing at the graduate level. He had directed a study at the Education Commission of the States on state policy relating to independent higher education. Jonsen was assistant dean and assistant professor of higher education at Syracuse University, 1972-1975, following service at Santa Clara University as director of admissions and alumni director. Jonsen's undergraduate education was at Santa Clara University. His master's degree in English is from San Jose State University and his Ph.D. is from Stanford University.

David A. Longanecker**July 1999-present**

David Longanecker came to WICHE as executive director in 1999 after serving for six years in the administration of President Bill Clinton as assistant secretary for postsecondary education. Prior to that he had been state higher education executive officer (SHEEO) in Colorado and, before Colorado, in Minnesota. He also served as principal analyst for higher education in the Congressional Budget Office. He served in the U.S. Army including in Vietnam. Longanecker's baccalaureate degree is in sociology from Washington State University; his master's in student personnel works is from George Washington University, and his Ed. D. is from Stanford University.

Endnotes

Chapter I. WICHE Origins

1. Redding S. Sugg, Jr., and George Hilton Jones, *The Southern Regional Education Board: Ten Years of Regional Cooperation in Higher Education* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1960), 3-10. Except as otherwise noted, this account of the founding of SREB is based primarily on Sugg and Jones.

2. Brevard Carihfield, "Interstate Compacts, 1783-1977: An Overview," in *Council of State Governments: The Book of the States, 1977-1978*, 580-585. Victor J. Danilov, *The Western Regional Education Compact* (thesis, Graduate School, the University of Colorado, 1963), 53-55.

3. *SREB: Ten Years*. Compact as amended (to 1960) is in Appendix A. It makes each governor a member ex officio with four additional persons appointed by the governor, to include at least one educator and at least one legislator. The corporate name of the governing body is Board of Control for Southern Regional Education, but from the outset this has been abbreviated to Southern Regional Education Board.

4. *Western Regional Education Compact* (Danilov), 99; *SREB: Ten Years*, 8.

5. G. Homer Durham, "WICHE: An Experiment in Interstate Co-Operation and Regional Planning," in *The Western Political Quarterly* X, 3 (1957), 692. Danilov asserts that Sabin urged the idea at a meeting of the Western branch of the American Public Health Association in May 1947, but if that is the case, she did not do it in the address he cites (*American Journal of Public Health*, XXXVII, 1311-1316).

6. *Western Regional Education Compact* (Danilov), 101-105. It was the very month in which, in the South, the governors' conference was amending the Southern compact to make feasible the broad program SREB began to develop the following year.

7. *Western Regional Education Compact* (Danilov), 106-107; G.D. Humphrey in *Proceedings of the National Conference on Regional Education* (White Sulphur Springs, WV, July 5-7, 1959), 7-9.

8. *Council of State Governments: The Book of the States, 1996-97*, 31, xv-xix; *Council of State Governments: Book of the States, 1978-79*, 22, 569-579. *Western Regional Cooperation in Higher Education: A Proposed Program*, published at the direction of the Western Governors' Conference by the Council of State Governments, January 1951.

9. *Western Regional Cooperation*, 2.

10. Minutes, executive committee and organizing meeting of the commission, November 19, 1951.

11. Condon committee reports of costs are with minutes of August 10, 1952, executive committee meeting. See also WICHE report, "Student Exchange Program," with minutes of the August 10, 1953, annual meeting.

12. Jones died on August 24, 1980, at age 79. (WICHE newsletter, autumn 1980, 11). Note: What the author has called the "WICHE newsletter," here and throughout, changed its name several times while preserving the sequence of volume and number. It was never called the "newsletter."

13. Notes of Gerald Volgenau interviews, WICHE Archives.

14. Minutes, August 9, 1954.

Chapter II. The Enarson Years

1. Gerald Volgenau's notes of an interview with Jones in 1973 are in WICHE Archives history interviews. Unfortunately, for the most part the notes are not transcribed and are not always legible. In addition to Jones's high regard for Enarson, they reveal concerns over budget and obtaining ratifications in California and other states but also a good deal of satisfaction over progress made.

2. Enarson told the author that this was a tongue-in-cheek comment to a WICHE friend on G. Homer Durham's presentation to the WICHE Executive Committee in March 1964, "WICHE: A Legalistic Evaluation" (discussed later). WICHE Archives.

3. *Mental Health Training and Research: Report of a Survey* (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1955), 7.

4. "Personnel Shortages in Psychiatric Services," delivered at the final conference of the WICHE Mental Health Training and Research Survey, June 2, 1956.

5. "The Mental Health Program at WICHE, Historical Background," compiled by Deborah Evans (Boulder, CO: WICHE, January 1996), 2.

6. Minutes, March 28, 1955; *Mental Health Training and Research in the Western Region: Report of a Survey* (Boulder, CO: WICHE, June 1956).

7. "Enrollment in Schools of Nursing in the West (1954)," in *Toward Shared Planning in Western Nursing Education* (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1954), table, 21.

8. *The Anniversary Book, A History of Nursing in the West, 1952-1992* (Western Institute of Nursing, Spring 1992), 9.

9. *Toward Shared Planning*, 7.

10. "The Organization of University Research for Western Development," for the Panel on Research for Western Development, AAAS, December 30, 1954, Enarson speeches, WICHE Archives.

11. Ward Darley had liked Enarson's ideas on collaborative research for Western development. Enarson wrote Darley in June 1955 to review WICHE's problem of location. Enarson liked the idea of locating in Denver, and even better, the possibility of being on or near the campus of the University of Colorado in Boulder. In his letter he was low-key and indirect: he asked whether Darley could suggest something in "downtown Boulder"; whether WICHE might be able to purchase certain university services, and whether staff might be accorded various campus privileges. Darley got the message and liked it. He replied that he had discussed the matter with the regents and was prepared to provide temporary offices in the Norlin Library, as well as various staff privileges and services of the business office. It was understood that after a year or a bit more, space would have to be found elsewhere, but in the meantime, WICHE would begin to put down roots in Boulder, where Enarson wanted to be and where the organization remains 50 years later.

12. This report is based on the minutes and on Enarson's December 1, 1955, letter to Frank McPhail.

13. Observations, judgments, and quotations in this section are based largely on a 10-page letter from Enarson to McPhail dated December 1, 1955, which was part of an ongoing dialog and correspondence between the director and the chairman. The relationship between the two was one of mutual respect and admiration. Among other things, Enarson appreciated the fact that McPhail advanced ideas both for the program and for the operation of the commission (for example, immediately after his election, he asked Enarson to send all commissioners a status report at the end of each month, a practice that continued well into the Robert Kroepsch administration.)

14. With other staff papers for this meeting in bound volume of 1956 mimeographed output, WICHE Archives.

15. This paper and the accompanying "Program Possibilities for 1956-1957" were in the Frank McPhail collection filed with minutes of the March 16-17, 1956, meeting. The papers are also found with other staff papers for the June meeting in the bound volume of 1956 mimeographed materials, WICHE Archives. Though not so marked, it seems clear that they were prepared for the June 1956 meeting.

16. Robert H. Kroepsch, director-designate, and George Rockwell, vice chairman of the newly established New England Board of Higher Education, were also guests at this meeting.

17. WICHE Archives, bound volume of 1956 WICHE mimeographed material, 35th of the unnumbered items.

18. Durham's paper, "WICHE: A Legalistic Evaluation," was presented at a meeting of the WICHE Executive Committee on March 7, 1964. It is found in WICHE minutes along with "Remarks of Robert H. Kroepsch," two days later. Kroepsch succeeded Enarson as executive director in 1960.

19. Enarson, June 12, 1957, memo to finance committee, 3.

20. Memo, May 15, 1958, from Enarson to WICHE Committee on Medical Education, with 1958 annual meeting minutes, WICHE Archives.

21. Enarson letter to Chair Frank Van Dyke, September 18, 1957.

22. The commission chairman and three members of the executive committee. The memorandum is with minutes of the 1957 annual meeting.

23. *Southern Regional Education Board*, 116-121.

24. Enarson letter to Van Dyke, July 30, 1957, WICHE Archives; and annual meeting minutes.
25. See "Statement on Theory or Principles Underlying Regional Education," prepared by WICHE staff for use of William McGlothlin in preparation for the SREB-sponsored National Conference on Regional Education in July 1959, undated (hereafter referred to as McGlothlin memo). In WICHE Archives' folder, "Enarson Archives, National Conference on Regional Education," but marked "WICHE: General, 1959."
26. Commissioners were interested in the North Dakota proposal but uncertain how to proceed. The chair appointed a committee to study the matter and report to the executive committee; but no further notice appears in WICHE minutes. North Dakota did join WICHE as an affiliated state, in 1984.
27. Minutes, August 1957; see also Enarson letter to Van Dyke, July 1, 1957.
28. As one example of the limited thinking that can characterize university administrators: the executive committee concluded, in April 1960, that the topic earlier approved for a legislative workshop that year should be scrapped because it would divide educators and legislators; the topic was to have been "autonomy and control in public higher education." It chose to advance instead the contributions of higher education teaching and research to state economic development. The new topic appealed to the Western Governors' Conference in May 1960; they asked that WICHE work with the Council of State Governments and state economic development directors to arrange such a conference. Time having elapsed, the conference on the role of universities in Western economic development was to be held in spring 1961. At the 1960 annual meeting, at which the commissioners were being asked for suggestions for the conference program, the advice being offered was remarkable for its self-serving nature. The focus was almost exclusively on the additional support the universities would need to enable them to take an active part in Western economic development.
29. "Yardsticks and Formulas in University Budgeting" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, February 1959), 2.
30. See Richard G. Axt, "Institutional Research and University Business Officers, or New Bottles for Old Wine," address to the Western Association of College and University Business Officers, May 3, 1960, WICHE Archives.
31. A "Budget Supplement, Seminar on the Budget Process for State Colleges and Universities" is bound with the proceedings of the workshop with no description of the seminar or its relationship to the workshop or indication of who attended. A preliminary program for this meeting appears with the minutes of the executive committee for March 30, 1959.
32. Hall T. Sprague, *Institutional Research in the West, Report of a Survey of Institutional Self-Studies at Western Colleges and Universities* (Boulder, CO: WICHE 1959).
33. There were nine women, five of them from religious orders, suggestive of the proportion of women in higher education faculty and administration at the time.
34. Monthly report, November 1959.
35. "Nurses for the West" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1959), 14, 107-112.
36. Newsletter, July 1958 and June 1959; monthly report, July-August 1958, February-May 1959; interview with P. Sirotkin, fall 1998.
37. "Meeting the West's Health Manpower Needs" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1959), 58-59.
38. *Ibid.*, 14-15. Italics in original. Enarson had been critical all along that SEP's major effect was to "redistribute the cost of professional education. It does little to encourage the expansion (of programs) we so desperately need." This observation he had sent to Ward Darley in a letter dated December 19, 1956.
39. Newsletter, November 1959; monthly report, September 1959.
40. "Statement on Theory or Principles Underlying Regional Education," prepared for William McGlothlin, 11.
41. "Television as a Tool of Learning" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1958).
42. See, e.g., his December 30, 1954, address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, "The Organization of Research for Western Development," Enarson speeches, articles, 1954-60, WICHE Archives.
43. Executive committee, March 20, 1959; monthly report, March 1959.
44. Monthly reports, April and May 1959; newsletter, "Higher Education in the West," June 1959.

45. Newsletter, June 1960. Draft of first annual report is with Kroepsch memo of July 3, 1962, to staff, forwarding a paper written by Harold Enarson in June 1960, WICHE Archives, general. No record has been found of the fate of ARMU. The departure of its director, Robert Bartz, must be inferred from a brief note in minutes of the executive committee in November 1962 that University of Colorado Professor Morris Garnsey would become acting director on January 1, 1963. A 2003 interview with Kevin Bunnell reveals that university members of the ARMU Board were unhappy with apparent ARMU success in gaining federal support for activities for which their institutions had applied on their own behalf, and the directors terminated the regional program forthwith.

46. "A Review," Student Exchange Program (Boulder, CO: WICHE, January 1958), 6.

47. Report is with minutes, 1957 annual meeting.

48. McGlothlin memo, 16.

49. McGlothlin memo, 15.

50. This section, including quotations, is drawn in part from a "Statement on Theory," McGlothlin memo.

Chapter III. The Kroepsch Years

1. In addition to the author's observation and "between the lines" interpretation of Kroepsch's 16 years as executive director, there is much evidence for these assertions. See, e.g., his report to the commission at the annual meeting in August 1969; also notes of interviews.

2. See Kroepsch memo to commission dated July 31, 1961, with agenda papers for August 1961 annual meeting.

3. Roma K. McNickle, "Summary of the Conference on the Student Exchange Program" (Boulder, CO: WICHE 1963), WICHE Archives, miscellaneous, SEP.

4. Biennial legislative sessions in several states made so early an effective date awkward or impossible. In subsequent years, action to increase either membership fees or Professional Student Exchange Program fees was made effective roughly two years later.

5. "Historical Background on the WICHE Mental Health Program and its Projects," in Mental Health Program's "Review of its Relationship with WICHE" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1995), 6.

6. Warren Vaughan's "Mental Health Project" memo to WICHE commissioners, with agenda papers for March 24-25, 1961, executive committee meeting.

7. *Higher Education in the West* (Boulder, CO: WICHE, October 1965); executive committee minutes, December 1965, Edna Scales correspondence; and Kroepsch interview, April 4, 1985. In the four years in which the program operated, staff of every mental hospital and school for the mentally disabled in the WICHE region participated in visitations to other institutions and agencies.

8. Executive committee minutes, December 1965.

9. Questionnaire, transmittal, and summary of responses are in WICHE Archives folder, WICHE evaluations, 1961, 1962.

10. "An Eighteen Month Project to Develop Basic Plans for Establishment of Regional Training and Research Centers for Professional Workers in Juvenile Delinquency in the West," with executive committee minutes, November 1960. Also, see director's monthly reports at annual meetings, and WICHE newsletters for 1962-63.

11. Newsletter, March and June 1964 and March 1965.

12. Derived from budget materials in the agenda papers for the June 1964 executive committee meeting. In addition to the \$171,819, the budget included \$74,571 of WICHE "hard money" that was allocated to the Mental Health, Nursing, and Special Higher Education programs that had been continued after the Carnegie Grant expired.

13. Commissioner correspondence files reveal that after several years, WICHE staff used the resolution as evidence of gubernatorial "endorsement" or "support" for payment of a separate fee for state participation in the Mental Health Program.

14. "Historical Background on the WICHE Mental Health Program," 6. The first paragraph is referenced to "The Creation of a Discipline: Middle Level Mental Health Workers" (Southern Regional Education Board, 1973).

15. Pearl Parvin Coulter, "The Winds of Change: A Progress Report of Regional Cooperation in Collegiate Nursing Education in the West, 1956-1961" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1963); minutes, August 1963; newsletter October 1963; monthly report, December 1961.
16. Monthly report, March 1964.
17. In an interview on December 1, 2000, Elliott attributed the delay in correcting her title to her not caring about the title; she described the change in 1964 as "a non-event."
18. "Report on WCHEN's Financial Situation," *Agenda Book* (Boulder, CO: December 1972).
19. Minutes, December 1966, March 1967; *The Anniversary Book*, 11.
20. The account of this project was greatly assisted by Carol A. Lindeman, retired dean of the School of Nursing at the Oregon Health Sciences University, who was principal investigator on the project; she has written that for her the greatest outcome was that "nursing research moved out of the ivory tower into the realities of nursing practice to become a force for improving patient care" (*The Anniversary Book*, 91).
21. Minutes, December 1965 and June 1968.
22. Telephone interview, February 2, 2001.
23. Minutes, August 1960 and November 28, 1960. And see Kroepsch memo of November 10, 1960, to executive committee, with attached Enarson proposal, "A Five-Year Plan for Expanding Medical Education Opportunities in the West," dated April 1960.
24. Minutes, March 1961.
25. "Report to the Commonwealth Fund of New York . . . for the Fiscal Year 1964-65," WICHE Archives.
26. Minutes, March 1961 and August 1961; newsletters, January and June 1962; annual report, 1962, 30-32.
27. Monthly report, September 1961; newsletter October 10, 1961.
28. Newsletter, January 1962; summary, Conference on Meeting the Medical Education Needs of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming; and "Preliminary Thoughts Concerning a Regional Medical School," by Ward Darley, M.D. WICHE Archives, medical education.
29. Minutes and newsletter, November 11, 1962.
30. Monthly report, May 1963; Kevin Bunnell, ed., "What You Should Know about Planning for the Education of Tomorrow's Physicians" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1964); and James M. Faulkner, M.D., "Opportunity for Medical Education in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 1964), vii-xi. Publications are in WICHE Archives, medical education.
31. "Opportunity for Medical Education," 3. Information on the study and its reception was also provided in Kevin Bunnell interview, October 9, 2000.
32. Aspirations for a medical school in Wyoming were expressed early and died hard. President Duke Humphrey urged that at some future time, Wyoming would have to establish a two-year medical school because its residents would be unable to gain admission elsewhere (*University of Wyoming News*, June 1961). At the executive committee meeting in March 1966, Wyoming Commissioner Frank Barrett, M.D., expressed his personal interest in "investigating the possibility of establishing a one-year school of medicine in Wyoming, as recommended in Dr. Faulkner's report." Faulkner had made no such recommendation. He did refer to the idea of a one-year program as "an untried venture in medical education," and suggested that if and when "a broadly based schedule of teaching and research in the biological sciences" had been established within the four states, consideration might be given to such a program. "Opportunity for Medical Education," 49-52.
33. Agenda is with minutes of March 1965 meeting.
34. Bunnell interview, October 9, 2000.
35. Condensation of remarks by Robert Aldrich, M.D., at a meeting of the WICHE Advisory Council on Medical Education, San Francisco, CA, August 6, 1965," WICHE Archives, medical education, 1965-70, post-Faulkner.
36. Acronym for the program was changed to WWAMI when Wyoming joined the program in 1997.

37. Minutes, March 1968.
38. Minutes, June, August, and December 1971; newsletter, April 1969.
39. Minutes, March 1973, December 1972, August 1975, and March 1976.
40. Minutes, March 1966.
41. Kevin Bunnell and Roma McNickle, eds., "The Role of the Universities in the Economic Development of the West" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, June 1962).
42. *Ibid.*, especially see Eldon Johnson, "Summary and Critique"; minutes, December 1961.
43. Minutes, March 1963; Bunnell interview October 16, 2000.
44. Minutes, March and June 1968, December 1974; newsletter, January 1969.
45. Minutes, December 1967; newsletter, April 1968. Kroepsch reported to the executive committee in March 1968 an opportunity for WICHE to become better identified with the growing community college movement. Willard Spalding, director of the California Coordinating Council for Higher Education, had asked WICHE to plan a working conference for statewide boards of junior colleges to review problems of structure, organization, objectives, and operations. For WICHE it was "a natural"—a welcome request. The commission authorized the necessary funding. But for whatever reasons, the record provides no report of further action on Spalding's request.
46. Minutes, December 1970; August and December 1971 and June 1964.
47. See text farther on in chapter, at 153.
48. The original Thompson proposal is with minutes of March 1968. Report of the Sandison committee and commission action terminating the project are in minutes, August 1970. Other statements are based on minutes of intervening meetings of the executive committee and commission. This author was struck by the vague language in which this proposal was originally advanced and by which it continued to be characterized.
49. With agenda papers and minutes, December 1970: "Day Care: An Educational Program for the Development of Personnel and Standards," December 1970.
50. At a meeting of the executive committee one year later, Mental Health staff member Richard Martinez reported an acute need for training and materials for teachers and administrators of day care programs, citing a few community college programs in California and urging a need in such institutions for information about program developments elsewhere. The committee was interested and responsive and urged staff to follow up with further study and reporting. The minutes make no reference to consideration given the subject one year earlier. No further mention is made of the matter.
51. Agenda papers and minutes, December 1967; WICHE newsletters December 1967 and November 1968; WICHE Archives, programs, department chairmen.
52. WICHE Archives, programs, "ETV Grant: Interim Report to the Ford Foundation," February 1, 1962, and final report, August 1963.
53. WICHE Archives, programs, librarianship, 1967-70 and 1974-75; Peter Hiatt, "The WICHE Continuing Education Program for Library Personnel, 1968-1974" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, March 1974).
54. WICHE Archives, "A Plan for Developing a Regional Program of Continuing Education for Library Personnel in the Western States," September 1969.
55. By the later 1960s and early 1970s, outside support including indirect cost reimbursements enabled WICHE to assign some of its funds to program development.
56. This account, including this quotation, is drawn in part from Hiatt's final report to WICHE and the Western Council on Continuing Education for Library Personnel (WICHE Continuing Education Program for Library Personnel, 1968-1974); also from Kevin Bunnell's memorandum dated November 24, 1976, to Phil Sirotkin, both with papers of the project in WICHE Archives.
57. Undated draft of memorandum from Phil Sirotkin to WICHE commissioners, "History of the Western Interstate Library Coordinating Organization (WILCO)," in WICHE Archives, programs, in "termination of WILCO" folder.

58. Undated Sirotkin draft of memo for the WICHE Commission. See also John Staley's memorandum to Phil Sirotkin, dated January 4, 1977, "Indirect Costs and WILCO," and other documents both in "termination of WILCO" folder, WICHE Archives.

59. This account was assisted by Kevin Bunnell interviews, February 19 and 26, 2003.

60. This account of events in 1954-56 is based in part on a statement, "Mining Engineering Education," presented to the WICHE Executive Committee in March 1967. WICHE Archives, programs, "mineral engineering survey" folder.

61. The report is "Mineral Engineering Education in the West" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, July 1969). The consultants limited their study to programs at baccalaureate and higher levels in ceramics, fuels, geological, geophysical, metallurgical, mineral dressing, mining, and petroleum engineering. See also other correspondence and documents in "mineral engineering survey" folder, WICHE Archives.

62. Example: Ray Feldman proposal to executive committee, December 1968, of a three-year program to develop curriculum for junior college training of mental health workers, with a special focus on "minority and disadvantaged groups." The Mental Health Program moved rapidly to establish ties with minority communities. One of its activities was a three-day conference in June 1970 on "Mexican-American Mental Health Issues," in Santa Barbara, CA. The conference was headquartered in a hotel adjacent to the University of California campus at a time when campus riots had led to nightly curfews and threats of arrest for participants. Newsletter, September 1970.

63. "The Minority Student on the Campus: Expectations and Possibilities" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, November 1970). Also see Kroepsch memo of November 2, 1970, to commissioners alerting them to the forthcoming distribution. At the March 1971 meeting of the executive committee, there was a critical discussion and a motion – which was defeated – to withdraw the proceedings from distribution.

64. Newsletters, April 1971 and June/July 1972; minutes, March 1971.

65. No more is heard of this program. Bill Bergquist left WICHE in the fall of 1974.

66. "The Interstate Exchange of Higher Education Data," the summary of a conversation which provided representatives of state coordinating agencies and others the opportunity to discuss the interstate exchange of higher education data and information, December 27-28, 1966, in WICHE Archives, NCHEMS folder, forerunners, origins

67. Quotation is from *Higher Education Management*, newsletter of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems at WICHE, July 1971. This account depends also upon a document, "The Chronological History of the WICHE Planning and Management Systems Program," in WICHE Archives, NCHEMS folder, forerunners, origins; minutes and agenda papers of WICHE Executive Committee and annual meetings during the period; and interviews with John Minter (March 2003) and Dennis Jones, long-time NCHEMS executive from the organization's earliest years.

68. Interviews with both Minter and Bunnell make it evident that their relationship was one of genuine mutual respect. It appears that neither considered that Minter – young, still without a doctoral degree, untried in higher education administration – was ready for so major an assignment.

69. As the MIS Program began, all WICHE states except Arizona were participants. Correspondence of Arizona Commissioner Dermont Melick and other factors make it appear that the university and the Arizona commissioners and leadership at the University of Arizona were not ready at the time for a broad sharing of information, the uses of which would be beyond their control.

70. Kroepsch speeches, WICHE Archives, October 20, 1969.

71. "A National Effort to Improve Higher Education Management, Section II – Background and History," WICHE Archives, NCHEMS folder, forerunners, origins.

72. Glenny's comments are in a November 21, 1969, letter to WICHE Chair Rita Campbell, in which he responded to her request for his opinions about WICHE PMS. Campbell was seeking views on a range of WICHE programs as part of the work of the Sandison committee. Letter is in "correspondence with commissioners" file, executive director's office.

73. See excerpt from "WICHE-PMS Site Visit Report to the Associate Commissioner for Education" (March 22, 1971) in the "WICHE – NCHEMS Relationship Study," Appendix E, background material for the NCHEMS Executive Committee Meeting, March 10, 1974, Chicago, in WICHE Archives. See also WICHE Executive Committee, June 1972.

74. WICHE Executive Committee approval of amendments to *NCHEMS Policies and Procedures* in December 1972 also changed the length of terms of members of the board and its officers, established three standing committees, and made other minor changes not affecting officer or committee roles and authority.

75. Survey is reported in *Annual Report* (Boulder, CO: NCHEMS, 1973), 12-14.

76. NCHEMS newsletter, July 1975, supplement.

77. 1973 WICHE Annual Meeting, *Agenda Book*, 167.

78. Bunnell and Elliott interviews; correspondence of executive director and commission members.

79. The report is with a letter from Sandison to Kroepsch dated February 10, 1971, executive director's office.

80. Because of the formal structure of the ad group – comprising the director and associate directors – Jo Eleanor Elliott, though the only woman directing a major WICHE program, was not a member. It was an omission that Kevin Bunnell has suggested was a mistake.

81. Craft's letter is with minutes of the executive committee, June 1972.

82. "Western Governors' Conference," transcription of a portion of the Wednesday, September 26, 1973, session, in WICHE Archives, "WICHE and Governors, 1972-73," folder.

83. The following account is dependent upon the regular sources used in this work and, importantly, a binder in the WICHE Archives pertinent to the committee's work, including (though not limited to) minutes of its meetings between March 5, 1974, and February 4, 1977. The binder appears to have been compiled and maintained by a person who had staff responsibilities for the committee during the years 1974-77, probably Mary Jo Lavin.

84. Kevin Bunnell interview, February 19, 2003.

85. Robert H. Kroepsch was diagnosed with ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or "Lou Gehrig's disease") in 1982 or 1983 and died February 27, 1986, at the age of 73. Kroepsch was a graduate of Bates College in 1933, received his master's in education at Harvard in 1938 and doctor of education in 1951. An assistant to President Carl Borgmann at the University of Vermont, he participated in the founding of the New England Board of Higher Education in 1956 and was its executive secretary until 1960, when he became executive director of WICHE.

Chapter IV. The Sirotkin Years

1. Interview, April 22, 2003. In late 1975 and early 1976 there had been speculation that Governor Jerry Brown was delaying appointments to two vacancies among the three California commissioner positions because of his inclination to terminate membership in the organization. During the period, Jo Eleanor Elliott stimulated submittal of letters to the governor from California nurse administrators to point out the values and achievements of WICHE's nursing program. The author found no evidence of Brown's views.

2. Transcript, semiannual meeting, 1977.

3. See earlier text, on 150-151.

4. "On Target: Key Issues of Region, State, and Campus, Proceedings of the Work Conference on Higher Education" (Boulder, CO: WICHE, March 1976), 2-6.

5. August 2, 1976, transmittal memo and report from John D. LaFaver to "those concerned with WICHE funding," WICHE Archives, evaluations binder, report, 1, 3.

6. Sirotkin credited Dumke with success in "turning around the organization and program so that we are now in a position of relative strength." Sirotkin letter of March 1, 1979, to Glenn Dumke.

7. Memorandum of August 5, 1976, to staff, WICHE Archives, evaluations, green binder, correspondence of Phil Sirotkin 1976-'77.

8. This account follows the Briggs report; Sirotkin's November 30, 1976, letter of response to Briggs; and Sirotkin's memorandum dated November 29 to the WICHE commissioners advising them of these developments, all in WICHE Archives, evaluations, Sirotkin correspondence, 1976-77.

9. "Third Progress Report Issued by Task Force," Western Governors' Task Force on Regional Policy Management, July 22, 1977, in WICHE Archives, evaluations.

10. Summary of recommendations, Governors' Task Force on Regional Policy Management, December 10, 1976; memorandum from Sirotkin to WICHE commissioners, December 13, 1976, both in "WICHE Crisis 1976-78, Mtn./Plains Governors' Task Force" folder, 11.

11. Sirotkin interviews.

12. Minutes, executive committee, February 1977.

13. Summary profiles of the WICHE external evaluations with K. Briggs's letter to P. Sirotkin dated June 21, 1977, in WICHE Archives, evaluations, "Ratchford Report" folder.

14. Holbrook subsequently wrote a letter of reprimand to his friend and fellow attorney Utah Governor Scott Matheson with the flat statement that "WICHE has been deprived of all semblance of due process" (Donald B. Holbrook to Hon. Scott M. Matheson, letter dated October 6, 1977, in *Agenda Book* for October 29, 1977, meeting of the executive committee, 18-23). The event was a sorry example of the arrogance with which political officers sometimes act. Copies of Olson's report; of Sirotkin's August 23, 1977, letter to Olson with comments on Olson's draft report; of the transcription of the portion of the governors' conference that dealt with WICHE (primarily Olson's presentation and the discussion with governors that followed); and Sirotkin's (undated) "Response to Ken Olson's Verbal Report on WICHE" are in the WICHE Archives, evaluations black binder.

15. In Utah a bill was passed specifying that two of the governor's appointees must be legislators – and the governor vetoed the bill. The legislature amended its action to require one such appointment and passed the bill over the governor's veto (Sirotkin interview). In many other states, over time it became practice that one of the three commissioners would be a legislator.

16. In several interviews Sirotkin emphasized important contributions of a number of commissioners in the two-year struggle, including Frank Barrett (WY), Pat Callan (WA), Don Driggs (NV), Glenn Dumke (CA), Donald Holbrook (UT), Kerry Romesburg (AK), Pat Saiki (HI), Gordon Sandison (WA), and former commissioners Bud Davis and John Richardson.

17. Interviews with Kevin Bunnell, summer 2003.

18. See Sirotkin comments in verbatim record from February 27, 1971, "Initial Meeting of the Advisory Council," in WICHE Archives, graduate education project folder.

19. The regents' authority with private institutions derives from its being the educational chartering agency of the state. It had chartered virtually all of the private colleges and universities. In doing so it retained the authority to dismiss boards of trustees. It also had other significant powers over educational programs wherever taught. See Frank C. Abbott, *Government Policy and Higher Education* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1958).

20. The foregoing account is based on documents in WICHE Archives, graduate education project, origins, 1976.

21. Terrell and Woodall letters are in WICHE Archives, graduate education project, 1977, "Developing the Proposal."

22. After several years New Mexico withdrew from the group, for reasons the author did not find in the record but at least partly because meetings often were held in the Northwest, which was costly for New Mexico in both time and money.

23. An unedited verbatim record of the first several hours of the meeting is in WICHE Archives, "Initial Meeting of the Advisory Council." Chancellor J. Russell Nelson of the University of Colorado expressed what seemed to be a general view of the project in the research universities: he had a continuing interest in it because of its potential for improved resource use and improved student opportunity. "But as an institutional officer I have suspicion about any efforts to regionalize, because of what those efforts may do to individual institutions. I hope that in the course of the project my hopes for it may be nurtured and my suspicion and concerns laid to rest."

24. Graduate education project, WICHE Archives, NorthWest Area Foundation final report, fall 1984, 9, and appendix D.

25. "Measuring Mental Health: WICHE Looks at Accountability, Manpower," WICHE reports, spring 1981, 2-7.

26. Ibid.

27. WICHE leadership urged the Western Governors' Conference in 1965 to endorse the proposed annual fee. The governors, who in the mid-1950s had helped WICHE initiate the program, responded with a resolution that in effect said nothing: the conference "recommends that the Western states give careful consideration" to paying the annual charge. As the years passed, this action was reported by WICHE in various publications in the following terms: "The Western Governors'

Conference unanimously adopted a resolution which recommended that each state contribute \$7,500 annually to support the continuation of this program.” The fact was that as an organization, the governors did nothing, then or later, to support the program.

28. Minutes, April 1978; “A Proposal for Implementation of the Plan to Regionalize Optometric Education Program in the West,” June 30, 1980, with P. Sirotkin letter of September 19, 1980, to Terrance Keenan, in WICHE Archives, “Optometry: Development of Regional Plan, 1978-1980.”

29. Quote is from February 1979 commission minutes; but such a specific request of the governors has not otherwise been found.

30. Support for one or more of these activities was provided by Allstate Insurance, ARCO Foundation, AT&T Foundation, The Adolph Coors Company, California Casualty Group, The College Board, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Mountain Bell Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, and Philip Morris USA.

31. In addition to minutes, see “WICHE Telecommunication Project” report, with record of December 1983 annual meeting.

32. When Judith Gill succeeded Charles Lenth as program director in late spring 1989, there was a confusion of names of the same activity. Judy’s title was director of research and policy analysis. The staff unit continued to be known as the Information Clearinghouse to both staff and commission and was so named in WICHE publications. The name of the related commission committee was Information Exchange and Special Projects.

33. This account should take note of Sirotkin’s role, following his retirement at WICHE, in the establishment of the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC). Prior to his retirement in December 1989, during the summer of that year, Sirotkin was an invited speaker at the Annual Midwest Legislative Conference. He used the occasion, among other things, to describe the role and benefits of agencies for regional cooperation in higher education. Early in 1990, the Midwest conference sought his assistance in conceptualizing and organizing such an agency in the Midwest. The WICHE executive director (Dick Jonsen) and the commission supported the idea and made available space and administrative services that helped make Sirotkin’s assistance possible. Sirotkin worked with a committee of the conference to outline the purposes, structure, and operation of a Midwest Higher Education Compact and a governing commission. At the request of the conference, he took the lead in making contacts with the states eligible for membership and, following state commitments and activation of the compact, in the search for a president. He then served for nine years at the president’s urging as an assistant in conceptualizing and activating MHEC programs. When he retired from this service early in the new millennium, the MHEC Commission created the Phil Sirotkin Award, to be presented as the commission deems appropriate for exceptional service to the Midwestern states. MHEC made its initial award at its meeting in December 1999 to Sirotkin as its “founding father.”

34. The statement is based on the record and on interviews.

Chapter V. Summary and Reflections

1. The information on which these statements are in part based was given the author by Bob Kroepsch on March 22, 1985, in the first of a series of taped interviews held that spring in Kroepsch’s home. The statements are based also on interviews with Kevin Bunnell in 2000-2003. The author’s view is that after more than 15 years in the job, Kroepsch was ready for a change; further, that at age 63, with few years before he might wish to retire, Kroepsch did not want to be WICHE CEO without Ruth’s advice and support. Following his departure in 1976 Kroepsch embarked on a series of visits to friends and relatives and a long-hoped for trip to China. About 10 years after retiring, he was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease). With the progression of his illness, Kroepsch moved to Frasier Meadows retirement community later in 1985, where he died in February 1986.

2. In interviews 10 years after his resignation, Kroepsch acknowledged some lack of communication with the governors toward the end of his administration but evidenced no expectation or interpretation of the widespread upheaval that occurred in 1976-1978.

3. The Midwest Higher Education Compact and Commission became operational in 1991.

4. See Kevin Bunnell’s review copy of the section on the Sirotkin years, 3.

SOME CONFESSIONS & APPRECIATIONS

For years I have been interested in the reasons and the ways in which organizations come into being – the circumstances and factors that impel their founders to take action; the purposes the organizations are expected to pursue; the processes through which they are created; the ways in which their leadership reacts to changing conditions, given purposes that were chosen in another day; their persistence; their contributions; their missed opportunities. That interest led me many years ago to do a dissertation and then a book on the long history of the regents of the University of the State of New York. Following my retirement from WICHE in 1992, it led me to write a history of the origins of the Auraria Higher Education Center in Denver. It led me also to think that writing a more complete history of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education than currently existed could be an interesting and useful task.

Working on the WICHE story had to await completion of the Auraria story, but in 1998 the time arrived. There was a certain urgency about it – two, soon to be three, former executive directors were alive and well and living in Boulder, and (like me) they would not be around forever. Also in the area was the deputy of the third executive director (who had died in 1986) and others who had filled major positions on the staff. These individuals could provide information and advice for a story that might not be possible for someone else to tell. So with Executive Director Dick Jonsen's encouragement and support, I went to work on the WICHE story as an interested volunteer whom WICHE generously supplied with an office, computer, telephone, and other essentials.

Necessarily, the task started with gathering archival materials and getting them into more usable order. Regrettably, at WICHE as at many organizations, maintaining archives cannot take a high priority in the face of other urgent needs for staff attention. There are gaps, even in WICHE's collection of its own publications. Nonetheless, the available resources are extensive and the presence of many who have *made* the history makes it possible to do today what could not be done at some future date.

In the task, the former executive directors have been of particular help. Harold Enarson was virtually the founding director – William Jones who holds that distinction served for only a year, at a time when major effort had to be devoted to getting the organization up and running. Harold Enarson was wonderfully generous with encouragement and information in numerous interviews. Phillip Sirotkin and Richard Jonsen were extraordinarily generous in contributing from more recent times, both in interviews and in critiquing drafts. I had known Bob Kroepsch in the 1960s and 1970s, and shortly before his death was able to tape interviews with him about salient features of his administration. Invaluable help in accounting for Kroepsch's 16 years was provided by his friend and deputy, my own long-time friend Kevin Bunnell, whose review of my drafts was careful and invariably helpful.

Members of the WICHE staff, past and present, have helped fill out the story. Though surely errors and inadequacies remain, these individuals have made it possible to correct many. I am altogether grateful to John Staley, WICHE's long-time controller; former directors of the nursing program Jo Eleanor Elliott and Jeanne Kearns, and to Carol Lindeman; to John Minter, Mollie McGill, Paul Albright; and from the Mental Health Program, Jim Stockdill, Diane Vari, and Deborah Evans. Most of these friends are retired; none is currently at WICHE. Dennis Jones, executive director at the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, took time from a full schedule to review a draft of the NCHEMS part of the WICHE story. Current WICHE staff – from Executive Director David Longanecker on through the organization, including unit directors Cheryl Blanco, Sally Johnstone, Jere Mock, and Marv Myers, and former Student Exchange Program Coordinator Sandy Jackson – have helped me with information for various sections and with review of drafts. For editing, design, and production I am indebted to Annie Finnigan, Deborah Jang, Candy Allen, and Anne Ferguson. Marla Williams, the executive director's assistant, has been of continuing help in matters large and small. I would like to add my thanks to those expressed by Dave Longanecker to the Wyss Foundation, established by our friend and former commissioner and chairman, Loren Wyss, for a grant that has helped make this publication possible.

I have long been impressed by Alexis de Tocqueville's extraordinary compliment to Americans some 175 years ago when he wrote:

Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools. . . . Wherever at the head of some new undertaking you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association.

WICHE's very formation illustrates the appropriateness of his observation. That readiness to get together with one's neighbors, to go to the effort to resolve problems that involve others without waiting for some one or some superior governing authority to act, characterizes all that WICHE has done and can do. That WICHE has accomplished so much affirms the wisdom in de Tocqueville's comment.

I regret errors that surely remain in this story, and I regret instances where ignorance, short-sightedness, or prejudice have colored my treatment of activities or of individuals. I hope that the story such as it is will be helpful to those who have yet to cope with the problems and the opportunities that confront a regional enterprise in higher education.

Frank C. Abbott
August 2004

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