

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings from Black Hills State University

I had the distinct honor to be inducted as Black Hills State University's 11th President on Feb. 3rd. I was filled with humility as I listened to representatives from the Board of Regents, BHSU Foundation, Alumni, faculty, staff and students offer words of congratulations and best wishes.

It is moments like these that causes one to reflect on his/her career. As a lifelong educator, I started my career in education right here in the Black Hills. Many years have passed since those days, but at my core, I remain unchanged. I have been a secondary teacher, professor, a dean, provost, and president. And now, I find myself back in the beautiful Black Hills of my home state of South Dakota, as my career culminates in the presidency of BHSU. Without a doubt, this is a monumental time in my life where I feel as though I have come full circle.

Our ambition at BHSU is to live our mission well...to be a university that is student-centered, intellectually challenging, locally and regionally engaged. There is no more noble and essential work, and I am honored have the opportunity to lead BHSU forward. Thank you for trusting in me.



Laurie S. Nichols

President, Laurie S. Nichols



More than 300 people gathered to celebrate the 11th President of Black Hills State University, Dr. Laurie S. Nichols. After words of support from campus and community members, Dr. Laurie S. Nichols shared her vision for the university during the ceremony.

NICHOLS SHARES VISION FOR BHSU DURING PRESIDENTIAL CELEBRATION

State and community leaders joined Black Hills State University earlier this month to celebrate the appointment of Dr. Laurie S. Nichols as the university's 11th President.

Dr. Joan Wink, Regent, chaired the BHSU Presidential Search Committee that recommended Nichols be retained as the permanent BHSU President. She was the first of several community members, faculty, staff, students, and alumni to provide personal congratulations to Nichols at the ceremony.

"Laurie, your ability to empower others to seek a common goal and your attention to continuous quality improvement will serve this University well," said Wink during the celebration on Feb. 3.

More than 300 people filled the David B. Miller Yellow Jacket Student Union for the celebration. Mayor of Spearfish Dana Boke officially welcomed Nichols to Spearfish. Dr. Paul B. Beran, executive director of the S.D. Board of Regents, presented Nichols with the BHSU Presidential Medallion, worn at graduation and engraved with the names of all previous BHSU Presidents.

"You have the task of bringing BHSU to the next level. We believe you are up to that task," said Beran. "We look for you to carry out the mission of the university, to recognize new possibilities, and seize the opportunities that may arise from these possibilities."

SOLAR POWER INCREASES AT BHSU

BHSU is in the midst of a major solar installation project on campus. This is one of many of the [sustainability initiatives](#) making BHSU an environmentally friendly campus. [See the recent news report](#)



BHSU RANKS AMONG BEST ONLINE MASTER'S IN EDUCATION

The online master's in education at BHSU was included on a list of the Best Online Programs for 2020 by U.S. News & World Report. BHSU offers 19 undergraduate and three online graduate degrees in education.

Black Hills State University was included on a list of the Best Online Programs for 2020 by U.S. News & World Report. BHSU offers an online master's of education in reading, along with online master's of science degrees in curriculum & instruction and secondary education.

BHSU has a strong history in preparing educators. The University was originally founded as a Normal School for teachers in 1883. Last year, BHSU was the first in the state to earn Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Accreditation for the university's education programs. The placement rate of BHSU teacher-education graduates in their field is over 90 percent. [Read more](#)

Online master's programs in education at BHSU have been recognized nationally several times recently.

- Study.com named BHSU the No. 4 Best Online Teaching Degree in the U.S.
- Intelligent.com named the BHSU curriculum & instruction program as one of the Top 50 in the nation. BHSU came in at No. 32 recognized for "Best Emphasis Options."
- The BHSU online master's in secondary education was also recognized by Intelligent.com as one of the nation's Top 50, coming in at No. 28 with "Most Unique Curriculum."

BHSU STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR SAVING THE LIFE OF FELLOW STUDENT

Two students at BHSU saved the life of their friend this fall while hiking in Spearfish Canyon. Preston Knobloch, applied health sciences major from Sioux Falls, and Alexis Venables, art major from Sartell, Minn., were recently recognized by BHSU with a Lifesaving Award.



Phil Pesheck, director of BHSU Public Safety, shakes the hand of BHSU student Preston Knobloch as he presents Knobloch and Alexis Venables (left) with the BHSU Lifesaving Award. Knobloch and Venables saved the life of Alex Wooden (right) during a hike in Spearfish Canyon this fall.

Just two weeks after meeting and moving into their residence hall at BHSU, Preston and Alex Wooden set off to hike Devil's Bathtub in Spearfish Canyon, a trail known for multiple creek crossings and natural waterslides. Alexis, also a BHSU student, joined the roommates for the adventure.

While climbing the rock walls at Devil's Bathtub, Alex accidentally slipped and fell 45 feet to the rocks below, sustaining numerous injuries.

Preston and Alexis responded immediately and provided emergency, lifesaving assistance. [Read more](#)



BHSU is one of 13 universities, including Yale and Carnegie Mellon, hosting the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWiP) this year.

WOMEN IN PHYSICS CONFERENCE DRAWS NEARLY 100 PHYSICS MAJORS TO CAMPUS

Nearly 100 undergraduate physics majors from throughout the U.S., including 30 students from Puerto Rico, were on campus in January for the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWiP). The conference was held in collaboration with the Sanford Underground Research Facility (Sanford Lab).

Dr. Brianna Mount, assistant professor of physics at BHSU, said the goal of the conference is to help undergraduate women continue in their pursuit of a degree in physics.

"Often female physics students are the only females in their university classes. This conference is a great opportunity for female students from across the region to see that they are not alone, and to be surrounded by and network with many other women in physics," says Mount. [Read more](#)



Black Hills State University named a Top 10 Military Friendly® school in the Small Public university category.

BHSU NAMED A TOP 10 MILITARY FRIENDLY® SCHOOL

Black Hills State University was named a Top 10 Military Friendly® School by VQOTORY media company. The university earned the Top 10 ranking in the small public university category.

Currently, more than 180 veterans and veteran dependents are enrolled at BHSU. Greg Krajewski, veteran resource coordinator and veteran of the U.S. Air Force, says BHSU offers unique services and financial aid to veterans.

"We provide reduced tuition of \$250 to our active duty veterans. With the federal aid they receive, the BHSU reduced rate for veterans covers their tuition cost," says Krajewski.

BHSU earned especially high rankings in the "Culture & Commitment" and "Military Student Support & Retention" categories of the Military Friendly® benchmarks.



BHSU STUDENTS MEET BUSINESS LEADERS AND ALUMNI IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

A group of BHSU students had the opportunity to meet with business leaders and alumni in the San Francisco Bay area recently. The students met with executives from Golden State Warriors Stadium, Fitbit Headquarters, AT&T Park, Amazon Headquarters, Google Campus, and Hewlett Packard. The group was part of a marketing class taught by adjunct professor and entrepreneur Julie Turner Olson. BHSU business entrepreneur major Taylor Hepp created this [video](#) of the unique learning experience. [Read more](#)

