WSU Foundation welcomes two new leaders in Joseph Hunter and Keith Pickus

Two key positions at the Wichita State University Foundation will be filled in August 2014. Joseph Hunter will become the vice president for development and Keith Pickus, currently with WSU, will be named the Foundation’s new vice president for corporate and foundation relations. Hunter will assume duties on Aug. 25 while Pickus will begin duties on Aug. 10.

Joseph Hunter

“We are fortunate to have Joseph join our team,” said Elizabeth King, WSU Foundation president and CEO. “His personal philosophy of giving back has guided his abilities to build and empower his development teams.”

Hunter received a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy from the University of Dayton and he has two master’s degrees, one in philosophy and one in public administration, both from Virginia Tech. He is completing his Certificate in Executive Management from Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia.

Most recently Hunter was the senior director/associate vice president of development for Western Washington University in Bellingham, Wash. Prior to this position, he served more than 10 years in various development roles.

“I have spent the last few years at Western Washington University helping to build a highly effective team and ensuring the success of the university’s first campaign,” said Hunter. “While visiting with WSU Foundation staff, I perceived a mature development program with limitless potential, and the university seems to be a rising star, which is already great and has its best years ahead of it.”

At the WSU Foundation, Hunter will be responsible for the sustainment and growth of major-gift fundraising, enhancing the Annual Giving for Excellence program and overseeing the activities of the development staff to ensure their maximization of fundraising results. He will assist in the development and implementation of a strategic plan for the fundraising activities aligned with the current needs of Wichita State as well as future institution, college and school priorities for a comprehensive campaign.

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Keith Pickus

Pickus received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, and his Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Washington — all focusing on history.

He began his teaching career lecturing and teaching on the topic of European, German and Jewish history at the University of Washington and Montana State University before becoming an assistant professor for the Department of History at Wichita State. In addition to continuing to share his love of history, Pickus was called upon to temporarily fill leadership roles in various areas at WSU. Pickus will continue his two positions of professor of modern German and Jewish history and director of operations for the Center for Combating Human Trafficking.

His new responsibilities at the WSU Foundation include strategizing, organizing and implementing a robust corporate and foundation fundraising program.

“This new position will require me to learn new skills and grow professionally,” said Pickus, “two things that motivate me on a daily basis.”

Independently and with the help of appropriate university offices, he will steward and develop existing and new corporate and foundation relationships.

“I believe my in-depth knowledge of the university’s academic operations and personnel make me uniquely qualified to connect faculty expertise with the needs of our corporate and foundation partners,” he said.

“Keith’s record of fostering community collaborations will be an asset to the WSU Foundation in initiating and strengthening relationships and increasing investments to further the university’s vision,” said King.