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Strode hired to lead WKU's regional campuses, including Owensboro satellite location

By Bobbie Hayse Messenger-Inquirer
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Derick Strode

Derick Strode has been named the Western Kentucky University director of regional campuses.

In this capacity, Strode will oversee regional campus operations and their daily duties, including supervising their staff.

Strode, who has worked with WKU for 17 years, said he hopes the Owensboro community sees this new job title as the university “making a re-affirmation” to its regional campuses.

WKU’s regional campuses — in Owensboro, Elizabethtown-Fort Knox, Glasgow, and Somerset — had chancellors at the helm until spring 2018 when the university, facing a multi-million dollar deficit, eliminated those positions as a cost-saving measure. At that time, an official in the WKU Division of Extended Learning and Outreach department took over leadership duties for the satellite campuses.

Strode said leaders at the university hold a lot of regard for the communities that WKU serves, and the university is “re-affirming its presence.”

He said by creating his position, the university is continuing to invest in the regional campuses.

“I am looking forward to being the actor to carries out that re-affirmation,” he said.

His interest in this new position stemmed from a desire to create partnerships in different communities.

“My plan is to devote myself a day a week to be in each one of our regional communities,” he said. “So it’s looking like Thursdays are going to be my Owensboro day.”

He said WKU-O students and staff can expect “the same great experience they have been having,” and complimented the satellite location on having a “real family sense.”

Beth Laves, associate vice president for DELO, said in a release that Strode brings valuable experience in academic leadership, program development and collaborations to WKU’s regional campuses.

“We are thrilled to have someone with his proven ability to develop student-focused programs and work with internal and external partners which are important aspects of this position,” she said.

Strode has experience in student recruitment, advising and academic services. He began at the university in 2004 as an admissions counselor and later become an international student adviser. In 2008 he became The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky assistant director of academic services and coordinator of research, internships and scholarships, according to WKU.

Born and raised in southcentral Kentucky, Strode is a first-generation college graduate who has a bachelor's degree in English, master's degrees in student affairs and higher education, and English, and a doctorate in educational leadership, all from WKU.

Strode officially begins in this new capacity on Aug. 1.

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