



# West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Higher Education  
News Clippings

Week of March 8, 2009

March 12, 2009

## W.Va. should encourage older adults to attend college, Senate hears

By Phil Kabler, Staff writer

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- West Virginia needs to do more to encourage adults over age 25 to pursue college degrees - particularly since the number of high school graduates is projected to nosedive over the next decade, Higher Education Policy Commission Chancellor Brian Noland said Wednesday.

"It's important we bring more adults into the system, because high school graduates continue to decline," he told the Senate Finance Committee.

With little population growth, and an aging population, the number of high school graduates is projected to shrink from 18,732 this spring to 16,646 for the class of 2015.

Noland said that, at current college-going rates, that would translate into nearly 1,000 fewer freshmen entering state colleges each fall - comparable to losing the entire in-state freshman classes at Shepherd and West Virginia State each year.

Some colleges are already experiencing declining enrollments, with Marshall, West Virginia State, Potomac State and WVU Tech posting declines this academic year.

Compared to 2003 figures, five schools - Concord, Marshall, West Liberty, West Virginia State, and WVU Tech - have lost enrollment.

Meanwhile, statewide enrollment of students over 25 has dropped over the past two years, to 18,510, accounting for about 17 percent of total undergraduate enrollment.

Nolan said there are more than 173,000 West Virginians who attended college without earning a degree. He said the state is gearing up an outreach program to encourage individuals with 90 credit hours or more to come back to complete their Regents degree.

He said a similar program in Kentucky found about 10,000 residents with 90 credit hours or more, and he said about 1,000 of those enrolled to complete their degrees.

Also Wednesday, Nolan said the state's Promise scholarship program has retention and graduation rates in excess of 80 percent, the highest of the 16 state-funded merit scholarship programs in the country.

"It's an unpublicized hallmark of the program," he said.

By comparison, he said, only about half the recipients of Georgia's HOPE scholarship retain their scholarships to graduation.

March 13, 2009

## Byrd says spending measure includes millions for MU, WVU

Sen. Robert B. Byrd, D-W.Va., announced Thursday the omnibus spending bill passed by Congress and signed by President Obama this week includes \$22.5 million in funds for Marshall University and West Virginia University.

Marshall will receive \$12.5 million to help support health and transportation research programs, including \$1.9 million for the new Center for Diagnostic Nanosystems to develop non-invasive nanotechnologies to diagnose diseases at early stages, including ovarian cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

"Early discovery and diagnosis of these diseases common to West Virginia is extremely important, and I am proud to be able to secure funding for this purpose," Byrd said.

Marshall's funds also include \$4 million to begin the Translational Genomic Research Institute to predict and treat diseases including Alzheimer's disease, autism, Parkinson's disease, diabetes and cancer. The Department of Justice also will give Marshall \$5 million to expand forensic science programs to study DNA testing and train students in forensic science.

At WVU, \$4 million will promote the continued development of the Multiple Sclerosis Center at the Erma Byrd Biomedical Science Center. Last year, Byrd added more than \$3.5 million to help develop the Center. WVU also will receive \$4 million for forensic research and training.

Other appropriations include: \$475,750 for research on long-term environmental and economic impacts of a coal liquefaction plant in China, \$950,000 to continue research on emissions from conventional and alternative-fuel buses and trucks and \$475,750 for research and development of lightweight composite materials to improve energy efficiency in heavy-duty trucks and passenger cars.

# The Daily Athenaeum

"Little good is accomplished without controversy, and no civic evil is ever defeated without publicity."

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March 10, 2009

## Legislators, students react to possible Promise law

By Shay Maunz, Staff Writer

State legislators will examine a Senate bill in the coming weeks that would rescind students' Promise Scholarships for alcohol-related violations if passed.

Sen. Mike Green from Raleigh County introduced the bill in February, which was referred to the Senate Education Committee, who reported changes to the bill last week. It is now on the agenda to be considered by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The bill states that a student receiving any form of state-funded financial aid, including the Promise Scholarship, will lose his or her aid if convicted of two or more violations relating to illegal possession or consumption of alcohol, narcotics or prescription drugs.

In its original form, the text of the bill specifically mentioned underage consumption or possession, open container violations, driving under the influence, public intoxication and contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

But the version of the bill that was reported by the Senate Education Committee struck the stipulation for underage consumption or possession and the open container violation.

The bill was originally introduced during the 2008 legislative session. Green, then a co-sponsor of the bill, now its only sponsor, said he was initially approached by a group of his constituents who were interested in creating provisions for consumption and possession, but as the bill moved through the legislation process more provisions were added to help it gain support. Green said that it was introduced too late in the session last year to be acted on and agreed to sponsor it again in 2009 with the additional provisions.

He said that he thought the alterations that have been made to the bill this time around can primarily be contributed to concerns with record keeping and enforcement for those violations.

But he supports what he thinks the bill would achieve, especially as the state faces tough financial times.

"It's an accountability issue to me. I think we are responsible to be good stewards of the taxpayers' money," he said.

But Sen. Mike Oliverio, who is a member of the education committee, described the bill as "draconian," saying that imposing such penalties for more minor and common infractions is harsh and unnecessary.

He supported the committee's decisions when reviewing the bill, especially removing the penalties for open container violations. Oliverio said that these types of violations are too easily incurred in a college setting and are not really indicative of a student's character or scholastic ability.

But he is worried about the changes that might be made to the bill as it passes through the judiciary committee.

"Just as easily as I took out the open container provision, someone could put it back in," he said.

West Virginia University Student Government Association President Jason Parsons echoed Oliverio's concerns.

"We're all young, and I think there are a lot of Promise Scholars who have engaged in regrettable behavior," he said. "And I think taking away someone's Promise Scholarship is an extreme repercussion for making mistakes that a lot of us make."

Students were also concerned with the prospect of losing their financial aid.

"I mean think about it," said junior criminology major Andrew Lang. "I don't think that whether you get a violation means that you're not a good student. It just means you made a mistake that everyone does."

But Green stressed that a student must be convicted twice to lose his or her financial aid.

"It would take an egregious act for someone to receive two convictions," he said. "It's common sense legislation. We're not making something illegal. All of these things are already illegal."

March 11, 2009

## OP-ED COMMENTARIES

### Promise scholars inspire

By Virginia Kleist

A few students sit slumped at the back of the classroom, faces hidden under ballcaps and appearing nonchalant, yet these same students get at least a 96 percent on every one of the very difficult exams.

Some never miss a class, or a class assignment, while working 20-plus hours a week to earn money to survive. Others write research reports that are so interesting that a classroom conversation is sparked due to their insightful comments. Often, these students explain something to their peers with more clarity than an experienced professor.

Who are they? They are West Virginia's Promise scholars, and they help to make my classroom a magnificent place to teach and to learn.

More than half of West Virginia University's incoming, full-time freshmen from West Virginia are Promise scholars. Just five years after the first class of Promise students arrived on campus in 2002, retention rates rose dramatically. The data indicate that Promise awardees are retained at nearly a 90 percent rate, while non-Promise in-state students are retained at a 75 percent rate.

It is well known that there is a positive relationship between a student's ACT scores and his/her predicted college success. Promise awardees have both higher ACT scores as well as higher grade-point averages than other students at their high schools. Our Promise students are expected to perform better in college, and indeed they do.

With this program, students have the added incentive to achieve stated goals in high school in order to receive the benefits of the program. The attractiveness of a Promise scholarship keeps them on track by taking the required "Promise Core" coursework in English, social sciences, laboratory science and mathematics. While national composite ACT scores have been falling, West Virginia's overall composite ACT scores have risen since Promise was initiated.

These students are motivated to achieve once they enroll. A Promise scholar must retain a 3.0 average or lose funding.

Because of the Promise program, with the guarantee of merit-based support at the state public institutions, many of our best and brightest students now stay in West Virginia for their college years. This also raises the likelihood that they will remain in the state after college. If a student begins at an out-of-state school, it may be more difficult to encourage that student to remain a West Virginian upon graduation. Higher Education Policy Commission data indicates that Promise may have had a positive impact on reducing the outflow of our college-age students to nearby states. You can trust me on this: West Virginia surely wants to retain the kind of students that have earned the Promise awards.

Promise scholars also intensify the academic experience for fellow students. The Promise program is a factor in making WVU a better university. It contributes to a higher quality educational experience in both high school and college across West Virginia, and in the long term is paying back by educating high quality teachers who will remain in the state to educate the next generation.

Video lottery was passed in order to fund the Promise scholarships, and I hope that it continues to be used for this purpose. Although the program's costs have been escalating, the video lottery revenues have been escalating at an even faster rate. The benefits from this program will last over decades, and the biggest benefits of this program are the intangible ones.

It is an honor, a privilege - and just plain enjoyable - to teach West Virginia Promise scholars. The educational aptitude of these students encourages us as faculty to do our very best with our teaching and our research. The Promise scholarship helps to make our institution a superb educational environment for all of our students. A cap on this funding for West Virginia students will harm their ability to choose WVU and would have an unfortunate impact on West Virginia's population, education and economic goals.

I can say with certainty that this program graduates West Virginians with much "promise."

# The Daily Athenaeum

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March 13, 2009

## University receives \$300,000 in research grants

West Virginia University received \$300,000 in research grants at an event Thursday in Charleston, W.Va.

In conjunction with Undergraduate Research Day at the State Capitol, seven research grants, totaling more than \$770,000, were presented to West Virginia colleges and universities Thursday.

"The vast majority of research grants go to WVU, simply because they have more research and more numbers," said Paul Hill, the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission vice chancellor for science and research.

But WVU was not the only institution to receive grants. Although some grants were earmarked for universities with graduate programs, making only WVU and Marshall University applicable, many only required that schools have undergraduate programs.

Other grant recipients included Concord University, Marshall University, West Virginia State University, WVU Institute of Technology, West Virginia Wesleyan College and Wheeling Jesuit University.

HEPC set the guidelines and accepted proposals for the grants. The recipients were chosen through a peer review process.

Hill and Gov. Joe Manchin presented the grants.

"(Gov. Manchin) is very supportive of making these investments to further research that may lead to development in the state," Hill said.

Undergraduate Research Day is an annual event intended to highlight research projects conducted by students at colleges and universities across the state.

More than 100 student researchers from 12 state institutions displayed posters about their projects in the Capitol Rotunda and outside the House and Senate Chambers and discussed their projects with legislators. All of the projects are on students' original research.

"We have students who are literally doing cutting-edge research, and we wanted the legislators to see the quality of their work," said Keith Garbutt, Eberly College family professor, dean of the WVU Honors College and a co-chair of the event's organizing committee.

He was impressed with the number of legislators who approached students to hear about their projects.

Undergraduate Research Day has been an event for six years, and Garbutt said each year more legislators visit the students, showing that they take a sincere interest in research and higher education in the state.

He added that the research projects came from all across the University and from many different disciplines, not just the sciences.

WVU students presented posters in the areas of animal science, plant science, biology, psychology, computer science and information technology, forensic science, physics, chemistry, biochemistry, sociology and social work, engineering, history, African studies, political science, English, environmental studies and geology.



March 11, 2009

## WVU: Meningitis killed student Test confirmed the question

Staff, wire reports

A BELL-RINGING for Chelsea Kanatus is scheduled for noon-1:30 p.m. Friday in front of Ming Hsieh Hall.

Tests confirm that a WVU freshman who died March 2 at WVU Hospitals had bacterial meningitis.

The family of Chelsea Kanatus, 19, of Stephens City, Va., was informed Tuesday, according to Amy Johns, a spokeswoman for WVU's Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center.

Dr. John Guilfoose, an infectious disease expert at WVU, made a special request for a polymerase-chainreaction (PCR) test to be done because he wanted a definitive answer, according to Johns. The state Health Department coordinated the testing of spinal fluid.

"The PCR test is not widely available, nor is it routinely used in clinical practice," Guilfoose said in a press release. "But it can be useful in cases where the patient is under antibiotic treatment that affects other lab results. The PCR test is unique because it amplifies the genetic material of the organism and allows identification, despite previous antibiotic exposure."

An earlier test, conducted Friday, was inconclusive due to the antibiotic treatment, Johns said.

About 44 people who came in contact with Kanatus received preventive antibiotics, Johns said. A total of 31 WVU students were treated at Student Health Service, while the others were treated at other facilities in West Virginia, Virginia and New Jersey.

As of 2006, WVU has had a policy requiring all incoming freshmen to be vaccinated against meningitis. Johns said Dr. Jan Palmer, head of Student Health Service, said that according to Kanatus' student health records, she was vaccinated; however, the vaccine isn't 100 percent effective.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and *Neisseria meningitidis* are the leading causes of bacterial meningitis currently. The vaccines cannot prevent all types of the disease, but they do protect many people who might become sick if they didn't get the vaccine.

Meningitis can be spread through intimate and nonintimate contact, Palmer said in the WVU press release. Being in the same room with an infected person for four continuous hours raises the risk of contracting the disease. Palmer said in earlier reports that the incubation period is about a week.

Symptoms include a stiff neck, headache, high fever, vomiting and sore throat. Nausea, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion and sleepiness may also occur.

“Because no one else presented symptoms,” Johns said, WVU followed its standard procedure in protecting its students against a possible meningitis outbreak. The procedure includes educating students, conducting interviews and conducting surveillance for any symptoms, she said.

March 9, 2009

## Hearing for former WVU provost delayed

By Patricia Sabatini and Len Boselovic, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A hearing on former West Virginia University Provost Gerald Lang's request to halt an academic disciplinary hearing against him was canceled today at the request of the university.

WVU asked for the continuance because of health issues involving one of the school's attorneys, spokesman Dan Kim said. A new date for the hearing in Circuit Court in Morgantown has not been set, he said.

Dr. Lang, who resigned as provost last year after administrators falsified records to award an unearned degree to Gov. Joe Manchin's daughter, Mylan Inc. executive Heather Bresch, faces charges of academic misconduct for his role in the matter.

Dr. Lang sued the university Feb. 26 to stop a hearing by WVU's Office of Academic Integrity. His suit alleged that university attorneys involved in the process had conflicts of interest.

The disciplinary hearing, originally set for March 16-20, has been rescheduled, possibly for late April, Mr. Kim said. He said he wasn't sure of an exact date. WVU contended that because the disciplinary hearing was pushed back, the court hearing was no longer urgent, Mr. Kim said.

Besides Dr. Lang, others at WVU are facing misconduct charges, according to Dr. Lang's suit. The complaint did not identify the others. Proceedings by WVU's integrity office are confidential.

Dr. Lang, who currently works in the university's research and economic development office, did not return a telephone call this morning seeking comment.

Other administrators who resigned in the wake of the degree scandal were business school Dean R. Stephen Sears, President Michael Garrison, chief of staff Craig Walker and general counsel Alex Macia. Dr. Sears continues to teach at the school, while the other men left last year.

WVU's board of governors on Friday named Towson University Provost James P. Clements as the university's new president. The 44-year-old, one of two finalists for the job, will succeed interim President C. Peter Magrath on June 30.

March 10, 2009

## Provost says Tech will turn corner

Leader outlines positive changes

By Davin White, Staff writer

CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The campus leader at West Virginia University Institute of Technology said despite struggles to attract students, a tough audit report and some people's perception of the campus, the Montgomery school is turning the corner.

During an interview Monday, Provost Scott Hurst said students will see a difference in services when they return to campus in the fall.

In 2006, state lawmakers passed a bill to bring in employees from West Virginia University's campus in Morgantown to help streamline financial aid, student records, course registration and other services. In large part, lawmakers saw a need to cut back on increased operational costs at Tech.

For instance, WVU Tech students will register for fall classes using the Students and Technology Achieving Results system that students in Morgantown have used for years. Likewise, they'll use the Mountaineer Information Xpress system for e-mail, campus news and more.

Right now, students might not notice any of the "integration" changes, Hurst said. But this fall, he expects 85 percent of the changes will be in place with the rest to follow in 2010.

The total process has taken three years, Hurst said, which has burdened WVU Tech staff.

Last month, the Legislative Auditor's office released a report that said WVU Tech is losing money and students as the school struggles with an isolated location, high turnover and old buildings.

At the time, auditor Gail Higgins said told legislators that increased enrollment across all programs was essential if WVU Tech is to survive. Brian Noland, chancellor of the state Higher Education Policy Commission, has said WVU Tech clearly has to hire staff who can hit the road and sell the university to high school students.

Michael Mattison, the school's new dean of enrollment management, is developing a plan to attract new students to Tech, Hurst said. That calls for two new administrative jobs under Mattison, a director and associate director's position.

Hurst expects the efforts to pay off by 2010. At best, he would only expect a slight increase in enrollment this fall.

In order to be solvent in the future, WVU Tech needs to increase enrollment by 459 full-time students, which would give the school about 1,459, Hurst said. The school could accommodate 2,000 full-time students.

In the past year, Hurst said some of the dollars that would have been spent on marketing and recruitment fell victim to two demands: the work required in Montgomery to integrate services with Morgantown and the effort to separate WVU Tech from its community and technical college.

There is also public concern over WVU Tech's future in Montgomery, which dates back to the failed proposal to move the College of Engineering to South Charleston.

People have even asked Hurst if Tech is going to be a school next year.

"We're not closing Tech," Hurst said. "My argument is it's the perception hurting us worse than the facts."

Last month, the state auditors found that travel between Montgomery and Charleston might work against students enrolling at Tech, while the drive from Morgantown to Charleston takes about 2 1/2 hours less than it did 50 years ago.

Some students don't mind driving a two-lane highway between the Chelyan bridge and Montgomery, Hurst said.

"They like where Tech is," he said. "They like it in Montgomery."

WVU Tech officials are working with the community to revive the campus swimming pool, which has been closed for more than two years. Community residents and students could both use the pool, he said. School officials have other ideas to partner with Montgomery and the surrounding communities to bring businesses to the area.

In response to allegations of police brutality in Montgomery, Hurst said he personally deals with that issue and speaks to Montgomery mayor James Higgins on a regular basis.

Higgins told Hurst that procedures are in place to prevent future problems, which Hurst relayed to those on campus. He does not believe it's hurt enrollment at WVU Tech.

"Has it brought it to our attention to make sure it doesn't affect us? Yes," he said.



March 10, 2009

## Louisos: Tech again should stand alone

By Mannix Porterfield, The Register-Herald

CHARLESTON — Troubled times have arrived on the campus of WVU Tech, and one lawmaker thinks the past might offer the solution.

To phrase it one way, it could be back to the future for Tech.

In a bill he crafted last week, Delegate Tom Louisos, D-Fayette, wants to see Tech get a divorce from West Virginia University.

Tech has become a source of controversy ever since Gov. Joe Manchin suggested in his first term that the engineering department be moved to the Dow Chemical complex near Charleston.

That didn't pan out as planned, so in a compromise, the engineering department stayed put, but students at the junior and senior levels were allowed to join Dow's research team.

Even so, any tinkering with Tech is bound to stir passions in Montgomery among its ardent supporters.

The bill that put Tech under WVU's umbrella was never popular in the Fayette County delegation.

And nothing has changed, it appears.

"We want our independence," Louisos says. "We want to go back where we were. The sad part is, several years ago, when the state was going to take the engineering and bring it to Charleston, that really harmed that institution."

As a businessman, Louisos said it sent a dismal message that Tech couldn't handle its engineering department.

"When you say you're going to close a business down, whether people believe it or not, it's hard to bring one back," Louisos, who owns a fast-food eatery in Oak Hill, said.

"That really harmed that institution."

Tech came under fire weeks ago when the legislative auditor's office released its audit, showing the school provided house waivers to more than half its students.

That move cost the school some \$1.5 million and failed to increase, or even stabilize, enrollment.

In contrast, the audit reflected, both WVU and Marshall issued waivers to a mere 4 percent of its enrollment.

Louisos says the audit exposed difficulties caused for several years by officials who didn't understand Tech's problems.

"Several millions have been spent in the last few years to bring the dorms up to standard and money has gone into the engineering department," he said.

"Money is there, but it's not enough. We've got to work to get more money and change some arrangements, too."

Louisos is convinced that West Virginia Tech — its once, and future name? — can survive on its own.

"I really think it can," he said. "It did at one time."

The same audit, however, pointed to a host of challenges, not the least of which is the bleak town in which is located — Montgomery.

"If we don't do this, we'll possibly try something else," Louisos said.

# News and Sentinel

## Parkersburg

March 12, 2009

### WVU-Parkersburg may lose WVU name, affiliation

By Jody Murphy and Michael Erb

PARKERSBURG - The board of governors at West Virginia University at Parkersburg today is sounding the alarm over the lack of communication between the school and West Virginia University.

And possibly the loss of affiliation with the state's flagship university.

Connie Dziagwa, spokeswoman for WVU-Parkersburg, said letters were mailed this morning to WVU and the governor's office concerning a lack of a contract between the two schools, which is mandated by state law.

"The board is expressing its frustration at this point," Dziagwa said.

Board member Keith Burdette said the the two entities have been operating without a contract for a year and members are concerned.

"This is a big, big deal in the community," Burdette said.

"The real story is what the future of this college is going to be for the next 20 or 50 years," he said. "That is being decided right now."

Burdette said the board went into executive session Wednesday night to review the status of its contract between WVU at Parkersburg and WVU.

"We found there was no contract," he said. "We are about to be kicked off WVU's bus by WVU."

After coming out of executive session, the group passed a resolution to send a letter to WVU giving it two weeks to communicate with WVU-Parkersburg, officials said. The board also sent a copy of the letter to Gov. Joe Manchin.

"The letter basically says we sent two drafts and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission has sent a draft and (WVU) has not responded," Burdette said.

He also said Joe Campbell, WVU-Parkersburg's board president, went to Morgantown to meet with the university president and got no response.

"They have never responded to any of it," Burdette said.

The college is waiting for replies, Dziagwa said.

"We're really in limbo at this point, kind of in suspended animation, just waiting for a response," Dziagwa said.

Burdette said officials at WVU-Parkersburg have until June 30 to make decisions about the direction of school, including the name. After that, Burdette said it falls into the hands of the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical Colleges.

"If we are not going to be part of WVU we have to start making plans, we can't wait until June 30," he said. "We are about to run out of time."

Manchin spokesman Matt Turner said he is gathering information including from James Skidmore, chancellor of the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical Colleges.

Burdette he is requesting a meeting with Manchin.

"Gov. Manchin and WVU has left the school out in the cold," Burdette said. "We need to get their attention or it will go away."

Dziagwa said the lack of a contract would not affect any of the school's two- or four-year programs.

"Those are our programs, not WVU's," she said.

However, any use of WVU's name or logo would end if an agreement could not be reached, she said.

## \$12.5M in federal funding to go to MU

The Herald-Dispatch

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- More than \$12.5 million in federal funding will be directed to Marshall University as part of the recently enacted FY 09 Omnibus Appropriations, according to a release from the office of Sen. Robert C. Byrd.

Included in Marshall's funding is more than \$1.9 million for the development of a new Center for Diagnostic Nanosystems as part of Marshall's focus on emerging biotechnology and science programs.

The program will be responsible for the development of new non-invasive nanotechnologies designed to detect and diagnose diseases and illnesses at very early stages.

Diseases that disproportionately impact rural populations, such as ovarian cancer, heart disease and diabetes, many of which are common throughout the populations of West Virginia, will be the focus of the initial research.

The new program will be housed in the Robert C. Byrd Biotechnology Science Center.

"Early discovery and diagnosis of these diseases common to West Virginia is extremely important, and I am proud to be able to secure funding for this purpose," Byrd said in a written statement. "The likelihood of prevention or successful treatment can hinge on early detection, and this new program will help ensure that more West Virginians are not only treated successfully, but through this new research could help other populations throughout the nation."

Byrd also obtained \$3.996 million for Marshall to initiate the Translational Genomic Research Institute, which will occupy the third floor of the Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The aim of the center is to utilize new gene-based diagnostic tools to better predict, reduce the risks of and identify the most responsive treatments for diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, autism, Parkinson's, diabetes and numerous forms of cancer.

The federal funding will be used to create translational research laboratories and to hire faculty members, technicians and nurses to staff the Institute.

"On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of Marshall University, we thank Senator Byrd for his strong leadership and support of our research efforts," said Marshall President Stephen J. Kopp in a release. "The benefits of these appropriations go far beyond our campuses. They will greatly assist our research initiatives; have a positive impact upon the health of every West Virginian; as well as the quality of human health across the country. We are proud to call him an alumnus of Marshall University and appreciate his dedicated service to the great state of West Virginia and the United States."

West Virginia University is receiving \$10 million through the package, \$4 million of which is to be used for continued development of the Multiple Sclerosis Center within the Erma Byrd Biomedical Center.

The center will focus on clinical diagnosis and treatment, patient education, family and caregiver support and basic and clinic research pertaining to multiple sclerosis.

"For those who have MS, the attention they require involves more than just medication and physical treatment," Byrd said. "This center will provide MS patients with many different aspects of care and treatment, and will therefore greatly increase the general welfare of both patients and their families."

Byrd added more than \$3.5 million for the development of the center last year.

"Senator Byrd has once again demonstrated great vision for the future of West Virginia University," said Curt M. Peterson, vice president of Research and Economic Development at WVU. "His labors on WVU's behalf in the Omnibus Bill will not only benefit the projects of the University, they will help touch the lives of thousands and thousands of West Virginians. We are grateful for his continued recognition of our mission of discovery, engagement and innovation."

# Charleston Daily Mail

DAILYMAIL.COM

March 11, 2009

## Marshall students will foot the bill for new rec center Complex financed by private funds costs \$150 per semester

by Ry Rivard, Daily Mail staff

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. -- Marshall University is seeing results from a public-private partnership that could be a model for other state colleges and universities as government funding for new construction dries up.

But at Marshall there is a new and perhaps unexpected lesson that its new, \$30 million privately financed recreation center is teaching students about the state of college financing.

"It's going to be a constant, inevitable confrontation with reality that the things that we do have real costs and that there is only one group of people here who pay the costs," said Stephen Hensley, Marshall's dean of student affairs.

That group: the students.

While students have always paid for their education and room and board, a reduction in state subsidization for college has meant an increase in tuition and fees to make up the difference. As colleges add fee-based services, like the recreation center, there is little taxpayer cushion and they see it add up directly, inevitably and immediately on their bills.

At Marshall, the student recreation center will cost students \$150 per semester.

By contrast, West Virginia University students pay \$90 per semester to use the university's \$35 million recreation center, which was built in 2001.

At a recent Marshall Student Government Association meeting, the dean made another point about the companies on campus that built and run the recreation center.

"What is their first obligation?" Hensley asked.

"Money," someone said.

"Exactly, it's to make a profit. And inevitably there's going to be friction," Hensley said.

On the surface, Marshall's Huntington campus has the \$30 million recreation center and \$28 million for its First Year Student Residence Halls.

But behind those buildings is an intricate financial arrangement: A limited liability company established in Maryland run by a non-profit based in California is leasing land beneath buildings in West Virginia that were put up by an Alabama company.

The companies put money up front and continue to pay staff and the utility bills in return for Marshall delivering students as customers. In 30 years, when the buildings and a bond behind them are paid off, control of the land reverts back to the university and Marshall owns the buildings.

The students themselves are largely unaware of all this. All they see are new buildings. But at least some are wary of higher student fees and being able to fully use their new recreation center.

University President Stephen Kopp was directly involved in the financing plan, part of a package of ideas he brought from his experience in the private college world.

"It's a matter of understanding the intricacies of this financial arrangement," he said.

Kopp said the university did thorough financial due diligence to make sure that the numbers would work out and the university could pay back the companies, which took out money up front for the projects.

Neither Marshall nor the lead developer, Alabama-based Capstone Development, provided a clear figure on the cost difference between private financing and public financing, though officials at both acknowledge a cost difference.

Student government advisor Joe Stone, an accounting professor, put the deal another way: "rip-off."

Stone said he had been warning students for years that the money was going to come out of their pocket. But he said there was no other way for the recreation center to be built.

Olivia Morris, a student government representative from the College of Education and Human Services, sits on the recreation center's advisory board.

She said that so far the private company that staffs the center, Washington, D.C.-based Centers LLC, has been cooperative.

But there is worry that students don't have as much control over the building and they won't have as much freedom to use it as they would if it was a public building.

"Since it's kind of new, it's hard to say if they are cooperative with the students, if they will let us have special projects that aren't something Centers would be in charge of," Morris said in an interview.

In the end, Marshall may not have been able to build the center without the financial arrangement. Now that it's up, 1,600 people a day, mostly students, are using it. School officials are also using it - to recruit more students.

"It will be a recruiting factor for everybody who comes on campus and that's not limited to students," said David Stewart, the director of campus recreation who is employed by Centers. "If we're recruiting a faculty or staff member we'll bring them through this building."



March 10, 2009

## President Kopp stresses importance of starting, completing higher education

By Melissa Ison

Marshall University President Stephen Kopp expressed not only the importance of attending a higher education institution but also staying in school when he spoke to approximately 600 prospective students and parents Saturday.

"For students who are here today, it is very important to think about the future and also to make a very firm commitment," Kopp said. "That commitment is to finish what you start. To start and stop will not add anywhere near the value and opportunities to your life as completing your college education."

The group came to Marshall to learn about the university, see the campus and be educated about the enrollment process and financial aid possibilities.

With a first to second year student retention rate of 71 percent and a graduation rate around 41 percent in 2008, Marshall's student retention rate is lower than that of West Virginia University. WVU had a first year retention rate of 80 percent in 2008 and has a graduation rate historically around 66 percent.

Kopp has set a goal in his strategic vision for a retention rate similar to that of WVU with an 80 percent rate for first year student retention and a 60 percent graduation rate.

Gary Meekins a parent of a prospective student in attendance from Philadelphia, said Kopp's words on staying in school resonated with him because he dropped out of college and it took him 14 years to return and get his degree.

"Making the decision to start college and the goal to finish is pretty important for the kids to hear," Meekins said. "Once you make that decision to start, the hardest part is to finish."

Caiti Anderson, a senior from St. Joe High School in Ironton, Ohio, has a scholarship and has already been accepted to Marshall to study communication disorders. She is confident in her prospects at Marshall and liked a different aspect of Kopp's speech.

"He said to go into the future and not be afraid of it, just go into it full force, " Anderson said, "When he said having your parents support you while you're at it was important because my parents are really skeptical about me going off to college. It gave me confidence about going here."

## Marshall approves separation plan; MCTC is expected to vote soon

CHRISTIAN ALEXANDERSEN, The Herald-Dispatch

HUNTINGTON -- The Marshall University Board of Governors unanimously approved Thursday an agreement spelling out the terms of its separation from Marshall Community and Technical College.

The terms of the agreement remained unknown, however, because the agreement won't be made public until after MCTC's Board of Governors votes on it, university President Stephen Kopp. He expected the MCTC board to act on the agreement quickly. The MCTC Web site did not list a date for its next board meeting as of Thursday.

The Marshall board discussed the agreement in executive, or closed, session before voting on it in public.

Since it is an ongoing negotiation, Kopp said Marshall is waiting for MCTC approval.

Before they voted on the memorandum, Kopp said Marshall was in agreement with several major aspects that were of concern to MCTC.

Following legislation passed during the 2008 legislative session, universities and community & technical colleges that were academically and administratively linked had to work out a separation plan.

Since then, the institutions have disagreed on a number of topics, including e-course fees, recreational center fees and land at the corner of 20th Street and 5th Avenue bought with MCTC's state-appropriated funds that the Marshall board holds the deed on.

# Charleston Daily Mail

DAILYMAIL.COM

March 12, 2009

## Faculty dissatisfaction an issue at Marshall college

By Ry Rivard, Daily Mail staff

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. -- Forty-seven grievances have been filed in the past year against Marshall University's College of Education and Human Services by the West Virginia chapter of the American Federation of Teachers.

That is more than a third of the 121 grievances filed statewide from February 2008 through February 2009 by AFT-WV, which represents more than 6,000 public school teachers and college faculty.

Judy Hale, president of AFT-WV, said Rosalyn Templeton, dean of the college of education, has not taken control of the situation and ignored or failed to enforce the university's own rules.

Templeton referred questions to the university's communications office.

Bob Bickel, a veteran professor in the college of education, said the problems are in part a result of Marshall President Stephen Kopp treating the college "like a redheaded stepchild"

AFT-WV representative Chris Barr sent a letter last week to Kopp about a case she called "the final straw."

That case involved Harold Blanco, who was seeking a job as an assistant professor. Eight other Marshall faculty members represented by Barr contended that Blanco was hired in violation of Marshall policy.

At a grievance hearing on Feb. 5, Marshall officials said that Blanco had not been hired at all and asked that the case be dismissed, according to Barr.

The union dropped the matter, Barr said.

A day later, on Feb. 6, Provost Gayle Ormiston hired Blanco, Barr added.

Through Freedom of Information Act requests, WV-AFT learned that Blanco had been offered the \$48,000 tenure-track position by Dean Templeton on Jan. 27 - more than a week before the grievance hearing.

University spokesman Bill Bissett said Barr's letter is being reviewed.

"The concerns detailed within are being reviewed," Bissett said. "As it involves personnel matters, we are unable to discuss the matter further."

Blanco did not reply to an e-mail seeking comment. A message left Tuesday on his voicemail was not returned.

AFT-WV filed 13 grievances in February 2008 alleging violation of policy covering the selection of chairs and one other grievance alleging violation of past practice and procedure with regard to approval of an on-line course.

The union filed nine grievances in May 2008 alleging violation of college policy related to electing faculty to committees, along with another grievance about an on-line course.

Also that month, it filed seven grievances over denial of salary increases.

AFT-WV has filed 16 grievances so far this year.

"Why are we going to have these policies if you are not going to follow them?" Barr said.

Hale said her union and the faculty members it represents continue to go in circles with Marshall officials, including Dean Templeton.

"We are looking for someone above her pay grade to take a serious look at this issue and determine how to resolve it," she said.

Carl Johnson, who is now retired but once worked for Templeton as chairman of the School of Education, said the best thing for her to do is find another job.

Johnson said that he had a good relationship with her.

"For her sake, I think the best thing for her to do is to find another job, because you just keep running into roadblocks otherwise with the faculty," Johnson said.

When Templeton became dean in the summer of 2005, she went to meet with her predecessor, Tony Williams.

Williams said that was their only meeting.

"I met with her for one 30-minute conference the morning of her first day on campus. I never had another conversation with her on any topic, period," he said.

"She never asked me my opinion or background on any subject or 'how was this handled?' or information regarding any university topic," Williams added.

Johnson said that was a sign of things to come.

"That was an indication that, 'Hey, I'm going to be my own person. I don't want any input from any previous dean,'" Johnson said.

Within a year of Templeton's arrival, faculty members had issues with the dean, Johnson said.

"I had a number of faculty that wanted me to have a vote of no confidence against the dean, and I refused to do so," he said.

Current faculty members tell Johnson that the atmosphere at the education school is getting worse and that instead of communicating with each other they go into their offices and close their doors.

Johnson said a couple of faculty members have told him "that they have never been treated so poorly as they have been by this dean.

"In my opinion, that's the reason there are so many grievance. See, if you treat people like you'd like to be treated, you aren't going to have many grievances."

On the other hand, the dean has supporters, Johnson said.

"Three or four people are very supportive of the dean. They think she's the best thing since sliced bread, but they haven't seen the side of the dean that some of the faculty have seen," Johnson said.

Professor Bickel doesn't blame Templeton for all the problems. He said she has had difficulty dealing with Kopp and other top administrators.

"As best I can determine she's turned out, in many ways, to be just as weak as all the other deans. She can't get a fair shake for the college of education," Bickel said. "We remain under-funded with obsolete computers that don't work well, extremely low salaries and high workloads.

Bickel acknowledged that Templeton helped him get a raise.

"(But) most people I know here are miserable," Bickel said.

"During the 22 years I've been here, the college of education has always been treated like an afterthought, like a redheaded stepchild," he said.

Marshall spokesman Bissett said university administrators disagree with Bickel's characterization.

But Bickel said the college is "horribly under-funded" and that some of the penny pinching has left the college operating like a "Mickey Mouse institution."

It's no longer fun to come to work, he said.

"You do it because you do it," he said. "And if you do, you really have no life because you have four courses to teach and she (Templeton) wants research done and, in addition to that, because we have no money from the university, she pushes us to write grants."

Bickel said President Kopp places too much emphasis on new buildings, biotechnology and engineering, all at the expense of liberal arts and faculty salaries.

"Certainly, the president has no interest in the college of education. He has no interest in seeing that we are properly funded. No interest in seeing we are funded as a quality entity," Bickel said. "And she can't fix it."

March 11, 2009

## Private college taking tuition to public level to compete

By Bill Schackner, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As private colleges nationwide worry that the recession may drive students away to lower-priced public schools, one West Virginia campus is trying out a novel approach.

It's matching public campus prices.

Davis & Elkins College, a liberal arts campus of 600 students in the east-central part of the state, promises to hold its tuition equal to the tuition and fees at the state's flagship school, West Virginia University.

It's a move that also will bring Davis & Elkins much closer to rates at other public campuses with which it competes, including Fairmont State University.

The offer -- a reduction of more than \$14,000 per year -- will be available starting this fall to full-time applicants who graduate from high school this spring with at least a 2.5 grade average and live in one of seven counties near the campus.

The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), a group of 952 private campuses, said it knew of only one other school, California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, Calif., that makes a similar pledge.

The offer comes as growing joblessness and worries about financial aid availability are making this recruiting season arguably the most unpredictable in decades. Many private campuses are taking added steps to hold down costs, and some are likely to offer even deeper discounts than usual off their "sticker price" once students go through the financial aid process. But this offer is more direct.

"There is something to be said for the clarity and transparency of being told, up front, this is what you can expect to pay," said Tony Pals, a spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based NAICU.

"This is an especially innovative approach," he said. "It's one that will be watched closely by other private colleges, especially if enrollment at our institutions decreases this year."

In Pennsylvania, a couple of private four-year schools have published prices less than the state's flagship, Penn State University, including Grove City College. But it's not because of any guarantee, said Don Francis, president of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania.

"That's unusual," he said of the Davis & Elkins pledge. "I've never heard of it."

The pledge is among several initiatives aimed at boosting enrollment on the wooded campus in the Potomac Highlands that is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The school in Elkins, about a three-hour drive from Pittsburgh, says those moves explain why applications this year already top 1,000, triple last year's pace.

Almost 90 percent of its students are from in-state or from neighboring Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and Ohio. But the school is attracting fewer students from just beyond its front door, specifically Randolph, Upshur, Barbour, Pocahontas, Tucker, Pendleton and Webster counties. Out of 175 full-time freshmen this year, 55 are from those counties, down from 77 last year.

Price is a factor, says the college, noting the area's relatively low household income.

Rates for next year aren't set, but tuition this year at Davis & Elkins is \$19,320, not counting \$520 in fees. By comparison, a year's in-state tuition and fees total \$5,100 at WVU and \$5,024 at Fairmont State.

"Kids were driving by us and going to Fairmont State and WVU," said Kevin Wilson, vice president for enrollment management and chief operating officer.

Those students will soon have a similarly priced alternative near home, thanks to what Davis & Elkins calls its Highlands Scholar program.

Campus President G.T. "Buck" Smith, who took office in July, proposed the program last summer before the extent of the economic slump was known.

He calls it community outreach, saying many local residents would benefit from the personalized attention at a school so small.

"They'll stay here, they'll be entrepreneurial and they'll contribute to the renaissance of the whole state," he said of those who will graduate because of the program. "This is an investment in the community."

And it will help the college fill unused seats.

The school says 200 of its 692 dormitory beds are unused. Presumably, said Mr. Wilson, at least some Highlands Scholars will live on campus.

Davis & Elkins has not capped how many Highlands Scholars it will take, but expects about 50 will enroll, Dr. Smith said. Given the price cut, that suggests a cost to the college of \$700,000, though some would already be eligible for the school's tuition discount rate that averages 30 percent.