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FOUNDATION NEWS

Official Newsletter
June 2023



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All-Sports Reception honored exceptional student-athletes

The Fairmont State athletic department held its annual All-Sports Reception, presented by Diversified Energy and Mon Health, on May 1st at Joe Retton Arena in Fairmont, W.Va.

2023 Jasper H. Colebank Award Winners

The Jasper H. Colebank Award is widely recognized as the top honor for a Fairmont State University student-athlete. This award is presented each year to the male and female senior student-athlete who, in the course of his or her college career, has done the most to promote the best interest of athletics at Fairmont State University.

This year's female recipient is Peyton Barnes from the Fairmont State Acrobatics & Tumbling. A senior from Waldorf, Maryland, Barnes is a four-year starter on the team. During her time on the mat, Barnes has helped lead the team to two regular season Mountain East Conference Championships and two MEC Tournament Championships (2021 & 2022). Barnes was named MEC Specialist of the Year in 2023 and garnered All-MEC Second Team honors in 2022 and 2023. She won a trio of individual event championships at the 2022 MEC Championship and led the Falcons to two individual event championships at the 2023 conference tournament. She participated in her second National Collegiate Acrobatics & Tumbling Association (NCATA) National Championship in early May after her team earned the No. 8 seed in the 2023 championship with a 9-2 record.

The male Colebank Award winner this year is Isaiah Sanders. A Sicklerville, New Jersey native, Sanders has played four seasons at Fairmont State after transferring his sophomore year. Sanders has been named to the MEC All-Conference First Team three times in his career. He is a three-time all-region winner and is a three-year captain at Fairmont State. Sanders appeared on the Bevo Francis Award Finalist Watchlist two times in his career, which is awarded annually to the top player in small college basketball. Sanders became the ninth player in Fairmont State history to eclipse 2,000 points wearing a Fairmont State uniform. He finished with 2091 career points at Fairmont State, which is the 8th highest all-time. Sanders accolades are etched in Mountain East Conference history, as he is the second all-time in career points with 2,449 points.

2023 Eston K. Feaster Award Winners

The Eston K. Feaster Award is presented to the male and female senior student-athletes who have maintained the highest grade point averages among all letter winners.

The first female winner this year is Amelia Moore. A senior from Mansfield, Ohio, Moore graduated in the fall of 2022 with a degree in National Security & Intelligence. The four-year volleyball starter earned a perfect 4.00 grade point average and was named to the CSC Academic All-District Division II Volleyball Team in 2022 and was a four-time Mountain East Conference All-Academic honoree. Moore was named to the 2019 MEC All-Freshman Team and tallied over 750 kills and 250 blocks in her career.

The second female winner this year is Mackenzie Sorton. An Architecture major, Sorton has accumulated a grade point average of 4.00. The Morgantown, West Virginia native has participated in women's tennis and women's cross country teams during her time at Fairmont State. Sorton has been the team captain for the women's tennis team for three seasons and has played No. 6 singles and No. 2 & 3 doubles. She is a recipient of the Charles J. McClain Presidential Scholarship, which is a full scholarship awarded to three incoming freshman. Sorton is also involved with the Fairmont State Student Government Association and a member of the Fairmont State University Honors Program.

The male recipient is Kyle Carson. Carson, a member of the men's swimming team from Charles Town, West Virginia achieved a 3.94 grade point average as a Computer Science major. He competed in the 2023 GMAC/MEC finals and qualified in three individual events. Carson is a four-time CSCAA Scholar All-American and won College Sports Communicators Academic All-District in the 2022-23 season.

Kickin' it for Katy 5K Run/Walk raised awareness for suicide prevention, funds for forensics students

The Fairmont State University Forensic Science Program hosted the second annual 'Kickin' it for Katy' 5K run and walk on Saturday, April 29, on the University's campus. All proceeds from the race go to the Kaitlynn Towson Forensic Memorial Award to raise awareness around suicide prevention, benefiting Fairmont State Forensic Science students.

"We are pleased to see the outpouring of support from this community, and we are excited to watch Kickin' it for Katy grow," said Gina Dixon, the grandmother of Kaitlynn Towson. "Our family is proud that Katy's name and story will be remembered and that we are spreading awareness."

After the race, participants and spectators were invited to the 'Stomp Out the Stigma' celebration hosted by Falcon Wellness and Mental Health Services on the Falcon Center Quad for race awards, live music, food vendors, raffle prizes, a dunk tank and more.

"These two events are a natural fit together as they both support the mission of suicide awareness and prevention, which is especially important in our college-age students," said Forensic Science Program Coordinator Mark Flood. "The scholarship money being raised is in memory and support of Katy's legacy and will mean that these collaborative short-term events will have a longer-lasting impact."

"We want students to know that their mental health is our priority here at Fairmont State University," said Director of Student Health Chelsea Collins. "All supporters of mental wellness are invited to come and promote mental well-being. Students are not alone, we want them here with us to enjoy life."



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West Virginia residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial documents from the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, West Virginia 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement. A portion of all donations is used to further advancement efforts on behalf of Fairmont State University.

Fairmont State Alumnus Bus Jaco addressed new grads at 154th Commencement

Fairmont State University honored graduates during the University's 154th Commencement exercises on Saturday, May 6 in the Feaster Center.

"Commencement is always an uplifting and exciting event on our campus," said Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Tim Oxley. "Not only does it represent centuries of higher education tradition, it marks a significant milestone in the lives of our graduates that will serve them well throughout their lives. Commencement also reminds the University's faculty and staff members of the importance of what we do, and why we do it; focused on a culmination of teaching, learning, and student engagement."

This year's commencement speaker was Fairmont State alumnus William "Bus" Jaco, Ph.D. The Grafton, WV native is Regents Professor Emeritus, Oklahoma State University, and Adjunct Professor of Mathematics at Rice University. He holds degrees from Fairmont State University (B.A. Cum Laude), Penn State University (M.A.), and University of Wisconsin-Madison (Ph.D.). He held faculty positions at University of Michigan and Rice University before joining the faculty at Oklahoma State University as Head of the Department of Mathematics in 1982 and was appointed Grayce B. Kerr Chair in 1993, an endowed position that he held until his retirement in 2021.

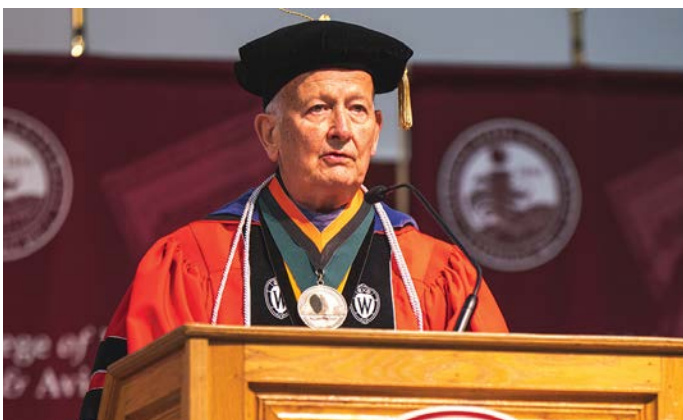
During his time at Fairmont State, Jaco was heavily involved in Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity when not in the classroom. During his speech, he fondly remembered his previous Professor in Mathematics, Dr. James La Rue who he referred to as an "advisor, mentor and friend." La Rue had encouraged Jaco to continue on to higher education with his studies in

math. When Dr. Jaco graduated from the College on the Hill in 1962, his son had attended with him donning a miniature cap and gown. Dr. Jaco returned to campus as commencement speaker and his wife, Linda, and eldest son were again with him for the occasion.

Jaco spoke briefly about his many accomplishments, achievements, and experiences that followed graduation from Fairmont State. He had enrolled in classes as a first-generation college student, hoping to make a living as a math teacher. He graduated with the determination and confidence to turn his dream into an incredible career. "Over the 61 years following my graduation from Fairmont State, I have held either a research, a teaching and research, or an administrative position in nine different states, through appointments at twenty different research institutions, and I have travelled the world to collaborate on research and work with colleagues spread across nine countries."

Before ending his speech, Jaco left the graduates with some words of advice, emphasizing the importance of hard work and the inevitability of change. He reminded the class of 2023 to take chances, stating "I would rather be sorry for something I did, than to be sorry for something I never did do." Finally, he encouraged them to view their time at Fairmont State as only the beginning of a lifetime of learning.

When asked about his experience returning to campus as the commencement speaker, he explained that learning of the wide array of programs offered at Fairmont State and seeing the graduates made him "impressed and proud to be there and to be a fellow graduate of Fairmont State."



Friends of Fairmont State gathered in Florida

This spring, two Friends of Fairmont State Gatherings were held in Florida as an opportunity to bring Falcons together to reminisce and reconnect.

The first event was held in Naples, Florida and was hosted by Dr. Roberta & Mr. Jim Strosnider and Mr. David & Mrs. Cecelia Price. The group of attendees spanned the graduating classes of 1962 to 1976. They were provided an update on the University by Foundation President, Rae Dyer, and enjoyed a slide show and Fairmont State trivia during their luncheon. Ms. Dyer spoke to the group about various opportunities to engage with campus.

The second event was held in Sebastian, Florida and was hosted by Mrs. Sherry and Mr. David Brown at Captain Hiram's. Fairmont State Alumni from the classes of 1958, 1970 and 1980 were in attendance that evening. The group talked in length about how much the campus has changed and had an opportunity to reminisce and connect.

Foundation President, Rae Dyer, stated "It was wonderful to see groups of people connecting over their love of Fairmont State. It was a joy to hear the stories of their time as students and to see the enthusiasm for what's to come."

The Foundation was grateful for the opportunity to bring these groups together and looks forward to more of these gatherings in the future.



From left to right: Barbara Riggleman ('76), David Riggleman ('69), Roberta Strosnider ('67), Jim Strosnider ('67), Linda Swihart ('71), Stan Swihart, Sharon Messmore ('68), David Price, Cecelia Price ('70), Lois Laughlin ('62), William Laughlin (Retired Faculty), Gary Gallucci ('68), Maria Gallucci



Left to right: David Brown, Sherry Brown ('70), Rachel Rae Dyer (Foundation President), Marissa Mauro ('19, Foundation Director of Development for Annual Giving & Stewardship), Sue Post ('58), Candice Hawley ('80)

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ASCE Concrete Canoe team made a splash at regional competition

Fairmont State's American Society of Civil Engineers student chapter swept the concrete canoe competition at the ASCE Virginias Regionals Symposium hosted by Marshall University on April 14.

In addition to taking home the overall team title, Fairmont also earned first-place in each of five races as well as the following categories: technical proposal, project presentation and final product.

"This has been an exceptional weekend for the student chapter," said Tabitha Lafferre, Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering Technology and ASCE Student Chapter Faculty Advisor. "The students truly put their heart, blood, sweat and tears in to this year-long project."

The ASCE Virginias Regionals Symposium provides students from schools across West Virginia and Virginia a chance to gain valuable hands-on experience by competing in many engineering-related competitions. For the concrete canoe competition in particular, students must follow strict rules that dictate the contents of the concrete matrix in building the canoe and, of course, the vessel must float, to be eligible to compete in the races. The canoe entered in this year's competition, named "Black Diamond," is a tribute to coal miners and West Virginia's status as a top coal producer in the country.

According to Lafferre, this marks the 18th regional level win for Fairmont State. The team will now move on to the national concrete canoe competition at the ASCE Civil Engineering Student Championship hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Platteville from June 10 to 12.

"The team always has a goal of placing in the top 10 overall," said Lafferre. "Even though the regional symposium is over, they'll continue practicing paddling until the last day of the spring semester."

To help fund the trip, the Fairmont State ASCE student chapter held an elimination dinner at the Knights of Columbus on May 5th. The dinner included a buffet-style meal, historical presentation, keynote address, canoe display, gift basket raffles and a \$1,000 cash prize.



Save the date:

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY
Homecoming
SEPTEMBER 30, 2022



Second Fighting Falcon Lift-a-Thon a success

The Fairmont State Athletics Department hosted the 2023 Fighting Falcon Lift-a-Thon during the week of April 17 to raise money for enhancements to the Rusty Elliott weight room.

Similar to a walk-a-thon fundraiser, student-athletes perform maximal reps on three exercises: squat, bench press, and deadlift. The total number of repetitions completed are recorded, and the donation amounts are based on this total.

This year's participants performed a total of 22,011 repetitions with an average sponsor amount of \$.40 per repetition.

Planned enhancements include the addition of Velocity Based Training (Vitrue) devices and ANCORE PRO functional trainers for all eight squat racks in the weight room. With these upgrades, Fairmont State Athletics can continue providing student-athletes with the highest performance training.

"Our second Fighting Falcons Lift-a-Thon was a huge success," said Fairmont State's Head Strength & Conditioning Coach Adam Kolberg. "We had 278 student-athletes participate, and thanks to their tremendous efforts and the gracious support of sponsors, we raised over \$8,500 for the strength and conditioning program."

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Ruth Ann Musick Library hosted writing contest

Fairmont State's Ruth Ann Musick Library hosted its first writing contest this March in which Fairmont State University students submitted work based on the American Library Association's National Library Week theme, "There's More to the Story."

Students were encouraged to write either a short story or a poetry submission inspired by the theme of "There's More to the Story" and the prompt "Photo and/or Diary". Nineteen submissions were received: eight short story submissions and eleven poetry submissions. The selected winners for the short story category include Avary King (first place), Sydney Brooks (second place), and Natalie Clingenpeel (third place). The selected winners of the poetry category include Molly Simpson (first place), Alexandra Mellott (second place), and Vetra Foster (third place).

Reilly Crow, a junior Graphic Design Technology major from Glendale, West Virginia, established the contest in partnership with the Ruth Ann Musick Library staff. "People need a way to express themselves," he said. "When people share stories, there are always some left-out details. With the theme "There's More to the Story," we see what reading stories are for."

Each first place winner received a \$250 cash prize and publication in next year's edition of Whetstone, Fairmont State University's undergraduate literary and art journal.

"We have a lot of creative, amazing young people on this campus that are growing, changing, and always doing awesome things," said Jacquelynn Sherman, Assistant Library Director. "Their accomplishments are just one example, one little piece of the whole that makes Fairmont State such a great place to learn."



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