



## FAIRMONT STATE FOUNDATION

Official Newsletter - July 2019

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## Braxton county native endows scholarship

Carson Drake, a Braxton County native who graduated from Fairmont State in 1986 with a bachelor's degree in Electronics Engineering Technology, has established the Carson B. Drake Engineering Scholarship, which will support students from Braxton County who have financial need and are enrolled in Computer Science and Computer Security; Electronics Engineering Technology; or Mechanical Engineering Technology.

"The Fairmont State program was perfect for me," Drake said. "It was not too big like the large universities where you can get lost, and it was very practical and hands-on rather than largely theoretical. I was immediately able to take what I learned at Fairmont State and apply it in the field in manufacturing facilities all over North America."

As an entrepreneur, Drake built his career focusing on industrial automation. He is also co-founder and vice president of Gray Matter Systems, a Pennsylvania company that transforms manufacturing companies into technology companies that create new revenue, boost the economy and revitalize cities. The company focuses on co-innovation and curating the best process and technology to drive industrial companies and utilities through digital transformation.



"I am so proud of what Fairmont State University has become," said Drake who wants to bring positive change to keep the ball rolling and help Fairmont State continue to improve. He hopes to help students find internships in manufacturing companies throughout the region by leveraging contacts he's made over the years. His passion for Fairmont State is driven by his interest in the students. "I look at them and I see me in 1986. They are just looking for a chance, and they don't know what they don't know yet."

## Every Gift Matters - The Scholarship Campaign raises \$2 million

In the summer of 2018 the Fairmont State Foundation set out to raise \$1.3 million dollars for scholarships by December of 2019. Since then, we have had many alumni and friends of Fairmont State who have stepped up and decided to give back to the school that means so much to them. To date, we have had more than 900 gifts from 500 donors, totaling just over \$2 million and surpassing our goal by over \$700,000.

Scholarships play a vital role in attracting and retaining the best and brightest students. The cost of a college education continues to rise and so does the importance of that education. Ninety percent of Fairmont State students rely on financial aid. Previously, most scholarships only provided funding for two of the four years required to complete a degree. The goal of this campaign was

to close that gap and provide four-year scholarships so that our students had the funding they needed to complete their degree at Fairmont State University.

Private support from donors was crucial to making this campaign a success. One of the questions we asked our alumni during this campaign was, "How did you get to where you are today?" Based on the response we received in the form of alumni gifts the answer was clear. Fairmont State University has been and will continue to be the foundation from which Falcons will build their futures.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Every Gift Matters – The Scholarship Campaign. By helping ease the financial burden on our students you are helping them to focus on their studies so that graduates are ready to take flight.

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*

*- Nelson Mandela*

## 1865 Heritage Society - Leave a Legacy

Touching the lives of others while creating a lasting legacy is what you can do by joining the Fairmont State Foundation's 1865 Heritage Society. This special group is made up of individuals who have chosen to include Fairmont State in their will or estate plan. There are many ways to make a planned gift. Although most planned gifts come from wills or living trusts, other options include life insurance, retirement assets, real estate, and securities. These gifts provide a way for you to pass on your values, achieve certain charitable and financial goals, and may yield certain federal tax advantages. Some planned gifts can even give you an income throughout your lifetime.

Members of the 1865 Heritage Society are providing a strong foundation upon which Fairmont State may continue to advance its time-honored tradition of providing quality education. They have the foresight to understand that the future success of Fairmont State depends on the plans we make today. The goal of the Society is to acknowledge these individuals for their vision and to provide a lasting tribute in their honor. For more information about including Fairmont State in your estate plans, contact the Foundation at 304-534-8786 or [FSF@fsufoundation.org](mailto:FSF@fsufoundation.org).



## Student spotlight - Lake Porter

The "Every Gift Matters—the Scholarship Campaign" helps students to continue their education both in and out of the classroom while also being able to gain experiences they wouldn't otherwise have had. Student-athlete Lake Porter of Charleston, W.Va., said scholarships give her a sense of relief knowing she is taken care of and can focus on her academics.

A double major in marketing and accounting and a member of the Women's Soccer Team, Porter said receiving a scholarship is the same as hearing someone is betting on her to become successful. "It's like receiving a key tool that will help you with this journey. Scholarships mean everything, I set out on a journey at 8 years old to get a scholarship to help me have a ticket to education," she said. "It's given my mom peace of mind knowing that I'm taken care of here and I can't wait until the day I have a diploma in my hand and my mom in the other. I owe that all to the scholarships I received from Fairmont State University."

Porter is on the Student Leadership Board for the School of Business and a member of Team Impact. Over the next few years she hopes to join more clubs with focuses on business and entrepreneurship.

"My scholarships are proof that hard work and staying focused may be rewarded. They give me a certain drive on the field and in the classroom to make sure that I maintain the requirements necessary to keep them," she said. "This blessing has also given me responsibilities that I think have helped shaped me into a person my parents, siblings, mentors, and coaches can be proud of." To be given the opportunity to attend Fairmont State through participation in a sport she loves and the emphasis donors have put on the importance of a college education.



"We are treated like family members here. I have never stepped into a room full of students and staff members where I have felt unwelcome. The range of diversity is refreshing," she said. "It's incredibly easy to learn something new every day, whether it be in the classroom, while meeting new people, or even finding out something about yourself. This is the best time."

Porter enjoys being surrounded by people who are on a mission to achieve their dreams just like she is. The best part is the professors and staff on campus help her to fulfill her dreams.

"When you donate to Fairmont State University, you can rest assured that your donation is being used to help a kid turn their dreams into a reality," she said. "There are some students here are the very first in their families to attend college, and you can know that you have helped that student make history."



## Leave a mark on the campus you love

Don't miss the opportunity to leave your mark on campus. This year the Senior Campaign will allow everyone to do just that. The campaign will be raising funds to create an engraved brick patio and seating area around our beloved Victory Bell. Senior Raychel Fitzwater, Student Government member, said they chose the project because they feel it is a great way to honor the Victory Bell's upcoming 80th anniversary on campus. "When the SGA executive board was thinking of ideas for the focus of our campaign, the first thing that came to mind was the Bell. The Bell is a historic part of our campus and history we felt wasn't being honored in the way it should be," she said.

Students, alumni and friends can support the Beautify the Bell campaign by purchasing an engraved brick, which will be placed in the new seating area surrounding the bell. The bricks will be \$20.19 for students and \$50 for alumni and friends.

To participate in the campaign visit <https://www.fsufoundation.org/giving/bell> or call the Foundation office at 304-534-8786.

### Athletic calendar of events

- Saturday, August 24
- Thursday, September 5
- Friday, September 6
- Saturday, September 7
- Thursday, September 12
- Saturday, September 21
- Sunday, September 22
- Thursday, September 26
- Sunday, September 29
- Thursday, October 3
- Saturday, October 12
- Saturday, October 19
- Saturday, October 19
- Saturday, October 26

- Falcon Tennis Classic
- Football at Charleston
- Women's Soccer vs. Caldwell
- Women's Tennis vs. Washing & Jefferson
- Football vs. Wheeling Jesuit
- Fairmont State at Notre Dame (Football)
- Women's Soccer vs. West
- Frostburg State at Fairmont State
- Women's Soccer vs West Liberty
- Football at Glenville State
- Football vs WV State
- Fairmont State Baseball Golf Outing
- Football at Concord
- Football vs West Liberty – Homecoming

Full Calendar: <https://fightingfalcons.com/calendar.aspx>

### Save the date

- Thursday, September 12  
Donor Appreciation Tailgate
- Friday, September 13  
Scholarship and Donor Stewardship Banquet
- Thursday, October 24 -  
Saturday, October 26  
Homecoming
- Thursday, November 7  
Day of Giving

## Foundation welcomes new President

This spring, the Fairmont State Foundation welcomed long-time development professional Julie R. Cryser as president.

Cryser comes to the Fairmont State Foundation having served as the assistant dean of development and alumni relations at the WVU Eberly College of Arts & Sciences. Prior to that position, Cryser worked as the assistant dean in the WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources & Design for three years, previously serving as the director of development there since January 2012.

"I am very excited about coming to the Fairmont State Foundation," Cryser said. "Fund raising for Fairmont State University means ensuring students are able to afford college. It means that faculty and staff have additional resources to offer the best education possible. And I'm awestruck by the quality of programs and possibilities."

Cryser spent nearly 19 years in development, communications and alumni relations at West Virginia University, having raised more than \$30 million to support scholarships and student and faculty opportunities as a front-line fund raiser since 2006.

On the communications side of advancement, Cryser lead a Davis College team that published a 150th anniversary history book to celebrate the College's milestone anniversary. Under her guidance, the college increased communications, including

producing two magazines per year, a monthly alumni newsletter, videos and internal communications.

"The Falcon family welcomes Julie as our new Foundation President." said Gary LeDonne, chair of the Fairmont State Foundation Board of Directors. "Julie has an extensive background in higher education fund raising and enabling her to lead the Fairmont State Foundation to new heights."

Prior to joining WVU, Cryser worked as a reporter and editor in newspapers throughout West Virginia and Pennsylvania, having earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from WVU in journalism and graduating with honors. She is married to Dave Hickman, a retired sports writer, and has two children, Grace and Annie.



## Contact us

On the web: [www.fsufoundation.org](http://www.fsufoundation.org)

By Phone: 304-534-8786

By Email: [fsf@fsufoundation.org](mailto:fsf@fsufoundation.org)



**FAIRMONT STATE  
FOUNDATION**

## One day, one Falcon family: Date set for Fairmont State University's inaugural Falcon Day of Giving

Mark your calendars for November 7, 2019. This day will be the first annual Fairmont State University Falcon Day of Giving. 24 hours dedicated to showcasing all things Fairmont State and raising money to support its students and programs.

Fairmont State has a rich tradition of excellence. Many students have passed through the halls on this campus and gone on to become successes and pioneers in their respective industries. To continue this tradition of excellence and allow our university to grow we must increase funding available for scholarships, program support and athletics.

Private funding is crucial to meeting these needs. The Falcon Day of Giving is one day where all alumni, students and friends of Fairmont State can come together and give back. When many come together for a common cause, their impact can be felt for years to come.

The Falcon Day of Giving will be filled with events on campus, at the alumni center and on social media. It will be 24 hours of all things Fairmont State that you will not want to miss. Want to be part of the giving day team? Sign up to be a Social Media Ambassador and we will provide you with social media graphics, posts and some cool gifts to help us spread the word across social media about the importance of coming together for one day and giving back.

If you would like to challenge other alumni and friends to give back on Falcon Day of Giving by providing a matching donation, please contact Julie R. Cryser by email at [juliecryser@fsufoundation.org](mailto:juliecryser@fsufoundation.org) or by phone at 304-534-8786.

**Be a Day of Giving Ambassador and help spread the word!  
Sign up at [www.fsufoundation.org/news/2019/ambassador](http://www.fsufoundation.org/news/2019/ambassador).**



## \$1000 Club and beyond

Did you know that approximately 1 out of every 10 undergraduate students at Fairmont State participate in a varsity sport? These individuals chose Fairmont State as a place where their athletic talents can shine as they pursue a first-class education. Our student-athletes strive to be the best in competition, but also continue to be leaders in academics. Our athletics department endeavors to create an environment where they can achieve both goals.

From coaches and training staff, to administrators and faculty, to alumni, family, and friends, we all play important roles in laying the foundation for these young men and women to excel in their sport and in the classroom.

Our efforts to sustain and strengthen Fairmont State Athletics can only happen with support from our community, alumni, and friends. To help our programs remain competitive with our peers, please allow us to present our newest initiative in athletic development—The Fighting Falcons \$1000 Club and Beyond.

As a refreshed version of the \$1000 Club for its sixth annual campaign, the Fighting Falcons \$1000 Club and Beyond provides our generous friends of athletics even more opportunities to directly support Fairmont State University student athletes.

By becoming a member, you are helping to fund scholarships, travel, equipment, and other operational expenses for the program, or programs, of your choice. Members may also support athletics in the form of planned gifts, endowments, and capital giving for facility improvements.

The student-athlete experience is a special, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. However, it does not come without significant costs. Falcon student-athletes are counting on fundraising dollars to enhance their experience, making Fairmont State a significant part of their lives. We know we can count on you, as your generosity is second to none.

Please consider joining alumni and friends as a part of the Fighting Falcons \$1000 Club and Beyond. We are proud of our history and excited about our future. To learn more or make a gift visit [www.fightingfalcons.com](http://www.fightingfalcons.com) and click on \$1000 Club.



**THE FIGHTING FALCONS**  
**\$1000 CLUB**  
**AND BEYOND**

JOIN THE TEAM | BEHIND THE TEAMS |  FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY  
**ATHLETICS**



July 2019  
Summer Edition

# FAIRMONT STATE FOUNDATION

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Official Newsletter



1300 Locust Avenue  
Fairmont, WV 26554

## Save the Dates Homecoming 2019

- **Thursday, October 24**  
Bonfire
- **Friday, October 25**  
Emeritus and Alumni  
Awards Luncheon  
Hall of Fame
- **Saturday, October 26**  
Parade  
Alumni Tailgate  
Football Game