



FAIRMONT STATE FOUNDATION

Official Newsletter - September 2021

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Alumni Establish Scholarship for Members of the Black Student Union

The Fairmont State Black Student Union Alumni Association has created a scholarship in support of the student organization they serve.

The Fairmont State University Black Student Union Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship will be available to active, working members of Fairmont State University's Black Student Union. Qualifying students who are sophomores, juniors or seniors will demonstrate academic success, along with campus and community engagement in order to be eligible. Black Student Union Legacy members are also eligible for this scholarship.

"The Fairmont State Foundation is beyond grateful that the Black Student Union Alumni Association has come together to establish an endowment that will continue their mission in creating equal access to opportunities for students while enhancing student's success," said Fairmont State Foundation Development Officer, Tori Anselene.

Fairmont State's Black Student Union was established to foster open dialogue among students of color, the Student Government Association and school administration with the goal of creating equal access to opportunities. Additionally, the organization strives for fair educational, cultural and social acceptance at Fairmont State University.

"The creation of this endowment will support students who are working toward a future of diversity, equity and inclusion in education," stated Fairmont State Foundation President, Gary K. Bennett.

From its inception in 1969, the Black Student Union has been active on campus and within the community. Black Student Union has been active on campus and within the community. Black Student Union activities include leading

the BSU Gospel Choir, holding events for Homecoming and offering special programs at local churches in celebration of Black History Month each year. The organization currently hosts programming to address and encourage African American and multicultural education.

"I feel that my college experience would not have been the same without a group like BSU," said Fairmont State Black Student Union President, Peyton Barnes. "I am so very grateful for the Black Student Union Alumni Association for their kindness and generosity"

When asked why the Black Student Union Alumni Association chose to establish this scholarship, Jacqueline Dooley, President and Chair of the organization, explained, "The Black Student Union alumni want to offer a helping hand, reaching back to deserving youth to lift them up and aid in their academic success with this financial support."

The Fairmont State Black Student Union Alumni Association serves as a catalyst to reunite former students for social, cultural, educational and community experiences. The organization serves as mentors to current Black Student Union members at Fairmont State University in various academic disciplines to assist in career development opportunities.



A3L Federal Works Establishes Scholarship for Students in STEM

Fairmont, West Virginia's A3L Federal Works, LLC has committed \$25,500 to the Fairmont State Foundation to establish a scholarship honoring the father of President and CEO, Roya Maher.

The Mr. Karim Maher Memorial Scholarship will offer four annual awards of \$1,250 to Fairmont State University students, with preference given to minorities and women majoring in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) related fields.

"It is through the generosity of organizations such as A3L Federal Works that the important education in the STEM areas will go from good to excellent at Fairmont State," said Gary K. Bennett, Fairmont State Foundation President.

Mr. Karim Maher was a successful real estate and municipal planning professional who understood how STEM professionals improve lives by designing and building well planned cities and residential communities. He valued higher education, supporting his children and extended family with their college educations. Mr. Maher also provided charitable support to organizations that helped under served youth achieve their dreams of advanced education.



"The A3L Federal Works generosity of establishing the Mr. Karim Maher Memorial Scholarship will directly impact Fairmont State students by giving them an opportunity to further develop their studies in the areas of science, technology, mathematics and engineering while continuing Mr. Maher's legacy," said Tori Anselene, Fairmont State Foundation Development Officer. "Fairmont State greatly appreciates those like A3L Federal Works, who provide opportunities for deserving students in STEM."

Mr. Maher believed that women should have a place in STEM fields, and Ms. Maher describes him as ahead of his time. He encouraged her to pursue her own engineering education and career.

"He was instrumental to my education as an engineer. I owe my drive to succeed and my can-do attitude to my father. His love and confidence in my abilities helped me aim high and achieve my goals," Maher said. "He was a great man, and he had a heart of gold. I hope to keep his memory alive and continue his legacy by starting this scholarship and supporting amazing West Virginia students."

As a business owner and a woman in a STEM field, Ms. Maher recognizes the demand for personnel with STEM education and she wants to encourage women and minority students to pursue degrees in such fields of study.

"Ms. Maher herself is a perfect example of the excellence one can achieve in STEM fields when a student is supported and encouraged," said Mirta M. Martin, Fairmont State University President. "And just as she was sustained by her father's support, we want to do the same for the next generation of STEM professionals, particularly creating opportunities for women and minorities who traditionally have not had proper exposure and access to STEM education. The Mr. Karim Maher Memorial Scholarship will allow us to further our efforts to provide that access, ignite the passion for STEM and help more students pursue their dreams."

When asked why she chose to support students at Fairmont State, Maher responded, "I am impressed with Fairmont State University and their curriculum in STEM. I have employees who are Fairmont State graduates, and they are highly qualified, outstanding engineers."

A3L Federal Works, LLC, an SBA 8(a) certified, HUBZone certified, Woman-Owned Small Business, provides high quality engineering, technology, and management services to federal and state governments, civilian agencies, and commercial clients.

Diversified Gas & Oil Commits Additional Scholarship Funding to Fairmont State

Diversified Gas & Oil Co., the Birmingham, AL, company whose chief executive officer and co-founder is Fairmont State University graduate and Board of Governors member Rusty Hutson Jr., has committed an additional \$50,000 in scholarships over five years to Fairmont State students.

“Diversified Gas & Oil strongly believes in supporting students who attend colleges in our operating areas and that are seeking to start careers in the gas and oil or related industries,” said Brad Gray, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. “We believe that the energy sector in the United States is strong and that it is a driver of economic prosperity for millions of people in the country. Our industry is a major factor in maintaining low energy costs for our country. At Diversified, we are very committed to our business operations in the Appalachian Basin.”

Diversified donated \$30,000 in scholarships starting in 2019 for rising seniors earning a degree in a natural gas- and oil-focused major with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Each student selected receives a \$2,500 scholarship for their senior year. The additional contribution will extend the scholarship program for five more years through 2026.

Gray said that for the gas and oil industry to continue to be productive, innovative and successful, it needs a consistent talent pool of qualified, local, educated young people. Gray stated that the industry not only needs traditional engineers but also needs talented technology, finance, safety and environmental employees to manage the complexity of operations.

“We can think of no better place from which to source this talent -- young people from our back yards, our high schools, our universities,” he said.

“For most of our students, paying for college is one of the most significant investments they and their families will ever undertake,” said Mirta M. Martin, Fairmont State University President. “But they know that they are really investing in themselves. It’s a sound investment, because Fairmont State graduates have a reputation for being highly skilled, hard-working and optimistic. And with their generous scholarships, Diversified Gas & Oil and Rusty Hutson are also investing in our students, easing our students’ financial burdens.”

DGOC views these scholarships as an investment in the communities in which they operate and investment in the lives and the futures of students preparing for a career in the industry.

Diversified is an operator of gas and oil producing assets. Its innovative, disciplined investment strategy is focused on the acquisition of mature, low-decline and low-risk wells, enhancement of operations with a focus on efficiency, and maximization of profitability for shareholders. Founded in 2001, Diversified has deep roots in the mineral-rich Appalachian United States.



The Fairmont State Foundation invites you to join us for a tailgate before the Fighting Falcons take on Frostburg State.

DONOR APPRECIATION TAILGATE

Saturday, October 23
11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Maroon Lot
Kickoff at 1:00 p.m.

RSVP to Marissa

- Phone: 304-534-8786
- Email: marissa@fsufoundation.org
- fsufoundation.org/giving/tailgate



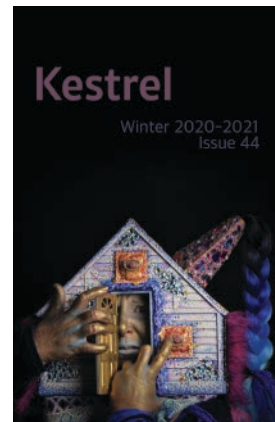
**FAIRMONT STATE
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Kestrel: A Journal of Literature and Art

Kestrel: A Journal of Literature and Art is the only print journal published by an institution of higher learning in West Virginia. Founded at Fairmont State in 1993 and publishing continuously since then, *Kestrel* publishes poetry, poetry-in-translation, fiction, creative nonfiction, art, and reviews. In 2009, *Kestrel* began its Celebration series, which brings contributors to each biennial issue to campus for two days of readings, panel discussions, class visits, workshops, and community outreach events like presentations to Marion County's Lifelong Learners and area high school classes. These Celebrations have currently brought nearly 200 writers from all over the country to Fairmont State (during the pandemic, Celebrations were held virtually, with contributors tuning in from as far away as Spain). In-person Celebrations have been supported by contributions from I-79 Honda.

The modest budget is supplemented by subscriptions, sales, and donations. Over the years the Journal has also received grants from the West Virginia Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, and from the Fairmont State Foundation. In 2016 the Friends of *Kestrel* program was launched to begin an endowment for the journal, and in the last two years, gifts received during the Foundation's Day of Giving were used to enrich that endowment.

Kestrel is edited by faculty members Kylie Ford (art), Suzanne Heagy (fiction), Donna J. Long (Editor-in-Chief and nonfiction), Nathan Myers (reviews), and Elizabeth Savage (poetry). *Kestrel* provides valuable internship experience in editing, publishing, marketing, and community outreach to student interns who receive academic credit for their work with the journal. For more information, visit fairmontstate.edu/kestrel/.



HOMECOMING SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 7-9

Fairmont State University will host its 2021 Homecoming celebration from Thursday, October 7 through Saturday, October 9. After canceling the event in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the campus community is looking forward to welcoming its Falcon Family back for a weekend of festivities.



Visit fairmontstate.edu/alumni/homecoming for more information.

Scholarship Created in Honor of Eric W. Underwood

Sidney and Judith Underwood of Parkersburg, West Virginia have pledged \$27,000 to create a scholarship in memory of their son Eric, who passed away in July of 2020. The Eric W. Underwood Endowed Scholarship will provide support to full-time students in the College of Science and Technology at Fairmont State University.

"The generous gift from the Underwood's is greatly appreciated. Their kind remembrance of their son will have a lasting benefit to Fairmont State students," said Fairmont State Foundation President Gary K. Bennett.

"We choose to honor Eric with this scholarship because he would want future generations to continue to pursue advanced education in this field of study," said the Underwoods. "As a young man, he collected model planes, ships and enjoyed watching trains. He loved drawing and it was natural that he studied drafting and engineering in college. Eric was fascinated with how machines, such as trains, worked. He studied them and could explain how the mechanics of their engines, brakes, worked. As an avid rail fan and member of the B&O Historical Association, he also enjoyed riding all the scenic rail works of WV. He loved music and learned to play guitar as an adult. He also enjoyed nature; hiking, riding bikes, and taking photos. During his time at Fairmont State, Eric held great respect for his instructors and the educational standards at the University."

Eric received an Engineering Technology degree from WVU Parkersburg before going on to complete a bachelor's degree from Fairmont State in Mechanical Engineering Technology in 2018. He also earned a master's degree in Technology Education from WVU. Eric was skilled in the areas of educational leadership and curriculum development.

"With the establishment of the Eric W. Underwood Endowed Scholarship, Eric's legacy will continue forever here at Fairmont State University," said Tori Anselene, development officer at the Fairmont State Foundation. "Students pursuing a degree within the College of Science and Technology will greatly be impacted because of Judith and Sidney's generosity."

The Eric W. Underwood Endowed Scholarship will be available to Fairmont State University students enrolled full-time at the College of Science and Technology. Applicants must be West Virginia residents with a minimum grade point average of 3.0.

Foundation Welcomes New Board Members

The Fairmont State Foundation recently welcomed five new members to its Board of Directors. New members include Kathy Martin, K. Alex Miller, II, Chad Riley, John Wilson and Dixie Yann.

Kathy Martin is a 1995 graduate of Fairmont State with a Board of Regents degree. Martin is the owner-broker of KLM Properties, Inc. headquartered in Morgantown.

K. Alex Miller, II is a 2001 graduate of Fairmont State with a bachelor's in business administration. He is a founding partner of Miller Law Offices in Fairmont, where he practices law with his father, Kenneth R. Miller ('65).

Chad Riley is a 1995 graduate of Fairmont State University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering technology. A 2008 Fairmont State Outstanding Young Alumnus, Riley serves on the University's technology advisory committee and has been a part of many of the building projects that have taken place on campus in recent years.

John Wilson graduated from Fairmont State with a bachelor's in accounting in 1988. Wilson is a certified public accountant with Schmidt & Wilson, LLC in Pittsburgh, PA. Wilson is also a co-owner and co-founder of Cox Well Service, LLC in Spencer.

Dixie Yann recently completed her term on the Fairmont State University Board of Governors, serving since 2012. Yann is active in the community with several organizations including the Pricketts Fort Memorial Foundation, United Way and Marion County Meals on Wheels, which she co-founded.

Tori Anselene Joins Foundation as Development Officer

In March, Tori Anselene, a proud Fairmont State University alumna who holds a bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis in marketing, joined the Fairmont State Foundation staff as a development officer.

Anselene is a front-line major gift fundraiser who cultivates and builds lasting relationships with donors and identifies funding opportunities that fit donor interests and desires.

Tori brings to the table prior experience in fund raising, a drive to be successful and an intimate knowledge of Fairmont State University and the community. She is also passionate about fund raising for the university from which she graduated.

Anselene is excited to reconnect, meet and collaborate with faculty, alumni, and friends of Fairmont State University. She understands the value and importance of discovering new opportunities with current and future supporters to help enrich students' time at Fairmont State through funding initiatives.

"I have worked in the development field for several years and truly enjoy building meaningful relationships with those who, through their generosity and giving hearts, make a significant impact," she said. "The ability to work directly with those who have a dream to make a difference in students' lives and bring new opportunities to the university is an honor because I get to assist them in making that dream a reality."

As a life-long member of the Fairmont community, Anselene sees the impact Fairmont State brings to Marion County and throughout West Virginia. Her husband Caleb, is also a native of Fairmont and holds a degree in nursing from Fairmont State.

"I was a first-generation student and received financial assistance through scholarships that were available because of the support of donors and the Fairmont State Foundation, and I will be forever grateful," Anselene said. "I see my new role as an opportunity to help do the same for future students by dedicating myself to support our mission while utilizing my experience, skills and education."



Campus highlights

Criminal Justice program receives national recognition: Fairmont State University has recently been ranked among the top 100 Best Affordable Criminal Justice Programs in the country by University Headquarters. University Headquarters considers several factors to determine its rankings to assist students in their college searches. Details including cost of tuition, admission rate, graduating salary, among several others are examined throughout the ranking process to provide student support and ensure a valuable degree upon graduation.

Reneau named finalist for WV Professor of the Year: Fairmont State University Associate Professor of Special Education, Dr. Julie Reneau, has been selected as one of the five finalists for the Faculty Merit Foundation 2020 West Virginia Professor of the Year Award.

Forensics program ranked among nation's best: Fairmont State ranked #30 among universities included on the website's 2021 Best Bachelor's Degrees in Forensic Science list. The rankings were compiled based on the following factors: comprehensive curricula in both the physical science and the criminal justice system, United States Department of Education data, accessibility, affordability, internship and research opportunities, faculty expertise and extracurricular opportunities.

Bennett Returns as Foundation President

The Fairmont State Foundation is honored to welcome Gary K. Bennett's return as president of the Fairmont State Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising organization utilized by Fairmont State University. He brings with him decades of experience as a CPA and an outstanding educator, along with a passion for the Foundation's mission to serve the University and the greater Fairmont community.

"We are so very fortunate to have such an exceptional, caring and experienced gentleman leading the Foundation," said Dr. Mirta M. Martin, Fairmont State University President. "Gary has masterfully led our Foundation before; we look forward to welcoming him home – once again. The Foundation and the entire Falcon Family will benefit from Gary's experience and expertise, as well as his deep fondness and devotion to Fairmont State."

In addition to serving as a board member for the Foundation, Bennett is an alumnus from the Fairmont State College class of 1972, a retired faculty member, and assistant dean of what is now named the College of Business and Aviation.

Bennett previously served as president of the Foundation in 2018 and 2019. His passion for Fairmont State and positive relationships with University stakeholders will allow the Foundation and the University to continue their collaborative efforts to support Fairmont State students and programs without interruption.

Fairmont State University President Dr. Mirta M. Martin is looking forward to working with Bennett again.

"Gary is a Falcon through and through – that's one of the things that makes working together such a joy. He is always driven to find ways to help the Fairmont State University family. He carries in his heart the "why" of what we do – to help the next generation of Falcons achieve their dreams – and that is exactly what he has been doing for decades, as an alumnus, a faculty, and a generous donor. The University is so very grateful for Gary, and excited at the boundless opportunities that can be achieved as he steps into the Foundation leadership role once again."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Please save the date for the third annual Falcon Day of Giving, scheduled for October 28, 2021. Falcon Day of Giving is One Day with One Goal to come together as One Falcon Family to raise funds for Fairmont State University. When we combine our support, there are no limits to what we can accomplish. Join us for 24 hours of celebrating all the best Fairmont State University has to offer.

Show your Falcon Pride and give back!

falconsgive.fsufoundation.org



ONE DAY • ONE GOAL • ONE FALCON FAMILY

Thursday, October 28 • SAVE THE DATE • #FalconsGive2021

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Fall Edition



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1300 Locust Avenue
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