

The gift of education changes the future.

FOUNDATION NEWS

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A message from Dr. Bolyard

Dear Alumni and Friends of Fairmont State University,

Reflecting on my first months at the Fairmont State Foundation, it has been an amazing as well as transformative experience in my career. As a longtime Fairmont resident myself, daughter of a proud Fairmont State alumnus, and a native of West Virginia, I have always known and respected the important role that Fairmont State University holds as a higher education institution in our state and region. I find myself smiling each morning on my drive to the office, knowing that I have the distinct pleasure of playing a part in the advancement and growth of this institution.



Higher education has always been an important part of my life. I earned my own degrees here in West Virginia, receiving my bachelor's and master's degrees from WVU and my doctoral degree from Marshall University. Equipped with my own education and many years of fundraising experience, I feel prepared and excited to assist the next generation in receiving the quality education that Fairmont State is well known for providing.

Upon my arrival in November, I was quickly swept up in the excitement of the 2024 Day of Giving. On February 29, 2024, 1,199 alumni and donors joined together to raise more than \$530,000 for the students and programs of Fairmont State. The impact that this day will have on our campus is incredible, and the passion shown for this University on that day was nothing short of inspiring. Since 2019, Falcon Day of Giving has raised over \$1.2 million to support a variety of scholarships as well as programmatic support for Fairmont State University students to help them realize their endless potential.

While Day of Giving 2024 was truly remarkable, it is only the beginning of my journey with the dedicated staff and Board of Directors at the Fairmont State Foundation. The programs and initiatives on this campus are exciting and I, along with my team, are ready to support them by facilitating relationships and identifying opportunities to encourage growth and create new possibilities. Fairmont State is full of faculty and staff who are driven and care deeply about their students, and I am honored to work side by side with them to support students in any way we can.

Since my arrival, the entire Fairmont State community welcomed me with open arms, hearts, and ideas on our future direction. While I have been here less than a year, I have met incredible alumni and passionate donors, and I look forward to working closely with those I have met and those I will meet soon.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Bolyard". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Dr. Anne Bolyard
President, Fairmont State Foundation

Falcon Day of Giving exceeds goal, raising \$530,992 for Fairmont State University

Fairmont State University held its fifth Falcon Day of Giving on Thursday, February 29 with a goal of raising \$375,000 for programs, teams, and scholarships campus-wide. During this 24-hour giving marathon, 1,199 alumni and friends of Fairmont State raised more than \$530,992, far exceeding the goal.

Falcon Day of Giving serves as an opportunity for the Fairmont State community to come together for a single goal, while supporting the areas that matter most to them. Whether it is a scholarship fund, athletic team, student organization, academic department, the Academy for the Arts, or the Falcon Marching Band there were more than 50 different giving opportunities for donors to choose from.

“On February 29th, we experienced a record-breaking Day of Giving that demonstrated the enduring commitment to present as well as to the future of Fairmont State University from our donors,” said Dr. Anne Bolyard, Fairmont State Foundation President. “The power of community-based philanthropy will transform the lives of our students and our university, as well as our state.”

This year, Fairmont State’s five colleges raised a combined total of \$106,626 from 397 donors in support of various programs and initiatives. An additional \$89,606 was raised for academic scholarships.

The College of Business and Economics raised the most dollars for an academic unit this year, with a total of \$27,344. The College of Liberal Arts had the most individual donors at 141.

610 donors supported athletic teams and programs for a total of \$263,605, with Football leading the charge at \$41,855 from 105 donors, and Women’s Basketball raising \$38,125 from 48 donors. An additional \$8,669 was donated in support of athletic scholarships.

“This type of support is one of the reasons I came to Fairmont almost 4 years ago,” said Greg Bamberger, Director of Athletics at Fairmont State. “Our donors care, our community cares, our alums care about how our athletic teams represent this institution. They want Fairmont State to be the best, and these resources

allow our coaches and student-athletes to have a little extra for that scholarship, or that piece of equipment that will help us get over the hump. I can’t thank everyone enough for their unwavering support.”

More than 50 challenges and matches were sponsored by generous individual and corporate donors this year.

- William Laughlin and Lois Muto Laughlin provided \$12,500 in matching gifts for each of the five Colleges.
- In support of the Falcon Fund, University President Mike Davis sponsored a challenge offering \$1 for each of the 1,199 donors that made a gift to any participating area.
- During the Athletics Power Hour, Jennifer and Scott Kinty matched gifts to any athletic team up to \$2,500 between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Day of Giving.
- EMCOR Services Scalise Industries sponsored a Beyond the Classroom challenge, matching \$1,000 in gifts to student initiatives, including The Nest Student Food Pantry, club sports, the Student Veterans Organization, and the Father Jude Molnar Fund. The company also sponsored the Heating Up the Competition challenge, awarding \$1,000 to the college with the greatest number of individual donors. The College of Liberal Arts earned this gift.
- Aladdin Campus Dining and the Fairmont State bookstore generously provided prizes and raffle items used to encourage faculty and staff giving, and student participation during the Day of Giving festivities.

During Day of Giving festivities, snack stations with donuts and popcorn were sponsored by colleges and organizations across campus to encourage student, faculty, and staff participation. Campus community members were also encouraged to stop by the Falcon Center to make a gift, try their luck at the punch-a-bunch board for prizes, sign a thank you note, and watch live interviews with Day of Giving ambassadors from various departments and programs.

The dunk tank challenge was held again this year, allowing willing participants to risk a plunge in exchange for dollars toward their preferred department or program. Courageous volunteers included Dr. Steve Roof on behalf of the College of Science & Technology, JR Lowery on behalf of Club Sports, Spencer Flanagan on behalf of the Staff Council Scholarship, Bri DiBacco on behalf of the LEAD Center, Dr. Paul Reneau on behalf of Health & Human Performance, Justin Radar on behalf of the Father Jude Molnar Student Emergency Fund, Dr. Alyssa Schwartz on behalf of the Marching Band, Jason Frazer on behalf of the College of Business and Aviation, and President Mike Davis.

For the first time, the University hosted a livestream during Day of Giving, featuring students, donors, alumni, and representatives from departments across campus. Later in the day, Mike at Night brought together the past and the present, as current students, alumni, and administration joined President Mike Davis in the Falcon Center for an evening of festivities. Attendees enjoyed a variety of foods including an ice cream sundae bar and cotton candy. During the late hours of Day of Giving, participants enjoyed activities such as a ping-pong tournament and 3 v. 3 basketball. It was a night of celebration as donations continued to roll in support of the students and programs at Fairmont State.

“The 2024 Day of Giving was a huge success for Fairmont State University. We crushed our \$375,000 goal by more than \$155,000, setting an all-time high for Day of Giving donations,” Dr. Mike Davis, president of Fairmont State University, said. “And we didn’t just raise funds; we also raised spirits,” Davis added. “The growing optimism and excitement throughout our Day of Giving festivities was infectious and inspired people to give to our academic programs, our athletic teams, and student support initiatives. These donations will help Fairmont State continue to be a great place to learn, to work, and to call home.”

Fairmont State University and the Fairmont State Foundation wish to thank all our donors, ambassadors, and volunteers for participating in the 2024 Falcon Day of Giving.



Virginia family honors late son with scholarship for special education

A Virginia family with ties to Fairmont has established a new endowed scholarship for students studying special education in the College of Education, Health and Human Performance at Fairmont State University.

John A. Carbone and Mary Lois Carbone have donated \$30,000 to Fairmont State in honor of their late son to create the John Anthony Carbone, Jr. Memorial Endowed Scholarship.

Due to complications at birth and other issues along the way, John did not have a complete, traditional, formal education and did not fully understand the complicated world he lived in. Overcoming many obstacles and never complaining, with the loving support of his parents, sister, and extended family he made the most of his capabilities and successfully navigated his way through life with a friendly disposition and engaging smile which made him a friend to all he met.

John wanted to do whatever he could to help others achieve advanced education so that they could help other less fortunate people. Being a frugal person, John, Jr. carefully managed his limited sources of

income. Thus, a significant portion of this endowment consists of the money from his own savings account.

"I am thankful that we will be able to provide funds to teacher candidates pursuing special education," said Julie Reneau Professor of Special Education and Executive Director of Autism Individualized Mentoring & Support Services. "There is a critical shortage of special educators in our region and skilled special educators are needed to help students with disabilities reach their long-term goals. I am so amazed and appreciative that the money for much of this endowment comes from John Jr."

The John Anthony Carbone, Jr. Memorial Endowed Scholarship will provide funds to students demonstrating financial need to cover tuition, fees, books, room, and board. Students who are residents of West Virginia or children of West Virginia residents are eligible for this award with preference given to graduates from high schools in Marion, Monongalia, Harrison, and Taylor Counties. Recipients must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better and be entering their junior year of studies as a special education major.



Mark Your Calendars
Homecoming - October 5, 2024

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY
Homecoming

Dr. Ragavanantham Shanmugam - Department Chair, Engineering Technology

Dr. Ragavanantham (Raggs) Shanmugam joined Fairmont State University in August as the Department Chair and Associate Professor of Engineering Technology. He brings more than 21 years of progressive teaching in areas of advanced manufacturing and engineering research, higher education administrative experience along with three years of industry experience. Dr. Shanmugam has a proven track record in driving major transformational initiatives for often underserved student groups.



“In my previous role at Navajo Technical University, part of my responsibility was to fine-tune our curriculum to best serve the needs of a student population that was predominantly minorities,” Dr. Shanmugam explained. “Fairmont State is similar in that 70% of its student body are first-generation college students. Although these students present unique needs, I believe that some of the things I learned while refining engineering programs Navajo Technical University will translate well here and I look forward to supporting student success. I’m extremely proud to join the Fairmont State family.”

He went on to explain that the faculty in his department, many of whom have been at Fairmont State for a decade or longer, are exceptional educators. He described them as dedicated to their students and hard-working, and he’s looking forward to working with them to build on existing departmental successes.

When asked about the strengths of the program he’s been chosen to lead, Dr. Shanmugam said “I feel we have a good foundation in the Engineering Technology department, and I want to make sure that we are utilizing our opportunities and resources to the best of our abilities to ensure students are successful in the classroom and in their chosen careers after graduation.”

Looking to the future, Dr. Shanmugam wants to fully assess the undergraduate and graduate programs housed by the Engineering Technology department to refine these offerings and best meet the needs of today’s technology-focused students and employers.



University announces master's degree in Cybersecurity and Risk Management

Few professions in the 21st century are more in demand than those related to cybersecurity. As technology continues to advance, so does the sophistication of cybercrimes, making it imperative for professionals in the field to possess advanced knowledge and skills to counter these threats.

To address this need, Fairmont State University now offers a Master of Science degree in Cybersecurity and Risk Management. Beginning with the Fall 2024 semester, students will be able to pursue what has become a highly desired master's degree.

According to a 2022 report by the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are approximately 700,000 unfilled jobs in cybersecurity. Job postings in this field have increased by 94 percent over the past six years.

The cybersecurity field is expected to continue its rapid growth for at least the next decade, with the need for an 89 percent increase in the cybersecurity workforce worldwide, according to the International Information System Security Certification Consortium.

While the number of cybersecurity postgraduate programs has risen over the past several years, Fairmont State's coursework is unique.

"Fairmont State's program has been designed to cover intelligence related topics that are absent in many of the available cybersecurity programs," said Dr. Robert Cutlip, Director of Fairmont State's Cybersecurity and Data Analytics Programs.

Dr. Cutlip brings three decades of experience in the federal government as a research engineer, senior scientist, and chief data scientist to the program. He currently serves as senior scientist and member of the cyber working group at the Institute for Defense Analyses. He is also board certified as an expert in cybersecurity investigations by the McAfee Institute.

With his vast experience in the intelligence community, and more specifically in counterintelligence, Cutlip has crafted a curriculum that Fairmont State students will find indispensable upon completion of the master's program.

"Our master's program is designed to satisfy an unmet need in the marketplace," Cutlip said. "It assures access to a high-quality graduate education in cybersecurity with a focus on cyber intelligence and risk management."

"The rising tide of cybercrime necessitates professionals with a master's degree in cybersecurity," said Dr. Rebecca Giorcelli, Interim Dean and Professor of Information Systems Management at Fairmont State. "The statistics surrounding data breaches and electronic theft highlight the urgent need for specialists who have advanced knowledge to combat these threats."

Fairmont State's Master of Science degree in Cybersecurity and Risk Management was formally approved in October 2023 by the Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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FAIRMONT STATE
UNIVERSITY
College of Business & Aviation



Stephanie Anderson - Head Women's Basketball Coach

In the years since Head Women's Basketball Coach Stephanie Anderson began leading the program in 2019, the team has steadily grown into a powerhouse in the Mountain East Conference, securing the 2024 conference title in March.

Anderson believes that a diverse strategy of supporting student-athletes on and off the floor is essential to providing a high-quality college experience. She said that her favorite moments with players often happen off the floor – in the locker room and during team-building trips as a group, when asked what moment from the 2023/2024 season was most special for her.

"The players truly enjoy being together, building friendships that will last a lifetime, and I'm proud to witness their growth. The support we provide off the court is way more than anything that happens at game time," she said. "From relationship building and personal guidance, to study halls and rides to appointments, we're here to make sure our student-athletes have what they need to be successful through all aspects of their college experience."

She went on to describe how donations impact the Women's Basketball program and improve the student experience.

"We are so thankful for the support our donors provide and we want them to know that their gifts do directly benefit our players. Donations support scholarships, but these funds also allow for things like our recent locker room renovation, which would not have been possible with our program budget. We are fortunate to have a huge community of people who support Women's Basketball at Fairmont State."

Anderson also took a moment to invite basketball alumni back to campus. "The foundation of any culture is the people who came before. We welcome everyone who was involved in the history of Fairmont State women's basketball to join us for a game and share in the culture they helped us to build."



Fairmont State President shares vision to make the University ‘A Great Place’

Fairmont State University formally installed Dr. Michael K. Davis as its 27th President on Thursday, April 4. More than 750 faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members, local and state officials, delegates from other universities, and former colleagues of Dr. Davis attended. West Virginia Delegate Joey Garcia, West Virginia Senator Michael Oliverio, and Pierpont and Community Technical College President Dr. Milan Hayward provided greetings during the ceremony.

“President Davis has done so much for Fairmont State in the nine months he has been here. His passion for Fairmont State and ability to build meaningful connections with the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members he encounters have further solidified his position as Fairmont State’s leader,” said Board of Governors Chair Rusty Hutson. “We knew when we selected him, he was the right person for the job and we have not been disappointed. Time and time again Dr. Davis has gone above and beyond.”

Davis began his presidency on July 1, 2023. He hit the ground running by immediately immersing himself

in the campus and the surrounding communities. His “Open Mike” sessions—in-person and virtual—allowed Fairmont State students, employees, and community members to have meaningful discussions with him. Those conversations helped Davis plan his path forward.

“I believe Fairmont State is the best regional university in West Virginia,” Davis stated. “It’s a great place to learn, a great place to work, and a great place to call home. I want to make sure that message reaches every resident of the state.”

According to Davis, being “best” doesn’t mean “being biggest,” or “being the most exclusive.” He said it means providing the best regional university experience for students, from the day they accept their offer of admission, to graduation, and beyond. It means creating a work environment where faculty, staff, and administration feel valued and eagerly approach each day with optimism and a shared commitment. It means being true partners with the communities in North Central West Virginia, so the University’s successes can help them reach their full potential.



The gift of education changes the future

Kayla Fogle Wheeling, West Virginia

Senior, Elementary Education
Recipient of the Harry Sr. and Martha Glenn Flesher Scholarship Fund

Why Fairmont State?

"I chose Fairmont State for their outstanding education program and impressive swim team program. My time here has allowed me to discover who I am, what my values are, and what I find most important in life."

What does your scholarship mean to you?

"This scholarship has helped to lessen the burden of paying for my senior year. It will help me to focus on the education I am receiving as opposed to worrying about the financial side of college."



Wesley Benson Shinnston, West Virginia

Sophomore, Communication Arts
Recipient of the Stuart F. Hammel Memorial Endowed Scholarship

Why Fairmont State?

"I wanted to attend Fairmont State because it was important for me to stay close to home. Coming here, I found myself quickly having a sense of belonging. It didn't take long to know that I picked the right place."

What does your scholarship mean to you?

"The scholarships I have received will take the financial burden of college off of my shoulders and allow me to focus on my academics. I am so grateful to scholarship donors for caring about my future!"



Emilee Estep Glen Fork, West Virginia

Junior, English Education
Recipient of the Crystal-Miller-Morris Endowed Scholarship

Why Fairmont State?

"I chose Fairmont State because it felt the most like home. I come from a small town that will always be a huge part of my heart, and a large family who always push me to go further."

What does your scholarship mean to you?

"My scholarship has provided me the financial support to pursue my educational goals with the peace of mind that I don't have to worry about finances to achieve my dreams."



Fairmont State and KVC West Virginia create innovative pathway to college for youth in foster care

Governor Jim Justice announced during a press conference today, that Fairmont State University, in partnership with KVC West Virginia, has created Middle College at Fairmont State University.

“Middle College at Fairmont State University exemplifies our commitment to providing every young person with the tools they need to succeed,” Gov. Justice said. “By empowering youth in foster care to pursue higher education, we are investing in their future and the future of our state. This initiative embodies the spirit of collaboration and compassion that defines West Virginia. I commend Fairmont State University and KVC West Virginia for their vision and dedication to making Middle College a reality.”

Middle College at Fairmont State University empowers youth ages 16-18 who have experienced foster care and is the only program of its kind in the nation. Participating students will earn their high school diploma and an associate degree simultaneously while supported by Fairmont State and KVC professionals.

Developed through a collaborative partnership between Fairmont State University and KVC West Virginia, Middle College transforms West Virginia’s educational landscape and breaks down barriers to higher education. This program provides a college experience for high-school age students, and participants experience the same advanced academic programming, amenities, and vibrant campus life that the college-age population enjoys.

The concept of high school students enrolling in college classes has been around since the late 1960s. Middle College is unique because it focuses on this most deserving population - youth ages 16-18 who have experienced foster care.

“We believe that every young person, especially youth who have experienced foster care, deserves the chance to reach their full potential,” said KVC West Virginia President Brent Lemon. “Middle College at Fairmont State University offers the opportunity for youth to achieve their educational dreams while receiving unwavering stability and support. KVC’s team of residence hall staff, case managers, therapists, and specialized supervisory staff ensure the safety, stability, and well-being of participating students.”

All tuition, fees, and campus living expenses are fully covered by federal and state sources. Additionally, KVC’s community-based support services and round-the-clock on-campus assistance are provided at no cost to participating students, creating a nurturing environment where students can excel.

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Donors help aspiring teachers get one step closer to their own classrooms

In the spring of 2023, the College of Education, Health and Human Performance, in conjunction with the Fairmont State Foundation, launched an initiative to support students majoring in education. The purpose of this new fundraising opportunity was to directly support future teachers in Fairmont State's education program by covering the cost of Praxis testing.

Praxis tests are a set of certification examinations that education students are required to pass before entering their own classrooms. The types of exams required varies depending on the student's classroom specialty and the grade level they wish to teach.

The tests must be taken by the second semester of an education student's Junior year, before they embark on their student-teaching experience.

The associated fees are not covered by student loans or scholarships, and can total as much as \$600 – an enormous price for aspiring teachers to bear as they look toward graduation and plan for their careers.

Mr. and Mrs. Gary K. Bennett were quick to volunteer their support for this important fundraising initiative, stating "Because of the current shortage of qualified teachers, we feel it is our responsibility to do everything we can to alleviate this situation. It is our pleasure to financially support these future educators."

Fairmont State alumna, Carolyn Kirby Jordan, also chose to support the Praxis initiative while also honoring the life and legacy of her mother. As a second-generation teacher, Carolyn understands the importance of this need and the impact it will have on current students. "I want to thank Fairmont State Foundation for the opportunity to honor my Mom, Joan Layman Kirby, in such a meaningful way. She was an educator in Marion County for over 30 years. She and her friends were great role models to me, and I strive to be the same for others. I know she would be pleased to know this program is helping future educators achieve their dreams."

College of Education, Health and Human Performance Dean, Amanda Metcalf, acknowledged the importance of this initiative. "Students face many challenges on their path to becoming educators. We are incredibly grateful to our Falcon community for their support in helping alleviate the financial burden for these students in a creative way."

In March of 2024, the College of Education, Health and Human Performance was able to award nine students with vouchers to cover the cost of their Praxis exams thanks to the generosity of the Bennetts, Carolyn Kirby Jordan, and donors like them. These vouchers alleviated a substantial financial obligation, allowing students to focus on exam preparation and coursework.



Professors establish fund for faculty and staff development

A couple who have enjoyed successful careers in higher education pledged \$30,000 in support of faculty and staff development at Fairmont State University. The Drs. Errol L. and Patricia Reese Mini Grant Fund will provide support for the Falcon Mini-Grant Program at Fairmont State, providing an opportunity to apply for faculty and staff to apply for financial resources supporting special initiatives and projects.

"Faculty development is an integral part of the student educational experience at Fairmont State University by providing opportunities to expand the skills, knowledge, and programmatic capacity of our faculty members," said Dr. Anne Bolyard, Fairmont State Foundation President. "We are grateful for the Reese family and their dedication to the advancement of higher education and to Fairmont State University."



Dr. Errol Reese started his pursuit of higher education at Fairmont State and after completing his undergraduate degree in two years, he went on to earn a degree in dentistry. Errol's mother attended the Fairmont State Normal School, and his father was very supportive of Fairmont State. Both he and Dr. Patricia Reese had lifetime careers as dental professors and university administrators. Both Errol and Patricia have always believed in the great importance of higher education. They both have children and grandchildren with doctoral degrees. Both have spent a great deal of time in higher education in their own careers. Patricia serves on the Council of Regents at Loyola University and has been for 21 years. Her daughter is about to join her on the council, something she is very excited about experiencing together.

Errol and Patricia have established a similar fund at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and they are excited to provide this opportunity for faculty and staff at Fairmont State through the Falcon Mini-Grant Program. Errol has a history of leading and supporting faculty development throughout his career. During his time as the Dean of the College of Dentistry at UMB, he realized faculty would benefit from learning about preparing grant proposals, coordinating projects, and reporting on the outcomes – skills that are essential for faculty.

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs at Fairmont State University administers the Falcon Mini-Grant Program offering competitive grant awards to faculty and staff each academic year for the purpose of supporting institutional needs and providing opportunities to advance the mission of Fairmont State University.

"The generosity of the Reese family will provide long-term support for the Falcon Mini-Grant program," said Christy Burner, Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs at Fairmont State. "This program helps our faculty and staff develop skills and gain confidence in grant writing, which increases our capacity as a campus to secure more external funding for special projects and initiatives."



Luke Barker - Head Football Coach

In early February, Luke Barker joined Fairmont State Athletics as the 19th Head Football Coach for the Fighting Falcons. When asked why he chose Fairmont State for his new role as Head Coach, Barker explained that he's excited about the sense of community that Fairmont exhibits.

"It comes down to involvement. I want to be at a place where the University matters," he said. "I want to be in a place where the community is involved and where athletics is important. That's what Fairmont State offers."

Coach Barker believes that coaching student-athletes goes beyond the field and the academic experience, and he strives to provide lessons in leadership, life, and service.

"If you want something from the community where you play, attendance at games, for example, you have to be prepared to give back to the community that supports your mission," Barker said. "This means our players must be involved and visible in the community. This means that students not only serve the needs of the community, but they begin to build important connections right here in Marion County that will help them develop an affinity for the University and the region, and prepare them for life after school."

Barker is also focused on team building as he settles into his new role, bringing players together for activities that aren't related to football. He wants them to further develop their connections with each other socially, which he expects will translate to stronger connections and team success on the field. Barker credited donors for making these activities possible.

"Every dollar the program receives from a donor directly impacts our student-athletes by improving their experience here at Fairmont State. Whether the funds help us to host a board game night with pizza and socialization, or they provide 20 replacements for expired helmets before the season opens in August, your dollars matter to our players," Barker explained. "Donations mean that we can provide a better college experience for each of our 102 football players, on and off the field."



Alumnus establishes scholarship for working students

A Fairmont State alumnus and Fairmont native has created a scholarship at Fairmont State University designed specifically to help students who work while they pursue a degree.

The Brent Lambiotte Endowed Scholarship will be available to undergraduate and graduate students who are employed and work 10 or more hours per week while attending classes, with preference given to those with higher work hour obligations.

“Brent Lambiotte’s generous gift to Fairmont State students will provide crucial financial assistance to those balancing work and studies,” said Dr. Mike Davis, Fairmont State University President. “With financial strain being a major concern for students, this scholarship, coupled with affordable tuition, can significantly impact their ability to focus on their education. More than half of the students attending college in the United States rely on gifts such as this, so we are especially grateful to Brent.”

When asked why he chose to support working students at Fairmont State, Lambiotte explained that he hadn’t really considered establishing a scholarship until he had an opportunity to visit campus in 2023 and spend some time speaking with students.

“The campus visit was somewhat emotional for me and brought back a lot of memories,” said Lambiotte. “While the tuition cost back in my day was really cheap, it was still a struggle to attend college. Most of my memories related to the jobs I had done to stay in school. I worked in three different gas stations starting the summer between my junior and senior years of high school and continuing through my college years. At that time, working in a gas station was not like working in a convenience store/gas station today. You actually pumped gas for the customers, washed cars and did mechanic work.”

“During my visit, I thought about how I would have appreciated some financial support when I was in college,” Lambiotte continued. “I was really impressed with the quality of the students I met during my visit. I realized that some students are struggling with finances while attending school and hope I can help some who are in that situation.”

“Having the opportunity to reconnect alumni like Brent with current students is immensely rewarding,” according to Timothy Liebrecht, Director of Development and Corporate Relations at the Fairmont State Foundation. “In his visit, Brent afforded students the opportunity to ask him questions as he shared life lessons and career insights with them. This type of engagement impacts students’ futures by giving them access to unique perspectives and practical advice. We are incredibly grateful for his time on campus and his decision to make this financial investment in Fairmont State students. Brent is a perfect example of how one individual can make a truly life-changing impact.”

Lambiotte earned his Education degree with an Industrial Arts focus from Fairmont State. After teaching in a high school setting, he went on to build a career in automotive supply chain and logistics, working for several automotive companies, including Mercedes-Benz and Honda. During his career pursuits, Lambiotte achieved an MBA from The Ohio State University, received three professional certifications, and was admitted to practice before the Interstate Commerce Commission.

After leaving his automotive career, Lambiotte shared his industry knowledge and expertise as an adjunct professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Collat School of Business, and taught certification classes to working professionals who were pursuing certification by The Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM).

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Executive Coordinator

Dr. Alyssa Schwartz - Director of Bands

Being involved in music has substantial and proven value beyond enjoyment. Musical study improves cognition, reduces stress, and increases dexterity and coordination. Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Director of Bands at Fairmont State, also believes the reason the Bands are so valuable to students is because skills gained when learning a musical instrument and playing with a group translate to other areas of life.

"Aside from the communal joy of making music – healthy practice, collective progress, enjoyment, growth, and balance all come together to create the band experience," Schwartz said. "My hope is that the time we spend together is not just doing something for fun, but also something much further reaching."

Fairmont State Bands include the Marching Band in the fall semester, and the University Wind Ensemble in the spring. Both groups are classes that count toward the music minor or a student's fine art class work, but require a great deal of time and commitment from participants. Dr. Schwartz noted that she is continually impressed by the hard-working nature of the students that participate in band throughout the year.

University Bands do have a small annual budget, but Schwartz says it doesn't quite cover the cost of maintaining existing instruments and uniforms. She says donations to the band are crucial for making sure they can meet basic needs for the program and these gifts have a direct impact on participating students.

"I have instruments dating back to the 1960s that no longer work well and are in such poor condition that trying to save them is not financially reasonable. My strategy has been to systematically replace our failing equipment a little at a time, but the cost is beyond what we can afford. Good-quality harnesses for the drumline

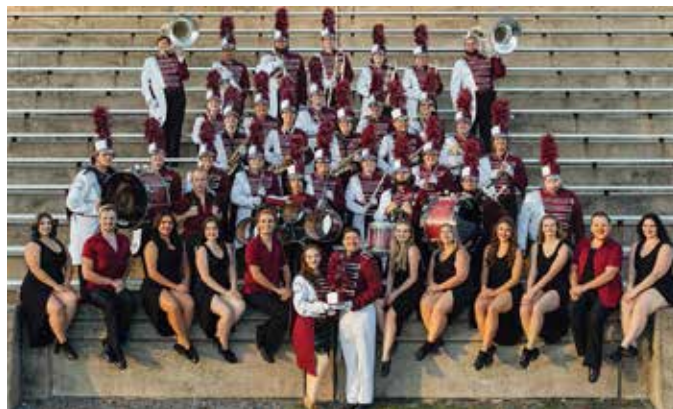
can cost \$300 each or more, while a sousaphone, an instrument in the tuba family that a musician wears during marching season, costs about \$10,000 to replace," Dr. Schwartz explained.

Despite financial challenges, she continues to improve the footprint of her programs. In collaboration with community members and talented artists from across the region, she launched the audition-based Community Symphonic Band last year and considers the inaugural year hugely successful.

The community ensemble included local professional musicians, band directors, retired band directors, Fairmont State faculty, and advanced high school and college musicians. The ensemble provided approximately 40 musicians in the Fairmont area an opportunity for high-level music making, and their performance served as a fabulous enrichment to campus life at Fairmont State. The next performance of this group will take place on Oct. 12.

Additionally, a new minor in Musical Arts at Fairmont State has launched, and the program has been well received by students across campus. The minor provides opportunities for students to participate in music ensembles, learn music theory, history, and the business of music.

"I'm often thinking about how we keep the arts alive at Fairmont State," Dr. Schwartz said. "The Community Symphonic Band and the new music minor are both manifestations of this goal. So many students express how valuable the band experience is for them, and I want to provide them the best possible opportunities. The arts are truly alive here, and we want to make sure to keep it that way for our students, alumni, and the donors who generously support our programs."



West Virginia family endows scholarship for students in healthcare and accounting majors

A second-generation Fairmont State alumnus and his wife have created a new scholarship supporting first-generation students studying for careers in health sciences, nursing, or accounting at Fairmont State University. John and Kat Guido have established The Dr. & Mrs. Joseph P. Guido Memorial Scholarship in honor of his parents – Joseph and Therese.

“John and Kat Guido have made an enduring commitment through their gift to first-generation students,” said Dr. Anne Bolyard, Fairmont State Foundation President. “The scholarship honors John’s parents and their legacy of unfailing support to their community. This scholarship will empower Fairmont State University students to realize their aspirations to help others by entering these professions.”

Joseph Guido attended Fairmont State for two years before enlisting in the armed forces to fight for his country during World War II. Upon his return, Joseph completed his undergraduate degree at Fairmont State and went on to earn a doctorate in dentistry from the University of Maryland. He returned to Fairmont with his wife Therese, of Baltimore, Maryland, and he served the Fairmont community as a dentist from 1951 until the mid-1980s.

Joseph and Therese raised five children, each attending classes at Fairmont State. John graduated magna cum laude in 1982 with an accounting-focused business degree and a love for economics. John’s brothers chose advanced education in medicine and pharmacy at West Virginia University after their time at Fairmont State, and his sister earned degrees in nursing and psychology at Fairmont State before pursuing a degree in education from Virginia Tech.

John credits his father with instilling his ambition and drive, while his mother demonstrated the importance of patience. He has carried these qualities with him through his educational pursuits and into his successful career as a Certified Public Accountant. John’s wife Kat is a skilled homemaker and community volunteer, and he credits her role as a caregiver for his continued professional success and the successes of their daughter Josilyn.

When asked why they chose to support first-generation students pursuing healthcare and accounting degrees, John said “I am inspired by ambition, and I believe those who pursue challenging careers in these fields should be supported. Kat and I hope that the students who receive this scholarship are highly ambitious and can achieve the success that my siblings and I have achieved because of our time at Fairmont State.”

“We are grateful for John and Kat Guido’s generous gift. As a first-generation student myself, I know from experience that being the first in your family to go to college presents obstacles. The Dr. & Mrs. Joseph P. Guido Memorial Scholarship will help more first-generation students overcome those obstacles and succeed,” said Dr. Mike Davis, president of Fairmont State University. “On top of financial obstacles first-generation students face, accounting and healthcare are challenging majors. This generous scholarship will allow students in these fields to focus on academic success on their way to becoming exceptional accounting and healthcare professionals.”

John Guido serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Fairmont State Foundation. Josilyn, a third-generation Falcon and the daughter of John and Kat, is currently enrolled at Fairmont State and will graduate this year with a degree in studio art and a minor in digital technology and design.

The Dr. and Mrs. Joseph P. Guido Memorial Scholarship will be available to first-generation college students in their sophomore, junior, or senior years who study for degrees in the areas of health sciences, nursing, or accounting. Preference will be given to students expressing interest in becoming a physician, pharmacist, nurse, or certified public accountant in public practice. Recipients must maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or better.



Video series from Dr. Mike Davis highlights a new era of enthusiasm and optimism at Fairmont State

In January of this year, Fairmont State President Mike Davis launched his new monthly video series. In each installment, Dr. Davis discusses the happenings on campus and important events on the calendar for the weeks ahead.

These short monthly videos include:

- Procedural matters, including the Board of Governors' recent approval for the University to take the next steps in planning its new online criminal justice degree, and the status of a new strategic plan currently under way
- Innovative new programs like Middle College
- Event recaps like the hugely successful 2024 Day of Giving, and the festivities surrounding Dr. Davis' inauguration on April 4
- New hires, including Head Football Coach Luke Barker
- Successes across campus, from the Concrete Canoe team's competition performance to the Women's Basketball conference win
- Dr. Davis' vision for Fairmont State as a great place to learn, work, and call home

If you'd like to stay in the loop on what's going on at Fairmont State, visit

<https://www.fairmontstate.edu/about/president/communication>,

select **Video Messages** in the provided dropdown, and enjoy Dr. Davis' latest rundown.





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