

MINUTES
Marshall University Board of Governors
Microsoft Teams Meeting at
Brad D. Smith Center for Business and Innovation
Livestream and In-Person
August 5, 2025

Present: Kathy D’Antoni, Kathy Eddy, Angel Moore, Samuel Moore, Carleen O’Neill, Robin Riner, Geoff Sheils, Bill Smith, Connor Waller, Rusty Webb

PH: Kipp Bodnar, Ginny T. Lee, Donnie Holcomb

Absent: Shawn Ball, Chad Pennington, Jim Smith

I. Call to Order

After confirming the presence of a quorum, Chairman Sheils called the meeting to order. He then introduced the next agenda item: the swearing-in of new Marshall University Board of Governors Staff representative Carleen O’Neill and Student Representative Connor Waller, administered by Marshall University Chief Legal Officer & Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Corporate Relations, H. Toney Stroud.

II. Minutes Approval

Upon a motion by Kathy D’Antoni, seconded by Rusty Webb, the minutes of the regular meeting held on June 11, 2025, and the special meeting held on July 28, 2025, were approved.

III. Committee of the Whole

**A) Approval of Board of Governors Rule No. GA-10 - Policy on Non-Voting,
Advisory Members**

The following resolution was read:

*Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors approve Rule No. GA-10 -
Policy on Non-Voting, Advisory Members*

** Rule GA-10 is being introduced in order to govern the roles and responsibilities of non-voting, advisory members who sit on the Marshall University Board of Governors.*

As of 2025, pursuant to West Virginia Code §18B-2A-1(c)(3), the faculty representative, student body representative and staff representative shall be non-voting, advisory members.

The enactment of that provision creates the need and opportunity for Marshall University to address what it means to be a "non-voting, advisory member" of its Board of Governors, which we now do through this policy.

Upon approval of this resolution, a comment period will open and remain open until 10:00 am on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. If substantive comments are received, a final rule will be presented to the Board for approval at a subsequent meeting. The rule changes for any individual rule are approved as final at the conclusion of the comment period if no substantive comments are received for that rule.

Upon a motion by Samuel Moore, seconded by Bill Smith, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. Committee Meeting Reports

Academic and Student Affairs

There were no action items brought forward from the Committee.

Provost Report

Interim Provost Robert Bookwalter gave the Provost's Update. Provost Bookwalter stated in his report that there are four main areas he wished to address: leadership transitions in Academic Affairs, sustainable enrollment growth, a report from the School of Pharmacy, and a number of academic highlights from across the university.

He began by noting that Marshall University is undergoing a considerable period of leadership transition. He himself is part of that change, having assumed the role of Interim Provost 34 days ago after 38 years at Marshall University. He joined the institution as a faculty member in Communication Studies and has served as dean in both the College of Education and the College of Liberal Arts. He is serving as Interim Provost while the search for a permanent Provost is underway. A search committee and a search firm are collecting applications, with reviews expected to begin at the end of August. Preliminary interviews will be conducted in September and October, with finalists brought to campus. The goal is to reach an agreement with a new hire by the middle of the fall semester for that person to begin in January.

Since he vacated his position as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, Dr. Kelly Prejean, Associate Dean and 20-year English faculty member, is serving as Interim Dean. The Lewis College of Business has hired Dr. Rohan Christie David, a graduate of Wake Forest University and the University of South Carolina, who has served as Dean at the University of Louisville, the University of Colorado Denver, and most recently Texas A&M University at San Antonio. In the College of Education and Professional Development, Dr. Kelly Bradley from the University of Kentucky will become the new dean. She is currently completing project work under contract and will officially begin her role on September 8.

Additional leadership appointments include Dr. Allison Carey, a longtime English faculty member, former Chair of the Department of English, and Chair of the Council of Chairs, who has been appointed Associate Provost for Assessment and Strategic Initiatives. Her colleague, Dr. Susan Tusing, will serve as Chief University Accreditation Officer, with both positions together replacing the work of former Vice President for Assessment, Dr. Mary Beth Reynolds. Dr. Anne Marie Casey has joined as the founding Director of the School of Library Science. Dr. Del Chrol, Chair of the Department of Humanities, is now Chair of the Council of Chairs. Dr. Bookwalter emphasized that with so many transitions, one of his priorities during his time as Interim Provost will be fostering team building among academic leadership.

He reported that Marshall has seen enrollment growth of more than 4% for the third consecutive year. Vice President for Enrollment Jerry Ross shared that this success was the result of a large-scale outreach effort that included six million emails, 350,000 text messages, and 225,000 mailed communications. Plans are in place to sustain this enrollment growth through 2026.

Dean Eric Blough of the School of Pharmacy gave a report highlighting the school's focus on best value, best test scores, and best student experience. The introduction of the BS in Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Pharm.D. program is contributing to enrollment increases and strengthening the program overall.

Vice President for Student Affairs, Marcy Simms, reported that more than 1,500 students will participate in Week of Welcome (WOW). Dr. Bookwalter described WOW as "the second-best day of the year" after commencement, because it marks the start of students' journeys toward earning their degrees and eventually walking across the stage to shake the President's hand.

Dr. Bookwalter then shared numerous academic highlights. Marshall Online earned the 2025 Anthology Catalyst Award in the Leading Change category for deploying Blackboard Ultra, creating a humanistic online teaching framework, designing a concierge-style student experience, and developing targeted micro-credentials to support lifelong learning. The College of Arts and Media hosted the 10th anniversary celebration of Trey Kay's Us & Them podcast, with participation from Marshall University's Dead Podcasters Society. Faculty member Dan Hollis served on the faculty of the West Virginia Governor's Honors Academy in July.

In the College of Engineering and Computer Sciences, Dr. Isaac Wait received a \$457,000 grant from the West Virginia Department of Highways for statistical analysis of culvert maintenance. BSEE Students Ben Taylor, Matthew Allen, and Preston Sellards, along with graduate student James Gao, co-authored the article "Enhancing Drone Navigation and Control," published in Applied Sciences.

The College of Education and Professional Development's June Harless Center for Rural Educational Research inducted four individuals into its Hall of Fame: West Virginia State Superintendent of Schools Michele Blatt; West Virginia native Emily Calandrelli, known as "The Space Gal," an MIT engineer, TV personality, author, and science education advocate; outgoing Dean Dr. Teresa Eagle; and business executive, author, and philanthropist Sheryl Sandberg, whose foundation has donated \$5 million to the Marshall For All, Marshall Forever campaign. The college also hosted the Country School Association of America Conference on campus this summer and dedicated a bench in honor of Freedom Rider and civil rights activist Joan C. Browning, who was recently awarded an honorary degree by Marshall.

In the College of Health Professions, biomechanics graduate student Yasmine Jutt is interning with the Los Angeles Dodgers, helping to develop their state-of-the-art performance lab. The School of Nursing hosted a HERD Nursing Day Camp in June for middle and high school students.

The College of Liberal Arts celebrated three alumni who earned prestigious teaching awards this past spring. Marissa Dillon, a 2011 graduate with a bachelor's degree in English, received the Stephen L. Fisher Award for Excellence in Teaching for K-12. Dr. Kayla Johnson, who earned degrees in English, French, and Secondary Education from Marshall before completing her Ph.D., is now a faculty member in the University of Kentucky's College of Education and won the Great Teacher Award from the University of Kentucky. Dr. Sarah Kerckmar, who earned both her B.A. and M.A. in Communication Studies from Marshall in 2000 and 2002, is Chair of the Health and Clinical Sciences Department at the University of Kentucky and received the Thompson Prize from the Association of University Programs in Health Administration.

In the College of Science, Dr. Robin O'Keefe, Academic Lab Manager Robbie Clark, and colleagues identified a new genus of plesiosaur from fossils discovered in Canada. Graduate student Zak Bartholomew in Biological Sciences was awarded a \$15,000 NASA WV Space Grant Consortium Graduate Research Fellowship. The Marshall Aviation Program is now certified to offer first responder unmanned aircraft system training in West Virginia and beyond, and it is participating in a NASA grant project examining potential impacts of UAS.

In the Lewis College of Business, the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education awarded continuing accreditation for seven years to Marshall's Health Informatics program. The college's Student Center for the Public Trust achieved Ambassador tier ranking for the seventh consecutive year.

In the School of Pharmacy, Drs. Mary Catherine Platz and Brittany Riley received a \$7,500 grant to initiate pharmacist services at the Tri-State LifeCare Medical Adult Day Center. P4 student Carley Carter was selected for the United States Public Health Service Excellence in Public Health Pharmacy Award, recognizing significant contributions to public health.

Provost Bookwalter concluded his report by stating that he is proud of the work being done across all academic units and honored to serve as Interim Provost until a permanent appointment is made.

Student Representative Report

Connor Waller, Student Body President, gave the Student Representative update. In his report, Connor, who began his tenure as Student Body President at the end of April, introduced himself to those who had not yet worked with him. He expressed appreciation to the Board for their hospitality and warm welcome, noting that he had spent the previous day with them and found the experience positive and encouraging.

Connor stated that his remarks would be brief and that, while technically an elected official, he prefers to be "a person of few words." He explained that he would not be outlining specific initiatives during this meeting, but rather providing an overview of the direction Student Government is taking in the upcoming academic year.

He emphasized the guiding principle of “Marshall for All” and noted that he has challenged the Student Government team to focus on three student-centered pillars: student experience, student wellness, and student success. He explained that while there are defined criteria for initiatives under each pillar, it is equally important to approach all efforts with transparency, collaboration, and compassion.

On transparency, Connor noted that feedback over recent years indicated a need for improvement in Student Government communication. To address this, he plans to launch the inaugural issue of a Student Report from his office to the entire student body within the next one to two months. This report will detail current initiatives, recently passed measures, and other Student Government activities.

On collaboration, Connor stated that Student Government is building strong connections across campus, including with Student Affairs, the Wellness Center, the Office of Community Service, Admissions and Recruitment, and others, with the list continuing to grow. He also acknowledged the President’s continued collaboration with SGA, expressing gratitude for the support.

Connor reported that a structural reorganization was implemented to strengthen student advocacy, including the creation of two new positions: Secretary of Student Advocacy and Secretary of Student Success. The Secretary of Student Advocacy will address student concerns directly, while the Secretary of Student Success will engage with campus departments to address those concerns and find solutions.

Finally, Connor noted that the SGA budget for the fiscal year reflects only a slight reduction from the previous year. Student organizations will continue to be fully funded at \$20,000, the same level as last year. He concluded by thanking the Board for their time and expressing his optimism for a productive year ahead.

School of Medicine Report

Dr. David Gozal, Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs presented the School of Medicine report. During his report, Dr. Gozal stated that the School of Medicine has been quite busy. He began by noting that the Class of 2029, consisting of 82 students selected from a pool of 3,026 applicants, recently joined the school following a very selective admissions process. These students participated in a White Coat Ceremony in which the white coat and stethoscope were gifted by faculty and other donors. A total of 100 donors contributed, giving students the privilege of wearing the white coat for the first time.

Within the Physician Assistant program, after significant work by the PA program faculty and their director, Ben Spurlock, along with members of the Provost’s Office and the School of Medicine, the program successfully achieved full accreditation for the next decade. Dr. Gozal stated that this accomplishment puts the program on a trajectory for continued success and that he hopes to report on its progress and unique achievements in the coming years.

At the same time, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) approved the School of Medicine’s request to expand its class size from 83 students to 99 students. Beginning in 2026, this expansion will allow the school to accept more students and provide a variety of new programs, including collaborations with the School of Business and the College of Liberal Arts through innovative initiatives.

Dr. Gozal then highlighted a unique student achievement. Hannah Turner, a first-generation college student, has become the inaugural participant in the BS-to-PhD program, which begins in the

College of Science and proceeds directly into PhD studies in the School of Medicine. He stated that her achievement embodies the Marshall for All, Marshall Forever creed and he hopes she will be the first of many students to take this path.

Several notable student and faculty accolades were also shared. Three students received exceptionally competitive national awards. Medical student Katherine Germann was awarded a Fulbright U.S. Student Program Award to conduct research enhancing surveillance of respiratory infections in Peru using artificial intelligence technologies. Sidney Strause, a doctoral student in the biomedical research PhD program, received the highly competitive Porter Physiology Development Fellowship from the American Physiological Society (APS) for the 2025–2026 academic year. Two graduate students in the biomedical research PhD program were awarded prestigious NASA Graduate Research Fellowships.

Dr. Gozal also reported that the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Faculty Affairs (GFA) named Darshana T. Shah, PhD, professor of pathology and senior associate dean for faculty advancement at the School of Medicine, as the recipient of the 2025 Carole J. Bland Phronesis Award. This award recognizes faculty affairs leaders who embody the spirit of phronesis—acting for the welfare of others without self-interest and championing the growth and success of others.

He stated that he strongly believes in building a pipeline to attract more students to the medical school and to train them in the health professions. As part of this effort, two dozen high school students from across the region participated in the Health Care Pathways Initiative (HCPI) at Marshall University, an immersive program introducing students to college life and careers in health care. In June and July, the university also hosted Project PREMED (Providing Real-World Experiences for Marshall-Educated Doctors), a program for undergraduate students interested in pursuing careers in medicine. Participants learned about the admissions process, the medical school curriculum, and life as a medical student. This year's Project PREMED cohort included 16 students from West Virginia and seven other states.

Dr. Gozal reported on several leadership transitions. Dr. Susan Flesher, professor of pediatrics and an alumna of Marshall's medical school and residency program, has been appointed senior associate dean for admissions. Dr. Christine Gilkerson will take on an additional role through the Marshall Health Network. The School of Medicine has also welcomed 43 new faculty members to its clinical and research faculty between June and October 2025.

He noted significant faculty accomplishments, including the work of Brandon J. Henderson, PhD, associate professor of biomedical sciences, who mentored a large group of medical students in research that was published in a highly competitive journal. He also welcomed Dr. Trupti Joshi, senior associate dean and professor at the School of Medicine, whose informatics and population analytics team is transforming how Marshall advances health care, research, and education. This work includes targeted health interventions for rural Appalachian communities, fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration, and equipping students and faculty with in-demand skills in data science and AI.

Dr. Gozal reported that Marshall University hosted the 23rd Annual West Virginia IDeA Network for Biomedical Research (WV-INBRE) Summer Research Symposium in downtown Huntington, where dozens of undergraduate students showcased their summer research projects. He thanked President Brad Smith for attending and opening the event.

He also highlighted that Marshall Health hosted its second annual Hope Blooms fundraiser in support of Project Hope for Women & Children. The sold-out event saw an increase in attendance and funds raised, which will help provide care to pregnant women with substance use disorders through Project Hope. Dr. Gozal concluded his report by thanking the Board.

Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee

The following are action items from the Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee:

A) Approval of Revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. FA-3 – Purchasing Policy

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors approve the revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. FA-3 - Purchasing Policy.

** This Rule establishes the rules and policies governing and controlling purchase, acquisition and inventory management of materials, supplies, equipment, services, construction and printing by the Governing Board of Marshall University, created pursuant to West Virginia Code §18B-2A-1 and hereinafter referred to as the "Governing Board." This Rule is being revised to allow for updates related to emergency purchases and bids tasks.*

Upon approval of this resolution, this Rule will be posted at <https://www.marshall.edu/policies/> and a comment period will open and remain open until 10:00 am on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. If substantive comments are received, a final policy will be presented to the Board for approval at a subsequent meeting. If no substantive comments are received, the policy will be considered approved in its current form with an effective date of the end of the comment period.

Upon a motion by Kathy Eddy, seconded by Samuel Moore without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Approval of Revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. FA-5 - Capital Project Management

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors approve the revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. FA-5 - Capital Project Management.

** The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, delegate appropriate authority and assign responsibility for the governance, prioritization, financing, planning and management of capital projects at Marshall University. This Rule is being revised to allow for updates related to emergency purchases and bids tasks.*

Upon approval of this resolution, this Rule will be posted at <https://www.marshall.edu/policies/> and a comment period will open and remain open until 10:00 am on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. If substantive comments are received, a final policy will be presented to the Board for approval at a subsequent meeting. If no substantive comments are received, the policy will be considered approved in its current form with an effective date of the end of the comment period.

Upon a motion by Samuel Moore, seconded by Angel Moore, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

C) Authorization of Reallocation of Funds from the State Institutions of Higher Education Deferred Maintenance Grant Program

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors authorize reallocation of funds from the State Institutions of Higher Education Deferred Maintenance Grant program for projects, as described below

** In June 2023, the Board of Governors approved the submission of thirty-one (31) deferred maintenance projects under the State Institutions of Higher Education Deferred Maintenance Grant program. Some of Marshall's projects came in under budget; therefore, staff now seeks authorization to reallocate funding for projects, as follows:*

- Reallocate \$78,000 from Morrow Library ADA Upgrades (WVHEPC-M009) to Fine Arts Renovations (WVHEPC-M0J0) for carpeting the balcony curb, installation of electric VAV units, materials, and supplies for additional header to support a heating coil.*
- Reallocate \$60,000 from Morrow Library ADA Upgrades (WVHEPC-M009) to Holderby Hall Demolition (WVHEPC-M014) to address relocation of electrical line, installation of lighting to replace lights lost due to building demolition, and temporary fire hydrant service.*
- Reallocate \$116,738 from Student/Band Bleacher Replacement (WVHEPC-M026) to Concrete Work (WVHEPC-M013) for concrete repairs to the Henderson Center due to water infiltration and damage to the building structure.*

Authorizing this request will allow Marshall to use and transfer funding from those deferred maintenance projects that came in under budget and reduce other project budgets to address critical needs in other deferred maintenance initiatives

Upon a motion by Kathy D'Antoni, seconded by Bill Smith, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Information Items

Of note, in the package, there are updates for:

*Finance Update
Facilities and Operations Update
Internal Audit Update*

Athletic Committee

There were no action items brought forward from the Committee.

Information Items

Of note, in the board package, there are updates for:

Athletic Team Update
NCAA Legislation
National Issues Updates
Budget Update

V. President's Report

**The President's report is attached as an addendum to the Board of Governors minutes.*

VI. Executive Session under the authority of WV Code § 6-9A-4

Upon a motion by Samuel Moore, seconded by Kathy D'Antoni, the board entered Executive Session under the authority of WV Code §6-9A-4 to discuss Matters involving Commercial Competition.

After a brief session, the Board entered open session. No votes were taken during the Executive Session.

VII. Chairman Sheils Report

Chairman Geoff Sheils began his report by reporting that it has been an exciting time on campus over the past couple of months, with a great deal of activity taking place. He remarked on the recent update regarding the removal of Holderby Hall, which he finds particularly exciting as he passes it daily on his commute to work.

He stated that Connor led 11 orientation sessions over the summer, noting that the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% favorable reviews. He thanked Connor, his team, and all university staff involved in making the sessions a success, acknowledging the significant amount of work required.

Chairman Sheils stated that he appreciated the Board's dedication, time, and energy over the past few days, emphasizing that their investment in Marshall University is deeply valued.

He further stated his thanks to Andrea and the President's Office team for their behind-the-scenes efforts in planning the retreat, organizing the Board meeting, and coordinating meeting logistics, including the room setup and catering. He remarked that such events do not simply "just happen" and require careful planning and execution.

Chairman Sheils concluded his report by stating that the next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 8. He also noted that on Tuesday, October 7, there will be a Shared Governance Conference to which all Board members are invited. He then invited Robin to provide additional details on the event. Robin stated that they're planning to hold the town hall meeting around lunchtime and would like board members on the panel to answer questions from students, faculty, and staff. While lunchtime would be ideal, she noted that panels will run throughout the day. She explained that the sessions will feature experts discussing various aspects of shared governance, including one on how AI can improve shared governance processes. She added that the event is open to the entire campus community and will also include participants from neighboring institutions, with the goal of showcasing

Marshall's work both internally and externally. Virtual attendance will be available to encourage participation from across the region. Following Robin's remarks, Chairman Sheils adjourned the meeting.

VIII. Announcements

IX. Adjournment

Without objection, the Board Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy D'Antoni, Secretary

President's Report – August 2025

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
- It's exciting to have our students back on campus and to see the many signs of growth that surround us.
- Let me begin by thanking you for investing your time to actively participate in this strategic offsite yesterday as we focused on advancing our 2037 aspiration of 100% job placement and zero student loan debt.
 - This year, we placed a particular emphasis on two of our centers of excellence – advanced manufacturing & aviation.
 - We developed a deeper understanding and appreciation for the 54% of West Virginians, and the roughly 40% of the nation who choose an alternative path to a four-year degree
 - We showcased the importance of skilled trades in our state and across the nation ...
 - We reviewed the current programs and capabilities we offer at Marshall University through our apprenticeships, micro-credentials and joint offerings in partnership with our high school CTE and state-wide community and technology colleges ...
 - And we discussed pathways to increase Marshall's impact by 10X to increase workforce participation, create pathways to prosperity for all families, and showcase West Virginia as a place that celebrates all contributions to a 21st Century

Economy.

- We mean it when we say “Marshall For ALL” ... everyone matters and everyone has a role to play in West Virginia’s future.
- As context for those who were not in attendance:
 - The Board of Governor’s Retreat plays a **critical role** in our annual operating rhythm.
 - The role of the Retreat is to raise the altitude of the plane, sharpen our contextual awareness, and focus our collective skills and capabilities.
 - More specifically, the goals of this meeting were to:
 - To inspire **future-back and outside-in learning**,
 - To **build awareness & capability** in each of us as leaders,
 - And to strengthen our **teamwork & commitment to Marshall For All, Marshall Forever.**
- **Yesterday was the 3rd strategic retreat** we have approached in this manner.
 1. In year 1, we:
 - Leaned into the use of **Design Thinking**, the Silicon Valley technique that has led to some of the world’s

greatest inventions.

- We also invested the time to build our awareness and understanding of **large language models and artificial general intelligence** ...
- And in year one, we heard from experts like **Sal Khan**, founder of Kahn Academy, engaged with **high school students** and gained hands-on experience as we **conducted experiments** with ChatGPT.
- Coming out of that first retreat, we **formalized a Presidential Task Force on AI** – focusing these emerging capabilities across **four key areas**:
 - Advancing innovation in teaching and learning
 - Accelerating research excellence and impact
 - Improving operational efficiency and sustainability
 - And providing access and making needed investments in leading technology and tools
- In addition, we began to think more expansively about how these capabilities could accelerate and strengthen our commitment to Marshall For All, Marshall Forever
- In particular, we experimented with ways to close the student success gap for Pell-eligible students relative to their peers through delivering **an individualized**

learning experience and support, at scale!

2. In Year 2 (last year), we advanced this objective by applying our design thinking capabilities to address the grand challenge of being an **R2 institution with community college acceptance rates** ... testing ways to provide individualized support for every student ... meeting them where they are and helping them get to where they strive to be.

- We invested time:
 - **Diving deeper into the progress being driven across the campus by the Presidential Task Force on AI**, including efforts to test the various AI products we were using and measuring the results-to-date.
 - We applied **design thinking** to advance our understanding of how to operationalize and **apply AI in our own areas of work**,
 - And we completed an assignment to advance our individual understanding of AI by completing an AI micro-credential, leaving us inspired to complete more short courses and to lead the campus by example.
 - Then, we focused our efforts on leveling the playing field of opportunity and increasing student success for Marshall for All/Pell-Eligible students.

- That work diagnosed root cause reasons for why our 1st year retention had dropped from 78% to 72% ...
 - We dove deep with students ...
 - Developed hypotheses to test ...
 - And introduced a series of policy changes and new support services, which have strengthened 1st year retention by nearly 400 bps (currently 76.7%) for Fall 25.
- Suffice it to say these retreats have proven to be hands-on and action-oriented ... translating ideas into impact and showcasing the power of being an Applied Research Institution.
- Our strategic offsite this year once again reinforced what we have acknowledged and embraced at Marshall University ...
 - Higher education is in the midst of significant reimagination and transformation across the globe,
 - At Marshall, we have chosen to seize this opportunity to reimagine and reinvent ourselves, serving as a demonstration project for the rest of the world in the process.
 - Marshall is privileged to have such a talented and engaged Board of Governors that is willing to roll-up your sleeves, learn with us and provide your wisdom

and insights along the way. Thank you!

- Shifting from capability-building to bench-building ... last week we welcomed Gerald Harrison as our next Vice President and Director of Athletics at Marshall University:
 - The role of Athletics Director at Marshall is far more than a job ... it's a calling.
 - A unique opportunity to lead the heartbeat of our university and one of the most visible expressions of our values, our culture, and our aspirations.
 - Athletics is where excellence takes the field ...
 - Where community pride is on full display ...
 - And where the next generation of leaders are shaped.
 - Those who have served in this role appreciate that they stand on the shoulders of those who came before them ... and I want to begin by thanking Christian Spears for his leadership and dedication.
 - Christian set a new bar with his vision, velocity and outcomes ...
 - From hiring talented coaches, establishing winning programs and conducting successful fundraising efforts
 - To facility enhancements and engaging fan experiences
 - Christian is leaving us much better than he found us, and I am grateful for his friendship, leadership &

impact.

- Building on this foundation, we embarked on a national search on May 21st to identify our next AD, and we set the bar high.
 - We were seeking a transformational leader ... someone who is purpose-built for this moment in time with the shifting landscape in NCAA Athletics.
 - A leader with strong business acumen, an innovative spirit, and a commitment to academic excellence and competitive integrity.
 - Someone who embodies the Leadership Success Profile we have defined and hold ourselves accountable to at Marshall:
 - A strategic thinker ...
 - Who drives for results ...
 - Builds high performance cultures ...
 - Innovates for impact
 - And inspires through their actions ... leading with intellectual curiosity, humility, teamwork and grit.
- We found that leader in Gerald Harrison.
 - Gerald brings over two decades of experience in Division I athletics ...

- Including impactful tenures at Tennessee, Duke, and most recently as Vice President and Director of Athletics at Austin Peay State University.
- At Austin Peay, he delivered:
 - Record-setting fundraising ...
 - Introduced groundbreaking partnerships ...
 - Hired 16 coaches, 6 of whom went on to receive Coach of the Year honors.
 - And led the university to won 13 conference championships, including 3 football titles in 5 seasons!
 - During his tenure, student-athletes thrived academically, maintaining a 3.0 GPA or higher for a record-setting 16 consecutive semesters.
- But what stood out wasn't just his record. It was the way he did it
 - With humility, discipline, and a deep commitment to the broader mission.
 - Gerald earned a reputation as bridge-builder across campus...
 - And as a winner across NCAA Athletics.
- Our campus stakeholders recognized this immediately.

- In campus feedback sessions, Gerald stood out for his transparent communication, his willingness to listen and learn, and his ability to connect across students, faculty and staff, alumni, and coaches.
 - He earned our respect, not just as a capable leader, but as a kind and authentic person.
 - We are excited to welcome Gerald, his wife Lisa, and his daughters Torri and Lorri to the Marshall Family.
 - Gerald will assume his responsibilities at Marshall effective August 18th.
- Finally, as we look to the academic year, we continue to see early indications of positive enrollment trends ... despite the macro-environmental headwinds:
 - Our Fall 2025 enrollment is once again on pace to outperform internal projections, building on a 3-year trend that reversed a 13-year enrollment decline and has since increased enrollment nearly 15% since 2023.
 - As we welcome the Fall Class, we continue to advance our vision of Marshall For All, providing access to an affordable, high quality education.
 - The Class includes more than 700 students attending as part of the Tuition-Free WV program, coming from families with a household income of \$60,000 or less which qualifies them to attend Marshall tuition-free.

- 200 of those students are also participating in the next cohort of our Marshall For All Debt-Free Program where housing, books and food are also covered, building on first 100 students who we admitted in the Fall of 2023, and the second 100 who were admitted in the Fall of 2024.
- For all other students, Marshall continues to offer the lowest net tuition cost of any four year institution in the state and surrounding region,
- While delivering the highest return-on-investment, as measured by net earnings upon graduation.
 - Net earnings measures the average earnings of a graduate 8 years after the start of the freshmen year, and divides those earnings by the total cost of their college education.
 - Anything higher than a 1 is a positive return on investment.
 - Marshall currently delivers a net earnings ratio of 1.32 versus a national average of .85, and other R2 institutions across the nation of .72.
- Collectively, our students continue to prove that Marshall is indeed a Prosperity Platform that offers the most affordable, flexible and achievement oriented education available.
- And we're just getting started!

- Wrapping up, our shared purpose of Marshall For All, Marshall Forever, is being brought to life through the Power of We ...
 - Our shared governance model that unleashes the wisdom of our collective campus, accelerating our velocity and translating ideas into impact.
 - These efforts have our campus aligned, inspired and hard-at-work to become that demonstration project for the nation.
 - Together, we are accelerating our momentum, reducing our structural deficit and rewarding our employees with pay increases as we strive to deliver on our commitments of a positive financial position with pay levels at market rates by 2027.
- As I remind us in each meeting, we still have heavy lifting ahead of us, but it is important to pause and celebrate shining achievements.
 - From the outset ... we knew this was not a turn-around, it was a transformation ...
 - One that we believed, if we executed well, would position Marshall to become an exemplar in higher education ...
 - We are making meaningful progress, providing a roadmap to future prosperity for our students, our employees, our communities and for the country.
 - **Marshall For All, Marshall Forever!**
 - And with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my comments.