

# MINUTES

## Marshall University Board of Governors

### Microsoft Teams Meeting at

### Shawkey Dining Room/Memorial Student Center

### Livestream and In-Person

**December 3, 2025**

**Present:** Kathy D’Antoni, Vicki Dunn-Dionne, Kathy Eddy, Donnie Holcomb, Carlene O’Neill, Robin Riner, Geoff Sheils, Jim Smith, William Smith, Connor Waller

**PH:** Ginny T. Lee, Angel Moore, Rusty Webb, Charles Wendell

**Absent:** Kipp Bodnar, Samuel Moore

#### **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 Vicki Dunn-Dionne and Charles Wendell, 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 Eddy, seconded by Donnie Holcomb, the minutes of the regular meeting held on October 8th, 2025, were approved.

#### **III. Committee of the Whole**

*IDEA District Update*

#### **IV. Committee Meeting Reports**

Prior to the committee reports, Dr. Kathy D’Antoni took the opportunity to recognize two honorees of the Faculty Recognition Program to honor exceptional academic and research achievements. The two honorees were Arka Chattopadhyay and Cicero Fain.

Dr. Arka Chattopadhyay, assistant professor of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, was awarded a \$750,000 NASA grant for the research project, “Advancing Regional Air Mobility in Appalachia.” The award and project are in collaboration with Dr. Nabaneeta Biswas, associate professor in the Lewis College

of Business, Nancy Ritter, Chief of Aviation Operations at the Bill Noe Flight School, and Dr. Darshan Sarajini, assistant professor of Aerospace and Ocean Engineering at Virginia Tech.

Dr. Cicero Fain, Assistant Provost for Access and Opportunity and adjunct professor of History, was recognized by the Ohio History Connection with a 2025 State Historic Preservation Office Award. This honor celebrates his incredible work preserving and sharing the stories of African American heritage throughout Appalachia, keeping history alive and inspiring future generations. The award was presented to Dr. Fain on November 7, 2025, at the Ohio History Connection in Columbus

### **Academic and Student Affairs**

#### **A) Approval of Revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. AA-5 - Employee Dependent Undergraduate Tuition Assistance Program**

The following resolution was read:

*Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors approve the revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. AA-5 - Employee Dependent Undergraduate Tuition Assistance Program.*

*\* This revision updates the tuition assistance program for dependents of employees to ensure equal treatment for all, regardless of residency status. Currently, Section 4.1 provides full remission of Capital and Education & General (E&G) Fees only to resident students. Non-resident and metro dependents receive remission limited to the resident rate, creating unequal benefits for employees who meet the same eligibility requirements. The proposed change would provide the same remission benefit for all dependents, eliminating this disparity.*

*Benefits of the Change:*

- Promotes fairness and consistency in employee benefits.*
- Strengthens employee morale and loyalty.*
- Aligns with the intent to support employees' families in pursuing higher education at Marshall.*

*Estimated Cost: Approximately \$80,000 annually, based on current non-resident enrollment.*

*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 Friday, January 16, 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 Donnie Holcomb without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **B) Approval of Revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. SA-1 - Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The following resolution was read:

*Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors approve the revisions to Board of Governors Rule No. SA-1 - Student Rights and Responsibilities.*

*\* This Rule establishes regulations regarding student rights, responsibilities, and conduct at Marshall University.*

*The revised MUBOG SA-1 Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities consolidates previous policies (SA-1 and SA-3) into a single framework and introduces mandatory reporting requirements for employees regarding serious violations such as threats, physical harm, hazing, drugs/alcohol, weapons, and discrimination. It expands definitions to include virtual property and online environments, reaffirms student rights to expression, association, and privacy, and guarantees due process in disciplinary proceedings.*

*The update also reorganizes conduct standards into seven categories, covering academic integrity, health and safety, human rights, campus environment, property protection, responsible citizenship, and virtual classroom behavior. It clarifies housing and residence life adjudication, adds progressive discipline for online misconduct, and updates sanctions to include probation, suspension, expulsion, and degree deferral or revocation. Additionally, new amnesty provisions encourage reporting of sexual misconduct and seeking emergency help for overdoses without fear of alcohol or drug-related penalties.*

*For further rationale regarding the proposed changes to SA-1, please see the attachment. 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 Friday, January 16, 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 Donnie Holcomb, seconded by Jim Smith without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.**

### **Provost Report**

***Interim Provost Robert Bookwalter*** gave the Provost's Update. During his report, Provost Bookwalter shared a series of updates from Academic Affairs. He began by expressing what an honor it is to represent Marshall's faculty, describing them as brilliant, creative, and deeply engaged across every college. He also spoke about the dedication of our deans and emphasized that Academic Affairs truly serves as the heart of the university.

He noted that during the committee meeting, members received strong updates from across Academic Affairs. Dr. Amine Oudghiri-Otmani reported on behalf of the Advisory Council of Faculty and the Faculty Senate, outlining ongoing faculty priorities and the statewide collaboration among four-year institutions working together on legislative efforts related to higher education in West Virginia. Dean Gozal provided an update from the School of Medicine, noting improved test scores, continued growth in research, the strength of the Physician Assistant program, their successful accreditation standing, and ongoing efforts toward securing a future building to house the school.

Dr. Karen McComas shared that graduate students currently make up about 24 percent of Marshall's student body, with roughly half enrolled online. She emphasized the central role graduate programs play in supporting our R2 research designation. Dean Brian Hoey followed with an update on the Honors College, highlighting its impact on recruitment, retention, community engagement, and the creation of a comprehensive student experience that extends well beyond the classroom.

Provost Bookwalter then moved into highlights from each of the academic colleges. In the College of Arts and Media, five distinguished alumni Corley Dennison, Cathryn Gibbs Harris, Jeff Hopson, Jerod Smalley, and Patrick Wittich, were inducted into the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications Hall of Fame. The Marshall Artists Series also hosted two major events: a conversation with José Andrés moderated by President Brad D. Smith, and a conversation with Javier Zamora moderated by former Provost Dr. Avi Mukherjee.

In the College of Engineering and Computer Science, Dr. Arka Chattopadhyay received a \$750,000 NASA grant for his project on advancing regional air mobility in Appalachia. The Provost also noted that CECS faculty published eight research articles and students presented seven research papers during the period he referenced.

In the College of Education and Professional Development, statewide impact expanded through new Telebehavioral Health and Neuroscience Literacy microcredentials. Several faculty, staff, and students were recognized nationally, including Dr. Kimberly McFall's Fulbright Specialist appointment, Dr. Eric Beeson's Innovative Research Award, Dr. Kari Mika-Lude's recognition with both the WVCA Past-President Award and the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence Purple Ribbon Award, Jamie Lima's Friend of Children Award from the West Virginia American Academy of Pediatrics, and Counseling graduate student Collin Ballantine's Marilyn Smith Emerging Leader Award.

In the College of Health Professions, the Department of Public Health received a \$411,707 award from the U.S. Department of Education to create a certificate program supporting low-income students and helping them progress toward graduate study in Public Health or Community Health Work. Dr. Kumika Toma also created a new scholarship program for Health Sciences students, awarding \$500 per semester to four students representing a range of backgrounds and future goals, including students preparing for medical or health-related graduate study, students facing personal hardships, adult learners with dependents, and first-generation college students.

In the College of Liberal Arts, the inaugural HerdWork Humanities Internship Program launched with 21 students placed in West Virginia nonprofits to gain hands-on experience in writing, community engagement, and social advocacy under the leadership of Dr. Richard G. Jones and with support from the Mellon Foundation.

In the College of Science, graduate student Mary Zarilla, working in Dr. Anne Axel's lab, documented the rarely seen African golden cat in northern Uganda. Dr. Rosalynn Quinones published a research article on caffeine disclosure in weight-loss teas in the ACS Journal of Chemical Education, in collaboration with colleagues and Marshall students. Dr. Laura McCunn published an article in The Journal of Physical Chemistry based on a study conducted with six undergraduate chemistry majors examining chemical reactions occurring during PVC plastic recycling.

The Division of Aviation reported FAA approval for dispatch training and the launch of new evening classes at the South Charleston campus. Marshall Aviation added an Extra 300L aircraft to the Bill Noe Flight School fleet, and construction on a new hangar at Yeager Airport begins this month.

At the Lewis College of Business, the Provost noted recognition in TFE Times' "2026 Best MBA Rankings" and continued collaborative efforts with Northwestern Mutual and the Office of Career Education to host mock interview workshops for students.

The School of Pharmacy reported a second consecutive statewide win in the OTC Medication Challenge, with students demonstrating exceptional knowledge and teamwork. The school also partnered with

Walgreens to host two immunization clinics offering COVID-19, influenza, and RSV vaccines to the campus community. Within University College, Bekah Agee was honored with the first-ever West Virginia Award for Excellence in Advising, recognizing her outstanding support of student success.

University Libraries launched American Milestone Centennial courses on Marshall's Skills Exchange platform, celebrating 100 years of Black History Month and offering free access to the community. The Center for Student Success secured a \$7,500 WVHEPC Campus Mental Health grant, bringing total mental-health-related grant funding for 2025–26 to \$32,500.

The Office of Online Education reported that four new online degrees have been approved since May 2025—Psychology (B.A.), School Psychology (Ed.S.), Communication Studies (B.A.), and Library Sciences (M.S.) along with five new areas of emphasis or minors. They also issued 166 HOME Framework badges and continue to expand both access and quality in online learning at Marshall.

### **Student Representative Update**

*Connor Waller*, Student Body President, gave the Student Representative update. During his report Connor began by expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to speak and extended gratitude on behalf of the student body. He opened with an update on the food drive and the pop up food pantries held in October and November. This initiative was created through a partnership between SGA and Student Affairs to support students affected by the temporary pause in SNAP benefits during the government shutdown.

He shared that once the initiative was announced, donations immediately began coming in from across the campus community. Numerous offices, faculty and staff, students, and local alumni chapters in Huntington, Kanawha, and the Southern Coal Fields contributed, along with members of the surrounding community. Several monetary donations were also made, which allowed SGA to expand the resources available to students.

With the support received, SGA hosted two pop up food pantries. The first was held on November 3 and served 132 students. The second was held on November 10 on a very snowy and extremely cold day and served 70 students, with an additional 30 students coming in for private food selection. A final pantry for the semester will take place next week to ensure students can secure food before leaving for Christmas break.

Connor also reported that SGA has allocated \$9,000 to student organizations so far, leaving \$11,000 to distribute in the spring semester.

He recognized the work of Student Body Vice President Alyssa Davis, who served as chair of the planning committee for the 55th Memorial Fountain Ceremony. He noted the overwhelmingly positive feedback received and thanked the campus community for its dedication to honoring the legacy of the 75.

Connor then described his trip to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the week before the Fountain Ceremony, where he attended the unveiling of 4 statues honoring the Tuscaloosa Four, Marshall football players from Tuscaloosa who died in the 1970 plane crash. He described the ceremony as both somber and uplifting and said that speaking with family members of the players brought new perspective and renewed the spirits of those who attended.

He continued with an update on Dancing with the HERD, which takes place tomorrow. The event is officially sold out, although supporters may still contribute to the couples who are raising money for

student focused initiatives. The fundraising couples include Brad and Alys Smith raising funds for Marshall for All Marshall Forever, Gerald and Lisa Harrison raising funds for the Helen Gurley Brown BOLD Women's Leadership Fund, Tony and Cassie Stroud raising funds for the Student Emergency Fund, and Shawn Schulenberg and Ariel Barcenas raising funds for the Study Abroad Student Support Fund.

As of lunchtime today, the 4 couples have raised a total of \$18,329 for these initiatives. SGA is hopeful that the amount will reach at least \$20,000 by the time the event begins. Connor closed by thanking everyone once again and wishing the Board a wonderful day and holiday season.

### **School of Medicine Update**

**Dr. David Gozal**, Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs, presented the School of Medicine update. Dr. Gozal presented a report outlining the School of Medicine's activities over the past two months. He began by congratulating the fourth-year medical students who recently completed the national NBE examination. This exam is administered to all medical students across the country, and this year our students scored above the national average in every clinical discipline. He emphasized that this is the first time the school has reached this level of performance and described it as remarkable progress, with expectations for continued improvement in the years ahead.

Dr. Gozal explained that once these examinations are completed, fourth year students begin preparing for Match Day, the process through which they secure placement into their chosen specialty programs. It is an extremely competitive national process involving fifteen to sixteen thousand medical students. Students must prepare for interviews and decisions related to selecting their specialty programs. To support them, Associate Dean Dr. Marie Frazier and her team conduct a residency preparation course and provide a wide range of mock interviews so that students are fully prepared for the process. Match Day will take place on March 20th, and as in previous years, the school looks forward to celebrating with students and families. He noted that the School of Medicine achieved a one hundred percent match rate for the last three years and hopes to continue this tradition.

Dr. Gozal went on to share several recognitions. Paulette S. Wehner, vice dean for education, received the 2025 Award for Excellence in Rural Health. The Marshall Community Health Consortium also received the 2025 Award for Excellence in Rural Health for an organization. He added that the West Virginia Rural Health Association created a new annual award in memory of Debbie Curry, a long time School of Medicine employee and rural health advocate who passed away earlier this year. The Debbie Curry Opportunity and Innovation Award honors an individual who inspires students, uplifts others, and strengthens the future of rural health in West Virginia. Dr. Gozal noted that these recognitions reflect Marshall's growing national leadership in rural health.

He also reported that Deb Koester, assistant professor of family and community health and director of the Division of Community Health, was named a 2025 Wonder Woman for WV Living magazine, and that Sheanna M. Spence, chief marketing officer, was named a 2026 Young Gun for WV Executive magazine.

Dr. Gozal shared that the School of Medicine and Marshall Health Network recently launched the Marco Mobile Medical Unit. This unit will travel throughout the network's 40b county region to provide care tailored to the health needs of each community. The ribbon cutting took place on November 10th at the Lincoln County Opportunity Center in Hamlin. Funding was made possible through community project support secured by Congresswoman Carol Miller through the United States Department of Agriculture, along with matching funds from Marshall Health Network.

He also highlighted achievements in research. Marshall University's 37th Annual Health Sciences Research Day set a new record with one hundred eighty presentations. Students from the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine have presented their work at regional, national, and international conferences, sharing research across a wide range of disciplines.

Dr. Gozal concluded by noting the completion of a study designed to improve Medicare annual wellness visits and preventive care outcomes. He explained that this work provides guidance that can expand access to preventive medicine, reduce healthcare costs, and lessen the negative effects that occur when diseases are not detected early. He thanked everyone for their attention.

### **Naming of Endowed Chair**

At the conclusion of Dr. Gozal's remarks, per Board of Governors Rule No. GA-8, Naming Policy for Programs and Facilities, Sections 4.1.1. and 4.1.2, President Brad D. Smith informed the board that he has authorized the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine to establish the Bill and Lois Dolin Distinguished Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery. The chair will be endowed through a gift from Bill and Lois Dolin. Annual distributions from the endowment will support resident education and miscellaneous needs of the department.

### **Annual Student Affairs Update**

**Dr. Marcie Simms**, Vice President for Student Affairs, gave the Student Affairs update. Dr. Simms began by expressing her appreciation for the opportunity to share the work taking place across Student Affairs. She noted that this presentation format began last year and has become a meaningful way to highlight the scope of the division's responsibilities and ongoing initiatives.

She shared that her team completed their annual plan on the page and will be making a few revisions following several organizational updates. One of the most visible changes this year is the name of the division, which is now the Division of Student Affairs. She explained that the new name better represents the work of the division and aligns with their mission.

Dr. Simms explained that Student Affairs operates across 6 buildings on campus. One of her goals this year has been to bring staff together more consistently. The division now hosts monthly meetings with presentations that help offices understand each other's work. They also hold 2 retreats each year to strengthen connection and communication.

She outlined the core areas within the division which include Student Life, Wellness Programs, the ACE Center which focuses on access, connection and engagement, and the Office of Advocacy and Accountability. The division includes 39 full-time employees, 17 graduate assistants, 29 student employees and 4 counseling interns. Several offices are staffed by only 1 full-time employee and a graduate assistant, which demonstrates how broad the division's responsibilities are.

Dr. Simms provided updates on new initiatives that have taken place since the last meeting. These included the name change for the division, the approval of the updated Student Code of Conduct, and continued growth in Esports. The Esports program now competes nationally, recently defeated James Madison University in Call of Duty, and has relocated to expanded space on the 4th floor of the library. She also discussed the division's assessment plan and the launch of the WOW Academy which engaged more than 2,000 students over the summer by connecting them with resources before the fall semester.

Additional updates included the establishment of the Community Service and Parent Programs office, the expansion of the ACE Center to serve non-traditional students, first generation students and students on the autism spectrum, and the university's progress in meeting federal hazing prevention requirements. She also noted that the BOLD Women's Leadership Program now operates under the Women's Center with support from the Helen Gurley Brown Foundation.

Dr. Simms shared engagement numbers from across Student Affairs. There are currently more than 213 student organizations. The Esports program has 488 members with a team GPA of 3.66. Greek Life raised more than 11,000 dollars for the student emergency fund during Greek Week and continues to maintain a strong academic record. The Marshall engagement app continues to grow with 14,000 total downloads and more than 70,000 opens during the month of October.

She highlighted participation in major events such as Family Weekend and Homecoming service projects. Week of Welcome continues to be one of the division's most successful efforts. More than 1,700 students checked in for events. According to the survey, 100 percent of students reported connecting with other students and 92 percent reported that they learned about important campus resources.

Updates also included student support services. More than 1,400 students attended the annual Student Resource Fair. The Office of Advocacy and Accountability processed 1,635 excused absences and adjudicated 129 conduct cases. The Behavioral Intervention Team reviewed 173 reports of concern. The laptop rental program loaned 46 laptops and the countdown to commencement event welcomed more than 360 seniors.

In wellness and basic needs support, Student Affairs distributed 177 donated meal swipes and provided 320 emergency fund awards. Violence prevention and bystander training programs were also expanded this year along with hazing prevention education.

Dr. Simms shared data from the Accessibility and Accommodations Office which now serves 930 registered students. Students are supported across a wide range of learning, psychological and medical needs. The office will soon relocate to the basement of East Hall where it will have more testing rooms, improved space and updated ADA compliant features.

Counseling services continue to be heavily used. There are 801 active clients, and more than 4,000 appointments were completed this fall. The counseling center also provides group therapy, outreach programs and crisis response. Most clients are 18 and 19 years old and all services are free to students. She also noted that students can be evaluated through Marshall's psychology clinic at no cost if they need updated assessments for accommodations and medication management is available through Marshall Psychiatry for students in active treatment.

Dr. Simms concluded with upcoming priorities. These include completing the relocation of Accessibility and Accommodations to East Hall, launching student demographic dashboards that will track involvement and retention, implementing a new student engagement and organization management system that will be fully integrated into the Marshall app, publishing a Student Affairs Impact Report next summer and expanding the WOW Academy courses for the upcoming year.

### **Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee**

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

#### **A) Receipt of Final Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2025**

The following resolution was read:

*Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors hereby receive the Final Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2025*

*\* During the October board meeting, the financial statements presented were still considered drafts. We are now presenting the Final Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Statements for Marshall University for receipt by the Board of Governors.*

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

**B) Approval of Proposed Changes to 2025-26 Academic Year Housing Rates**

The following resolution was read:

*Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors does hereby approve the proposed changes to the Schedule of Fiscal Year 2025-26 Academic Year Housing Rates.*

*\* To ensure students are aware of costs in advance and to allow for informed decision-making regarding leases at The Landing, the following changes to the fee schedule are proposed:*

*Landing Rates for May 2026 Occupancy (New Leases), there is a proposed rate adjustment of approximately 2.5%-3% to reflect inflation and operational cost changes.*

*The proposed monthly rates are as follows: Studio apartments will increase from \$995 to \$1,020, two-bedroom apartments will increase from \$1,485 to \$1,520, and one bed in a two-bedroom apartment will increase from \$775 to \$800. These monthly rates apply to 10-12-month leases.*

**Upon a motion by Jim Smith, seconded by Donnie Holcomb, 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:

*Student -Athlete Success & Well-Being*

*Competitive Excellence & Winning the Right Way  
Fan Experience & Community Engagement  
Revenue Growth & Resource Development  
Fan Experience Capital Projects Updates*

## **V. President's Report**

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

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

Upon a motion by Jim Smith, 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 Sheils moved into announcements and mentioned he would keep things brief since it was getting late.

He began by welcoming Vicki Dunn-Dionne and Charlie Wendell to the Board, saying the Governor made excellent appointments and expressing how much he appreciates their willingness to serve. He also mentioned that he has been on the Board for seven and a half years and that the time has gone by quickly, hoping their experience will be just as rewarding.

He thanked Connor Waller, Alyssa Davis, and the entire planning committee for doing such a tremendous job with the Foundation Ceremony. He said the event was meaningful, well organized, and a true reflection of Marshall. He added that our students continue to impress him with their poise and confidence, and that it makes him proud to be an alum.

He reminded everyone that Winter Commencement will be held on Saturday, December 13th at the Marshall Health Network Arena and encouraged all members to attend if possible. He expressed appreciation for everyone involved in planning the ceremony.

He then let the Board know that President Smith has submitted his mid-year self-assessment for the first six months of FY 2026. He said he will be sending it to the Board in the next couple of weeks to gather feedback, which he'll compile and share with President Smith during their January check-in. He noted that the process is similar to what was done in July, though not the full three-year evaluation.

He also reminded everyone that the next Board meeting will be Thursday, February 5th, pointing out the date change from the original schedule.

In closing, he said this is an exciting time to be part of Marshall and that the transformation taking place is real and remarkable. He expressed gratitude for the university's leadership and shared his optimism for the upcoming year. He also thanked President Smith and First Lady Smith for opening their home to the Board the previous evening, saying the hospitality was very much appreciated and did not go unnoticed.

He ended by asking if there were any additional questions or items to bring before the Board before moving toward adjournment.

**VIII. Announcements**

**IX. Adjournment**

Without objection, the Board Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy D'Antoni, Secretary

## President's Report – December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
- As we enter the holiday season and prepare for Winter Commencement, I'm weeks away from celebrating my 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary in this role.
  - This intersection of events leads me to two reflections:
  - The first is how quickly time passes when you do something you love!
  - And the second is how grateful I am to work alongside you in support of our students and all who serve this wonderful institution ...
  - I am very excited to welcome our two newest board members ... Vicki and Charlie ...
  - Both of you have already made significant contributions to Marshall University in various ways over the years, and we look forward to the wisdom and counsel you'll bring to the boardroom.
  - They say gratitude is when an experience is recorded in your heart, and not in your mind ...
  - And as we enter this holiday season, I am grateful for the privilege of serving this institution and community with you.
  - Thank you!
- With that sentiment expressed, I want to focus my update on 3 topics:
  - Employee engagement
  - Enrollment
  - And economic development
- Let me begin with employee engagement.
  - As I often proclaim, Marshall is a special place.
  - At every moment of truth, I'm inspired by the collaboration and commitment that is evident across our campus and community.

- From high school visits, community outreach and record-setting Green & White Days ...
    - Prospective students, parents and community members are experiencing Marshall's warmth, growth and potential ...
  - In classrooms, auditoriums and labs ...
    - Our faculty continue to inspire minds and advance scholarship, research and creativity ...
  - Our students are setting the example through their academic achievements, their athletic and artistic performances, and their service in support of each other during times of need ...
    - As evidenced by their efforts to provide pop-up food pantries during the Government shutdown ...
    - As well as in times of celebration, both on the field, on the stage and in the classroom.
  - And our dedicated staff are working tirelessly to ensure a safe, high functioning and aesthetically beautiful campus...
    - One that innovates and operates in ways that strengthen our academy and our community.
  - Together, our campus is leading this institution into the next chapter of great, unified by a shared strategy – Marshall for All, Marshall Forever.
- At Marshall, every voice matters and every contribution counts.
  - We recently completed our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual employee engagement survey, also known as our virtual listening tour.
  - We had record-setting participation, with 74% of our campus completing the survey, up 8% pts year-over-year.
  - This alone illustrates the level of commitment this campus invests in our collective future.
  - The feedback contained trended results for the past three years, comparisons to our higher education peers, and was accompanied by more than 7,000 write-in comments, which I read over the Thanksgiving break.

- This employee feedback is invaluable for identifying where things are working well, as well as where we need to take our game to the next level.
- This year's results are in the context of a dynamic environment in which we and our peers are operating ...
  - Mercer, the outside firm who conducts this survey for us, as they do for other higher education institutions and companies in various industries ...
  - Informed us that this year, organizations have struggled to maintain prior year engagement levels,
  - With most experiencing meaningful engagement decreases as economic, social, technological and geo-political disruptions have ramped up.
- Our employee engagement score this year was 72, a 1-point decline vs. last year, holding steady and quite positive overall.
  - As a reminder, it requires a 5-point change to be considered statistically significant, but ...
  - As we say at Marshall, facts are friendly, even if they tell us what we don't want to hear ...
  - And 1pt is 1pt in our books ... providing us with an opportunity to learn and improve.
- Across the 52 dimensions surveyed where we were able to compare to our higher education peers,
  - Marshall scored notably better than our peer group across 11 questions,
  - Equal to our peers on 35 questions,
  - And below on 6 questions.
- A sampling of areas where we outperformed other higher education institutions include:
  - My university is making the changes necessary to compete effectively **+13 points**

- Senior leaders act in ways that are consistent with what they say (they “walk the walk”) **+10 points**
  - Senior leaders give employees a clear picture for the direction the university is heading **+10 points**
  - My university communicates effectively with employees on matters that affect them **+10 points**
  - And my university responds quickly to meet students’ changing needs and wants **+ 9 points**
- Areas where we continue to lag our peers include:
    - People being held accountable for results **-13 pts**
    - I believe I’m compensated fairly for what I do **-13 pts**
    - The better my performance, the more I’ll be rewarded - **10 points**
    - I feel I have the right tools and resources to do my job properly - **11 points**
- These underperforming areas are consistent themes ...
    - As we push forward to implement clearer goal setting, coaching and performance management ...
    - We finalize our market-based comp adjustments that will be increasingly aligned with performance,
    - And we complete our transition to an Incentivized Budget Model, where resource allocation decisions will be made closer to the action in the colleges and departments.
- In the context of the rapidly changing external environment, a new watch area has emerged for our campus, as well as our peers – Meeting the Market –
    - Marshall’s scores were equal or slightly better than our peers, but down year-over-year for the following two questions.
      - The university has the right products and services for the marketplace.

- The work environment supports development of new and innovative ideas.
    - This reinforces the increasing importance of applying design thinking, leaning into ethical and practical uses of AI, and continuing to cultivate and support research, scholarship and creativity.
  - Putting a bow around this topic ...
    - 82% of employees say they feel proud to work for Marshall University ...
    - Reminding us that we have an inspiring purpose and amazing talent to take our game to the next level!
  - As we did in years past, we will summarize these results in the coming weeks, sharing campus-wide insights and actions being taken ...
  - With local teams focusing on what needs to be done in their respective areas to create the best environment for our talent to do the best work of their lives.
  - I am encouraged by the strong survey participation and steady year-over-year results, but I know we can do better.
- Which takes me to my second topic, enrollment in the context of broader trends.
    - While the statewide Fall 2025 numbers won't be released until mid-December, preliminary data released by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center suggests:
      - Fall enrollment for undergraduate degrees increased 1.9% nationally ...
      - Pacing just above the nation's population growth of ~1%.
    - As we've been tracking, Fall 2025 undergraduate enrollment at Marshall increased +7.7% (including dual enrollment) and +4.3% if dual enrollment is excluded.
      - These results are noteworthy when you consider that West Virginia suffered negative population growth once again.

- While Fall 2025 marks the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year of enrollment growth, we objectively recognize the headwinds before us ...
  - Fall 2025 is the last year before the enrollment cliff begins.
  - According to research conducted by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, West Virginia will be one of the top 5 states hit the hardest by the demographic cliff.
  - With a projected 26% decline in high school graduates between now and 2041.
  - That is why our Strategic Enrollment Management efforts are so important ...
  - As well as our commitment to continuous innovation to ensure we have the most compelling value proposition ... grounded in affordability, flexibility and lifetime achievement.
  - While many are awaiting the publishing of the Fall 2025 numbers ... we're already working hard on Fall 2026 ...
    - This Fall, our team has participated in more than 350 recruiting events throughout the region.
    - We've expanded the Marshall Direct Admission program to the first Metro County (Boyd County, Kentucky) ...
      - And we're in process of launching the program in Lincoln, Boone, Jackson and Mingo Counties, as well.
    - We're exploring ways to build on the success of the expanded Metro region with a concept called the Border Benefit ... which we'll discuss more in our upcoming budgeting process.
    - And we're preparing to invite an additional 240 freshmen into the Marshall for All Debt-Free Program in the Fall 2026 Class, as we continue to execute Tuition-Free WV for residents with a household income of <\$65K.
    - While it's still quite early, applications for Fall 2026 are up 11% year-over-year, with completed apps trending +40% and intent to enroll +41%.
    - Finally, we're assessing a fresh approach to how we will administer institutional grants and waivers in the Fall of 2027 to

ensure we are targeting the students with the greatest need, while being more efficient in merit and needs-based waivers.

- Again, we will discuss these potential changes in our upcoming budgeting process.
  - Collectively, these efforts work hand-in-hand with our student success efforts occurring across our campus, which have led to a year-over-year improvement in student retention of more than 4 percentage points...
  - And are the reason why Marshall is growing ...
- Which takes me to my third and final topic ... the role we are playing in driving growth in our local economy, as well.
    - Marshall is proud to serve as a prosperity platform ... a platform that accelerates individual success, innovative ideas and economic impact ... in our community, our state and our nation.
    - We continue to be invited to the table to help advance prosperity for our citizens, based on the impact we're producing.
    - In conjunction with the City of Huntington, the momentum we are building behind the IDEA District that Toney walked through earlier, as well as the Health Sciences District in partnership with the Marshall Health Network, are revitalizing our local community.
    - At a state level, we've worked closely with our partners at the Marshall Health Network and our state leaders to submit an application for the Rural Health Transformation Fund.
      - If approved, West Virginia could receive more than \$100 million per year for five years under federal legislation.
    - In addition, Marshall ... along with WVU, Shepard and Blue Ridge CTC have also been asked to lead the state-wide efforts to advance the strategic thinking behind positioning West Virginia as the Power Tech Center ...
      - Bridging the intersection between the nation's need for energy and the powerful technologies that are powering the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.
    - And our role goes beyond the state level, to include international trade.
      - On November 5<sup>th</sup>, we were invited by our state leaders and the Ambassador of Japan to join him and roughly 20 CEOs of Japanese

companies in New York to define opportunities to attract more Japanese companies to do business in West Virginia.

- And in doing so, to create more job opportunities for our citizens and our communities.
  - It may be surprising to learn that West Virginia currently hosts 22 Japanese companies, producing more than 5,000 jobs and \$3.2B in investment in the state ...
  - And Marshall is at the forefront of these efforts.
  - Make no mistake, we are playing an active role in defining and driving economic prosperity across Appalachia.
- To close-out this comprehensive report, I'll summarize by saying ...
    - Our campus is aligned and engaged ...
    - We are working hard to innovate and outwork the enrollment cliff headwinds ...
    - And we're at the table with our elected leaders to catalyze economic growth and prosperity for our citizens & the region.
  - We have charted a course to become a demonstration project for what is possible in our state and for our nation ...
    - And while we are proud of the momentum we have built, we recognize that we still have hard work ahead of us ...
    - With that said, we are demonstrating that when we work together, we can set a new standard for others to see and help advance.
    - **Marshall for All, Marshall Forever!**
  - And with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my comments and will be happy to take questions.