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Board of Governors Meeting  
**Media Clips**

*March 10, – April 6, 2020*

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April 4, 2020

**WVU Parkersburg to hold coronavirus info session [video]**

WTAP-TV

March 9, 2020

West Virginia University at Parkersburg will host a community forum on the coronavirus tomorrow. The information session will provide the latest on the virus from reputable medical sources about its international and national spread. Health officials will inform attendees on how to best contain and prevent the virus, steps the college and surrounding communities should take to prevent it, and how to prepare and react for possible confirmed cases in West Virginia. It will be held at 12:15 in the college theater. It is open to students, staff, and the public.

### **Local health, medical professionals discuss coronavirus [video]**

WTAP-TV

March 10, 2020

<https://www.wtap.com/content/news/Local-health-medical-professionals-discuss-coronavirus-568678771.html?ref=771>

**WOOD COUNTY, W.Va.-(WTAP)** Local health professionals say the biggest threat from the coronavirus is to people, especially older people, who have conditions ranging from diabetes to COPD to asthma.

"That's where we are seeing the deaths in the United States," says Rebecca Eaton, Director, Clinical Services, Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department. "And it's because of the underlying conditions, not the Coronavirus, it's the Coronavirus with everything else that's going on."

They stress calm. They also avoiding targeting certain groups of people.

"We have enough stress, with just the information about the COVID-19, without adding any other rumors or stigma to the equation," Roger Coffman, Administrator, Washington County Health Department.

At an informational meeting Tuesday at West Virginia University at Parkersburg, medical experts said the number of deaths from COVID-19, so far, is well below those from other recent viruses.

"The only concern is, the transmission is so easy that we're expecting to have a lot of people exposed to the virus," said Dr. Seyoum Bage, Infectious Disease specialist, WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center

The college is taking steps to deal with an outbreak, but it, like the health departments, is also preaching common sense.

"We need soap and water, we need fresh air, we need good nutrition, we need to hydrate ourselves," said Kathy Frum, Chair, Nursing Department, WVU-Parkersburg, "and we need to stay away from sick people. That's the best thing we need to do in the college community."

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### **WVU-P panel discusses coronavirus**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 11, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/03/wvu-p-panel-discusses-coronavirus/>

PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg held a Coronavirus Forum on Tuesday with around 70 people from around the college and the community attending and able to ask questions of local health officials.

The panel consisted of Jillian Jeffrey, regional epidemiologist, Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department; Dr. Seyoum Bage, infectious disease medicine, WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center; and Kathy Frum, MSN, RN, chairperson of the Nursing & Health Sciences Division, WVU Parkersburg. WVU Parkersburg President Chris Gilmer acted as moderator and spoke about precautions they will be taking at the college if the coronavirus spreads further and impacts the local area.

“I had a number of messages and e-mails already from people watching remotely because there are already people apprehensive about coming into public settings,” Gilmer said. “We have brought these people here today in an abundance of concern for your health and safety.”

Jeffrey said Tuesday there have been no confirmed cases of the COVID-19 so far in West Virginia.

“Right now we are focusing on prevention,” she said. “We want to make sure that you are washing your hands frequently.



Kathy Frum answers questions during a Coronavirus Forum at West Virginia University at Parkersburg on Tuesday. (Photo by Brett Dunlap)

“If you are sick you should stay home. If you are coughing or sneezing you should wash your hands after that. If you are out in the community you should wash your hands afterwards. We want you to focus on everything you can do to keep yourself healthy right now.”

So far no travel restrictions have been put in place within the United States, Jeffrey said. They are advising people to continually wash their hands if they are out in public or around sick people. If you are in public, avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

“If you are out in the community around people who are sick, you should maintain six feet away from anyone who is coughing or sneezing. That is called social distancing,” she added. “Just focus on those basic preventive measures to keep yourself healthy.”

Frum talked about washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

“What is happening with the soap is it is lathering and bumping that bacteria or whatever off of your hands and you’re doing the friction for 20 seconds and rinsing your hands in a downward fashion,” she said. “You will see (a nurse) get a paper towel and dry our hands off, get another paper towel and turn the faucet off and get another paper towel to open the door.”

That is done because the virus can live on inanimate objects for a little while and can be on the faucets and doors.

“Washing your hands is probably the best thing you can do,” she said.

Bage said the situation with the virus nationwide remains “fluid” as things might change. Right now, the United States is considered a low risk for the virus, but that could change, he said.

Audience members asked questions about how the virus is transmitted, how serious it is compared to a cold or the flu, will it become commonplace in a year or so, what precautions/how often should they clean surfaces in classrooms.

The virus is transmitted through droplets, like any cold or flu virus, and can stay alive on surfaces for a few hours on hard surfaces, Bage said, adding it can be transferred by people touching those surfaces and then touching their faces.

The panel recommended people clean their mobile phones and computers regularly.

“You should be cleaning high touched surfaces regularly,” Jeffrey said of technology, handrails, chair armrests, desktops, restrooms. “It is anything that is frequently touched.”

There is a list of recommended cleaning supplies on the Centers for Disease Control website. For many surfaces the CDC recommends a third cup of bleach to a gallon of water.

“Regular cleaning will prevent different illnesses from being transmitted,” Jeffrey said.

Bage said there is a lot of speculation going on now. They don’t know how long the virus will last, whether it will die out after one season.

"There are a lot of unknowns," he said.

Gilmer reiterated that it was probably best to hope for the best outcome, but be prepared for the worst.

"Hope the crisis doesn't come, but be prepared for it being as bad as it can in case it does," he said.

Someone asked the panel about tests conducted on at least five people in the state where two have come back negative for the virus by the CDC. The person wanted to know where in the state these people might be.

Jeffrey didn't know where the tests were conducted, but steps are in place to protect the people involved.

Bage said the symptoms are similar to the seasonal flu, cough, fever, headache, nausea. People can treat those symptoms as they normally would with over-the-counter medications. If it persists they may need to seek out medical help.

If people need to go to the doctor, they should call ahead so the doctor's office knows what they might be dealing with and whether you have a travel history, Jeffrey said.

Bage said the virus incubation can take 10-14 days. The duration of the symptoms is determined case to case.

People are most contagious when they are ill, but they do not have to have symptoms showing to be contagious, the panel said. A person needs to be tested twice over 24 hours with negative results before they are determined to not be contagious anymore.

The university is putting precautions in place should it need to move classes online.

"We will be prepared to do that," Gilmer said, adding WVU-P has a stockpile of supplies to clean and sanitize the college.

"We are taking every precaution we can think of to promote the health and safety of the university," Gilmer said.

The panel recommended that the CDC website had the most up-to date-information on the virus and recommends people check there regularly.

People can watch the entire presentation by going to [wvup.edu/live](http://wvup.edu/live).

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### **Artsbridge cancels Spectacular Arts festival**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 11, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/03/artsbridge-cancels-spectacular-arts-festival/>

PARKERSBURG — Artsbridge has canceled the upcoming Very Spectacular Arts Festival, citing concerns of coronavirus and a state of emergency in Ohio.

Artsbridge Director Amanda Stevens said the decision was made Tuesday to cancel this year's festival which was scheduled for March 17 at West Virginia University at Parkersburg.

The annual event brings special needs students from around the region together for activities in music and art. Stevens said last year 300 students from 20 schools and five counties attended the event, and the same number had signed up for this year as well.

*"Due to Ohio declaring a state of emergency, and half of our students that attend come from Ohio schools, we're doing this as a preventive measure," Stevens said. "We need the children's health and safety to be our priority."*

The festival includes about 200 volunteers, many of whom are older and had expressed concerns about being exposed to a large group in a relatively confined space.

*"Many have voiced their concerns to me; they would rather not be in a large crowd right now," she said.*

Stevens said many of the students who attend the event have compromised immune systems or other health concerns.

*"We're really sad to make the decision," she said. "It's not an easy one to make."*

This marks only the second time the Very Spectacular Arts Festival has been canceled. Two years ago, officials canceled the event following a 10-day statewide teachers strike that caused many West Virginia school systems to drop out of the event.

A calendar change due to a snow day for Wood County Schools also forced Artsbridge to cancel its planned Arts Encounter event.

The coronavirus has quickly spread from China throughout Europe and recently into the United States. No cases of the virus have been confirmed in West Virginia, but Ohio declared a state of emergency this week after confirming three cases. Ohio State University canceled classes until the end of the month, citing concerns over spread of the virus. Online courses continue and officials at the university are working on ways to hold other classes remotely as well.

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**Video, story: West Virginia officials trying to be ‘as proactive as possible’ about novel coronavirus**

WV MetroNews

March 11, 2020

<http://wvmetronews.com/2020/03/11/west-virginia-officials-trying-to-be-as-proactive-as-possible-about-novel-coronavirus/>

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** — State officials provided an update this afternoon on coronavirus response, while precautions were taking place all over West Virginia.

“We don’t have any identified cases here, but we won’t be surprised when we find the first one,” said Cathy Slempp, the state health officer.

Meanwhile, all 55 county school superintendents in West Virginia will get an update on the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, from state officials later this week.

Clayton Burch, state superintendent of schools, Bill Crouch, secretary of the state Department of Health and Human Resources and Dr. Cathy Slempp, state health officer and commissioner for the DHHR’s Bureau for Public Health were scheduled to address the superintendent group on Friday.

The focus was to be on ongoing preparations for any arrival of COVID-19 in the Mountain State.

“It’s just going to continue to reinforce the message and we also want to make sure that we are as proactive as possible,” Burch said.

“We want to treat any potential outbreak the way we would treat a power outage. We want to isolate it. We want to target the school, when possible, but, as far as now, the safest places for our children are in the schools.”

In Jefferson County, [\*\*the Panhandle News Network reported\*\*](#) public schools would dismiss two hours early this Friday, March 13, to complete Phase II of Jefferson County’s Pandemic Response Plan.

Teachers and staff in Jefferson County were going to use the time without students to prepare instructional packets to be used in cases of future dismissals for COVID-19. Facility cleaning work was also planned.

On Tuesday, West Virginia University [\*\*announced plans to suspend\*\*](#) classes on campus effective March 23, the Monday after next week’s previously-scheduled Spring Break.

Beginning on March 30, instruction for WVU was to move largely online for an undetermined period of time.



Dr. Clay Marsh, vice president and executive dean for health sciences at WVU, said the decision was the “right move to make.”

“What we’re really trying to do is we’re trying to reduce the spread on people that repatriate from Spring Break who might go elsewhere and become exposed,” Dr. Marsh said during an appearance on Wednesday morning’s MetroNews “Talkline.”

At that time, the state Department of Health and Human Resources was reporting no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in West Virginia.

That was depicted [in a map](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Schools were not the only places making preparations.

On Tuesday morning in Huntington, about 100 people participated in an informational seminar on COVID-19 from the Cabell-Huntington Health Department and the Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce at the St. Mary’s Highlawn Building.

“It was an exchange not only of information, but also a question-and-answer period,” said Bill Bissett, president and CEO of the Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce.

“Right now, I really think the key is information and quality information. Make sure it comes from a medical professional or public health department.”

A similar event was held Tuesday at West Virginia University at Parkersburg.

Next week, a public informational event was planned at WVU Medicine’s Berkeley Medical Center in Martinsburg. It was scheduled to start at 7 p.m. at the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center Auditorium and was to be streamed on Facebook Live.

At Shepherd University, students were being advised to take textbooks, course materials, laptops, tablets and other critical items with them as they departed Shepherdstown this week for Spring Break.

Shepherd officials said it was possible campus classes would not resume, as scheduled, on March 23. Online instruction may be necessary “depending on the severity of the coronavirus,” [information from Shepherd indicated](#).

In county public schools, “Many of our districts have not had Spring Break. Many of them are gearing up for Spring Break in the coming weeks,” said Burch.

Entry restrictions [started this week](#) at federal courthouses in the Northern District of West Virginia.

Prohibited from entry were the following:

- People who had been in China, South Korea, Japan, Italy and Iran during the last 14 days;
- People who live with or have had close contact with someone who had been in one of the

- listed countries within the last 14 days;
- People asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital or health agency;
  - People diagnosed with or in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19;
  - People with fever, cough or shortness of breath.
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### **West Virginia University at Parkersburg weighs COVID-19 options**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 12, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/03/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-weighs-covid-19-options/>

PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg is taking steps in case in-person classes are suspended, among other preparations in response to the COVID-19 coronavirus, the president of the college said.

President Chris Gilmer said he is in “*close communication*” with Chancellor Sarah Tucker of the West Virginia Community and Technical College System concerning developments at the state level, according to a statement from Gilmer on Tuesday.

*“I was recently updated that a state of emergency has not been called in West Virginia, and no guidance has yet been provided on a statewide level about consideration of closing campuses or curtailing events. We will, of course, follow any statewide guidance that we receive,”* Gilmer said. *“Unless and until such guidance is received, we will make the very best and most informed decisions that we can make on a local level.*

*“To the degree that such transition is possible, I have instructed the provost of WVU Parkersburg to begin making preparation to transition our face-to-face classes to online classes. I may make this decision to transition at a local level or state authorities may make it at a statewide level,”* he said. *“Further, I am reviewing requests for out-of-state travel on a case-by-case basis, and am considering putting a complete halt on non-essential domestic travel. I have not yet taken that step, on advice of medical authorities who do not believe such a step is currently necessary. WVU Parkersburg is not aware of any University-sanctioned international travel recently undertaken or planned.”*

WVU-Parkersburg on Tuesday held a public forum on the coronavirus, part of the college’s commitment to provide up-to-date communications with the school and community, Gilmer said.

*“As the medical experts have told us, this situation changes very rapidly, therefore, the university will err on the side of caution and will continue to communicate with our stakeholders on a heightened basis,”* he said.

WVU in Morgantown, Ohio State and Marietta College this week announced in-person class cancellations. Shawnee State University at Portsmouth, Ohio, said it is investigating three suspected cases of coronavirus. Marshall University has canceled all university-sponsored international travel through April 30.

On Wednesday, WVU also announced that its annual Academic Media Day scheduled on March 30 will be canceled in light of the college's decision for students to remain home after spring break and the cancellation of domestic and international travel, John Bolt, senior executive director of communications for the university, said.

*"I also realize that many of you might not have been able to attend because of the avalanche of news happening these days, so canceling seemed the most prudent decision,"* he said.

At Shepherd University at Shepherdstown, W.Va., students getting ready to leave for spring break were advised to take textbooks, course materials, laptops, tablets and personal items with them if the university changes the academic schedule or they are unable to return on March 23.

Course instruction may move from the classroom to online via Sakai, depending on the severity of the coronavirus over the next few days and weeks, Holly Morgan Frye, interim vice president for student affairs and director of Community Relations and the Campus Health Task Force, said in a message to students.

Travel during spring break may require quarantine in place if there are coronavirus reports in the home region or travel area, she said.

Fairmont State University canceled faculty-led trips to Ireland and Egypt. Glenville State College advised students to be careful about where they travel during spring break next week.

In the meantime, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services Tuesday night said a third test for a possible coronavirus infection was negative. Five people have been tested and two tests remain outstanding, the department said.

No cases of the virus are confirmed in West Virginia.

Centers for Disease Control coronavirus website is [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html).

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources around-the-clock COVID-19 information hotline is 1-800-887-4304. The website is [coronavirus.wv.gov](https://www.coronavirus.wv.gov).

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### **Event cancellations increase for precautions**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 18, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2020/03/event-cancellations-increase-for-precautions/>

PARKERSBURG — More cancellations have been announced over COVID-19 coronavirus precautions.

The Lubeck Volunteer Fire Department gun and knife show scheduled April 4 and 5 has been canceled over coronavirus concerns until further notice, organizers said. The show was through a new partnership with R&R Shows.

The Belpre Museum fundraising book sale that was scheduled for this Saturday has been canceled. The event included books collected over the lifetime of the late Rod Hineman.

The Wood County Democratic Executive Committee, saying it is acting out of an abundance of caution and concern, has postponed its annual dinner that was to be held Saturday at the Nemesis Shrine.

*“We will have the dinner later this summer,”* Chairman Judy Stephens said. *“If you have purchased tickets or tables they will be honored when we reschedule.”*

Refunds will be made by emailing [contact@wcwvdeems.com](mailto:contact@wcwvdeems.com).

The city of Parkersburg has canceled the Civil Service test for police officers that was scheduled for 9 a.m. April 4 in council chambers.

In Vienna, the Chick-fil-A on Grand Central Avenue has canceled the April 4 Breakfast with the Bunny event scheduled in conjunction with the Mid-Ohio Valley Easter Parade, which has also announced its cancellation.

The Parkersburg Art Center has canceled the Art-O-Rama scheduled for Saturday, while the ArtStart Preschool has been canceled until further notice. The classes for Mini-Monet, Baby Van Gogh Go, Homeschool Art, and Preschool Picasso have been suspended for now. and teachers will contact parents when they resume. The adult classes and exhibits are remaining open for now. The Camp Creativity scheduled to begin in June will proceed as scheduled.

Parkersburg South High School Band had a bingo event scheduled for Saturday at the PSHS Cafeteria. Due to the closure of area schools, the event has been canceled.

The 11th annual New Era Kite Festival at Mineral Wells Elementary School has been rescheduled from this weekend to April 18-19 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

A Pedal to End Cancer spinning event scheduled for April 4 at the Camden Clark Health and Wellness Center is being postponed. A new date will be announced when it has been determined.

Student auditions have been canceled on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday next week for *“Women Are People,”* a readers theater based on the book of the same name published by

Alice Duer Miller at West Virginia University at Parkersburg. The event is part of the college's commemoration of Women's History Month and the centennial of Women's Suffrage in America.

The Camden Clark Auxiliary Masquerade Jewelry Sale scheduled for Thursday and Friday at the auditorium at Camden Clark Medical Center has been canceled.

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### **WVU-P to extend spring break**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 18, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/03/wvu-p-to-extend-spring-break/>

#### Campuses closed to general public

PARKERSBURG — Spring break will be extended for one week for students at West Virginia University at Parkersburg.

President Chris Gilmer announced on Tuesday that spring break is extended on both campuses through Sunday, March 29. Classes will resume in a fully alternate, non-face-to-face format on Monday, March 30.

The college president also closed the campuses – both Parkersburg and the Jackson County Center – to the general public. Both campuses are open to students, faculty and staff only. Members of the general public are asked to transact business by telephone or through technological means.

This will include requesting admission to the university, registering for classes, getting advised, paying bills, and other necessary functions. A link will be available on the college's website to allow students to access these functions in an online location. Students are also encouraged to call 304-424-8310 to talk to the admissions staff.

*"The university recognizes that this decision will create a hardship for some faculty members, some students, and the public. We deeply regret any inconvenience; however, the decision is judged essential toward the promotion of public health and is in keeping with prevailing national trends," Gilmer said. "We look forward to providing our usual excellent customer service when this crisis has passed."*

The university hopes to resume face-to-face instruction on Monday, April 20, although this date will be evaluated regularly and could be extended, Gilmer said.

Computer labs on both campuses will be open during regular hours, and the IT help desk will remain open, anticipating a higher volume of calls due to an increase in online instruction. Labs

will be available for student and faculty use to complete instruction because the university recognizes that many students and some faculty members do not have reliable access to the Internet at home, WVU-P said. Social distancing will be enforced in the labs, the university said.

*“The goal is to protect the university’s employees and the public to the degree possible by enforcing social distancing,”* Gilmer said. The practice of social distancing is now in mandatory effect on both campuses. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention define social distancing as *“remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately six feet or two meters) from others when possible.”*

The opportunity for most employees to work remotely will be phased in over the next few days, Gilmer said.

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### **WVU-P marketing, communications team wins awards**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 22, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2020/03/wvu-p-marketing-communications-team-wins-awards/>



The WVU Parkersburg Marketing & Communications team won awards in the Educational Advertising Awards competition sponsored by the Higher Education Marketing Report. Back row, from left: Ryan McCoy, student intern; Jared Bailey, multimedia specialist; Sarah Weeks, student intern; Brooke Buchanan, student intern; Rebecca Rhodes, program specialist; Kristy Cramlet, program specialist; and Michelle Young, senior graphic arts designer. Front row: Tom Lemon, program specialist; Madison Sayre, student intern; Torie Jackson, vice president for institutional advancement; and Toni Grogg, student intern. (Photo Provided)

PARKERSBURG — The Marketing and Communications team at West Virginia University at Parkersburg won five awards in the 35th annual Educational Advertising Awards competition sponsored by the Higher Education Marketing Report.

It's the school's first time to be recognized for its marketing efforts by the largest educational advertising awards competition in the country.

WVU Parkersburg earned two gold awards in the Newspaper Advertising – Single Ad and Ad Series categories.

The single ad *“Start Sooner, Finish Faster”* highlights the achievements of a football player who excelled on and off the field by earning college credits during high school. The *“Come Join Us”* ad series features students in well-known spots throughout the seven-county region served by WVU Parkersburg, such as North Bend State Park in Ritchie County, Fort Boreman in Wood County and the Little Sister oil well in Tyler County.

An ad series featuring students who attended rival high schools, but then became best classmates at the college won a silver award in the Newspaper Advertising – Series category.

Bronze and merit awards in the Outdoor Advertising category were received for *“Let Us Invest in You”* and *“Join Us”* billboards showing students in the college's Communication and Media Studies experiential learning program in scenic outdoor spots in Wood and surrounding counties. The students visited the communities as part of an assignment to examine the demographics and other characteristics of the target audiences in those areas for marketing research.

*“Our team is innovative in both design and in approach to educational advertising,”* said Torie Jackson, vice president for institutional advancement, WVU Parkersburg. *“It is this initiative to pursue uncommon marketing techniques that allows WVU Parkersburg to make a prominent statement among the pages of newspapers, the sounds of airwaves, or the passing of billboards. It is an honor to work with such a talented team.”*

This year, the Educational Advertising Awards received more than 2,350 entries from over 1,000 colleges, universities and secondary schools from all 50 states and several foreign countries.

Judges for the awards competition consisted of a national panel of higher education marketers, advertising creative directors, marketing and advertising professionals and the editorial board of the Higher Education Marketing Report.

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**WVUP closing all buildings, moving all functions online [video]**

WTAP-TV

March 23, 2020

<https://www.wtap.com/content/news/WVUP-closing-all-buildings-moving-all-functions-online-569034121.html>

**PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP)** - West Virginia University at Parkersburg is closing all of its buildings in Parkersburg and Ripley at the close of business on Monday because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The building will stay closed until further notice.

In addition, President Chris Gilmer said all instruction and business functions of the college are immediately moving online, with all offices operating remotely starting on Tuesday.

“It is our great hope that we will be able to come back to face-to-face operations as soon as possible,” said Gilmer. “We will be monitoring the situation continuously and making appropriate announcements.”

As announced last week, spring break has been extended on both WVU Parkersburg campuses through March 29. Classes will resume in non-face-to-face formats on March 30.

The college will continue to make updates on the campus website to notify students, faculty and staff members. You can go to the website by clicking on the link to the right of this article. [www.wvup.edu/coronavirus](http://www.wvup.edu/coronavirus).

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### **Businesses, cities adapt with COVID-19 restrictions**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 24, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/03/businesses-cities-adapt-with-covid-19-restrictions/>

**PARKERSBURG** — More activities are grinding to a halt as cities and businesses in the Mid-Ohio Valley continue the global effort to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Hino Motors Manufacturing USA shut down production, effective Monday, at its Parkersburg facility, with hopes to resume April 6, said Davey Jung, executive vice president.

*“Unfortunately the situation is quite fluid, so we will continue to monitor and assess the situation and make any adjustment to our schedule accordingly,”* he said.



Peoples Bank is serving customers primarily through drive-throughs, with some in-person services by appointment, said Ashley Brown, vice president regional manager. Employees are working on rotating schedules to serve customers while minimizing contact.

*“We are paying all full-time employees, regardless of the number of hours they’re working,”* Brown said.

Even before Gov. Jim Justice issued his *“Stay-at-Home”* order Monday afternoon, Parkersburg Mayor Tom Joyce announced city buildings would be closed to the public and all employees age 65 and older, or with specific underlying health conditions, had been sent home either to work from there or on paid leave. Memorial Bridge toll collectors were placed on paid leave, and the bridge is open at no charge until further notice.

Joyce said multiple factors led to his decisions, including a confirmed COVID-19 case in Washington County and multiple employers and organizations implementing similar steps.

*“The city is taking every precautionary measure to keep our employees safe with our primary focus being the continuity of essential services,”* he said via email *“Those services deemed essential are Fire Department operations, police and sanitation.”*

After Justice’s declaration, Joyce expanded upon the initial steps, saying all non-essential personnel will be placed on paid leave starting Wednesday. The governor’s order takes effect at 8 p.m. today.

In addition, Municipal Court proceedings are postponed until further notice. City parks remain open, but the bathrooms are closed. People should maintain the recommended social distancing of at least 6 feet between them in the parks, Joyce said.

City Council President Mike Reynolds said he decided to cancel tonight’s council meeting, which had been planned to be livestreamed on YouTube. The agenda was light, he said, and it made sense not to put anyone at risk by holding it.

The governor’s order didn’t change much for the cities of Vienna, Ravenswood and St. Marys, officials said.

*“Our office is closed to the public, but we are business as normal,”* St. Marys City Manager Mark Dearman said. *“We’re just maintaining our regular work staff, practicing, of course, social distancing.”*

Vienna Mayor Randy Rapp said the city building was closed last week, along with the Vienna Utility Board building. Numbers to contact for services are posted at both locations and online

*“We are not taking any face-to-face payments at this time,”* he said. *“We’re running on skeleton crews, except for essential services.”*

Vienna Recreation is still accepting online applications for spring sports.

*“They’ll make a decision later on what time the leagues will start, if we’re allowed to,”* Rapp said.

The drive-through windows at the new Ravenswood City Building – a former BB&T facility – have been useful over the last week-and-a-half, Mayor Josh Miller said. The entire city hall was shut down a week ago, with employees being scheduled to work in cycles to cut down on contact, he said. For those who need to stay home with children, arrangements are being made.

*“We’re being very flexible with our employees, and we’re only sticking to the basics,”* Miller said.

No utility services will be terminated as pandemic precautions batter the economy, he said.

Miller urged citizens to *“stay at home as much as you can”* to cut the risk of spreading the virus. One person has tested positive in Jackson County.

The city building in Spencer went *“on lockdown”* Monday, before Justice spoke, Mayor Terry Williams said. All events at city-owned buildings have been canceled for the next three weeks – with the exception of an American Red Cross blood drive slated for 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday at the Heritage Park Community Building.

*“We’ll allow that to happen because there’s a blood shortage,”* Williams said.

Municipal staff will report to the building today, and Williams expects to put them on rotational shifts then.

*“We’ve got to be serious and take every step we can to protect people,”* Williams said. *“We’ve even closed our parks and basketball courts. We don’t want kids congregating with school out.”*

West Virginia University at Parkersburg announced Monday afternoon that its main campus in Parkersburg and its Jackson County Center in Ripley would be closed at the end of business Monday and will remain locked until further notice. All instruction and business functions of the college were moving immediately online with the hope to resume face-to-face operations as soon as possible, according to the school’s Facebook page.

Hands-on learning, such as labs, will be shifted to the end of courses. If the school is unable to resume face-to-face operations nearing the semester’s end, the situation will be assessed for further options.

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### **Mid-Ohio Valley groups band together to make faceshields**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 27, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2020/03/mid-ohio-valley-groups-band-together-to-make-faceshields/>



Logan Mace, West Virginia University at Parkersburg Entrepreneur Center project coordinator, wears a faceshield prototype to demonstrate its usage. (Photo Provided)

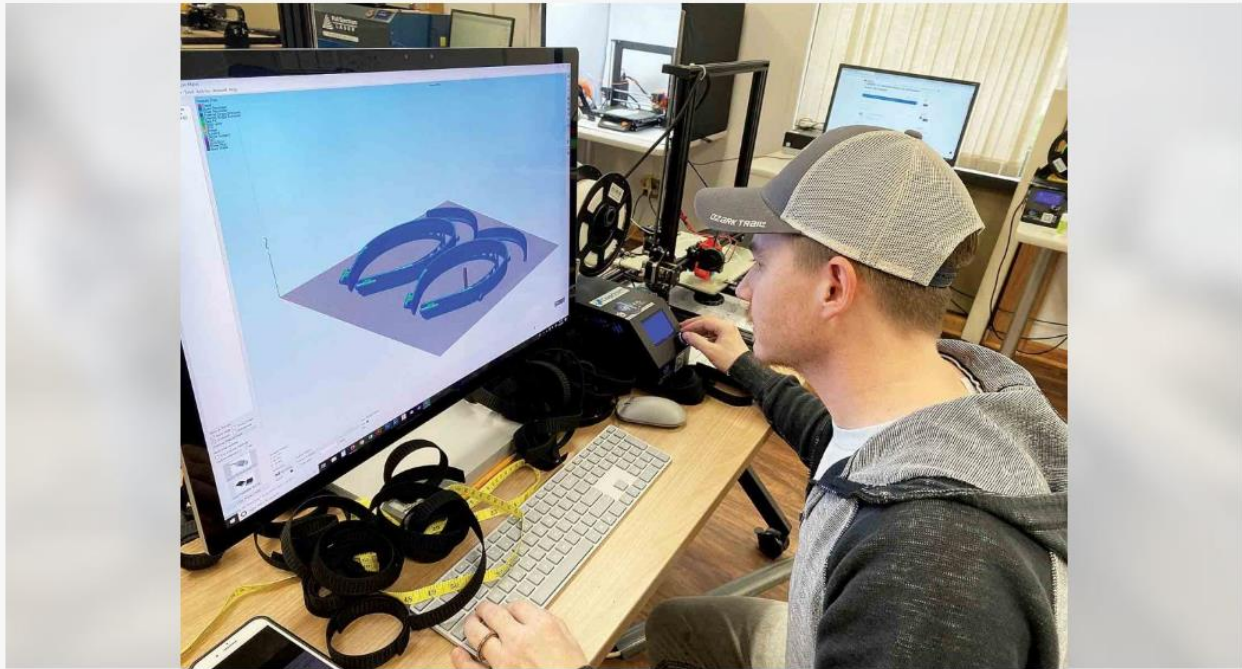
**PARKERSBURG** — Residents across the Mid-Ohio Valley are working together to do their part in fighting the COVID-19 coronavirus.

The Entrepreneur Center at West Virginia University at Parkersburg has partnered with Marietta’s Building Bridges to Career Makerspace and the Boys and Girls Club of Parkersburg to produce hundreds of protective faceshields for local health care providers.

According to Michele Wilson, executive director of the college’s Workforce and Economic Development Division, she was recently contacted by Jeff Matheny of the WVU-Parkersburg , Board of Governors and the CEO of Physicians Business Office recently to see how they could use their onsite makerspace to provide additional faceshields to the health care community.

*“I’ve been following the news on COVID-19 responses from hospitals and health care facilities around the country when I saw an article talking about shortages of personal protective equipment because of huge demand,”* said Matheny. *“The article described the process which has been developed in Boston to utilize 3D printers to produce face shields.*

Matheny said upon forwarding the information to Wilson, her team jumped in and quickly produced a prototype.



Logan Mace inputs the head piece design into the 3-D printing program, telling the printers what design to create. (Photo Provided)

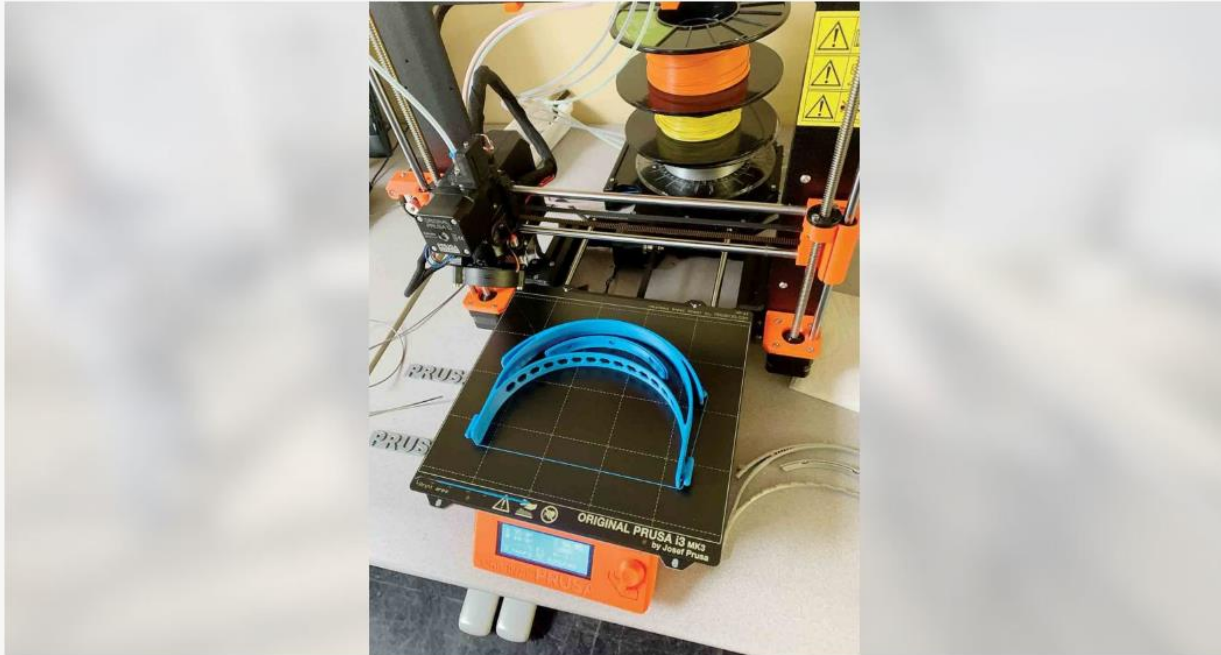
“Other community partners have since become involved with the project,” said Wilson. “Local philanthropist Tres Ross of the Ross Foundation called each of the makerspaces and brought us together in hopes of using the available resources to produce hundreds of the face shields,” said Wilson.

“We (Building Bridges to Careers Makerspace) were already looking for a way to help out during this time of need, when we were contacted by Tres Ross,” said Marietta makerspace coordinator Brad Hemmerly.

Hemmerly said he was excited for the partnership and chance to help the community.

Facing the challenge of producing protective face shields as quickly as possible, Logan Mace, WVU-Parkersburg Entrepreneur Center project coordinator, said he immediately started researching potential solutions.

Mace said he found that the online maker community already had designs developed that the college’s makerspace would be able to fabricate using its 3D printers and laser cutter.



A 3-D printer prints the headpiece design at the Building Bridges to Careers Makerspace in Marietta. (Photo Provided)

“A prototype was created and shared with Matheny, who then asked the makerspace to create 100 shields as quickly as possible for distribution to local hospitals, physicians’ offices and health care centers later this week,” said Wilson.

Mace said the shield helps protect the wearer’s face from contagious sneezes and coughs.

According to Wilson, the West Virginia National Guard also has collected a prototype from the college to test it for durability and protection capabilities.

Wilson said the makerspaces have enough supplies for 1,600 face shields and that Ross and other community partners are working to provide more materials.

“It takes two hours to print the frame and only minutes to cut the shield and attach the elastic piece,” said Wilson.



Finished products were loaded for distribution Thursday. (Photo Provided)

According to Wilson, the Workforce and Economic Development Division is planning to virtually train other makerspace locations throughout the state on how to create the masks for distribution.

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### Local residents ready to help

The Marietta Times

March 26, 2020

<https://www.mariettatimes.com/news/2020/03/local-residents-ready-to-help/>

People in Marietta stand ready to help their neighbors, but their neighbors, for now, seem to be doing OK.

The NextDoor website that connects people in the Oak Grove and Devola communities posted a call for people willing to help the elderly and infirm, those unable or unwilling to go out in these times of pandemic, and more than a dozen signed up. At this point, there appear to be few taking them up on the offer.

*“I’ve offered, but I haven’t had anyone yet who needed assistance,”* Devola resident Sean Phelps said Wednesday. *“I’ve checked in on a couple of neighbors, one has a grandson taking care of her needs. I’ll make time if anybody needs help, for anybody who needs anything picked up so they don’t have to be exposed.”*

Janet Stacy, one of the Stacy Family Farm proprietors, said she also has indicated she’s available to help.

*“Even my mother insists on going out on her own. I check with our neighbors any time I’m just going out,” she said. “I wish they’d just stay home and let us help them, but they’re independent and want to do things on their own. They’re taking advantage of those special shopping hours for seniors. What can you do? We’re just figuring it out, doing the best we can.”*

Stacy said in some ways she thinks the older generation is adapted to crisis.

*“In all honesty, I think the elderly are prepared for this, because that’s the way they live. Younger people, this is all new to them,” she said. “I’m hoping when our strawberry season comes, this sticks, that people will maybe freeze them, learn to can tomatoes, it could be a fun and important thing to do.”*

Jane Trautman has lived in Oak Grove for 48 years, and she’s offered to help neighbors, but like Phelps and Stacy found that her neighbors seem to be weathering the challenge well.

*“A lot of people do have people looking after them,” she said. “I have a good friend, she’s 96 years old, and her daughter is looking after her. I’m taking some chili to her tomorrow. I’m staying in touch with people I know who are older.”*

Trautman said she walks every day, and the mild weather has helped decrease the sense of isolation for many.

*“I just hope we can get through this, I pray and hope it won’t be as bad as it is in New York City,” she said. “We just need to reach out and be kind to one another, let people know you’re thinking about them. I do reach out to neighbors and friends, and I got names from my church, Gilman Methodist, and checked with them. We’ll get through this somehow.”*

The city’s food pantries have been swamped with demand. Sherry Hill at the Marietta Community Food Pantry, which a few months ago moved from the First Congregational Church on Front Street to the Broughton Commercial complex on Ohio 821, said demand has nearly tripled since the onset of COVID-19 restrictions. The service, she said, is being conducted by volunteers who place the food requests on a table outside the building. The client then picks up the food and places it in the car, avoiding direct contact.

*“It’s actually working very well,” Hill said. “They drive up, a volunteer in mask and gloves takes the food out. The clients have been very cooperative and patient.”*

The pantry has seen many new clients, she said.

*“I’ve talked to them, some of them at length on the phone. These are new families who haven’t previously used a food pantry, many of them because a business shut down and they lost their income,” she said.*

Volunteer Orvie Fisher said the pantry is in need of many items.

*“We need Lysol, disinfecting wipes, gloves and masks,” he said. “And for our clients, there’s peanut butter, toilet paper, canned beans, macaroni and cheese, canned soup, crackers, diapers, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste ...”*

The Gospel Mission food pantry has been going nearly nonstop as well, said director Candy Waite.

*“A gentleman was just here picking up food for his clients at L&P Services (a mental health services firm), the O’Neill Center has been here, Head Start, we’ve had quite a few here,” she said. “And that’s a blessing, that they’re coming here to get food for people in need.”*

The mission is maintaining social distancing, she said.

*“We’re keeping our distance, only letting two people in at a time. We didn’t want to do that, but we don’t have a choice,” she said. “We are going through a lot of food, it seems like 10 times as much. I want to send out a plea for donations so we can continue to help everybody. We’re running low on a lot of things.”*

Waite maintained her optimism.

*“We are learning this together, we’re all just going forward in life, encouraging everybody to trust in the Lord, lean on the Lord,” she said. “People have anxieties, they are scared.”*

Meanwhile, a few doors down from Gospel Mission, the Building Business to Careers Makerspace on Lancaster Street is gearing up to help the front line medical professionals cope with the expected onslaught of patients with COVID-19.

Brad Hemmerly said the Marietta operation has united with a number of makerspace operations in the region to create face shields for doctors, nurses and other hospital and clinical personnel. The shields will help prolong the life of personal protective equipment such as N95 masks and safety glasses by reducing exposure, he said.

*“The idea came from the Czech Republic,” he said. An operation there used computer design and 3-D printing to make enough shields for the entire country, he said. The designer made the command files publicly available and they are now being used around the world.*

Hemmerly said the computer file issues directions to a 3-D printer to make the devices out of plastic. Hemmerly was in Columbus Wednesday afternoon picking up the raw plastic for the printers. He said the Marietta makerspace and those at the Parkersburg Boys and Girls Club and WVU-P are working to produce them.

*“Each one takes about six hours to print,” he said. “We’re reaching out to other makerspaces in Ohio to see if they’re interested in participating. Also, people who have 3-D printers at home can post a note on our Makerspace of Marietta Ohio Facebook group if they’re interested in helping.”*



### Volunteers from WVU-P reach out to seniors

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 30, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2020/03/volunteers-from-wvu-p-reach-out-to-seniors/>



Volunteers made a basket to deliver to the residents of Mid- Ohio Valley Nursing Home and Cedar Grove Assisted Living. (Photo Provided)

PARKERSBURG — Volunteers with West Virginia University at Parkersburg have come together to help brighten up the days of residents at Mid- Ohio Valley Nursing Home and Cedar Grove Assisted Living.

*“Right now we have around 30 volunteers that have been connected with a resident,”* said WVU-P President Dr. Chris Gilmer.

Gilmer said they only know the residents’ first names, and he was put in contact with a lady named Bernice.

*“We talk a couple times a week about everyday topics,”* said Gilmer.

Senta Goudy, with the college’s Center for Weekly Engagement, had the idea.



Dr. Chris Gilmer, president of West Virginia University at Parkersburg, colors a photo for his adopted grandparent, Bernice. (Photo Provided)

“I saw different posts on social media where residents were reaching out to family at home or about those who had no one to talk to,” she said.

Goudy said this idea was a way to help lift the spirits of those in isolation.

“Some of them like to talk about their pasts, days and feelings, it is important for them to have outside contact and feel heard,” said Gilmer.

Volunteers have been writing letters and making pictures for their adopted grandparent.

Goudy said the two nursing homes do a lot for the college community and she is glad for the opportunity to help them and show thanks to their residents.

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### **Donations supply a booster shot to Camden Clark Medical Center**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

March 29, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/03/donations-supply-a-booster-shot-to-camden-clark-medical-center/>



A nurse at the WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center Emergency Department with the supplies of Personal Protective Equipment donated to the hospital by the nursing program at West Virginia University at Parkersburg. (Photo Provided)

PARKERSBURG — Local nursing education programs are stepping up by donating needed protective gear to the WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center to help during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Nursing and Health Sciences division at West Virginia University at Parkersburg and the nursing program at the Wood County Technical Center donated protective supplies to the hospital.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has spread, many hospitals in the country have faced shortages of protective gear for medical personnel.

*“The Nursing and Health Sciences division at WVU Parkersburg answered the call when we were notified by WVU Medicine Camden Clark of their desperate need for personal protective equipment (PPE),”* said Kathy Frum, chair of Nursing and Health Sciences Division. *“On behalf of the NHS division, Amy West, program director of the Surgical Technology program, and Megan Ludwig, Surgical Technology faculty member, gathered disposable PPE supplies that we had in our nursing and surgical technology labs.”*

The donations, delivered last week, included sterile gowns, isolation gowns, surgical masks, surgical masks with shields, shoe covers and gloves.

*“(These items were donated) to those healthcare providers on the frontline who desperately need these items to keep our community safe as well as themselves and their families,”* Frum said. *“The healthcare providers are truly the heroes in this crisis.”*

Another donation was made by the nursing program at the Wood County Technical Center.

Julie Bertram, director of health services for Wood County Schools, and Don Brown, director of security for Wood County Schools, delivered the medical supplies Monday to the Camden Clark emergency room.

*“We dropped off masks and gloves and gowns and face shields,” Bertram said. “They were for the nursing program, but now that schools are closed, we know there is a need for them at Camden Clark.”*

These initiatives have the support of the leadership at WVU Parkersburg.

President Chris Gilmer said he appreciates the efforts of the employees who are using the makerspace at the university to help design alternative medical supplies for local healthcare providers and the team that provided some of the university’s stockpiled medical supplies to Camden Clark as ways of reaching out to the community in a time of need.

*“I appreciate that Riverhawks are thinking strategically and proactively about how we can all support each other and how we can help to ease the burden on the healthcare system,” Gilmer said.*

Over the past week, the Southside and Vienna Lowes stores donated rain suits, 3M masks, gloves, goggles and a canopy; Home Depot, Rural King, Peoples Bank and Woodcraft donated N95 masks to the hospital.

In a statement from Camden Clark, officials said while supplies are available for their staff at this time, as the incident rate of COVID-19 affects the community, they anticipate an increased demand for PPE.

*“We are exceptionally grateful for the businesses, unions, and individuals who have graciously donated supplies to support our inventory,” the statement said.*

Officials at the medical center were touched by the support from the local community.

*“The outpouring of local donations of personal protection equipment and supplies by our community members has been amazing and we are very grateful to the many groups who are helping support WVU Medicine Camden Clark and our employees during this important time period,” said MarJean Kennedy, vice president of marketing, Business Development and Strategic Initiatives. “We very much appreciate the generosity of groups like the Health Sciences Division at WVU Parkersburg, the Wood County Technical Center, Woodcraft, West Virginia Appalachian Laborers’ District Council and the many others whose PPE donations help ensure that our team at Camden Clark remains prepared to manage the COVID-19 outbreak as we work to maintain the health and wellness of the community we serve.”*



Megan Ludwig, Surgical Technology faculty member at West Virginia University at Parkersburg, and Amy West, Program Director of the Surgical Technology program at West Virginia University at Parkersburg, deliver donated Personal Protective Equipment to the Emergency Department at WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center. (Photo Provided)



The nursing program at West Virginia University at Parkersburg donated their sterile gowns, isolation gowns, surgical masks, surgical masks with shields, shoe covers and gloves to the Emergency Department at WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center. (Photo Provided)



From left, Amy West, program director of the Surgical Technology program at West Virginia University at Parkersburg; Megan Ludwig, Surgical Technology faculty member; and Linda Roberts, WVUP security guard, gathered the supply of disposable Personal Protective Equipment they had in the nursing and surgical technology labs and donated it to the Emergency Department at WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center as the school was closed down during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hospitals nationwide are reporting shortages of such needed equipment. (Photo Provided)

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### **RCBI producing face shields to aid health care industry**

Charleston Gazette-Mail

March 30, 2020

[https://www.wvgazettemail.com/coronavirus/rcbi-producing-face-shields-to-aid-health-care-industry/article\\_82abc6d1-bb12-51b3-a863-ed3069c8c54.html](https://www.wvgazettemail.com/coronavirus/rcbi-producing-face-shields-to-aid-health-care-industry/article_82abc6d1-bb12-51b3-a863-ed3069c8c54.html)

**HUNTINGTON** — In an effort to help protect health care workers on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff members at Marshall University’s Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) have developed ways to produce face shields using 3D printing and laser technology.

Using the variety of 3D printers in RCBI’s Center for Innovation and the laser in the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center, RCBI’s staff is manufacturing components for face shields that can be used in health care settings until commercially produced supplies catch up with demand, according to Charlotte Weber, director and CEO at RCBI.

“These prototypes are examples of the innovation that is possible through the expertise of our staff at RCBI,” Weber said. “I am proud that our team has stepped up to try to meet this need in the health care community.”

Deacon Stone, who manages RCBI's Center for Innovation, pioneered a printing method that produces multiple frames at once instead of one at a time.

"Our unique innovation transforms a typical one-off 3D printer into a production warehouse," Stone said. "This approach has allowed us to produce 100 face shield frames in under 24 hours, using only four machines."

In addition to the 3D printed frame prototypes, Jerry Jefferson in RCBI's Advanced Technology Center has been using a laser to cut polycarbonate plastic material into shields to fit to the 3D-printed frames. He also created a version of the face shield that can be entirely manufactured using RCBI's laser.

"We can cut the components for an entire face shield in two minutes, and we can cut roughly 200 of them from one sheet of polycarbonate," Jefferson said.

As each prototype is modified and improved, RCBI's team will share results with others around the world to help improve on the process and more rapidly meet the need for personal protective equipment in hospitals, Weber added.

RCBI isn't the only agency efforting to make face shields for medical providers and first responders. Shepherd University, West Virginia University-Parkersburg, and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine all are working toward fabricating face shields.

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### **College courses continue off campuses because of COVID-19**

WV MetroNews

March 31, 2020

<http://wvmetronews.com/2020/03/31/college-courses-continue-off-campuses-because-of-covid-19/>

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** — At colleges and universities across West Virginia, it's an historic time as the 2020 Spring Semester continues off campuses, part of statewide efforts to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus.

One of those institutions going completely online with coursework starting this week was Glenville State College located in Gilmer County in the heart of the Mountain State where, prior to Monday, less than 25 percent of classes were not conducted in person.

"We've never been completely online before — like probably most institutions in the state," said Dr. Gary Morris, provost and vice president of academic affairs at Glenville State.

He talked with MetroNews on Day 2 of the "new normal" with instruction being delivered to Glenville State students online via YouTube, Skype, Microsoft Teams and other methods.

“It’s left up to the instructors to decide what the best way for them to deliver their content is and it’s all over the place,” said Morris.

In general, Glenville State’s transition was built onto the existing Blackboard system that already linked the campus.

Similar steps came during extended spring breaks in March on campuses in other parts of West Virginia and other states.

Full online instruction began on Monday at schools that included West Virginia University, Marshall University, West Virginia University at Parkersburg, Shepherd University and West Virginia State University.

“It has been a pretty massive shift in a pretty short period of time,” said Dr. Sarah Armstrong Tucker, interim chancellor for the Higher Education Policy Commission and chancellor of the West Virginia Community and Technical College System.

Concord University made the change last week along with Bluefield State College and Fairmont State University.

Transitions were also continuing at West Liberty University, Wheeling University and other higher education institutions.

“Some lectures will need to be videotaped and livestreamed. Some coursework is able to be completed via email. It’s just sort of depends on the course and where they are in the semester,” said Dr. Tucker.

“Getting people trained on how to do this effectively has been a pretty significant challenge, making sure that we have the bandwidth in the state to be able to do this. We have a lot of students too who don’t have internet access from their home.”

Bandwidth on WVNET, which connects schools to the internet, has been ramped up to handle increased traffic.

At Glenville State, Morris said a few students without any access to the internet in off-campus locations were given special permission to remain in the residence halls following screenings for COVID-19 symptoms and then precautionary self-quarantines.

Nineteen students deemed high risk or in high need for a variety of reasons were remaining on campus as of Tuesday.

Other students were permitted to schedule appointments to retrieve items from Glenville State’s residence halls.

“Overall, morale seems to be pretty good. I think this having been in the news for some time before we had to make some decisions helped because people were aware this was coming,” Morris said.



West Virginia University officials **previously said the decision** to keep students off campuses in Morgantown, Beckley and Keyser was being made “out of an abundance of caution to best protect its campuses and the communities at-large.”

All campus buildings, including residence halls, were closed and all WVU employees were required to work from home with exceptions for those needed to keep online operations running along with a select few others.

Students were not allowed to return to campuses except under limited circumstances until notified.

At **Marshall University**, faculty and staff members went through training prior to the transition online on Monday.

Final exams were scheduled at Marshall from Apr. 30 to May 1.

“It’s been a very big challenge. Higher ed has faced some very significant challenges through this COVID crisis,” said Tucker. “The institutions are doing their best to make sure that their campus communities stay safe.”

At Glenville State, Dr. Morris agreed.

“I was a little nervous, but the faculty here have been remarkable,” Morris said.

“They knew what was happening and they said, ‘What can I do to help? How can I do this?’ It speaks to the nature of the people in this industry and at this campus that we’ve been able to do that.”

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### **Local colleges finishing semester online**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

April 1, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2020/04/local-colleges-finishing-semester-online/>

#### *WVU-P postpones spring commencement*

West Virginia University at Parkersburg will continue with online classes for the rest of the semester, college officials said Tuesday.

Officials are monitoring the situation, according to a press release from WVU-P.

WVU-P President Chris Gilmer, in an e-mail sent to the campus community, said he has had to accept the reality the university will not be able to hold the May 2020 commencement.

“I am officially announcing that it has been postponed,” he said. “I have waited longer than most college presidents to make this decision because I realize, based on feedback from our

students and my own experience, that commencement is the most important and cherished time of the year for our graduates and their families.”

Gilmer said a virtual commencement was considered which would have allowed the university to celebrate at the usual time, but was judged to be an insufficient way for the university to fully mark the accomplishments of students.

He still wants to be able to do a live graduation toward the end of summer so students and their families could celebrate those accomplishments.

“WVU Parkersburg’s Spring 2020 Commencement is being postponed until Saturday, Aug. 8, 2020,” Gilmer said. “At present, nothing except the date will change.

“The postponed ceremony will be designed to be a moment of even greater celebration for our graduates and their families. Please hold the date Aug. 8 for our postponed spring commencement.”

The university had originally planned to return to face-to-face instruction on April 20. However, based on the extended national social distancing policy, that goal can no longer be met until May 4 at the earliest, Gilmer said.

“We will currently hope to resume face-to-face instruction for one or two weeks in early May so that our labs and more hands-on programs can finish the semester with fuller teaching and learning options,” Gilmer said. “If the social distancing guidelines are extended, we will revise our plans and make further announcements.

“Regardless, we expect to finish this semester’s academic instruction in one format or another and to proceed fully with summer and fall instruction.”

Officials with Ohio Valley University posted on its website that the Higher Learning Commission has granted permission for the university to conduct all of their courses online for the remainder of the semester.

“This means you will need to be extremely proactive through this transition in the way you engage in each course,” the post told students.

All planned activities on campus are either canceled or postponed for the remainder of the semester. Cancellations include Expressions, New Day Conference and the Spring Musical. Encounter is being postponed.

“Graduation is not being canceled, but commencement exercises will be postponed to a later date,” *the post said*. “*Graduates will receive their diplomas as coursework is completed at the end of the semester.*”

Marietta College also is continuing online coursework and will conduct a virtual commencement on May 3, according to a post on the college’s website.

The college will hold the virtual ceremony so students' achievements are still recognized. Later in the summer, the college will mail each graduate their diploma.

"However, President Bill Ruud understands that this milestone must also include an on-campus ceremony," the post said. "The college is still working out the details, but there will be a traditional commencement scheduled at a later date."

Classes are continuing online at Washington State Community College.

Officials had originally planned to resume on-campus classes next week. However, as social distancing recommendations have been extended to the end of April, most class work has moved online. Including College Credit Plus sections for dual enrollment students, 380 courses were moved to a virtual format.

Faculty devised videos and utilized technology in other ways to teach and supply students with needed data to complete coursework as stay-at-home orders were initiated.

*"Each faculty member rose to the challenge and devised plans to ensure their students could still learn. The challenge they were presented with was enormous, yet when classes were back in session the following week, they were ready,"* said Vicky Wood, president of WSCC. *"We used best practices to quickly devise a plan to keep our students on track to finish their courses this semester and in many cases, complete their degrees."*

The spring commencement will be postponed, said Washington State Marketing Director Elizabeth Godfrey.

Washington State officials will meet today to discuss plans for how to proceed with graduation and other celebratory events, she said.

An announcement is expected to be made soon to the community on what those plans will entail.

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### **WVU-Parkersburg continues to offer counseling for students [video]**

WTAP-TV

April 3, 2020

<https://www.wtap.com/content/news/WVU-Parkersburg-continues-to-offer-counseling-for-students-569337411.html>

**PARKERSBURG, W. Va. (WTAP)** Even with the campus being closed and students doing online classes, WVU-Parkersburg is making sure students still get the help that they help need.

The college has been continuing to offer counseling services to students through email and by phone.

They are now working on another way to communicate with the students who are in need if the services.

"We are working throughout the West Virginia colleges like myself, like WVUP are working to establish a telehealth," said Kurt Klettner, executive director of student support services at WVU -Parkersburg. "Which enables me to incorporate elements of the camera. We have programs, it's like Skype. It allows me to talk with and then see, if they have a computer with a camera, they can voluntarily choose that."

The college will continue to work to make telehealth available to students.

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### **WVU Parkersburg students reach top 100 in global business competition**

Clutch MOV

April 3, 2020

<https://clutchmov.com/wvu-parkersburg-students-reach-top-100-in-global-business-competition/>

WVU Parkersburg Business Policy Capstone students are in a neck-and-neck race for global market leadership competing in the international market simulator [GLO-BUS](#). All five student teams in the class finished in the top 100 recently.

The competition promotes students to co-managers of a company – selling either wearable video cameras or sophisticated camera-equipped copter drones – where they must make major decisions in areas such as product design and performance, financing company operations, pricing and marketing.

A computer provides insight into how each decision will impact the company's performance by calculating the potential sales, profits, and other key information. The companies are judged on five criteria, including how much they earn per share, return on equity investment, stock prices, credit rating and brand image.

"Seeing it from week to week, you see how important it all is," said Tom Mullenix, WVU Parkersburg student and team member of Prestige Worldwide. "Our team didn't consider the importance of some aspects of the process, but we now see how crucial each element is."

This marks the first time all of the student teams in the capstone class have earned a top 100 ranking during the competition. The top performer, A PORC, tied for 25th in the overall game, and their performance in stock price ranked 8th globally for the same week of February 24 to March 1.

"It's quite amazing to see five teams all in one location in a global competition," said Jeff

Holland, professor and chairperson of the Business, Accounting and Public Service Division. “It’s almost statistically impossible.”

GLO-BUS combines all of the student’s previously learned concepts and lets them create their own strategies for success.

Supported by classmate and teammate, Nick Roedersheimer, Mullenix added, “We took some loans early, and we’ve paid them off. We’re looking forward to doing well in the long run.”

The competition is ongoing and the teams are planning for continued success.

The Business Policy Capstone students are joined by more than 31,000 students from 297 schools in nearly 30 countries.

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### **Parkersburg man writes fifth novel**

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

April 5, 2020

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2020/04/parkersburg-man-writes-fifth-novel/>



"On a Sunday in May" is the fifth novel by Stephen Hupp, the library director at West Virginia University at Parkersburg, and is set in the world of auto racing. It is available at amazon.com. (Photo by Jess Mancini)

PARKERSBURG — A Parkersburg man penned his fifth novel, this one set in the world of auto racing.

*"On a Sunday in May"* by Stephen Hupp is about a day in May in auto racing when the Grand Prix of Monaco, the Indianapolis 500 and the 600 Mile race at Charlotte are held. *"On a Sunday in May"* presents three stories based on the world-class races.

*"I've been interested in cars and racing since I was kid about 10-years old in the 1970s,"* Hupp said.

Among his favorite drivers were Tony Stewart, Al Unser Jr. and Sr., Mario Andretti, A.J. Foyt and Dan Gurney.

He's never raced or gotten involved in the sport, which compared to other sports and activities is expensive, Hupp said.

*"I'm not much of an athlete,"* he said.

The book is a sequel to Hupp's first novel, *"Born to the Breed,"* which was about Marty Dodd. Dodd aspired to be a driver in NASCAR, but his parents had other career plans for the want-to-be racer.

Dodd and car owner Roland McCarthy return in *"On a Sunday in May"* with several new characters, Hupp said.

The characters, composite personalities of people Hupp has known, include the Italian driver Teo Valla and the American racer Logan Collins.

The stories are fictional accounts of the three races, but are based on actual events in history, Hupp said.

*“Readers who are knowledgeable about racing will pick up about what races I’m talking about,”* he said.

The book is written from the perspective of the radio communications between driver and crew and from broadcast commentaries, Hupp said.

*“There is some narrative in the stories giving background of the characters,”* he said.

The 260-page *“On a Sunday in May”* is available from amazon.com for \$19.99. A Kindle version is available for \$2.99.

Hupp also is in discussions with West Virginia book stores about stocking *“On a Sunday in May.”*

Hupp is the director of libraries at West Virginia University at Parkersburg. He plans to continue writing, but is taking a break for the next month before starting on his next book.

*“I’m not sure what it will be about,”* he said. *“I have some ideas.”*

In addition to *“On a Sunday in May”* and *“Born to the Breed,”* his earlier writings are *“Daughter of the Valley”* and *“Wings in the Night”* that are set in the Mid-Ohio Valley and *“Of Gods and Spirits.”*

All publications are available on Amazon.

For more information, call Hupp at 304 482-3176 or at [stephenlhupp@gmail.com](mailto:stephenlhupp@gmail.com).

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