



West Virginia University at Parkersburg
Board of Governors Meeting
Media Clips

May 13, 2023 – January 13, 2024

**Dr. Torie Jackson named West Virginia University at Parkersburg President
WTAP**

May 16, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/05/16/dr-torie-jackson-named-west-virginia-university-parkersburg-president/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - Doctor Torie Jackson was named as the president for the commuter college.

“We are excited and honored that Dr. Torie Jackson has been selected as the new President of WVUP,” said Steven Hardman, chair of the board. “Dr. Jackson’s experiences — both personally and professionally — and her outlook on life make her uniquely suited for this position.”

Dr. Jackson — who served in the interim president role for the 2022 through 2023 academic year — says she is excited to be taking on this position.

Jackson is a WVU-P graduate and says it is the college built her into the person that she is today.

“I often says that this is the college that built me. And I literally mean that,” Dr. Jackson said. “When I was at a time in my life when things were difficult, this is the college that

embraced me and helped me to develop confidence in myself. So, to be able to instill that confidence into students today is a dream that I'm happy to have."

Dr. Jackson said she was overwhelmed by the community's immediate support after being named WVU-Parkersburg president. Jackson said she looks forward to continuing to improve the college.

"We recently have completed our strategic plan for the college, and it will take a team approach to reach those goals and outcomes," said Jackson when asked about her plans for presidency. "We will also continue to work with industry professionals to prepare a workforce for upcoming jobs, and focus efforts on recruitment and retention of students in all programs."

Jackson is a Ritchie County native who has been a member of WVU-Parkersburg since 2008. She is an alum of WVUP with an associate of applied science in journalism. She has a Regents Bachelor of Arts with an emphasis in journalism, a Master's in corporate/organizational communication, and a doctorate in higher education administration, all from West Virginia University.

Jackson named WVUP president
Parkersburg News and Sentinel
May 17, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2023/05/jackson-named-wvup-president/>



PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg has named its new president.

The school's Board of Governors voted Tuesday to name Torie Jackson as the new president of the university.

The board's vote brought cheers and applause from some of the over 40 people who attended the meeting.

Some even threw confetti as Board President Steven Hardman brought her into the board room and introduced her as the new president.

"It is an honor and a privilege to lead the institution that first embraced me years ago," Jackson said. "I appreciate the support of our board of governors, our faculty and staff, and our students.

"I will continue to work to make sure all of us are WVU Parkersburg Proud!"

The Selection Committee narrowed it down to two finalists, Jackson and Cathy Monteroso, the interim president at West Liberty University, from a list of seven semi-finalists.

Jackson will assume the presidency on July 1. She is currently the interim president and Chief Executive Officer at WVU-P. She has also served the school in various leadership roles since her start in higher education in 2004.

She has been serving as the interim president for almost a year since former President Chris Gilmer left last June to become the president at West Virginia University Potomac State College.

"We have discovered so many things about WVU-P that I think we can make it even better," Jackson said. "So the opportunity to see those through is something I was really hoping I would have and now I do so I am very excited."

Jackson is an alumna of the institution, originally graduating in 1997. She has served as Chief Operating Officer, Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement, President and CEO of the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation, and as an Associate Professor of Communication.

"I often say that this is the college that built me," Jackson said. "When I was at a point in my life when things were difficult this is the college that embraced me and helped me develop confidence in myself.

"To be able to instill that confidence in students today is a dream I am happy to have."

Hardman said they are excited and honored to have selected Jackson as the new president.

"We are excited and honored that Dr. Torie Jackson has been selected as the new President of WVU-P," *Hardman said*. "Dr. Jackson's experiences — both personally and professionally — and her outlook on life make her uniquely suited for this position."

Her other leadership roles at WVU-P have also included Dean of Public Affairs and Experiential Learning; Chair of the Division of Humanities, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences; and Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning at WVU-P. She has been elected by her peers to serve as Chair of the Faculty Senate and as the faculty member of the Board of Governors.

Jackson holds an earned doctoral degree in higher education administration (Ed.D.) from West Virginia University, a master's degree in organizational communication from WVU, and bachelor's and associate degrees in journalism. Her first college degree was an associate degree in journalism from WVU-P.

She had previously worked at The Parkersburg News and Sentinel in the late 1990s. She has also been involved in the community on the Ritchie County Board of Education, as an Executive Committee Member of the West Virginia School Board Association, a Legislative Steering Committee Member of the West Virginia School Board Association, Past President of the Creed Collins Elementary School Parent Teachers Organization, a member of the West Virginia Press Association, Delta Kappa Gamma, and an active leader and volunteer in church and civic activities.

Many representatives from a number of community organizations were present for the announcement and congratulated Jackson immediately afterwards.

"Community support is vital to being a successful college president," Jackson said. "The fact this community has already embraced the direction WVU-P is going and me

as the leader will help us move to that next level of being a driver in the economy and making sure we are preparing the workforce.

“When the community works with the college there is so much success we can have.”

WVU-Parkersburg Veterans Corps to honor Memorial Day

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

May 18, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/05/wvu-parkersburg-veterans-corps-to-honor-memorial-day/>

PARKERSBURG — The West Virginia University at Parkersburg Veterans Corps will host a Memorial Day celebration in honor of those who gave their life serving in the U.S. military at noon May 25 in the College Theater.

“Part of West Virginia University at Parkersburg’s mission is to provide life-changing educational opportunities,” said Darren Shearlock, WVU-P Veterans Advocate. “This Memorial Day ceremony is a great opportunity to provide education on how these honorable men and women sacrificed everything to change all Americans’ lives for the better. I hope the entire Parkersburg area community joins us and shows the whole world that we are so appreciative of their enormous sacrifice.”

Pearley Brown III, an Assistant Professor of English at WVU-P, will be speaking at the ceremony. Brown is the son of Master Sergeant Pearley Brown Jr., a veteran who fought in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

“I always feel honored to host a Memorial Day event at WVU-P,” said Shearlock. “I believe that all Americans owe an enormous debt to the courageous men and women who died defending our country and our way of life.”

The event is free and open to the public.

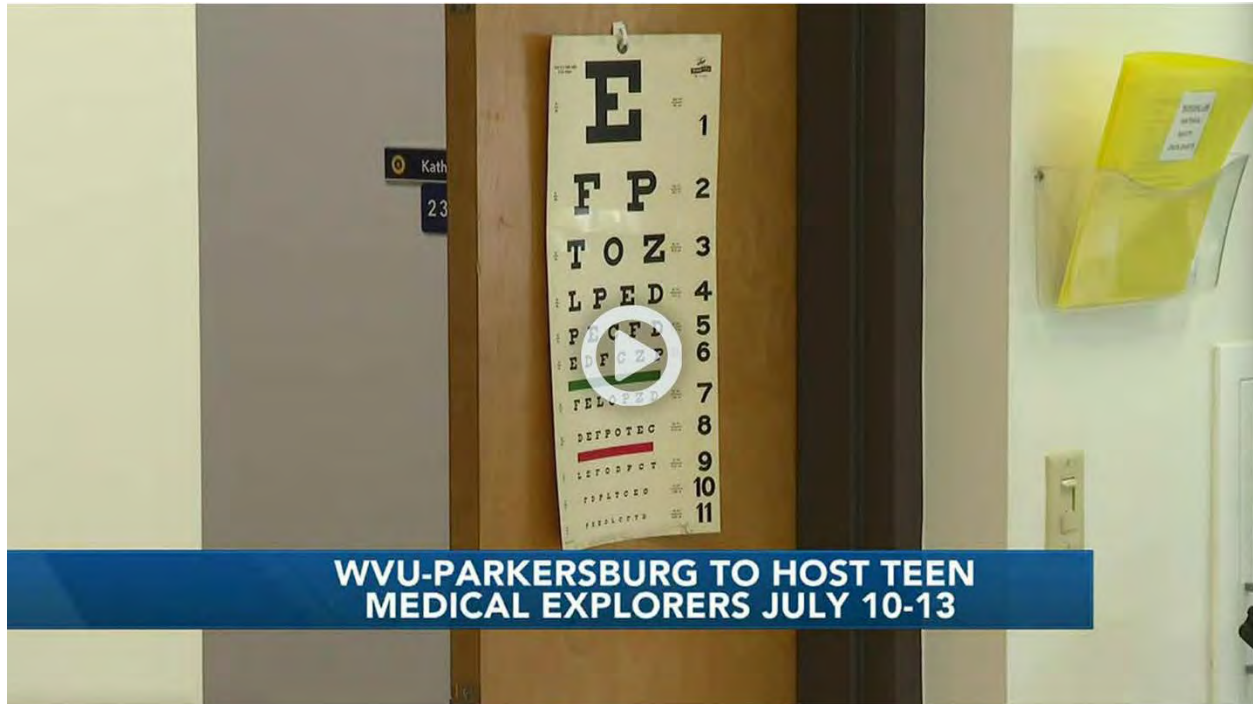
For more information or to become a WVU-P Veterans Corps member, contact Shearlock at darren.shearlock@wvup.edu or 304-424-8000 ext. 337.

WVU-Parkersburg to host Teen Medical Explorers July 10-13

WTAP

May 30, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/05/31/wvu-parkersburg-host-teen-medical-explorers-july-10-13/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - West Virginia University at Parkersburg is bringing back a program for young students to get involved in healthcare.

The college is hosting its second annual “Teen Medical Explorers” program.

This program is for 20 children, ages 13 to 17, to get the chance of learning from medical professionals and getting the chance to use medical equipment, C.P.R. certification and see different occupations in the medical field.

WVU-Parkersburg nursing and health sciences dean, Kathy Frum said this program gives children the chance to be interested in healthcare work and help address the workforce shortage in this field.

“This is the age group where we have to get kids interested in what do they want to do? What do they want to be? I mean, they don’t know what they want to be, but if we keep showing them opportunities and opportunities that are local to get a good job

and to have good benefits and things like that. Hopefully kids will stay around and take advantage of the educational resources we have at WVU-P,” Frum said.

For more information on how to sign up, you can click this [link](#) to find out more.

WVU Parkersburg installs first EV charging station on campus

Marietta Times

Jun 5, 2023

<https://www.mariettatimes.com/news/local-news/2023/06/wvu-parkersburg-installs-first-ev-charging-station-on-campus/>



PARKERSBURG — Wood County Technical Center students held a ribbon-cutting ceremony outside of the Caperton Center with caution tape and an electric saw to inaugurate the opening of the new electric vehicle charging station at West Virginia University at Parkersburg Friday, May 26.

The students, who go by Amish Electric, were part of the Electrical Technology program, instructed by Mark Holbert. Mark Powell of Gexpro and Phil Cunix of Astorg

Auto came to show their support. Cunix brought an electric truck and van to test out the charger.

“The charging station the class just completed gave the students the opportunity to take ownership of the project from the design phase to the completion of the installation,” Holbert said.

Holbert said the electric tech program teaches students about various electrical fields including residential, commercial and industrial wiring.

“The students have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with planning an electrical installation, installing electrical service, wiring a house, installing electrical devices, working with different switching configurations, conduit bending, wire-pulling techniques, motors, motor controls and many other electrical skills,” he said. *“The electrical field is always expanding into new technologies, some of them being green energy such as solar and wind, energy savings such as LED lighting and smart houses and electric vehicles.”*

Director of the Wood County Technical Center and Caperton Center for Applied Technology Jason Hughes applauded the students for their ingenuity.

“I’m very proud of Mr. Holbert and his students for taking on this innovative project,” he said. *“This project illustrates the power and importance of partnerships in education.”*

Holbert said the charging station project has helped students prepare for a future career in the electrical industry.

“Skilled electricians are in high demand,” he said. *“Hopefully, with this program and the opportunity for the students to gain hands-on experience, like this EV charging station project, the students will be ready to pursue a good-paying career in the electrical industry after their education is complete.”*

Brayden Allen, Nathan Buskirk, Owen Collins, Jayden Dearth, Colton Floyd, Levi Gribble, Hunter Landis, Eli Law, Shamus Mahaney, Austin Ritchie, Isaac Sullivan, Bowen Taylor, Alex Tawney and Jeffery Waldron were among the students who attended the ceremony.

"It was a really great experience," said Alex Tawney, from Williamstown High School. "We were able to do something new and learn a lot of new things."

Parkersburg South High School student Jeffery Waldron added, *"It was good for us to have the experience, and it is great that the public gets to use the EV charger."*

WVUP President Torie Jackson said the college would consider the need for additional charging stations in the future.

"The growth of electric vehicles in our area will result in additional EV charging stations in future years on the campus," she said. "We will monitor usage of this first station to know any necessary expansions of EV charging on the Parkersburg campus."

The station is listed on EV charging maps for public use and is across from the Caperton Center near the Walking Trail and the Welding Tower on campus.

Seeing Green: Wood County businesss growing peppers at West Virginia University at Parkersburg Farm

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Jun 10, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/06/seeing-green-wood-county-business-growing-peppers-at-west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-farm/>

PARKERSBURG — Peppers grown at the West Virginia University at Parkersburg Riverhawk Farm are going to be used in salsa and hot sauces by a local company.

Javier Santelices, owner of Pancho Picante, planted 1,000 pepper plants on a quarter of an acre he's leasing at the farm. The peppers will be used in salsas, hot sauces and spice mixes made by Pancho Picante based in Washington, W.Va.

Santelices is an Ag Workforce student at the university and has been working over the last year on opening his business, Pancho Picante. He has a Multi-Disciplinary Studies degree from the university with four minors in business, communications, sociology and psychology.

"The Riverhawk Farm is leasing him ground and assisting with the growing of these peppers in order for him to use the product to make the salsa, sauces and spices his business offers," said John Riggs, director of Agriculture at WVU-P. "Javier wanted to use local produce."

The business started in 2020 during the COVID pandemic. Santelices had grown a variety of peppers for a few years and not knowing what to do with them he would make salsa at home.

He usually made so much, he and his wife started sending salsa to friends. After a while they started to get responses back from people wanting more and if he would be selling it.

“After hearing that a few times and COVID happening and not knowing what to do about school, I just decided to go ahead and get a minor in business and try to figure out Pancho Picante,” Santelices said.

He has been growing peppers himself for about five years, crossbreeding them in different combinations for the best taste and spiciness. He goes and picks the best-looking ones with the best taste and takes the seeds from those for planting.

“We now have a good selection of peppers here that we are going to be using,” Santelices said.

The Riverhawk Farm is already growing potatoes for the Mister Bee Potato Chip Co. and has been looking for other partnerships.

“We are really happy to help Javier grow his business as well as grow agriculture within the Mid-Ohio Valley,” Riggs said.

Each pepper plant will yield, depending on the variety, several pounds of peppers. Peppers are picked in the fall to early winter when the spicier variety will be ready. Some peppers can take over 180 days, around six months, to ripen from seed to pepper.

“They take a long time,” Santelices said.

Some jalapenos are ready in 90 days from planting, but the spicier varieties take longer to grow and ripen.

Santelices said Pancho Picante recently got a food manufacturing license and a 10-by-6 trailer has been converted into a food truck and manufacturing facility.

Much of the work is done by hand, such as dehydrating garlic and onions and processing the peppers to be smoked, roasted or toasted to bring out the best taste, Santelices said.

"We do everything by hand," he said. "We do extremely small batches, that way I can control and maintain the process myself. I'm not doing big batches that I can't control. Every pepper touches my hand, because I want to be sure it is perfect."

Santelices is originally from California and many of the pests that have bothered pepper plants in California are not present in West Virginia, but the plants do require daily checks.

"I go out every day and check them," Santelices said. "The plants talk to you depending on how the leaves are, what color they are, what the variations are, how they look, how their striations are, they are telling you exactly what they need."

If plants need calcium, the leaves slightly wrinkle, he said. If it is magnesium, the veins turn yellow. If it is nitrogen, the whole leaf starts to turn yellow.

He addresses those needs and the physical needs of the plant, too, like tying up the stems to prevent the weight of the peppers from breaking the branches. Some plants will be 6 feet tall.

The plants will also need supplements of water, because they are nutrient and water hungry, Santelices said.

Riggs estimates it will take an inch of rainfall a week to supply the plants with their water needs.

"We have an irrigation system setup and in place so Javier can grow the best peppers he can," Riggs said.

They have specialty equipment, like the rain flow bedmaker and the rain flow water wheel transplanter to help supply the plants with what they need.

Santelices' father is from Mexico and his mother was from Spain. He talked about how many family gatherings centered around good food and good times.

His father, Francisco, was nicknamed “Pancho” and his company is named after him. Although his father is still alive, Santelices said that just adds to the pressure of putting out a good product because his father will be judging it.

“Good food puts you in a good mood,” he said. “We are trying to give people a reason to gather and enjoy being with each other.”

West Virginia Day celebration planned

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

June 16, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/06/west-virginia-day-celebration-planned/>



PARKERSBURG — A local expert on the Civil War will be the featured speaker at Blennerhassett Island Historic State Park on Tuesday, West Virginia Day, June 20.

Brian Stuart Kesterson's presentation will focus on the contributions of citizens and politicians from the Parkersburg area who helped West Virginia become a state in 1863.

This year marks the state's 160th anniversary.

The celebration will begin at 1:30 p.m. by the park's Rotary Shelter. Cake and ice cream will be available afterward to celebrate the state's birthday.

Plan on taking the 1 p.m. ferry at the latest to be able to attend the presentation.

Kesterson has served in numerous historical organizations and has been on the lecture circuit since 1988, having presented programs to historical organizations in West Virginia, Virginia, Ohio, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

He has been a guest speaker at the West Virginia Department of Culture and History at the Capitol Complex in Charleston and has spoken to the history department of West Virginia University at Parkersburg on numerous occasions.

Kesterson is a history teacher in Wood County Schools.

On March 17, 2005, he was named a West Virginia History Hero for outstanding work and significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of West Virginia history.

For more information, call 304-420-4800.

Local colleges respond to declining enrollment rates

WTAP

June 21, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/06/21/local-colleges-respond-declining-enrollment-rates/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - College enrollment rates are dropping nationwide, according to the [Brookings Institution](#).

Despite that downward trend, Marietta College has seen stable rates for a few years. "In the last four years, we've been pretty steady, anywhere between 350 and 370 new students each year, so for us it's been pretty stable," said Scot Schaeffer, Marietta College's Vice President for Enrollment Management.

Despite that stability, Schaeffer said they're concerned about the next few years. "There is what's coming up called the 'enrollment cliff,' he said. "In 2025, the high school graduates in the United States are going to really plummet, and in the state of Ohio there's a 10,000 high school drop-off in 2025."

Between fewer students going to college and easily accessible online programs competing with more traditional institutions, Schaeffer said colleges across the country are concerned about the enrollment cliff. He said Marietta College is already taking steps to prepare for that cliff. "We've done things to expand where we typically get our students from and our names," he said. "We've expanded and done a virtual tour to try to get people that are further away, they can get a real strong sense of the campus before maybe they travel here to come and visit. We're just being more strategic in where we're going to talk to students."

Beyond just expanding recruitment efforts, Schaeffer said Marietta College needs to demonstrate to potential students why choosing a four-year liberal arts education can be better for them in the long run than getting a less intensive degree or forgoing college entirely. “You might hit that ceiling and not be able to break through it, where a person with a college degree can,” he said. “So we have to do a much more concerted effort on showing the return on investment and what you can get with a college degree.”

Dr. Torie Jackson, President of West Virginia University at Parkersburg, said they’re concerned about the enrollment cliff too and have seen some troubling enrollment rates themselves, with a 15% decline in enrollment in 2022. This year, though, she said things are improving. “For 2023, this summer, we have a 16% increase in enrollment, and we are very excited about those numbers,” she said.

Jackson partially attributes this increase to a number of efforts the university has made to promote itself. “We’ve been doing a lot with marketing,” she said. “And you can see billboards, you can see commercials, you can hear radio spots. If you don’t know that WVUP is in the Mid-Ohio Valley, then you might not have just been paying a lot of attention lately.”

Additionally, Jackson said WVUP is in a good position to maintain solid enrollment because of its programs. “We have the availability of programs that not all institutions do,” she said. “Right now, the state legislature has been really kind to offer programs like West Virginia Invests, and that will pay for the tuition for a two-year degree that’s technical in nature. Well, that’s mostly what we offer, are technical two-year degrees.”

Jackson said WVUP’s partnerships with local companies, combined with the affordability of their programs, lets students graduate job-ready with little debt, making them appealing for students who may not be inclined to pursue four-year degrees.

Manchin announces \$4 Million for six projects to support West Virginia Universities and colleges

Senator Manchin

June 21, 2023

<https://www.manchin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/manchin-announces-4-million-for-six-projects-to-support-west-virginia-universities-and-colleges>

Washington, DC – Today, U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV), member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, announced \$4,055,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for six projects that support universities and colleges in West Virginia. Senator Manchin secured this federal funding by submitting [Congressionally Directed Spending \(CDS\) requests](#) on behalf of West Virginia through the [Fiscal Year 2023 funding bill](#).

“West Virginia’s universities and colleges are essential to providing students with the knowledge and skills to compete in our rapidly-changing economy,” **said Senator Manchin**. “I am proud to secure these investments that will improve educational access, opportunities, and results for students pursuing post-secondary education. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will continue advocating for resources to support our institutions of higher learning across the Mountain State.”

The Senate Appropriations Committee allows members of Congress to submit Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests, which provide opportunities for state and local governments, non-profits, and other public entities to receive targeted funding for projects that bolster their communities. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Manchin works to ensure taxpayer dollars are allocated to priorities that directly support West Virginians, boost economic growth, and support the needs of communities across the Mountain State while remaining fiscally responsible.

Individual awards listed below:

- **\$1,000,000** – Marshall University Research Corporation. To support research and education in cybersecurity, including the purchase of IT equipment and software.
- **\$885,000** – Glenville State College Research Corporation. To purchase equipment and technology for the Land Resources department
- **\$705,000** – West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education. To purchase equipment for a commercial driver’s license program
- **\$642,000** – Concord University. To support geoscience programs
- **\$596,000** – West Virginia University at Parkersburg. To support upskilling incumbent workers program
- **\$227,000** – West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. To upgrade computer lab equipment for students

WVU Medicine Center for Nursing Excellence to launch Aspiring Nurse Program Parkersburg News and Sentinel

June 22, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/06/wvu-medicine-center-for-nursing-excellence-to-launch-aspiring-nurse-program/>

MORGANTOWN – The WVU Medicine Center for Nursing Excellence will launch the new Aspiring Nurse Program this fall at two community colleges including West Virginia University at Parkersburg.

While in most cases tuition support from student loans, grants, and scholarships is available, the program will provide each student with up to \$25,000 to support day-to-day life expenses.

“What we’ve heard from many students is that they are working two jobs to support themselves while they’re in school and are one flat tire away from having to drop out,” Melanie Heuston, chief nurse executive for the WVU Health System, said. *“The Aspiring Nurse Program will help to alleviate some of the financial stress the students are under so they can focus their time and energy on completing their education.”*

The first cohort of students will be nursing students at BridgeValley Community and Technical College in South Charleston and West Virginia University at Parkersburg. Clinical rotations will be done at WVU Medicine hospitals to ensure students are getting top-notch, hands-on clinical immersive experiences that will help them as they transition to practice. BridgeValley students will be partnered with WVU Medicine

Thomas Hospitals, and WVU-Parkersburg students will be partnered with WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center.

Those selected for the program will receive \$5,000 for each of the four semesters they're in school plus a \$5,000 sign-on bonus upon hire in exchange for a three-year work commitment with their respective hospitals after graduation. The hospitals and schools will not only support students financially throughout the program, but through human-centered approaches with academic success coaches and retention specialists.

"WVUP believes the most significant thing a community college can do is be a good community partner. When we collaborate with local businesses to meet their needs and, at the same time, provide amazing opportunities for students, then we are fulfilling our mission," Torie Jackson, president of WVU-Parkersburg, said. *"We believe purposeful and planned training of a workforce will elevate the Mid-Ohio Valley and the entire state of West Virginia, and we are honored to partner with WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center."*

The Center for Nursing Excellence is working on additional partnerships in the Northern Panhandle, Eastern Panhandle, and southern portions of the state with a targeted roll out as early as January.

For more information on the program, go to [WVUMedicine.org/Aspiring-Nurse-Program](https://www.wvu.edu/medicine/Aspiring-Nurse-Program).

WVU Parkersburg to hold cosmetology info sessions

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

June 22, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/06/wvu-parkersburg-to-hold-cosmetology-info-sessions/>

PARKERSBURG — Two informational sessions about the new cosmetology program at West Virginia University at Parkersburg will be held 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. June 27 at the Workforce and Economic Development building in Parkersburg.

The sessions will help interested students begin their academic careers in the college's School of Cosmetology and Esthetics. An admissions

representative will be available during both sessions to answer any questions.

For more information, contact Lisa Carter at 304.420.8618 or Lisa.Carter@wvup.edu.

Constellium and WVU-P holds skilled trades scholarship signing ceremony WTAP

June 23, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/06/23/constellium-wvu-p-holds-skilled-trades-scholarship-signing-ceremony/>



RAVENSWOOD, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - Constellium and West Virginia University at Parkersburg are hosting a skilled trades scholarship program signing ceremony. This ceremony not only gives these students the chance to earn an associate of applied science degree, but the students also have a job lined up for them after they graduate at Constellium.

One of the people that signed says this gives him added incentive in staying in the area.

“Yeah, I’m kind of a homebody when it comes to the state of West Virginia. I like it here a lot. A lot of people here don’t, but I love it here though. I think it’s a beautiful state. And especially having a nice job like this and a great career path to follow I think it will definitely help me stay here longer,” Alec Marshall said.

Constellium chief executive officer, Buddy Stemple says this is a great way in addressing workforce shortage needs.

“It’s tremendous. I mean skilled trades people like welders, mechanics, electricians are very hard to find. We discouraged kids from going into trade schools for decades which has been the wrong thing. So, it’s really important to us and this is the fourth group we’ve had. And we’re really excited about it,” Stemple said.

There were a total of 13 scholarship recipients. Eight of them are specializing in mechanical work and the other five will be in electrical work.

12 students accepted into Skilled Trades Scholarship Program at Constellium
The Jackson Star and Herald
June 27, 2023

https://www.wvnews.com/jacksonnews/12-students-accepted-into-skilled-trades-scholarship-program-at-constellium/article_72acb036-12ed-11ee-a8c0-9f798d14e12b.html



RAVENSWOOD, W.Va. (WV News) — The Skilled Trades Scholarship Program through Constellium and West Virginia University at Parkersburg (WVUP), now in its fourth year, offers students the opportunity to go to college while learning a trade.

“Throughout the school year, our team goes to the schools and tech centers to tell the students about this opportunity and teach them about what we actually do at Constellium and where our products are used,” Teresa Kerns, Manager, Communications and College Relations at Constellium, said. “Then we invite seniors to the plant to learn a little more, take a mini tour of the plant campus and give them a packet of information about the scholarship opportunity, along with an application.”

Applicants are then rated based on their grade point average and attendance. Following that, the interview process begins. The students are given the opportunity to tell Constellium about themselves and why they feel they need such an opportunity.

Once selected, Constellium, along with WV Invest, covers all of the student’s tuition, books and fees for WVUP. The student will graduate with an associate’s degree in applied technology focusing on either electrical or mechanical engineering. Once they graduate, they will begin working at Constellium with another six months of training before they become electricians or millwrights.

“This makes a big impact on the community and these students,” Constellium CEO Buddy Stemple said. “They are going to go to college, they’re going to have no debt, they are going to come out with an associate’s degree and a job. That’s a pretty good deal, I think.”

Recently a signing ceremony was held for 12 new students from schools including Ripley High, Ravenswood High, Roane County High, Parkersburg South High and Wirt County High School.

Those going into the mechanical field included Austin Balis, Joah Defren, Tanner Ebos, Ethan Fry, Nicholas Hill, David Moor Jr. and Drake Smith.

Those heading into electrical studies included Hunter Brown, Isaiah Casto, Alec Marshall, Austin Starcher and Alec Vance.

“My trade will be welding,” Joah said. “This scholarship pays for tuition and books for my associate degree in welding at WVU-P. This opportunity means the world to me.”

Starting out on a career path is something that Hunter is looking forward to.

“It will not only set me up with a career that will pay well but will give me a trade that I can use forever,” he said. “Knowing that I have a job waiting for me is the best part.”

The interview process is always a nerve-wracking experience.

“The interview process definitely had me nervous,” Joah said. “The night before, I went over and over things I wanted to say. Knowing that my grades back in New York weren’t that great, I was very worried that I might not have a chance at this scholarship. I knew I could do better and really focused on my studies during my senior year at Ripley High School. I improved and carried a 3.9 GPA during my senior year.”

Not only is this opportunity valuable to the student, but their families as well.

“As a parent, this is fantastic that I can be reassured that my son will have training in a skill that can be used for his adult life while accumulating no college debt,” Tim Brown, Hunter’s father said. “It’s a great opportunity that Constellium is providing for them.”

Dr. Torie Jackson, President of WVUP, spoke to the recipients about the school’s part in the collaboration.

“We have lots of support for you as you go along this journey,” she said. “Just know that we’re here for you and you can reach out to us at any point and time.”

This type of program is also good for the local community.

“This program is significant to Constellium as well as the community,” Kerns said.
“Providing good jobs and keeping our children at home for their career journey is a win for everyone.”

\$10M gift to create new WVU Parkersburg Technology Center

The Intelligencer. Wheeling News-Register

July 1, 2023

<https://www.theintelligencer.net/news/community/2023/07/10m-gift-to-create-new-wvu-parkersburg-technology-center/>



PARKERSBURG — A local foundation’s multimillion-dollar gift will finance the creation of the new WVU Parkersburg Technology Center.

The Ross Foundation’s \$10 million gift will be used to purchase and renovate portions of the former Ohio Valley University where the center will be located, college President Torie Jackson said at an announcement Friday morning attended by numerous local officials.

The gift from the Ross Foundation of Parkersburg is the largest in the history of West Virginia University at Parkersburg, Jackson said.

“I look forward to being a part of this,” Tres Ross of the Ross Foundation said.

Ross is the son of the late Sam Ross, a businessman and philanthropist from Parkersburg.

“On behalf of the Board of Governors, thank you for being a part of the container and being able to see the vision that Sam Ross and the Ross Foundation had for this college, the community and our students,” Joe Oliverio, chairman of the WVU-P Board of Governors, said.

The growth of degrees in computer science and information technology, a bachelor’s of applied technology in cybersecurity and opportunities for growth in degrees such as mechanical engineering will be the focus of the WVU-P Technology Center, Jackson said.

“The well-being of the Mid-Ohio Valley is our concern,” she said. “The ability for students to attain technology jobs in the Mid-Ohio Valley is our concern.”

The center will include 25 technology-based incubators, she said. Student businesses with winners of the college’s pitch competition will have a place to incubate their business as they move from concept and business plan to an operating company, Jackson said.

The college will work with the Wood County Development Authority to encourage companies to locate in the center, Jackson said.

“I’m super excited about this announcement today,” Lindsey Piersol, executive director of the development authority, said.

The WVU-P Foundation will use \$4.6 million of the gift to purchase the property. The remainder will be used for renovation.

The focus will be on the north campus, located in the city of Vienna, Jackson said.

The former Stotts Administration Hall will be transformed into the Technology Center, Jackson said. When the renovation is completed, the foundation will give the building

to the college for operation as an academic and technology incubation center, she said.

The foundation will keep the residential facilities and will get a private group to operate the residences as subsidized housing for students, Jackson said.

Buildings on the south campus on College Parkway will be sold or demolished, then the property will be available for other uses, she said.

The funds from the sale of all the property will establish an endowed fund to support professorships, scholarships and a venture fund for the development of technology programs and companies in the new location, Jackson said.

Ohio Valley University closed in December 2021 and has been in bankruptcy court. The sale depends on the process in court, according to Jackson.

“We can not give an exact timeline until the court rulings are complete,” she said.

The gift may also be the largest ever given to a community college in West Virginia, Sarah Tucker, chancellor of the West Virginia Community and Technical College System, said in a message to the college.

“President Jackson and her team have worked very hard to secure this donation,” Tucker said.

Delegate Vernon Criss, R-Wood, called the project a game changer for the region.

“I think this is a great day for WVU Parkersburg,” Criss said.

New WVU Parkersburg president excited to get to work in permanent role

WV Metro News

July 2, 2023

<https://wvmetronews.com/2023/07/02/new-wvu-parkersburg-president-excited-to-get-to-work-in-permanent-role/>

PARKERSBURG, W.Va. — The new president of WVU Parkersburg says stepping into a permanent leadership role is a full circle moment for her as a graduate of the university.

Dr. Torie Jackson had served as interim president from July 2022 until she was named the permanent president in May.

Jackson received her associate and bachelor's degrees in journalism at WVU Parkersburg before earning her doctoral degree in higher education administration and a master's degree in organizational communication from West Virginia University.

She started out as a newspaper reporter for the News and Sentinel at the age of 18.

"I walked into the editor's office and asked if I could be considered for employment. My first job was writing obituaries," Jackson recalled.

Higher education was always the end goal, she said. Jackson has served WVU Parkersburg in a variety of leadership roles since 2004. She was the Chief Operating Officer, Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement, President and CEO of the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation, and as an Associate Professor of Communication.

During her time as an associate professor, she helped lead WVU Parkersburg to offer four year degrees for communications students.

"At that point in time, it was still a two year degree, so we were able to create a whole new curriculum that made it a four year communication/media studies degree based on a lot of courses we already had, just packaging them differently and giving students an opportunity for that baccalaureate degree in the Mid-Ohio Valley," she said.

Job security has been a big focus throughout Jackson's career. She told MetroNews her father lost his job after a plant he worked at closed due to a strike. He also didn't have his high school diploma.

"Because I knew what my family had gone through at that point in time, I wanted to make sure that I had an education that allows me to have more job possibilities," she said.

Under Jackson's leadership, the marketing division at WVU Parkersburg has won 23 national marketing awards in the past three years, the most of any college or university in West Virginia. Jackson said they were able to accomplish that by listening to communication interns about how to better market themselves.

“We were able to give a lot of assessment with them about what would appeal to a younger generation and make some changes to the way we did marketing based on input from our own students,” she said.

WVU Parkersburg, along with WVU, Marshall University and several other institutions in the state, are dealing with low student enrollment. Jackson said one of her top priorities will be on recruitment and retention.

“We need to make sure that we have degrees that meet the workforce needs, especially the community and technical colleges and that we’re able to bring students here to this location to train them to then go out and work a job in the Mid-Ohio Valley and beyond,” she said.

Before being named as permanent president, Jackson became interim president following the departure of Chris Gilmer, who left in July 2022 to become president of Potomac State College.

New WVU Parkersburg president excited to get to work in permanent role

The Jackson Star and Herald

July 4, 2023

https://www.wvnews.com/jacksonnews/wvu-parkersburg-foundation-holds-a-wv-day-celebration/article_abcc1c30-1775-11ee-b1e7-ef7adde87471.html



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WV News) — The cannon fired once again at West Virginia University at Parkersburg Foundation’s annual Toast to West Virginia at the Historic Oakland Estate on June 24.

The event focuses on the estate’s place in West Virginia’s history during the Civil War and West Virginia’s journey into statehood. The land’s original owner, James McNeil Stephenson, was an integral part in the Staunton-Parkersburg Pike that began its journey east just across the street from Oakland. Built in 1832, the Greek revival home earned its estate name from all of the oaks that populate the land.

This year’s event featured a signature cocktail that also has ties to the home. Board member Andrew Walker traveled to Harmon, W.Va. to visit Athey Lutz who is a descendant of James McNeill Stephenson. The family started distilling their own single bourbon barrel whiskey, Still Hollow, in 1790 eventually relocating to the current establishment. The whiskey is copper pot distilled from West Virginia grown heirloom corn and mountain spring water. Additionally, Still Hollow distills syrup harvested up the road from the distillery in used bourbon barrels. Walker created an Oakland Old Fashioned from the bourbon and the syrup so guests could properly toast the Mountain State.

“I thought it was good to bring back some of the family history which is steeped in West Virginia history. Additionally, it’s 100% West Virginia made so it’s a perfect addition to any West Virginia Day celebration,” Walker said.

In addition to the signature cocktail, guests were treated to a cannon firing reenactment from Carlin’s Battery. During the Civil War, the original Carlin’s Battery D was encamped on Fort Boreman. The group fired the cannon three times. The first two rounds were half pound rounds and the final round, discharged by WVU Parkersburg President Dr. Torie Jackson, was a full pound round which would have been fired during the Civil War.

“It was a true pleasure to have the opportunity to pull the string that lit the cannon with Carlin’s Battery. The intensity of the explosion is definitely amplified when standing so close. What a memorable way to celebrate the 160th birthday of the Mountain State,” Jackson said.

Mid-Ohio Valley Relic Recovery was present to go over their finds from recent metal detecting digs at the estate. They found items ranging from Civil War uniform pieces to antique cutlery — many of which were emblazoned with the letter “S.” Some items date back to the late 1700s. The group returns the items to the estate which adds to the history of the home and the area.

“We are incredibly lucky to be stewards of such an integral part of Parkersburg’s history. The Historic Oakland Estate offers a window to the past and we hope to make sure that it’s part of Parkersburg’s future as well,” said West Virginia University at Parkersburg Foundation Director Olivia Reeder.

Tours of the Oakland estate are available by appointment by calling 304-424-8340.

Camden Clark Medical Center, WVU Parkersburg conduct Teen Medical Explorers Academy

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

July 13, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/07/camden-clark-medical-center-wvu-parkersburg-conduct-teen-medical-explorers-academy/>



PARKERSBURG — WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center and West Virginia University at Parkersburg joined for the second annual Teen Medical Explorers Academy.

Youth in the Teen Medical Explorers Academy are 13-17-years old and learn about local healthcare services and careers. The program was held Monday through Wednesday with participants spending Tuesday at the hospital.

The day-long session on Tuesday at the hospital included the Lab, Respiratory Therapy, Emergency Department, Rehabilitation Services, Surgery and Perioperative Services and Radiology. The Camden Clark leadership team also visited with participants throughout the day.

"We were thrilled to participate in the WVU Parkersburg Teen Medical Explorers Academy again this year," Heather Mace, interim director of professional practice and education at Camden Clark, said.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the students, but also for Camden Clark to share the wide-ranging job opportunities available in healthcare locally and how we work together to care for our patients and community," she said. *"The students were engaged, learned a lot and had fun. We appreciate them taking time out of their summer to visit Camden Clark."*

Program topics covered throughout the academy include use of personal protection equipment, taking vitals and patient care, wheelchair and crutch safety, CPR certification, occupations within the medical field, mock OR and OB simulations.

Agreement between Mountwest, WVU at Parkersburg paves way for students to earn bachelor's degrees

Herald Dispatch

July 14, 2023

https://www.herald-dispatch.com/news/agreement-between-mountwest-wvu-at-parkersburg-paves-way-for-students-to-earn-bachelors-degrees/article_8fe2d4da-cd2d-5486-87c3-98110946ae90.html



HUNTINGTON — The presidents of Mountwest Community and Technical College and West Virginia University at Parkersburg on Thursday signed an articulation agreement

that allows students who have completed an associate's degree at MCTC to earn a bachelor's degree at WVU-P in an additional two years.

MCTC President Josh Baker and Torie Jackson, president of West Virginia University at Parkersburg, signed the articulation agreement at Mountwest in Huntington. The agreement, which is a two-plus-two agreement between the institutions, will allow students who have completed an Associate of Applied Science degree at Mountwest to earn a Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervisory Management through West Virginia University at Parkersburg in an additional two years.

Because AAS degrees are designed to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce, Mountwest officials said the agreement will allow students to pursue further education while already working in their chosen field.

"We became aware of their BAS degrees a few months ago, and it is a great pathway for our students, and so we asked them to come help us build the pathway," Baker said. "We want our students to know that ... they have options, and this is one of the options they can pursue. We want them to be more aware of it, make sure it's well known to them, make sure we're marketing it."

Baker said the articulation agreement enhances the value of the associate degree because students have a pathway to earn a bachelor's degree in two years. Jackson said it also allows a larger audience of community college students to have an opportunity to get a bachelor's degree.

"Our goal is to have a more educated workforce in West Virginia, and we have to partner together sometimes to make that happen," Jackson said. "What we see is this is the first of the pathways that we can create for students."

Starting this fall, students with an AAS (Associate of Applied Science degree) that includes 15 credit hours of general education coursework and 45 credits of program-specific coursework can enter the BAS in Supervisory Management program.

“What this degree is, is very flexible,” Jackson said. “They can take a variety of different online classes to fill up those 60 hours that are required for the second two years of a bachelor’s degree.”

Jackson said there are a few classes that are required in every four-year degree that are in there, but the degree is “built with flexibility to match the wishes of the student.”

According to Baker, though Mountwest had done articulation agreements with several other higher education institutions, this is its first articulation agreement with another community college.

WVUP to host “Early College Catch-Up Day”

WTAP

July 15, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/07/15/wvup-host-early-college-catch-up-day/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) – West Virginia University Parkersburg will hold an Early College Catch-Up Day on Thursday, July 20, 2023.

Early College Catch-Up Day is an event to help high school students catch up on their applications.

The event will take place from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the student lounge.

WVUP's Early College program allows high school students to earn college credits while in high school, according to a statement from WVUP.

Representatives from the Early College program and Business Office will be available to help students at the event.

"Early College students benefit from having peace of mind by attending the event," said Early College Director Michelle Nabers.

Autocross event held at West Virginia University at Parkersburg

WTAP

July 16, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/07/16/autocross-event-held-west-virginia-university-parkersburg/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - Local people had the chance to spend their Sunday morning enjoying an autocross event in Parkersburg.

The Southern West Virginia Sports Car Club of America hosted an autocross event at West Virginia University at Parkersburg on Sunday.

Over 40 drivers raced against the clock to navigate a course set up in the WVUP parking lot. Southern W.Va. SCCA Regional Executive Gregg Rome says autocross is the most accessible motorsport for driving enthusiasts due to its low barrier of entry.

A major highlight of the sport for Rome is the people. "It's just a lot of like-minded people who like cars or motorsport and stuff like that," he said. "It's a lot of fun to drive around in an empty parking lot, legally, you know? Just the camaraderie and the spirited competition and everything like that."

For more information on Southern West Virginia SCCA events, click [here](#).

WVU Parkersburg adds Agribusiness and Cosmetology to its list of programs **The Jackson Star and Herald** **July 18, 2023**

PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WV News) — Starting fall of 2023, students can earn an Associate of Applied Science degree in Agribusiness or Cosmetology.

Agribusiness will prepare students to run and maintain a farm operation, while giving them the knowledge to manage a farm financially. Students will receive hands-on experience from industry professionals in various agricultural fields on The Riverhawk Farm to help students step into already established agribusinesses. Skills gained in the program will prepare students for careers as an Agriculture Marketing Manager, Agriculture Sales Representative, Agriculture Finance Manager, Farm Store Manager, Livestock Buyer, and more.

"We are very fortunate to provide top notch, hands-on education to the producers and agriculturalists of the MOV. WVUP Agriculture and The Riverhawk Farm are blessed with a great team that strives to be the best Agriculture hub for workforce training and academics," said Agriculture Director Johnny Riggs.

Cosmetology will offer students a mix of classroom studies and hands-on training to prepare them for the beauty industry. Cosmetology is a 16-month program that could have students in the workforce earning money in less than a year and a half. Students will become masters of treatments, procedures, and therapies that help their clients accentuate their best features.

The new Cosmetology program will be housed at WVU Parkersburg's School of Cosmetology and Esthetics at 3113 Murdoch Avenue. Students will have access to both a classroom setting and a working salon that will be open to the public for students to hone their expertise. Skills gained in the program will prepare students for careers as hairstylists, consultants, skin specialists, nail technicians, estheticians, instructors, managers, or salon owners.

"When you enjoy being creative and making other people feel beautiful inside and out, you'll never work a day in your life," said Director of the School of Cosmetology and Esthetics Lisa Carter.

Carter said the associate degree would give students a more rounded education and would push them to succeed in the beauty industry.

"At WVU Parkersburg, we match degree programs to industry needs. In both agriculture and cosmetology, we know jobs exist for trained employees," WVU Parkersburg President Dr. Torie Jackson said.

Registration for fall 2023 classes is ongoing now.

For more information about Agribusiness, contact Johnny Riggs at John.Riggs@wvup.edu or call 304.424.8285.

For more information about Cosmetology, contact Lisa Carter at Lisa.Carter@wvup.edu or call 304.420.8618.

WVU Parkersburg president discusses upcoming school year

WTAP

July 24, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/07/24/wvu-parkersburg-president-discusses-upcoming-school-year/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - Dr. Torie Jackson is going into her first year as the official president of West Virginia University at Parkersburg. She said she is excited to be leading her alma mater.

“I’ve often said that it’s exciting to be a part of the institution that built me,” Dr. Jackson said. “And to have been an alum of WVU-P and have the opportunity to serve as its president is a very humbling and honoring experience. I know the institution well and I think I’m going to be able to use that to my advantage to help us find strategic ways to grow the institution and to meet community needs.”

Jackson said the community college is expanding its services, including offering full degrees at its campus in Jackson County.

“We haven’t had a full degree at Jackson County for a really long time. We’ve just basically been offering basic education credits,” Dr. Jackson said. “So, it’s an amazing opportunity for us to do something that the community needs, and they need that with Nucor, Berkshire Hathaway, Tima and all those companies that are coming in.”

Jackson said the college is also looking at long-term plans to continue improving the school.

“Of course, we’re trying to increase C.T.E. programming for high school students and work in conjunction with high schools to make sure that they’re getting collegiate credit for that. We’re also looking at building the WVU-P Technology Center. And that is an extremely large project that will allow us to impact the economic development of the Mid-Ohio Valley,” Dr. Jackson said.

Classes for WVU-P begin on August 21st.

Marietta Memorial announces new student Nursing Investment Grant Program

Marietta Times

July 28, 2023

<https://www.mariettatimes.com/news/local-news/2023/07/marietta-memorial-announces-new-student-nursing-investment-grant-program/>



Marietta Memorial Health System continued the celebration Thursday of its new program to encourage nursing careers, provide flexible options for nursing training and give money to student nurses for day-to-day expenses along the way.

The ultimate goal is to help people complete their healthcare educations and join Memorial Health System.

MHS has lots of nursing opportunities and it's willing to put money where it will help the most, several hospital representatives explained at a signing ceremony for the first 10 students accepted in the new Student Nursing Investment Grant Program.

That program is being funded by a \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and two representatives of that department were welcomed Thursday. Jonathan McCracken, the USDA's Rural Development State Director for Ohio, was one of several speakers who told the group Thursday that a planned living expenses stipend for nursing students was *"life changing."*

MHS is working closely with the nursing programs at Washington State Community College and West Virginia University at Parkersburg. The two schools provide students who are already on the path to study nursing, and they fill the requirement of students attending community colleges being able to use the grant funds.

Those students chosen for the Memorial program each will get \$6,000 per semester to spend as they see fit, whether it's on rent, transportation, food, child care or another necessity.

"A nursing semester runs about five months, so \$6,000 works out to \$1,200 a month. That will be really helpful," said Paige Smith, CNE, who is vice president of patient services and the chief nursing executive in the MHS system.

"Our local high schools and colleges are great partners," Smith said. *"The grant and these partnerships will help carry on the drive to keep health care local, to add and keep nurses who are going to be in our workforce with local ties, with local families."*

WSSC President Dr. Vicky Wood and Director of Nursing Tricia Schaad were joined by Vice President of Academic Affairs at WVU-P Dr. David Lancaster, and the school's Nursing and Health Sciences Dean, Kathy Frum. Wood and Lancaster echoed the sentiment from McCracken that the money would be life changing, giving more students the options and support to reach their academic goals.

It was the 10 WSSC and WVU-P students at the Thursday ceremony who were the most important persons in the room, according to the healthcare education officials. They included WSSC students Hannah Campbell, Marie-Louise Campos, Caitlyn Miller, Kaylee Morris, Emma Szymanski and Ashley Weckbacher. The WVU-P students were Miranda Becker, Kearanie Hopkins, Lydia Hostottle, Kayleigh Johnson and Victoria

Thomas. They each signed a certificate of commitment to the MHS Student Nursing Investment Grant program.

“In two years we’ll be celebrating our registered nurses,” Wood said of the students.

“But those are only the first 10. We have room for 100 in this program. These are the first 10, we want 100!” said Andria Rexroad of the MHS human resources department.

“Yes,” said Offenberger. *“We want to get the word out that we have information about this program and other types of support for nursing education. If you’re thinking about being a nurse, or you’ve thought about going back and finishing the program you started, go to our website. There’s a phone number you can call, lots of information, and an ‘apply now’ button. The website explains the grant we’ve been talking about today, plus student nurse tuition assistance, the \$18,000 sign-on bonus if you get your RN license and commit to three years with Memorial Health System once you graduate. It explains the Nursing Career Pathway that gives you graduated steps in your on-the-job training.”*

For more information on Memorial Health System nursing education opportunities, go to mhsystem.org/student-nurse/.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg wraps up Kids’ College

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

July 31, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/07/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-wraps-up-kids-college/>



PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg has partnered with Hino Motors Manufacturing of Mineral Wells to provide cobot and welding training to students during Kids' College.

Kids' College is an annual program, mainly taught by WVUP faculty, that introduces youth to various college courses and career paths. WVUP hosted three weeks of classes in June, where students could pick four subjects per week. About 40 students attended each week.

Topics included arts and crafts, media studies, general programming, welding, beginner drawing, chemistry, farm technology, cobot, bookmaking, archeology, music technology, photography, Tree-riffic Trees and Plants, intro to making, geology, space and rocketry, journaling, Bird-o-Rama and music technology.

Roger Thulasi, senior production engineer at Hino and cobot instructor, taught students what cobots are and how to program them. A cobot is a collaborative robot

intended for direct interaction with humans in a shared space. Thulasi said this partnership is important because it helps students engage with newer technologies.

“We believe these kids are the future,” said Thulasi. “Hino wants to reach the kids in the community and support them.”

Ed Shaw, maintenance manager and welding instructor, said in his class, students learned about metal inert gas (MIG) welding and proper personal protective equipment usage. For their final project, students welded their initials onto metal plates. Shaw said it is important to introduce youth to welding as it is the backbone of the current world and is responsible for creating many of the commercial products used daily.

WVUP also worked with Jennifer Wallace, program assistant at the WVU Extension office in Wood County, who taught Bird-O-Rama and Tree-riffic Trees and Plants.

“I feel these subjects are important to teach the children because they should understand their roles as stewards to the earth and how we can protect our natural resources, and that nature can help us too,” said Wallace.

Students brought designs to life in the WVUP Makerspace, launched rockets made from 2-liter soda bottles, went on an archeological dig, learned how to milk a cow and created their own movies, among other things.

“We are pleased with the Kids’ College 2023 reboot. The kids enjoyed experiencing new opportunities and engaged in their classes, and numbers exceeded expectations,” said Abby Campbell, Workforce and Economic Development division program coordinator. “Several kids commented that they don’t normally like school, however, they loved Kids’ College. We look forward to bringing back this experience for 8-12-year-olds each summer and only look for this program to grow.”

West Virginia University at Parkersburg works to help Alderson Broaddus University students amidst the revoking of ABU’s authority to award degrees

WTAP

Aug. 2, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/08/02/west-virginia-university-parkersburg-works-alderson-broaddus-university-students-amidst-revoking-abus-authority-award-degrees/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Council voted unanimously to revoke Alderson Broaddus’s authorization to confer degrees in the state effective December 31st, 2023.

WVU at Parkersburg is offering affected students a path to enroll ahead of the fall semester.

University president Dr. Torie Jackson says state institutions are working to ease the stress of students during this time.

“Colleges throughout the state are stepping up at this point in time and saying we express our sympathy for your situation, and we want to make sure that your students are able to continue their education. It’s very important for us as West Virginia to stand together and make sure we are able to get our workforce educated and the students prepared for that workforce.”

Dr. Jackson added there is financial aid, flexible scheduling and scholarship opportunities for anyone interested in enrolling.

For more information or to apply, contact WVU-P's admissions office at 304-424-8310.

WVU – Parkersburg offering second-year program focusing on substance abuse issue

WTAP

Aug. 7, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/08/07/wvu-parkersburg-offering-second-year-program-focusing-substance-abuse-issue/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - WVU-Parkersburg is providing the peer recovery support specialist program.

The community college's workforce and economics division program coordinator, Martha Leeson said this gives students the chance to learn the path to recovery on a personal level.

"They work on a journal together. And they share confidential information together. And they get very close in this program. We have a graduation and everything for them once they're done. So, they know they're not alone in this journey," Leeson said.

Leeson said the program includes shadowing and internship opportunities.

Students have had the opportunity to work with community partners such as Peer Solutions, The Fellowship Home and Westbrook Services. This program will begin on Sept. 1 to Nov. 18. And if you would like more information you can call 304-424-8275 or email martha.leeson@wvup.edu.

WVUP receives Metallica funding

Marietta Times

Aug. 11, 2023

<https://www.mariettatimes.com/news/2023/08/wvup-receives-metallica-funding/>

PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg for the fifth year will receive funding through the Metallica Scholars Initiative.

The funding, through the All Within My Hands foundation created by the heavy-metal band Metallica, will be used to enhance career and technical education programs.

The college is pleased, according to President Torie Jackson, who quoted a from a song by Metallica, *“For Whom the Bell Tolls.”*

“I like to say, ‘For whom the bell does toll, at WVU Parkersburg, it tolls for you,’” WVUP President Torie Jackson said. *“Yes, that is a reference to a Metallica song, but it is even more of a reference to the strategic partnerships they have made with colleges like WVUP we are thrilled to be growing in areas like computer science, computer information technology, and digital media production – the programs we use as part of the Metallica Scholars Initiative.”*

The Metallica Scholars Initiative was launched in 2019 by All Within My with the American Association of Community Colleges. The program supports 42 community colleges across 33 states and by the end of this year, will have helped over 6,000 students pursuing careers in the trades.

Signing event held for aspiring nurses

WTAP

Aug. 14, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/08/14/signing-event-held-aspiring-nurses/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - WVU Medicine at Camden Clark is partnering with West Virginia University at Parkersburg for the "Aspiring Nurses program." And they are kicking it off with a signing event.

Officials say this program is designed to help with the nursing shortage. One way it will help these students is assisting them with outside expenses. For each semester, nursing students will get \$5,000.

"They maybe one flat tire away from dropping out of nursing school," WVU Medicine at Camden Clark Medical Center chief nursing officer, Carol Grove said. "And with our support and WVU-P's support to make sure that they are successful, I believe that this will make a big difference for them."

Students will not only get the chance to work closely with other medical professionals at WVU Medicine at Camden Clark but will have a job lined up after college with the hospital.

"These students will be able to graduate and work in the Mid-Ohio Valley. Which is wonderful for Camden Clark," WVU-Parkersburg president, Dr. Torie Jackson said. "Because they know that these students who are getting so well trained at WVU-Parkersburg will be able to be their nurses on the floor very soon."

One of the nursing students who signed, Carsen Hesson says this will go a long way in getting her through nursing school and to follow in her mom's footsteps.

"She's the best nurse I know," Hesson said. "I look up to her and I really admire what she does. And I've seen a lot of people she's touched, and it makes me want to do the same thing."

Signs of Things to Come: WVU Medicine Camden Clark holds ceremony for nursing students

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Aug. 15, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/08/signs-of-things-to-come-wvu-medicine-camden-clark-holds-ceremony-for-nursing-students/>

PARKERSBURG — A group of West Virginia University at Parkersburg nursing students have made a commitment to WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center in order to grow and learn as they work to become nurses.

A group of 27 students were accepted into the inaugural group in the WVU Medicine Aspiring Nurse Program. A signing ceremony was held Monday at the medical center for the students and their families.

WVU-P was selected as one of the first two community colleges to participate in the WVU Medicine Aspiring Nurse Program, with students to be partnered with Camden Clark. The students selected will complete clinical rotations at WVU Medicine Camden Clark to ensure they receive high quality, hands-on clinical immersion experiences to assist them as they transition to professional nursing practice.

"The Aspiring Nursing Program was created to support nursing students in a very holistic manner," said Jessica Huffman of the WVU Medicine Center for Nursing Excellence. "We talked a lot with our partners at WVU-P (and elsewhere) to see what is it that nursing students were needing.

"We found there was a lot of support for scholarship programs. We heard a lot of heartwarming stories from students that needed a little bit more to get by while they were in nursing school."

The program was put together to support the students by providing up to \$25,000 over the course of their schooling to help with things such as child care, tuition

assistance or an investment in good shoes as many nurses walk up to a 5K during their shift.

“We are not dictating what the money goes towards as each student has individual needs,” Huffman said. *“We want to make sure we are supporting them.*

“It is not just about the money, we are looking at the whole picture.”

The students accepted include Marley Summers, Olivia Matlack, Braylin Tabor, Grace Packer, Paige Linville, Tyler Hartley, Malane Smith, Shelby Goodwin, Cassandra Boggess, Elizabeth Onuoha, Abby Moore, Joyce Eddy, Janae Longenecker, Carsen Hesson, Alexis Cooke, Logan Skurupey, Karlie Lockhart, Ashley Rankin, Adelle Lowe, Adrienne Blair, Brayden Whited, Haylee Brown, Haylie Polan, Jaden Garner, Lexi Gregory, Robert Phillips and Sierra Smith.

The WVU Medicine Center for Nursing Excellence established the Aspiring Nurse Program to provide day-to-day life expenses for nursing students to support their everyday needs. Each student accepted to the program will receive up to \$25,000 over the course of four semesters including a sign-on bonus upon hire in exchange for a three-year work commitment following graduation. Students accepted to the WVU Medicine Aspiring Nurse Program will also receive support from academic success coaches and retention specialists.

“We are excited that you will be able to do your clinicals here at Camden Clark,” Huffman said. *“We feel like we have an excellent facility and state-of-the-art equipment.*

“We think you are going to have a good experience with your clinicals. I think you will have amazing support throughout the rest of your educational journey.”

Carol Grove, Camden Clark Chief Nursing Officer, said she was excited about the partnership with WVU-P.

“We are supporting a tremendous amount of people because we believe in you and we think this is absolutely the right thing to do,” she said. *“I am excited (the students) have chosen to join our team here.”*

WVU-P President Torie Jackson talked about the excitement and commitment of these students.

"You have such an opportunity to be successful with all of the people here to support you, not only at Camden, but also at WVU Parkersburg," she said. "Just knowing that people are here and they want you to succeed is very important.

"We are here to support you every step of the way."

Carsen Hesson is a first-year nursing student who has already completed four years of college. She was accepted into the Aspiring Nurse Program. She has worked at the hospital as a tech for three years and gained a lot of respect for many at the hospital, including her mother who is a nurse.

"I am really excited about this for me and my fellow classmates," she said. "This program helps where we need the help."

It is a commitment to the hospital in providing financial assistance to the students where the students give a three-year commitment to work at the hospital after they complete their schooling, Hesson said.

She believes the program will benefit all the participants in being able to finish their schooling by providing for some of the expenses they incur while working towards getting their degree.

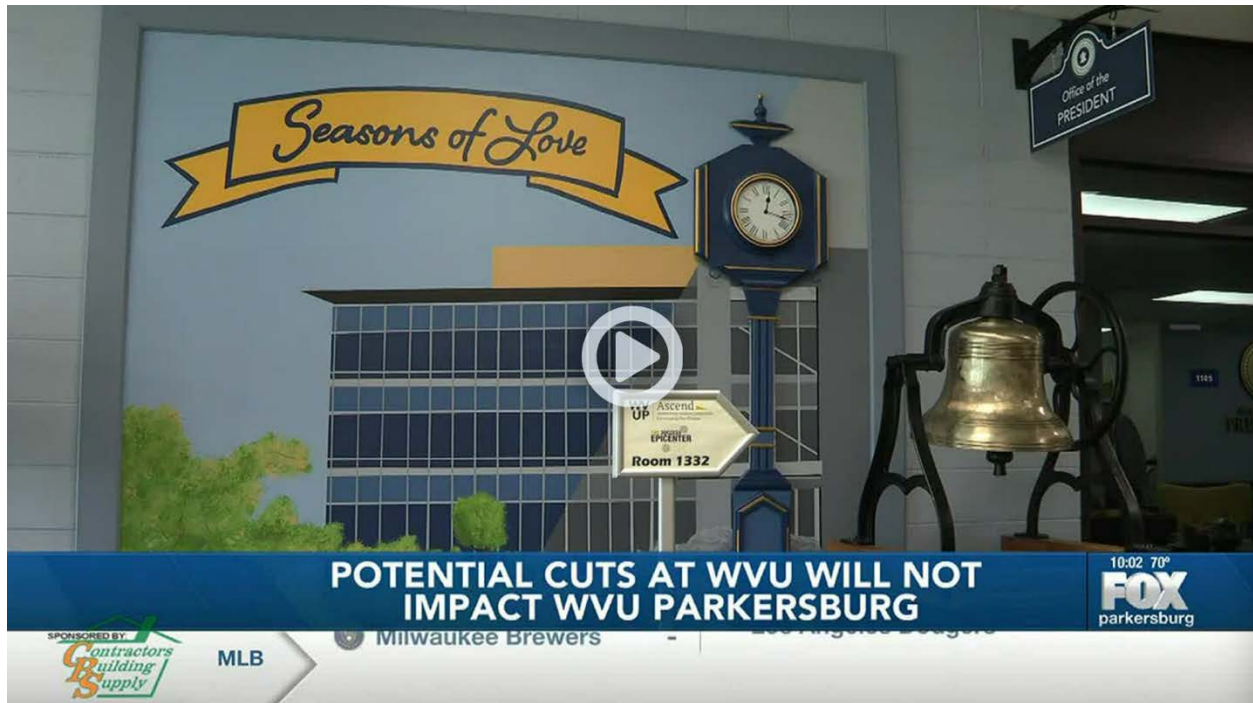
"It would have been quite a struggle here and there to piece everything together," Hesson said. "This helps tremendously and I won't have to worry about that in addition to my school and course work."

Potential cuts at West Virginia University won't hurt WVU Parkersburg, says WVUP president

WTAP

Aug. 15, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/08/15/potential-cuts-west-virginia-university-wont-hurt-wvu-parkersburg-says-wvup-president/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - In September, West Virginia University's board of governors will vote on whether or not to cut dozens of programs and faculty members. It's a tough decision motivated by dropping enrollment and a \$45 million budget deficit.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg President Dr. Torie Jackson said that thankfully, WVUP isn't facing the same financial challenges as WVU and don't have to make cuts. "If WVU is choosing to make cuts to any of their academic, it does not impact any of the programs at WVU Parkersburg," she said. "And right now, we ended the year with a surplus, and we are not facing a deficit, so we are not making academic program cuts at all right now."

Jackson said the issues at WVU don't impact WVUP because, while the two institutions have some overlap, they're financially distinct. "When it comes to our association as a college, we are independent," Jackson said. "We operate financially under two different sets of criteria, and we have our own budget, and it is not impacted by WVU's budget."

Jackson said that WVUP also isn't facing the same enrollment challenges as WVU and many other colleges and universities. "Currently our enrollment is up as of today at 9%" Jackson said. "Our summer enrollment was up 16%, and considering the current

economy and the number of students enrolling in higher education, we are very excited by that number.”

Jackson said that WVU losing some of its programming may leave a void that WVUP and other colleges could expand to fill. “While WVU is making potential cuts to programs, it gives the other colleges in the state an opportunity to say, is that program that they will no longer be able to offer one that we already have that we may potentially grow,” Jackson said.

Jackson said the position WVU is in is not unique. She said issues with enrollment in particular are forcing colleges across the country to make hard decisions about their programming and future.

On the Rise: WVU-P sees higher enrollment

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Aug. 16, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2023/08/on-the-rise-wvu-p-sees-higher-enrollment/>



PARKERSBURG — As classes prepare to get underway at West Virginia University at Parkersburg next week, the college is seeing increased enrollment.

WVU-P President Torie Jackson addressed the university's Board of Governors during their regular meeting Tuesday.

Classes will get underway Monday, Aug. 21.

As of Tuesday, they have 2,362 students enrolled for the fall semester. That is an increase in full-time equivalency (FTE) of 120 students and a headcount increase of 88, Jackson said.

"However, I say that to tell you that our goal to be up by 150 students is still on track as we expect that many additional students just in dual credit enrollments that aren't in the system until later this week or next," Jackson said. "We truly will be up more than 200 students this fall."

Jackson talked about the state of higher education in West Virginia as some schools have struggled to stay in operation. However, the thing that makes WVU-P special is they are uniquely positioned to help varied group of students, she said.

"Our enrollment is up because of partnerships with companies like WVU Medicine Camden Clark, Chemours, Constellium and so many more," Jackson said. "Our local companies find value in the education we provide their current employees and their future employees."

Jackson said around 460 incoming students have been participating in College 101 classes this week and last week in helping students make the transition into a college setting and learning about how things operate at the college level.

"We are an institution that provides accessible, life changing educational opportunities in a safe and supportive environment," Jackson said.

The university has 64% of students who are traditional age (23 and under), and 36% who are non-traditional (24 and over).

Jackson quoted the phrase enshrined on the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

“We ask our community to send us those who need a change or are ready to begin a new path,” Jackson said. “It can be high school to college. It can be those who have already been in the workforce that are looking for another opportunity.

“They can be emotionally or physically tired. They all join us for a hope to enhance their financial stability. Renewal of purpose, financial enhancements — it helps all breathe easier.”

WVU-Parkersburg to offer new cosmetology school

WTAP

Aug. 17, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/08/18/wvu-parkersburg-offer-new-cosmetology-school/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - West Virginia University-Parkersburg’s new cosmetology school is almost open.

“The area that we’re in is in a great location for the community for them to come get their hair done, their services done. And it brings in practice for our students and customers to work on,” Cosmetology school instructor, John Stanley said.

College president, Dr. Torie Jackson said the school was the site of Lee’s Studio on Grand Central Avenue. She added the owner of Lee’s Studio, Lee Rector had a dream of making this school a reality.

Officials with the new program and the college say the goal is both to help with the shortage in cosmetology and keep them in the area.

“And that’s an opportunity for them to build more businesses in the Mid-Ohio Valley,” Dr. Jackson said. “Everybody cares about their hair. So, we all want to make sure that we have plenty of people to choose from.”

The new cosmetology school will feature both a classroom and a cosmetology studio setting. Dr. Jackson said students will be tasked with earning up to 18-hundred hours for this program to complete.

WVU-P marks Sept. 11 with remembrance ceremony

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Sept. 12, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2023/09/wvu-p-marks-sept-11-with-remembrance-ceremony/>



PARKERSBURG — Over the last 22 years many people have grown up without any real understanding of what happened on Sept. 11, 2001, but it is up to those who still do to pass that along to the next generation, speakers said at a 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony held Monday at West Virginia University at Parkersburg.

Around 50 people attended the event in the college theater where speakers spoke of where they were at the time, what they were doing and how they found out about the terrorist attacks going on in New York City and Washington, D.C., where planes were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as well as the passengers of United Flight 93 who attacked their hijackers to prevent them from reaching their final destination which was believed to be in Washington, D.C., with the hijackers crashing the plane in rural Pennsylvania.

Dean of Academic Affairs Jared Gump talked about dropping his son off at middle school and his son commenting on all the flags, asking if it was Memorial Day.

“No this is for 9/11,” he said. “It is hard for those of us who lived through it to imagine that there are people now who did not experience it and do not have those memories.”

He was on his honeymoon in Hawaii when the attacks occurred. They were in an isolated area with little media access or phones. They did not find out about it until the following day when all the airports were closed and were given newspapers detailing what happened.

“We didn’t have TVs there and we weren’t able to see anything,” Gump said, adding eventually TVs were set up and they could see what was happening, including the heroic acts of so many people working to help others.

“It is very important we have events like this to help people to remember and for those who didn’t experience it to learn,” Gump added.

Holly Martin, Associate Professor of Biology, sang the National Anthem.

In his invocation, WVU-P student and U.S. Army veteran Zachary Knight said they paused Monday to reflect the sacrifices of so many in times of need, including the military, police officers and first-responders as well as their loved ones in uncertain times.

WVU-P Student Veteran Raymona Grant talked about how everyone has their own memories of that day. Her son was born that day.

“When he was 6 he asked me, ‘Mom, why is everyone sad on my birthday?’” she said. “It still chokes me up that my son had to learn about 9/11 when he turned 6.”

Grant recounted what happened that day with the hijackings and the death and destruction caused.

“The 9/11 attacks killed 2,977 people,” she said. “This was the single largest loss of life resulting in a foreign attack on American soil.

“Those who lived through it will always remember.”

Keynote Speaker Mark Beecher, a U.S. Navy veteran and Veteran Service Officer with the American Red Cross, talked about the need to remind the next generation of what happened.

“It is something we should remember and pass on,” he said. “On 9/11, America was changed very drastically.

“We need to observe this in a patriotic way.”

He talked about the first-responders who died that day and the others who were traumatized that day as well as those who were just going to work that day at the different locations. He talked about how no remains were found for a number of the victims.

“Those people need to be remembered,” Beecher said.

Quoting former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Beecher said the attacks were meant to break America’s spirit.

“Instead, we have emerged stronger and more united,” he said. “We are more determined than ever to live our lives in freedom.”

He recounted stories from different people on how they remember when they found out about the attacks, the scale of the destruction and a renewed sense of patriotism.

“The stories go on and on and on,” Beecher said, adding the importance of passing those on to others like others passed the story of the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, to him and kept it going.

Following the attacks, the country’s blood banks collected record amounts of blood. Now the American Red Cross is in a critical shortage situation with more donations needed. People can give blood as a way of honoring those lost on 9/11 and do other acts to honor those who were lost.

Quoting U.S. President Harry Truman, Beecher said America was not built on fear.

“America was built on courage and imagination and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand,” he said.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg announces fall 2023 clinical students

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Sept. 18, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/09/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-announces-fall-2023-clinical-students/>



PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg has announced its Fall 2023 Clinical students.

The Fall 2023 class of students in Education 401 are: Maggy Criser of Jackson County, Lindsey Cross of Pleasants County, Valerie Bircher of Ritchie County, Nolan Brace and Alysha King of Wood County.

The Fall 2023 class of students in Education 410 includes: Ella Casto and Johnathan Zuniga of Jackson County, Amanda Gist of Tyler County, Kailey Elliott, Jordan Flinn, Mikayla Gessell, Abby Homan, Cody Moore and Abby Anderson of Wood County.

The WVU-P Elementary Education program provides field experience in the classroom as early as the freshman year. With the traditional student teaching model, teacher candidates spend a semester in two classrooms and quickly assume teaching responsibilities under the mentorship of an experienced teacher until they are teaching full-time. The new residency model places teacher candidates in one classroom for their entire senior year, and they assume responsibilities more gradually.

“We are very proud of our clinical students,” Bobbi Marshall, dean of Professional Studies, said. *“They have completed a rigorous program of study, successfully passed state exams, completed approximately 230 hours in a K-6 classroom and written*

countless lesson plans. Our residents are prepared and excited to begin influencing the lives of current and future generations of children."

West Virginia University at Parkersburg adopts updated compensation structure policy

WTAP

Sept. 21, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/09/21/west-virginia-university-parkersburg-adopts-updated-compensation-structure-policy/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - West Virginia University at Parkersburg is adopting changes to their compensation policy that will let new faculty members start at a higher salary in the future.

During their meeting on Sept. 19, WVUP's Board of Governors approved a new policy change introduced by the college president and Executives President of Finance and Administration.

WVUP President Dr. Torie Jackson said the changes overall compensation policies that have been in place since 2015.

Jackson said the college's old policy was to start new faculty in teaching positions at the lowest salary tier, regardless of experience.

Now, Jackson said the college will set starting pay at a level commensurate with candidates' experience.

Jackson said existing faculty approve of the changes.

"Our faculty senate has been talking about it for a couple of months," Jackson said. "We've given them drafts of the proposal that we had. And we've been able to see that maybe we needed to correct a few things along the way. And so, with our faculties input, I believe that we've created a policy that's very good for them."

Jackson said the policy changes will mean some existing faculty get raises.

She said she believes the new policy will make WVUP more competitive in hiring experienced faculty members.

The new policy goes into effect next month.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg Board of Governors updates faculty compensation efforts

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Sept. 22, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/09/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-board-of-governors-updates-faculty-compensation-efforts/>



PARKERSBURG — The Board of Governors at West Virginia University at Parkersburg approved a policy change that would update the Faculty Compensation Structure, allowing WVU-P to help retain and recruit better faculty candidates as well as gave an update on the new WVU-P Technology Center.

The measure was introduced by WVU-P President Torie Jackson and Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration Alice Harris at this week's Board of Governors meeting.

Jackson said the original Answer Book Policy for Faculty Salaries and Performance-Based Increases, which was outlined in 2015, is no longer adequate for hiring new employees. Jackson and Harris gathered payroll information from four other community colleges, including Bridge Valley Community & Technical College and compared starting salaries for faculty. Harris found that based on a nine-month salary, WVU-P is paying faculty less than comparable schools.

The new hiring policy will include more competitive salaries for faculty and the ability to evaluate employment candidates based on experience and provide them with a salary that matches that experience. This will, in turn, help retain employees and help recruit the best candidates possible.

BOG Faculty Representative Andrew Walker said he has received good feedback about the policy update. The faculty views the policy as a hiring policy and are interested in learning how they can be evaluated in order to move up in the pay scale in the future, he said.

Harris said the policy change is affordable due to the conservative budgeting for interest income and the “significant” savings the college made by Jackson continuing her role, in addition to the presidency, as the Vice President of Institutional Advancement instead of opening the position.

“What I will say is, I don’t think we can afford not to,” Harris said about updating the policy. *“It is so difficult right now to hire people, and it’s important for our existing faculty to know that we truly appreciate them and that we’re going to be taking steps to make sure that we can be as fair as we can possibly be with everyone with the funds that we have available to spend.”*

Jackson said the policy would go into effect starting in October. Harris added that eligible faculty would receive the entire amount of their annual increase over a prorated period through the end of their contract. Harris added that they plan to revise the staff salary policy in the future.

The board unanimously approved the compensation structure policy change for faculty.

During Jackson’s report, she discussed policy and procedure updates and an update on the WVU-P Technology Center planned for the site of the former Ohio Valley University.

It was announced in June, the Ross Foundation is providing \$10 million to the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation to create the Technology Center. The WVU-P Foundation has signed an asset purchase agreement for the former OVU property. After being approved by both the estate and bankruptcy courts, the WVU-P Foundation will buy the property and use remaining funds to renovate it.

Jackson said there would be a bankruptcy hearing, as well as a receivership hearing this week, which will decide whether the Foundation can proceed with taking possession of the property that will become the center. The next phase of the project is to renovate the facility.

"I will be directly leading this project from start to finish, along with an amazing team of employees from WVU-P and with a group of community leaders who want to see the economic impact this educational facility joined with business incubation will have on the Mid-Ohio Valley," Jackson said. "We are planning, we are preparing, we are visioning and we are moving forward — and it's a true team effort."

WVU-P is one step closer to finalizing deal for former Ohio Valley University property

WTAP

Sept. 22, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/09/22/wvu-p-is-one-step-closer-finalizing-deal-former-ohio-valley-university-property/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - Earlier this year, WVU-P filed an asset purchase agreement for the approximately 255-acre property for \$4.6 million.

There were 21 liens on the former OVU property, which contributed to the delay in court appearances.

WVU-P president Dr. Torie Jackson said a bankruptcy court hearing was held earlier this week with no objections and today a receivership piece was in the estate court with no objections.

“Right now, we have a thirty-day appeal period that we have to wait for that to expire and then we can do a closing on the asset purchase agreement and that means we actually take ownership of the buildings officially. At that point in time, we have lots of people interested in the structures we are not going to keep and there are lots of good resources we can use in the community in that regard. And then we are going to begin working on the large admin building to build a WVUP Technology Center.”

Jackson said this is an exciting time for the university.

“With this technology center, we are also going to have a minimum of 25 business incubators that will exist inside of it, so to be able to draw those technology companies to the Mid-Ohio Valley is exciting for our future growth.”

Jackson said this will not only give students the chance to learn tech in the area, but also bring in more tech opportunities to the Mid-Ohio Valley.

This is Home: Dr. HG Young III, PhD.

WTAP

Sept. 23, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/09/23/this-is-home-dr-hg-young-iii-phd/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - Dr. HG Young III Ph.D. has been a familiar face at West Virginia University Parkersburg for quite some time.

“I’ve been here over 40 years, and I am now the most senior faculty, but not oldest. Most senior, but not oldest faculty member, and I think the only faculty member still here that taught at Parkersburg Community College.”

Originally from Clendenin, WV, Dr. Young grew up 20 miles north of Charleston. An alumni of West Virginia Wesleyan and West Virginia University Dr. Young says that he came to work at WVUP by taking a chance.

“It’s just one of those things that happens in your life. I graduated from college. I got a job teaching high school. I was happy doing that. There was a notice of an opening here. Sometimes you just throw your hat in the ring. I got called for an interview and things happened pretty quickly, and I was hired here at age 23. First of all, I’m part of the college’s General Education faculty and what that means I teach courses for all students, specifically music appreciation, and I’ve had a lot of students in my classes over many years doing that. Secondly, I’m responsible for students who come here and want to transfer and earn a degree in music, and then I’m responsible for providing opportunities for student performance. I have been responsible for the college chorale

throughout my career, and we've done a variety of things. We in the last probably 15 or more years, we've done regular the West Virginia Symphony."

Throughout his time at WVUP, Dr. Young has helped many a chorale and groups of artists to create musical and artistic experiences where the students he teaches and the community in which he lives. One such experience comes every year around Christmas time, where students from the college chorale, along with members of the community, have the opportunity to sing with the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, among other accomplishments.

"We have had this partnership with the West Virginia Symphony I believe this may be the 17th or 18th year. They perform a concert called the Sounds of the Season and it's a holiday concert. We have been invited to be part of that for all of these years. We rehearse the music in Parkersburg, we go to Charleston for a rehearsal, we perform with the Symphony at the Clay Center, and then there's a performance here at Blennerhassett School on Sunday afternoon. So that has been a really wonderful partnership for us, and it's a concert that I hope everyone would want to come to. Santa seems to have been there every time and lots of other special holiday music. In addition to that, over the years we've also sung some significant choral works with the West Virginia Symphony, most recently the year before last, we sang Mozart's Requiem, and we learned that during the pandemic. So that was a challenge, but a great experience. Before that we had sung Beethoven's 9th and we were ready to sing Carl Orff's Carmina Burana, just as the pandemic hit, so that was a great opportunity lost. But the partnership with the West Virginia Symphony is something we do now, that I feel very proud of."

When asked if there were any milestones from his time at WVUP that stuck out to him, Dr. Young says that it all comes down to the core of many a teacher's joy.

"Back to what I said earlier, I think that the things that we do with the students have been the highlights. Our production of West Side Story here was just an incredible performance for a number of years. We did Renaissance Dinners, and we were invited to the Greenbrier, and we performed Renaissance Dinners in costume at The Greenbrier. You know the opportunity to sing with the West Virginia Symphony, so I would say that the major highlights, at least for me, are those opportunities to have for students to be able to do performances of great art, great for students to do performance of great works of art at the highest level. And if we do that, I think that I'm contributing what my part of WVU Parkersburg is all about."

Parkersburg Pop Con ready to make its return

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Sept. 25, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/09/parkersburg-pop-con-ready-to-make-its-return/>



PARKERSBURG — Parkersburg Pop Con has finally returned this year for its fifth event, the first since before the COVID-19 outbreak.

The convention is a family-friendly celebration of all things pop culture, including movies, television, comic books and video games. Parkersburg Pop Con is hosted by West Virginia University at Parkersburg and will take place from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

“It’s a good time for the entire family, young and old,” said WVUP Chief Information Officer Doug Anthony. *“You’ll never know who or what you’ll run into. In the past, we have had cosplayers dressed as Star Wars and Ghostbusters characters and just about every superhero imaginable.”*

The convention will support a variety of 50 vendors, including different kinds of collectors and artists. This year will include a cosplay contest with separate judging for children and adults and a pop culture trivia contest. In addition, Ricky's Cafe, WVUP's restaurant, will be open and serving media-themed food items.

General admission tickets for the convention are \$5. Presenting a valid WVUP student ID will lower the cost to \$3. Veterans can enter free with a valid military ID.

"Preparing for this event is a labor of love, but it's worth it," said Anthony. "We'll start planning next year's event right after this one is over."

For more information, visit parkersburgpop.com or contact popcon@wvup.edu or 304-424-8280.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg honors education students, Kappa Delta Pi inductees

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Sept. 28, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/09/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-honors-education-students-kappa-delta-pi-inductees/>



PARKERSBURG — The West Virginia University at Parkersburg Professional Studies Division honored students admitted into the education program and inducted new members into the honor society Kappa Delta Pi on Sept. 18.

Students Lydia Bice, Olivia Birkhimer, Megan Brown, Aliyah Fields, Gracie Gill-Franks, Madalyn Gregware, Elizabeth Hoover, Ravyn Lucas, Haley Martin, Mariah Parks, Hannah Parsons, Vanessa Patton, Natalie Slusher, Alyssa Smith, and James Voutour were admitted into the Education Program.

“We’re very excited to celebrate the accomplishment of our new teacher candidates,” said Dean of the Professional Studies Division Dr. Bobbi Marshall. *“Teaching is a sacred profession.”*

Marshall introduced the students and explained what it takes to be a teacher. She said teachers must be lifelong learners dedicated to their profession, who can commit to being a role model while demonstrating dispositions that support growth in themselves and their students.

In order to be admitted into the Education Program, Marshall said the candidates must have completed at least 30 hours of coursework, 60 hours of field placement, maintain a 3.0 GPA, pass or be exempt from three PRAXIS Core or Case exams and complete 50 hours of service learning.

Lydia Bice, Taylor Leaptrot, Abigail Offenberger, Vanessa Patton, and Traeci Shannon were all inducted into Kappa Delta Pi.

“The WVU-P Sigma Omega chapter Kappa Delta Pi focuses their work on providing professional development opportunities to current students and graduates, service to the community, teacher education recognition, and receptions for the signing ceremony, KDP initiation, and celebration ceremonies for education graduates” said KDP Chapter Advisor Danielle Shockey.

The Education Department had a small reception with food and drinks for family after the ceremony.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg sets Friday inauguration ceremony for Jackson
Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Oct. 5, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/10/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-sets-friday-inauguration-ceremony-for-jackson/>

PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg will host an inauguration for President Torie L. Jackson on Friday on the main campus.

Jackson will be formally inaugurated as WVU-P's 13th president at 6:30 p.m. Friday in the College Activities Center at WVU-P.

Jackson was named President of WVU-P during a Board of Governors meeting on May 16. Jackson officially assumed the presidency on July 1.

The inauguration event will feature heavy hors d'oeuvres and music by Phillip Bowen. Joe Oliverio, board of governor's chair, is the Master of Ceremonies for the evening.

The inauguration of a new president is an opportunity to look forward and to celebrate new ideas and the future of the university, organizers said.

WVU Parkersburg Foundation receives donation to support agriculture

WTAP

Oct. 9, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/10/09/wvu-parkersburg-foundation-receives-donation-support-agriculture/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) – The WVU Parkersburg Foundation will receive a donation from Jay-Bee Oil.

The \$200,000 donation will be made over a four-year period to support the Riverhawk Farm and grow agriculture in the MOV.

Jay-Bee Oil & Gas Inc., out of Ritchie County, has been operating in W.Va. since 1982. It is a family-owned business that produces oil and gas resources.

The donation was announced on Monday, Oct. 9, 2023.

The donation will help provide students with top-tier educational opportunities through The Riverhawk Farm, according to WVUP.

WVUP Agriculture Director John Riggs said the funding will be put toward agricultural infrastructure development and innovation at The Riverhawk Farm. “For example, a portion of the \$200,000 will be used to develop a beekeeping and honey processing

facility, the completion of this project is set for Fall 2024,” said Riggs. “We will also be utilizing funding to develop livestock facilities and offer scholarship opportunities to students.”

WVU-P slates events for National Coming Out Day

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Oct. 11, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/10/wvu-p-slates-events-for-national-coming-out-day/>

PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is celebrating this year’s National Coming Out Day today with guest speakers, film discussions, bracelet making and more.

“National Coming Out Day is an annual LGBTQIA+ awareness day that anyone can support before the LGBTQIA+ population. It’s an opportunity to share who you are with your friends and family,” said Nancy Harris, Executive Director of Career Services and chair of the DEI Committee.

The celebration will begin at 10:30 a.m. in the College Activities Center. Students, faculty and staff are welcome to come down to create LGBTQIA+ pride buttons and bracelets. Students will be able to use various colors to customize their bracelets and buttons to their identities.

At 12:15 p.m., there will be a showing of three short films, *“The Outcoming”*, *“Out”* and a scene from *“Love, Simon.”* Ocean Smith from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) will facilitate a collective discussion on the three films afterward. Jenny Williams, also from the ACLU, will lead a short pride-themed meditation after the film discussion.

Also available to WVU Parkersburg students is a private chat with alum and mental health professional, Kaci Romanowski. She will be available to students to speak to one-on-one in the college’s Activity Center.

"We wanted to have some support available, as we know that coming out day can bring up some challenges for some people," said Alicia Beeson, Associate Professor of English and member of the DEI Committee.

National Coming Out Day was first observed in the United States in 1988. The holiday acts as an LGBTQIA+ awareness day and is about encouraging and supporting anyone who *"comes out of the closet."* The day was inaugurated by Robert Eichberg and Jean O'Leary, two LGBTQIA+ activists. The date of Oct. 11 was chosen because it is the anniversary of the Second National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1987.

"No one at WVU Parkersburg, regardless of your sexuality, your gender, your color, ever is alone because we truly are a family," Harris said.

WVUP board approves funds for Jackson County Center renovation, online degree option

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Oct. 18, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2023/10/wvup-board-approves-funds-for-jackson-county-center-renovation-online-degree-option/>



PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg’s Board of Governors unanimously approved resolutions allocating \$450,000 toward renovations at the school’s Jackson County Center and establishing a fully online option for its bachelor of applied technology degree.

WVU-P President Torie Jackson told board members Tuesday that the Jackson County Center has been operating at a financial loss in recent years, to the tune of approximately \$400,000 in the last fiscal year. The proposed renovation would *“take the first floor of that facility and completely turn it into an applied technical center,”* she said.

That would allow WVU-P to offer complete advanced manufacturing technology and multi-craft technology electrical maintenance associate of applied science degree programs at the campus, which has only been host to general education classes for several years, Jackson said. The first year of the associate of applied science in reliability and maintenance technology would be offered there as well, although the second year would shift to the main campus, where the school has an established welding lab *“with plenty of space,”* she said.

The degree programs have been requested by companies in the region, including Timet in Ravenswood and NuCor in Mason County, to provide their needed workforce, Jackson said.

“I think we’ll be able to get a return on our investment rather shortly,” she said.

Alice Harris, executive vice president of finance and administration, said the plan is to have the project under contract by Jan. 15, so work can get under way in February and the space is ready for classes by the fall 2024 semester.

The funding, which would come from the college’s approximately \$22 million in reserves, would not cover fixtures, furniture and equipment. Additional funding will be sought for those expenses, Jackson said.

Another resolution approved by the board will open up WVU-P courses to students in South Carolina starting in the spring semester.

The board authorized the addition of fully online options for the school's bachelor of applied technology degree, with specializations in software engineering and cybersecurity and network administration. WVU-P already has articulation agreements with Pierpont Community and Technical College and Blueridge Community and Technical College through which students can take the first two years of the program at those fellow West Virginia schools before completing the last two years as WVU-P students. Faculty have developed completely remote options for those classes.

WVU-P recently signed an articulation agreement with Aiken Technical College in South Carolina, said David Lancaster, vice president for academic affairs. The online designation would allow students from out of state to qualify for in-state tuition and take other online-only classes through WVU-P.

"I really do think this is the wave of the future," Lancaster said. "If we can do this online ... then we can also do that in South Carolina or any other place."

Jackson opened the meeting with a moment of silence in remembrance of Drew Carpenter, a member of the math faculty who died in a motorcycle accident on Sept. 22.

WVU Parkersburg School of Cosmetology is open

WTAP

Oct. 27, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/10/27/wvu-parkersburg-school-cosmetology-is-open/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - West Virginia University at Parkersburg held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for their new cosmetology school.

The WVU Parkersburg School of Cosmetology and Esthetics is located at the old Lee's Studio on Murdoch Avenue.

Lee Eric Rector has thought about changing the studio into a school for several years.

"I am just overwhelmed that it is finally coming to fruition. I think that the response and the impact that we have had on this program opening is just overwhelming," said Rector.

Even though the school is through WVU Parkersburg, Wood County Schools has a pre-cosmetology class at their technical center for high school students.

Superintendent Christie Willis shares how they might partner with the school in the future.

"We are having talks right now of how we might be able to integrate some of this, maybe, into their senior year so they can get help; but we are just in infancy plans at the moment with that," said Willis.

WVU Parkersburg President, Torie Jackson, is looking forward to how the school will benefit everyone.

"We just hope that the community can use the services and help the students have more opportunities to learn. Also, that they just know that what we are doing is going to allow a lot of salons to have trained employees," said Jackson.

Natalia Alvarez is a student in the cosmetology program and shares what it means to work in the community.

"It's going to be great to have people from the community be able to come out and for me to be able to touch the community in one way or another. Being able to see the smile on my client's face after I am finished, and being able to make them feel the best that they can through their looks," said Alvarez.

Students going through the cosmetology program have been working with hair, and starting Monday they will be open to the community.

To schedule an appointment you can call the school at 304-420-8617.

Hunter Burwell recognized for academic success

WTAP

Oct. 31, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/10/31/hunter-burwell-recognized-academic-success/>



BELPRE, Ohio (WTAP) - Burwell is an Honor Student at Belpre High School. He enjoys spending time with family and friends. He believes in studying hard and making good grades.

Burwell credits his mother and father as the reason he strives hard academically. He is currently taking courses at Washington State Community College and plans to continue his college career after high school. He is considering West Virginia University Parkersburg or Ohio State University and intends to get a job in software engineering.

Although Burwell is not involved in any extracurricular school activities, he is a fan of golf and enjoys spending time at local courses. He is also an avid fisherman who shares that hobby with his father.

He is involved in a 3D printing club at school. He also enjoys the occasional pickup game of basketball with friends.

Groundswell: Pepper Harvest heats things up at WVU-P's Riverhawk Farm

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Nov. 4, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/11/groundswell-pepper-harvest-heats-things-up-at-wvu-ps-riverhawk-farm/>



PARKERSBURG – After a summer of growth, the pepper crop at Riverhawk Farm at West Virginia University at Parkersburg is being harvested and will be used in salsa and hot sauces by a local company.

Javier Santelices, owner of Pancho Picante, planted 1,000 pepper plants last spring on a quarter-acre he's leasing at the farm.

As of Tuesday, they have picked 4,000 pounds of peppers and are continuing.

"The peppers have come out absolutely gorgeous and amazing," Santelices said.

The peppers are hybrids he created from Carolina Reapers, Ghost peppers, Fatalii (an African spicy pepper), Pequin peppers, Hatch peppers, Jalapeno peppers, Scorpion peppers and Scotch Bonnet peppers, among others.

"I have so many peppers, I don't even know all the names of them," Santelices said as he laughs.

Each pepper plant will yield, depending on the variety, several pounds of peppers. Peppers are picked in the fall to early winter when the spicier variety will be ready.

The peppers will be used in salsas, hot sauces, salt mixes and spice mixes made by Pancho Picante based in Washington, W.Va.

The Riverhawk Farm is leasing Santelices ground and assisting with the growing of the peppers.

Over the past season, Santelices has tried a number of different techniques and ways of growing peppers to see what works best in growing these peppers in West Virginia compared to his native California.

They have been trying things like extending the rows at different lengths, doing different watering routines on different rows and trying no till, till and growing them in beds to see which techniques work the best.

"We have a lot of data on what we should and shouldn't do," he said.

Throughout the season, Santelices daily inspected his plants while he pulling weeds. He had to tie the plants from snapping under their own weight.

"There is definitely a lot of work involved," he said of the hours he spent working by hand and then going home at night and making sauces and marketing his business.

All of the peppers are being picked by hand, sorted by hand, the stems are removed by hand and they are washed by hand.

"It is very labor intensive, but I would call it a labor of love," Santelices said.

With the recent cold snap this past week, extra care has to be taken.

"If we do it right and cover them up if there is a frost, we should be able to pull peppers out all the way to December as long as it doesn't dip below 28 degrees for too long," Santelices said. "The plants have not been damaged yet by the cold. A few have been shocked and dropped their leaves but the majority of plants are well and producing still. (From Tuesday on) these next few days will be a challenge."

John Riggs, director of Agriculture at WVU-P, said Santelices did a good job in his first year of commercial crop production.

"I'm very happy for Javier and Pancho Picante as they had a terrific yield on their peppers," he said. "He used his quarter-acre and made it a bountiful quarter-acre."

Santelices is estimating a few thousand bottles of sauce and salsa as well as a number of spice mixes can be made with this year's crop.

Pancho Picante was named after Santelices' father, Francisco (Pancho is a family nickname), who was born in Tijuana, Mexico, and now lives in San Diego, Calif. He came to West Virginia recently to see his son's enterprise and help out.

"I wasn't expecting so much," he said. "It is beautiful. I love it.

"I am impressed and proud of him. This is a lot of work."

The company is planning to return to the farm next season.

"We have plans to make it better," Santelices said.

He wants to further organize the peppers as this year they mixed the placements because they did not know which ground would be good for certain peppers and he didn't want to lose any one kind of plant if he placed them all together.

"There is no bad ground here," Santelices said.

For the upcoming holiday season the focus will be on gift packs. Orders can be directly from its website.

“Anyone who likes good food, we have something for them,” Santelices said. “We are offering free shipping until the end of the year due to the bountiful harvest we had.”

Because of his Mexican heritage, people may think all of his sauces are spicy, but there is a variety of flavor in their products.

They have a variety of sauces including Sol Fire, Snake Bite, El Greengo, Adobo Chile, Exorcist and Chile Limon as well as seasoning mixes.

“We are purveyors of flavor,” Santelices said. “We focus on flavor.”

WVU Parkersburg seeks gifts for families in need

WTAP

Nov. 7, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/11/07/wvu-parkersburg-seeks-gifts-families-need/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - West Virginia University at Parkersburg is accepting new and unwrapped toy donations for families in need.

The college is once again partnering with Toys for Tots for its annual toy drive.

A drop off location in WVU Parkersburg’s tutoring and testing center is available until December 15.

College president Dr. Torie Jackson says some of its employees' volunteer for toys for tots as part of their community service projects.

Jackson said the college works to play a vital role in the community in as many ways as possible.

"We are a community college and if we don't do our part to show we are a part of this community and we want to do everything we can to make it better, that is what we are supposed to do," said Dr. Jackson. "That is our mission and if that means more children wake up on Christmas morning and have an opportunity to smile because someone has given them we are more than happy to play a role in that."

The donations serve children six months through 13 years old.

NRCTC and WVU Parkersburg enter '2+2' agreement

59 News

Nov. 10, 2023

<https://www.wvntv.com/news/nrctc-and-wvu-parkersburg-enter-22-agreement/>

BEAVER, WV (WVNS) — New River Community and Technical College president Bonnie Copenhaver hosted a ceremony on the Raleigh County campus on Friday, November 10, 2023, today, as the college entered an agreement with West Virginia University at Parkersburg.

Students who earn an associate's degree in Applied Science at New River Community and Technical College are now able to head straight into a four-year degree at WVU-Parkersburg, as part of an articulation agreement between the colleges, according to NRCTC President Dr. Bonnie Copenhaver.

"No courses have to be retaken, and it's a very nice offer for them, at that point in time," added WVU-Parkersburg President Torie Jackson. "We have made that available online, so they have an option to stay in their home community and get another baccalaureate degree, through another community and technical college in West Virginia."

WVUP Foundation closes on former Ohio Valley University property

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Nov. 28, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2023/11/wvup-foundation-closes-on-former-ohio-valley-university-property/>

VIENNA — The former property of Ohio Valley University is now officially in the hands of the WVUP Foundation.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg President Torie Jackson said the Foundation, the school's fundraising arm, closed on the purchase just before Thanksgiving. The goal is to renovate the north campus, which includes the former Stotts Administration Center and Smith and Rampy Halls. The south campus, including the Snyder Activity Center, Fox Dining Hall and other facilities, will be assessed to determine which buildings will be sold and which need demolished because they've reached the end of their useful life, Jackson said.

"This can be a really great opportunity to renovate a facility and continue its educational purposes in the Mid-Ohio Valley," she said. "It can also be an amazing opportunity to drive the economy into a technology sector."

OVU shut its doors in December 2021, amid financial and academic struggles. WVUP announced this summer it was purchasing the 225.22-acre property for \$4.6 million as part of a \$10 million gift from The Ross Foundation, the largest in the school's history.

The Stotts building is planned as the future home of the WVUP Technology Center, which will focus not only on technological degrees but also provide incubator space for tech businesses.

The foundation is working with a local architectural and engineering firm to get the Stotts building heated as winter approaches, Jackson said. Approximately \$300,000 has already been spent toward that goal.

The foundation is also working with Wood County Economic Development to secure federal funding to replace doors and windows, at an estimated cost of \$1.25 million, and the state of West Virginia to fund repairs to the roof and installation of solar panels, expected to be around \$2.1 million.

Once renovations are done, the intent is for the foundation to gift the center to the college, Jackson said.

The Smith and Rampy dormitories are “*in relatively decent shape*,” Jackson said, and the hope is to eventually use them to provide some student housing. That would have to be done by a third party, and more work needs to be done to determine what form that would take, given the diverse nature of WVUP’s student body.

Parkersburg Symphony Chorus performs with West Virginia Symphony Orchestra WTAP

Dec. 3, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/12/04/parkersburg-symphony-chorus-performs-with-west-virginia-symphony-orchestra/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - Members of the Parkersburg Symphony Chorus sang in two concerts over the weekend with the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra (WVSO).

The Parkersburg Symphony Chorus is made up of the West Virginia University Parkersburg Chorale and community singers from throughout the area.

The first concert took place on Saturday at the Clay Center in Charleston, where they were joined by the West Virginia Symphony Chorus as well as the University of Charleston Concert Choir.

According to the Director of the Parkersburg Symphony Chorus, Doctor H.G. Young III, this year marks the 18th season that the Parkersburg Symphony Chorus has been a part of the annual “Sounds of the Season” holiday concert put on by the WWSO.

Just as it is every year there are many weeks of prep and rehearsals that go into each performance.

According to Dr. Young, The Parkersburg Symphony Chorus does about five weeks of rehearsal, starting in early November with rehearsals taking place once a week in Parkersburg.

Prior to the concert in Charleston, the chorus participates in a dress rehearsal with the orchestra, symphony choir, and other participating choirs.

The Parkersburg chorus then performs with the symphony in the Clay Center during an evening concert with an afternoon concert at Blennerhassett School the next day.

Dr. Young says that the highlight of these concerts to him...all comes back to the music.

“I think it’s just singing all this wonderful music for the season. Some things we sing year after year and some we sing new pieces and just to experience music with first of all, students and community people, the singers and then with the whole wonderful West Virginia City Orchestra.”

Enrollment showing improvement in state’s 2-year schools; high school dual enrollment up nearly 40%

Metro News

Dec. 7, 2023

<https://wvmetronews.com/2023/12/07/enrollment-showing-improvement-in-states-2-year-schools-high-school-dual-enrollment-up-nearly-40/>

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — There are more than 16,000 students enrolled in community and technical colleges across the state.

The West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education got a look at fall enrollment numbers at its meeting held Thursday in Charleston.

Total headcount enrollment is listed at 16,660.

State Higher Education Chancellor Dr. Sarah Armstrong Tucker said enrollment is getting closer to pre-pandemic levels.

“Our headcount enrollment has increased and we are trending in the right direction,” Tucker said. “We are starting to get back to pre-pandemic levels.”

Tucker said she’s particularly pleased with a nearly 40% increase in dual enrollment where high school students take classes through a local community and technical college.

“I really think it’s important for our high school students to see themselves as being college-ready, to see themselves as being able to be successful in college. It cuts costs for them. It cuts their time to degree. It just makes all of the sense in the world for our students to be enrolled in college while they are still in high school,” Tucker said.

There are 4,299 students taking part in the high school dual enrollment program this fall. The headcount was 3,212 last year.

First-time freshman enrollment has also showed an increase from 2,530 last year to 2,819 this year. Freshman enrollment was at 3,021 in 2019 before the pandemic.

Blue Ridge Community and Technical has the highest enrollment among two-year schools at 2,787 followed by WVU Parkersburg at 1,835 and BridgeValley Community and Technical College at 1,769 students.

Some of the state’s four-year colleges and universities continue to struggle to return to pre-pandemic levels for enrollment. Tucker said if schools play to their strengths she believes enrollment will increase at both two and four-year schools.

“You’ve heard me say many times that I think that higher education is the way out of poverty for the vast majority of West Virginians and I believe that,” Tucker said. “Both sectors have lots of really important things to offer for our students and they are different.”

More than 95% of the students enrolled in community and technical colleges in West Virginia are from West Virginia. West Virginia Northern Community College has the highest percentage of out of state students at 16%.

Scholarship will honor West Virginia University at Parkersburg student killed in farming accident

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Dec. 9, 2023

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2023/12/scholarship-will-honor-west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-student-killed-in-farming-accident/>



PARKERSBURG — The family of Ethan Cain, a West Virginia University at Parkersburg student killed in a farming accident, met with the WVUP Foundation on Nov. 28 to finalize the agreement for the Ethan Cain Memorial Scholarship, the school announced.

“The scholarship holds significant meaning for the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation as it commemorates the life of Ethan and honors his passion for agriculture,” said Olivia Reeder, director of the WVUP Foundation, in a release. *“It serves as a lasting tribute to*

his memory while supporting the educational pursuits of future agriculture students. We are grateful that the family chose such an impactful way to memorialize Ethan.”

Reeder said the scholarship is designed to financially assist agriculture students at WVUP.

“It may cover various expenses related to their education, such as tuition, textbooks and other academic fees, providing valuable support for their academic journey,” she said.

Sheena Deem, Cain’s aunt, as well as several cousins and other family members attended the scholarship signing in his honor, the release said.

“This scholarship means a lot to us. This means that we’re keeping Ethan’s name alive,” Deem said in the release. “We wanted to try to help out other kids that needed help on trying to further their education in agriculture.”

Deem said Ethan had been interested in farming since he could walk.

“Ethan, for probably as soon as he was able to walk, was riding a tractor with Papaw; he lived, ate and breathed the farm,” she said.

Cain participated in WVUP’s Short-Term Agribusiness program and worked on the Riverhawk Farm with John Riggs, agriculture director, the release said.

“Ethan Cain meant an awful lot to me, as a friend, a student and a farmer,” Riggs said in the release. “I really respected his drive and work ethic for as young as he was; it is hard to come by that level of work ethic today.

“He took a great deal of pride in working to earn money and buying his own things,” he said. “He was one of those farm kids, much like myself, that loved to be out on the tractor, baling hay or feeding cattle.”

Riggs said he was humbled and honored that the Cain and Clevenger families “trusted me to bring this scholarship to WVU Parkersburg’s Agriculture program.

“WVU Parkersburg Agriculture’s main goal is educating the next generation of agriculturalists,” Riggs said in the release. “When I was first told about the Ethan Cain Memorial Scholarship, I became very emotional due to my connection with the family

and the sensitivity of the matter. Knowing what this means to the family, community and the future of agriculture education for other students, we will strive to be the best stewards of this funding as we can be.”

Riggs said in the release that seeing the community come together to support the scholarship speaks volumes to what type of person Cain was.

“His name will live on forever through this scholarship, and many students will be able to advance their farming knowledge because of him. That would have meant a great deal to Ethan,” Riggs said. “I would like to thank the family, community and the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation for all the work that went into bringing the Ethan Cain Memorial Fund to fruition.”

The release said the scholarship will be available to students who have graduated from Ritchie County High School or St. Marys High School and plan to pursue agriculture at WVUP. If no student from that area is eligible, it may go to any West Virginia student pursuing agriculture.

More information is available by contacting the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation at foundation@wvup.edu.

Historical Oakland Estate is open for Christmas tours

WTAP

Dec. 13, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/12/14/historical-oakland-estate-is-open-christmas-tours/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - For the first time in a long time the Historical Oakland Estate is decorated and open for Christmas tours.

"We decided that we will decorate the Oakland Estate for Christmas which has been done in the past but we really haven't had the opportunity to open it up to the public," said WVUP Foundation Director, Olivia Reeder.

In January Reeder and the WVUP Foundation said they were hoping to get the community back involved with the home and initiatives like this is how they are getting started.

"Absolutely this qualifies for the campaign we did which is called History loves Company and we're still working on that. We've invited people in for different types of courses like sushi making or cookie decorating. We have a lot of fun thing coming up with our Kentucky derby party or WV day. All of those things are what this home was about and what the family wanted being a community hub of entertainment, learning and culture," said Reeder.

One of the main goals of the historical society is to bring back the legacy of the home and the families that lived inside.

"It's very important to us that we maintain the legacy of the Stevenson's and the Lutz's they gave so much to the community through the home and who they were as people and members of the community. We want to honor that and the gift they gave the foundation," Reeder said.

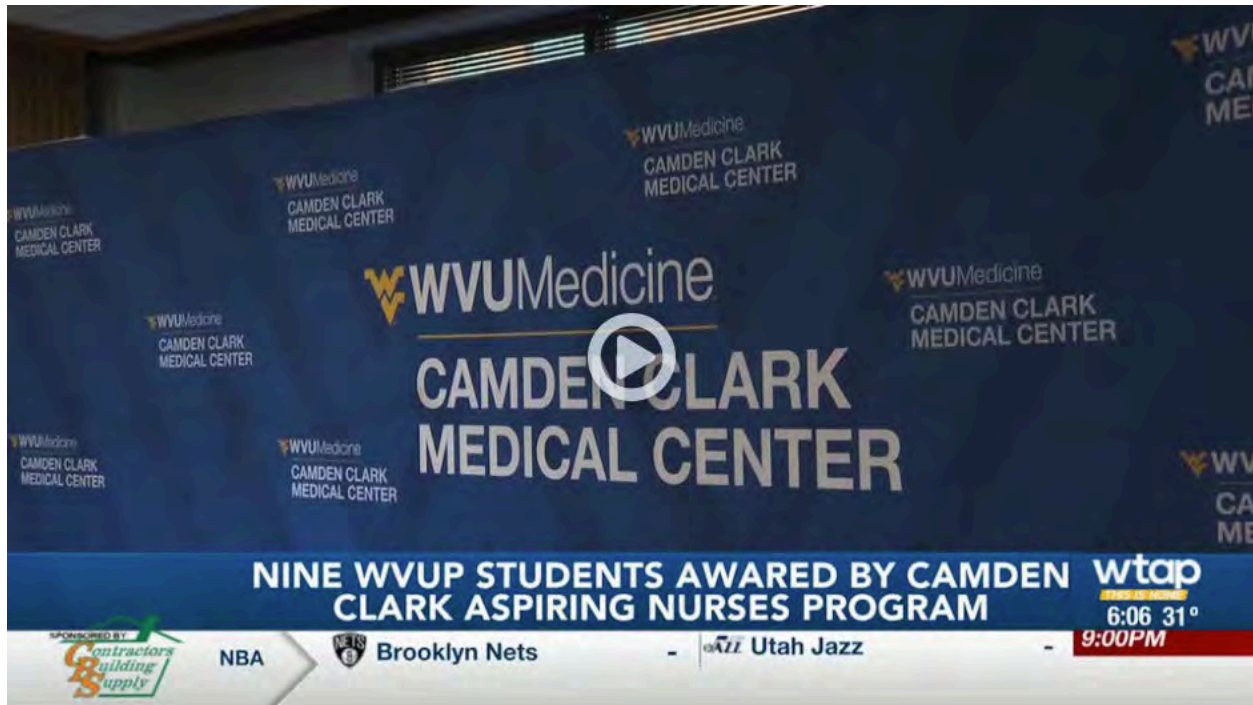
You can reserve your historical tour by messaging the WVUP foundation Facebook page or call the number attached (304) 424-8340.

Camden Clark Aspiring Nurses Program awards WVUP nursing students

WTAP

Dec. 18, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/12/18/camden-clark-aspiring-nurses-program-awards-wvup-nursing-students/>



PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WTAP) - Nine West Virginia University at Parkersburg nursing students are getting help funding their education thanks to a scholarship from Camden Clark Medical Center.

Camden Clark's Aspiring Nurses Program gives nursing students \$5,000 per semester they can use to pay for tuition or living expenses during their education. In exchange for the funding, the nurses commit to three years working for Camden Clark after graduation. They also receive a \$5,000 sign-on bonus upon graduation.

Nine students were awarded scholarships Monday, with a ceremony taking place at Camden Clark.

Karissa Reynolds, one of the nursing students awarded, said she's already worked for Camden Clark in a non-medical capacity. "I started as a unit secretary on the behavioral health unit, and while working in that position I just kind of fell in love with the people I work with every day," Reynolds said. "The nurses, the patients, the leadership."

Reynolds said the chance to further her education and eventually work for Camden Clark as a nurse means a lot. "It's an amazing opportunity," Reynolds said. "It's a rare opportunity and I'm so thankful that I was chosen for it. I've got two small kids at home,

I work full time just to keep our bills paid. So, to have a little bit of support from the hospital and the people I already work with has been a blessing?"

WVUP Dean of Nursing Kathy Frum said she's excited that their students are getting additional support. "It's a fantastic experience, opportunity for these kids," Frum said. "There is no better time than right now to go to nursing school. We're very excited to see these nine people, and we will give them everything that they need."

Frum said she thinks the extra financial support will help improve academic outcomes for the students. "With them helping them financially, the students can focus more on their academics, and that has always been -- sometimes they're just one flat tire away from having to drop the program," Frum said. "So they have all this extra support now in order to finish the program and hopefully help put a dent in the nursing shortage."

A look back at the biggest stories of 2023 in the Mid-Ohio Valley

WTAP

Dec. 31, 2023

<https://www.wtap.com/2023/12/31/look-back-biggest-stories-2023-mid-ohio-valley/>



PARKERSBURG, [W.Va.](#) (WTAP) - Hundreds of people came to Mountwood Park on a cold day in February to help police search for Gretchen Fleming. Her dad and stepmom talked to WTAP in December on the one-year anniversary of her disappearance.

"I believe that it's only a matter of time until they solve this case," said Jennifer Fleming, Gretchen's stepmom.

There was a strong windstorm in the Mid-Ohio Valley on Saturday, March 26th. Trees were uprooted in neighborhoods like Vienna. Gusts reached up to 50 to 60 miles per hour.

Kim Stephens became the Marshall University Head Women's Basketball Coach in March. She is from Parkersburg and graduated from Parkersburg South High School.

"I'm incredibly honored to be a part of the Thundering Herd family. This has been a dream of mine for a really long time," said Stephens.

The Morgan Local School District strike ended in mid-March after OAPSE Local 51 union signed a contract with the school board.

A strike of Profusion Industries in Marietta ended on March 30th after International Chemical Workers Union Local 343 members voted unanimously to accept a new contract from the company.

Brenton Strange was drafted to the Jacksonville Jaguars at the end of April. He is from Parkersburg and played football for Parkersburg High School and Penn State.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg Board of Governors named Dr. Torie Jackson as the university's president in May.

"I often say that this is the college that built me. And I literally mean that. When I was at a time in my life when things were difficult, this is the college that embraced me and helped me to develop confidence in myself. So, to be able to instill that confidence into students today is a dream that I'm happy to have," said Jackson.

Hillary Dennison was sentenced in June to life in prison after shooting and killing her father, Harold Dennison, and her fiance, Beau Wasmer.

Omnis Technologies bought the Pleasants Power Station at the beginning of August. The coal-fired power plant will now use coal to produce hydrogen for energy and graphite, which is in high demand for electric car batteries.

Derek Taylor's murder trial started on the first day of August. A jury found him not guilty of the murder of Cory Friend three days later.

The Marietta River Trail reopened again after being closed for three years due to the road collapsing. The mayor talked to WTAP about the reopening.

“It’s been a long time coming. We’ve had a lot of inquiries over the years, ‘Why isn’t this getting done?’ but this is about a 2 million dollar project for the city to absorb,” said Marietta Mayor Josh Schlicher.

Marietta also broke ground on a new water treatment plant in August to replace the older one. It’s expected to be up and running around July 2025, according to the city.

The Memorial Bridge that connects Parkersburg and Belpre had a grand reopening on August 31st after being shut down for a year and a half for rehabilitation. Parkersburg’s mayor was there to celebrate.

“This is a big win for the local community. Certainly for the city of Parkersburg, but also Belpre and Vienna. This bridge has always been a bridge of convenience,” said Parkersburg Mayor Tom Joyce.

Oscar Hernandez Diaz’s murder trial in September ended in a hung jury. He later took a plea deal and was sentenced to 3 to 4 years in prison for involuntary manslaughter for the death of Abraham Olvera.

The chairman of the Marietta Riverfront Roar announced in mid-October the festival would not continue. It had been in the area for over 20 years.

There was a ribbon cutting near the end of October at Point Park in downtown Parkersburg for the opening of the Parkersburg Ohio River Trail.

WTAP celebrated its 70th anniversary in November with a half-hour special looking back at the station’s history.

Belpre’s mayor, Mike Lorentz, did not run for re-election in November. He was the city’s mayor for 16 years.

Washington County Sheriff Larry Mincks announced that he will not run for re-election next year. He became the sheriff back in 2004.

A woman named Crystal Roseberry and her friend, Thomas Platt, were shot and killed by her estranged husband, Stevie Roseberry, on 38th Street in Vienna. Police say Stevie shot and killed himself the next day.

The Williamstown Yellowjackets won the Class Single A football championship for the second year in a row. They took down Greenbrier West 42 to 12.

“I’m just extremely proud of the 38 kids we have, the 10 seniors we have. Credit to them. They worked their butts off. The greatest class to come through. The greatest team,” said Williamstown High School Head Football Coach Chris Beck.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg bought the former Ohio Valley University campus near the end of 2023. It will eventually become the WVU Parkersburg Technology Center.

2023 ended on a sad note. Todd Baucher passed away at the age of 67 on December 29th. Todd had worked at the station for 41 years and retired in 2021. He was a beloved colleague and will be missed.

West Virginia University at Parkersburg holds 2023 fall commencement

Parkersburg News and Sentinel

Jan. 5, 2024

<https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/community-news/2024/01/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg-holds-2023-fall-commencement/>



PARKERSBURG — West Virginia University at Parkersburg held its annual fall commencement ceremony on Dec. 16 at 10:30 a.m. in the College Activities Center, a release said.

Kevin Smith, an alumnus and manager of distribution systems at Appalachian Power, served as the keynote speaker and encouraged the Fall 2023 class of graduates that being themselves would help carry them through life.

“Just be yourself, that’s why you’re here today and that is what has brought you to this celebration of this great accomplishment,” said Smith. *“Take what you’ve learned and apply it, prepare well for interviews and even dress up a little for the occasion, but just be yourself and then hang on for the ride that follows.”*

The release said Smith earned his associate degree in 2019, and a Bachelor’s in Supervisory Management in 2021, both from WVU-P. He is currently pursuing a Master’s of Executive Leadership from Liberty University. He is a Roanoke, Va., native, but currently lives in Lynchburg, Va., with his family.

The release said WVU-P President Dr. Torie Jackson reminded the graduating class that they would always have a support system behind them.

“While you were here at WVU-P, we hope you learned in your classes, but we also hope that you realized that you have a support system beyond that of your family and friends. You have a campus of supporters that are here to celebrate your success today and that will continue to be WVU Parkersburg Proud of all of your future accomplishments,” said Jackson. *“We believe in you!”*

She continued, *“Think of new and innovative ways to do things, agree to get out of your comfort zone and push yourself to accomplish those dreams knowing that we’re here to have your back.”*

Over 100 graduates crossed the stage, with 292 students earning certificate, associate and bachelor’s degrees, pending final grades.

To watch the Fall 2023 commencement ceremony, visit youtube.com/wvuparkersburg.



December 2023
West Virginia University at Parkersburg
Social Media Report

facebook

[@wvuparkersburg](https://facebook.com/wvuparkersburg)

Fans (number of page likes): 8,682

WVU Parkersburg gained 13 fans in December 2023.

Top Posts

West Virginia University at Parkersburg
Published by Hootsuite · 4d · 🌐


WVUP is proud to announce that the Nursing Students of the Month for December are Cynthia Poling, Leah Wagener, Wendy Joyner, Ayden Nelson, and Emily Hadley. 🏆 This prestigious recognition is awarded to a nursing student who has consistently displayed outstanding qualities in the pursuit of their nursing education and clinical practice. These students have consistently maintained a high level of academic performance, demonstrating a deep understanding of nursing theory a... [See more](#)




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 **West Virginia University at Parkersburg**
Published by Hootsuite · December 16, 2023 ·


Congratulations Graduates! 🎓 Tune in to our YouTube Livestream at 10:30 a.m. to watch the Fall 2023 Graduation Ceremony live!
<https://youtube.com/live/5Zs6DAWicrY?feature=share>











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 **Zach Knight**
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 **West Virginia University at Parkersburg**
Published by Hootsuite · December 19, 2023 at 1:01 PM · 






WVU Parkersburg is offering a hybrid 13-week Nail Technician Short-Term program to teach students how to properly manicure and pedicure clients hygienically and professionally. 🎓 The program will take place Mondays through Thursdays, January 29 to May 9, 2024, from 5-8 p.m.




Upon completing the program, students will be prepared to become a licensed Nail Technician in West Virginia.

👉 To register, call 304.424.8258 or email Abby.Campbell@wvup.edu.



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  23  2  29 

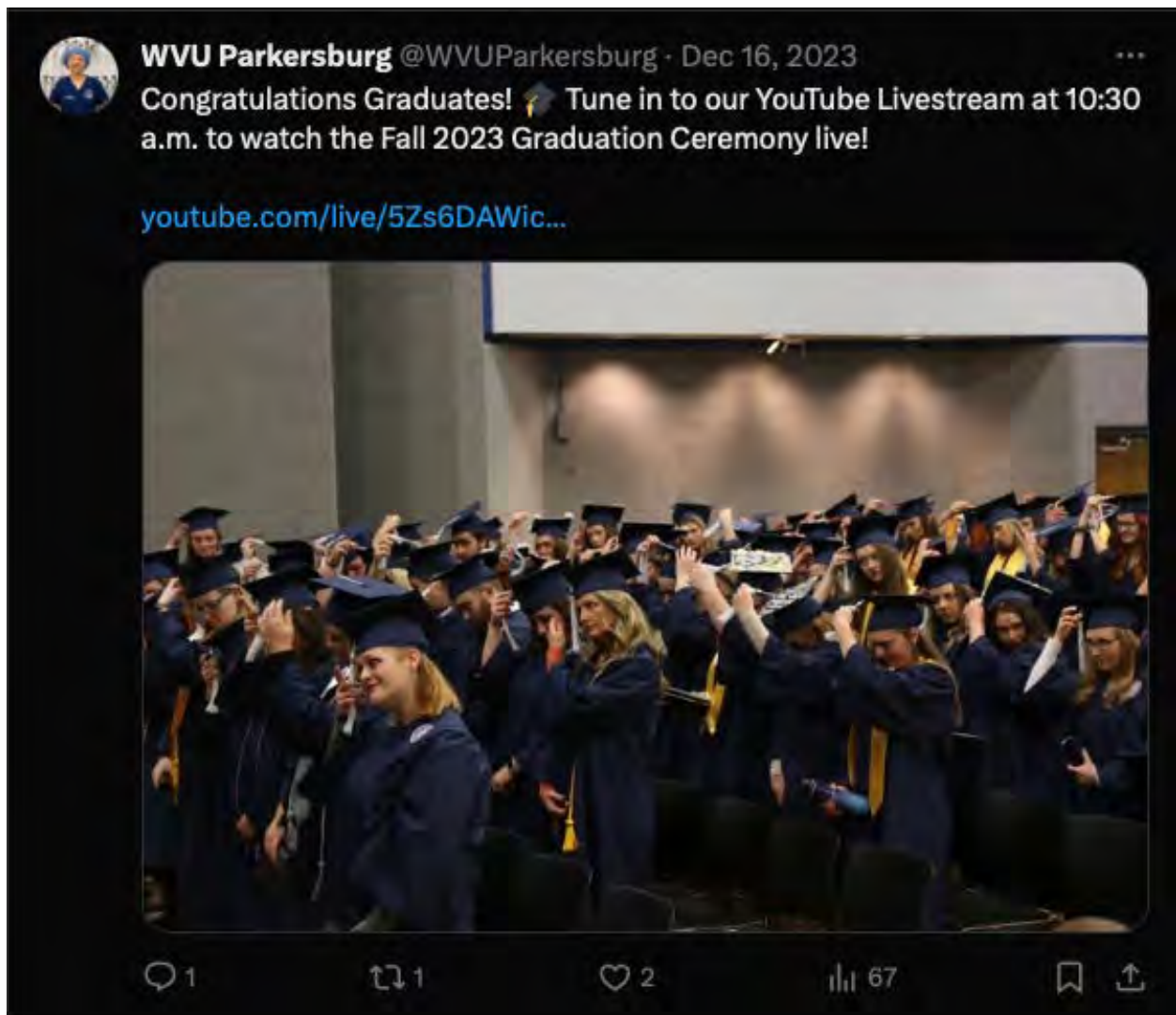
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twitter.com/WVUParkersburg (@wvuparkersburg)

Followers (number of people following WVU Parkersburg's account): 1,340
WVU Parkersburg gained 3 followers in December 2023.

Top Tweets



 **WVU Parkersburg** @WVUParkersburg · Dec 18, 2023

Interested in HVAC? 🛠️ WVU Parkersburg's Workforce & Economic Division is offering an HVAC short-term program with D&R Heating & Cooling on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from January 16 to May 2, 2024, from 6-9 p.m.

👉 To register, call 304.424.8258 or email Abby.Campbell@wvup.edu.



2 3 77



WVU Parkersburg @WVUParkersburg · Dec 28, 2023

WVU Parkersburg is offering a 90-hour Dental Assistant program Mondays and Wednesdays, from Feb. 6 - May 16, 2024, from 6-9 p.m., at the WVU Parkersburg Workforce & Economic Development Building.

👉 For questions, contact Martha Leeson at 304-424-8275 or martha.leeson@wvup.edu.

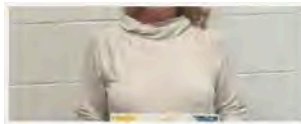

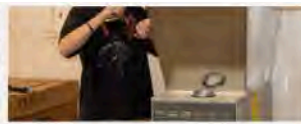





[instagram.com/wvuparkersburg](https://www.instagram.com/wvuparkersburg) (@wvuparkersburg)

Followers (number of people following WVU Parkersburg’s account): 1,848
WVU Parkersburg lost 3 followers in December 2023.

Top Posts

 <p>wvuparkersburg Jan 11, 18:02</p> <p>WWUP is proud to announce that the Nursing Students of the Month for December are Cynthia Poling, Leah Wagoner, Wendy Joyner, Ayden Nelson, and Emily Hadley. 🏆 This prestigious recognition is awarded to a nursing student who has consistently displayed outstanding qualities</p> <p>38 likes 7.85 % engagement rate</p>	 <p>wvuparkersburg Dec 16, 15:00</p> <p>Congratulations Graduates! 🎓 Tune in to our YouTube Livestream at 10:30 a.m. to watch the Fall 2023 Graduation Ceremony live! https://youtube.com/live/5Zs6DAWicrY?feature=share</p> <p>33 likes 8.4 % engagement rate</p>	 <p>wvuparkersburg Dec 18, 18:01</p> <p>Interested in HVAC? 🏠 WVU Parkersburg's Workforce & Economic Division is offering an HVAC short-term program with D&R Heating & Cooling on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from January 16 to May 2, 2024, from 6-9 p.m. 📞 To register, call 304.424.8258 or email Abby.Campbel</p> <p>19 likes 5.21 % engagement rate</p>	 <p>wvuparkersburg Dec 19, 18:01</p> <p>WVU Parkersburg is offering a hybrid 13-week Nail Technician Short-Term program to teach students how to properly manicure and pedicure clients hygienically and professionally. 📍 The program will take place Mondays through Thursdays, January 29 to May 9, 2024, from 5-8 p.m. Upon</p> <p>17 likes 6.01 % engagement rate</p>
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LinkedIn

[linkedin.com/school/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg](https://www.linkedin.com/school/west-virginia-university-at-parkersburg)

Followers (number of people following WVU Parkersburg’s account): 7,161
WVU Parkersburg gained 65 followers in December 2023.

Top Posts

Posted by James Dobbs • 12/18/2023

 **West Virginia University at Parkersburg**
7,161 followers
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JOB ALERT! 📣 WVU Parkersburg is accepting applications for Food Service Worker. To learn more and apply, visit wvup.edu/jobs.



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