West Virginia University has made the most progress of any of the nation’s flagship universities in providing access for low-income and underrepresented minority students, according to a report issued from The Education Trust.

WVU was one of four institutions with the “highest marks for overall performance on measures of equity and for their progress between 2004-2005 and 2007-2008.” The others were the University of Florida, the University of Maine and the University of Utah.

While WVU fared well in the study, the report, entitled “Opportunity Adrift,” was critical of the broader record of flagship institutions.

The report was issued the same day Gov. Joe Manchin called on West Virginia’s colleges and universities to do more to make higher education accessible.

“Our colleges and universities are more prepared than ever to take us to the next level, but our children have to get to college first,” Manchin said in his State of the State message on January 13. “Our greatest challenge is to make sure those who start college will finish.”

WVU President James P. Clements praised Manchin for his commitment to education and for making it a priority.

“It’s clear he cares deeply about education,” Clements said. “And he understands the key to success in West Virginia is a greater level of education and that access is a priority.

“We’ll do everything we can to help the governor fulfill his vision.”

The Education Trust looked at minority student and low-income student access, and minority student success in the fall of 2007. It also measured progress in these areas from 2004 to 2007.


“We have been working very hard on retention and graduation rates,” said Brenda Thompson, associate vice president of Enrollment Management. “And the picture should only improve,” Thompson said. “Since 2008 the University has added a multicultural recruiter, increased financial aid and launched programs to help keep students in school.”

The percentage of minority students continues to rise with each freshman class, she said.

“Programs such as STARS (Students Achieving and Reaching Success) at the Center for Black Culture and Research, HSTA (Health, Science and Technology Academy), HCOP (Health Careers Opportunity Program) and others have really made an impact as we work to increase the number of students from diverse backgrounds on campus,” she added.

The Education Trust promotes high academic achievement for all students at all levels — pre-kindergarten through college. Its goal is to close the gaps in opportunity and achievement that consign many young people—especially those from low-income families or who are black, Latino, or American Indian—to lives on the margins of the American mainstream.

WVU program gives students a chance to get to know faculty

By Colleen DeHart, WVU News and Information Services

A student’s bond with a professor can be just as important as grades. Really.

“Other than your friends, the most important relationship you have in college is with faculty members,” says Chris Martin, WVU vice president of University Relations. “Teachers have been the most important people in my life. They have opened my horizons and helped me to understand what I could be.”

And to help those relationships develop, West Virginia University has established the Faculty Fellows program to connect students with professors outside of the classroom — making them more approachable and allowing students to form mentoring relationships.

“This is a great opportunity for students to interact with professors in a way they
Dear Mountaineer Parents Club families,

As I reflect on another academic year coming to a close, I think about the impact that you have had on the life of your student. Many of you are struggling to understand how a year has passed already and that your son or daughter has just completed his/her first year of college. Others are trying to imagine how it can be possible that your student is graduating! As I work with parents from the recruitment phase through graduation, I learn every day how committed the families of our WVU students are to making sure that their students succeed. This commitment is something that we embrace at West Virginia University.

The Mountaineer Parents Club makes it easy for families to support their students. Currently, there are over 20,000 members. These families have decided to take an active role in their student’s education by signing up to join the Mountaineer Parents Club. In addition, we have over 350 parents who have volunteered to take an active role in their local clubs.

Volunteering is defined as the practice of people working on behalf of others or for a particular cause without payment for their time and services. That is what parents do! I am amazed by the dedication of our WVU parents—planning events, participating in Summer Send-Offs and WinterFests, sending support packages, creating local club newsletters, organizing local bus transportation, hosting WVU speakers, designing websites, setting up local Club Facebook pages, and more!

Parents are also dedicated volunteers in the area of student recruitment. Last year, through the WVU National Alumni Recruiting Network (NARN), parents volunteered over 500 hours. They attended college fairs and phoned and e-mailed prospective students in eight different states. In West Virginia alone, six Mountaineer Parents Clubs participated in a phoning campaign.

Chris Long, Central Maryland Club chair, said this about being a volunteer: “I took over as chair of the Central Maryland Club because I knew it was a valuable organization. I felt that I should continue that tradition and have tried to foster many activities. My volunteering, I think, has shown our daughters civic and social responsibilities and the rewards that come with that—the camaraderie with local parents and the WVU parents clubs. All of these friends are simply another extended family. Katherine has begun her life of volunteering and social responsibility as well.”

West Virginia University is fortunate to have families involved. Not only do they contribute to the overall well-being and success of their students, but they are critical to our institution.

If you are interested in being a more active volunteer, please contact us at ParentsClub@mail.wvu.edu. In addition, if you are interested in helping us recruit future Mountaineers, go to the National Alumni Recruiting network site at http://narn.wvu.edu/. I know you will find these experiences rewarding. We all want the best for our WVU students, and being involved in the university they are attending is a wonderful way to support them.

Thank you to all parents and family members of WVU students. Your dedication and altruistic nature are truly inspiring.

Sabrina M. Cave, Executive Director

Many WVU staff members attended Mountaineer Parents Club Summer Send-Offs last year, including this one in Northern Virginia. We hope that you will be able to attend your local Summer Send-Off this year. Check the Mountaineer Parents Club website at http://parentsclub.wvu.edu/ for details, beginning in June.

Spring 2010
The Mountaineer Parents Club newsletter is a free publication for Mountaineer Parents Club members. It is a joint project of Enrollment Services, News and Information Services, the Mountaineer Parents Club, the WVU Foundation and University Relations. Letters and suggestions are welcome. Send mail to: Editor, Mountaineer Parents Club newsletter, PO Box 6240, Morgantown, WV 26506 or parentsclub@mail.wvu.edu.

Funding for this newsletter was provided in part by the Susan B. Hardesty Parents Club Endowment. West Virginia University is governed by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and the WVU Board of Governors. West Virginia University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution. Designed by WVU Creative Services.
A midst widespread oral health challenges facing West Virginia, the WVU School of Dentistry is taking a stand. Aided by the generous support of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the School is launching the WVU Oral Health Initiative (WVU OHI), a multi-faceted program to change perceptions of oral health, improve daily oral hygiene behavior and mobilize the oral health workforce into areas of greatest need.

The Benedum Foundation’s recent $250,000 grant to the School of Dentistry will allow it to expand some of its existing community programs, including CHOMP — qualified elementary-aged students receive free transportation to the dental school for treatment during the school day.

The grant, made through the WVU Foundation, will also help the School to initiate new programs that will support the efforts of state oral health educators, create an online community and educational resources, and collect data about the efficacy of oral health programs. The School plans to engage other schools within WVU, such as the School of Journalism, as well as stakeholders throughout West Virginia to work together for a common purpose.

Interim Dean Dr. Louise Veselicky is emphatic about the importance of the School’s outreach programs.

“I believe our dental school should be the leader—beyond training the workforce—in improving the oral health of all West Virginians,” Veselicky said. “By engaging directly with the citizens of West Virginia, the WVU School of Dentistry, with its many partners such as the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and its generous supporters, will break the cycle of poor oral health.

“The need for public awareness and good daily oral hygiene is critical,” she said. West Virginia leads the nation in the number of individuals aged 65 and older who have lost all of their natural teeth, and the state Department of Health and Human Resources concluded in a 2006 study that 84% of West Virginia’s youth have cavities by high school graduation.

Veselicky points out that altering behavior at an early age—including a dental visit before age one—can completely prevent a cascade of systemic health problems that begin in the mouth.

“It is important to realize that the mouth is connected to the body and that oral health is connected with overall health,” she said.

The 2003 U.S. Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health states that dental decay and/or gum disease is linked to low birth weight, cardiovascular problems, cancer, diabetes, poor nutrition, speech impairments and psychosocial problems.

Veselicky believes that simple lifestyle choices like drinking fluoridated water, daily brushing, flossing, and reducing sugar in the diet are the most important, easiest and affordable ways to improve oral health and preserve natural teeth. With the efforts of the WVU OHI, she hopes to promote this message statewide.

Veselicky says that by tackling oral health outreach and by focusing energy to educate parents and children as well as the wider community, the WVU School of Dentistry, with support from the Benedum Foundation, will improve the quality of life and health for West Virginians.
Students get to know faculty
(continued from page 1)

might not normally get a chance to,” added Martin, who formerly served as dean of the Perley Isaac Reed School of Journalism at WVU, is a current faculty member and one of 15 Faculty Fellows.

Faculty Fellows, which augments the Resident Faculty Leaders program, was started as part of WVU’s residential college model, first implemented when Lincoln Hall was opened in 2006. Since then the program has been expanded to three other residence halls.

Under the program, members of WVU’s faculty teach courses in the residence halls, eat meals with the students, organize trips and events and provide opportunities for students to learn more about their career of choice.

During her time as a fellow, Martin has had meals with students and organized focus groups on social media, among other things.

David Slusarick, a graduate student and residential advisor at Dadisman Hall, said the fellows program helps to smooth the transition from high school to college.

“It helps students realize that professors are normal people who are very approachable and accessible, and it makes them more comfortable with the idea of turning to a professor for help,” Slusarick said. “It also helps with networking, scholarships and getting accepted into programs.”

Fellow and humanities lecturer Caleb Winters has taught a course in Lincoln Hall and Anna Schein, associate curator of the West Virginia and Regional History Collection at WVU Libraries, has organized weekly library tours.

The freshman seminar class Winters taught was called “Pop Culture and Your Life.”

“It was a neat opportunity to give my assessment and then give the students a chance to give their opinion and teach each other,” Winters said. “The students had a lot of opportunity to steer the class and talk about what they wanted to talk about. It was a really good class that the students and myself took a lot away from.”

Other fellows have planned trips to museums in Pittsburgh, the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Pocahontas County, Harpers Ferry and Coopers Rock.

The program benefits the faculty just as much as the students.

“I get to learn what the students are interested in and what they do in their spare time. It is a constant reminder of why I do my job, and what it is really about,” Martin said.

For more information on WVU Housing and Residential Education, visit http://housing.wvu.edu/.

April 4, Residence Halls re-open @ noon
April 9-11, Weekend of Honors
April 11, Spring Ring Day
April 16-18, Spring Family Weekend
April 17, Parents Club University
April 22, Zero-Year Reunion
May 3-8, Finals Week
May 8, Residence Halls close @ 5:00 p.m.
May 14-16, Commencement
May 17, Summer classes begin
October 1-3, Fall Family Weekend

The Mountaineer Parents Club teamed up with the Center for Civic Engagement to offer “Notes to Home” during Random Acts of Kindness Week. Students were encouraged to send a postcard to a loved one with the postage paid by the Mountaineer Parents Club.
WVU Foundation to launch scholarship campaign

The WVU Foundation is launching a campaign in April aimed at helping current WVU students impacted by the economic downturn. “Stepping Up for Students” is a fund drive to raise need-based student scholarships to be awarded by WVU Financial Aid for the 2010–2011 academic year.

“We are aware of students who are struggling to make ends meet and stay in school,” said Greg McCracken, University Fund director and organizer of the campaign. “Some students are working two jobs, even those already on scholarship, because of the strain the economy has had on them and their families.”

McCracken said the WVU Foundation is responding with an urgent appeal to alumni and friends for scholarship dollars.

“Your gift to the ‘Stepping Up for Students’ fund could make all the difference for a student struggling to return this fall,” he said. “In some cases, just a few hundred dollars stand between a student and his/her ability to attend WVU.”

For more information or to contribute to the campaign, visit the Foundation’s Web site at www.wvuf.org or call the Foundation at 304-284-4000 or 800-847-3856.

Brock Burwell, a senior from Harrisville, WV, was named the mascot for the 2010-2011 season. He has been the alternate Mountaineer mascot since 2008, but his Mountaineer roots go way back. When Burwell was little, his uncle was the Mountaineer mascot and Burwell frequently tagged along as the “little Mountaineer.” “The love for this state and WVU is something that I have, and have had, for my entire life. My family has raised me to respect and love this state from my infancy,” Burwell wrote in his application essay. “I am extremely excited at the chance of representing my University and state as the Mountaineer and continuing the long-lasting tradition.”

At the Capital Classic luncheon in Charleston, WV, WVU engineering faculty and students presented Massey Energy with a plaque in recognition of the Massey Energy Fund for student scholarships in mining and civil engineering. Left to right are: Gene Cilento, Glen H. Hiner Dean of the College of Engineering and Mineral Resources; Martin Smay, mining engineering major at WVU; Thomas Cook, vice president of environmental affairs for Massey Energy; Allison Sears, mining engineering major at WVU; and Christopher Bise, professor and chair of mining engineering at WVU.
Several years ago, we offered a session for parents of incoming freshmen at New Student Orientation called “Holding on and Letting go.” The nuances of this program focused on how you could help your student settle in on campus. We discussed what resources would be available so you could help direct your student as needed. We also focused on finding a way for you to strike an appropriate balance of assistance and support for your adult student as you began the process of letting go.

For many of you now four or five years later, the days of helping your student get acclimated to campus are a thing of the past. Graduation is now on the horizon. Congratulations! While it may seem like just yesterday you were trudging boxes of your students’ belongings into their freshman residence halls — just that quickly — it is almost time to start the move-out process. Thus the cycle continues as the process begins yet again with your student preparing to head off — now into the workforce as an alum with his/her degree and diploma in hand.

With this newest stage ahead, your students may again look to you for guidance and direction as they prepare resumes, attend interviews, look for jobs, and check out places to move. Just as we mentioned the importance of finding an appropriate role during the first stage of transitioning your student to college, now is the time to finalize that “letting go” portion of the process.

With the final semester and job hunting process under way, this is also the time for your student to fully embrace his/her role as an independent adult and take the lead confidently in this new stage. As a parent you may be hearing the stresses as students scurry to finish senior capstone projects, registered for graduation along with attending job fairs and interviews. With the light at the end of the tunnel, however, remember to resist the urge to step in and do. Rather lend support, trust their ideas and efforts, and be an understanding ear. These very skills — multitasking, leadership, confidence, and decision-making — are the things for which they have been training. In many ways this is their final project.

With that said, just as during those first semesters on campus, remind them that resources are still available. Help with all aspects of the job search process can be found through our Career Services Center — [http://careerservices.wvu.edu/](http://careerservices.wvu.edu/).

Thinking outside the box, summer jobs or internships to continue to help build the resume and/or bridge the gap while the career search continues can be found through the Office for Student Employment — [http://studentjobs.wvu.edu/](http://studentjobs.wvu.edu/). If graduate school is in the cards, details are available through our Office of Graduate Education and Life — [http://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/](http://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/).

Also remind students that we have a vast array of WVU alumni — over 170,000 — who are a great resource and network for future grads through our WVU Alumni Association — [http://alumni.wvu.edu/](http://alumni.wvu.edu/). Encourage your student to join the WVU Alumni Association or perhaps consider making this membership an early graduation gift.

So with the next chapter just ahead for your graduate-to-be, I leave you with a Dr. Seuss quote that I greeted you with years ago at New Student Orientation:

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. You are the guy who’ll decide where to go.”

Congratulations to the parents and Class of 2010! No matter where the next chapter leads your student, remember — Once a Mountaineer, Always a Mountaineer! ❤

Chris Lewallen, a Business Management major from Alderson, WV, and Ron Cheng, a Political Science major from Morgantown, WV, were recently elected WVU student body president and vice-president.
West Virginia University has announced the schedule for its 141st Commencement weekend May 14-16. The University will host a series of individual, personalized ceremonies at a variety of venues on the Evansdale campus and around Morgantown, including the WVU Coliseum, Creative Arts Center and Student Recreation Center.

Students and their families are encouraged to visit the Commencement Web site http://commencement.wvu.edu for event updates, as well as information about photography, lodging and traditions. More will be added as details are finalized.

Did you know that the Mountaineer Parents Club has a “Question of the Month” on its website? This month, they want to know about an instructor who has had an impact on your student. Visit the site at http://parentsclub.wvu.edu to answer the question.

The WVU Foundation now has a Matching Gifts page on its website. To see if your employer has a matching gift policy, visit http://www.wvuf.org and click on Matching Gifts in the drop-down menu under “Ways to Give.”

The Center for Civic Engagement has been instrumental in helping organize relief efforts for the people of Haiti. The Dollars for Disaster program has united the campus and proven our true Mountaineer Spirit! To learn more visit its Web site at http://cce.wvu.edu/dollarsfordisaster.

Commencement Lodging
Parents and families can stay in WVU’s finest residence hall, Lincoln Hall, during Commencement Weekend — Friday, May 14 through Monday, May 17, 2010. The rooms are suite-style with semi-private baths and houses two individuals on each side of a bathroom. The beds are extra-long twin-size. Linen service and free parking will be provided. The front desk is staffed 24 hours a day for your convenience.

For more information or to make reservations, please call 304-293-2790. Or email us at Conferences@mail.wvu.edu. Rooms are $66.36 per night, plus tax. Payment is required prior to arrival.

The fall and summer course schedule is available at http://courses.wvu.edu. Log on to choose available classes for next semester.

The David C. Hardesty Jr. Festival of Ideas lecture series is once again bringing fantastic speakers to WVU. Check out this year’s lineup at http://festivalofideas.wvu.edu.

Where can I buy my books? Where is this class? For a typical incoming freshman, the first few weeks on an unfamiliar campus away from home can be quite overwhelming. WVU’s Undergraduate Advising Services Center is trying to make things a little easier. The center is creating a Student Advising Handbook that will serve as a resource for students — answering all of their “newbie” questions with ease and convenience. The handbook will include: a glossary of campus lingo terms, a “How-to” section featuring ecampus, labeled pictures of certain places on campus, tips for studying, traditions of WVU and a humorous section on the differences between college and high school. It will be available to students in the fall semester of 2010.

The Mountaineer Parents Club now has a Facebook page. Just log on and look for “WVU Mountaineer Parents Club” and become a fan!


2010 Census “Portrait of America” Road Tour stops at WVU
The West Virginia University community might not have the Personal Rapid Transit system if it were not for the U.S. Census. The census is more than a survey that tracks population and other trends around the country — it is a governmental tool used to determine where more than $400 billion in annual funding will go. On Friday, January 29, the 2010 Census “Portrait of America” Road Tour stopped in Morgantown to spread the word about the survey’s importance. For more information, visit http://2010.census.gov.

Did you know?

The WVU Foundation now has a Matching Gifts page on its website. To see if your employer has a matching gift policy, visit http://www.wvuf.org and click on Matching Gifts in the drop-down menu under “Ways to Give.”
WVU’s Career Services Center offers ‘tips and tricks to beat the odds’

By Tara Curtis, WVU Alumni Association and Dave Durham, Career Services Center

Whether you are deciding on a major or getting ready to start your senior year, WVU’s Career Services offers a variety of programs and guide you along the way. Each year, Career Services offers educational seminars and professional development programs aimed at helping students during various stages of their time at WVU. Here are a few tips to get you on track:

▶ Freshmen
Welcome to WVU! As you begin your studies, it is also time to start thinking about your career path:
- Visit WVU’s Career Services to help you get started
- Get involved in campus activities
- Start building your first resume (it’s never too early to start)
- Get to know the faculty and alumni in and around campus

▶ Sophomores
- Update resume to reflect previous courses and summer experiences
- Apply for internships or be strategic about selecting a summer job that will help you develop professional skills
- Visit Career Services to learn and practice effective interviewing techniques and to schedule a mock interview
- Take advantage of networking/mentoring opportunities with alumni, faculty and others

▶ Juniors
- Fine-tune your resume writing and interviewing skills
- Seek out leadership opportunities on- and off-campus to add to your resume
- Research potential employment locations and types to narrow your search
- Consider the possibility of professional or graduate school
- Participate in networking/mentoring opportunities with alumni, faculty and others

▶ Seniors
- Start the job search process (be sure to participate in career fairs)
- Attend Career Services Professional Development seminars (evaluating benefits packages, how to be successful in your first job, dress for success, etc.)
- Network, network, network! Get to know alumni and business leaders
- Register with CareerShift through the Career Services Center
- Update your MountaineerTRAK profile (and stay registered even after you graduate)
- Create a LinkedIn profile and join the WVU Alumni LinkedIn Network

To find out more about the programs and services offered through the WVU Career Services Center, visit http://careerservices.wvu.edu. Regardless of your rank or major, activate your MountaineerTRAK account, your direct connection to internships, job opportunities and much more at www.myinterface.com/wvu/student.

Mountaineer Parents Club newsletter is a joint effort of the WVU Foundation, News and Information Services, Enrollment Services, University Relations and the Mountaineer Parents Club.

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