Parents: In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, University Offices will be closed from Wed., Nov 27 to Fri., Nov. 29. Offices will reopen with regular business hours Mon., Dec. 2. Residence Halls will reopen Sun., Dec. 1 at noon.

In this season of Thanksgiving we hope you are enjoying the holiday with your students and finding a myriad of reasons to give thanks. We certainly are thankful that you are part of our Mountaineer family. While your students are home over break here are a few topics for discussion. At Thanksgiving dinner you may hear chatter about housing arrangements for next fall. Reminders on this process (and important questions to ask!) are included below as well as the date for the spring Off-Campus Housing Fair. While home, you may also wish to get online with your student to review and pay spring bills (due by Jan. 6) or enroll in the six-month payment plan (available through this Sat., Nov. 30.) Also this Saturday is the last day for continuing students to enroll in spring classes to avoid the late registration fee. Parents Club Winter Break Buses are now accepting reservations. Below you will also find info on family discount for the upcoming men’s basketball game on Dec. 1 (when you may be bringing your student back to campus!) among others. December Commencement speakers were recently announced. This and other helpful graduation reminders (including the last day for students to register to walk) follow.

Again, enjoy the break with your students and remember that free, home-cooked food is always something to be thankful for as a college student – so clean out those leftovers and pack some turkey sandwiches as they head back down our country roads and they get ready for finals week just a few weeks away -see below for prep tips! Happy Thanksgiving and thank you for all you do to support your WVU students throughout the year, parents! We are glad to have you as our partners! In this edition:

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PARENTS CLUB NEWS

Winter Break Bus Reservations Live
The reservation system for the Winter Break buses is now live. The Winter Break buses travel to Allentown, PA; Carlisle, PA; Hagerstown, MD; Secaucus, NJ; King of Prussia, PA; and Highland, NY, which also services those in the Connecticut, New York and New England areas. The Southern New Jersey, Central Maryland and Long Island, NY, Mountaineer Parents Clubs also offer buses to their areas. Please note that the dates for the winter break holiday buses are as follows:

- Buses leave Morgantown – Sat., Dec. 21, 2019
- Buses return to Morgantown – Sat., Jan. 11, 2020

These dates, as always, correspond to the residence hall closing and opening schedule. Please check the Parents Club Bus Website for details and to make Winter Break reservations. Reservations must be made online. The last day to request a refund for the winter buses is Mon., Dec. 9. Please note – The Northern VA bus is full.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Avoid Late Registration Fee – Register for Spring classes by Nov. 30
As a reminder, continuing students should be sure that they have registered for at least one spring 2020 class by Nov. 30 to avoid a $50 late registration fee. Registering for classes in a timely manner is important as students work toward graduation. Students are more likely to get the courses they need to stay on track to graduate within their expected timeline, and graduating on time can reduce loan and credit card debt. Continuing students will be assessed a $50 late registration fee if they do not register for any spring 2020 classes until after Nov. 30. Students have been made aware of this timeline and reminders sent over the past few weeks. Learn more about time tickets and important dates about priority registration. More information about the late registration fee can be found at the Office of the Registrar site.

Technology Outage Alert – Dec. 1
*Please be aware that STAR will be unavailable from 12:01 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 1 for important maintenance. During this time, students with fall 2019 bills won’t be able to pay bills, register for classes, or complete other tasks. We apologize for any inconvenience this may create. This outage will also impact the Parent/Guest Portal. Due to this, we have extended the payment deadline for November eBills to 4:45 p.m. on Monday, December 2. Late payment fees will be assessed after 4:45 p.m. that day for students who owe $200 or more from their November eBills.

December Graduation reminders
As we prepare to send forth our newest group of WVU alumni, here are a few final reminders. Ceremonies will take place, Sat., Dec. 21. There will be two ceremonies – one at 10 a.m. and one at 2 p.m. See the schedule for what schools and colleges are represented at each. Ceremonies will not last longer than 2 hours. As a reminder, the clear bag policy will be in effect for Commencement and more on that can be found here. The last day for students to register to walk in the December Commencement ceremonies is Fri., Dec. 6 via this form.

Commencement Speakers have been set. A barrier-breaking physician and a successful entrepreneur, both natives of West Virginia and graduates of West Virginia University, will provide real-life examples for graduates at the University’s December commencement. Dr. Patrice Harris, the first African American woman to become the president of the American Medical Association, and Nesha Sanghavi,
the owner and president of women’s collegiate brands UG Apparel and chicka-d, are the speakers on Dec. 21 at the WVU Coliseum. Congratulations to all our upcoming December Graduates!

Housing Conversations
As a reminder, while your students are home, please remember to have the conversation about housing … for next year. We had sent details in a prior Parent E-News in October but want to reiterate these helpful reminders while your students are home. While the searches are under way and students are getting excited about their “new place,” staff members from Student Legal Services and the Off-Campus Housing Office offer great tips and remind students and parents to look at all the details and consider individual circumstances before signing a lease.

Some key items to remember: Leases are legally binding contracts, and after signing a lease – no matter what happens to your status as a student – students are bound by the terms of that lease for the stated period. While many landlords and property managers will tell students that they must sign early, in reality there is a healthy supply of housing, with many leases not starting until August 2020. Many leases in the Morgantown area are joint leases, so a potential pitfall is signing a lease with another student who may not return for next year. Friendships can also change in the next few months. And how are grades for all the roommates? Fall grades will not post until Dec. 23. Consider waiting to avoid the risks of signing a lease many months prior to moving into an apartment – friendships can change or new friendships are made.

Lease Start and End Dates Matter: Is your student graduating next year? 2020 commencement dates are posted as May 15-17, 2020. Students should be sure to read the fine print, check lease ends dates and consider their personal situation in regards to a lease such as, what is the last day on the lease compared to graduation for those graduating in May – or speak with a landlord in advance for other options. Is there an option for early termination or subletting for those graduating in Dec. 2020? For those staying on in town who might simply be moving out from the residence halls or on to a new apartment, be sure the lease start and end dates match up (or consider storage options now).

Only in Morgantown Half the Year? If your student is graduating mid-year, or leaving the area for study abroad, co-ops, internships, student teaching, National Student Exchange or similar programs next year, residence hall housing options could make sense because of the added flexibility. Students in these circumstances may be released from a WVU Residence Hall Room contract for that period, with proper documentation. A limited number of upperclassmen spaces are held for returning students for a limited time. If interested, students should complete the residence hall interest form online today. A staff member can help walk them through the process.

Free Lease Reviews: It’s a great idea for students to have a lease review performed by Student Legal Services prior to signing. Services are free for students, and it is important for them to understand the legal document they are about to sign. Call Student Legal Services at 304-293-4897 for an appointment.

Residence Hall Options: Limited spaces do exist for upperclassmen who wish to remain in the residence halls next year and are available now. If interested, students should complete the interest form online today.

Consider University Apartments: With four University Apartment properties managed and operated by WVU (University Place, University Park, College Park and Vandalia) these properties offer a convenient, secure and independent living environment with the freedom of 24-hour access all year.
Off-Campus Housing Fair: Many students attended the first Off Campus Housing fair last week, but if they were unable or still have questions, please encourage your students to attend the final Off-Campus Housing Fair on Evansdale on Jan. 18, 2020 to educate themselves about the process and explore all housing options.

CAMPUS NEWS AND HAPPENINGS
Thanksgiving Dinner and Changes in Hours
If your student is still in town over Thanksgiving break, they are welcome to attend or volunteer at the Wesley United Methodist Church Community Thanksgiving dinner. This will take place at Wesley United Methodist Church adjacent to the WVU Downtown Campus from 12:30-3 p.m. on Thurs., Nov. 28. This is free so if your student is still in town, encourage them to drop by and get a Thanksgiving Dinner. Students can also register in advance for a take-out dinner by calling 304-292-9485 or e-mailing wesleymorgantown@gmail.com before 3 p.m. on Wednesday. They can pick up take-out dinners between 10:30 and noon on Thursday. If they wish to volunteer, they can also call or e-mail the number and address above.

Serenity Place, home to our Collegiate Recovery Program, on campus is also offering Thanksgiving Dinner to any students in town at 2 p.m. Thanksgiving Day.

Additionally this link gives some helpful info about other campus services and hours that are altered over break in case you wish to share this with your students. Happy Thanksgiving, everyone!

Finals Week and end of the Semester Prep
As students prepare to return to campus, they should be looking and head beginning to prep for finals now. Finals get under way Monday, Dec. 16. Students should check finals times and dates as noted on their syllabus or as adjusted by their instructor. Click here for the overall Finals Schedule. All Fall 2019 final grades will be posted online by the end of the day Dec. 23 and can be viewed in STAR by the student or on the Parent/Guest Portal with appropriate access granted by your student. Here are a few other reminders and tips to share with your students:

- **ChillFest before Finals**: Hosted by WellWVU, this free de-stress event offers massage therapy, acupuncture, black light yoga, belly dancing, therapy dogs, painting, essential oils, stress balls, snacks and more on Thurs., Dec. 5 from 5-9 at the Student Rec Center.
- **Tutoring and Support**: The Office of Student Success reminds students that Tutoring Centers are open for students. They are also hosting a workshop called Preparing for Finals on Thurs., Dec. 12 at 2 p.m. in Bennett Tower, Room G05.
- **Fuel up for Finals**: On Dec. 16 and 17 students can kick off Finals Week at the Fuel Up For Finals event will feature a host of snacks to help students as they make their way through finals.
- **Libraries**: The WVU Libraries are offering extended study hours, with the Evansdale Libraries open 24 hours most days.
- **Mountainlair**: While keeping regular building hours, the Lair hosts open study rooms during finals.
- **Wellness Support**: As a reminder, students who are feeling stressed heading into finals can simply text the new WVU Crisis Text line to reach a live, trained crisis counselor.
- **Residence Halls Quiet Hours**: 24-hour quiet hours will be enforced for the week prior to and during finals. Students are expected to head home within 24 hours after completing their last final, and halls officially close for Winter Break on Sat., Dec. 21 at noon. (NOTE: If a student is
signed up to take the Parents Club Winter Break buses home, they can request permission via their Residence Hall Coordinator to stay until Saturday.)

- **Break Housing:** For residence hall students who need a place to stay over Winter break, students should complete the [Winter Break Housing Registration](#) before December 6.

**Men’s Basketball Family Day Discounts available**

Parents if you are headed back to Morgantown Sunday, Dec. 1 to bring your student back to campus, you can also catch a WVU Men’s Basketball game! Family Days are always a Mountaineer fan favorite so here is a great chance to bring the whole family and save money. Coach Bob Huggins and the Mountaineers face Rhode Island on Sunday, Dec. 1. Tipoff is slated for 2 p.m. at the WVU Coliseum. This is the first “Family Day” presented by Leidos. Fans can purchase four tickets and a $25 concession voucher for $70 per Family Day package - a savings of $35. Also, the Nicholls matchup on Saturday, Dec. 14, presented by Star Furniture, is a “Family Day” and packages are $70 each for four tickets and a $25 concession voucher. Tipoff is slated for 2 p.m. Log on here to purchase [Family Day ticket packages](#) or call 1-800-WVU GAME. As a reminder, WVU students can request tickets in the Student Section for free but if you want them to sit with you, you would need to include them in your ticket purchase.

**Enrollment Verification or Good Student Discount**

This time of year, many folks have to provide proof of enrollment for insurance purposes. Your students can obtain this online by following [these directions](#).

**1098-T Electronic Consent**

West Virginia University has partnered with ECSI, offering students the opportunity to receive their 1098-T Tuition Statement electronically this year. If your student would like to receive his or her 1098-T form electronically, they need to give consent by following this [ECSI link](#) and following the step by step instructions. 1098-Ts will be provided by the end of January 2020. If electronic consent is not received by **Jan. 1, 2020**, the 1098-T will be mailed to the current Parent/Permanent mailing address on file in the STAR student account system. Follow this [link](#) for questions or information regarding your tax documents and to obtain contact information for ECSI. **Please Note – As per IRS guidelines, 1098-T forms are issued to all students who are US citizens or green card holders who have reportable transactions during the calendar year. Foreign National students will only be issued a 1098-T form if they have both reportable transactions during the calendar year and a valid US Social Security number reported in the STAR student account system.**

**ARTICLES/VIDEOS OF INTEREST**

**Article of Interest: Helicopter Parents and Hothouse Children**

WVU associate professor, Kristin Moilanen, is researching the effects of helicopter parenting on young adults. See a recent article on this research here.

**Latest Gee Mail: 'Are you Mountaineer enough to help someone in need?'

Recently, the West Virginia University community reflected on the fifth anniversary of the [Nolan Burch](#) tragedy and rolled out an anti-hazing campaign, **“Would You?”**. In this edition of [Gee Mail](#), President Gee takes on a more serious tone as he urges Mountaineers to take care of one another to prevent even more tragedies from occurring.
Thanks to the many parents who also took the time to view, share and write back to me with your thoughts after we shared the educational documentary, “Breathe, Nolan, Breathe” two weeks ago. We each play a role in the safety of our community and we appreciate you helping to have the conversations with your students, friends and others so no other family has to experience such a tragedy.

/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman
Office of Parent Relations
West Virginia University