

Parent Electronic News  
West Virginia University  
December 8, 2016

**\*\*Reminder – On December 19, Spring bills are due in full or students must be enrolled in a payment plan by this date.\*\***

It's once again that time of year – libraries are packed with study groups, computer labs are overflowing as last-minute papers get written and students are burning the midnight oil. *Finals Week* is here! With Winter Break just around the corner, students will begin the journeys over the river and through the woods to their homes near and far. Space remains on most *Parents Club Winter Break Buses*, so see below. Before they leave, share with students the details on *Housing Wrap-Up and Safety Notices* for those living both on and off campus. While some are embarking on their first week of finals, our December graduates will be taking their very last exams before celebrating at *December Graduation* on December 16. For all the details on this ceremony including the speaker and the WVU Alumni Association's *Mountaineer Send-off*, keep reading. If you are looking for some last minute holiday gift ideas, check out the article below titled *All I Want for Christmas is a Sharp New Suit* as suggested by our friends in Career Services or the latest on *Bowl Game Tickets!* As your students conclude their fall term, also check out the *Important Upcoming Dates* listed below to make plans over break.

I leave you with a quick reflection and insight on yesterday's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. In front of Oglebay Hall on the Downtown campus stands a poignant piece of this history. The mast of the battleship USS West Virginia, which was sunk during that attack, stands as a tribute to veterans. The bell from the armored cruiser USS West Virginia, which served in World War I, also occupies a spot on the plaza. Yesterday, the WVU community marked the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor with a ceremony: <http://bit.ly/2gpenxa>. Next time you are on campus, be sure to check out these historical treasures. And now, here's wishes for good luck on finals and a successful finish to the semester! In this edition:

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### **Reminder: Full Spring 2017 Payment Due December 19**

If you have not already, log on today following the directions below to pay the spring bill or to enroll in a monthly payment plan. Don't wait until the last minute in case there are questions regarding your students' account!

1. Log into Parent/Guest Portal if granted access by your student: <http://bit.ly/119XiAm>. Students can pay online through STAR: <http://bit.ly/1m8XLtH>.
2. In the Parent/Guest Portal, click the tab for your student's name.
3. Click link for Electronic Bill/Make Payment.
4. Select "Spring 2017," and click "Submit"
5. Scroll to bottom for "Pay Now"
6. If necessary, you can also do a "print screen" from this page if a printed copy of the bill is needed for Smart 529 plans or other reasons.

To enroll in a monthly payment plan: <http://bit.ly/1AwviiO>

Questions? Call or stop by the Mountaineer HUB to speak with a representative: 304-293-1988, <http://bit.ly/1R8kZwF>. WVU wants to work with our students and families as early as possible so they can start the spring semester successfully.

### **December Commencement Reminders and Speaker Announced**

Commencement is scheduled for Friday, December 16, 2016, at 1:30 p.m. in the WVU Coliseum. Who better to tell a group of new college graduates to "reach for the stars" than an astrophysicist? Sean McWilliams, assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, will address August and December 2016 graduates: <http://bit.ly/2h159DO>. The ceremony is expected to last roughly two hours.

Students who wish to participate must register to walk in the ceremony by tomorrow, December 9: <http://bit.ly/2cyQK04>. Students can check in at the upper Country Roads Gate beginning at 12:30 p.m. If families need accessibility accommodations, they should contact the WVU Office of Accessibility Services as soon as possible and in advance at 304-293-6700. If family members are unable to attend, the event will be live webcast at <http://bit.ly/2gh4CTi> as well as recorded. A video will be uploaded to the December Commencement website the week after the event. Diplomas will be mailed to students after the ceremony, so students should be sure they have the appropriate mailing address on file by updating this in STAR. <http://bit.ly/2gdMtFm>. Congrats to our soon-to-be new Mountaineer alumni!

### **Mountaineer Send-off Open House for December Graduates**

Encourage your December graduate to stop by the Erickson Alumni Center on Friday, December 16 from 10 a.m. -5 p.m. The WVU Alumni Association will be hosting a Mountaineer Send-off Open House in the Alma Mater Room for December grads and their families. We welcome them to come together one last time before leaving campus, sign the senior banner, learn about the alumni network, enjoy free snacks, grab their Class of 2016 giveaway and sign up to win a free life membership in the WVU Alumni Association! <http://bit.ly/2h8uzRI> or [acannon2@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:acannon2@mail.wvu.edu)

### **Finals Week, December 8-14**

Finals got under way today. Students should check individual times and dates as noted on their syllabus or as adjusted by their instructor. The overall schedule can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1MZdalV>. Final grades will be posted online December 20 and can be viewed on STAR by the student or the Parent/Guest Portal with appropriate access granted by your student: <http://bit.ly/119XiAm>.

- *Fun before/during finals:* To help students de-stress as they study, events have been ongoing: <http://bit.ly/2haGill>.
- *Libraries:* The WVU libraries are offering extended study hours, with Evansdale and Downtown Libraries open 24 hours. They are also hosting some de-stressing activities: <http://bit.ly/2haDkhd>.
- *Mountainlair:* While keeping regular building hours, the Lair is hosting open study rooms for finals throughout the building.
- *Residence Halls:* 24-hour quiet hours are 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 close on Thursday, December 15 at noon.
- *Reduced Rate Parking for Finals Week:* SWVU Parking offers reduced rates for finals week: <http://bit.ly/2ghbsYU>

## **Housing Wrap-Up and Safety Notices**

### *On-Campus Residence Halls*

Students are expected to vacate their residence hall rooms within 24 hours of their last final to ensure a quiet environment for those still studying. University residence halls will officially close on Thursday, December 15 at noon, and they will not reopen until Saturday, January 7 at noon: <http://bit.ly/1EjuamX>.

All students must be out by December 15 but can leave belongings in their residence hall room. They should take any valuables or items they may need over break home with them. During Winter Break, students will not be permitted into their residence hall rooms nor will they have access to their mailboxes. This does not apply to students living in University Apartments.

Prior to leaving, students should lock valuables in their closet or take the valuables home, close and lock their windows, close the curtains, empty their trash, and unplug appliances such as hair dryers and curling irons. If they have rented a MicroFridge, please leave it plugged in to prevent food from spoiling. Finally, students should make sure their room door is closed and locked when leaving.

### *Off-Campus*

If your students live off-campus, remind them to prepare their apartments for being away. Unfortunately, crime tends to increase around the holidays. Tips to pass along include:

- Put lights on a timer.
- Have mail temporarily held by the USPS to give their place the “someone’s-home” look.
- If they subscribe to a newspaper, contact their carrier to temporarily stop the delivery.
- Take out their trash and clean up before leaving.
- Take valuable items with them when they leave town.
- Keep their heat on during break to avoid pipes freezing/bursting during a cold snap. Set the thermostat to a lower-than-normal setting while out of town, but do not turn the heating system off. Landlords generally require a minimum thermostat setting in winter months.
- Have a friend who is local check on the place. The Morgantown Police are also available to do a vacant property security check for those residing within city limits. Requests can be made online at <http://bit.ly/1tanLBx> or you can call the Morgantown Police at 304-284-7522.
- Finally, the obvious reminder is to close and lock all windows and doors as. Many crimes are simply crimes of opportunity.

- Upon returning to Morgantown, students should immediately report any theft or incident that is suspicious in nature to authorities.

Here's to a safe and restful break!

### **Holiday Parking Options**

The Parking Management office is providing vehicle storage options to students leaving campus for the winter break. Temporary student permits can be purchased for \$20, which covers December 9 through January 8. The permits are valid on the Evansdale campus at the Student Rec Center (ST-4) lot or on the Downtown campus at the Mountainlair garage (ST-2) second level. To purchase a permit, visit Mountaineer (304-293-5502). <http://bit.ly/2ghcap3>

### **Parents Club Winter Break Buses**

We are still taking reservations for the Winter Break buses to Allentown, PA; Carlisle, PA; Hagerstown, MD; Secaucus, NJ; King of Prussia, PA; and new for this year is a bus to Highland, NY, to service the Connecticut, New York and New England areas. The Southern New Jersey and 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 – Thursday, December 15 (except Northern Virginia, which is full – it will leave December 14)
- Buses return to Morgantown – Saturday, January 7

For specific schedules and to make reservations, see: <http://bit.ly/1vStOFj>. The last day to request a refund for the winter buses has passed. No other refunds will be issued.

### **WVU Alert and LiveSafe App**

Current students are automatically subscribed to WVU Alert text messages if the student has provided a cell number to the University. If you think you have not been receiving text alerts, please complete the missed alert form: <http://bit.ly/2gg2Eh2>. The last alert was September 7, 2016. Students can update their account information by completing the student update form: <http://bit.ly/2gfZtpG>.

Parents or spouses can be added to a student's account using the parent sign-up form: <http://bit.ly/1L6ee6S>.

Students are also reminded that a wide variety of campus safety and emergency information is available at the WVU Police website: <http://bit.ly/1vPyHYz>. You can find campus safety and security tips at <http://bit.ly/1rvcpau>.

Learn how to shelter-in-place at <http://bit.ly/2h1M48P>.

You can review the University's Emergency Response Plan at <http://bit.ly/2gGNy5h>.

Students can also download the free LiveSafe app for your Apple or Android phone. It allows them to report an anonymous tip, call campus police or 911, view a map with the latest information on crimes reported in the area and notify friends in real-time of their location and safety. Additional info and links to download the LiveSafe app are available at <http://bit.ly/1wQdq1H>.

In addition, the WVU Police Department offers training opportunities including personal safety and active shooter programs. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/2gGOXkL>.

You can also call the WVU Police Department at 304-293-2677 (COPS) for more information or assistance.

### **Congratulations to the First FAFSA Scholarship Winner! File Now for a Chance to Win**

Congratulations to Gabriella Ambrusico, who won the first scholarship drawing for filing her 2017-2018 Free Application for Federal Student Aid in October! If you haven't yet filed, you can still be entered to win a \$250 scholarship for filing your FAFSA by December 31! Why file now?

- Now through December 31, students will automatically be entered for a chance to win \$250 of scholarship money.
- Students can complete their FAFSA at <http://bit.ly/2gg2nL8> for the 2017-2018 academic year NOW using your 2015 tax information.
- You may be eligible to automatically pull your and your student's tax information into the FAFSA from the IRS, making it easier than ever.
- You will receive the best financial aid package available to you!
- You can get your financial aid award offer as early as February.

If you need assistance, contact the Mountaineer Hub at 304-293-1988.

## **All I want for Christmas is a Sharp New Suit ...**

The gift that keeps on giving: If you're still shopping for the perfect holiday gift for your student or you need just one more thing to complete your shopping, look no further than the nearest department store. This year, invest in your son or daughter's future by buying them a tailored suit, ensuring that they will make a positive first impression with prospective employers. Career fairs and on-campus interviews will resume in January: <http://bit.ly/2hbJtr0>, so send them back to school in style!

If you are looking for additional resources to help provide career-related support, check out the Career Services Center's parent resource guide at <http://bit.ly/1J5gKQ1>.

## **Bowl Game Tickets Available**

Still looking for unique gift ideas for students or family members? The No. 16 West Virginia Mountaineers (10-2, 7-2 Big 12) and the Miami Hurricanes (8-4, 5-3 ACC) will play in the 2016 Russell Athletic Bowl. The game will kick off at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 28 at Camping World Stadium and will be televised nationally by ESPN.

A limited number of tickets for WVU students went on sale Monday, December 5, at the Mountaineer Ticket Office in the WVU Coliseum. These are priced at \$30 each. Student tickets must be purchased in person with a valid WVU ID, and sales are limited to two tickets per valid student ID and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

General public tickets are available through the Mountaineer Ticket Office. Fans can purchase tickets online at <http://bit.ly/1BMvB9i>, or by phone at 1-800-WVU GAME. Let's go Mountaineers!

## **Important Upcoming Dates**

As we approach the end of the term, we have included a list of helpful dates. Please note that University offices will officially be closed December 23-27, and January 2.

December 9 – Last day for students to register to participate in December Commencement. <http://bit.ly/2cyQK04>

December 15 – Parents Club Winter Break buses depart Morgantown. (Northern Virginia will depart December 14.) <http://bit.ly/1LqJ1e7>

December 15 (Noon) – Residence halls officially close for Winter Break

December 16 – December Commencement held 1:30 p.m. at the WVU Coliseum. <http://bit.ly/1qEeNjg>

December 16 – Spring student health insurance opt-out (waiver) deadline (no need to complete if you previously opted out this fall). <http://bit.ly/119XdfW>

December 19 – The full spring 2017 account balance is due or monthly payment arrangements must be in place. <http://bit.ly/1M1t6TT>

December 20 – Fall grades will be posted to students' STAR accounts in the afternoon (or the parent guest portal with appropriate access granted by your student). <http://bit.ly/119XiAm>

*December 23-27 and January 2 – University Offices are closed*

December 31 – Authorized financial aid will disburse

January 7 (Noon) – Residence halls reopen for spring term.

January 7 – Parents Club Winter Break buses return to Morgantown.

January 8 – Mid-Year Academy for any first-year student on probation (students will be notified over break via email and letter). <http://bit.ly/2h1USM9>

Week of January 9<sup>th</sup> – Refunds for students/parents with Direct Deposit option will begin to arrive. <http://bit.ly/1WzCXLv>

January 9 – First day of classes.

January 13 – Last day to add/drop classes.

Week of January 16<sup>th</sup> – Refunds for students/parents opting for checks will begin to appear. <http://bit.ly/1WzCXLv>

**/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman**

Office of Parent Relations

West Virginia University