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**WEST VIRGINIA**  
**HIGHER EDUCATION**  
**POLICY COMMISSION**

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# Higher Education News Clippings

Week of May 13, 2007

May 18, 2008

## WVU law dean plans to step down

MORGANTOWN — Longtime West Virginia University professor John Fisher announced Thursday he plans to step down next year as dean of the College of Law.

Fisher, 64, began teaching at the law school in 1971 and has served as dean for 10 years, according to a WVU news release.

Upon retiring as the second-longest serving dean in the law school's history, Fisher plans to continue teaching in Morgantown.

WVU President David Hardesty said a search committee will probably begin looking for Fisher's replacement by the start of the next school year.

Fisher is known for successfully increasing alumni support.

Since he began as dean, donations to the school went from \$10.6 million in 1998 to \$23 million today, according to the release.

In 1997, Fisher was given the WVU Foundation's Award for Outstanding Teaching. He was selected the Professor of the Year by the 1996 graduating law class.

May 18, 2008

## Childcare center closure surprises Tech students

By Susan Williams

As a single mother and a dental hygiene student, Samantha Cook had everything worked out.

She could walk to school, and she enrolled her children, ages 6 and 9, in childcare on the campus of West Virginia University Institute of Technology in Montgomery.

Now with only one more year of school to go, Cook found out last week Tech officials are closing the childcare facility.

"I have no family here," she said Thursday. She chose to come to Tech because of all the support she was getting to make it possible that she could attend class, work a part-time job and take care of her children.

Without help, she might have to leave school, she said.

Tech student John Parsons said he has four boys, ages 6 to 12, who go to the childcare center. Parsons was very upset to learn of the decision to close the facility, he said, and upset because students who use the center were not consulted ahead of time.

Cook and Parsons, along with other parents, attended a meeting this week to find out from Tech officials what can be done.

Scott Hurst, Tech's associate provost, said school officials decided to close the childcare facility because of money.

"It was running a deficit," he said, "and Tech was subsidizing the day care. We understand the value of the facility, but the funds we were using for the daycare are supposed to go for our core mission."

Hurst said he understands how parents could be upset, but he hopes a better facility might be developed in the town of Montgomery.

"Tech has many resources, and we could use those resources to help a new daycare get started. But our expertise is not in daycare. We hope to work with members of the community to get a facility going," he said.

In the meantime, he contacted all certified childcare providers who operate within a six-county area near Tech and who are on the approved list of Department of Health and Human Resources providers to let them know about the issue.

They also organized a Childcare Providers Fair to be held from 6 to 9 p.m. June 1 in the Tech Ballroom.

Hurst hopes parents can find good care for their children during this transition, he said. He also hopes a private person or organization will start a new childcare facility in Montgomery.

"I'm optimistic this will all work out," he said.

# Charleston Daily Mail

May 18, 2008

## Rockefeller aids Upward Bound with funding

Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., announced earlier this week the U.S. Department of Education has awarded a total of \$2,695,529 in federal funds to assist low-income students in West Virginia pursue higher education.

"Education is the key to a young person's future. These types of grants help some students open the door to an education that they might otherwise be locked out of," Rockefeller said in a prepared statement. "By giving these students the opportunity to pursue higher education we will, in turn, develop a highly skilled workforce that can take on the challenges of the new global economy."

The funds will provide grants to higher education institutions through the Federal TRIO program, Upward Bound.

Federal TRIO programs are educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Upward Bound provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The goal of the program is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education.

These grants will fund approximately 575 participants from seven different colleges and universities across West Virginia. The colleges and universities receiving funding are:

Concord University -- \$390,929

Davis & Elkins College -- \$645,513

Marshall University -- \$344,012

Potomac State College at WVU -- \$282,211

Salem International University -- \$403,961

West Virginia University -- \$250,000

West Virginia University Institute of Technology -- \$378,903

Increasing the rate at which participants complete secondary education, Upward Bound provides them with six-week summer programs on college campuses, as well as tutoring and mentoring to support college attendance.

Participants of the Upward Bound program include high school students from low-income families, high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree, and low-income, first-generation military veterans who are preparing to enter post-secondary education.

May 18, 2008

OPINION

## Education quality more important than marketing

By Cheyenna Weber

WHEN faculty and the Board of Governors sparred recently over the appointment of Morgantown lawyer Mike Garrison as president of West Virginia University, many saw it as a fight for the guiding principles of the school. At stake is whether WVU will act as a corporation or an educational institution.

During David Hardesty's 12-year reign, WVU operated as a corporation, overly concerned with marketing, brand management and increasing cash flow. Many, including the faculty, argue the school has lost sight of its founding principles to serve the educational needs of West Virginians. As a WVU alumna who has experienced Hardesty's "student-centered" approach firsthand, I have to agree.

Critics tend to make a fuss over Hardesty's efforts to increase enrollment. This expansion has come at the expense of academics and student well-being and has less to do with Hardesty than with national demographics. WVU enrollment merely reflects a national trend. Schools across the country have been experiencing record numbers since the late 1990s, and next year the largest class of high school seniors in U.S. history will graduate. In the rush to become a competitive candidate in the global marketplace, more students are heading to college.

And it may not be such a good thing. Everyone seems to think increasing enrollment is best, and from a marketing and fundraising perspective it is; but to current and incoming students, it isn't quite so rosy. Throughout the past decade WVU was without enough housing and many freshmen were forced into hotels or private dorms. Class sizes grew and the university relied on more part-time, non-tenured, and graduate faculty to run enough required courses. Throughout this expansion, the school raised tuition several times, supposedly to increase pay for faculty and to build housing. Hardesty spent millions on a student recreation center and a new alumni center, partly to attract new out-of-state students. But for many current students and alumni, treadmills and cushy alumni center couches aren't enough to justify the falling quality of instruction. It isn't just larger classes and less experienced instructors, it also affects reputation. Any law school students will tell you that when WVU fell in rankings to the fourth tier, it directly affected the value of their degrees. The new WVU leadership must reevaluate the effects of expansion on academics and eschew marketing gimmicks in favor of increasing the quality of education. More tuition money doesn't necessarily mean a better university.

My main concern with David Hardesty has always been his focus on WVU as a corporation rather than an educational institution. His latest decision to join the board of CONSOL and his contention that this is not a conflict of interest is hardly a surprise.

Following another national trend, corporations have come to bear increasing influence at WVU. The school maintains an exclusive licensing agreement with Coca-Cola, despite student and faculty protest at the company's use of paramilitaries to murder and harass union leaders in Columbia. The WVU bookstore is no longer run by the university, but instead operated by Barnes and Noble, which has little financial incentive to stock less expensive used books to help ease student costs. Corporations have even extended to the Mountainlair food court, where fast food companies, notorious for paying workers substandard wages and peddling unhealthy products, vie for lucrative contracts. And this is just the little stuff. I won't even get into the enormous waste of resources WVU spends every year protecting its logo from copyright infringement, (even on student Web sites), or the role of corporate funding on the kinds of research the school conducts.

Perhaps even more galling has been Hardesty's attempts to protect the WVU brand by stifling student and faculty dissent. A prime example is the Free Speech Zones controversy. This policy restricted free speech activities to small areas well out of earshot from most students, administrators and faculty and was selectively enforced. It took a lawsuit from the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education ([www.fire.org](http://www.fire.org)) on behalf of students and some brand-damaging adverse media attention (including coverage of a "funeral" for free speech on campus), before Hardesty finally rescinded the policy and stopped wasting WVU resources reinterpreting the U.S. Constitution.

Even Hardesty's much-vaunted effort to combat partying, "WVUp All Night" appears to be little more than a PR stunt. Up All Night provides free food and activities for students as an alternative to downtown bars and has been hailed as an innovative way to promote wholesome fun and combat binge drinking. In fact, Up All Night is little more than a free food fest that attracts the already drunk and stoned after they've imbibed elsewhere. Grant Avenue parties and downtown bars continue to rake it in, many offering Ladies Nights to attract crowds of girls whose IDs are seldom legal. The link between underage consumption downtown and sexual assault and rape, much of which occurs back on campus, is well documented. WVU isn't the only school with this problem, of course, but the issue requires leadership, creative solutions, and commitment, not just free hot dogs and weakly attended workshops on date rape and binge drinking. Rather than lead a hard-nosed charge against underage consumption by using the power of the president's office to go after the establishments that promote it, Hardesty instead devised an image-friendly alternative that in fact does little but quell the munchies of under-the-influence underage students.

David Hardesty's tenure has been too focused on WVU the corporation and brand to the detriment of student well-being and academics. His policies have resulted in a diminished educational experience which is more expensive and unsafe than ever. The school was never intended to turn a profit, although that would be wonderful, and it

should hardly be in the business of producing “lifestyle” brands and consumer goods. WVU can best enhance its brand image not by clever licensing and marketing campaigns but rather by addressing student and faculty needs. This would improve student life and make a WVU degree more valuable. This would be a sound business policy, reaching well beyond Hardesty’s short-sighted policies which denied major problems and stifled dissent. Let’s hope the new administration will openly address the challenges facing the school and return the focus from corporate policy back to where it belongs: educating West Virginia’s students.

Weber, a WVU graduate, lives in New York, N.Y.

May 17, 2007

## W.Va. State to lose its Upward Bound funds

By Davin White

West Virginia State University's Upward Bound program, which strives to place low-income students in college, will lose its federal funding after June 1, 2008, the program director said Wednesday.

The school's program serves potential first-generation college students in Kanawha, Boone, Lincoln, Fayette and Putnam counties, said Barbara Cary.

"There's no program right now in [those counties] that will serve low-income, first-generation students," Cary said.

WVSU's most recent grant application, submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, received a score of 80, Cary said. She likened that to a "C" grade, but is confused because the grant before was scored an "A," or in the top 10 percent of all requests submitted.

She criticized those who read the grant and said the score makes little sense, as WVSU has since bolstered its program with robotics and other curricula with assistance from NASA.

An official with the U.S. Department of Education was not immediately available for comment late Wednesday afternoon.

Cary also criticized what she believes are the "politics" behind the decision.

"We're fighting to save the program," she said. "Instead of buying bullets we can invest in books."

She's hoping Upward Bound alumni in the Charleston area will speak out to try to save the funding. She expects to speak with several at the program's annual "graduation" Saturday morning on the WVSU campus.

Upward Bound has been at WVSU since 1966, Cary said. She's been director since 1991, and said the program has helped graduates on the road to becoming lawyers, engineers and school leaders, like Shawn McNeil, assistant principal at Stonewall Jackson Middle.

Upward Bound identifies low-income students following their eighth-grade year, Cary said. WVSU's program serves 120 students over four years.

“I am so pleased with what this program has accomplished with the kids, and we don’t want it to go away,” said Cynthia Edwards, whose son William is a senior at Capital High School. She credits Upward Bound with her son’s Promise scholarship and a second scholarship offer from Marshall University.

Earlier this week, Sen. Jay Rockefeller announced Upward Bound awards presented to several other colleges in West Virginia, benefiting about 575 students. Those include Concord University, receiving \$390,929; Davis & Elkins College, \$645,513; Marshall University, \$344,012; Potomac State College, \$282,211; Salem International University, \$403,961; West Virginia University, \$250,000, and West Virginia University Institute of Technology, \$378,903.



May 17, 2007

## Hoppy's Commentary For Thursday Talkline Host Hoppy Kercheval

One of the topics on the table at high level meetings in the Manchin Administration the last several weeks has been the future of the pop tax. Governor Manchin is taking a hard look at the tax which critics-particularly the soft drink industry--view as anti-business.

The Soft Drink Excise Tax was enacted in 1951 to raise money for the WVU Medical School. The tax is one cent per bottle of soda, one cent on each ounce of dry mixture and 80 cents for each gallon of soft drink syrup.

Those taxes will raise \$14.6 million this year for the WVU medical, nursing, dental and pharmacy schools. WVU Medical School officials view the tax as critical part of the budgetary support for health care professional education in West Virginia. It makes up almost 20 percent of the state share of the WVU Health Sciences Center Budget.

But Manchin is interested in getting rid of the tax.

He surprised the medical school earlier this year by proposing a bill that phased out the pop tax over 14 years. That set off a mad scramble by WVU Health Sciences Vice President Dr. Robert D'Alessandri to convince the governor and legislative leaders of the importance of the money to the medical school.

The bill died, but the idea did not.

Now, with D'Alessandri leaving to start a new medical school in Scranton\Wilkes-Barre, the Manchin Administration believes it is a logical time to take a closer look at the massive WVU Health Sciences budget.

That means D'Alessandri's replacement will have to justify how the pop tax money is spent, whether there are other revenue sources to replace the money if the tax is eliminated or whether the money is needed at all.

One ranking WVU Health Sciences official told me he doesn't care about the pop tax itself, but he does care about the money, meaning he has no problem with the governor eliminating the tax as long as it's replaced.

But Manchin has become a bit of a penny pincher (at least in government terms). He has been fixated on paying down the state debts and holding down salary increases. He's not afraid to confront agency heads and make them explain how they spend their money.

WVU HSC can expect the same scrutiny for its \$70 million annual appropriation from the state.

The Health Sciences Center will respond by trying to convince the governor that the giant health complex is actually the "goose laying the golden eggs." As one Health Sciences official told me, the state makes a \$70-million investment and "gets a \$1-billion industry with hospitals, research programs that draw down grant money and free health care for the poor."

A ranking Manchin Administration official tells me he believes the governor and the legislature will "begin looking at how to deal with this tax while also making every effort to keep the medical school whole."

Clearly, the pop tax is an unusual thing. Fifty-six years ago, when the state had no medical schools and only one university, the pop tax was seized upon as a novel way to hasten the development of a medical school in Morgantown.

Times have changed, but there can be no doubt in anyone's mind that the investment of state tax dollars in the impressive medical complex at Morgantown has paid tremendous dividends for the entire state.

The pop tax may leave MoJo and the pop-makers flat, but if he's determined to wipe it out, he needs to find \$14.6 million some place else.



May 17, 2007

## OPINION

# Focus on MU students' needs, not their wants

It seems that the Marshall University Board of Governors has decided that students need to live at a replica of The Greenbrier, complete with luxury suites and a theater. But wait, there's more. A new recreation center also is planned that will include pools, a climbing wall, a track, courts for racquetball, handball, volleyball, and basketball, three fitness rooms and a place to sunbathe. New softball and baseball fields are also in the works.

If Marshall were as wealthy as Harvard or Duke, I might understand some of these plans, but as it is, I wonder what in heaven's name this Board of Governors is thinking. Look: Maybe students want these luxuries (who wouldn't?), but is the board incapable of distinguishing between what students want and what they really need?

Here are a few basics that Marshall students really need:

More course offerings so that graduation does not take five or six years.

More professors so that classes can be small and personal attention given.

Fewer part-time instructors.

More excellent teachers.

More excellent scholars.

More fields to major in.

A real computer science major.

Fewer costly add-on fees.

More and better-outfitted classrooms.

More books in the library and more, better-equipped laboratories.

Fewer vice presidents (What do they do with their time?).

In contrast to these real needs, the Board of Governors has chosen to focus exclusively on making Marshall into a combination of a luxury resort and The Mall of America. What

kind of vision is this? Recently, the American Association of University Professors revealed that Marshall full professors are the lowest paid of any 1-A football school.

What is the board's response? Apparently it's, "Let the student party begin."

May 17, 2007

## New construction will keep MU competitive

A. Michael Perry, a member of the Marshall University Board of Governors, had a good reason for voting Monday to approve construction of the new Recreation Center at Marshall.

The university, he said, needs to broaden its appeal and attract more students from out of state. Marshall needs up-to-date residential halls and high-quality recreation offerings to do that, he said.

Construction on new residence halls will begin in June, and the recreation center should be under construction in August. The new freshman residence halls will have two-person suites with individual bedrooms and a shared bathroom for each suite, along with the latest technology, including wireless Internet. They will provide a total of 785 beds, a study room, a theater room and a video conference room.

Menis Ketchum, chairman of the Board of Governors, said the individual bedrooms and bathrooms should be attractive to prospective students. Today's students "want their own bedroom and place to take a bath or shower. They don't want gang showers," he said.

The \$94 million project is being done under a plan that is new to Marshall. The project, which includes new baseball and softball fields at a later date, is being done by Capstone Management of Birmingham, Ala. Capstone is contracting with Mascaro Construction to build the new recreation center and residence halls. Capstone will own and operate the facilities until it has a return on its investment.

Marshall is adapting to the realities of the modern market for higher education services and to the reality that it cannot rely on state government for the money it needs for major projects.

These are new ways of doing things, but new ways must be found. The number of college-age people in West Virginia could decline as much as 6 percent by 2010. That's not just a West Virginia statistic. The number of people in the 18-to-25 age group is falling nationally. Colleges and universities will have to fight for those people if they expect to maintain their current enrollments.

It's a new market for what universities sell. Marshall is making progress. Up-to-date facilities are needed. The construction that begins soon should keep Marshall competitive for students from West Virginia and elsewhere.

May 15, 2007

## WVU faculty question presidential search process

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. (AP) -- West Virginia University's Faculty Senate plans to create a task force to address lingering questions about the university's recent search for a new president.

The Faculty Senate approved a vote of no-confidence in the search process on Monday. However, a motion calling for an independent investigation of the process failed. Instead, the Faculty Senate opted to create the task force and voted to work with incoming WVU President Mike Garrison.

Faculty Senate Chairman Parviz Famouri said the task force will look at a variety of issues, including ways to improve communication and representation of faculty in the administration.

WVU's Board of Governors voted on April 13 to name the 38-year-old Garrison, chief of staff under Democratic Gov. Bob Wise, the successor to retiring President David C. Hardesty Jr.

While student body leaders had backed Garrison, the Faculty Senate had endorsed the other finalist for the job, Kansas State University Provost and former WVU dean M. Duane Nellis.

Sherman Riemenschneider, chairman of the math department, said he was disappointed that his motion calling for an independent investigation of the search process was rejected, while the motion calling for faculty to work with Garrison was approved.

"It was a no-brainer that there was no confidence in that procedure," Riemenschneider said.

Across the state, critics have challenged the integrity of the selection process, including a federal judge who -- without naming names -- urged the Board of Governors to choose "with no regard for personal or political considerations and without fear or favor."

Steve Goodwin, board chairman and head of the selection committee, has defended the process as conspicuously open.

May 15, 2007

## MU construction set to begin

By JEAN TARBETT HARDIMAN

HUNTINGTON -- Demolition will begin this month, readying for a new recreation center and new residence halls at Marshall University, and workers will begin laying bricks on the projects this summer.

Marshall University's Board of Governors approved a resolution Monday morning that joins the university in an agreement with Capstone Management of Birmingham, Ala.

Capstone is contracting with Mascaro Construction to build the new recreation center and residence halls in the area of the university's tennis courts and the former 20th Street Baptist Church. And Capstone will own and operate the facilities until it has a return on its investment, said Menis Ketchum, chairman of the board.

The project -- which later includes baseball and softball fields -- has a \$94 million price tag, and Marshall has a 30-year financial agreement with Capstone, Ketchum said. It's the first time the university has entered into this form of financial arrangement, but it allows Marshall to move forward on a project that's been years in the making and is critical for recruitment of today's college students.

"This is what modern-day students want, and this is what we're trying to give them," Ketchum said.

The 123,000-square-foot recreation center will feature pools, a three-story climbing wall, a track, courts for racquetball, handball, volleyball and basketball and three fitness rooms for free weights, Nautilus and cardiovascular machines. It also will have an area for child care and an outdoor area for sunbathing.

It will be open to Marshall students, faculty and staff from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m., said Board of Governors member John Hess. It's something today's college students demand and will utilize, he said, and it's important for their health and well being.

The new freshmen residence halls will feature two-person suites with individual bedrooms and a shared bathroom for each suite, along with the latest technology, including wireless Internet. They will have 785 beds, as well as a study room, a theater room and video conference room.

The individual bedrooms and bathrooms should be a draw, Ketchum said.

"(Today's students) want their own bedroom and place to take a bath or a shower -- they don't want gang showers," he said.

With the approval of the resolution Monday, bonds will be sold beginning June 12, and Mascaro Construction -- a Pittsburgh-based company that built the Robert C. Byrd Biotechnology Science Center -- can move forward with construction. Master Mechanical Insulation Inc. of Huntington is doing the church demolition.

Workers already have moved onto campus and are getting ready, Ketchum said. The tennis courts will be taken out within a week, and demolition on 20th Street Baptist Church -- whose congregation has relocated to the Tri-State Fire Academy temporarily - - will begin May 21.

Construction on the residence halls will get going in June, and the rec center will probably get started in August, Ketchum said. The goal for opening the residence halls is the fall semester of 2008, and the rec center for the spring semester of 2009.

A \$94 million investment is one of the largest the Huntington area has seen in a while, said A. Michael Perry, a member of the Board of Governors.

But new buildings have been a common sight in recent years, and changes on campus will continue.

"By the time we open the rec center, (Hodges Hall) will be gone," Ketchum said. Twin Towers likely will be converted into single-room suites, and the university might move the softball field to a spot across 3rd Avenue from the football stadium, and maybe put a baseball field there as well, he said.

Ongoing improvement of campus facilities is crucial for the university and the community, Perry said.

"It's absolutely incumbent upon the leadership of Marshall University to (help the university) grow," he said. In the past, Marshall has drawn a good portion of its students from within the state, but high schools are losing enrollment and graduating fewer students, he said.

So Marshall needs to broaden its appeal and attract more students from out of state, Perry said. Up-to-date residential halls and quality recreation offerings are a critical piece to that, and other universities already have them.

"When you start trying to be in competition with those universities, you have to have the facilities," Perry said. An education at Marshall University "is a bargain for students in many parts of the country," he said, "and we have to capitalize on that, as well as educating the people of West Virginia."

# Charleston Daily Mail

May 14, 2007

Editorial

## Raise standards, raise achievement

Officials of the Promise scholarship program, under pressure to reduce costs, thought they would reduce the number of scholarships by raising the requirements.

At first, it worked, and the number of students who qualified dropped a bit. But something else may be going on now.

Originally, students had to graduate with a 3.0 grade-point average and score at least 21 on the ACT or 1,000 on the SAT. Last July, the state raised

the required scores to 22 and 1,020, respectively.

Last year, the state offered Promise scholarships

to 3,319 graduating high school seniors. This year, at least 3,395 high school seniors qualified. More students may win Promise scholarships on appeals.

While a number of factors, including class size, could affect those numbers, it is possible that West Virginia's high school students are responding to higher standards.

Certainly, an offer of up to four years of free tuition is a good incentive to buckle down in high school and then maintain those good grades in college.



May 14, 2007

## **Board of governors to get wellness center update**

By Justin McElroy

With the scheduled start of construction on Marshall University's new expansion nearing, the university's board of governors will get an update on how the project is progressing today.

An informational board meeting about the \$95 million wellness center and residence halls is slated for 10:30 a.m. today in the Shawkey Dining Room of the Memorial Student Center.

Representatives from Marshall were unable to say specifically what will be discussed at the meeting.

The project, which is being handled by Capstone Management of Birmingham, Ala., will add a health and wellness center that tentatively contains a small swimming pool, running track, three to four gymnasiums as well as exercise rooms.

Plans also call for a new 700-bed residence hall that will be split into two facilities.

The facility is uncharted territory for the university and the state, which entered into an "off balance sheet project" with Capstone. That means Capstone will own and operate the buildings until their investment has been returned, at which point the buildings will become the property of Marshall. Marshall personnel will run the facility, but the development firm will be paying their salaries.



May 14, 2007

## **Construction on new MU residence halls, rec center about to begin**

HUNTINGTON — Demolition will begin this month readying for a new recreation center and new residence halls at Marshall University, and workers will begin laying bricks on the projects this summer.

Marshall University's Board of Governors approved a resolution this morning that joins the university in agreement with Capstone Management of Birmingham, Ala.

Capstone will build the new rec center and residence halls around the 1900 block between 3rd and 5th avenues, in the area of the university's tennis courts and the former 20th Street Baptist Church.

The project has a price tag of about \$92 million, and Capstone will own the facilities until it has a return on its investment, said board president Menis Ketchum.

It's the first-time the university has entered into this form of financial arrangement.

The rec center will feature pools, fitness rooms, a three-story climbing wall and racketball, handball, volleyball and basketball courts, Ketchum said. The new freshmen residence halls will feature two-person suites with individual bedrooms and a shared bathroom for each suite, along with wireless Internet. They also will have a study room, a theater room and video conference room.

The residence halls are scheduled to open for the fall semester of 2008, and the rec center for the spring semester of 2009, he said.

## **New Eastern college struggles to meet expectations – 5/14/07**

By Cecelia Mason - 304-876-9313

**Lead:** Controversy surrounded the state legislature's decision in 1999 to create Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College in Hardy County. That year the Legislature allocated about \$2M to the college. The money was used to study post secondary education needs in the eight counties that make up the Potomac Highlands and to begin the college.

Eastern, however, has not met all of its goals.

Cecelia Mason has more:

**Cecelia Masom:** Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College had the biggest percentage decline in student population in the state this past year. Eastern's enrollment decreased 13% to 766 students. Jim Skidmore is the Chancellor of the Community and Technical College system:

**Jim Skidmore:** I think everybody will agree that the college has not met the expectations that everybody envisioned when the college was established.

**CM:** Skidmore points out that this is the first time in many years that the state has built a new college from scratch:

**JS:** We do not know what all was going to be involved and what the growing pains were going to be in developing a new college.

**CM:** Do you think that's a good use of money versus having another college offer classes since there are so few students enrolled in this school?

**JS:** That will be a decision that will have to be made at some point in time. It depends on what the college does in future as far as enrollment and at some point in time it possibly could be better to align it with another college.

**CM:** Each of the state's colleges has to create a document called a compact that outlines what the school expects to achieve. Eastern's goal is to have more than 1100 students taking courses for credit by next year. In order to meet that goal, the school would have to enroll more than 200 students between now and next fall. Another measure of how well a college is doing is the number of degree programs it creates. This is another area where Skidmore says Eastern falls short.

**JS:** There's some progress being made but they're not where they need to be in the delivery of programs at this point.

**CM:** Eastern's Web site shows the school offers six associates degrees plus a tech prep program. Skidmore says Eastern hasn't developed enough programs to attract the students needed to meet the enrollment goals.

While Eastern has struggled to increase enrollment and create degree programs, Skidmore says it has surpassed its goal in developing non credit workforce training. Eastern had predicted it would provide more than 1500 hours by the fall of 2007. So far, the school has offered more than 3400 hours.

The legislature created Eastern in March of 1999. Former House Finance Committee Chairman Harold Michael represents the area, and directed \$2M to open the school. His efforts attracted criticism from those who thought building a new community college in such a rural area was a waste of taxpayer money. The criticism didn't faze Peggy Hawse. She's a Hardy County educator who was hired in 1998 to conduct a feasibility study.

**Peggy Hawse:** "When I did the study I actually recommended that the college be a part of another institution in the beginning. And it was set up to be a freestanding institution but it has to have the scaffolding or the support of another institution until accreditation is given."

**CM:** Hawse was Eastern's first employee and currently chairs the school's board of governors. Because it's not accredited yet, Eastern has an agreement with Southern WV Community and Technical College. Eastern expects to be accredited within the next year or two.

The statute that created Eastern says the school must find more effective delivery systems. Eastern has what it calls access centers in each county it serves where students can take classes through computer and video technology. Former Board of Governor's Chairwoman Phyllis Cole says while the access centers are an innovative idea, they have also impeded enrollment:

**Phyllis Cole:** "You have people and particularly young adults that were terrified or not really technology wired that were afraid of a computer, afraid to turn it on, let alone go in and enroll for a college class."

**CM:** Hawse agrees that the technology has kept some students away. But she says that will change with time:

**PH:** "The students in our schools today are computer literate so the next generation of people that we train that will not be an issue. But we certainly must invest a lot of time and patience and programs with the current students that we have."

**CM:** An attempt was made earlier this year to merge Eastern with Blue Ridge Community and Technical College in Martinsburg. A bill was introduced in the legislature but failed. Peggy Hawse says she doesn't rule out the option of merging with another school. But points out it would take an act of the legislature. As the newly elected Chairwomen of Eastern's board of governors, Hawse says she's committed to changing the way the school operates:

**PH:** "We must look at every avenue that we can. We need to change do things differently, whatever it is, but we must deliver programs to our customers, to our community."

**CM:** Eastern has a budget of about \$2 million dollars a year. The school currently rents space in a building on the outskirts of Moorefield. One of its goals is to buy or build a campus.

For WV Public Broadcasting, I'm Cecelia Mason in Shepherdstown.

# Charleston Daily Mail

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## WVU will pay new president \$255,000

by Jake Stump

West Virginia University President-elect Mike Garrison will earn \$255,000 a year starting in July.

Garrison, 38, who was selected in April to succeed the retiring David Hardesty, will make \$20,000 less than what Hardesty makes.

Garrison and the WVU Board of Governors agreed on the new president's contract last week, board Chairman Steve Goodwin said.

His contract is for three years, ending June 30, 2010, and is very similar to Hardesty's, Goodwin said.

Garrison will receive an automatic pay raise each year that will match the average percentage increases handed out to faculty and administrators.

WVU will provide Garrison and his family the five-bedroom brick home now occupied by Hardesty. It sits on 1.8 acres of land and includes a dining area for 150 guests, a guest room, parlor, kitchen and two offices.

The university also will provide Garrison and his wife each with new vehicles. Hardesty currently drives a \$28,000 Chrysler while his wife, Susan, has a \$30,000 Audi.

Goodwin emphasized the cars often are used for job-related purposes.

Garrison will also receive comparable sick leave -- about one and a half days per month -- and health benefits, but Goodwin said this morning he did not know the specifics of the plan.

Despite the pay and perks, Garrison's salary still ranks substantially below what the average public university president makes. Several university presidents across the country make twice or even nearly three times as much.

According to a report from the College and University Personnel Association, a median salary for university presidents in 2004 was \$290,000.

Garrison's salary would place him 170th out of 183 public university presidents, based on a 2006 earnings scale from the Chronicle of Higher Education.

But the job remains quite a lucrative one by West Virginia standards.

"It's high compared to the average West Virginian and a good salary for anyone living in the state," Goodwin said. "We think the president's job is well-compensated when you consider other things the president is entitled to."

Garrison's contract begins July 1, but he won't officially take over for Hardesty until September. Garrison, a Morgantown attorney, is currently transitioning into his new role.

Besides annual salary, there are a few other differences between Garrison's contract and Hardesty's.

The new president will not receive supplemental retirement income after he leaves the job. Hardesty's initial contract was similar, but it was later changed to allow him to earn \$294,000 a year in pay and benefits if he continues to teach after the age of 65.

Garrison will be eligible for retirement plans offered by the state's Public Employees Insurance Agency, which are available to most public employees.

Garrison also will not be allowed to serve on any outside boards. Hardesty currently serves on the Consol Energy Board of Directors and makes \$70,000 from that position.

"Keep in mind that Hardesty didn't serve on outside boards until a year or so ago," Goodwin said. "Being president of WVU is a full-time job. It requires commitment and focus on being a president the whole time."

"If at some point, Garrison asks the (Board of Governors) if he can serve on some board, we would consider that," Goodwin said.