



West Virginia

Independent Colleges & Universities

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

WELCOME TO WVVCU

Championing *independent higher education* throughout the state of West Virginia.

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR, CHRIS WOOD

“When you transform your mind, everything you experience is transformed.” This quote from Tibetan educator, Yongey Rinpoche, encapsulates the essence of the educational experience at the six private higher education institutions within the state of West Virginia. A necessary complement to the public higher education system, the WV Independent Colleges provide high quality and high touch educational experiences that include the heart and soul as well as the mind. Transformation and preparedness are the result.

There is a buzz on our campuses as enrollment rebounds post-pandemic, new academic programs are launched, innovation and creativity abound, and tomorrow’s leaders are inspired and trained. Donors through the state and beyond have chosen to invest tens of millions of dollars in our institution’s students, programs, and buildings.

The WVICU’s Circle of Vision Scholarship Program has been supported by corporate and individual donors who recognize the crucial role of the state’s Independent Colleges. A new donor joining the many faithful contributors to the Circle of Vision Scholarship Program was Highmark WV Charitable Fund for Health. Addressing the nursing shortage around the state, Highmark’s focus was to support students who plan to pursue a career in the healthcare industry. These scholarships are a tangible step to support our state’s necessary workforce for many years to come.

Member institutions within the WVICU were saddened to witness the closing of Alderson Broaddus University in July 2023 after more than a century and a half serving West Virginians. Yet, in the spirit of collegiality and collaboration that is at the heart of the WVICU, member institutions stepped up to welcome and teach-out AB students so they could pursue their degrees and graduate on time. Putting the needs of students first is the hallmark of the Independent Colleges of West Virginia.

The member institutions and Board of Directors of the WVICU are grateful to our Executive Director, Ben Beakes, as well as the support of Three Point Strategies to lead our organization. We also wish to thank former Board member Julie Gurtis, President of United Bank, for her service, even as we welcome Rossitsa Getskova to our Board. We also welcome Dr. Dianna Vargo who is serving as the Interim President of Wheeling University. A final thanks to our corporate Board members who are crucial to the forward momentum of the WVICU.

The WVICU believes that we are stronger when we work together. Strength within our organization and our member institutions results in transformation of the lives of our students. That is the sole reason for our existence.

With warmest wishes,

Chris A. Wood
Chair of WVICU and President of Davis & Elkins College





Thank you, **Julie Gurtis**

The board of directors would like to recognize an outgoing board member, Julie Gurtis, President of United Bank, for her many years of service to the WVICU. Julie served as treasurer of the association, a member of the executive committee, and also on the investment committee. Julie's experience and expertise will be missed as we continue to advance the interest of private higher education here in West Virginia.



Welcome, **Rossitsa Getskova**

The WVICU would like to welcome Rossitsa Getskova, our newest member on the board of directors. Rossi joined United Wealth Management in 2005 and served as Head of Equity Research prior to becoming a Portfolio Manager. Rossi earned her BS and MBA from the University of Charleston with an emphasis on business and finance and holds the Series 7 and 66 securities licenses. An active member of the community, Rossi serves as the Investment Committee Chair for the WV Bankers Association, serves on the West Virginia Independent Colleges & Universities board of directors, and is a member of the University of Charleston (UC) Financial Planning Advisory Committee. She is a member of the Investment Committee for the YWCA and a former Board of Directors of the Charleston Ballet.



HONORING OUR PARTNERS:

United Bank is a community bank that offers local decision-making and personalized service since 1839, with the insights, technologies, products, and services of a large bank – and a deep commitment to the communities in which they operate.

United Bank first opened in Parkersburg, WV and this year celebrates 185 years of service. United has grown to be one of the top fifty largest banking companies in the United States.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND CAMPUS

UNIVERSITY OF CHARLESTON

- Forbes Advisor named UC Master of Science in Cybersecurity as one of the **Best Master's of Cybersecurity Online Degree Options**
- College Factual ranked **UC #1** in the southeast and **#4** in the entire country as a Best School Associate Students to Study Organizational Leadership
- BestColleges.com included UC in its list of the **Best Online Organizational Leadership & Fastest Online Technology** programs for 2023
- UC has the **only virtual reality lab** in the state that provides all healthcare students studying anatomy physiology with immersive 3D technology

APPALACHIAN BIBLE COLLEGE

- Alpine camps and retreats brought in more than **3,000 guests** to campus this summer
- New full-time resident students can take advantage of a **new scholarship that covers 100% of tuition**

WHEELING UNIVERSITY

- Fall 2023 incoming class reflected nearly a **30% increase over last year**
- Students represent **23 states and 21 countries** including Brazil, Canada, Congo, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- WU welcomed **21 students** from Alderson Broaddus

BETHANY COLLEGE

- **New academic programs:** bachelor's degrees in criminal justice, international studies, healthcare admin, and digital marketing
- **New master's degree** in business admin
- Fall 2023 enrollment is **42% larger than last year**
- **Renovations to Harlan Hall and science lab.** New fitness center, esports arena, and computer lab
- **New partnerships include:** WVSOM, NEOMED (pharmacy), Wheeling University for doctorate in PT, Saint George's University (medical and veterinary)

DAVIS & ELKINS COLLEGE

- This fall D&E welcomed **the largest class in a decade** to Senator Nation
- Fundraising numbers were close to **\$17 million last year**
- The construction of the new Freshman Village is underway and the **first new residence hall in 53 years** is also going up
- Upon completion **renovations will begin on Gribble and Roxanna Booth Halls**
- Capital campaign **"Creating Home: It Takes a Village"** has surpassed 80% of a \$25 million goal
- Naming rights to the **new building** will be announced soon

WEST VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

- Welcomed over **370 new students this fall**, representing the largest new student class since 2019.
- Overall enrollment at the college is **projected to be up by over 4%**, with increases in WV students, WV Promise Scholars, Creative and Performing Artists, Student Athletes, Community Service Scholars, and the largest freshman international class in over 20 years
- **Received a \$50,000 research and development grant from the One Foundation.** This money is to be used to conduct research into the need for a Day Center that provides services for unsheltered, housing and food insecure individuals and families in Clarksburg.



FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID

What is FAFSA? FAFSA is a free online application that college students can use to determine their eligibility for student aid. Once a student's financial need has been assessed, FAFSA will provide funding options. FAFSA is the only way to apply for federal student aid.

How does the FAFSA delays affect students, and the private institutions in West Virginia?

FAFSA normally rolls out October 1st every year, however, after a major overhaul to the application form that rollout was delayed three months. Colleges did not receive student FAFSA information until mid-March which created timeline difficulties for the institutions as well as budget concerns. First, colleges and universities will be delayed sending out financial aid packages, which could force schools to change their admission timelines. Second, students cannot make a decision on where they want to attend without having the full financial picture causing commitment day to also be delayed. This leads to budget concerns for schools planning for their fall enrollment.

On April 30th Governor Justice announced that West Virginia will temporarily suspend the FAFSA requirements needed to qualify for the state's largest financial aid programs. This will include the Promise Scholarship and the Higher Education Grant Program.

Students and families can visit collegeforwv.com for more information or call West Virginia's financial aid hotline at [877-987-7664](tel:877-987-7664).



STEVEN MITCHELL

WHEELING UNIVERSITY

I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for the WVICU scholarship that I have been awarded. I am truly honored and appreciative to have been chosen as a recipient of this scholarship.

Receiving this scholarship is not just a financial relief for me, but also a tremendous source of motivation and inspiration to continue my academic pursuits. It means a great deal to me to have your support in achieving my educational goals.

I promise to put this scholarship to good use, working diligently to maintain my academic excellence. Your generosity has lightened my financial burden and allowed me to focus on my studies, which I am deeply passionate about.

Once again, thank you for your generous contribution to my education. Your belief in me and your commitment to helping students like myself is truly commendable. I am eager to make the most of this opportunity and hope to give back to the community and future students just as you have given to me.

Thank you once again for your generosity, and I am truly humbled and grateful for your support.

Sincerely,
Steven Mitchell



LUKE HEFLIN

WV WESLEYAN COLLEGE

I am writing this letter to express my deep gratitude for being selected for this scholarship. I am truly honored and appreciative of the financial support that this scholarship provides towards my education. Receiving this scholarship is a tremendous opportunity for me, as it will greatly alleviate the financial burden of my tuition fees and allow me to focus more on my studies and personal growth.

This scholarship not only serves as a recognition of my achievements and hard work, but also motivates me to strive for excellence in my academic pursuits. I would also like to express my gratitude to the generous donors who made this scholarship possible. Your selfless contribution towards helping students achieve their educational goals is truly inspiring.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and investment in my future. I am eager to use this opportunity to make a positive difference in the world and become a successful individual in my chosen field of study.

Sincerely,
Luke Heflin



Circle of Vision

The Circle of Vision Scholarship program was started in 1997 and provides West Virginia students with the opportunity to attend one of our six private colleges or universities. Many of these scholars are the first in their family to attend college.

WVICU colleges and universities do not receive state government funding. We depend on corporate, foundation, and private partnerships to help make college more affordable for West Virginia students. Since 1997, Circle of Vision scholarships have been awarded to **3,721 students** totaling **\$8,348,636**.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Circle of Vision Scholarship Program assisted nearly **100 students** who demonstrated financial need and academic excellence with the total giving of **\$400,000** distributed among **all member institutions**.



WE SERVE
6,000 Students

WVICU institutions serve over 6,000 students including over 2,100 West Virginia residents. 1,742 are first-generation college students.



WE BELONG
\$233 Million

The total estimated annual economic impact of WVICU members is \$233 million.



We ACHIEVE
+18%

The average four-year graduation rate at WVICU institutions is 18% higher than WV's public institutions, and the six-year graduation rate is 12% higher.



WVVCU established the **Legacy Endowment Scholarship Fund** in 2010. By contributing to this fund, you can make a permanent and positive difference in the lives of deserving West Virginia college students through planned or current giving. Bequests from generous West Virginians helped establish this fund, which awards scholarships annually to West Virginia students at member colleges and universities through the Circle of Vision Scholarship Program.

Several large donations from individuals who believe in private higher education were combined to create this fund. Many others have contributed to the fund over time. The Legacy Fund has contributed a total of **\$160,000 to the Circle of Vision Scholarship Program** over the last eight academic years.





GIVING SUMMARY

2023 TYPES OF GIFTS

Scholarships	\$214,990.54
Designated	\$185,000.00

Total: **\$399,990.54**

2023 SOURCE OF FUNDS

Foundations	\$305,150.10	76%
Corporations	\$42,000.00	10%
Trusts	\$50,740.44	13%
Individuals	\$2,100.00	1%

Total: **\$399,990.54** **100%**

COMPOSITE DATA

MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

Students	6,067
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WV Residents	2,189
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2022 Grads	1,741
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Budget	\$137,371,947.00
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Endowment	\$244,527,487.00
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CIRCLE OF VISION DONORS

\$50,000 & ABOVE

Maier Foundation

\$20,000 - \$49,999

McDonough Foundation
Legacy Endowment
CIC/UPS Scholarship Grant

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Jacobson Foundation
Madge Douds Trust
Steptoe & Johnson
Driehorst Family Foundation
WesBanco Bank
W.E. Stone Foundation
United Bank
Antero Foundation
Highmark WV Charitable Fund
for Health
H.B. Wehrle Foundation
Hamilton Family Foundation
Nutting Foundation
Carbon Fuel Foundation
CIC Scholarship Challenge Grant

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Marth Gaines & Russell Wehrle Memorial Foundation
Encova Foundation
Cecil I. Walker Charitable Trust

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Antero Resources
Tri State Roofing & Sheet Metal Charleston
Tri State Roofing & Sheet Metal Parkersburg
Three Point Strategies
BHE GT&S
Imperial Charitable Trust
JH Fletcher
John McCuskey

UP TO \$999

James & Law Company
Kanawha Roxalana
Stuart Lewis

WVICU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

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President, Davis & Elkins College

MARTIN ROTH, VICE-CHAIR

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JAMES MOORE

President, WV Wesleyan College

DIANNA VARGO

COO, Wheeling University

NON-VOTING MEMBER

BEN BEAKES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



WVICU MEMBER INSTITUTIONS



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Mt. Hope, WV 25880
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100 Campus Dr.
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dewv.edu



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Buckhannon, WV 26201
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