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Board of Governors Minutes

Board of Governors

8-6-2024

The Minutes of the Marshall University Board of Governors Meeting, August 6, 2024

Marshall University Board of Governors

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MINUTES

Marshall University Board of Governors

Microsoft Teams Meeting at

Brad D. Smith Center for Business and Innovation

Livestream and In-Person

August 6, 2024

Present: Shawn Ball, Brea Belville, Kathy Eddy, Kathy D’Antoni, Patrick Farrell, Donnie Holcomb, Carol Hurula, Samuel Moore, Robin Riner, Geoff Sheils, Bill Smith, Jim C. Smith

PH: Kipp Bodnar, Ginny T. Lee

Absent: Angel Moore, Chad Pennington

I. Call to Order

Subsequently, upon confirming the presence of a quorum, Chairman Sheils called the meeting to order. Chairman Sheils announced the next agenda item: the swearing-in of the new Student Body President, Brea Belville, by Cabell County Circuit Judge Corky Hammers. He also took this opportunity to recognize outgoing Student Body President Walker Tatum, thanking him for his service and presenting him with a gift from the board in appreciation of his time and contributions.

II. Minutes Approval

Upon a motion by Kathy D’Antoni, seconded by Donnie Holcomb, the minutes of the meeting held on June 12, 2024, were approved.

III. Committee of the Whole

Action Items

A) Approval of Renaming Smith Hall to Stewart H. Smith Hall

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, That the Marshall University Board of Governors does hereby approve the renaming of Smith Hall to Stewart H. Smith Hall and its subsidiary Smith Communications Building to Stewart H. Smith Communications Building.

- *Completed in 1967, the Smith Hall complex houses several university entities, including the*

Smith Communications Building and the Evelyn Hollberg Smith Music Hall. Smith Hall was named in honor of Marshall University's seventh president, Stewart H. Smith, who served from 1946 to 1968. Opened in 2010 and named in 2015, the Brad D. Smith Foundation Hall serves as a hub for the Marshall University Foundation Inc. and the Office of Alumni Relations. The building honors the current president, who is an alumnus of the university. In addition, the Brad D. Smith Center for Business and Innovation opened in January 2024 and houses the College of Business. This facility is also named in honor of the current president. To differentiate among the aforementioned facilities, it is recommended that Smith Hall be renamed Stewart H. Smith Hall and its subsidiary Smith Communications Building be renamed Stewart H. Smith Communications Building. The name of the Evelyn Hollberg Smith Music Hall will remain unchanged.

Upon a motion by Patrick Farrell, seconded by Samuel Moore, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Approval of Advisory Board Members for the West Virginia Autism Training Center

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors does hereby approve Landon Meadows and Hillary Adams for the Advisory Board of the West Virginia Autism Training Center.

- *The West Virginia Autism Training Center (ATC) was established in 1984 by the West Virginia Legislature and housed at Marshall University, within the College of Education and Professional Development. The ATC was founded by Dr. Ruth Sullivan and other parents across the state who recognized the need of children with autism for well-informed parents and well-trained educators. The legislation describes an Advisory Board made up of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and/or parents, professionals in the field and community representatives. The Marshall University Board of Governors approves members of the Advisory Board.*

Upon a motion by Brea Belville, seconded by Carol Hurula, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. Committee Meeting Reports

Academic and Student Affairs

The following are action items from the Academic and Student Affairs Committee:

Action Items

A) Approval of Updated Board of Governors Rule No. AA-1 – Sabbatical Leave

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors does hereby approve the updated Board of Governors Rule No. AA-1 – Sabbatical Leave.

- *This policy establishes a uniform sabbatical leave plan for faculty members. A sabbatical leave is a merit-based professional development activity that allows faculty to enhance their potential as teachers, artists and scholars, and thereby make additional contributions to the mission of Marshall University.*

The recommended changes introduce a structured timeline for the sabbatical leave application and review process, adding specific dates and detailed evaluation procedures, including written descriptions and scoring rubrics. They also update the effective date to include a recent policy reorganization and specifies that post-leave reports must be submitted to multiple university officials. These changes enhance clarity, ensure thorough evaluation and maintain accountability.

Upon a motion by Kathy Eddy, seconded by Robin Riner, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Approval of Board of Governors Rule No. AA-16 – Professional Responsibility, Academic Responsibility and Academic Freedom

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors does hereby approve Board of Governors Rule No. AA-16 – Professional Responsibility, Academic Responsibility and Academic Freedom.

- *This rule sets forth the understanding that the faculty and instructors at Marshall University are expected to attend to certain academic and professional responsibilities and are entitled to certain freedoms to fulfill their roles.*

Upon a motion by Robin Riner, seconded by Donnie Holcomb, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Information Items:

Provost Report

Provost Avi Mukherjee gave the Provost's Update. During his report, Provost Mukherjee stated that he would highlight the accomplishments of the various colleges. Provost Mukherjee reported on several key achievements and initiatives. The College of Arts & Media represented the university on an international stage with a performance of "The Telltale Lilac Bush" at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland from July 3 to August 11. He highlighted that the College of Engineering and Computer Science was awarded a three-year NSF grant of \$352,310 to Dr. Sudipta Chowdhury and Dr. Ammar Alzarrad for their project "REU Site: Safety Analysis and Design Nexus: Bridging Theory and Practice."

He also noted that Dean Teresa Eagle and Dr. Isaac Larison from the College of Education and Professional Development attended the Country School Association of America (CSAA) annual conference at the University of Toledo in June. The CSAA focuses on supporting and celebrating early education in America, particularly through restored early schoolhouses. Furthermore, the 2025 CSAA

annual conference will be held at Marshall University, acknowledging the campus's historic one-room schoolhouse.

In other achievements mentioned by Provost Mukherjee, the College of Health Professions hosted its first-ever /r/ Boot Camp in June at the Speech and Hearing Center, where Assistant Professor Ernay Adams and graduate students helped campers learn to produce a true /r/ sound. The College of Liberal Arts received a two-year \$11 million Health Resources and Services Administration grant for graduate psychology education, led by Dr. Marianna Linz and Dr. Keith Beard.

Provost Mukherjee highlighted the College of Science's accomplishment in achieving the #1 ranking in overall performance on the Forensic Science Assessment Test (FSAT) for the 2024 cohort of the Master of Forensic Science Program, marking the 13th win in the past 15 years. Additionally, Dr. Nadja Spitzer from Biological Sciences was awarded a \$319,317 National Science Foundation grant for her research on the impact of silver nanoparticles on microtubule stabilization and cellular development in the nervous system. Dr. Eugene Shakirov, also from Biological Sciences, received a \$100,000 NASA EPSCoR R3 grant for his research.

In the Division of Aviation he mentioned Marshall University became the first flight-training provider in the country to offer a virtual reality full-motion simulator for commercial flight training, hosting members of the FAA National Simulation Program for this groundbreaking event.

Provost Mukherjee announced the appointment of Dr. Ben Eng as interim dean of the Lewis College of Business. Dr. Eng brings extensive experience in teaching, research, and service as an associate professor of Marketing and Entrepreneurship. Dr. Eng has demonstrated leadership as the founding Executive Director of the iCenter since 2018 and as Assistant Provost for Academic Engagement and Innovation since 2022, roles that have prepared him well to guide the college during this transitional period. The search for a permanent dean is slated for the spring of 2025.

Furthermore, he mentioned, Drs. Gayle and Dan Brazeau from the School of Pharmacy were invited to teach a course on Pharmacogenomics and Precision Medicine at the Keck Graduate Institute, reaching 35 high school and college students worldwide. Provost Mukherjee stated that the Center for Student Success welcomed three new Total Withdrawal Counselors to support students considering course withdrawals.

Provost Mukherjee also shared that Sarah Davis, head of the undergraduate academic advising department, was selected as one of twelve NACADA Emerging Leaders for 2024-2026, enhancing her leadership network within academic advising. NACADA is recognized as the primary professional organization for faculty advisors at universities.

He concluded his report by announcing the launch of the Durables Project under Online Education. This project aims to develop ten course themes centered around in-demand interpersonal skills for a diverse audience, enhancing the university's certification programs and introducing common themes across these micro-credentials.

Student Representative Report

Brea Belville, Student Body President, gave the Student Representative update. Throughout her report, Brea expressed enthusiasm for her new role and detailed her engagement in several significant activities since her inauguration in May. She shared her satisfaction with the recent Board of Governors retreat that focused on the themes of student wellness, safety, and equity—key areas of her campaign platform. Brea noted that she and Vice President Connor Waller were inaugurated in May and quickly set to work. They

participated in the West Virginia Leadership Conference, where they exchanged best practices with other West Virginia institutions and met the leader of the state's Advisory Council of Students.

Brea highlighted the success of the student orientation sessions where she had the honor of speaking alongside university officials. These sessions featured panels of student leaders who provided invaluable advice to newcomers. Impressively, 176 new students expressed interest in joining the Student Government Association during these orientations, a testament to the positive momentum at Marshall University. She also discussed her involvement in addressing student housing concerns, stating that she has been proactive in understanding and communicating the ongoing housing situation, ensuring students are well-informed and their concerns are heard. Updates from the university have shown positive developments.

Brea emphasized the importance of maintaining traditions such as the "Student Leader of the Game" during the football season and outlined her plans for collaboration with Athletics and Alumni Relations, including the game against Ohio State. In September, Marshall and WVU SGA members will unite for the University United event in Washington D.C.

As for Homecoming, Brea was thrilled about the forthcoming activities in October, following the success of the previous year. She and Connor are deeply involved with the Fountain Ceremony Committee in organizing the 54th Annual Fountain Ceremony, an event dear to the SGA and the university community, which solemnly honors the memory of 75 individuals. In conclusion, Brea thanked everyone for their attention and reiterated her optimism and commitment to making the coming year a positive one.

School of Medicine Report

Dr. David Gozal, Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs, presented the School of Medicine report. During his report, Dr. Gozal detailed the welcoming of the MD Class of 2028 at the School of Medicine, which consists of 82 students from a broad array of backgrounds and represents 35 undergraduate institutions. He shared that the class, which began orientation on July 24, includes 57% West Virginia residents, 89% science majors, and 10% entering with graduate degrees, including a PharmD. Additionally, 11% of the students come from the BS/MD program, and 9% from the MD Early Assurance program. On July 26, the white coat ceremony officially inducted these students into the medical profession, instilling the core values of professionalism, humanism, and compassionate care, supported by over 120 donors who sponsored white coats and medical instruments.

Dr. Gozal highlighted the story of Isabella "Bella" Griffiths, a standout new student recognized during the ceremony for her dedication. Known on campus for her extensive involvement in activities, including the Yeager Scholars Class of 2023 and her role as Student Body President, Bella's unique birth via gestational carrier due to her mother's type 1 diabetes sparked her interest in medicine, leading her to join the Class of 2028.

In research news, Dr. Gozal announced significant grants awarded to faculty members. Dr. Price E. Dickson received a \$3.3 million NIH R01 grant to investigate genetic mechanisms that influence fentanyl addiction, utilizing a diverse panel of mice and advanced neurogenomics. He works alongside co-investigators Drs. Brandon J. Henderson and Alejandro Q. Nato Jr. Additionally, Dr. Jinju Wang secured a \$300,000 grant from the American Heart Association to study the effects of ACE2 modified exosomes on ischemic stroke, with Associate Professor Ji Bihl as co-investigator.

Dr. Gozal also discussed the launch of a new phase 2 clinical trial at the School of Medicine and Marshall Health Network. This trial aims to evaluate the safety and pharmacokinetics of oral lofexidine, a non-opioid investigational medication, in newborns suffering from neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS) or neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) due to prenatal opioid exposure. The randomized, controlled clinical trial will enroll up to 24 eligible newborns at Hoops Family Children's Hospital, making it the first hospital in the country to offer this non-opioid investigational treatment option for NOWS. The study will assess NOWS symptoms using the Modified Finnegan Neonatal Abstinence Scoring Tool (mFNAST), the duration of treatment, the need for rescue medication, and the length of hospital stay. Dr. Todd Davies, associate director of research in the Division of Addiction Science, will serve as the principal investigator for the study.

He noted the U.S. News & World Report's 2024 rankings, highlighting improvements in several categories. The Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine ranked #18 in Serving Rural Areas, #13 in Serving Medically Needy Areas, #81 among the Most Diverse Medical Schools, and #59 for Most Graduates in Primary Care.

Dr. Gozal emphasized the importance of educational outreach initiatives like the Health Care Pathways Initiative (HCPI) and Project PREMED. The HCPI is a free residential summer camp and UNITE program funded by the Army Educational Outreach Program, supported by Marshall Health Network and the School of Medicine. More than two dozen high school students from the region participated, experiencing college life and learning about healthcare career options, including medicine, pharmacy, and kinesiology. Project PREMED, which stands for Providing Real-World Experiences for Marshall-Educated Doctors, offers undergraduate students an opportunity to explore medical school as a career path, gaining insights into the processes and preparation required for applying to and attending medical school.

Dr. Gozal shared updates on administrative changes, including Dr. Paulette Wehner's appointment as vice dean for education, overseeing various educational programs and compliance with ACGME standards. The medical school plans to establish newly defined departments, with Dr. Nitin Puri chairing the Department of Medical Education and Curriculum.

Finally, Dr. Gozal highlighted faculty development initiatives such as the Summer Teaching Academy, a one-day event with interactive workshops, hands-on activities, and collaborative projects aimed at improving educational practices. Additionally, the Promoting Academic Community Excellence (PACE) Teaching Certificate program incorporates principles of adult learning theory and technologies to help participants engage learners more effectively. Some of this work has been recognized by Harvard Medical School. This initiative has been led by Dr. Darshana Shaw.

He concluded with upcoming events, including the "Standing Out In Our Field" Scholarship Fundraiser on August 24, featuring the theme "Boots and Bling," and the 37th Annual School of Medicine Homecoming on September 27-28.

Athletic Committee

Action Items

There were no action items brought to the Board.

Information Items

Of note, in the board package, there are updates for:

Athletic Teams Updates
NCAA Legislation Updates
National Issues Updates
Budget Update

Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee

The following are action items from the Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee:

Action Items

A) Approval of Updated Board of Governors Rule No. FA-3 – Purchasing Policy

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors does hereby approve the updated Board of Governors Rule No. FA-3 – Purchasing Policy.

- *This rule establishes the rules and policies governing and controlling purchase, acquisition and inventory management of materials, supplies, equipment, services, construction and printing by the Governing Board of Marshall University, created pursuant to West Virginia Code §1 8B-2A-1 and hereinafter referred to as the “Governing Board.” This rule is being revised to update the list of persons within the university who have signature authority.*

Upon a motion by Carol Hurula, seconded by Samuel Moore, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Approval of Property Acquisition

The following resolution was read:

Resolved, that the Marshall University Board of Governors hereby does approve the property acquisition, and demolition and removal of structures located at 1530 and 1540 4th Avenue in Huntington, West Virginia. It is further resolved that the President of Marshall University is hereby authorized to execute any documents to effectuate the purchase of the property and the demolition and removal of structures.

- *The Marshall Innovation District will comprise several city blocks along 4th Avenue in Huntington, West Virginia. Several properties sit on parcels necessary for developing the Innovation District and fulfilling the university’s strategic vision. 1530 and 1540 4th Avenue are vacated apartment complexes. The apartments were income producing for a number of years, but the owner now intends to sell the property to Marshall University.*

This site, the future home of the Marshall Institute for Cyber Security (ICS), is critical to advancing Marshall University’s strategic vision. In 2023, the university was awarded \$45 million by the State of West Virginia to establish the ICS. The new ICS will encompass two parcels of property, running west on 4th Avenue from Hal Greer Boulevard.

The Marshall University Board of Governors currently owns one of the needed parcels, and the second parcel will be acquired from Fairmount Properties. The cost of the property acquisition, and demolition and removal of structures, will be covered by the \$45 million State investment.

Upon a motion by Kathy Eddy, seconded by Donnie Holcomb, without further discussion, a vote of aye, no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Information Items

Of note, in the package, there are updates for:

Finance Update

Facilities and Operations Update

Internal Audit Update

V. President's Report

**The President's report is attached as an addendum to the Board of Governor's minutes.*

VI. Executive Session under the authority of WV Code § 6-9A-4

Upon a motion by Bill Smith, seconded by Donnie Holcomb, the board entered Executive Session under the authority of WV Code §6-9A-4 to discuss Matters involving Commercial Competition.

After a brief session, the Board entered open session. No action was taken during the Executive Session.

VII. Campus Carry Report

Chairman Sheils requested Brandi Jacobs-Jones present the Campus Carry report she delivered earlier to the Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee. During her report, Brandi Jacobs-Jones stated that Marshall University has been preparing for campus carry implementation over the last 18 months. She said that, before July 1, an implementation team was formed to review the legislation and determine how it could be applied on campus. As part of their preparation, she noted that an action learning team visited eleven other higher education institutions in states like Tennessee, Texas, and Georgia to learn best practices from those that had previously implemented similar legislation.

She said that the university also established a Campus and Community Safety Work Group in partnership with Chief Phil Watkins of the City of Huntington's Police Department. Additionally, she explained that they developed a website that is regularly updated with new information and feedback from the campus community regarding guidance and information needs. She shared that the university held two campus town halls that included faculty, staff, and students to address questions and gather feedback in person and online. She also noted that Marshall worked with the Office of Homeland Security to assess its athletic venues.

She further mentioned that, to ensure adherence to federal standards and guidelines, Marshall enlisted the services of Security Risk Management consultants from Columbus, Ohio. She explained that this firm specializes in higher education and healthcare safety. They became familiar with the consultants after their detailed after-action review of the active shooter incident at Michigan State University. She noted that the leader assigned to Marshall previously led security efforts at Ohio State University, including post-9/11 security measures for athletic venues.

She stated that before July 1, \$300,000 was allocated for implementation on campus. This included new fencing at Joan C. Edwards Stadium and the acquisition of open gate metal detection systems, capable of screening 5,000 people every 30 minutes. She mentioned that four units are being purchased and six leased for the stadium.

Jacobs-Jones reported that post-July 1, the campus community actively engaged in the implementation process. She noted that, as of Wednesday's finance report, 75 offices and labs were designated as no-weapon zones, a number that has since increased to 125. Additionally, she said that, so far, four residents in the residence halls have requested or purchased safes from the university's selected vendor.

She shared that on August 1, the President updated the campus community on the campus carry implementation and provided guidance for requesting no-weapon zone decals for personal offices. She noted that the athletic department also released information on the "Safe to Stay with the Herd" initiative, which highlights steps taken at athletic venues, including a new no-reentry policy. She explained that this policy aligns with the industry standard and institutional practice of over 300 higher education institutions, with Marshall being one of the last two not to have enacted such a policy.

She stated that athletics has partnered with Sodexo to enhance the fan experience, opening gates two hours before kickoff instead of the traditional 90 minutes. Special sales, events, and activities are planned, including special hot dog prices and commemorative cups. She emphasized the inclusion of local vendors and food trucks to provide additional offerings beyond traditional concessions, thanks to the efforts of Mark Arnold and his team.

Jacobs-Jones concluded by announcing upcoming training sessions. She said that the Student Affairs and General Counsel's Office will offer faculty training on classroom management and assisting students. Additionally, during the Week of Welcome, an event called "Together We Thrive" will be held on Friday at 3:30, providing first-year students with tips and tools for campus safety, including campus carry and pedestrian safety.

VIII. Chairman Sheils Report

Chairman Sheils took the opportunity to thank each board member for their time over the past two days, expressing his hope that the time spent was both helpful and productive. He extended his gratitude to President Smith, his staff, and the cabinet for their role in coordinating the learning opportunity. Chairman Sheils also acknowledged Board of Governors member Ginny T. Lee for her dedication and contributions, despite the significant time difference. Additionally, he recognized Board member Patrick Farrell for his efforts and leadership in his previous roles on various committees and as Chairman of the Board.

IX. Announcements

The next meeting will be held on October 9, 2024. The notice will be forthcoming.

X. Adjournment

Without objection, the Board Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy D'Antoni, Secretary

President's Report – August 2024

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
- Good afternoon.
- Let me begin by thanking you for investing your time to actively participate in this strategic offsite as we focused on advancing our efforts to strategically and ethically apply Artificial Intelligence to:
 - Advance innovation in teaching and learning,
 - Strengthen our research excellence and impact,
 - Improve our operational efficiency and sustainability,
 - And ensure data security, compliance and governance.
- Marshall is privileged to have such a talented and engaged Board of Governors that is willing to roll-up your sleeves, learn with us and provide your wisdom and insights along the way. Thank you!
- This meeting has once again reinforced what we have acknowledged and embraced at Marshall University ...
 - Higher education is in the midst of significant reimagination and transformation across the globe,
 - And we have chosen to seize this opportunity to reimagine and reinvent ourselves, serving as a demonstration project for the rest of the world in the process.
- There are 3 headwinds reshaping higher education as we speak:
 - Demographics
 - Digital
 - Doubt

- On the demographics front:
 - The country has been bracing for the pending “enrollment cliff” in 2025, when the nation will experience 15% fewer seniors graduating high school as a result of smaller family sizes over the past several decades.
 - With these smaller senior classes, the double whammy is that 12% fewer graduating seniors are expected to pursue a college degree, creating a pipeline problem for post-secondary educational institutions and our nation’s workforce.

- On the Digital front:
 - How education is being delivered and how students prefer to learn is being reshaped by technology.
 - Learning platforms such as YouTube, Khan Academy, Coursera and Credly were already growing quickly, and have now been given a turbo boost with the emergence of large language models and Generative AI ...
 - Moving us one step closer to the aspirational vision of personalized learning experiences at scale.

- And finally, on the subject of Doubt:
 - Higher education has been in the news over the past year for a variety of reasons, and national sentiment has grown increasingly dour as evidenced by the Gallup Survey – where confidence in Higher Education dipped to 36% last July, down from a previous study of 57% in 2015.

- The collective implications of the 3 D’s are being felt nationally, with daily announcements of significant actions being taken to rectify financial deficits, and an acceleration of private and public institutions of higher learning closing their doors or merging with others.

- According to research conducted by Inside Higher Ed, as well as the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal:
 - For the five years between 2010-2014, approximately 40 higher education institutions merged or closed their doors.
 - Since 2015, that pace has accelerated with an additional 131 institutions merging or closing their doors.
- Beyond the 3 D's, we are navigating the massive transformation occurring in NCAA Athletics - from Name, Image and Likeness and the Transfer Portal ... to conference realignments and litigation settlements – in combination, these elements are changing the DNA of college athletics for the generations to come.
- To paraphrase Jeff Bezos, founder and Executive Chairman of Amazon – “never lean away from the future, because the future always wins.”
- In this context, Marshall has leaned in ... charting a course to become the most admired and studied university in the nation ... powered by our strategy - Marshall For All, Marshall Forever!
 - We are committed to being a 21st century prosperity platform that offers an in-demand curriculum ... delivered on-demand with the most contemporary mix of technology and human expertise ... and exemplifying areas of distinctive excellence on a national level.
 - We have set bold goals for our 200th anniversary in 2037:
 - Goals that include placing 100% of our students in a job or continuing education upon graduation, with no

student graduating with student loan debt.

- Growing our research, grants and contracts from \$65M today, to more than \$150M while increasing the number of start-ups in the state by 3X.
 - And increasing our economic impact in West Virginia from what had been a 14X return for every state dollar invested, to a 30X return.
- Our efforts are laser focused on accelerating 5 student-first priorities ...
- To increase access
 - To ensure affordability
 - To grow our support programs
 - To deliver these programs and services on-demand
 - And to enable lifetime achievement.
- We continue to see early indications of positive outcomes, despite the macro-environmental headwinds:
- Our Fall 2024 enrollment is once again on pace to outperform internal projections, building on a strong Fall 2023 that reversed a 13-year enrollment decline.
 - We are admitting our second 100 students into the Marshall For All Program with the promise of no student loan debt, building on last year's successful cohort of students who are proving the success of the program through their academic and civic performance.

- We have seen strong growth in our research, grants and contracts, on pace to exceed our forecasted levels.
 - And our updated economic impact analysis now reflects that for every dollar the state invests in Marshall University, we are now generating an 18X return, up from 14X two years ago.
 - We have leaned into AI with a Presidential Task Force being co-chaired by Dr. Shawn Schulenburg and Professor Bill Gardner, ensuring that we lead the way in learning and applying these tools in the most innovative and constructive manner possible.
 - And our Athletics Department is quickly innovating and scenario planning to ensure Marshall University is positioned to effectively compete and win in whatever version of NCAA Athletics unfolds in the months ahead.
-
- We have been sharing this story with external audiences, including legislative leaders representing the sixteen southern states who attended the recent Southern Legislative Conference at the Greenbrier, to major philanthropic foundations across the country.
 - Our story is resonating and the interest in supporting our journey is increasing.
 - None of this would be possible without the Power of We ...
 - Two years ago, Robin Riner and a dedicated team formed a Shared Governance Task Force to benchmark and propose a shared governance model to unleash the wisdom of our

collective campus, while accelerating our velocity in translating those ideas into impact.

- Those efforts led to a campus that is aligned and hard-at-work to become that demonstration project for the nation.
- Together, we've begun to accelerate our momentum, reduce our structural deficit and reward our employees with pay increases as we strive to deliver on our commitments of a positive financial position with pay levels at market rates by 2027.
- As I remind us in each meeting, we have heavy lifting ahead of us, but it is important to pause and celebrate shining achievements.
 - From the outset ... we knew this is not a turn-around, it is a transformation ...
 - One that we believe, if we execute well, will position Marshall to become an exemplar in higher education ...
 - And in doing so, provide a roadmap to future prosperity for our students, our employees, our communities and for the country.
 - **Marshall For All, Marshall Forever!**
 - And with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my comments.