

Updates from Brevard College



Fall 2018

Dear Tornados,

This is my favorite time of the year. The students are back, there's a bit of fall in the air, and I get to share the good things happening at Brevard College with you, our alumni and friends.

Last week, we welcomed a record 311 first-year students at Convocation and 11 new faculty members. The residence halls are nearly full. For the sixth year in a row, we balanced the budget and kept enrollment stable at or above 700 students. Gifts to the college were historic, including a multi-million dollar unrestricted estate gift from Charles A. Pickelsimer, a former Trustee and friend. The transition to an NCAA Division III school is going well; we wrapped up the "winningest season" overall in a long time.

The successes of the past year mean that we are entering the 2018-19 academic year with a bold commitment to our students to do everything we can to support them to graduation. In the year ahead, we will implement new student success initiatives (BC CARES), and exciting new academic initiatives. These will include intensive learning opportunities similar to the Voice of the Rivers annual expedition. The entire campus is currently engaged in focus groups to update our master plan. The goal is to make our facilities, spaces and places more supportive of the experiential learning that distinguishes BC.

Our college was founded to be the "school of opportunity in the mountains" for students attracted to active, engaged learning inside and outside the classroom. My life's ministry has been to empower people to succeed through education. In the year ahead, the Board of Trustees and I will work to ensure that BC stays relevant for all those students who need, deserve, and benefit from the highly personalized education offered here. We are going to grow enrollment, invest in the campus, and continue to focus our efforts on student success.

In my inauguration remarks in 2012, I compared the challenges of moving us in the right direction to mountain biking. I said that in order to get to that sweet single track with the beautiful views, we have to climb the steep trail. That climb requires determination and focus. You have to be all in. We're not at the top of the climb yet, but we can see it from here. And it's all the more exhilarating because you have come along with us on the journey!

Because of your support, we have been able to accomplish much in a short period of time. Because of your support, Brevard College continues to be committed to an experiential liberal arts education.

Thank you for all you do to support Brevard College, in so many ways.



My life's ministry has been
to empower people to
succeed through education.

David C. Joyce, President

Focus on Student Success: BC CARES

Campuswide Attention to Retention & Engagement Strategies



Dr. Debbie D'Anna, Vice-President for Student Success and Dean of Students, and Brandon Smith, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for Student Success and Associate Professor of Theatre, share their thoughts on BC CARES, an initiative to help BC students thrive. Here, they are enjoying a light moment with Kelsey Kushner '19, in the renovated Learning Commons in the J.A. Jones Library.

Q: What is exciting about BC CARES?

A: Everything! We are committed to helping our students graduate, and have been working with the John Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. BC CARES is a partnership between academic affairs and campus life to create an environment for student success in and out of the classroom. We are focusing on supplemental instruction, targeted use of new technology and social media, outdoor activities, leadership training, and service projects. Our goal at every step of the way is to increase student engagement and enjoyment of the learning process all the way through to graduation.

Q: Who and what are “Success Mentors”?

A: Success Mentors are the main point of contact for all new first-year students. It's like a success coach, checking that new students are not struggling, and guiding them in academic success techniques, time management, financial aid, academic advising, and career exploration.

Q: How does the work study program support student success?

A: Work study is now part of the overall educational experience, and tied to areas of study in a more meaningful way. Over the course of the four years, the work study program will help students acquire important job skills to complement what they learn in the classroom.

Q: Where can students find the help they need?

A: The J.A. Jones Library was recently renovated and now houses a Learning Commons, a user-centered learning lab with a variety of support services. That is where students can find Brandon's office, along with Shirley Arnold, who is the Associate Dean for Student Success and works closely with freshmen and undeclared majors.

Find out more at www.brevard.edu/the-academic-enrichment-center

\$1.36 Million Invested in Campus Renovations!



McLarty-Goodson Hall: \$345,000 in classroom and faculty office upgrades. (Cannon Charitable Interests grants, Charles Pickelsimer estate gift)



Moore Science Building: \$140,000 for faculty offices, new windows, classroom AC. (Trustee gifts)



Paul Porter Center for the Performing Arts: \$420,000 for new roof, HVAC, signage, induction looping. (Porter Family Foundation, Trustee gifts, Lois Gibbs estate gift)



The Villages Residence Halls: \$350,000 for upgraded bathrooms, interior renovations, exterior improvements. (Cannon Charitable Interests grants)



Betty Neale Quad: \$50,000 for gardens, painting, updated signage. (Trustee gifts)



Dunham Hall: \$55,000 for HVAC, induction looping in Ingram Auditorium. (Lois Gibbs estate gift, Norm Witek & Brevard Distance Runners Camp)



Emphasis on Innovative Academic Programs

A National Science Foundation (NSF) grant for \$260,000 is funding the ROVERS (Remotely Operated Vehicles for Engaging and Retaining Students), a partnership between BC and Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI), a 200-acre former NASA tracking station located in Pisgah Forest. BC professors Dr. Mike Castelaz, Dr. Maureen Drinkard and Dr. Jennifer Frick-Ruppert, are organizing the grant.

Students on campus will explore PARI via a remote vehicle, using sensors and Geographic Information Systems to conduct data analysis. Science and math courses will integrate with the ROVERS program so that students can collect and analyze real-time data. Two science students, Peter Trench and Liz Hill, spent this past summer on NSF internships at PARI.

The BC-PARI partnership will create a dynamic classroom environment, promote individual student and faculty research, and provide best practices in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education.

This form of experiential education will improve our learning environment, broaden participation in STEM, and strengthen our students for the future STEM workforce.

*-Dr. Jennifer Frick-Ruppert,
Division Chair of Science and Mathematics*

Two Grants from the Appalachian Colleges Association Strengthen Experiential Initiatives



Dr. Robert Cabin
Professor of Ecology
and Environmental
Studies

With a \$30,000 ACA Sabbatical Fellowship, Dr. Robert Cabin will spend the next year developing BC's new sustainable agriculture and farm program. Working with six leading colleges with similar programs, his research will improve BC's ability to teach, study and solve key real-world problems such as how to produce food in a more sustainable manner. The new farm will likely rise on the far side of the recreational fields on Neely Creek Road, and will complement the new greenhouse currently on campus.

"Burnout" is more than a buzzword for Dr. Megan Keiser, who received a \$15,000 ACA Fellowship to study wellness for teachers in the classroom. To better prepare BC student teachers, Megan will add a module on wellness and self-care to the Teacher Education curriculum to help teacher licensure candidates become resilient and positive forces throughout their careers. As Megan notes in her proposal, "Efforts to develop candidates' capacity to maintain their own wellness will yield successful alums, those that remain employed and remain ambassadors for our small, but mighty Brevard College."



Dr. Megan Keiser
Associate Professor of
Elementary Education

May 2018 Graduates

“We may have walked different paths with different majors, but we have all shared one journey. Brevard has given us all a unique opportunity to learn from experience, which is such an advantage in a world that does not run on standardized testing.”

-Kate Brandhuber '17,
Commencement Address



Photo: Thomas Kennedy '21

Go courageously. Go purposefully. Go gracefully.

Go and be the positive change you wish to see in the world.

-Sharad Creasman '06, Campus Minister, paraphrasing Gandhi at the
2018 Baccalaureate Address

“We believe in you, and we are here to help you to learn how to believe in yourself. That is our mission, to encourage personal growth and inspire artistic, intellectual, and social action...we believe that you can change the world and fight for justice in the world, and we expect that you will.”

-Dr. Scott Sheffield,
Dean of Faculty, 2018 Convocation Address

Entering Class, August 2018



Photo: Thomas Kennedy '21