

Good morning, Bobcats.

I hope that you enjoyed your weekend and that you had the opportunity to stop by campus for some of the festivities.

We hosted a very successful 20th annual Appalachian Festival, which brought together artists and craftspeople in celebration of what makes our region so unique. A special thanks go out to Dr. Kara Rogers Thomas for organizing this family-friendly event that was full of performances, workshops, displays and activities for everyone to enjoy.

We also hosted FSU's Family Fun Day during the football game versus West Liberty. Congratulations to our Bobcats for taking the win 21-7 after scoring 14 points in the fourth quarter to make the team 3-0 on the season. Several of our other athletic teams also made us proud this weekend. Men's soccer won 4-1 against West Liberty; our volleyball team beat Kutztown and Assumption on day one of their tournament in D'Youville; women's rugby boasted their third straight win of the season defeating New Haven 55-34; and women's soccer tied with Wheeling in their weekend match.

We have so much to be proud of at FSU, so let's keep that winning momentum going as we head into Homecoming and Family Weekend next week (Oct. 2-5).

I am so excited for the revival of our Homecoming Parade, which is quickly approaching on October 2 at 6 p.m. on Main Street in Frostburg. This year's theme is "A Community of Treasures," and I am confident that it is sure to be one of the most spirited events of the year! I encourage everyone to come out and show your Bobcat pride as we celebrate our vibrant community.

To date, we have 26 groups registered to participate. Seventeen of those participants include student groups, athletic teams, departments and more ready to represent Bobcat Nation. As I mentioned before, we will award prizes to the top three FSU groups who best reflect the parade theme. Groups will be judged based on their creativity, school spirit and their overall impact on the Frostburg community. Winners will receive \$500, \$300 and \$200, respectively. I can't wait to see them all!

In addition to FSU's participants, we will have representation from several other community partners and organizations, including Rich Godlove for Sheriff, the Roundabout Children's Theatre Tour, the Mini Miners cheerleaders and Gems, Miss Maryland Volunteer, the Mount Savage and Frostburg Volunteer Fire Departments and Somerset Trust Company.

Registration will remain open until the end of the day today in case anyone else would like to join the fun!

I also have the distinct honor and privilege of riding in a car driven by Allegany College of Maryland's newest president, David Jones, and will be joined by the mayor of Frostburg, Todd Logsdon, as well. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase our strong and collective community partnerships.

On behalf of the entire Frostburg community, I want to thank Nicole Lewis (formerly Nicole Higgins – congratulations on your recent nuptials!) and her committee for their incredible work in organizing this year's parade. Events like this don't happen without countless hours of behind-the-scenes effort. I am also grateful for the tremendous support we received from the City of Frostburg and their commitment to making the Frostburg Homecoming Parade a success.

In closing, I look forward to our community coming together to celebrate tradition. I am certain it will be a wonderful event that brings joy, unity and a true sense of pride to everyone who attends.

With FSU pride,

Darlene Brannigan Smith, PhD
Interim President