

Here is our second vice presidential update, this one from Dr. Jeff Graham, interim VP for Student Affairs:

Oct. 21, 2019

Students, Colleagues & Friends,

Good morning. It is my pleasure to provide a few updates on behalf of President Nowaczyk regarding the [Division of Student Affairs](#). During the President's State of the University address in early September, I was able to articulate five priorities related to student services and student engagement.

1. **Career Readiness:** Over the summer, we were able to realign University resources by transitioning Clarissa Lang from Leadership Programs into the role of Director of Career Readiness in the [Career & Professional Development Center](#). In this role, she will join Amy Shimko and Dr. Robbie Cordle in supporting our commitment to assist students in obtaining career competencies, developing professionally, acquiring internships, and establishing career connections. So far this semester, we have launched [Handshake](#), our new student/employer relationship management system that provides students with access to thousands of potential employers, and have created an easy access system for faculty to [Report an Internship](#) that will allow us to collect institutional data on students participating in internships, field placements, clinical experiences, or student teaching. Additionally, we were able to welcome alumni speakers back to campus and recognize Interns of the Year and the Mentor of Year at the CareerExpo during Homecoming, before connecting students with employers at the fall Career, Internship, and Graduate Fair. As we continue to align our work with the University's strategic plan, we will be partnering with Academic Affairs in delivering an *Introduction to Career and Professional Development* one-credit course (LBST 201) designed for second-year students. Beginning in the spring semester, the [Career & Professional Development Center](#) will also launch a Career Readiness credential for students to assist in their workforce preparation.
2. **Cultural Inclusion:** The University Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion enters their first full year of operations under the leadership of Dr. Jennifer Earles and Robin Wynder. To support their efforts, Student Affairs has considerably increased funding for initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across campus. The Council recently announced two significant opportunities to promote collaborative relationships, including a Call for Programs to be funded through approval of mini-grants that support the mission of the Council, and a Call for Proposals to assist in the planning and redesign of the Lincoln School into a campus Multi-Cultural Center. To further support this endeavor, Student Affairs has hired an architect to begin the design of an inclusive courtyard in the front of the building that will serve to welcome students into the space and provide opportunities for outdoor connections among people. Additionally, Student Affairs has been able to demonstrate our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by recently participating in the National Coming Out Day

walk with our friends in Spectrum and through supporting engaging programs at the Social Justice Retreat sponsored by the [Center for Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#).

3. **Residential Facilities:** Student Affairs continues to collaborate with Administration and Finance, and specifically our incredible Physical Plant team, to create the best possible living environments for students. We have identified improving the physical aesthetics of our 11 residence halls as an important component of attracting students to our beautiful campus. Along with the \$42.9 million, 320-bed new residence hall that will be open for the fall 2020 semester, President Nowaczyk has committed \$7.5 million in renovations since 2017 to refurbish Annapolis and Cumberland Halls, along with numerous projects in several other residence halls on campus. Next year, we are planning to close Frederick Hall for a significant renovation, to be followed by Westminster Hall in the fall of 2021. These improvements will continue to enhance the student experience at Frostburg. Throughout the next year, the [Residence Life Office](#) will be focusing on developing living/learning communities in collaboration with academic departments and other areas of interest, including Greek housing.
4. **Student Engagement:** Student Affairs has demonstrated our commitment to engage students in campus activities throughout the semester as evidenced by the robust number of opportunities promoted by [Student & Community Involvement](#). The Food Pantry continues to be popular among students with hours of operation from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. The [Cultural Events Series](#) hosted country music artist Jo Dee Messina last Saturday and [Student Activities](#) was able to quickly sell out tickets for our Nov. 1 concert featuring rap music artist Megan Thee Stallion. Students will also have the opportunity to take advantage of a Late@Lane Halloween party on Friday, Oct. 25. This has been our inaugural semester of first-year recruitment for [Greek Life](#), which has enabled our fraternities and sororities to engage students in the campus culture during their first semester. This endeavor has proved to be promising as we have placed an emphasis on getting students involved with campus organizations as a retention strategy. [Civic Engagement](#) continues to be important to our students as evidenced by the popularity of our Town Hall series and New York Times Talks in collaboration with the [Beall Institute for Public Affairs](#). Additionally, students seeking to volunteer will be provided with the opportunity to apply for a spot on our Alternative Spring Break trip to Houston next semester.
5. **Student Well-being:** According to the NASPA 2019 Vice President for Student Affairs census survey, mental health concerns were ranked as the number one most pressing issue for colleges and universities. Similar to many institutions of higher education across the nation, Frostburg State University will continue to focus efforts and resources to address the health and well-being of our students. The Division of Student Affairs has recently been able to realign resources to focus on national best-practices for university counseling centers that include partnerships with external healthcare experts. This semester, the [Counseling Center](#) has been able to develop a clinical management contract with Western Maryland Health System, which allows us to more readily address emergent concerns of students, triage referrals to best serve a variety of student needs, avoid situations involving wait-lists, make appropriate level-of-care

referrals, create efficiencies in our ability to provide excellent services, and add clinical support to our dedicated team of professionals. We are very pleased with our new relationship with Western Maryland Health System and look forward to the quality of care that will result from this partnership.

Our professional staff members in [Student Affairs](#) stand ready to assist in the curricular and co-curricular success of our students. We remain steadfast in our commitment to provide students with exceptional student services and engaging experiences that complement our common educational mission. My very best to you,

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