Thanksgiving with the Herd: How the University provides for students during break

By BRIANNA MILLER
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Although most students are relaxing, Marshall University stays open during fall and Thanksgiving break, providing food, shelter and other necessities to students who need it most.

"We also try to highlight the athletic events that were happening during the weekend," Marcie Simms, director of student affairs, said. "Just this weekend, we had free bags of food the SGA sponsored over the weekend."

Simms also said Marshall hosts events like Snacks With Simms and Pop Up Pantry to help feed hungry students.

"I get recommendations during these types of face-to-face events, so if they're (students) feeling like they've been overlooked and they want to give us a recommendation…" Simms said. "I always tell students just to let us know, and maybe if it's something that we're not aware of, we'll provide for them, and we usually find a way."

Food is not the only resource available to students during any break.

Simms also said that housing is free for students who have nowhere else to stay.

"For campus housing, they (housing staff) will ask for students to complete a break form," Simms said. "That's really for safety reasons so we know who's in the building."

When it comes to planning for breaks, Brad Smith, Marshall University president, said that they plan up to a year in advance.

"The good news about an academic calendar is that it's sort of rinse, lather and repeat," President Smith said. "We have our historical approaches, and then we always do something called a hot wash, which is after every one of those breaks, we get together and say what worked well and what could've been better."

President Smith also said that during the Thanksgiving break, staff come together and cook meals for students.

"I think it's a very high student ratio, where our words and our actions match," President Smith said. "We're committed to the students. We're committed to make sure they have food, that they have housing, that they have activities, that they have learning experiences, that they have social experiences, and so our commitment to keeping things open, even during the break and making sure those who don't go home have a place to stay and have access to food."

Simms and President Smith both said that their number one commitment is to the students, and they're always open to expanding and brainstorming ways to make breaks better for students.

"I think we consider this a calling," Simms said. "Someone helped us along the way. We chose this profession, and oftentimes it's because of something that Marshall University did for us."

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Even though most students head home for Thanksgiving, there are still oppurtunities for students who stay on campus. (Caitlin Miller/The Parthenon)

SGA Supreme Court Returns

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After a year without a Marshall Student Government Supreme Court, five new justices were appointed for the upcoming year.

In Article 5 of the SGA constitution, it is stated that the Supreme Court is to "consider the actions of the Student Government Association Legislative Branch, consider the actions of the Student Government Association Executive Branch and uphold or strike down the actions of either branch, in part or in whole, based on the actions' constitutionality and relation to relevant governing documents, by a simple majority vote."

These responsibilities are very important to two of the recently appointed Justices, Kyndall Perry and Jayln Armstrong.

SGA member Kyndall Perry said the Supreme Court's main interest is looking out for the students.

"The Supreme Court takes every single resolution and compares it to the governing bylaws and constitution and ensures that we're following that to best serve the student body," Perry said.

In the same vein, Armstrong said she wants to make sure the student body is being accurately and fairly represented, and with the Supreme Court having the power to serve as a conduct board for the organization, that can be promised.

Appointed by student body president, Alissa Davis, both Justices have an extensive history serving in SGA.

Serving as a Justice during the Belville-Waller administration, Armstrong said she thinks that her experience makes her qualified for the position.

"I have been involved in SGA for a considerable amount of time. I am a 5th-year senior, and I joined in 2022 when I was a freshman. So, I've been around," Armstrong said. "I've seen various candidacies come through. I've been here since before even our current president was in SGA. So, I have a long-running presence within student government here. I think my experience here on campus really qualifies me."

Like Armstrong, Perry said she has experience in Student Government, primarily serving on the Judiciary Committee.

"I feel like serving as Parliamentarian on the Judiciary Committee set me up a lot for this, because the Judiciary Committee is not typical, like the other committees," Perry said. "It reviews more of the nitty-gritty, so to speak. It's a lot of constitutionality things. It's how we get our ad hoc committees, so I feel like that was kind of a setup for the Supreme Court."

Both Justices said they are happy about the return of the court and Judicial representation to be brought back to the student body.

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