



New Student Body President, Vice President Elected

D.J. Casto and Shannon Logan are WVU's new Student Government Association president and vice president, respectively. More than 6,000 students cast their vote online during February elections.



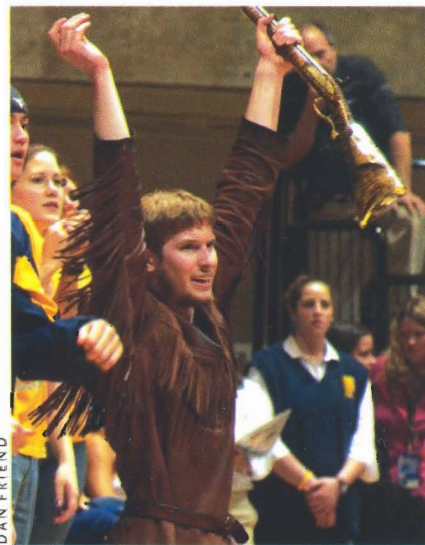
Shannon Logan and D.J. Casto

Casto, a senior accounting major from Clarksburg, was the 2004-05 SGA vice president and is a former SGA Board of Governors member.

Logan, a first-year graduate student in journalism from Baden, Pennsylvania, has two years of BOG experience.

Fincham Is Mountaineer Mascot Again

Petersburg native Derek Fincham will don his coonskin cap for another year as the Mountaineer mascot. The selection committee made the announcement



Derek Fincham

before a crowded Coliseum during Mountaineer Parents Club Winter Weekend.

"I have lived my whole life in this great state, and I have always been proud to be a Mountaineer," Fincham wrote in his application. "I come from a family that has deep roots and love for this state, and this love runs as deep as the dark coal that has made West Virginia famous."

The senior religious studies major made more than 150 appearances as the 2004-05 mascot.

Libraries Answering Online Inquiries

WVU Libraries are among 31 institutions across the nation participating in a pilot program to provide virtual reference services to people seeking government information.

The Government Information Online service allows researchers to go online and ask questions or seek information about state and federal government. Patrons access the service through a link on the WVU Libraries Web page (www.libraries.wvu.edu) or directly at <http://govtinfo.org>. From this site users can e-mail a question or engage in a real-time chat session with a librarian.

"More and more citizens are seeking information about government programs, services, and policies, and this virtual reference service makes it easy for Internet users to get that information quickly from qualified reference specialists all over America," said Penny Pugh, head reference librarian at the Downtown Campus Library.

If the pilot program is successful, Pugh said the library will consider becoming part of a permanent virtual government information reference service.

New Honors Experience

High-achieving freshmen have swelled the roster of the WVU Honors Program. During fall 2004, a total of 354 entering first-year students were admitted, bringing the total number of Honors students to 1,162, up from 918 last year.

In response to the growing enrollment, the Honors Program has developed innovative, increasingly challenging curriculum tracks. Under the new guidelines, students may choose from one of two paths: the Professional Scholar track provides an enhanced experience in a professional curriculum while the 21st Century Scholar track offers integrated studies courses and a third-year research methods class.

"The goal is to go beyond the experience in the major," Director and Eberly Family Professor Keith Garbutt said. "We are developing new, integrated courses of study that examine a whole range of a topic. Students would work primarily on a problem-based learning approach, taking a real-life problem and analyzing approaches to this issue."

Honors students will also be required to complete a final-year thesis, similar to a graduate thesis, as part of the capstone experience.

Ag Sciences Expansion Under Way

A new two-story, 37,500-square-foot building will house the plant pathology and environmental microbiology programs in the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Consumer Sciences. The \$9.5 million facility will contain research and teaching laboratories, a small greenhouse, a lecture hall, offices, and unfinished shell space for future expansion. It will be built on the south side of the Agricultural Sciences Building on the Evansdale campus.

"The purpose of this project is to relocate faculty and staff in our plant pathology and environmental microbiology program from Brooks Hall on the downtown campus to the Evansdale campus," said Cameron Hackney, dean of the WVU Davis College.

Over 1,600 Attend Mountaineer Parents Club Winter Weekend

From exercising at the Student Recreation Center to sampling WVU All Night activities in the Mountainlair,

