



*the Inauguration of*  
*Dr. Michael K. Davis*

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY  
PRESIDENT



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*Dr. Michael K. Davis*

TWENTY-SEVENTH PRESIDENT  
FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2024

4 P.M.

FALCON CENTER  
FAIRMONT, WEST VIRGINIA

*Like most new campus leaders, I dedicated time in my first months at Fairmont State University listening to different constituencies. The more I listened, the more I became convinced that we have something really special here.*

*Fairmont State University is a great place to learn, to work, and to call home. I am convinced that Fairmont State University can be, and will be, the best regional university in West Virginia.*



## *Dr. Michael K. Davis*

### FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Dr. Michael K. Davis is the 27th President of Fairmont State University.

Prior to assuming the leadership of Fairmont State, Dr. Davis served as Chief of Staff at James Madison University. In that role, he oversaw presidential priorities and directed matters of institutional importance, including strategic planning, institutional research, and accreditation. Dr. Davis was also regularly involved in external relations, strategic communication, alumni engagement, advancement, diversity and inclusion, and fiscal management.

Previously, Dr. Davis served as a faculty member and Director of Debate in James Madison's School of Communication Studies. There, he leveraged alumni support and external grants to elevate the Madison Debate Society to national renown. Earlier in his career, Dr. Davis taught communication studies and coached debate at Georgia State University, University of Georgia, University of Rochester, University of Louisville, Mercer University, and Syracuse University.

President Davis earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies and a Graduate Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies

from the University of Georgia. He also holds a Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication and Rhetorical Studies from Syracuse University. His academic research interests include women in the Civil Rights Movement, debate pedagogy, presidential rhetoric, and argumentation and advocacy.

President Davis' leadership approach grew from, and is grounded in, his commitment to students. This focus is rooted in his personal experience as a first-generation and low-income college student. Dr. Davis credits his completion of undergraduate studies to his advocates – people who treated him like a person, not a number, and who regularly reminded him of his potential.

President Davis believes that higher education is fueled by relationships. His interactions with students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, elected officials, and community members promote collaboration, foster innovation, and help make Fairmont State University a great place to learn, to work, and to call home.

# Program

## PRELUDE

Dance of the Shadows ..... Adrian Sims

Southern Hymn ..... Samuel Hazo

Sòlas Ané (Yesterday's Joy) ..... Samuel Hazo

Fairmont State University Wind Ensemble  
**Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Conductor**

## WELCOME

Dr. Dianna Phillips  
**Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs**

## PROCESSIONAL

Fanfare and Processional ..... James Barnes (arr. Branchfield)

Fairmont State University Wind Ensemble  
**Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Conductor**

*Please stand, if you are able, and remain standing through  
the National Anthem*

## POSTING OF THE COLORS

Fairmont State University Cadets of the West Virginia University  
Army and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps

## THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Star-Spangled Banner ..... Francis Scott Key (arr. Story)  
Soloist Franky Satterfield  
**Theatre; Senior**

Accompanied by the Fairmont State University Wind Ensemble  
**Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Conductor**

## GREETINGS

*From the West Virginia House of Delegates*

Joey Garcia  
**West Virginia State Delegate, District 76**

*From the West Virginia Senate*

Ben Queen  
**West Virginia State Senator, District 12**

*From Pierpont Community and Technical College*

Dr. Milan Hayward  
**President of Pierpont Community and Technical College**

## MUSICAL SELECTIONS

A Million Dreams ..... Benj Pasek and Justin Paul

Fairmont State University Collegiate Singers  
**John Morrison, Director and Accompanist**

I Sing Because I'm Happy ..... Civilla D. Martin and  
Charles H. Gabriel (arr. Paden)

Fairmont State University Collegiate Singers & Community Choir  
**John Morrison, Director and Accompanist**

## GREETINGS

*From the Fairmont State Foundation*

Dr. Anne Bolyard  
**President of the Fairmont State Foundation**

*From the Fairmont State Alumni Association*

Nick Fantasia  
**President of the Fairmont State Alumni Association**

*From the Fairmont State Athletic Association*

Craig Jennings  
**President of the Fairmont State Athletic Association**

## MUSICAL SELECTION

Falcon Fanfare ..... Brian Balmages

Fairmont State University Wind Ensemble  
**Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Conductor**

## GREETINGS

*From the Student Body*

Ashton Louden  
**President of the Student Government Association**

*From the Staff*

Spencer Flanagan, M.Ed.  
**Chair of the Staff Council**

*From the Faculty*

Dr. Robert J. Niichel  
**President of Faculty Senate**

## MUSICAL SELECTION

We Belong ..... Karen Marrolli

Fairmont State University Collegiate Singers & Community Choir  
**John Morrison, Director and Accompanist**

# Program

## INTRODUCTION

Xaiver Williams  
*James Madison University Class of 2023 (Bachelor of Music)*  
*University of Georgia Graduate Student (Master of Education)*

## INVESTITURE

Rusty Hutson  
*Chair of the Fairmont State University Board of Governors*

*Presentation of the Presidential Chain of Office*  
*Presentation of the Ceremonial Mace*  
*Conferral of Presidential Authority*

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Dr. Michael K. Davis  
*President of Fairmont State University*

## MUSICAL SELECTIONS

Fairmont State Fight Song .....Allard (arr. Green)  
Fairmont State University Wind Ensemble  
*Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Conductor*

Alma Mater ..... John Thomas Evans (Class of 1936)  
Fairmont State University Collegiate Singers and Community Choir  
*John Morrison, Director and Accompanist*

## RECESSIONAL

Fanfare and Processional .....James Barnes  
(arr. Branchfield)  
Fairmont State University Wind Ensemble  
*Dr. Alyssa Schwartz, Conductor*

*At the conclusion of today's ceremony, you may join the recessional, where you can personally congratulate and have your photo taken with President Davis.*

# Fight Song

Fairmont State College, we love you,  
And to your colors, we'll e'er be true,  
Your colors stand for fighting spirit,  
And this is what they mean,  
Rah Rah for Fairmont College  
Maroon the color of fighters,  
White is for sports pure and clean,  
We fight to win, and we love our fellows,  
Fairmont State College team.

# Alma Mater

Among the hills of time there stands,  
A school so fair.  
As pure as the sky above,  
And all the stars up there.  
And when we bow to thee,  
Dear Fairmont State our hearts with rapture thrill.  
So here's to the school we love,  
The college on the hill.

## *Invited Delegates*

1785 – University of Georgia  
1798 – University of Louisville  
1822 – Notre Dame College  
1833 – Mercer University  
1837 – Marshall University  
1837 – West Liberty University  
1840 – Bethany College  
1842 – Roanoke College  
1842 – Mary Baldwin University  
1850 – University of Rochester  
1867 – West Virginia University  
1869 – Southern Illinois University  
1870 – Syracuse University  
1871 – Shepherd University  
1872 – Concord University  
1872 – Glenville State University  
1873 – North Georgia University  
1888 – University of Charleston  
1888 – Salem University  
1890 – West Virginia Wesleyan College  
1891 – West Virginia State University  
1895 – Bluefield State University  
1895 – West Virginia University Institute of Technology  
1901 – Potomac State College of West Virginia University  
1902 – Frostburg State University  
1904 – Davis & Elkins College  
1908 – James Madison University  
1913 – Georgia State University  
1917 – Eastern Mennonite University  
1933 – North Idaho College  
1936 – Huntington Junior College  
1950 – Appalachian Bible College  
1953 – BridgeValley Community and Technical College  
1954 – Wheeling University  
1957 – Foothill College  
1960 – Christopher Newport University  
1961 – West Virginia University at Parkersburg  
1961 – Virginia Wesleyan University  
1971 – Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College  
1972 – West Virginia Northern Community College  
1972 – West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine  
1974 – Blue Ridge Community and Technical College  
1974 – Pierpont Community and Technical College  
1975 – Mountwest Community and Technical College  
1983 – Catholic Distance University  
1983 – Valley College  
1991 – American Public University System  
1999 – Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College  
2003 – Future Generations University  
2003 – New River Community and Technical College

## *Fairmont State University Board of Governors*

Rusty Hutson Jr., <b>Chair</b>	Jason Henderson	Kevin Rogers
David Goldberg, <b>Vice Chair</b>	Jennifer Kinty	Jon Dodds, <b>Staff Representative</b>
Jason Pizatella, <b>Secretary</b>	Deborah Prezioso	Gina Fantasia, <b>Faculty Representative</b>
Wendy Adkins	Jay Puccio	Riley Neal, <b>Student Representative</b>

## *West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission*

Andrew Payne III, <b>Chair</b>	James Dailey	Michele Blatt, <b>Ex-Officio,</b>
Michael Farrell, Esq., <b>Vice Chair</b>	Jim Denova	<b>State Superintendent of Schools</b>
Diana Lewis Jackson, <b>Secretary</b>	E. Gail Pitchford	Christina Cameron, <b>Ex-Officio,</b>
		<b>Chair of the West Virginia Council for</b>
		<b>Community and Technical College Education</b>

## *Inauguration Committee*

Brian Selmeski, <b>Co-chair</b>	Colton Griffin	Robert Niichel
Tiffany Raschella, <b>Co-chair</b>	Cheryl Lewis	Justin Rader
Anne Bolyard	Ashton Loudon	Jennie Rowand
Nick Fantasia	James McGahan III	Jessie Sharps
Spencer Flanagan	Lenora Montgomery	

# *Past Principals & Presidents*

## OF FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

### PRINCIPALS

1865-1867 — John N. Boyd  
1867-1869 — J. C. Linninger  
1869-1870 — William Ryland White  
1870-1871 — J. C. Gilchrist  
1871-1878 — James G. Blair  
1879-1882 — M. Elizabeth Dickey-Flemming  
1883-1889 — Conrad A. Sipe  
1890-1891 — John H. Roemer  
1891-1892 — J. C. Gwynn  
1892-1901 — J. Walter Barnes  
1901-1902 — Marcus M. Ross  
1903-1905 — W. L. McCowan  
1905-1907 — Ulysses S. Fleming

### PRESIDENTS

1907-1910 — Charles J. C. Bennett  
1910-1915 — O. I. Woodley  
1915-1945 — Joseph Rosier  
1945-1952 — George W. Hand  
1952-1959 — John W. Pence  
1960-1973 — Eston K. Feaster  
1973-1988 — Wendell G. Hardway  
1988-1996 — Robert J. Dillman  
1996-2000 — Janet Dudley-Eshbach  
2001-2008 — Daniel J. Bradley  
2009-2011 — Thomas L. Krepel  
2012-2017 — Maria C. Rose  
2018-2022 — Mirta M. Martin

# *History*

## OF FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

Fairmont State University's roots reach back to the birth of public education in West Virginia. The state's first private teacher's school, the West Virginia Normal School at Fairmont, was established by John N. Boyd in 1865. On February 27, 1867, the school became a public state institution.

Over the intervening years, the University's name has changed – to Fairmont State Normal School in the 1870s, to Fairmont State Teachers College in 1931, to Fairmont State College in 1944, and finally to Fairmont State University in 2004 – reflecting the ongoing expansion of academic offerings. Today Fairmont State delivers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs of study.

To accommodate its growth, the University has also changed locations. Originally housed in the basement of the Methodist Protestant Church in Fairmont, construction began on a brick building on the northwest corner of Adams and Quincy Streets in 1867. In 1893, Fairmont State Normal School moved into a new building on Second Street and Fairmont Avenue. In early 1917, the school moved to the building today called Hardway Hall, which sits atop a hill overlooking Locust Avenue.

The University's 120-acre main campus now includes dozens of buildings, while retaining its cozy, tree-filled, hilltop atmosphere. Fairmont State also has a presence in Harrison County, operating the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center in Bridgeport.

From its initial enrollment of 30 students, Fairmont State has grown to become the state's third largest public university, with roughly 3,000 students. What is more, the University has the highest percentage of native West Virginian students in the state.

What has remained constant is the University's impact; for nearly 160 years, Fairmont State has transformed the lives of students and served as a cornerstone for the communities of North Central West Virginia. Today, Fairmont State University has an alumni network of more than 40,000 Falcons across the state and around the world.



## *Gonfaloniers*

Gonfalons are long banners suspended from a crossbar. The name derives from medieval Italy, where gonfaloni was the name given to community meetings in Florence. Each neighborhood had its own flag and coat of arms; the word gonfalon eventually came to be associated with the flag.

At Fairmont State University, each of the five colleges has a gonfalon and is carried by a gonfaloniere ahead of the college's faculty when processing.

College of Business & Aviation  
***Avary King***  
***Business Administration; Senior***

College of Education, Health & Human Performance  
***Cameron Kisamore***  
***Physical Education; Junior***

College of Liberal Arts  
***Logan Summerlin***  
***English; Senior***

College of Nursing  
***Zachary Shreves***  
***Nursing; Senior***

College of Science & Technology  
***Hannah Sprout***  
***Studio Art & Psychology; Senior***

## *Academic Regalia*

The academic apparel, or regalia, worn at commencement and other ceremonies has its origins in the 12th and 13th centuries when scholars at European universities wore gowns and hoods as their daily attire. The long gowns may have been necessary for warmth in unheated buildings. The American fashion of academic caps and gowns derives from the regalia worn at Oxford University.

The bachelor's gown is traditionally distinguished by its long-pointed sleeves. The master's gown has oblong sleeves from which the forearm protrudes through a slit near the elbow. The doctor's gown has rounded sleeves, velvet panels around the neck and down the front of the gown, as well as three velvet bars on the sleeves. On presidential gowns, four velvet bars adorn the sleeves. The colors of doctor's gowns and velvet trim may represent the colors of that scholar's alma mater and field of study.

Hoods are typically worn with master's and doctor's gowns. Originally, the hood was used as a cowl, cape, and when hung from the shoulder, a sack to collect alms. It is said that when large wigs were in fashion, the cap section of the hood then fell back clear of the wig. This hood style continues today, with the narrow end of the hood shaped as a neckband connecting the two halves of the cape.

Like gowns, hoods differ for degrees. The doctor's hood is the longest and fullest. It is usually bordered with velvet, the color of which indicates the kind of degree, and lined with silk in the colors of the institution that granted the degree or representing the scholar's field of study.

The traditional rule is that a candidate for a degree should not wear that degree's hood until it is conferred.



## *The Presidential Chain of Office*

The Presidential Chain of Office is bestowed upon each president by Fairmont State University's Board of Governors. As part of today's investiture of President Michael K. Davis, a ceremonial chain was cast to encircle the presidential medallion.

The university's seal is the centerpiece of the chain and highlights Fairmont State University's core values of scholarship, opportunity, achievement, and responsibility. These four core values are also represented as links on the chain by four engraved falcon medallions. Two maroon gems bear witness

to the University's primary color. Two tree medallions symbolize the University as the trunk; faculty, staff, and administration as the branches; and the students and alumni as the leaves.

The Presidential Chain of Office is used in conjunction with all ceremonial academic events and is worn any time the president of the university wears academic regalia. It is regarded as part of the enduring legacy and permanent insignia of office.

## *The Falcon Mascot*

As the Fighting Teachers of Fairmont State Teachers College faded away in 1943 and the new Fairmont State College arose, students were left without a mascot. Just three years prior, the Fighting Teacher made his first appearance dressed in a long-tailed coat, wire-framed glasses, and carrying a pile of books.

The 1940s provided an unusual campus environment with many men away fighting in World War II. With the end of the war in 1945 and the signing of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, students began returning to campus in large numbers. By 1947, campus was booming again. As athletic schedules were set and events were planned, the brothers of Tau Beta Iota fraternity saw the lack of a Fairmont State College mascot as an opportunity to "hatch" a plan.

On Saturday, September 27, 1947, pedestrians in downtown Fairmont were greeted by an unusual sight – a truck driving around town with an "egg" in the bed and signs advertising that evening's football game against Glenville State. Hours later, during halftime, the mascot's egg was "hatched", and the Falcon made his first appearance.

Robert Barrett Hall (1923-1995) served as the first Falcon, and 77 years later the Falcon spirit is still alive. Today, the Fighting Falcon stands as a symbol of the spirit of Fairmont State University. From the bravery of starting a new educational journey, to the determination of finishing a degree, to the foresight of what career path to choose, Fairmont State University Falcons soar.

## *The Ceremonial Mace*

The mace was a formidable weapon in medieval times. However, since the 16th century in England and America it has become a symbol of office, order, and governance.

In higher education institutions, the mace is a symbol of the legal and chartered authority of the President, to whom the Board of Governors has delegated authority. It is a ceremonial staff, bearing engraved images and words that represent distinguishing characteristics of the institution.

Fairmont State University's mace was crafted from native cherry wood and bears an early seal of the University. This seal portrays one of the sturdy stone columns of Hardway Hall, a symbol of our strength and endurance, and a reminder of how far we have come since our founding in 1865.

During the processional, the ceremonial mace is carried by the President of the Faculty Senate.

## *The University Seal*

The University Seal is an expression of our identity and is used when marking formal ceremonies, such as inaugurations and commencements, as well as on documents of institutional and legal importance, such as diplomas, transcripts, and ceremonial programs.

Fairmont State University's seal includes iconography that represents our identity and history. The torch symbolizes our search for enlightenment through education. The columns of Hardway Hall – the first building on the current campus – represent our institutional heritage and long-standing commitment to education.

Our values are prominent in the center of the seal, and represent every Falcon's ability to **SOAR**:

**SCHOLARSHIP** — To celebrate the joy and wonder of discovery.

**OPPORTUNITY** — To grow, learn, engage, and contribute.

**ACHIEVEMENT** — To reach personal and community goals.

**RESPONSIBILITY** — To fulfill obligations to ourselves, the learning community, our society, and the future.

# A GREAT PLACE

TO LEARN • TO WORK • TO CALL HOME





1201 Locust Avenue | Fairmont, West Virginia 26554 | [FAIRMONTSTATE.edu](http://FAIRMONTSTATE.edu)