



December 16, 2015

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Since joining the State family in July 2012, I have witnessed, time and again, the heart and strength of West Virginia State University and the entire campus community. When my family and I arrived in Institute, we experienced an immediate sense of support as the campus community dedicated itself to moving West Virginia State University forward with a focus on excellence, accountability, and student-centeredness. The level of passion demonstrated by the campus and our sense of belonging to the community have grown dramatically in recent years. For that, my wife Marisela and I will be forever grateful to each and every one of you and consider West Virginia and the Kanawha Valley our adopted home.

Pending a forthcoming public announcement, I will be transitioning to a new role at Radford University as the 7th President effective July 1, 2016; however, my family and I will forever remain a part of the State family, and we will take a piece of West Virginia State University with us. We will never forget the love and support shown to us or the wonderful experiences and memories that have occurred on this beautiful campus. We are not only leaving a University, but a community of friends and loved ones who have embraced us in ways we never imagined possible.

Before departing the Kanawha Valley following the Spring 2016 semester, I will take every opportunity to pay tribute to those who have worked so tirelessly to improve the University and provide increased programs and services for our students, as well as our community. Without question, the West Virginia State University Board of Governors is comprised of a dedicated group of passionate leaders who are well aware of the path forward and have the determination to empower the campus community to pursue our goals each and every day. Marisela and I will be forever indebted to the Board of Governors, past and present members, for providing us with an opportunity to serve West Virginia State University, the local community, and the State of West Virginia!

Additionally, the daily operation of the University is guided by an incredible senior leadership team with unwavering support from passionate students, outstanding faculty, and dedicated staff, who have my everlasting appreciation and deepest respect for their individual and collective efforts to advance the University. Their ability to lead the campus is strengthened by the dedication of so many wonderful University supporters, including the Foundation Board of Directors, the Campaign Steering Committee, and the National Alumni Association, just to name a few. These individuals give of their time, talent, and treasure in the pursuit of a better tomorrow for all Yellow Jackets.

The University has also greatly benefited from the advice, guidance, and support of so many state and elected officials. To the West Virginia Legislature, the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, the Kanawha County Commission, and so many others, I will forever remember your passion for creating access and opportunity for our students, while strengthening local communities and our Great State!

Since joining the State family, Marisela and I have experienced excitement and growth within our own family. Shortly after arriving at the University, we welcomed twins Catalina and Cruz into our lives and into the hearts of so many of you. Catalina and Cruz spoke their first words here. They took their first steps right here on this campus. Our sense of belonging and closeness to West Virginia State University and the entire campus community will be carried with us, in our hearts and minds, throughout our lives.

I remain fully dedicated to the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends that make this University so very special. I am committed to working with the Board of Governors and University leaders on a transition plan. Furthermore, I pledge to work diligently over the next six months to continue our forward momentum as a State family. Again, Marisela and I appreciate the opportunity to serve as your President and First Lady.

My deepest gratitude,



Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.
President



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