

**Marshall University Alumni Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 11, 2021**

I. Call to Order & Welcome

President Mikala Shremshock called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

II. Invited Speakers

- Dr. Montserrat Miller – Executive Director of John Deaver Drinko Academy
 - Graduate of Marshall with bachelor's and Master's degrees; Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University; 5th generation in her family to be a Marshall grad. FYI – this is NOT the Drinko library (a widely held misconception). First project of the Drinko Academy was to foster better citizen understanding of how the U.S. Constitution was written and ratified in order to encourage our will to collectively participate as engaged and informed voters. The second objective was to create a body of Distinguished Drinko Fellows comprised of the most accomplished members of the Marshall University faculty. The Academy is committed to bipartisanship and the optimism that John and Libby Drinko exemplified in their philanthropy. Among the major projects of the Drinko Academy have been to coordinate fundraising for the Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy and the Dr. Carter G Woodson Lyceum.
 - Drinko Academy Purpose: To counter political polarization and cynicism by working to advance civic literacy and democratic engagement.
 - Drinko Academy Vision: The Drinko Academy fosters a vibrant, participatory, diverse, and inclusive civic culture.
 - Drinko Academy Mission: The Drinko Academy offers support to Marshall University's academic programs. It encourages initiatives that engender public commitment to civic literacy and community engagement as a means of strengthening our democracy. The Academy's activities exemplify how free speech, mutual respect, intellectual integrity, peer-reviewed scholarly research, and original creative expression enrich our country and our culture.
 - Update on current activities of the Academy include:
 - COVID has had a major effect on how the Academy has operated – fall semester spent outside Student Center talking to students and sharing information on voter registration, voting strategies, etc in a non-partisan manner. Spoke to more than 1500 students individually. They were one of the faces of the university that students could identify with. Largest voter registration MU has ever undertaken. Designated as a "Voter-Friendly Campus" – a great distinction for Marshall.
 - Responsible for celebrating Constitution Day, which is a federal mandate for being eligible for federal contracts, grants and student loans. Had a huge incentive this year to promote a better understanding of the Constitution. Seriously committed to non-partisanship. Their literature was from the National Constitution Center. Prepared a version of the U.S. Constitution that is completely non-partisan to distribute to students.

- Drinko Academy coordinated a year-long celebration of women's right to vote. Final women's rights parade was a tremendous success.
- Civil discourse initiative going on currently to help students learn to speak to others with civility and understanding.
- New national society of ACTA scholars. 100 students currently identified for induction into this society. Marshall is third school in the country to join this elite society. Baylor and Hampton Sydney were the first, but Marshall has the largest student involvement. Students have gone above and beyond to prepare themselves for active involvement as citizens.
- Many other initiatives being promoted from the Academy as well.
- Visit <https://www.marshall.edu/drinko/> website for more information. You may also contact Dr. Miller at millerm@marshall.edu.
- Max Lederer asked how alumni who are not in the Huntington area can get involved in activities?
 - All alumni are welcome to participate in any activities whether virtually or in-person.
 - Drinko academy will try to send out notices to alumni about some of the events, but please refer to the website for more information.
- Coach Huff unable to attend meeting today due to schedule changes and has been rescheduled for May meeting. Please send any welcome greetings to the staff to send to Coach Huff.

III. MUAA General Business

- Minutes Review
 - Janie McDaniel: January minutes are available on the Herd Alum website: <https://www.herdalum.com/monthly-board-calls>
 - Updated By-laws are posted on <https://www.herdalum.com/welcome-board-members> under Board Bylaws.
- Treasurer's Report – Mendy Aluise
 - Nothing to report at this time.

III. Committee Reports

- Jessica Wintz – Adams
 - Chapter Committee – Barbara White, chair
 - Seven chapters currently being formed: Myrtle Beach;
 - Given a green light (cautious) to have chapter meetings; chapters must follow state guidelines for meetings.
 - Technology Committee – Irv Johnson, chair
 - Facebook had a great reach of 171k with the help of a post concerning Byron Leftwich coaching in the Super Bowl
 - Events Committee – Reeves Kirtner
 - Nothing to report at this time.
- Jimmy Black
 - Bylaws Committee – Steve Wellman, chair

- By-law amendments passed at last meeting and are posted on website.
Nothing else to report
- Membership – Misty Ferguson, Chair
 - Nothing to report at this time.

IV. New Business

- Alumni Staff Report – Think of this as an annual report; was shared with Foundation Board last week. (see Events, Media, Chapters, and Partnerships PowerPoint).
 - Matt Hayes – Started presentation off with introduction to alumni relations staff and contributions they make to the university; trying to better understand alumni engagement (see slide presentation for detailed information). Working to improve decreasing alumni membership (slide 6). Trend is more volunteers to work with Board to advance goals (slide 7).
 - Larry Crum – Alumni events – numerous opportunities for alumni; Larry reviewed many alumni events (slides 8-11). Work with current students and recent graduates – “Week of Welcome” and “Countdown to Graduation”. Board will participate in activities in the future. Added incentives for students who sign up has been very successful.
 - Kasey Stevens – Chapters are heartbeat of what we do (slides 13-15). We are starting to see a chapter “snowball” affect. Takes time and attention, which we are working hard on. Partnerships (slide 16-20) included campus and business partnerships, as well as career services. Augeo is our new insurance affinity program (slide 18).
 - Larry Crum – Media (slides 21-30); HerdAlum website; social media; Facebook engagement; email marketing; Sons & Daughters Newsletter
 - Matt Hayes – MUAA Events and Activities (slides 28-30).
 - See PowerPoint for additional information. Any suggestions from the MUAA Board is greatly appreciated.
- Review voting results: Board to confirm elected candidates at April meeting. Elected candidates were:
 1. Lester Hicks
 2. Sarah Kemp
 3. Jimmy Black
 4. Robert Walker
 5. Reeves Kirtner
 6. Tiffani Ferrari
 7. Terry Bare
 8. Steve Wellman
 9. Eric Douglas
 10. Jill Jackson
- Virtual Alumni Weekend plans: events and activities will be uploaded to social media and HerdAlum.com
- Graduation: In-person May 1, 2021
- Summer meeting discussion: virtual meeting will be determined and shared

- Homecoming: not official but tentatively hoping for October 9th. Please do NOT share; keep under-wraps until we get definitive approval.
- Enrollment outlook for fall: have seen dramatic increase in students completing FAFSA; this should indicate that enrollment will increase.
- Events calendar on website: <https://www.marshall.edu/calendar/>

VI. **Closing**

- Next Meeting: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:30-7:30 pm. Speakers include Dr. Gilbert, Ron Area and Huntington Mayor Williams.
- Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Janie McDaniel, Secretary

In attendance:

Aluise, Mendy
Baldwin, Jordan
Black, Jimmy
Collins, David
Davis, Gail
Ferguson, Misty
Freeman, Bruce
Hammond, Alyssa
Hicks, Brian
Horner, Greg
Huff, Brandon
Johnson, Irv
Kirtner, Reeves
Lederer, Max
McDaniel, Janie
Morrison, Missy
Profitt, Brad
Rice, Akia
Shremshock, Mikala

Workman, Ben
Wintz-Adams, Jessica
Woodrum, Jim
Workman, Ben

Representatives:

Harrah, Joyce
McInerney, Margie
Meadows, Allen
Smith-Branch, Feon

Chapter Representatives:

Baldwin, Josh
Brumfield, Donna
Sandy, Ben
White, Barbara

MUAA Staff:

Hayes, Matt
Crum, Larry
Stevens, Kasey