



## A Message *from the* INTERIM PRESIDENT



October 20, 2021

### **Celebrating a Place We Love So Dear**

Members of the Yellow Jacket Family:

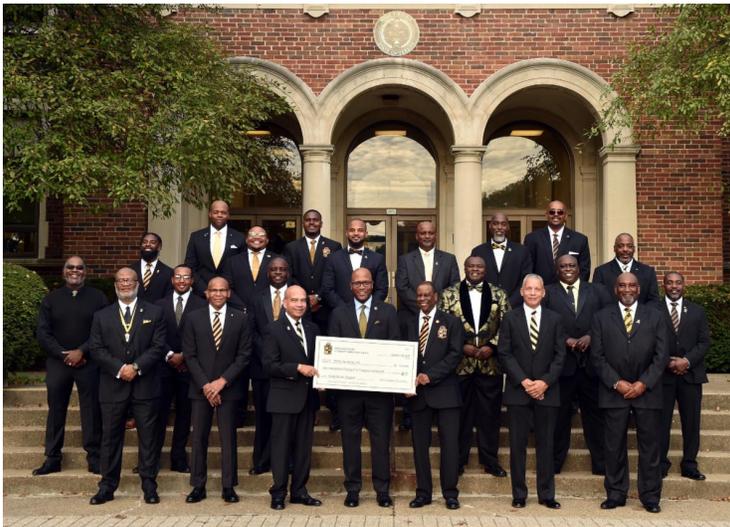
I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended this year's historic Homecoming activities this past weekend. It was an incredible sight to see so many people back on campus for our first Homecoming celebration since 2019. It was a special weekend for all those who attended and one that will never be forgotten.

There were so many memorable moments that it would be hard to name them all, but I am going to mention a few that illustrate the greatness of the Yellow Jacket Nation. To begin

with, Saturday night's football game was simply electric and was attended by more than 2,300 fans wanting to see our football team in action on the newly installed artificial turf and under the lights. A pre-game dedication ceremony reinforced what is possible through the power of partnerships bringing together public and private organizations to the benefit



of West Virginia State University. Many thanks are in order for NFL Hall of Famer Willie Lanier and his Honey Bear Project, the Jacobson Foundation, the Kanawha County Commission and the WVSU Foundation for their commitment to making this project a reality. Our student-athletes and indeed our entire campus will benefit from these world class facilities for years to come.



Another historic milestone we celebrated during Homecoming was the 100-year anniversary of the Alpha Zeta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Chartered on our campus in 1921, the Alpha Zeta Chapter has a long history of service to the university and to the region and they showed this again during Homecoming by donating \$125,000 to

support student scholarships.

I was honored to be part of two very special ceremonies during Homecoming recognizing our alumni for their contributions to our great university's proud 130-year history. The 'W' Club welcomed nine new members to the Sports Hall of Fame on Saturday morning. Donning gold jackets and joining fellow Yellow Jackets sports greats this year were: Jerry Lee Early, Ava



LaVett Holloway-Robertson, Avis LaVerne Holloway, Walter Holman, Kyle Patrick Jones, Sean Loyd, John Painter, Teddi-Lynn Russell-Lofgren, and Barry Shelton.

Then later Saturday the university recognized this year's inductees into the WVSU ROTC Hall of



Fame. We have a proud military tradition here at State stretching back to our founding and recognizing those who have served our country with honor and distinction was a very special moment. Joining the ROTC Hall of Fame this year were: Lt. Col. (Ret.) Thomas A. Marks; Lt. Col. (Ret.) Otha R. Vannoy; and, Chaplain Lt. Col. (Ret.) Paul Franklin Willis, Sr.

Since my arrival here my belief that West Virginia State University is a special place has only been confirmed. Seeing so many people return to the place we love so dear for Homecoming only reinforced that. Despite the challenges we have faced, knowing that we have such a large and committed base of supporters dedicated to our success means there is nothing we cannot accomplish. Together we are moving West Virginia State University forward.

Thank you and Go State!

Ericke S. Cage, J.D., LL.M.  
Interim President  
West Virginia State University