

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 24, 2018

### **SGA Announces Updates on Progress and Initiatives**

**Morgantown, WV** - With the fall semester quickly passing by, the West Virginia Student Government Association has been working to accomplish goals through initiatives in order to make our campus a better place for our students and faculty. Here's a look back on what was accomplished, with the help of so many, in the last couple of weeks:

- The Mountaineers Vote Voter Drive took place on October 4, 5, 7 and 8 in conjunction with the West Virginia University NAACP, was a great success. Georgia Beatty, the SGA Local Government Liaison stated: "We accomplished our goal at least in part: we registered as many students as we could and were there to help equip Mountaineers with a platform from which to project their voice. And now we're enabling that projection by providing absentee ballot applications to students of all origins. Looking forward, we are excited to extend our efforts beyond campus and into Morgantown itself!"

The Mountaineers Vote initiative is continuing their efforts through distribution of absentee ballots and providing information regarding how to vote in the upcoming elections on November 6.

- SGA Senator Gage Fortney-Henriquez hosted an event on August 29 and 31 to address some questions regarding mental health. Senator Fortney-Henriquez also hosted an event on October 8 and 10 discussing gender, sexuality and mental health. Both events are part of a larger initiative by Senator Fortney-Henriquez and SGA to address the stigma of mental health by bringing it to the forefront of the West Virginia University campus community. Senator Fortney-Henriquez will continue these efforts over the coming weeks.

Here is SGA plans and goals they are looking to achieve over the next few weeks:

- During the week of October 29 through November 2, SGA is hosting a "Green Week" Art Competition. All students are encouraged to enter any type of artwork (painting,

photograph, sculpture, etc.) as long as the artwork is no larger than 3-foot square. The theme of the competition is of the environment, nature, and celebrating the world we live in. The artwork will be on display all throughout Green Week in the Mountainair and students will get the chance to vote on which artwork they think is the best. The winning artist will receive a gift card and gift basket.

- The week of November 5th, Vice President Abbi Yachini and Zoya Khan are planning a week of outreach. Visit the WVU SGA Twitter for more information leading up to this week of events to learn more about what SGA does and how we can help solve your problems. There will also be giveaways and informational handouts on all campuses throughout the week.
- President Isaac Obioma addressed the importance of Sodexo with the following statement: “As soon as our administration heard about the issues regarding Sodexo, we immediately took action to address the concerns students have regarding on-campus dining. We were able to resolve a number of issues directly, including swipe usage and dietary needs. Last week, our administration had a meeting where we brought our problems regarding dining to President Gee and Sodexo. We will be assigning members of our organization to participate in a student focus group to provide updates to our student body regarding our furthered progress in addressing these issues. Members of the Student Government Association are prepared to inform Sodexo of any dining concerns raised by the student body. I encourage all students that have concerns, regarding all matters, to please reach out to our administration.”
- The University, in accordance with the City of Morgantown, is looking to get involved with the implementation of the Blue Zones Project. SGA will be meeting with Nursing School Dean Tara Hulsey, who is overseeing the University’s contribution, next week. For more information about what Blue Zones are, visit: <https://www.bluezones.com> for more information.
- Student Body President Isaac Obioma and SGA Senator Kareem Shammaa are working on an initiative with *Spin*, a company providing a dockless scooter sharing, to the Morgantown campus. Through the implementation of this initiative, SGA can provide an effective means of alternative transportation on campus while alleviating some stress of parking on campus. SGA is looking to have a *Spin* scooter pilot program implemented in the next few months.

- Aishwarya Vijay, SGA Diversity Director, is spearheading a diversity initiative, WVU Voices, in conjunction with the Student Government Association. WVU Voices involves Instagram posts (follow @wvuvoices) that seeks to highlight West Virginia University's diverse student body while accentuating the commonalities that exist throughout our campus community. The idea is to bring a face to a story so that people can connect to others and understand how people think, act, and interact. The WVU Voices committee is currently in search of WVU students to interview and highlight. Please contact committee chair Aishwarya Vijay via email, [asvijay@mix.wvu.edu](mailto:asvijay@mix.wvu.edu), for more information.
- The Student Government Association has partnered with the West Virginia Forward project, as well as student governments representing Marshall University, West Liberty University, and Fairmont State University. This initiative will provide care packages to underserved youth in southern West Virginia to promote higher education in underprivileged communities. These packages will primarily contain some clothing, and school supplies.
- Student Body President Isaac Obioma, Vice President Abbi Yachini and Chief of Staff Bryan Phillips are currently working to establish Student Government Association scholarships. These scholarships will primarily seek to uplift strong minority leadership on campus.

For more information on Student Government initiatives, contact SGA Communications Director Michael Curtis via email, [mcurtis@mix.wvu.edu](mailto:mcurtis@mix.wvu.edu).