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2018 Distinguished Scholar Survey Results_FINAL.12.13.18

University Relations

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DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS EVENT
SURVEY RESULTS

A Celebration of
SCHOLARS
like you.

West Virginia University.
BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Background
Distinguished Scholars Day – an invitation-only event welcomes high school seniors who have shown a level of academic commitment and dedication that goes above and beyond. This year’s event was held on December 3, from 8 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the Erickson Alumni Center.

Research Objectives
A follow-up survey was sent to all attendees to gauge the impact the event had on prospective students’ intent to attend WVU, as well as to understand the aspects of the event that are well-liked and those that can be improved upon.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE EVENT
Everything from the communication attendees received prior to the event to the check-in process itself appeared to go smoothly. The atmosphere at WVU’s Distinguished Scholars event was reportedly very warm and welcoming. This can be attributed to the personalized attention attendees received, their ability to engage with deans and department heads while dining with them and being able to visit/tour their academic departments.

Regarding the latter, attendees felt visiting their academic department was valuable; however, they wished more time had been allocated for the visit. In fact, “rushed” is a word that was frequently mentioned when attendees spoke about that portion of the event.

That said, attendees were significantly more delighted than disappointed with the day. In addition to the items mentioned above, they gave accolades to the speakers, the ability to get questions answered first-hand, and the “blue and gold” carpet treatment they received. In fact, the majority of students left the event certain they would attend WVU in the future. Another significant number of students, while not completely sold on WVU, indicated they would give WVU serious consideration.

OPTIONAL PROGRAMS
Most chose to participate in Sunday’s optional programs. The reception garnered more visitors than the campus tour, but the tour was more well-liked. A small percentage elected to tour the day of the event, but those who did also rated it very highly.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OPTIONAL PROGRAMS (continued)
The majority of attendees also took advantage of the University’s offer of a complimentary room at the Marriott. Most acknowledged that the accommodations were top-notch; just a handful recounted experiencing a delay upon checking in.

SUGGESTIONS
In addition to expanding the academic meeting portion of the program, several attendees suggested there be more opportunities to engage more with current students in their programs of interest.
DETAILED FINDINGS
ATTENDEE AWARENESS

Far more attendees learned about the event through email (73%) and/or direct mail (51%) than any other means.

Q. How did you/your student learn about the event? (check all that apply)
PRE-COMMUNICATION/CHECK-IN

Over nine in ten (93%) rated the communication distinguished scholars received prior to the event “excellent” or “very good.” About nine in ten (89%) gave the check-in process at the event equally high marks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication received prior to event</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check-in process</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Issues that arose**

- “The only thing was that it was not specified very clearly that some events were being held the night before and others the day of.” - Pennsylvania
- “There was some confusion about what the difference was between the campus tour on Sunday and the campus tour offered on Monday.” - Maryland
- “Mostly it wasn’t clear what we were supposed to wear for the evening thing. The whole thing seemed a bit hectic as well and the information fair was too crowded and I didn’t get a chance to ask as many questions as I would have liked.” - West Virginia
- “The only glitch was that we missed the extra sign up to tour the Honors Hall on Monday. It was in another email when we confirmed but it was buried. We missed out on that one small thing.” - Maryland

Q. Rate your experience with communications and the event check-in. Q. Please tell us about the issues you/your student encountered.
OVERALL SATISFACTION
All but 4% of attendees gave the event a grade of “A.” All but 4% were highly satisfied with the food and refreshments they received during the program.

Q. Taking everything into consideration, how would you rate the Distinguished Scholar event? Q. How would you rate the food and refreshments during the program?
INTEREST: PRE/POST

Nearly three-fourths of the students (73%) were extremely or very interested in attending WVU prior to their attending the event. After attending the event, about six in ten (59%) said they definitely decided to attend WVU. Another 39% said WVU is among their top choices.

Q. Prior to the event, what were you or your student's thoughts about attending WVU?
OPTIONAL SUNDAY EVENTS

Nearly two-thirds of attendees (66%) participated in the optional programming on Sunday. More attendees took part in the evening reception than campus tour, but the former earned lower ratings than the latter (77% versus 91% excellent/very good).

“ I would only ask for more seating at the Sunday reception and a little more info on what to expect timewise. We left after a while not realizing there were introductions and speakers later on.” - Virginia
OPTIONAL TOUR DAY OF EVENT
Only about one-quarter (26%) took the campus tour the same day as the event. Of those, 71% were very satisfied with it.

Q. Did you take advantage of the optional campus tour the day of Distinguished Scholars?  Q. How would you rate your tour experience?
### ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT VISITS

Eighty-seven percent found it extremely or very helpful to meet with their academic department. The departments they visited include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Visits</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal and Nutritional Science</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomedical Engineering</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPASS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis College</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Land Management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Visits</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise Physiology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forensic Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunology and Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife and Fisheries Resources</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. What academic department did you visit?
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT VISIT

More than eight in ten attendees (84%) found the visit to their academic department extremely or very helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpfulness of Academic Department Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions for improving the academic meeting experience

- Allocate more time to the academic session (23)
- Tour the department/visit the labs (5)
- Allow students to meet with multiple departments (4)
- Provide a sample of the curriculum (3)
- Meet with current students in the program (3)
- Have smaller groups (2)
Q. In what ways, if any, could we improve your academic department meeting experience?

VERBATIMS

Allocate more time to the academic session
- “A little more time in specific departments would have been great. It felt a little rushed, but overall was wonderful and very helpful. We especially loved being able to peek in on classrooms and really see what a typical day in the life looked like in the engineering building.” - New York
- “It would have been nice to have a longer amount of time to speak with the professors. It was rushed, but still very nice.” - West Virginia
- “We ran out of time for a proper tour of the Forensics department.” - Illinois

Tour the department/visit the labs
- “We were hoping for a tour of the nursing school. The meeting we had could have been held anywhere on campus. They suggested we come back to Admitted Students Day, but we would have preferred to do it all at once rather than make a return trip.” - Pennsylvania
- “I would have loved to tour the actual nursing classrooms and simlabs, etc. The conversation with faculty was focused on honors only; however, I would have liked to hear about nursing more generally in addition to the honors information. I realize that the focus of this event was honors and scholars, but I would have benefitted from learning more about my specific school!” - Pennsylvania
- “Spend more time on touring the facilities and maybe sit in on an actual class to show students what they would experience rather than broadly overview the majors.” - Pennsylvania

Allow students to meet with multiple departments
- “We did not have the option to select which academic department we wanted to visit when registering for the event. I would’ve liked to talk to someone from a different department because I’m not sure about my major.” - West Virginia
- “More time to explore. My son is interested in a dual degree with Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, we had to pick one, so maybe offer that as an option to find out about how the dual degree program works.” - Maryland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delights</th>
<th>Disappointments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming, showed sincere interest in the students (13)</td>
<td>No gluten-free diet options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impressive speakers (informative/engaging) (3)</td>
<td>Honors Hall tour was not in-depth (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible, caring faculty who answered questions (8)</td>
<td>WVU information area was a bit crowded (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and helpful staff/students (3)</td>
<td>Not enough room for both parents at academic meeting (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President Gee’s speech</td>
<td>No opportunity to talk about financial aid or have specific appointments set-up for the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing the surroundings/amenities (3)</td>
<td>Daughter in pre-nursing is required to do an extra semester to complete the BSN program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual attention (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining a clear understanding of the benefits of the Honors program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to speak with current students (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to lunch/engage with the deans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The food exceeded expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free hotel/gift bag (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. What, if anything, delighted or disappointed you about your visit to WVU? Please type "NA" in the text box if you are unable to answer this question.
“I loved the individual attention that WVU gave to each student. It was obvious that you truly want each of us to choose WVU and that you will do anything you can to help us make that choice. I was made to feel particularly special by eating with the deans of the honors college and Eberly college.” - West Virginia

“We were delighted with the welcoming atmosphere. It started with our check-in Sunday before the campus tour. The reception was fantastic, we appreciated the deans and students who were there and Evan felt connected and comfortable to WVU. Evan also appreciated meeting the deans and getting to talk with them. The program on Monday exceeded our expectation. From all of the great food and information to getting to chat with dept. members at lunch. We loved that President Gee came and spoke with the students, he is such a great leader.” - Maryland

“We were both very impressed with the detail and effort put into this event. It brought me to tears. We really felt welcomed, wanted and appreciated. GREAT JOB!!” - New York

“We were so impressed! Couldn’t believe the deans of every academic department were at the luncheon to meet with our senior ... we had all our questions answered by a variety of people and students representing every aspect of the university. Our son has worked hard at his academics through high school ... it meant so much to him that you all recognize his hard work and basically rolled out the blue and gold carpet for him and several other students from his high school.” - West Virginia

“The way the staff and students treated us made us feel wanted and appreciated. The WVU tour has by far surpassed all the other schools we have visited and it’s not even close.” - Virginia

“It was very nice to have WVU representatives handing out folders with itineraries at check-in. It made the experience more personal, and the information (including attendees’ names) was helpful for students.” - West Virginia
SUGGESTIONS
Attendees who made a suggestion in their overall comments about the event cited the following:

- Have a longer academic session; don’t rush it/allow enough time for touring (14)
- Allow more time to engage with current students (7)
- Improve technology (2)
  - quality of the video in the Alumni Center
  - add microphone on the buses
- Miscellaneous (4)
  - ensure event starts/ends on time
  - have more information tables at check-in
  - have scholarship offers at the event
  - spread out table at Alumni Center for easier navigation

One parent suggested that the Honors Program be better presented at the reception.

“During the evening reception, it may have been helpful to provide a "primer" on the Honors Program including a success story or two. A short primer could be in the form of a video or live speaker (preferred). I'm thinking that this approach might stimulate some questions and conversations as parents and students interact with current Honors Students during the reception. On the other hand, such an approach may not be effective in a relatively crowded space (it would be nice to have a somewhat larger venue). Overall, we found the reception to be very helpful.”
SATISFACTION WITH MARRIOTT

Over half (62%) took advantage of the complimentary stay at the Marriott Hotel. Every attendee who stayed there was highly satisfied.
SATISFACTION WITH HOTEL

A few guests recounted having a negative experience at the hotel.

“When we checked into the hotel we got there between 3-3:30. We were told to go sit down and they would call us when the rooms were ready. Well, before we knew it, everyone else was checking in and getting their room and we were never called. As a result we were late for the reception Sunday night. Very frustrating sitting there for 2 hours!”  - Illinois

“When we got to hotel, we didn't know we needed a credit card authorization since we came without our parents. We had to wait about an hour and a half after we got to the hotel for all of that information to be processed.”  - West Virginia

“My friend, who was my guest, and I tried to check into the hotel but couldn’t because we lacked a credit card. It got situated out and was fine, but we did have to wait an extra 45 min to check in because my parent had to receive and email back a form for her credit card.”  - West Virginia

“Check-in at the Waterfront took approximately 40 minutes.”  - West Virginia
DEMOGRAPHICS

About six in ten survey respondents were high school students; 42% were parents/guests. Far more learned about the event through email (73%) and/or direct mail (51%).

**Type of Attendee**

- High School Student: 58%
- Parent/guest of a prospective student: 42%

**Home State**

- West Virginia: 54%
- Pennsylvania: 17%
- Maryland: 9%
- Virginia: 7%
- Ohio: 5%
- New Jersey: 2%
- New York: 2%
- Texas: 2%
- Illinois: 1%
- Delaware: 1%