

# DELAWARE MOUNTAINEER

## WVU NAMES CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT AFTER DR. EUGENE BENNETT OF DELAWARE

"Naming the Department of Chemistry in Gene Bennett's honor will assure that future generations of students are aware of the incredible generosity he and his widow, Edna Bennett Pierce, have shown to that department," President David C. Hardesty Jr. said. "Their contributions have richly enhanced the education that WVU chemistry students receive. It is a privilege to honor the memory of an alumnus who was committed to helping students achieve success, as he did in his own career."

The Bennett family contributions have been directed to a variety of vital areas which are impacting the health and future of chemistry at West Virginia University. The Eberly College has benefited from the Bennett Academic Enrichment Fund for Science Students. WVU Libraries received the Bennett Library Endowment for Chemistry, which enhanced the chemistry publications collection and funded the establishment of the Bennett Periodicals Department in the new Downtown Campus Library. The department of chemistry, however, has been the principal recipient of the Bennett philanthropy.

"The legacy of Gene Bennett and the continued generosity of Edna Bennett Pierce to our department of chemistry is truly extraordinary," remarked Eberly College Dean M. Duane Nellis. "The Bennett philanthropy has gone directly to initiatives which have supported WVU students and faculty. It is only fitting that the department carry the name of one of our most successful alums."

Bennett giving has created the C. Eugene Bennett Distinguished Chair in Chemistry, which is currently occupied by Dr. Kenneth Showalter, an internationally recognized researcher in non-linear dynamics. Additionally, it has funded the C. Eugene and Edna P. Bennett Careers for Chemists Program, Bennett Graduate Fellowship Program and Bennett Program Enhancement Fund in Chemistry. The most recent gifts for the chemistry department from Edna Bennett Pierce totaling \$2 million will create a teaching professorship, an undergraduate scholarship program and an additional student academic enrichment fund and provide further monies for the Bennett Program Enhancement Fund.

The dedication of the C. Eugene Bennett Department of Chemistry will take place at Clark Hall on April 13, 2004 to coincide with the 10th annual Bennett Careers for Chemists event.

Before his untimely death in 1996, Dr. Gene Bennett had served several years on the Advisory Board of the Eberly College. He was born in Rutherford, W.Va. in 1929, and graduated from WVU with a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1949 and a master's degree in 1951. He went on to earn a Ph.D. in analytic chemistry at the University of Michigan in 1954, but previously did graduate work at Penn State.

Dr. Bennett brought to the College Advisory Board a varied perspective for its work since he had had a distinguished career as a research scientist with the Aeronautical Research Laboratories and then with E.I. duPont de Nemours & Company. In 1959, Dr. Bennett and two colleagues formed F&M Scientific Corporation which eventually merged with and became a division of Hewlett Packard Company. He left Hewlett Packard in 1968 to pursue various business ventures.

While at Penn State, Bennett met Edna Peterson, a member of the "Famous 500," the first class of women admitted to Penn State following World War II. Born in Rochester, Pa. in 1932, she graduated from Beaver High School in 1949 and from Penn State in 1953 with a major in child development. The Bennetts married on June 12, 1953 and had six children. She currently resides in Wilmington.

## Building Greatness Capital Campaign Update

Notwithstanding the economic slowdown of the past several years, alumni and friends of West Virginia University have stepped up to the plate in a very big way.

It is abundantly clear that the campaign effort has been a huge success, and many of the dollars raised are already at work!

Recently, the campaign moved over the \$300 million level, more than 20% greater than President David Hardesty's ambitious goal of \$250 million.

As of this writing, the final amount raised by the campaign has not yet been announced.

# MILAN PUSKAR MAKES \$20 MILLION GIFT TO WVU; FOOTBALL STADIUM WILL

Milan "Mike" Puskar, CEO of Mylan Pharmaceuticals, has made a gift of \$20 million to West Virginia University! This is the largest private gift ever made to WVU!

Puskar, already a generous contributor to our University, has earmarked the gift toward both academic support and athletic scholarship endowment. Additionally, major facility upgrades at Mountaineer Field, the WVU Coliseum and the WVU Soccer Field will be accomplished as a result of his generosity.

A few days after receiving this generous gift, West Virginia University announced that the football stadium would be renamed "Milan Puskar Stadium, home of Mountaineer Field". Later, Mr. Puskar was recognized by the public address announcer at the West Virginia-Temple football game and was greeted with a thunderous standing ovation by the Mountaineer fans in attendance.

Mike Puskar's generosity comes at a critically important time in the life of the WVU athletic program. Athletic conferences all over the United States are experiencing major realignment, triggered initially by the changes within the Big East Conference. WVU and other universities are dependent on strong conference affiliations to provide necessary operating revenue streams.

WVU is one of the very few universities whose athletic department is totally self-supporting, and Puskar's gift will help further strengthen the University's position as the nationwide conference shakeout continues.

Thank you, Milan Puskar, for all that you have done and continue to do for West Virginia University!

## **BIG EAST CONFERENCE UNDERGOES MAJOR RECONFIGURATION; WVU AND OTHERS FILE LAWSUITS TO RECOUP DAMAGES**

The Big East Conference has reconfigured after surviving a year of turmoil and the events will have a significant and lasting effect on West Virginia University athletics

WVU has joined several other remaining Big East universities as a plaintiff in lawsuits against the Atlantic Coast Conference, some of its member universities and certain individuals. The plaintiffs are claiming that they have been damaged by the defendants' actions. WVU is also named as a co-defendant in retaliatory legal action filed by many of the same opposing parties.

While the legal battles may take a long time to resolve, Mountaineer football fans will notice changes beginning as early as next football season when Miami and Virginia Tech leave the Big East and the University of Connecticut becomes a football playing member of the conference.

It is presently assumed that Boston College will be part of the Big East next year, and they are legally obligated to stay in the Big East through the end of the 2005 season unless they pay a large penalty fee to the league. Boston College is questioning their obligations to the Big East, and has retained counsel to investigate the matter further.

Assuming Boston College plays in the Big East next year, WVU will have only 6 conference football games instead of the normal 7. To help offset this temporary turmoil, WVU signed a non-conference short term contract with Virginia Tech that will keep the WVU-Virginia Tech rivalry alive for at least the short term, and both schools are hopeful that the game will be able to be scheduled in future years.

In the 2005 season, the Mountaineer football schedule will experience more change. Temple University (expelled from the Big East) and Boston College will be gone. The University of Louisville, the University of Cincinnati and the University of South Florida will join the Big East for all sports and help create a new eight-team football league.

The current arrangement that all schools have with the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) expires after the 2005 season and is currently being re-evaluated. How that discussion plays out will be very important to the future of the WVU football program and athletic department. Currently, the Big East Conference has an automatic BCS bowl bid for the winner of the conference. It has yet to be determined if the newly configured Big East will be eligible for an automatic BCS bowl bid after 2005.

Unlike football, Big East Basketball has taken some giant leaps forward! The termination of basketball programs at Miami, Virginia Tech and Boston College eliminates some of the bottom-feeders in the league. Along with the addition of Louisville, Cincinnati and South Florida in 2005, the Big East has also invited DePaul University and Marquette University, a Final Four team from last year.

Big East Basketball clearly is positioned as the premier college basketball league in the country, a league loaded from top to bottom with perennial national championship contenders. The roster of current Big East coaches reads like a laundry list of Basketball Hall of Fame nominees: Jim Calhoun, Jim Boeheim, Bob Huggins, Rick Pitino and many others. Expect plenty of Big East Basketball excitement coming out of Morgantown!

## **Young WVU Hoop Squad Using Hustle and Defense To Keep Pace In Competitive Big East Wars**

Second year Coach John Beilein continues his rebuilding work with the WVU Basketball program this year, fielding one of the youngest and most inexperienced teams in school history. There are no senior players on the roster, and only two juniors.

As of this writing, the Mountaineers check in with a nice 10-6 record (2-3 in Big East play) with solid victories over Boston College, Georgetown, St. Louis and in-state pest Marshall.

Expected to lead the Mountaineers was last year's leading scorer Drew Schifino. However in early January, Schifino was dismissed from the squad after violating team rules, leaving the team without a proven offensive threat.

The offensive burden must now be shared amongst a variety of players, and as the substitution rotation is firming up, it looks as though the two juniors on the squad will be required to shoulder much of the burden and lead the team. D' Or Fischer is a 6'-11" shot-blocking center who transferred to WVU a year ago and is terrorizing the Big East with his long arms and defensive ability. Tyrone Sally, the small forward from Richmond, is a stronger contributor this season.

Sophomores coming back to battle include the German standout Johannes Herber, point guard J.D. Collins, three-point artist Kevin Pittsnogle, and shooting guard Patrick Beilein. Incoming freshmen include point guard Tyler Relph, New York's high school player of the year in 2003. Jerrah Young, a rebounding forward from Chicago will see significant minutes and Franklin Young, a 6'5" swingman from Tallahassee will also be a factor.

Redshirting this year are 6'8" freshman forward Brad Byerson, the Richmond area player of the year in 2003, and point guard Nick Patella who survived a scary injury in practice and will take the year off to heal. Additionally, Beilein has brought in Mike Gansey, a 6'5" swingman transfer from St. Bonaventure who can practice with the team but won't be eligible until next season.

### **News And Notes From Around The Delaware Chapter**

- Mark July 10,2004 in your calendar...that is the date of the annual WVU Family Picnic. Last year our picnic drew a record crowd of over 230 alumni, parents, students and friends of West Virginia University. More details to come!
- Delaware was well represented at the recent Toyota Gator Bowl. Delaware Mountaineers seen roaming the streets of Jacksonville included Lou and Ann Ziccarelli, Richard Hewitt, Martha and Glen Gimbel, Carolyn and Dan Curry, David "Big Daddy" Wiant, Dick and Mary Kay Haden and Jon and Jamie Hickey among others!
- WVU alum Dick Struck is busy planning a special event in Wilmington on Saturday May 29 in conjunction with the dedication ceremony of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. Struck, who heads the Delaware American Legion, is producing a prayer breakfast at the Riverfront Arrts Center in Wilmington that will feature a major keynote speaker. Also on tap is a benefit walk-a-thon. Cash donations and volunteer support are needed, and you can find out more by calling Dick at 475-1723.
- WVU alum John Wik has sold Wik Associates to another WVU alum Mark Lannan and wife Marian Young. Both Wik and Lannan serve on the Board of your Delaware Chapter. The new company will be known as Brightfields-Wik Associates and will continue as the leading environmental engineering firm in our area. If you are having a mold- related concern with your home, call Mark or Marian and they will gladly help you.
- This spring, the Delaware Chapter will once again help recruit local high school students who have expressed a strong interest in WVU. We need alumni and parent volunteers to pull this off, and if you would like to help, please contact Jayne Armstrong at 573-6382.