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Restoring the Roar in the Catamount Community

by Dr. Jerry Wallace For the News & Tribune

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PSC

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the first in a series of articles which WVU Potomac State College campus president Dr. Jerry Wallace has pledged to share with our readers to keep them informed of happenings on and around the PSC campus.)

Thank you for the opportunity to join the community and lead this historic institution into the next chapter. During my transition back to West Virginia, I connected with PSC employees and students and enjoyed getting out in the community. Some of our initial favorite local restaurants include Queen's Point Coffee and Castiglia's Italian Eatery!

I have met with staff, faculty and community members who beam with Catamount Pride and understand with hard work we can serve as a beacon of hope for many more students in the region. I have multiple engaging employee activities in store for PSC faculty and staff which also includes a Potomac State College retiree breakfast each semester.

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Saturday, Nov. 2

Our first weekend visit to Keyser after being announced as PSC campus president was eventful! We took Kennedy to the Mineral County Veterans Parade on Main Street, which happened to be her first parade. After the parade, we grabbed coffee and shopped at the Harvest Holiday Craft & Vendor Show at Keyser High School. We concluded the day supporting the PSC men's basketball team against Pennsylvania Highlands Community College. I'm happy to share the Catamounts got the win!

Saturday, Nov. 9

The following weekend, we ventured back to Keyser and this time we made a trip to Morgantown. As a former student athlete, I love that my first WVU Athletics game was the WVU women's basketball team victory against Niagara University with a final score of 110-41. Kennedy also got her first West Virginia pepperoni roll during the game!

Friday, Nov. 15

On Friday, I drove nine hours total, from Danville, Virginia, to Keyser, West Virginia, and back (4 ½ hours each way). I made the special one-day trip simply to take a picture with PSC's first women's cross country All-American Athlete, and Mineral County native, Addison Lease. I felt the trip was warranted to congratulate Addison and Coach Chris Biser on the amazing performance at the NJCAA National Championship! As president, this is the level of commitment I bring and plan to inspire across the campus.

Friday, Nov. 22

I was able to attend the WVU Board meeting virtually and be introduced as the new campus president of WVU Potomac State College. It was refreshing to receive such a warm welcome from the board, WVU President Gee, and many more from throughout the WVU system.

Sunday, Nov. 24

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Sunday, I represented Potomac State College in the Community Thanksgiving Service hosted by Lucas Taylor at Keyser Presbyterian Church. Each community member was asked to share something they were thankful for and/or that God is doing in the community. Some of

the participants included Logan DelSignore, Barb Grayson, Mark Boucot, and even Keyser High School senior Abby DelSignore. I was blown away by the hospitality and pride for the community everyone shared!

Thursday, Nov. 28

Happy Thanksgiving! The Wallace Family officially moved on campus into the president's home, and we hosted Allyson's parents for the holiday. Allyson was born and raised in Beckley and we both previously worked at WVU Tech (Montgomery and Beckley). As we reflect on our journey, we are most thankful for family and our new addition coming in Spring 2025. We will find out the gender of the new addition on Christmas morning.

Official Start Date

Monday, Dec. 2

My official first day on the job included my faithful companion Ace, the Prez Pup. Ace is our six, soon to be seven-year-old, Yorkie-Poo who shot to regional fame in Danville, Virginia, with his involvement on campus and the community. Ace attends events and is generally a favorite among students of all ages. Be on the lookout for Ace in the community and on social media!

Quote of the Week: I released the first "Quote of the Week" for our series on WVU Potomac State College LinkedIn page. PSC will be posting different quotes with special meaning submitted by our employees each week. This week my quote was "A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new." As PSC makes strides for the future, we must be bold and innovative.

Tuesday, Dec. 3

Tuesday evening, I joined students on campus to customize tote bags. The tote bag painting activity allowed me time to connect directly with students and share some of my creativity. My bag was dedicated to my daughter Kennedy, so [infolinks](#) butterflies and Bow Ties — two of our favorite things.

Wednesday, Dec. 4

To bring in the holiday spirit, I launched the inaugural President Door Decorating Competition for employees to show holiday creativity before the break. Participants were encouraged to decorate their door between Wednesday, Dec. 4, through Wednesday, Dec. 18, to win prizes and create a festive campus! Our students will also be participating in a decorating competition to win gift cards to Queen's Point Coffee!

PSC Men's and Women's Basketball game

I had three first-year PSC students help ask questions related to the Quote of the Week at our basketball games. The atmosphere was full of excitement as both teams were victorious, being supported by students, employees, and community members in attendance. We posted a fun collage of the engaging student interviews on social media. Thank you, Telina, for all the special attention to our videos.

Friday, Dec. 6

Fourth annual Frosty Fest: My first Frosty Fest was family fun for all! The fourth annual event highlights Keyser native Jack Rollins, co-creator of "Frosty the Snowman." Attendees participated in fun games, activities, and games hosted by PSC students and employees. It was great to see the Catamount Community in action providing this phenomenal experience for so many students.

Monday, Dec. 9

Westernport Elementary's Allegany County After-school Program visited campus and received a special visit from Ace, the Prez Pup. Students were engaged in the holiday festive activities then they had the opportunity to meet Ace and give him rubs. Special shout out to Kara Hotchkiss and Mandi Larkin for their innovation and commitment to providing a special experience for all students engaging with WVU Potomac State College.

In closing, I'm delighted to follow the recent tenure of interim president Dr. Paul Kreider as he provided the foundational stability for Potomac State College to be receptive to new leadership. Under Paul's guidance, PSC has been set [infolinks](#) right path to do great things and I'm up for the challenge! I will be hosting Coffee and Conversation, a meet-and-greet event, open to the public, on Friday morning, Dec. 13, at Queen's Point Coffee. If you have time, please feel free to stop by between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and have a friendly conversation.

Go Catamounts!

