



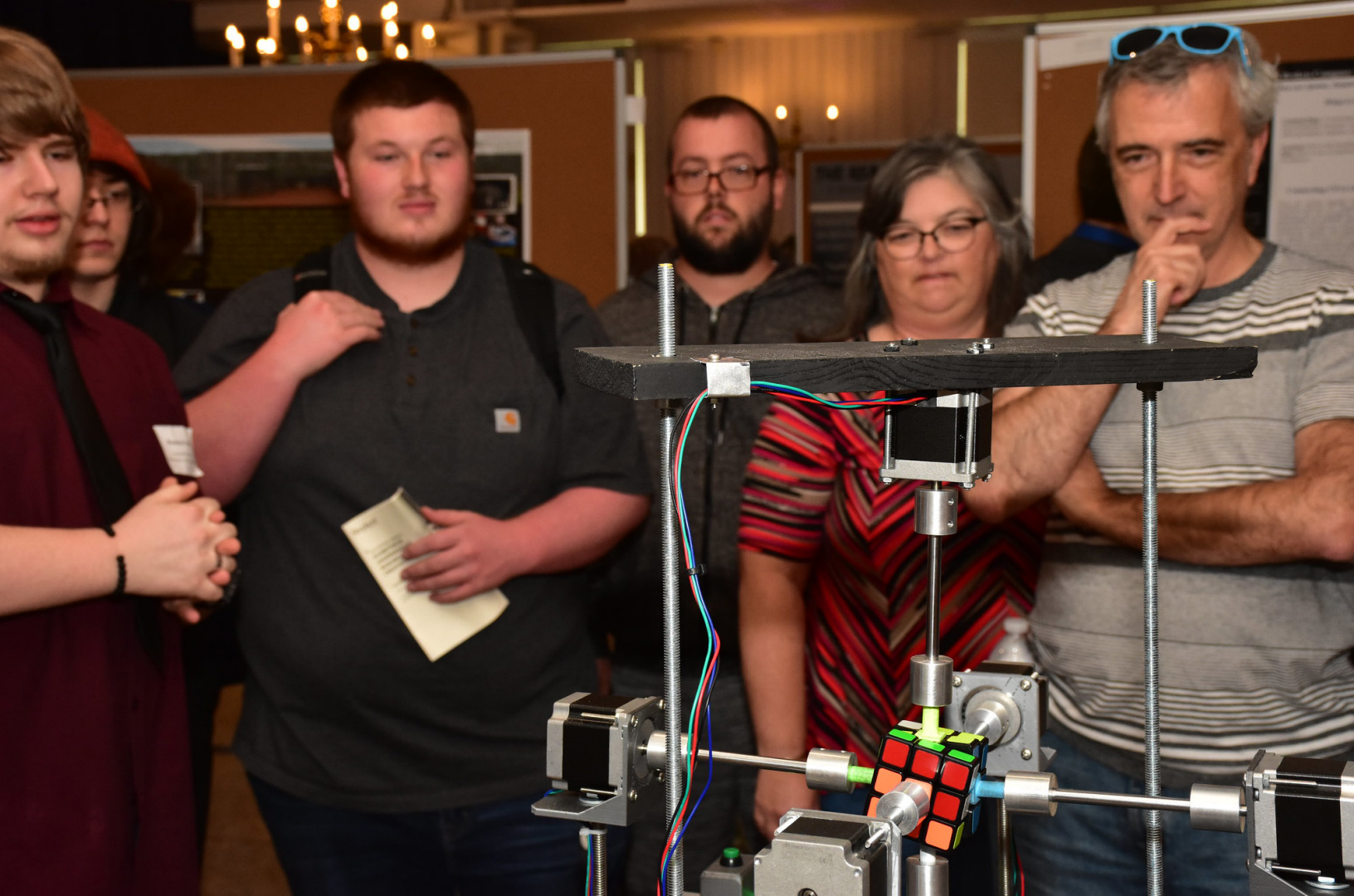
Shepherd UNIVERSITY | *President's* CLUB

## 2019 IMPACT REPORT



*Projects made possible by the  
Shepherd University President's Club*





## Strategic Research Initiatives program creates opportunities for students

*Knowledge, skills, and intellectual inquiry are essential to prepare all students for their future roles in society*

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Shepherd is committed to providing students with opportunities to apply abstract theories and skills learned in the classroom to real situations and to providing external and internal opportunities for the discovery, acquisition, and application of knowledge beneficial to society. Dr. Jason Best, director of strategic research initiatives, serves as a liaison between the university and external research partners, matching the interests of Shepherd students and faculty with those of those external partners. In this role, Dr. Best also works with deans and faculty to introduce, develop, and implement new research activities at numerous academic levels. The larger programs sponsored by Strategic Research Initiatives this year include:

### **Exhibition of Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors**

Undergraduate students at Shepherd are engaged in a large number of research and creative projects, developing original work within their fields of study. Individual departments often host events in order to highlight student work within a single discipline. This year, the university introduced an event that served as a showcase for student research and creative efforts across numerous disciplines on the campus. On April 17, Shepherd hosted its first Exhibition of Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors. Twenty-five undergraduate students presented their work in a poster or display manner, representing the following areas of study: Appalachian Studies; Contemporary Art and Theater; Biology; Business Administration; Chemistry; Communications and New Media; Computer Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering; Environmental and Physical Sciences; Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Sport Sciences; History; Psychology; and Sociology. More than 140 community members, faculty, staff, and students attended the event, interacting with the students as they presented their work.

*Photo above: Computer science student presenter Brandon Owens (far left) demonstrating his Rubik's Cube-solving robot.*





### Science Spring Break Immersion

Dr. Best worked with faculty and administrators in the West Virginia University Department of Biochemistry, along with science faculty and administrators at Shepherd, to develop an immersive research week within the WVU Department of Biochemistry for four Shepherd undergraduate science students. The Shepherd students spent spring break week 2019 embedded within numerous research laboratories, engaging in in-depth research experiences with faculty and graduate students.

### Global Science and Technology, Inc. Internship

The mission of Global Science and Technology, Inc. (GST) is to apply its leading scientific and technical expertise toward solving the challenges fundamental to advanced science and technology-based enterprises. Members of the GST leadership team came to campus on October 15, 2018, to interview candidates as part of a spring 2019 internship project focused on constructing next-generation lightning weather software products. This internship opportunity was collaboratively developed by GST and Shepherd.

### Internship Partnership with Invenergy

Invenergy is a leading privately held, global developer and operator of sustainable energy solutions, led by Michael Polsky, president and CEO. Members of the Invenergy corporate recruiting team restructured a previously-established internship opportunity and successfully place a Shepherd business student at Invenergy's Chicago office for the summer of 2019.

In addition to these events, numerous government agencies, industries, and nonprofit organizations have reached out to Dr. Best throughout the year in order to connect with students in academic programs across campus. Through collective efforts, these entities have been connected with those areas of campus best able to work with them and move forward on joint projects.



Science students (l. to r.) Alexis "Lexi" Fritts, Michael Watcher, Julia Ivey, and Payton Jackson embarking on their weeklong immersion into the WVU Biochemistry Department during spring break 2019.

Photos (from top): Dr. Rob Davies of the Crossroads Project interacting with psychology student presenter Rebecca Miller.

Art student presenter Kayley Kemp describing the motivation behind her artwork "The Two Offerings."

HPERS student presenter Patrick Prosser discussing work being done in the Human Performance Lab, located in the Butcher Center.



# Shepherd University Debate and Forensics Team brings home national championship

The Shepherd University Debate and Forensics Team was named national champion in Division I Team Speech Sweepstakes at the 2019 Public Communication Speech and Debate National Championship Tournament April 6-7 in Indianapolis.

The tournament hosted 77 schools and more than 1,600 entries, with the top Policy Debate seed in the country being Shepherd senior Miranda Jones, a political science major from Huntingtown, Maryland. Out of more than 94 debate entries, Jones won eight consecutive rounds to rank as the top seed in the nation heading into the tournament. Jones finished as the national champion in National Pentathlon and Audible Interpretation, and national runner-up in Improvisational Duo. She took third place in Great Speeches, Radio Broadcasting, Pecha Kucha, Table Topics, Research Paper, and Interviewing. Madison Ronevich, Inwood, is national runner-up in Sports Communication and national semifinalist in College Public Forum. She won third place in Humorous Political Commentary and fifth for Best

Tournament Speaker. Kristiana Carnivale, Inwood, is national runner-up for Humorous Political Commentary, fourth in Interviewing, fifth in Radio Broadcasting, and sixth in Improvisational Duo. Eric Ostrow, Reisterstown, Maryland, was also national runner-up in Improvisational Duo and Pecha Kucha, national semifinalist in College Public Forum, third in Sports Communication, fourth in Table Topics and National Pentathlon, and sixth in Best Tournament Speaker. Ryan Dudrow, Hedgesville, took fourth in Sports Communication, fifth in Great Speeches and Research Paper, and sixth in Improvisational Duo. Aubrey Duckworth, Kingwood, won fourth in Humorous Political Commentary and sixth in Great Speeches and Research Paper.

*Pictured (front row, l. to r.) are Miranda Jones, Huntingtown, Maryland; Kristiana Carnivale, Inwood; Shepherd University President Mary J.C. Hendrix; Spencer VanHoose, Martinsburg; Ilynn Brennan, Fairmont; Madison Ronevich, Inwood; Sam Brown, debate team director; back row, Aubrey Duckworth, Kingwood; Eric Ostrow, Reisterstown, Maryland; Ryan Dudrow, Hedgesville; Kyleigh Wallace, Shepherdstown; and Jacob Klepp-Egge, Westminster, Maryland.*



The Debate and Forensics Team was also successful in defending the West Virginia Intercollegiate Forensics Association Debate Sweepstakes State Championship, making Shepherd University the top-ranked debate program in all of West Virginia for the second year. Shepherd competitors were named State Champions in Policy Debate and Lincoln Douglas Debate. In total, Shepherd collectively placed 31 entries into West Virginia state championship rounds.

These achievements attracted the attention of top recruits. Shepherd received commitments for the fall 2019 from two competitors, Ethan Shaffer and Ben Haines. Schaffer, from Parkersburg South High School, is currently the top ranked high school debater in the state of West Virginia. Haines is a transfer student from Lord Fairfax Community College and is the team captain for LFCC's competitive forensics team.

*The Debate and Forensics Team's success and recruitment were made possible by the support of the President's Club.*



*The Shepherd University 2019 Public Communication Speech and Debate National Championship Team. Photographed from (l. to r.) are Eric Ostrow, senior political science major; Miranda Jones, senior political science major; Madison Ronevich, senior political science major; Sam Brown, director of forensics; Ryan Dudrow, senior political science major; Kristiana Carnivale, senior political science major; and Aubrey Duckworth, junior business administration major.*

## Professor Paul Saab

Graced the halls of the  
Robert C. Byrd Science Center  
and Snyder Hall with his  
“charismatic personality” and  
“sweet demeanor”



*The Paul Saab Memorial Lab is currently used to teach microbiology, a required course for nursing majors and an elective for biology, biochemistry, and environmental studies majors.*

## The Paul Saab Memorial Lab

Shepherd University is honoring the legacy of the late Paul Saab, a dedicated and beloved biology professor at Shepherd for 37 years until his passing in 2001. He touched the lives of many students during his time at Shepherd. During his tenure at Shepherd he could be found volunteering and working with many student groups on campus including as director of Elderhostel, coordinator of culinary arts, and advisor of Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority and Theta Xi fraternity. The impact of Paul Saab was significant at Shepherd and his memory lives on today.

In memory of Paul Saab, funds are being raised to equip a much-needed teaching lab in the Robert C. Byrd Science Center, Room 204. It is the perfect space to honor Saab as it relates to the courses and the students he taught. Initial funding to help launch the campaign was provided by the President's Club.



# Shepherd Success Academy coaches students toward persistence

## THE PROGRAM

Since 2017, 71 students have participated in the Shepherd Success Academy (SSA) that begins during summer orientation and continues through their first year at Shepherd. Students are connected with a success coach who works weekly with students one-to-one, creating an individualized success plan and assisting them in discovering their unique learning style. SSA creates an immediate support system for students who have worked hard to achieve their dream to pursue a bachelor's degree. As students complete this program, they become empowered to take the next steps to shape their futures.

Students with an approximate 2.0-2.5 high school GPA and a 19 ACT composite score/950-970 SAT composite score are invited to join the academy prior to their first semester at Shepherd. The students are then reviewed and selected by the success coach based on their potential to thrive in college with additional support. Alternatively, a student who has not met one or more of Shepherd's required GPA, test scores, or high school requirements is considered a provisionally admitted student and upon enrollment is required to participate in SSA.

The SSA one-to-one model allows conversations with the coach to be tailored to the student's specific needs, including discussing challenges, solutions, and persistence toward the next academic year.



Sessions focus on:

- Advocating for themselves and strategies to conquer undue academic and life pressures, including sharpening time management skills.
- Creating networking skills by challenging students to build relationships by communicating professionally with faculty and staff to explore their academic and career options.
- College reading, writing, and study strategies to earn strong grades.
- Managing stress and maintaining motivation.
- Designing learning strategies tailored to the specific way the individual student learns, allowing them the ability to plan, study smarter, and prepare for tests using custom learning techniques.
- Answering questions about academic policies.

## THE RESULTS

- 98%** believe their experience in the program made their transition to college easier.
- 94%** of students continued their education at Shepherd into their second semester.
- 82%** are considered in good academic standing, continuing into their second semester.

## FALL TO SPRING PERSISTENCE RATE

Fall 2017 to  
Spring 2018

**88%**

persistence rate

Fall 2018 to  
Spring 2019

**100%**

persistence rate

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS (STUDENT TESTIMONIALS)

*"Shepherd Success Academy really helped me adjust to college my first semester. My success coach was always there to help me with whatever I needed, and the academy proved to be an invaluable resource."*

*"Shepherd Success Academy was such an essential part of my first semester here at college. Having a coach to talk to and lead you through a moving and changing environment was amazing. With their help I now feel truly independent and able to achieve my goals."*

*"The Shepherd Success Academy was a must for me, and without it I would still be facing personal difficulties as a student and would have seen little gain in my education."*

*"The Shepherd Success Academy focused on improvement in academics, but also helped me with personal struggles as well. I really enjoyed building a personal relationship with my success coach because it made learning new techniques for academic improvement a lot easier for me."*

*"I actually felt like I was getting the help I needed and seeing how active the success coach is with students helped me gain confidence in myself."*

*"I have learned how I need to be successful through the Shepherd Success Academy. This program has opened me up as a student: I am more active in class, and I have already started working on how I can make myself stand out in my major."*

Students have a chance to unlock their academic potential, and the progress of the SSA students in the first two years has inspired the Office of Student Success to do even more. With the generous support of the President's Club, efforts are underway to expand the SSA footprint and to further support training the next generation of leaders and model citizens.

# Center for Teaching and Learning implements Tutor.com for Higher Education

In fall 2018, President Mary J.C. Hendrix asked the Center for Teaching and Learning for a project idea that would benefit all students. The center wanted to provide something that would aid student retention and success. Staff members know that tutoring assistance works and that tutoring in the Academic Support Center is highly utilized by Shepherd students, with more than 3,000 appointments per academic year. However, the center's survey data show that students want more convenient tutoring hours, as well as on-demand access to tutoring support.

## Recent Academic Support Center tutoring survey data (Fall 2018):

*Has tutoring been a factor in your academic success?*  
75 out of 92 surveyed agree or strongly agree

*How likely are you to sign up for a tutor in the future?*  
87/92 surveyed agree or strongly agree

*How useful would it be if the ASC were open in the evenings?*  
45/92 surveyed strongly agree

*What would you do without tutoring?*  
Fail  
Drop the class  
Google and pray  
Have an inferior paper  
Cry and fail science

*What can we do to improve your tutoring experience?*  
Add more linear algebra tutors  
Have more tutors to cover all subjects  
Have more available hours  
Add more French tutors  
Tutor by Facetime

## Project Description:

Therefore, the project idea was to pilot Tutor.com for Higher Education, a company that provides 24/7 online, on-demand tutoring, as well as scheduled tutoring, drop-off (online) essay review, diagnostic quizzes, and data analytics on student use and progress. The goal was to have Tutor.com supplement and enhance the services Shepherd already has by providing 24-7 tutoring for all students in every subject, thereby increasing course completion rates, persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

This is particularly helpful for the following students:

- Graduate students (it is difficult to find tutors for these students)
- Students in upper-level undergraduate classes (it is difficult to find tutors for these students)
- Dual-enrollment students and “at-risk” students
- Students with difficult work schedules
- International students (especially tutoring with writing)
- Students with families and students who commute to campus

In December 2018, the President's Club awarded the Center for Teaching and Learning \$6,000 to pilot the project with a select number of course sections and 246 hours of tutoring. As of April 29, the center has used 197 of those tutoring hours and had 178 tutoring sessions, averaging 22 minutes in length. More than 300 Shepherd students have been served by this platform.

## Outcomes:

The outcomes are aggressive, but they are modeled after what the Tutor.com for Higher Education promises to do:

- At least 80 percent of students using the service will receive a passing grade in their course.
- At least 88 percent of students using the service will re-enroll at Shepherd the next term (persistence).
- At least 96 percent of students will report improved grades after a tutor.com session.
- At least 96 percent of students will report increased confidence in course material after a tutor.com session.
- Increased Retention for University = Increased Revenue

## Is the program meeting outcomes?

Prior to final grades for Spring 2019, 54 percent of students served have responded to survey questions and, thus far, 89 percent of students are feeling more confident about their school work after using this service; 97 percent of students are glad the center offers this service; 93 percent of students would recommend this service to a friend; 91 percent feel this service is helping them to improve their grades, and 87 percent feel this service is helping them complete homework assignments.



# Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society International Convention

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Support from the President's Club helped the Department of English and Modern Languages send six students and one recent graduate to the Sigma Tau Delta International Convention in St. Louis, Missouri. Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, hosts the convention to provide an opportunity for members to present their creative and critical work, network with other students and faculty interested in literature and language, attend professional development workshops, and hear from dynamic keynote speakers.

Attending from Shepherd were Katharine Hardy, Shenandoah Junction; Gabrielle Hersey, Delray; Sarah Markle, Keyser; Alexandra McCarron, Charles Town; Claudia McCarron, Charles Town; Lilli Sutton, Shepherdstown; and 2018 graduate Kylie Krummel Byers, Fishers, Indiana.

Dr. Heidi M. Hanrahan, professor of English and Sigma Tau Delta's faculty sponsor, explained the value of this experience for students: "We are thrilled that the President's Club helped our students showcase the terrific work they are doing and let them see the connections between that work and the world beyond the classroom."

Claudia McCarron said, "Getting the opportunity to present and share my academic work with others has been an important part of my personal and professional development ever since I started studying at Shepherd. Presenting papers at conferences has not only helped me manage my fear of public speaking, it has also encouraged me to continue practicing and improving my writing and analytical skills. Attending the convention was a highlight of my senior year at Shepherd."

Gabrielle Hersey added, "As a graduating senior, the convention was especially important because I was able to attend seminars on potential career opportunities. I was also able to network with potential graduate schools and employers. Plus, it was really great to be able to spend time with my fellow chapter members before we all graduate and go our separate ways. I'm eternally grateful for the opportunity that Shepherd's president gave us."

*Below left: (l. to r.) Alexandra McCarron, Lilli Sutton, Sarah Markle, Claudia McCarron, Gabrielle Hersey, Kylie Krummel Byers, and Katharine Hardy.*

*Below right top: Gabrielle Hersey.*

*Below right bottom: Claudia McCarron.*







## Rising Tide: The Crossroads Project

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Shepherd University's Department of Music brought Rising Tide: The Crossroads Project for two extraordinary educational presentations and a concert/lecture/art performance on April 16 and 17.

The Crossroads Project is a global sustainability event in TED talk format, featuring the Fry Street Quartet with climate physicist and communicator Dr. Robert Davies. The performance about global sustainability weaves art and science together through music, prose, and stunning visual imagery. It incorporates Rising Tide by American composer Laura Kaminsky, as well as segments of Haydn and Janacek. Large-screen projections of original works by painter Rebecca Allan, photos by internationally recognized environmental photographer Garth Lenz, and exceptional graphics were incorporated into the performance presentation.

On Wednesday, April 16, Shepherd University students met Dr. Davies in the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History

and Education auditorium. This presentation, targeted at college students, explored systems science, ecological footprints, and planetary boundaries. Later that day, The Crossroads Project performers, including Dr. Davies, presented on the topic of Science Communication: Partnering of Science and the Arts. This lecture was targeted at the general public, and both events were free and open to the public.

On Thursday, April 17, The Crossroads Project presented the complete interdisciplinary performance of Rising Tide. Shepherd's Department of Music was thrilled to see so many partner and community organizations share information and cross-promote this event through social media, email, and flyers with members of the American Conservation Film Festival, National Conservation Training Center, the Sierra Club, and local churches to name a few. The President's Club support enabled the opportunity to re-engage in the conversation about the power of interdisciplinary collaboration.





## Office of Student Engagement: Alternative Spring Break

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While other students hit the beach, 14 undergraduate students went to southern West Virginia and put in some manual labor. The students helped with Coalfield Development Corporation, whose founder Brandon Dennison is a Shepherd University alumnus. The students completed 448 community service hours across three locations: Poor Farm, Black Diamond, and West Edge.

At Poor Farm students thoroughly cleaned out two abandoned buildings, uncovered a Civil War-era cemetery after removing debris from the area, and weeded the entire lot. The significance of the Poor Farm location being cleaned out is that it is intended to grow produce that will help the local community and feed school systems in the area, as well as teach agriculture practices to the community.

At Black Diamond and West Edge students completed weeding across a six-acre patch. They also cleaned an office

building where they removed the carpet in nine rooms and two hallways, removed baseboards, and chipped old paint from walls and ceilings.

Shepherd University students were the first people to set foot on the Black Diamond property to begin to make changes for the future. The site is intended to become a recycling plant in Huntington and help the economy of the local community.


The days were long and exhausting, but the students felt renewed at the end of each day with the good work they were doing. One of the students on the trip, Alyssa Garagiola, a first-year sociology major, commented in her nightly reflections that she found gratification in all of their hard work as she and her fellow students were “making an everlasting impact on the community.”



THE SOCIETY FOR

# *Creative Writing*

The President's Club partnered with Hope Maxwell Snyder, poet laureate of Shepherdstown and first poet in residence at Shepherd University, in order to establish The Society for Creative Writing. The Society aims to bring national and international poets, fiction, and non-fiction writers to Shepherd in order to encourage literary dialogue in the community and to expose students to professionals in the writing field, thus giving them the opportunity to explore different ways in which writing can enrich their lives and help prepare them for the future, regardless of their career choice. The inaugural poetry reading by Snyder and Michael Collier, former director of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference at Middlebury College, took place at the Marinoff Theater in February. Temple Cone, poet laureate of Annapolis, visited campus on March 21 and taught a poetry workshop. Snyder is planning a literary festival for October 10-13. Events will include readings, workshops, literary discussions and panels. Guests will include Sir Andrew Motion, former poet laureate of the United Kingdom and Homewood Professor of the Arts at Johns Hopkins University.



Thank You to the  
2018-19 President's Club Members  
for Making These Initiatives Possible.  
Your Investment in Shepherd University  
Makes a Difference!

# Shepherd

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