

PRACTICES EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER

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YWMC MEMBER SHOWCASE: Bluefield College, Virginia

Founded in 1922 and nestled in the majestic Appalachian Mountains of southwest Virginia, **Bluefield College** is a Christ-centered learning community developing servant leaders to transform the world. At Bluefield College, students will “Know & Be Known.” Bluefield is committed to developing students’ potential through the liberal arts, career-oriented programs, service to God and the community, and academic excellence and the integration of faith. Personal instruction and care are a hallmark of the institution, which boasts a 14:1 student-to-faculty ratio in the classroom. Bluefield has 544 undergraduate traditional students, 45% of whom represent a variety of racial and ethnic minorities and 44% of whom are Pell-eligible. Bluefield is a founding member of the Yes We Must Coalition and is currently participating in Data for Decision Making, the Research Fellows Partnership Program, The Wheel Online Consortium, and the Narratives Project.



The College offers over 40 majors, minors, and programs of study for undergraduate and graduate students with strong areas of undergraduate focus in exercise and sport science, business administration, criminal justice, biology, teacher education and licensure, the arts, music, and Christian studies. Bluefield also has strong undergraduate online programs, including

business administration, criminal justice, cybersecurity, early childhood education, human services, ministry leadership, organizational leadership, and an RN-to-BSN in nursing.

Founded with the purpose of educating students in Appalachia, the College continues to do so serving many first-generation students from the region and providing 98% of students with some form of financial aid. In addition, the Pathways tuition program provides eligible students with half-price tuition to meet the national call of delivering a quality education that is affordable and accessible to those at



our country's lowest social-economical level, and in keeping with the College's Christian mission to be a point of access to the youth of Central Appalachia. To qualify for our Pathways program students must live in a school district that is within a 45-mile radius of one of the surrounding counties. This program is only available to students who wish to commute to campus and who are Pell-eligible.

To help students achieve success Bluefield College has several resources in place through the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) on campus. Its website features many useful subscriptions and tools, such as Grammarly, to assist students as they strengthen writing and other skills. Other services offered include peer tutoring, group study sessions, in-depth labs for math and writing skills, academic counseling including accountability partnerships, individual academic coaching sessions, skills workshops, referrals for other services, and study spaces.

Students are also monitored by internal software called "BC Thrive." This software serves as an early alert system for course work, class attendance, and retention. This system has an alert feature that coaches, faculty, staff, and students can access if a student is dealing with obstacles to their education. The team assigned to the area is notified, and an assigned care circle is established with the goal of seeing that the student continues to thrive at Bluefield College.

For additional information or questions about Bluefield College, please email bcnews@bluefield.edu or call 276.326.4212.

Institutional Resources/Practices

When **Paul Quinn College** (TX), a federal work college, decided to convert its football field into an organic farm, many eyebrows were raised. But the move symbolized the College's dedication to a team of a different kind — the team of individuals and organizations fighting to end food insecurity and injustice in the United States. Located in a federally-recognized food desert, the WE over Me Farm has produced and provided more than 30,000 pounds of organic produce since its inception in March 2010, and no less than 10% of this produce has been donated to neighborhood charitable organizations. The rest is sold directly to local farmer's markets — including the farmer's market on the PQC campus — as well as restaurants and grocers throughout Dallas. The College's largest single account is Legends Hospitality, the vendor that serves AT&T Stadium, where the Cowboys play. A portion of the fresh produce is also served in the College's dining hall.

Under the guidance of the Farm Manager, the WE over Me Farm is operated and maintained entirely by Paul Quinn student employees who actively engage in all farm activities, from business planning to marketing. The Farm thus serves as a model of socially and environmentally-driven servant leadership and entrepreneurship. Boasting one of the largest student rosters on campus, it also serves as a demonstration site and lab for courses from business to biology, impacting dozens of students directly each term. For further information, contact: Chris Dowdy, VPAA, cdowdy@pqc.edu.

YWMC Webinar Series

The next YWMC Webinar in our Fall Series will focus on Strategies for Addressing Student Basic Needs Insecurities and is scheduled for Friday, September 27, at 1pm ET. To register for this event, go to: <https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WNhwNkbnCS92OdBElpL4k0A>. The second webinar in this series will take place later in October — be on the lookout for a Save-the-Date notice.

Recordings and accompanying slides of past webinars are available on the YWMC Website, <https://www.yeswemustcoalition.org/publications-webinars/#webinars>.

Submissions for Future Issues

YWMC members are encouraged to submit examples of policies, practices and/or resources that you have found to be effective in promoting student success and that you would like to share with your YWMC colleagues. Send brief descriptions to Nia Lane Chester, YWMC Program Manager. niachester@gmail.com.