

# PARENT & FAMILY

## NEWSLETTER

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### **FROM THE HILL**

The fall semester is off to a wonderful start, and it's been such a joy watching our campus come alive again! Our returning students have hit the ground running, diving back into academics, activities, and life on the Hill with energy and confidence. Meanwhile, our first-year students are finding their rhythm, making new friends, and settling into their home away from home. They're already learning how to balance their studies with the exciting opportunities McDaniel offers outside the classroom.

But before they arrived, some exciting renovations were completed on the Hill, including updates to the Learning Commons @ Hoover Library, now a one-stop hub for academic support. The space brings together academic deans, student success coaches, the Writing Center, STEM Center, and Student Accessibility and Support Services, alongside library and technology resources to better serve students.

We also refreshed the Black Student Union Clubroom and renovated the Economics and Business Administration department in Lewis Recitation Hall to create a more dynamic learning environment.

Work is continuing on the outdoor track and field facility and on a complete renovation of Merritt Hall, which will feature exciting new academic programs, including the B.A. in Early Childhood Education, M.S. in Occupational Therapy, and M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology. And coming soon — a brand-new dining option in Gill Center! We're thrilled to continue expanding spaces that bring comfort, convenience, and energy to campus life.

Now you know why you need to mark your calendars for [Parent & Family Weekend, Nov. 15-17](#). This is your chance to spend time with your student, connect with other McDaniel families, and see all the wonderful things happening on campus. From cheering on the Green Terror to meeting the folks who see your students every day — it's a weekend you won't want to miss! (Need gear to show your McDaniel pride? Check out the [online spirit shop](#) to order now.)

As you read through this newsletter, you'll find important updates from campus offices and teams who work hard every day to support your student's success and make McDaniel feel like home.

Happy fall from all of us on the Hill!



Christine Moran  
AVP of Student Success



Heidi Reigel '97  
AVP of Alumni & Parent Engagement

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## **ACADEMIC DATES**

Monday, Sept. 5

Last day to drop a class with no grade or change to audit

Monday, Sept. 22

Jan Term 2026 registration begins (non-travel courses)

Monday-Tuesday, Oct. 13-14

Fall break (no classes)

Tuesday, Oct. 14

Mid-semester grades available

## **Settling into life on the Hill**



Aerial view of new students.

Orientation was a great success, and our first-year and transfer students are already finding their place in the McDaniel community! One highlight of New Student Orientation was a scavenger hunt through downtown Westminster, giving students a chance to explore their new home away from home — special congratulations to Peer Mentor Natalie Litvak and her group for taking first place!

This fall, first-year students are encouraged to join the virtual First-Year Seminar Bingo Battle for a chance to win prizes. Each bingo square highlights a campus event or first-year milestone designed to help them fully embrace their first semester. Students are already sharing selfies and checking off goals as they engage with all McDaniel has to offer.

We're also proud to welcome over 50 transfer students, the second largest group in school history! Their semester kicks off with special activities just for them, including an evening ice cream social to dive into McDaniel resources and an outdoor games night hosted by Campus Recreation.

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## WHAT TO DO?

There's never a shortage of activities and events for McDaniel students to enjoy and get involved! Encourage your student to check out upcoming programs by visiting the Fall 2025 Undergraduate Events page on the student portal or exploring What's Up McDaniel for the latest happenings on campus.

Additionally, McDaniel College is committed to helping students explore opportunities, build meaningful connections, and prepare for their futures. This fall, the Center for Experience and Opportunity and the First-Year Experience team are offering a dynamic lineup of events designed to support student growth and engagement.

### September Highlights:

**Sept. 17** – A Night Among the Stars: Astrology with FYE (Red Square, 7:30 p.m.): A relaxed evening of stargazing and conversation.

**Sept. 25** – Resume Review Drop-In (Innovation Lab, 11 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.): Students can get personalized feedback on their resumes.

**Sept. 25-28** – Westminster Fallfest (Downtown Westminster): A local favorite with food, music, and community fun. Families are welcome to attend!

### October Highlights:

**Oct. 1** – Mock Interview Day (Mid-Level Roj, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.): Practice interviews with professionals to build confidence and skills.

**Oct. 3** – Transfer Coffee Date (Meet at Big Baker, 10:30 a.m.): A casual meet-up for transfer students to connect over coffee.

**Oct. 8** – Design Your Future Workshop: Grad School Applications (Innovation Lab, 4 p.m.): Tips and strategies for standing out in the grad school application process.

**Oct. 29** – Professional Pathway Showcase: Quantitative, Computing, and Business Sciences (Mid-Level Roj, 11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.): Students can explore potential career fields that align with their interests and academic pursuits.

These events are just a glimpse of how McDaniel supports students in their academic, personal, and professional journeys. We encourage families to talk with their students about participating!

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## CHEER ON THE GREEN TERROR





Our beloved mascot joined the cheerleaders on the sidelines to rally the crowd and celebrate McDaniel pride during a home football game.

There's nothing like the energy of game day on the Hill! Encourage your student to show their Green Terror pride and come out to support our athletics teams this season. Whether it's football or field hockey in the stadium, volleyball matches in Gill, or soccer on the field, there are plenty of opportunities to see our student-athletes in action.

Check out schedules, scores, and team updates on the [McDaniel Athletics website](#) so you don't miss a moment of the excitement!

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## **THE WRITING CENTER**

At the Writing Center, students from all majors receive individualized support at every stage of the writing process, whether they are crafting an essay, research paper, resume, or creative project. Writing is a cornerstone of a McDaniel education, equipping students with the communication and critical thinking skills that set them apart in their careers and academic pursuits.

The McDaniel Writing Center is recruiting its next cohort of undergraduate peer tutors! If your student has a love for writing and enjoys helping others — while gaining professional experience and earning money — encourage them to apply. Applications are due by Friday, Oct. 10, and selected students will enroll in Introduction to Peer Tutoring, a four-credit training course, in spring 2026. Students can learn more and apply [on the McDaniel Portal](#).

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## **MEET THE DEAN OF STUDENTS**

Dean of Students Phillip Sullivan, Ph.D., leads the offices that make up Campus Life, including Residence Life, the Wellness Center, Student Engagement, and the Office of Student Belonging. Collectively, these offices offer resources, guidance, and opportunities to ensure every student succeeds academically, socially, and personally.

Sullivan is dedicated to building a strong community and encouraging students to express their voices. One way students can participate is through the Student Government Association Town Halls, scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 30, and Tuesday, Nov. 18, from 6-7 p.m. in the Naganna Forum. These events provide students with a platform to give feedback, share ideas, and influence campus life — while also inspiring future student leaders.

He is always available to assist students with challenges, connect them to resources, and help them maximize their McDaniel experience. Parents and families can feel assured knowing their student has a dedicated team focused on their well-being and success.

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## **RESIDENCE LIFE**

Did you know that residence halls will remain open during the upcoming fall break on Oct. 13-14? While there won't be classes on those days, campus will still be buzzing — the dining hall and administrative offices will be open, and students are welcome to stay on campus and enjoy a mid-semester breather.

For a complete list of opening and closing dates for the year, be sure to check out the [Residence Life: Opening & Closing Calendar](#).

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## **WELLNESS CENTER**



Students sit outside on a sunny day.

The Wellness Peer Education and Empowerment Program (PEEP) has launched! This program aims to empower students to take charge of their holistic well-being here on the Hill. Research consistently shows that student involvement in outreach and prevention increases persistence and engagement.

These new student leaders, our “Wellness PEEPs,” will play a central role in this mission by creating events and educational resources for the student community and supporting students in taking steps toward wellness. Wellness PEEPs are enrolled in a two-credit EXP course and work closely with licensed mental health and health practitioners. In addition to the service these student leaders will provide to their peers, the Wellness Center staff will support the personal and professional development of the PEEPs by giving and receiving feedback, establishing support networks, reaching their goals, and fostering mentorship relationships.

If you have any questions at all, please give us a call at 410-857-2243 or email us at [wellness@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:wellness@mcdaniel.edu).

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## **THE OFFICE OF STUDENT BELONGING**

Led by Director Andraelya Moody, the Office of Student Belonging is committed to creating a campus environment where every student feels genuinely seen, supported, and celebrated. Our goal is to build authentic connections and foster inclusive spaces that empower students to succeed. Through purposeful programming, advocacy, and teamwork, we aim to ensure that all students at McDaniel College experience a strong sense of belonging and are inspired to lead meaningful change within our community.

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## **CAMPUS SAFETY**

The Department of Campus Safety is excited to welcome students back to campus for the new school year! Our team is here to help create a safe and supportive environment where students can live and learn confidently.

A quick reminder: All student vehicles on campus must be registered and display a valid parking permit. This helps us manage parking fairly and ensures emergency access to lots and roadways. Students can complete registration through the Campus Safety Office or online.

**McDaniel College's Department of Campus Safety** is available 24 hours, seven days a week. Whether it's a safety escort, vehicle assistance, or responding to emergencies, our team is always available to support students. Campus Safety can be reached anytime at 410-857-2202.

We look forward to a great year ahead!

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## **FINANCIAL AID TEAM**

Greetings from the Financial Aid team! We hope that your student's semester is off to a great start!

### **Be in the know.**

Now that the semester is underway, this is a great time to revisit important financial aid policies and procedures. Throughout the fall, we'll use this space to highlight key policies. A full list of financial aid policies is available [online](#).

### **This month's spotlight: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

All students who receive federal aid and McDaniel need-based aid are required to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, as mandated by federal regulations. To remain eligible, your student must:

- Maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA
- Successfully complete at least 67% of attempted credits
- Example of pace calculation: If your student attempts 30 credits in an academic year, they must successfully complete at least 20 of those credits ( $20 \div 30 = 67\%$ ). Keep in mind that

withdrawals (W) and failing grades (F) negatively impact the pace and can put your student's aid eligibility at risk.

### **Looking Ahead: 2026-27 FAFSA**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2026-27 academic year will open on **Oct. 1, 2025**. Don't wait to file! Completing it early ensures your student is considered for the maximum amount of aid available. We strongly encourage all students to complete the FAFSA as soon as possible.

### **Always here to help!**

Don't forget that your financial aid counselor and our team are here to help you and your student throughout the semester. If you have questions or need any assistance, don't hesitate to contact us! You can reach us by phone at 410-857-2233 in the office Monday - Friday between 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and by email at [finaid@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:finaid@mcdaniel.edu). You can also stay connected by following us on Instagram @mcdaniel\_financial\_aid!

Financial aid counselors are assigned based on your student's last name:

- **A-F:** Emma Sorrell | [emma.sorrell@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:emma.sorrell@mcdaniel.edu) | 410-386-4807
- **G-M:** Lerlene McAllister | [lerlene.mcallister@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:lerlene.mcallister@mcdaniel.edu) | 410-871-3311
- **N-Z:** Kenzie Elliott | [melliott@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:melliott@mcdaniel.edu) | 410-857-2255

### **Meet the Financial Aid team!**

This fall, the Financial Aid Office is hosting a special tabling event where students can stop by, say hello, and meet their dedicated financial aid counselor in person. It's a great opportunity for them to ask questions and get to know the team that supports their McDaniel journey.

Encourage your student to check their email for more details about when and where to stop by!

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## **STUDENT ACCOUNTS/BURSAR**

### **Keeping You in the Loop: Important Billing & Refund Updates**

McDaniel College is making it easier and more secure for students and families to receive refunds — all refunds will now be issued via direct deposit.

- Students have received instructions on how to set up direct deposit through PayMyTuition.
- Parents receiving refunds from Parent PLUS loans will also need to set up direct deposit.  
To do this, students must add parents as authorized users in PayMyTuition.

**Pro Tip:** Encourage your student to review their billing statement each month — especially in mid-September when parking registration and athletic fees are added.

### **Key Tuition & Payment Dates to Know**

- Spring statements available: Mid-November



- Spring payment plan enrollment opens: Nov. 15
  - \$75 enrollment fee for the semester
  - Installments due: Dec. 1, Jan. 1, Feb. 1, Mar. 1, Apr. 1
- Spring tuition due: Jan. 5

If you have questions or need help navigating PayMyTuition, feel free to reach out to the Bursar's Office at 410-857-2209 or [bursaroffice@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:bursaroffice@mcdaniel.edu). We're here to support you and your student every step of the way.

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## **PARENT HOMEWORK**

Why should your student be the only one with homework? We've got an easy (and fun!) assignment for you: Bookmark our [Parent & Family Resources](#) page — your go-to hub for everything you need to support your student throughout their McDaniel journey. Once you've bookmarked it, send Heidi an email at [hreigel@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:hreigel@mcdaniel.edu) and share why you're proud your student chose McDaniel. **The first three parents to complete this assignment will win a McDaniel T-shirt!**

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## **HUG FROM HOME**



Proud McDaniel parents hugging their daughter.

Want to put a big smile on your student's face? Our **Hug from Home** campaign is the perfect way to brighten their day and show your love — no matter how many miles separate you!

Make a gift of \$75 or more to the Fund for McDaniel by Sept. 30, and your student will receive a cozy McDaniel beanie along with a personal, heartfelt note from you cheering them on. It's a sweet surprise that reminds them you're always in their corner as they work toward new heights here on the Hill.

Your gift not only warms your student's heart but also benefits the Fund for McDaniel, enhancing the McDaniel experience for every Green Terror by supporting scholarships, experiential learning, and facility improvements.

Send a Hug from Home today!

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## **Greek Life at McDaniel College: A Tradition of Leadership and Connection**

Greek-letter organizations have been a vibrant part of McDaniel College since the 1920s, offering students opportunities for leadership, service, friendship, and personal growth. Joining a fraternity or sorority can help students develop lifelong skills, build a strong support network, and get more deeply involved in campus life.

We're proud to offer a vibrant Greek Life community that includes a variety of fraternities and sororities. Here's an overview of the councils and organizations your student might get involved in:

### **Panhellenic Association (PHA)**

This council includes our local sorority and national organizations that are part of the National Panhellenic Conference:

- Phi Mu
- Phi Sigma Sigma
- Alpha Sigma Tau

### **McDaniel Fraternal Council (MFC)**

This group includes our local fraternity and several national/international fraternities:

- Alpha Sigma Phi
- Phi Delta Theta

### **National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)**

These are historically Black fraternities and sororities, also known as the "Divine Nine:"

- Alpha Phi Alpha Inc.
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc.
- Omega Psi Phi Inc.
- Sigma Gamma Rho Inc.

## **National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO)**

This council includes Latinx-based fraternities and sororities:

- Hermandad de Sigma Iota Alpha Inc.

How students can get involved:

- Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 to be eligible to join a chapter.
- Interested students can reach out to chapter presidents or attend open events to learn more.
- Those curious about NPHC or NALFO chapters should connect with the director of Student Engagement for details.
- Chapters and the Office of Student Engagement host events throughout the year — these are great opportunities to meet members and explore Greek life.
- Each council has different recruitment styles and timelines, so students should learn about the process early.

Encourage your student to attend events, ask questions, and explore whether Greek life could be a rewarding part of their McDaniel experience!

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## **A collection of photos - just for YOU!**

It was an exciting start to the academic year! The college welcomed 525 new first-year and transfer students and celebrated the first day of classes with free coffee, sweet treats, and giveaways. Just days later, the annual Involvement Fair showcased nearly 100 student organizations, intramural sports, and fraternities and sororities, helping students discover how to get involved on campus.

Check out [our collection of photos](#) – maybe you'll spot your Green Terror!

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## **Conversation Starters: Prompts to connect with your student about the Hill.**





Students smiling and posing with the McDaniel College mascot outdoors, celebrating the start of a new semester.

- How was the Welcome Back Bash during the first day of classes?
- What clubs or organizations are you interested in joining?
- What class are you most excited about? Why?

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## Let's Get Social



Follow McDaniel College social media accounts to be in the know! Don't forget to join our McDaniel College Parent & Families Facebook Group. All accounts can be found on the [Parent & Family Resources](#) page.

Update Your Contact Information

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