

PARENT & FAMILY

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE HILL

Fall has fully arrived on the Hill! The trees are showing off their colors, and students are savoring the crisp air as they move through the final stretch of the semester. With Thanksgiving break on the horizon, the campus is buzzing with a mix of focus, excitement, and anticipation as student's complete projects and internships and prep for exams.

After the Thanksgiving holiday, encourage your student to take part in one of McDaniel's most treasured traditions, [Out of Darkness: A Celebration of Light](#), on Wednesday, Dec. 3. This meaningful event invites the campus community to slow down and embrace a moment of peace and calm as we near the end of the semester. Surrounded by light, music, and a sense of togetherness, students will leave feeling refreshed, uplifted, and ready to welcome the season with renewed energy and hope on the Hill.

And we're going to take a moment to check out a concert or two as we gear up for the [annual fall concerts](#). If you're in the Westminster area, come check them out for yourself.

Parent & Family Weekend 2025 was a wonderful success! We loved welcoming families to campus and getting to know so many of you throughout the weekend. We hope you found the schedule to be the perfect balance of planned activities and relaxing downtime with your student, and that you got to explore their favorite parts of life on the Hill and in the Westminster community. [Please enjoy some of our photos from the weekend!](#)

McDaniel College proudly celebrated our students' outstanding achievements at the annual Undergraduate Awards Ceremony and Brunch on Sunday morning. The event featured an inspiring keynote address from senior **Nicki James**, who encouraged her peers to embrace every opportunity to learn and lead as we gathered to honor academic excellence, leadership, and campus involvement across all class years. [Congratulations to our award winners](#) — you make the Hill proud!

Be sure to mark your calendars for **next year's Parent & Family Weekend: Nov. 6-8, 2026!**

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making your student's college experience meaningful, memorable, and successful.



Christine Moran
AVP of Student Success



Heidi Reigel '97
AVP of Constituent Engagement

ACADEMIC DATES

Wednesday, Nov 26 - Sunday, Nov 30	Thanksgiving Break (no classes)
Monday, Dec. 1	Classes resume
Friday, Dec. 5	Classes end
Monday, Dec. 8 - Friday Dec. 12	Final exams
Friday, Dec. 12	Semester ends

FIRST YEAR & TRANSFER STUDENTS

100 Days

On December 5th, first-year students will join college staff to celebrate 100 Days of School with a festive winter-themed event featuring a photo booth, activity stations, and sweet treats for all to enjoy.

My Design: A Graduation Requirement

All first-year students will return to campus on Jan. 4 to participate in My Design. The program runs Jan. 5-23, with daily sessions held 10 a.m. to noon. Details about move-in will be shared directly from the Office of Residence Life.

The program includes a special evening kickoff event on Jan. 5 and a day off on Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan. 19). Meal plans — even for commuter students — are provided throughout the program.

Each student will complete a Wellness Wheel by attending workshops and activities across the eight dimensions of wellness, earning credit for each event. Students may choose to spread their activities throughout Jan Term or complete them all in one week. At the end of Jan Term, they will submit their completed Wellness Wheel to their instructor for credit.

All Jan Term involvement opportunities will be available in CampusGroups during fall finals week so students can begin planning which events they want to attend. During the final week of Jan Term, students can look forward to an Academic Open House and a People Panel designed to support their academic and personal growth.

The experience concludes with a Closing Luncheon on Jan. 23, featuring great raffle prizes

and a celebration of all that students have accomplished through My Design.

My Design classes are already being filled — **students do not have to register.**

Student Success

Registration advising is still taking place with over half of the first-year students approved to register! We hosted Fall in the Halls on Oct. 30. in Rouzer and Whiteford Halls for first-year students who needed to be cleared for registration. And on Oct. 27, the support team held walk-in hours for sophomores and above who are undeclared to discuss their registration/major selection for spring 2026. Registration started on Nov. 3.

The Pick STEM! Center

The Pick STEM! Center is currently hiring students for assistant positions for fall 2026! The selection process will continue through the end of the semester, with training to take place in spring 2026. Interested students should email stemcenter@mcdaniel.edu for more information.

The Writing Center

As your student dives into their final essays and other big writing assignments, remind them that the Writing Center is here to help! We have highly trained peer tutors with experience in many kinds of writing across several disciplines. They can drop in or make an appointment at mcdaniel.mywconline.com!

RESIDENCE LIFE



McDaniel Hall in the fall.

Happy November, everyone. Please remember that for the upcoming Thanksgiving break, residence halls will close at 10 a.m. on Nov. 26 and will re-open at noon on Nov. 30.

[Residence Life: Opening & Closing Calendar | McDaniel College](#)

Winter Break

Students should plan to depart for winter break within 24 hours after their final exam, but no later than 10 a.m. on Dec. 13. If your student is returning to campus for Jan Term or spring courses, they do NOT need to move out all their property. However, building access over the break will be restricted so students cannot swipe into the buildings. Make sure they pack accordingly. Anything they need to access during the winter break must be taken with them when they depart.

If your student is going abroad for the spring or graduating mid-year, please remind them that they must move out completely in December after final exams. Housing spaces are often filled for the next semester by students who were abroad for the fall or are transferring to McDaniel as new spring 2026 students, so the departing student needs to move out when they finish their exams.

Please let us know if you have any questions at reslife@mcdaniel.edu. You can also follow us at [@mcdanielreslife](#) on Instagram.

CAMPUS LIFE



Students enjoying the Late Night Breakfast event in Englar Dining Hall.

Late Night Breakfast — Monday, Dec. 8 | 9–10:30 p.m.

Encourage your student to take a well-deserved study break and join friends in the dining hall for one of McDaniel's favorite traditions—**Late Night Breakfast!** This end-of-semester event features comfort food, laughter, and a chance to recharge before tackling more exams.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The end of fall semester shuttle to BWI Airport and BWI Amtrak sign-up link will be open on Nov. 25 at 8 a.m. and close on Dec. 9 at midnight on the My McDaniel Portal under Campus Safety.

Available dates and times are:

Friday, Dec. 12, departing campus at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 13, departing campus at 10 a.m.

Pre-registration is required for the return to campus with the January Term shuttle. The shuttle service will be available on Sunday, Jan. 3, 2026, departing from BWI at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. to bring students to campus.

If your student misses the pre-registration deadlines and still needs transportation, please email Nora Hood at nhood@mcdaniel.edu.

FINANICAL AID

As the semester winds down, it's a great time to check in on your student's financial aid and plan for the next semester and year. Here are a few quick reminders to help keep everything on track:

- **The 2026-27 FAFSA**

The FAFSA is open, and we suggest completing it as soon as possible so your student can be first in line for all available aid. Make sure both you and your student can log in at studentaid.gov using your FSA IDs. If you've forgotten your info, you can easily reset it on the website.

- **Check Aid and Billing**

Before heading home for winter break, your student should take a quick look at their student account and financial aid portal to confirm everything is set for spring. If something doesn't look right, the Financial Aid Office is happy to help!

- **Academic Progress Matters**

To keep receiving financial aid, students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards. This means maintaining at least a 2.0 GPA and successfully completing most of their attempted courses. We encourage you to check in with your student about their academic progress; many are surprised to learn their aid can be suspended after the review process if these standards aren't met. For students currently on academic probation, their grades will be reviewed at the end of the fall semester to determine their continued eligibility. If your student is considering dropping or withdrawing from a class, remind them to speak with their student success coach or the Financial Aid Office first, since making changes to their schedule could affect their financial aid.

Your personal financial aid specialist is here to help your family and answer any questions you have. The alphabetical breakdown of their students is by the first letter of the student's last name:

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

The team is here to help you with all your financial aid needs! Feel free to reach out to us on the main line at 410-857-2233 or send an email to finaid@mcdaniel.edu.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS/BURSAR

As we approach the end of the fall semester, please take a moment to view your student's statements to ensure that their accounts are current and have an account balance of zero.

Important Dates

Monday, Nov. 17	Spring bills available online.
Monday, Nov. 17	Spring payment plan enrollment opens. The first installment is due at the time of enrollment. Installment amounts are based on your enrollment date. Installments are due Dec. 1, Jan. 1, Feb. 1, March 1, and April 1. There is a \$75 enrollment fee and payment plan installments must always be kept current.
Monday, Jan.5	Spring bill due in full. Last day to enroll in the payment plan.

Don't forget! 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.

Looking ahead to important dates for summer and fall 2026

Monday, June 1	Summer tuition due.
Monday, June 15	Fall payment plan enrollment opens. The first installment is due at the time of enrollment. Installment amounts are based on your enrollment date. Installments are due July 1, Aug.1, Sept. 1, Oct. 1, and Nov. 1. There is a \$75 enrollment fee.
Wednesday, July 15	Fall tuition due.
Wednesday, July 15	Health insurance waiver deadline.

Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions at 410-857-2209 or bursaroffice@mcdaniel.edu.

As Thanksgiving approaches, many of you eagerly anticipate your kids' return. It's a time for family, gratitude, and the joy of reuniting. Welcoming your kids home for the holiday can be a heartwarming experience if approached with enthusiasm and open arms. Embrace the changes you will undoubtedly observe in your young adults with an open heart, and let's explore some tips for making this Thanksgiving a truly special occasion.

College is a transformative time, and your kids will likely return with newfound independence, new friends, and perhaps even a slightly different outlook on life. Encourage open and honest communication, allowing them to share their college adventures and challenges. This helps you understand their new perspective and strengthens the bond between you and your child.

While they're home, cherish the moments you have together. College life can be hectic, and Thanksgiving provides a precious opportunity for quality family time. Invite your child to join in cooking, go for a walk, or watch a fun movie. Remember, though, your child may have been missing friends. Give them space to visit high school friends, too.

Express your gratitude for having your children home and resist the idea of perfection. Your child may be very tired coming home and need a lot of rest. They may also want some time alone after a few months with a roommate! While their changes may be noticeable and perhaps a bit hard to swallow, they are still the kid you know and love. Try to appreciate the unique individuals they are becoming and the bright futures they are building.

The Wellness Center wishes you and yours a warm and wonderful Thanksgiving.

GREEN & GOLD RESULTS ARE IN!

A big thank you to all 1,084 donors who contributed over \$147,000 during our 2025 Green & Gold Challenge! Eleven teams surpassed their goals, and we had some incredible battles for the top spots!

[Check out our final leaderboards](#) below and see if your team took home a win.



DONOR HIGHLIGHTS

Our future as an innovative liberal arts college focused on student achievement and professional success lies in us reaching new heights — together. Thank you to the following donors for their recent gifts to the college in support of the strategic plan and [Reaching New Heights: The Campaign for McDaniel College](#). We can't do what we do without you!

- \$205,974.75 from the late Joan E. Barkelew Coffman '54 to support The Edgar Coffman '53 Indoor Golf Teaching Center.
- \$150,000 from Christopher Newman '88, P'24 and Susan Shoumer Newman '89, P'24 to support the Learning Commons and The Fund for McDaniel.
- \$26,867 from Thomas Quirk '92 to support The Fund for McDaniel and The Lewis Recitation Hall Renovations Fund.

[Make your gift online](#) today or contact Justin Forget, director of annual giving, at 410-386-4801 or jforget@mcdaniel.edu.

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



Students walking across campus with the McTeer Zepp fountain in the foreground.

- Who or what are you most thankful for at McDaniel?
- How are you planning to get involved with Out of Darkness?
- How are you preparing for your final exams?

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.

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