

PARENT & FAMILY

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE HILL

We hope you are enjoying having your Green Terror back at home for winter break and that they've told you all about the end of the semester celebrations that helped them kick off the holiday season.

What a magical evening we had on the Hill right after Thanksgiving Break as our campus community gathered for **Out of Darkness: A Celebration of Light**. This annual event ushers in the holiday season in honor of McDaniel's motto "E Tenebris in Lucem Voco," which means "I call you out of darkness into light." The glow of lights, the feeling of community, and the joyful spirit created a beautiful beginning to winter. [Check out our photo album](#) and [video](#) with highlights from the evening. Maybe you'll spot your student enjoying the festivities!

We have been honored to have your student as part of the Green Terror family this fall. It's been a full and meaningful semester, and we wish you and your student a fun, cozy, and restful break. Speaking of breaks, we want you to know that the college will be closed for winter break starting Wednesday, Dec. 24 and will reopen Monday, Jan. 5. Residence life will be available when Jan-Term students move back onto campus Sunday, Jan. 4 at noon. Cheers to the new year!



Christine Moran
AVP of Student Success



Heidi Reigel '97
AVP of Constituent Engagement

THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE (FYE)

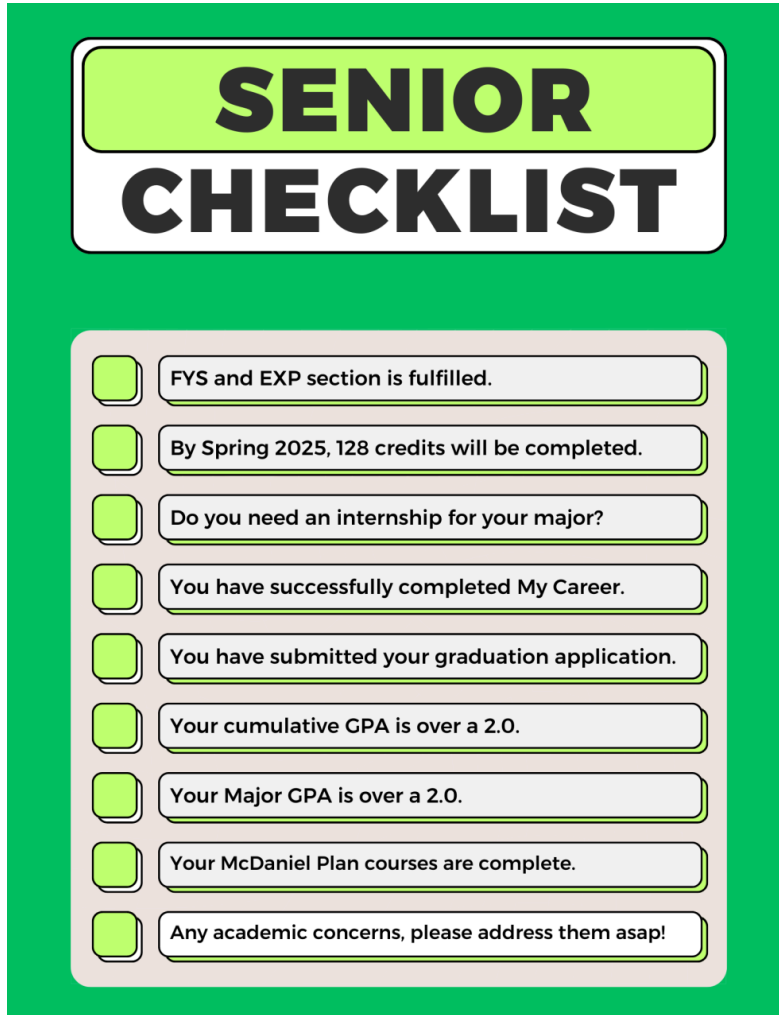
Applications for FYE peer mentors are now open. If your student enjoyed their first semester here and is looking for a way to connect with new students, encourage them to apply as a [first-year peer mentor](#) or [transfer peer mentor](#).

Do you have a first-year student?

Don't forget: All first-year students are registered for My Design as their Jan Term 2026 course. My Design is part of the McDaniel Commitment and is required for graduation. The course is held on campus from Jan. 5 to Jan. 23.

Do you have a senior?

Parents of seniors, please read over the senior checklist. These are great bullets to go through with your student to make sure they are on track for graduation this spring.

A green rectangular graphic containing a checklist. At the top, a white rounded rectangle with a green border contains the words "SENIOR" and "CHECKLIST" in large, bold, black capital letters. Below this, a light gray rounded rectangle contains a list of ten items, each preceded by a green square checkbox. The items are: "FYS and EXP section is fulfilled.", "By Spring 2025, 128 credits will be completed.", "Do you need an internship for your major?", "You have successfully completed My Career.", "You have submitted your graduation application.", "Your cumulative GPA is over a 2.0.", "Your Major GPA is over a 2.0.", "Your McDaniel Plan courses are complete.", and "Any academic concerns, please address them asap!".

**SENIOR
CHECKLIST**

- ☐ FYS and EXP section is fulfilled.
- ☐ By Spring 2025, 128 credits will be completed.
- ☐ Do you need an internship for your major?
- ☐ You have successfully completed My Career.
- ☐ You have submitted your graduation application.
- ☐ Your cumulative GPA is over a 2.0.
- ☐ Your Major GPA is over a 2.0.
- ☐ Your McDaniel Plan courses are complete.
- ☐ Any academic concerns, please address them asap!

Senior checklist for graduation.

COMMENCEMENT 2026

Save the date to celebrate your favorite graduate!

May 23, 2026

Please continue to check the [Commencement webpage](#) for the latest information as we approach the big day.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING ACADEMIC DATES

- **Dec. 31:** Official fall graduation date
 - **Jan. 5:** January Term begins (My Design for first-year students)
 - **Jan. 6:** Last day to add a class
 - **Jan. 7:** Last day to drop a class with no grade or change to audit
 - **Jan. 14:** Last day for withdrawals from class with “W” grade or select P/Dx/F
 - **Jan. 26:** Spring semester begins
-

ACAMEDIC RESOURCES

The Pick STEM! Center: Now hiring our fall 2026 cohort! Encourage your STEM-minded student to [submit an application](#). They can direct any questions to stemcenter@mcdaniel.edu.

Finish in Four: Student Success will be hosting a Finish in Four workshop every week during the January term. Please encourage your student to attend to plan a path to graduation.

Spring Registration: If your student needs assistance with their spring 2026 schedule or registration, please have them contact studentsupport@mcdaniel.edu so a staff member can assist!

The Writing Center: On behalf of the staff at the Writing Center, thanks for another great semester! We'll be closed during Jan Term but are excited to return in the spring for more tutoring, workshops, and writing!

RESIDENCE LIFE



McDaniel Hall framed by holiday lights.

The Office of Residence Life cherishes the connections we've established over the past 16 weeks. We look forward to welcoming your student back for the spring semester on Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026, at noon. If your student is registered for My Design, then we will see them a few days after the New Year!

Spring semester is also when we start preparing for the next academic year. The 2026-27 housing deposit is due on March 7, 2026. Applications will open during the first week of the spring semester. Students will be able to register for housing and form a roommate group on eRezLife.

A few recommended talking points to help your student prepare:

1. When is the \$200 housing deposit due for next year?
2. Would you like to live in a traditional hall, house, or apartment?
3. Have you thought about your potential roommate(s)?
4. How often do you eat in the dining hall?
5. What accommodations do you need to help you be successful on campus?

Reminder: Students registered for January Term My Design can return to the residence halls on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, at noon. Be sure to bookmark the [Residence Life: Opening & Closing Calendar](#).

CAMPUS SAFETY

Shuttle information for transportation to return to campus.

The **Jan Term 2026 shuttle to return to campus** from BWI Airport and BWI Amtrak will be available **Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026**. The shuttle departs from BWI to campus at 2 p.m., 5 p.m., and 8 p.m.

The **Spring Semester 2026 shuttle to return to campus** from BWI Airport and BWI Amtrak will be available **Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026**. The shuttle departs from BWI at 2 p.m., 5 p.m., and 8 p.m.

Pre-registration is required for all shuttles, and students may access the link through the MyMcDaniel Portal under Campus Safety by selecting the Transportation link.

The Department of Campus Safety helps students navigate a successful and safe experience at McDaniel College and can be reached at 410-857-2202 or campussafety@mcdaniel.edu.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS/BURSAR

Please take a moment each month to review your student's statements to ensure their accounts are up to date. By now, the fall balance should be paid in full.

Important Dates for Spring 2026

Tuition is due Jan. 5. Need a payment plan for tuition? Enrollment for a spring payment plan is open. The first installment is due at the time of enrollment. Installment amounts are based on your enrollment date. Installment due dates are 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. The last day to enroll in the plan for the spring is Jan. 5.

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 their parents, " the Borrower " 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.

CENTER FOR EXPERIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY (CEO)



Holly berries in foreground of Eaton Hall of Science.

Set Your Student Up for a Successful 2026 with the CEO!

Is your student considering an unforgettable experience abroad? Applications for summer and fall 2026 are open! Our Budapest campus and other exciting international locations offer incredible opportunities for academic growth, cultural immersion, and personal development. Studying abroad is more than travel; it's a chance to gain global perspectives and lifelong skills.

What can you do? Start the conversation now! Ask your student about their interest in studying abroad and explore how this experience can fit into their academic and career goals. Your

encouragement can make a big difference in their decision-making process. [Check out all the options available](#) to McDaniel students.

What should your student do? Encourage your student to schedule an appointment with the Study Abroad team through Navigate to discuss options and requirements. Afterward, they should apply by March 1, 2026, to secure a spot in the fall 2026 programs. Don't let this opportunity pass — help your student take the first step toward an extraordinary adventure!

What is your student doing this summer?

Summer 2026 may feel far away, but the best opportunities go fast! Encourage your student to begin exploring internships on Handshake today. Early planning means more choices and less stress later.

Why start now?

- Many employers post summer positions in December and January.
- Applying early increases the chances of landing a great role.

Encourage your student to take these next steps:

- Log in to Handshake and update their profile.
- Browse internships and set alerts for new postings.
- Schedule a career advising appointment through Navigate for resume and application tips.

Help your student take the first step toward building valuable experience this summer!

FINANCIAL AID

A Warm Hello from the Financial Aid Office

As your student settles into a well-earned winter break, we want to share an important update from our office, along with a few helpful reminders to help keep their financial aid and spring planning on track. Our team is here to help make each step as smooth and stress-free as possible.

We're pleased to share that **Destiny Guerrero has been promoted to director of Financial Aid**, following **Kemia Himon's departure to pursue a new professional opportunity**. Destiny has been a valued member of the Financial Aid team since 2019, bringing deep expertise, a commitment to student support, and a strong understanding of McDaniel's aid processes. She is excited to step into this leadership role and continue partnering with students and families throughout their financial aid journeys.

Get a Head Start on 2026-27: FAFSA Now Open

The 2026-27 FAFSA is officially open, and we strongly encourage students to complete it now. Filing early not only keeps next year's aid process simple, it also ensures they receive full consideration for **all available federal, state, and institutional resources**.

To get started:

- Log in at studentaid.gov using your FSA IDs.
- Need help with login information? You can reset credentials quickly on the site.

Don't forget to review aid. Please encourage your student to:

- Review their student account and financial aid portal to confirm everything is accurate for spring.
- Reach out to the Financial Aid Office at finaid@mcdaniel.edu or 410-857-2233 if anything appears incorrect or needs clarification.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Reminders

To remain eligible for financial aid, students must:

- Maintain at least a **2.0 cumulative GPA**, and
- Successfully complete the majority of attempted coursework.

Please note: Students on academic probation will be reviewed once fall grades are posted. Students considering dropping or withdrawing from classes should speak with their success coach or Financial Aid before making changes, as schedule adjustments may impact aid.

Maryland Residents: Important State Aid Requirements

Maryland offers several state programs that can significantly reduce college costs, including but not limited to: Senatorial Scholarship, Delegate Scholarship, Educational Assistance (EA) Grant, Guaranteed Access (GA) Grant, and Teaching Fellows for Maryland.

To remain eligible each year, Maryland families must:

- **Submit the FAFSA by March 1** (a firm state deadline).
- Maintain an active **MDCAPS** account.
- Check MDCAPS regularly and respond promptly to any requests.

State award notifications typically begin in early April, although timelines may shift. We will continue to monitor updates and keep families informed.

Get to know us! We also encourage you to meet your student's financial aid counselor.

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

We're here for you! Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting your student's success. If you have any questions, big or small, please reach out. We're always happy to help and look forward to working with you in the coming months.

WELLNESS CENTER

The New Year is often a time for reflection. For many people, this takes the form of New Year's resolutions and big sweeping goals of losing weight, studying more, or sticking to a budget. While goals are important for moving us toward our aspirations, it is imperative to approach resolutions or any goal of behavioral change with a healthy dose of self-compassion. We are more likely to achieve lasting change when we learn to unconditionally accept ourselves exactly as we are today. The concept of micro-habits has a lot to offer, especially for our college students who are often already stretching themselves in myriad new ways as they navigate the transition to adulthood.

A micro-habit is a small version of the larger goal. The power of micro-habits comes from starting small, connecting new desired habits with old automatic ones, and experiencing the reward that comes from completion. Here's an example: The goal to improve hydration by drinking more water every day can start first thing in the morning. Keep a tall glass of water on the bedside table. Before reaching for your phone, drink the water. This tiny step has a high likelihood of success and can jumpstart a steady course of improved hydration and all the wellness benefits that provides! [Check out this article](#) for a quick overview of micro-habits and links to more in-depth resources.

FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (OSE)

We know your student is eager to be settling into winter break, but we're already planning something fun for their return! **Welcome Back Week: Cozy Week** is coming soon, and campus will be warming up with activities, comfort, and connection.

Here's a peek at the week:

- **Monday, Jan. 26:** Hot Chocolate Bar & Mug Decorating
- **Tuesday, Jan. 27:** Go Bag Essentials
- **Wednesday, Jan. 28:** Plushie Bingo
- **Thursday, Jan. 29:** Relaxation & Animation Night
- **Friday, Jan. 30:** Silent Headphone Disco

We can't wait to welcome everyone back to the Hill!

ATHLETICS

Stay Connected to Green Terror Athletics

Don't miss a minute of the action — you can follow your favorite Green Terror teams all year long at mcdanielathletics.com. Games and matches are available to stream on any device at mcdaniel.edu/watch-athletics.

Make sure you don't miss important updates: Join our mailing list to receive breaking news, stories, and recaps on your favorite McDaniel Athletics teams. [Sign up here!](#)

We're proud to share that [46 McDaniel student-athletes across seven fall sports were named to the 2025 Centennial Conference Fall Academic Honor Roll](#) — a great testament to their

hard work both on the field and in the classroom.

Thank you for your continued support and for cheering on the Green Terror!

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



Students collecting samples from a stream at the McDaniel Environmental Center.

- What are you most proud of this semester?
- What are your plans for winter break?
- What have you learned about yourself?

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

McDaniel College
[Unsubscribe](#)