

Welcome back, Bobcats!

I am so excited for the start of this academic year!

Whether you're a new student, faculty or staff member stepping onto campus for the first time or are a returning Bobcat, we are so thrilled to have you here. As I am sure you will soon realize, Frostburg is a vibrant place full of energy and opportunity. Bobcats take a great deal of pride in the strength of our community – a true regional treasure.

One of our priorities this year is to build upon our partnerships within our strong community to reinforce the deep connections between FSU and the area it serves. As I noted in an Op Ed in today's Cumberland Times-News, Frostburg State University is not just a place of higher education – it is an incubator of leadership, creativity and innovation. Whether in the classroom, lab, athletic field or on stage, I look forward to seeing all the fresh ideas and shared accomplishments that this year will bring.

Speaking of community partnerships, I would be remiss if I didn't extend my heartfelt thanks to workers from the City of Frostburg for their help installing our new FSU banners along Main Street (pictured below), right in time for students' return to campus for the fall semester.



Being a relatively newcomer to Mountain Maryland, I hope that some of the insights that I have gained over the past six months will resonate with you as I invite you to discover (or rediscover) the University and campus and all that it has to offer. From our Children's Literature Centre, the Planetarium (stay tuned for reopening updates!), to our Cultural Events Series, FSU-TV3 and WFWM Radio – Frostburg offers unique opportunities for community engagement across campus. All of this combined with the rich treasures of Mountain Maryland make FSU an ideal place to learn, to work and simply to live.

Please mark your calendars for a few important dates. A Welcome Back Celebration is scheduled for Sept. 16 (8 a.m. light breakfast, 8:30-9:45 a.m. celebration) in the ARMAH where we will celebrate the accomplishments of some of our faculty and staff, highlight our priorities for the upcoming academic year, discuss new opportunities for investing in research and our programs and come together in an environment where everyone is valued and respected.

I am also so excited to announce the return of the Frostburg Homecoming Parade on Main Street on Oct. 2 at 6 p.m. This year's theme will be "Frostburg - A Community of Treasures", and we will award prizes for the top three FSU groups that best reflect that theme. I am hopeful that the revival of this annual community event will become a tradition for years to come.

We will share more information about both exciting events soon.

I know that we all lead busy lives, but amid all the hustle and bustle, try to take a moment to just slow down. Allow yourself the time to rediscover familiar things and appreciate and value all that the University and this community have to offer. And when you do, don't be afraid to just say **wow**.

In closing, join me once again in celebrating the start of our new academic year as we work together to strengthen FSU and forge the success of our students.

With FSU pride,

Darlene Brannigan Smith, PhD
Interim President