

Murray State University recognized nationally for merit-based scholarships

Murray State University has been recognized nationally for its merit-based scholarships. As part of College Aid Pro's "Merit Scholarship Transparency Report Card," approximately 650 schools and universities nationwide were graded based on the clarity of its merit-based scholarship requirements and award amounts, as well as consistency in the application process, with Murray State receiving an "A" grade.

Recognized nationally as one of America's best college values, Murray State has been named by U.S. News & World Report as one of the top universities in the country for 32 consecutive years. In the publication's most recent rankings last fall, Murray State was named a top 10 regional university in both quality and value.

Murray State was also highlighted last fall as a best value for students seeking a college degree by Washington Monthly in its "Best Bang for the Buck" rankings, as well as by Forbes, Money Magazine and the Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education.

Based on the University's most recent annual reports, \$115 million is awarded in financial aid and scholarships, with 99% of first-year students receiving financial aid or scholarships.



Nonprofit Leadership Studies program receives accreditation

The Nonprofit Leadership Studies program at Murray State University has been independently accredited for the first time in the program's history. Accreditation is an important stamp of approval for an academic program, as it endorses the content and affirms that students will receive a quality education in what the program claims it is teaching.

The accrediting body for studies in nonprofit and philanthropic studies is the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council.

Dr. Elise Kieffer, program director and assistant professor of Nonprofit Leadership Studies said, "Receiving this accreditation is the result of the hard work, dedication

and knowledge of the Nonprofit Leadership Studies faculty. It is an acknowledgement that what we are doing is impactful, and that we are preparing our students to enter the nonprofit workforce as change-making leaders. This is one more step that our program is taking to grow and increase our impact at Murray State and across west Kentucky."

The Nonprofit Leadership Studies program seeks to help create experienced, adaptive and effective nonprofit leaders, by promoting essential communication, coordination and collaboration skills. These leadership principles offer evidence of aspirations for the underlying foundation of the program and its implementation.

Honorary doctorates conferred at December 2022 commencement

Honorary doctorates were awarded to Ms. Mary Ford Holland (posthumously), who was the first Black student at Murray State University, as well as to retired Kentucky Supreme Court Justice Bill Cunningham at the December 2022 commencement ceremony.

Holland received a Doctor of Education with the degree accepted by Elnora Ford, Holland's niece and longtime caretaker.

"This is such an honor. I can see her now, responding to 'Dr. Mary Ford Holland.' That would bring her great joy, so for this, I am eternally grateful," said Ford, before encouraging graduates to embrace life, love, their profession and serving others.

Holland, formerly Mary Nathaniel Ford, was born on May 25, 1907, in Hematite, Kentucky, in Trigg County. In the summer of 1955, at

the age of 48, Holland transferred to Murray State College, now Murray State University, becoming the first Black student to attend the institution. She received her bachelor's degree in education from Murray State in August of 1961 at the age of 54.

Cunningham was awarded a Doctor of Laws. As part of his remarks, Cunningham emphasized the word 'honor' and its interpretations through virtues including truthfulness, kindness, loyalty, respect, humility and morality.

Cunningham is a native of Eddyville, Kentucky, in Lyon County. He graduated from Lyon County High School and then attended Murray State, earning his bachelor's degree in 1962.

Cunningham was elected to the Kentucky Supreme Court in 2007 and re-elected in 2014.



Elnora Ford and Supreme Court Justice Bill Cunningham

After twelve years on the Kentucky Supreme Court, Justice Cunningham retired in February 2019.

A total of 716 degree applicants comprised the fall/winter 2022 graduating class of degree applicants, including doctoral, specialist, master's, baccalaureate and associate degrees. A total of 26 states and 11 countries were represented in the fall/winter 2022 graduating class.



Fall 2022 data highlights increase in enrollment and continued growth in number of key categories

Murray State University's fall 2022 enrollment indicated many positive trends including overall enrollment growth, an increase in student retention and progression toward graduation and its largest enrollment of graduate students since 2015.

Below is a snapshot of fall enrollment:

- Total headcount for the fall was 9,489 students, which is nearly a 1% increase over the past year.
- Murray State students come from 48 states, 50 countries and 112 counties in Kentucky.
- Total graduate student enrollment is the largest since 2015 and reflects a 2.5% increase over last year.
- Total international student enrollment reflects a 41% increase from two years ago.
- Dual-credit students, comprised of enrolled Murray State students who, through high school dual-credit courses have earned credit toward a postsecondary degree, have increased by 24%. Through the University's Racer Academy dual-credit program, Murray State continues to develop pathways for students to transition directly into its academic programs.
- Based on most recent data, Murray State's first-to-second year retention rate of baccalaureate-degree seeking students is 77%, an increase of 2% over last year and the highest retention rate among all public comprehensive universities in Kentucky.

- Based on most recent data, Murray State is tied for first among public comprehensive universities in the state for fastest progression with the least time to earn a college degree. The University's graduation rate is the second-highest among all public comprehensive universities in Kentucky.
- Approximately 44% of Murray State students are first-generation students, defined as students whose parents have not completed a four-year degree.
- This year's freshman class represents 29 states, with 12% of the class having been named high school valedictorians and 64% of the class entering the University with earned credit hours toward graduation.
- This year's freshman class grew by nearly 4% in underrepresented minority students from last year.

"The quality, value, access and affordability of a Murray State University education continues to be at the forefront of our efforts to recruit, retain and graduate our students while providing them with a transformative college experience," said Murray State President Dr. Bob Jackson. "Despite enrollment headwinds nationally, I am greatly appreciative of our staff, faculty, students, alumni and all others who are actively involved with supporting this vitally important work of our University."

Engineering Physics program re-accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology

Murray State University's Engineering Physics degree program, administered by the School of Engineering, recently received reaccreditation by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (EAC/ABET). This program has been EAC/ABET accredited for over 25 years.

The engineering physics program is a four-year engineering degree with tracks in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, aerospace engineering and advanced physics. It is particularly strong in preparing students to work in cutting-edge technologies where traditional science and engineering disciplines overlap.



"This accreditation is a significant point of pride and affirms that our program meets the quality standards that produce graduates who are prepared to not only enter, but also succeed in the global workforce," said Jamie Rogers, interim director of the School of Engineering and ABET coordinator. "It is

particularly beneficial for future engineers in Kentucky to graduate from an EAC/ABET accredited program, as this accreditation of a student's engineering degree program is required in order for the graduate to pursue professional engineering licensure."

The engineering physics program is housed in the 85,000-square-foot engineering and physics building on Murray State's Gene W. Ray Science Campus. The facility contains state-of-the-art classroom and instructional spaces, a high bay area for engineering projects, multiple student design labs and faculty office and research suites.