New Enrollment Record at DSU

The University credits its current 73% freshmen retention rate – the highest-ever in University history – as one of the factors that has led to a new enrollment record this fall.

Friday, November 2, 2018

For the sixth consecutive year, Delaware State University has again achieved record-breaking enrollment, with a total student population of 4,872 for the 2018-2019 academic year. This represents an overall increase of 5% over last year’s enrollment of 4,648. The goal is to reach 5,000 students by the year 2020.

“Delaware State University has continued to grow year after year because we have continued to innovate, and have become much more strategic in how we attract and retain students. This year’s success builds upon past efforts to improve recruitment, enrollment, and retention. It is certainly an ongoing process, and is absolutely necessary, if we are going to meet our goal,” said University President Dr. Wilma Mishoe, who is laser-focused on putting “students first.”

Dr. Mishoe credits the implementation of a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) system and team, beginning in February of this year, as a key factor in this year’s record increase. “We placed every student enrollment ‘touch-point’—Admissions, Registration/Student Records, and Student Accounts—under a single leader with more than two decades of experience in the field.” Mr. Antonio Boyle, Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management, and his entire team have spent the last ten months singularly focused on improving the experience of students and families. “My goal was to put together the best team and then empower them to think ‘student first’ in everything that they do,” said Mr. Boyle.

Several other initiatives have also boosted enrollment. The Early College High School at Delaware State University (ECHS) had 57% of its graduates, having earned an average of 53 college credits while in high school, which enroll in the University this fall as sophomores. Additionally, the Summer Bridge program allows newly admitted students to earn a full semester of college credits during the summer, before they begin their freshmen year. Securing the fourth year of the state-sponsored INSPIRE scholarship led to a 21% increase in new, in-State Freshmen.

The University’s partnership with TheDREAM.US has been critical. This organization provides scholarships for the children of undocumented workers, commonly referred to as “Dreamers,” at colleges and universities that will accept them. Delaware State University is currently the number one choice for Dreamers in the United States.
Freshmen retention, the chief predictor for graduation, has also risen to 73%, the highest average in the University’s history. Additionally, this Fall the University created a new Digital Learning Initiative that puts an Apple iPad Pro in the hands of every incoming Freshman. The goal is to become a completely digital campus by 2020.

“You cannot stand still if you intend to grow,” said Dr. Tony Allen, Provost and Executive Vice President. “The needs of college students change rapidly and Delaware State University is preparing many of them for careers that don’t even exist yet. We plan to continue meeting them where they are and taking them wherever they want to go.”