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College of Health Sciences Newsletter, September 2017

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Old Dominion University

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ODU Monarch Physical Therapy patient Michael Sheffield works out on specialized equipment at the clinic.

‘Love, medicine and miracles’

Patient repays ODU Monarch PT
with donation of special equipment

By Irvin B. Harrell

When Michael Sheffield rolls into ODU Monarch Physical Therapy clinic on Mondays and Wednesdays at noon, he brings a generous dose of sunshine. Along with that sunshine, he is sometimes accompanied by mom, dad, friends, caregivers and often by a neighbor who too benefits from the clinic’s care. He also brings a big lunch for the long drives and nearly three-hour sessions.

Sheffield is a model of determination and humility. A paraplegic – injured in an accident in 2016 – with limited use of his upper body, he clenches his teeth and closes his eyes intermittently as he battles to strengthen his upper body under the care of both professional physical therapists and ODU students in training. Sheffield tempers his drive with an occasional smile and a little humor – but make no mistake of his



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Dean's Message

Staying committed to our mission, vision

As we start a new semester, I am reminded of opportunities on the horizon specifically that involve new programs and goals for our college. Faculty, staff and students are starting this academic year with individual objectives that include plans for accomplishing these goals. Similarly, our college is at the midpoint of its Strategic Plan (2015-2020) and while we have made progress, work remains. Our goals:

- ◆ Enrich the Quality of Life for Faculty, Staff and Students
- ◆ Enhance Academic Excellence
- ◆ Advance New Knowledge
- ◆ Create an Interprofessional Education and Practice Culture
- ◆ Engage with the Greater Community through Social, Intellectual and Cultural Activities
- ◆ Promote an Entrepreneurial Culture



Richardean Benjamin

Successes this past year have been noteworthy. The year ended with two programs attaining US News & World Report rankings, research expenditures for FY17 increasing by 18 percent, and the college reporting a record of more than \$2.6 million in donor giving. Community engagement was boundless, manifesting itself through a blood drive, Remote Area Medical (RAM) program, and study-abroad opportunities in Germany and Ireland. The ODU Monarch Physical Therapy clinic also has continued to grow.

To jumpstart the year, the Interprofessional Education (IPE) first class event had record attendance with representation from all schools in the college as well as community partners from Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS), Hampton University School of Pharmacy and Norfolk State University. Ultimately, we would like to see evidence of IPE throughout our academic curriculum which is just one area of focus moving forward. Other areas include new programs (BS Public Health, BSHS – Respiratory Therapy; MS Molecular Diagnostic; PhD Biomedical Sciences with concentrations in bioelectric and translational sciences). Additionally, we will focus on promoting faculty development and retention and begin a pilot test of the faculty mentoring program.

We have high expectations for our college and this academic year and hope those students, faculty and staff joining us for the first time will be just as committed to supporting our vision and mission moving forward.

Best to all,

Richardean Benjamin, RN, MPH, PhD, ANEF, FAAN,
Interim Dean

From the Editor

The educational road can lead to heartwarming surprises

Education is an infectious thing.

When I arrived at Old Dominion University almost three years ago, I didn't hesitate to take advantage of the opportunity to do something I always wanted to do, but never had the time: That is pursue my masters. Were it not for the support of my previous and current supervisors, as well as the countless cheerleaders in the College of Health Sciences and my professors, I would not be in the home stretch of achieving this goal.

It has been a slow and steady process, taking a course or two a semester while balancing work and my personal life, but I'm on target to walk in May. My masters program focuses on health care and communication (big surprise), and also incorporates a graduate certificate in health and humanities.

As I see all the bright young faces on campus every fall, I can't help but reminisce on my years in college pursuing my bachelors. I also feel even more grateful that after this many years removed, I've been given another opportunity to be a student in a world that I find more and more fascinating each day. Throughout my education at ODU, I have shared the knowledge I have obtained with many here at the college. I've engaged in so many conversations about health care and communication, and they have been inspirational and energizing.

I love it when health care and communication intersect to reflect magical moments of triumph. The Michael Sheffield/Monarch PT clinic cover story is a prime example. His story has even taught me things I never learned in college. Take a moment and share in this journey. Trust me, you'll be glad you did.



Irvin B. Harrell



From left, Pamela Blankenship, Dental Hygiene chair Susan Daniel, Assistant Dean Debbie Bauman and Professor Sharon Stull trade stories in the ODU Dental Hygiene Care Facility in September.

Special Memories

Dental Hygiene Alumna Pamela Blankenship was a guest speaker at the college this month in one of Professor Sharon Stull's classes. Blankenship was the 1988 Virginia Dental Hygienists Association Award winner while attending ODU. A plaque with her student name, Pamela J. Goodman, is on the wall in the ODU Dental Hygiene Care Facility.

CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

Volunteer gives first-person on Global Health Heroes

My name is Arya Nair, and I'm a junior in high school. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to be a part of the Global Health Heroes Project initiated by the Center for Global Health in the College of Health Sciences at Old Dominion University. The goal of this project was to expand students' knowledge on sustaining a healthy lifestyle for themselves and also the environment.

The Global Health Heroes Project took place at summer school at Portsmouth. The ODU staff and I met up with 29 students and took them through a journey of learning about healthy living and maintaining a healthy environment. We started the teaching process with a five minute animated video that covered the purpose of the day, and what we wanted the students to take away from it. We made learning easy and simple through a sorting game, crossword, bingo, and a board game. The children learned about food groups and the importance of being healthy by learning key words in a crossword puzzle. Through bingo they learned about different food groups. A sorting game taught the importance of recycling. And a board game provided knowledge on carbon footprints and climate change. This unconventional teaching method allowed the students to stay focused and also be active participants in the learning process.

I was taken aback by the knowledge they had already accrued throughout the years on these topics. Through this project, these children were taught to design and create a character that is a Global Health Hero. The Hero is designed to practice healthy and sustainable habits to be a better person and make positive contributions to the world. Our intention was to have these students aspire to be these heroes that they conceived and created.

Programs such as these encourage youngsters to make positive changes in the long term, to better their community and the world. Through the hardworking staff at the Center for Global Health, we expect and hope more of the students become Global Health Heroes. Through small actions, we know that these students can change the world in a big way.



Arya Nair

SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL THERAPY & ATHLETIC TRAINING

Trademark transfer incentivizes Walking Free program

This summer, Assistant Professor Gail Grisetti and adjunct instructor David Lawrence received the official transfer of the Walking Free trademark from Physicians for Peace to the newly formed non-governmental organization Mission Gait. The goal of Mission Gait is to provide education and training on physical rehabilitation for persons living with limb loss.

Programs will be offered within the United States for prosthetists and physical therapists who wish to expand their education in this area. The Walking Free program supports a similar mission internationally with a special emphasis on the Dominican Republic.

Mission Gait was granted its official 501(c)3 status earlier this year and the trademark transfer allows the use of the Walking Free program name. Both Grisetti and Lawrence are board members and officers of Mission Gait.



SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Jeng appointed to Virginia State Board of Health

Dr. Anna Jeng, professor of Environmental Health in the School of Community and Environmental Health at Old Dominion University, has been appointed by Gov. Terry McAuliffe to serve on the Virginia State Board of Health for a four-year term starting in August 2017. She had previously served on the board under the administration of former Gov. Timothy Kaine. She was the first board member representing the area of Public Environmental Health when the position was created during her first term from 2010 to 2014.

“It is a great honor to receive this appointment and resume being part of the leadership in planning and policy development for the Commonwealth as an advocate for and representative of the citizens of the Commonwealth to improve their health,” Jeng said.

“With this appointment, I have a sense of responsibility to work with the board to prevent and control diseases, improve Virginia’s public health infrastructure and the health and well-being of all Virginians.”

To achieve these goals, Jeng will work along with the entire board on 1) advising the governor, secretary of health and human resources, and state health commissioner on public health policy issues, 2) educating the public concerning the importance of health promotion and protection policies and programs, 3) supporting improved access to preventive and primary care services; and 4) facilitating public/private partnerships.



Anna Jeng

HEALTH SCIENCES ADVISING

Learning Community Meet & Greet



In late August, the Health Sciences Advising Center welcomed 96 new first year Health Professions Learning Community students with our annual Learning Community Meet & Greet, co-sponsored by the Office of Housing and Residence Life. The event was well attended by Learning Community students, students from the Schools of Nursing, Dental Hygiene and the Health Services Administration program, as well as faculty from each of our undergraduate programs and Assistant Dean Debbie Bauman and Associate Dean Kimberly Adams-Tufts.



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rigid resolve.

Were it not for his network of friends, family, community and Monarch PT, he says, his injury would have been truly devastating. And he has made it his mission to thank everyone through his dedication to his therapy and by giving back to those invested in his recovery.

“The only way that I initially could think of to pay back all the generosity that I received was to take my rehabilitation as seriously as a person can take it; to put every single ounce of energy I could into it,” he said. “And I’m still doing it, but ... the next step in showing my appreciation is to try my best to share that with other people.”

As an expression of gratefulness to Monarch PT, Sheffield recently raised \$39,000 and donated it to the clinic through Eggleston Services for the purchase of a cutting-edge piece of equipment that helps those with debilitating spinal cord or head injuries. Eggleston provides services for individuals with disabilities in Hampton Roads.

“Words cannot adequately express my deep appreciation to you and your family for your generosity,” said Dr. Lisa Koperna, the clinic’s director.

And it doesn’t stop there. Sheffield is planning another fund-raising event this fall for Monarch PT. The details are still being worked out but he envisions something in Norfolk with a scavenger hunt, which proved very popular with a fund-raising event held for him in 2016.

Old Dominion University and Eggleston have planned a reception showcasing the clinic’s advancement for treating individuals with neurologic injuries on Monday, Sept. 25, at 11 a.m. at ODU Monarch Physical Therapy.

On a winter night last year in a local martial arts dojo, a jiu jitsu maneuver changed Sheffield’s way of life and the lives of those connected to him.

“We were doing drills, and my partner grabbed my ankles, threw them over my head and fell on me at the same time, and it broke my neck,” he says. “It was a freak accident.”

Sheffield was taken from The House of Muay Thai to Norfolk General Hospital. A surgeon there would call his mother in the wee hours of Oct. 26 to let her know that surgery was imminent and urgent. Bobbi Sheffield then headed for Norfolk from her home in Virginia Beach off Sandbridge Road.

“When I heard what happened, I wasn’t able talk to Mike,” she said. “I was sad, worried. I told the doctor that I was



From left, David Sheffield, and physical therapists Leslie Prom and Karen Royall work with Michael.



Student Grace Logsdon, left, and Prom conduct exercises with Michael.

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praying for him as well and to tell Mike that I loved him.”

Bobbi called her husband, David – who was in Florida at the time – and called her older son Jeremiah, to let them know what happened. She also called her pastor, and along with him and two of Michael’s martial arts buddies sat in a waiting room during the six-hour operation.

“It’s a really scary time because you have such high hopes that surgery is going to fix everything and he’s going to be OK when he comes out,” she said. “But the first day after surgery, they said there was a real good chance that he would have to be put on a ventilator and a feeding tube and of course that’s not something you want to hear. We asked ‘for how long’ and they said it could be forever. That was a difficult time.”

Early tests revealed there was a little movement, Bobbi Sheffield said. Incomplete injuries made it more favorable for recovery, but active rehabilitation was the key.

David carries a picture of Michael on his phone, a photo of his son with tubes hooked up to him after the operation. The situation looks dire at best. “I don’t show him this,” he says. “But this is how bad it was.”

After the operation, the family was told that it would be better if Michael was intubated to support his respiration, which might diminish throughout the day, Bobbi Sheffield said. Also complicating things were the periodic fevers Michael would experience.

“They were as high as 107.5 degrees,” Michael said.

Michael spent almost a month in Norfolk General before being released. The family frantically searched for a place where he could undergo rehabilitation, but insurance coverage was a recurring issue. A neighbor told them about Shepherd Center in Atlanta, Ga., a world-renowned facility for neurological and neuromuscular research. David liked what he heard but insurance, again, wouldn’t cover it.

“We checked out a few other places, but we didn’t get a good feeling,” David said. “Shepherd kept coming up though.” Shepherd wanted \$163,000 up front, he added.

Michael’s sister Bethany Vaughan started a go-fund-me page, Michael said. “She wrote a letter saying that if someone could give us a loan, we would pay them back,” he said.

“I have been reflecting on all the times Michael has asked me to scratch his nose or wipe his tears for him as he lays in the bed unable to do it for himself,” she said on her page. “My family and I are humbled by this situation and are asking for your help.”

A member of the family’s church introduced David to someone among the congregation and “they wrote us a check for \$200,000,” he said. “We paid it back in six months.”

Michael spent 10 weeks at Shepherd Center and was released on Jan. 7, the day before his 30th birthday. During their time in Atlanta, David and Bobbi were taught by the Shepherd staff how to take care of Michael upon his release, but they remained fearful.

“We thought we were going to be in Shepherd Center till March and they say he’s going to be discharged and you say



Michael and his father.



Amid the activity in the clinic, Michael's mother Bobbi stands in the center.

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'Mike's in a 500 pound chair. How are we going to get him into the house? What are we going to do?'" David said. "It's just a thought that you never thought you'd need to think. There wasn't an easy answer."

The company owned by Bethany's husband pitched in, renovating part of the Sheffields' house to create an indoor ramp and easy access to Michael. "It was our own Sheffield Center," Bobbi said.

When the Sheffields returned to Virginia Beach, Michael started rehabilitation at Sentara three times a week for about a month. Upon release from Sentara, the family began scouting for other options going forward. Then something special happened. David, a board member of the Princess Anne YMCA, was asked to give the devotional at a board meeting and he shared Michael's story and what the family was up against.

"After the meeting, the YMCA director got me in touch with the lady who was in charge of all of the capital campaigns with the Y in South Hampton Roads," he said. "She told me she knew of another family who had a son with a spinal cord injury and said he had been getting some good help at Old Dominion. I said 'ODU? They don't have a teaching hospital.' She said a couple years ago they set up

a clinic on campus."

David called Dr. Koperna that afternoon and she invited him to bring Michael the next day. "It was just magical," he said. "And then we told our next-door neighbor about it, and Lisa invited her to come too."

Michael raves not only about the help he has received from Monarch PT, but also the progress his next-door neighbor has received there. "I knew right away that they would be able to help her," he said. "I thought 'She needs it more than me, and she has nowhere to go.'"

For more than two months, the Sheffields have found a home away from home at Monarch PT, and Michael appears to be getting stronger visit by visit.

"Michael's recuperation is an inspiring testament to the power of love, medicine, and miracles," Dr. Koperna said.

His physical and occupational therapy is intermixed with exercises on the special piece of equipment his generosity has made possible. Michael says that he is impressed not only with the level of professionalism he has received, but the philosophy of the clinic. In a word, he describes his therapeutic experience as "fantastic."

"Their doors are always open. As a research facility, they want to disprove the model of short-term rehabilitation for spinal cord injuries," he said. "They want to show there should be a push for more care for a longer period."

SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL THERAPY & ATHLETIC TRAINING

Former professor establishes legacy of giving



Former Old Dominion University Professor George Maihafer relaxes at his beautiful home in Norfolk.

By Irvin Harrell

It's safe to say that hang gliding landed former Professor George Maihafer at Old Dominion University some 35 years ago.

At the time he was at a cross-roads in his career, working as the chief physical therapist at what is now Southside Regional Medical Center in Petersburg, Va. He was 31 and had spent his past five years training people only to watch them turn colleagues and then leave for other jobs.

"There's a lot of turnover in the world of physical therapy on the clinical side," he says. "I learned a lot of leadership skills on the fly, but I needed more stability – all my friends continued to move on."

After several wholesale turnovers in his professional staff, Maihafer decided he needed to make a change. So once he trained a fresh group of grads out of Virginia Commonwealth University, he entrusted them to hold down the fort while he took a week off to figure out his future.

"I went out to the Outer Banks in October, when it was extremely quiet," he says. "And I learned to hang glide."

Maihafer spent his mornings hang gliding and his afternoons working on a list of what he wanted in life. "The list had things like: I want to be intellectually stimulated; I'd like to have change, but I'd like the change to be planned; and I'd

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Maihafer's home is accented with photos of his family.

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like a core group of friends for a longer period of time," he says.

So he set out on finding a faculty position and landed one at ODU in 1982 as the academic coordinator of clinical education in the then-School of Community Health Professions and Physical Therapy. There, he began forging a special bond that guided him all the way to retirement, he says.

"You just never know when you're going stick," he says, reflecting on his lasting relationships at ODU.

He retired in the summer of 2016, but his connection with ODU is far from over. In 2005, he set up the first physical therapy scholarship at the university, and this year he has launched The George Maihafer Scholarship in Physical Therapy, an endowment that will be valued at about \$1.7 million through his estate plans.

"The cost of education across the board is extremely expensive, especially graduate school education," Maihafer says. "The best bang for my buck is to leave the vast ma-



jority of my estate to Old Dominion University so they can in turn use that money to provide as much scholarship money for students as possible in the future."

Education has been a focus for Maihafer and his older sister Pam since their childhood. They were raised by parents who married in their early 30s and grew up in upstate New York in a town called Oneida. Oneida also was the name of the local silverware company, and four generations of his family worked there before it fell on hard times at the end of the 1990s. Maihafer notes the age his

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parents married, because he says it added to the cohesiveness of their family.

“They were so happy to have children. We had a great family. We did a lot of reading, travel, and everybody studied and educated themselves and we pushed ourselves to be better people,” he says. “Pam and I mirrored what our parents did.”

Maihafer says his affinity for physical therapy was stoked by his mother when he was in high school. At age 15 she signed him up for a Red Cross Senior Life-saving Badge so he could work as a lifeguard during the summer. After working at a camp for the underprivileged for a year, he landed a job as pool director and counselor at a camp for handicapped and disabled children in Syracuse, N.Y.

During a break at the camp, his parents came to visit and he proudly showed them the operation. While he was directing the tour, Maihafer says, his mother noticed a woman in the shallow end of the pool working with a

child. She asked what the woman was doing. After telling her that the woman was a physical therapist his mom remarked: “Oh Georgie, why don’t you become a physical therapist.”

“I thought to myself, ‘What a great idea; I could stay at the pool and I could keep my tan,’” he says.

Maihafer became a summer fixture at the camp for five years and his interest in becoming a physical therapist didn’t waver. But he would find out later that such a career was not about swimming pools and suntans.

When it was time for Maihafer to attend college, his father developed multiple sclerosis (MS), which forced him to retire in his mid-50s. It was a difficult time financially for the Maihafers, but being a good student paid off.

“At the time, you could take the Regent’s Test and if you scored in the top 10 percent of state students, you could get free tuition, room and board at the state school of your choosing,” Maihafer says. That was how he would pay for his first leg of college.

His sister was attending State University of New York at

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Oswego at the time, so Maihafer decided to choose that route as well for his first two years in college. Thereafter he attended Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, where he received his Bachelors in Physical Therapy in 1973.

Maihafer spent his first year after graduation working at in New York at the Rome Developmental Center and the following two years at the Shriners Hospital in Philadelphia. One of the joys of the jobs was the opportunity to work with children and rehabilitation, he says.

In 1976, he received a Kellogg Foundation Scholarship at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, which paid for his tuition, room and board to pursue his Masters in Clinical Classroom Teaching. After getting his degree, he headed to Petersburg, Va., where he took the job at Southside Regional.

Maihafer never looked back when ODU came calling a few years later and he regards it as his smartest career move. Ask him about ODU and the praises flow.

“It provided core stability. I received a more in-depth knowledge of the profession,” he says. “I became nationally recognized. It’s a great place to work. It helped me develop my skills and gave me the flexibility to become a mature adult.”

In the late’90s, Maihafer’s parents – who were married for more than 50 years – died within months of each other. Remembering their emphasis on the importance

of education, in 2004 he started working on setting up a tribute to them: the George and Kate Maihafer Scholarship, which has provided financial assistance to several physical therapy students. Maihafer agreed to add yearly installments to the fund until his retirement, but says that he and his sister will continue to contribute money to the scholarship.

“My parents are the reason I am where I am,” he says. “When I needed to be pushed in the right direction, they were there. Education is critical and tuition continues to increase. They instilled in me the strong belief in the power of education.”

This spring he worked on creating his latest gift to ODU: The George Maihafer Scholarship in Physical Therapy. When asked why he didn’t choose to spread the wealth to other educational institutions he has attended, it all comes back to the 34-year relationship he has had with ODU.

Not only did the university help him grow and achieve national success, he says, but it paid for two-thirds of his PhD, as he took night classes while teaching.

Maihafer says he considers the gift of teaching students to be one of his most prized achievements during his career. And the results of his longtime service as a professor continue to give back, he says.

“I’ve seen more than 1,000 students come through the doors at ODU during my tenure,” he says. “When I see graduates from our program come up to me and pat me on the back – maybe in a grocery store or at a meeting – just come over and greet me and tell me how wonderful their life is going and tell me how much they appreciate their education at Old Dominion University, that’s gold. And that happens more often than not and it makes my day when it does.”

College of Health Sciences Welcome Back Picnic

When: Oct. 2, 2017, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Who: Faculty, Staff and Students

Where: Health Sciences Picnic Area

On the Menu: Food, music, hula hoops, karaoke, prizes



Upcoming Events

October

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|--------------|---|
| October 2 | COHS Welcome Back Picnic, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. COHS Lawn Area |
| October 5 | President/Provost's Address to Faculty, 2:00 p.m. – University Theatre |
| October 7 | ODU vs Florida Atlantic - COHS Dental Hygiene, 6:00 p.m. Kickoff |
| October 7-10 | Fall Student Break |
| October 7-8 | Virginia Physical Therapy Association Annual Conference, Newport News & ODU Physical Therapy Alumni Reunion at VPTA Conference |
| October 11 | Faculty Diversity & Inclusion Event, Meet and Greet, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Multi-purpose Room, College of Education |
| October 13 | COHS Advisory Board Meeting, 8:30-10:30 a.m., Location: COHS Room 2115, 9:00 a.m. Tour of Nursing Simulation Lab |
| October 13 | DPT 1 White Coat Ceremony & Reception, University Theatre |
| October 16 | Dean's Student Advisory Committee Luncheon, 12:00-1:00 p.m. Location: HS 2114 |
| October 20 | ODU Family Weekend – ODU vs. Western Kentucky, Kickoff 6 p.m. |

November

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| November 3 | Founders Day Lunch, 12:00 p.m. Ted Constant Convocation Center |
| November 4 | ODU vs Charlotte, Homecoming – COHS - PT&AT, 3:30 p.m. Kickoff |
| November 7 | Alpha Eta Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Baron/Ellin Art Gallery |
| November 9 | Veteran's Day Observance, 12:30 p.m. Kaufman Mall, North Mall |
| November 13 | SON White Coat Ceremony, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., Ted Convocation Center, Big Blue Room |
| November 14 | Tidewater Physical Therapy Association Meeting Cadaver Series: Trunk/Spine at ODU SRC 2000 anatomy lab |
| November 18 | ODU vs Rice – COHS – C&EH, 2:00 p.m. Kickoff |
| November 22 | Noon Closing Thanksgiving Holiday – University Closed |
| November 23-24 | Thanksgiving Holiday – University Closed |