

March 2, 2026

Dear Parents & Families,

As we enter this holiday season, I'd like to acknowledge some of the things I am most thankful for this year, including the opportunity to serve the students, families, faculty and staff of the National Public Honors College, as well as the people of Maryland and our Southern Maryland community as the eighth president of the College. It is truly an honor and privilege to be part of such an engaged community of learners.

I'm also thankful for the overwhelming support for the College demonstrated by all of the members of our community. I witnessed this in so many ways during my [100 Day listening tour](#); and most recently again this past [Giving Tuesday](#), where our community showered us with its support. We raised a record-breaking \$456,000+ from 3,881 individual donors, to benefit more than 90 programs that support our students.

Finally, I wanted to share with you some updates from a special meeting of the Board of Trustees on Friday, Dec. 5. The board recommended approval of a new Master of Arts Program in Counseling and Clinical Psychology. While this program must be presented to the Maryland Higher Education Commission for its approval, we are hoping to offer this program in the near future, as it is a perfect follow-on to the psychology major, one of our most popular programs here at the College. The board also took action on initiatives to elevate and enhance our athletics and recreation programs, and received an update from the Housing and Campus Planning Work Group on renovation of student residences, a top priority of mine.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland. I extend my warmest wishes for a happy holiday season and joyous new year.

Sincerely,

Rhonda G. Phillips, Ph.D, FAICP
President
St. Mary's College of Maryland

Brace Yourselves... Winter (Break) is Here!



Spending quality time with your student during Winter Break can be precious and full of memories, but are you ready to make the most of your student's time at home?

For some, this will be the first time your student has been home since August. Or maybe your student never left home but has been busy on campus with classes and activities, which will now be on pause.

Regardless of your situation, our [Winter Break tips for success](#) are bound to help you enhance time spent with your student in the month ahead!

Holiday Self-care

The holiday season is often regarded as a festive time full of family, friends and joy. But for some college students, visiting family, celebrating holidays together and navigating festivities can be a source of emotional stress.

JED, a leading national nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for teens and young adults, is sharing [five tips for self-care when headed home for the holidays](#). Be sure to share the article with your student!

What a Giving Tuesday!



Giving Tuesday raised a record-breaking \$456,000+ to benefit more than 90 student programs. On behalf of all of us at SMCM, thank you for your commitment to supporting your student's education!

Important Billing Information

Your student's itemized Spring 2026 bill was sent to their SMCM email address during the first week of December. These bills included your student's charges as well as any anticipated financial aid.

Spring 2026 payments are due in full, or a payment plan must be arranged, no later than Dec. 19. Please note that payment plans became available on Dec. 5 for the Spring 2026 semester.

There are multiple ways to pay your student's bill. Payment can be made either in person at the Cashier's Office in Glendening Hall or via our [online payment options](#).

Anticipated financial aid will be applied to your student's account around the middle of January. For questions about financial aid awards, please call 240-895-3000 or email osfa@smcm.edu.

The Role of Parents and Families



Here at SMCM, we like to think of parents and families as partners in their student's success. Just because your student is now in college, doesn't mean your role in their life disappears -- but it does change.

In our newest [Parent and Family Resource article](#), we offer fresh insight on how you can settle into your role as a parent or family member of a college student.

Spring 2026 Family Webinar Series

SMCM has an informative slate of Parent & Family Webinars lined up for the Spring 2026 semester. Please join staff members from the Office of Student Success Services, Counseling Services and the Office of International Education for these well-received virtual webinars, free to parents and family members of SMCM students.

Visit [upcoming Parent and Family webinars](#) to learn more.

SMCM Foundation Earns Candid Platinum Status

The SMCM Foundation has earned the prestigious Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition awarded by Candid, the nation's leading nonprofit data and research organization. This achievement places the SMCM Foundation among a select group of nonprofit organizations nationwide that demonstrate exceptional transparency, accountability and data-driven impact.

[Read the full article](#) to learn more about the work of the SMCM Foundation and its most recent recognition.

Platinum Transparency 2025

Candid.

Events [view online](#) [search](#)

Important Dates & Deadlines

March 9 – 13 | [Spring 2026 Half-semester courses begin.](#)

 All Day

March 13 | [Spring 2026 LAST DAY to register for a half-semester course beginning at mid-semester](#)

 All Day

March 16 | [Spring 2026 Mid-semester report deadline.](#)

 All Day

March 16 | [Spring 2026 recess begins.](#)

 All Day

March 23 | [Spring 2026 CLASSES RESUME.](#)

 All Day

March 23 – 27 | [Spring 2026 Academic advising for all degree students currently enrolled.](#)



 All Day

March 24 | [Spring 2026 Advising Day: NO CLASSES](#)



 All Day

Upcoming Featured Events

March 5 | [St. Mary's College of Maryland Orchestra Concert, March 5](#)

 7 – 9 p.m. |  Nancy R. and Norton T. Dodge Performing Arts Center - Concert Hall



March 12 | [SMCM Jazz Ensemble Concert, March 12](#)

 7 – 9 p.m. |  Nancy R. and Norton T. Dodge Performing Arts Center - Concert Hall


March 12 | [VOICES Reading: Eman Quotah, March 12](#)

 7:30 – 9 p.m. |  Daugherty-Palmer Commons (DPC)



March 24 | [Career and Internship Fair](#)

 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. |  Michael P. O'Brien Athletics & Recreation Center (MPOBARC) - ARC Courts

March 25 – 26 | [The 26th Annual Colloquium on Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies: March 25–26](#)

 All Day |  Campus Center - Cole Cinema

March 29 | [Dance Club Showcase](#)

 5:30 – 8 p.m. |  Michael P. O'Brien Athletics & Recreation Center (MPOBARC) - Arena

March 25 – April 3 | [Spring 2026 Registration for degree students.](#)

 All Day

News [view online](#) [search](#)



[Associate Professor Tickle and Alumna Publish Article in Eating Behaviors Journal](#)

Feb. 12, 2026



[Luke Schwenk '25 Lead Author on Research Published in Peer-Reviewed Journal](#)

Feb. 11, 2026



[Provost Gantz Discusses Value-based Collaborative Culture on AAC&U Panel](#)

Feb. 2, 2026



[Biology Faculty Received a Combined \\$1.4 M Through Three Independently Awarded National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Grants](#)

Feb. 1, 2026



[Professor of Anthropology Sarah Hlubik Awarded Prestigious Fellowship from the Leakey Foundation](#)

Jan. 28, 2026



[Lorena Torres-Martínez Publishes Invited Commentary in New Phytologist Journal](#)

Jan. 28, 2026



[Rachel Swarns to Deliver the 2026 Benjamin C. Bradlee Distinguished Lecture in Journalism](#)

Jan. 22, 2026



[Performing Arts Students Present at Region 2 ACTF Conference, Win Competition](#)

Jan. 21, 2026

If you'd like to sign someone else up for the parent & family newsletter, we have a sign-up form on our [Families page](#), so check it out today for quick links, events, news, and other information to help you support your student.

NATIONAL PUBLIC HONORS

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