Morehead State University celebrates its 130th anniversary - 'A light to the mountains' expands its vision

As Morehead State University commemorates its 130th anniversary of educating students on this campus this month, we celebrate our continued history of excellence and resilience while remembering and honoring our rich tradition.

MSU is known for feeling like home. We blend quality academic programs with personal attention from faculty and staff on a safe, comfortable, "right size" campus - not too big, not too small.

Founded in 1887 as Morehead Normal School, it was a private, church-supported institution known as "a light to the mountains." In 1922, the Kentucky General Assembly re-established the institution as Morehead State Normal School, and we gained university status as Morehead State University in 1966.

Our mission calls us to be regional partners in education, economic development, health and wellness and civic engagement. MSU is proud to be woven deeply into the fabric of Eastern Kentucky and 84 percent of our students are from the commonwealth.

However, MSU's impact reaches far beyond our service region - across the state, across the nation and in fact, worldwide. Our space science program is one of only five like it across the country, and the Space Science Center is recognized internationally for the research and development being done by faculty, staff and students on nanosatellite technology.

We have recently added a fully online family nurse practitioner program to our nursing department, already known across Kentucky for producing outstanding graduates. Our pre-medicine and pre-dentistry tracks, as examples, produce alumni who are accepted into their respective professional programs at rates above state and national averages.

MSU alumni are improving the health care of this great commonwealth, and we are committed to doing even more. We are currently exploring the possibility of proposing and offering a doctor of physical therapy program.

Historically, MSU has a rich tradition of preparing educators for service in P-12 schools. We are proud to continue and build upon this commitment with distinguished programs like MSUTeach, designed specifically to prepare teachers in the STEM disciplines.
Likewise, we remain committed to providing access to educational opportunities for high school students.

Morehead State’s Eagle Scholars (early college) Program now serves more than 2,500 students statewide, giving them an opportunity to be better prepared for college and to enroll in college courses while they complete their high school education.

The Craft Academy for Excellence in Science and Mathematics, a dual-credit residential high school for academically exceptional Kentucky students, graduated its first class last May. Our students are doing remarkable work, including starting an e-textile business and launching an exomedicine experiment into space.

MSU has come a long way since our doors first opened on a chilly October morning in 1887. The light to the mountains continues to shine brightly over the foothills and mountains of Eastern Kentucky and across our commonwealth. Without question, it will continue to do so for another 130 years.

Jay Morgan is president of Morehead State University.