

Quarterly Ascertainments/Community Issues

STATION: WKKW

SUBJECT: Economic impact of WVU athletics

West Virginia University athletics means big money for Monongalia County and the state of West Virginia as a whole.

According to a study released by athletic director Shane Lyons on Wednesday, the athletic program is responsible for an annual economic impact of \$302.7 million to the state and \$78.8 million to the county. WVU athletics also helps the state fill its coffers, with an estimated \$18.6 million in tax revenue generated by its presence.

On top of the dollar amounts, there's also the matter of job generation. The study estimated that WVU athletics directly or indirectly supports 2,109 jobs in West Virginia, 709 of which are based in Monongalia County. That estimate includes both full- and part-time positions in fields ranging from hospitality, construction, retail, information technology and security.

These figures were determined by Tripp Umbach, a Pittsburgh-based consulting agency that specializes in economic impact studies. The company was commissioned by the WVU athletic department to do the study in 2016.

The figures in the study are specific to the 2017-18 academic year at WVU. They measure the money spent by both WVU athletics, fans and visitors in town for sporting events.

Lyons said that there was previously no concrete way of measuring WVU's financial benefit to the community as a whole.

"I thought it was important as a department that we have a better understanding what we mean to this state and the county," Lyons said.

The study measured three different calculations – direct expenditures for goods and services by WVU, staff and visitors, indirect spending within Monongalia County and West Virginia, and induced spending by households directly employed by WVU athletics or the local or state businesses providing goods and services to WVU athletics.

Football is the primary economic driver.

Visitors were responsible for an estimated \$193.9 million in 2017, with another \$29.5 million entering the economy from WVU's football operations budget. Men's basketball brought in \$28.3 million from visitors and \$7.2 million from WVU's operations budget.

On a per-game basis, WVU football brought \$8.18 million into Monongalia County in 2017.

DATE: Sunday, July 7, 2019 on WKKW

TIME/DURATION: 2:44

GUEST: WVU Athletics Director Shane Lyons

MEDIA INTREST: Morgantown AM -- WAJR, Dominion Post, WVAQ, WKKW, WBOY, WDTV, Facebook, Twitter

YEAR: 2019

QUARTER: 3rd