



Academic Affairs is a community of educators that supports the university's mission by enrolling, teaching, retaining, graduating, and inspiring diverse, lifelong learners prepared to contribute to the common good.

Issue No. 14

February 2024

This monthly newsletter features stories about events and programs within the Division of Academic Affairs. It is intended to inform, engage, and recognize members of our esteemed Community of Educators, all the faculty and staff who are committed to student success.

Please share your stories with us by clicking the yellow box below.

If you have an event coming up, please upload it to the university's [Campus Calendar](#). Click "SUBMIT AN EVENT" button. For more information about how to submit an event, see the story below in "Resource Corner."

To share information about an upcoming event, click [here](#) for submission to the [Ram Report](#).

**Submit Provost's Post Stories
Here**

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Dear colleagues,

As we close out the month of February, we look back on Black History Month with a sense of responsibility and pride in the many outstanding events and programs that have taken place across campus. This annual observance provides us with a valuable opportunity to reflect on the rich contributions, achievements, and struggles of the Black community throughout history. At West Chester University, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment that values diversity and promotes equity for all. As we recognize Black History Month, we reaffirm our dedication to creating a campus culture that embraces the strength found in our differences and works towards eliminating disparities in education.

WCU has taken significant strides in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and one of our cornerstone initiatives in this regard is Moon Shot for Equity, which is now in its third year of implementation. Our goal—to eliminate institutional equity gaps by 2030—is both aspirational and achievable, and this year we are implementing the recommendations from our five goal teams even as we are continuing their work and launching new teams to tackle different structural barriers to success. As always, we welcome feedback from the campus community

that will help us realign WCU to be more equitable for our Black and Latinx students.

Our commitment to equity is deeply embedded in our new strategic plan, *Reimagining Student Success: Building on WCU's Momentum*. Picking up where we left off with the last strategic plan, *Pathways to Student Success*, our new strategic plan has been developed to advance the University from now through the end of the next academic year by focusing on three priority areas: learning, diversity, and community. We understand that achieving true equity requires ongoing efforts, and we are committed to continually evaluating and evolving our strategies to meet the diverse needs of our community.

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us also reiterate our shared commitment to building a campus culture that reflects the richness of our diverse backgrounds with respect and understanding. By embracing the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, we not only honor the legacy of those who have paved the way but also create a foundation for a more just and equitable future.

Thank you for your dedication to these important values and for contributing to the ongoing success of our students. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the educational experience at WCU.

Best regards,

Jeff Osgood

BEING "STUDENT READY"

Ram Portal Launch Update

Timeline:

During the week of March 4th all students and faculty will be able to log into RamPortal to review the fall 2024 class schedule and begin preparing for registration. When the system is available, students and faculty will receive an email with instructions on how to log in.

Preparing:

The best way to prepare for RamPortal is to attend a training session. In the weeks ahead we have additional sessions for faculty advisors, and sessions for chairs/graduate coordinators/academic department admins. Please register for sessions on the [FAST Training site](#).

Supporting fall 24 registration will look different in RamPortal. Our [Registration website](#) provides more information about the timeline for registration. Below is a quick guide on what tools you can plan to use.

Note: Advisors and students will be utilizing the myWCU Degree Progress Report (DPR) to see their degree requirements during the fall 24 registration period. WCU has moved the launch (aka "go-live") of the new RamPortal Degree Audit tool until Summer 2024 to allow us to ensure the accuracy of the degree requirements.

Support:

We recognize that it will take time for students, faculty, and staff to learn the new RamPortal system. We're here to support everyone in the transition. Here are some ways to connect with support during March.

- For security issues (i.e. trouble logging in or not being able to see what you need), complete an [Academic & Enterprise Systems Access Request form](#)

- For problems with a student record, complete an **Academic & Enterprise Systems Incident Form**
- For feedback on how we can make RamPortal work better for you, please email **sis@wcupa.edu**
- For training, please sign up for a **FAST Training session**
- For hands-on support with challenges you are encountering, join us in an **open lab**

For instructions on common RamPortal tasks such as how to view advisees and remove advisor holds, visit our **training website**.

Fall 2024 Registration & Advising	
Advisor Notes	MyWCU Advising Notes (Notes will transition to RamPortal in summer 2024)
Class Offerings	The class schedule will be visible in RamPortal the week of 3/4 A PDF of offerings will be available on Registrar's website prior to 3/4
Degree Audit	The myWCU DPR will accurately show historic enrollments including spring 24 and summer 24 classes.
Holds	The advisor hold (AH) will be applied. Advisors will release the hold in RamPortal
Academic Record, Current/Future Registration	View most accurate record in myWCU via Display All and DPR. Note: Spring 24 and Summer 24 registration information will NOT be accurate in RamPortal until September 2024. myWCU will NEVER show Fall 2024 class registration information.

STUDENT SUCCESS

WCU Students Take Awards at Kennedy Center at American College Regional Theater Festival

(Story courtesy of WCU Communications & Marketing)

Students in West Chester University's Department of Theatre and Dance displayed talent and skill and won awards at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF, Region 2) in Downtown Pittsburgh.



KCACTF Region 2 attracts theatre students and faculty from colleges and universities in six Mid-Atlantic states for four days of theatre training and competition. The Region's Leadership, with support from the Pittsburgh Playhouse of Point Park University, the August Wilson African American Cultural Center, and The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, enabled the invitation of 115 college and university theatre programs to present and receive feedback on student work. Of the 700 students in attendance, 25 were from West

Chester University. They were joined by two faculty members from the department.

West Chester University students received the following commendations at the festival:

- Raven Burckhalter was invited to perform in the KCACTF 2024 Cabaret. It was also announced that Burckhalter will be working in a professional production of Once on this Island at Philadelphia's Arden Theatre Company this Spring.
- Ania Hawkins-Williams received a Civic Dramaturgy commendation for work on Me, War and Toy Grenade
- Eli McBride received a Creative Audience Engagement Commendation for Dramaturgical work on Kiss Me Kate.
- Victoria Naftel was presented the Randy Lutz Allied Design and Technology Award, Regional 2 for Charlotte's Web puppets. She won a trip to Seattle, Washington, to present at the United States Institute of Theatre Technology this spring.
- DJ Ty Tansey was featured at the Late-Night Dance Party
- Isabella Yackanicz was a Musical Theatre Initiative (MTI) Finalist and received a one-on-one coaching session.
- Griffen Anderson, Myra Kelley, and Victoria Naftel received First Place in the Timed Props Event as part of the Technical Olympics.

West Chester University students attended workshops in resume development, cold readings, dance, design, and more. They also attended luncheons, participated in Technical Olympics, attended design exhibit presentations, entered competitions, and performed.

NFL Selects Four WCU Student Interns

(Story courtesy of WCU Communications & Marketing)

After having emerged successfully from a rigorous selection process, four WCU students in the University's graduate Athletic Training program will intern with NFL teams from across the country this summer.



"Four WCU students landing NFL internships in the same summer is a testament to their hard work, the strength of our program, the faculty who support them, and our larger University community's dedication to excellence," said Scott Heinerichs, dean of the College of Health Sciences. "We're thrilled for their selection in this competitive process, and to see how they'll inspire future WCU students," he said.

The students, all pursuing their master's degree in Athletic Training, are working with the following NFL teams:

- Kansas City Chiefs - Sharese Johnson
- New York Jets - Gabrielle Louis-Charles
- Buffalo Bills - Julia Rose
- Washington Commanders - Nicholas Tucker

**Learn
More**

ACCESS

150 Employers Court WCU Students at 2024 Job Fair: PA Auditor General Recognized WCU Student as First Graduate of Intern2Hire Program

(Story courtesy of WCU Communications & Marketing)



With the sound of feet hitting the ground running, the spring job-hunting and internship-mining season has officially begun for college students; three-quarters of employers say the overall job market is favorable for graduates of the Class of 2024. This is great news for 1,000+ West Chester University (WCU) students who pounded the pavement on February 28 at an on-campus job and internship fair that brought 150 employers to the University's Student Recreation Center. Employers in attendance ranged from nonprofits and government agencies to small, mid-size, and large corporations. WCU's Twardowski Career Development Center organizes the University's Job and Internship Fair.

As the road to successful employment is often paved with a rewarding internship, Pennsylvania Auditor General Timothy L. DeFoor joined President Christopher Fiorentino and Twardowski Career Development Center Director Jennifer Rossi Long in recognizing Francisco Molina, a 2023 WCU alumnus and the first graduate of the Intern-to-Hire Program.

The fair provided the landscape for productive student-employer engagement. By speaking one-on-one with employers, students are determined to land job and internship interviews for later dates.

Exactly what are employers looking for these days? Rossi Long shares that employers are looking for employees who have command of emotional intelligence. "In today's technologically-advanced, complex job markets, employers want their employees to have skills that cannot be replaced by Artificial Intelligence. In addition to solid academic backgrounds, they need employees who bring skills that are inherently human — interpersonal communication, creativity, problem solving, and empathy," she says. There is also a give-and-take that appears to be much more prevalent in today's job market. In addition to making positive connections with employers, many students are equally as interested in making sure potential employers' values match their own and that employees' best interests are top of mind.

Much is currently being done by those at WCU's Twardowski Career Development Center to help students become comfortable with the process of interviewing. One of the most popular tools has been the use of the "Big Interview," where students are able to do a mock interview on their own by recording an interview and playing it back to hear what they said, how they said it, as well as watch the non-verbal gestures used. Some WCU professors are even incorporating "Big Interview" in their classrooms by choosing sets of questions specific to their subject areas. "This tool is proving to be a great way to integrate career-readiness in the classroom," says Rossi Long. "The platform puts the power of the interview in the hands of the student whenever the student needs to access it the most."

The fair is intentional. It has been designed to provide teachable moments to students

at every stage of their job or internship hunt. In fact, the fair even acts as a training ground for job-hunting voyeurs or “first-timers,” students who will one day be pounding-the-pavement themselves for jobs or internships. While students interact with employers, graduate assistants will escort some job-hunting newbies who will watch intently as participant-observers and learn how one approaches an employer, what one says to an employer, how one dresses, and more.

The Class of 2024 has much to be excited about. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, “Salary stability is evident as slightly more than 43% of employers plan to increase starting salaries to Class of 2024 bachelor’s degree graduates, and nearly all remaining employers anticipate keeping salaries at last year’s levels.”



Journal of Access, Retention, & Inclusion in Higher Education

JARIHE Call for Manuscripts

The Journal of Access, Retention, and Inclusion in Higher Education (JARIHE) is seeking qualitative and quantitative manuscripts that share best and promising practices on student success programs. This call applies to research addressing all students, including those in regular admissions and developmental programs. Please note: submissions by graduate students are also encouraged. Submissions will be accepted through April 1, 2024.

JARIHE is a peer-reviewed scholarly publication that supports research in the areas of developmental education, access, retention, inclusion, and student success in higher education.

[See Guidelines](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Department of Theatre & Dance Premieres New Adaptation of Chekhov's Three Sisters

(Story courtesy of WCU Communication & Marketing)

West Chester University’s Department of Theatre & Dance presents a world premiere adaptation of the Anton Chekhov classic **THREE SISTERS**. Associate Professor of

Theatre John Bellomo adapted and directed the show. **THREE SISTERS** runs **Thursday, February 29, Friday, March 1, and Saturday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, March 3, at 2 p.m.**, in the JP Adler Studio Theatre, E.O. Bull Center for the Arts, 2 East Rosedale Ave., West Chester, PA. General Admission tickets are \$15, \$12 for students and seniors with valid I.D. To purchase tickets, click the button below.

THREE SISTERS debuted at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1901. In THREE SISTERS, the Prozorov sisters long to leave their country estate and return to Moscow, but they find themselves trapped by financial hardships, tumultuous affairs, and their own inner demons. Chekhov navigates the sisters' beautiful suffering with gentle humor, warmth, and compassion.

The cast of THREE SISTERS includes: Ivana Agova (Ensemble), Raven Burckhalter (Ensemble), Sophie Cox (Anfisa/Ensemble), David Gold (Vershinin), Nicci Hardaway (Olga), Emily Harris (Irina), Ania Hawkins-Williams (Ferafont), Ronnie Hernandez (Chebutykin), Owen Kaatz (Kulygin), Lauren Kuerschner (Natashsa), Luke Preston (Tuzenbakh), Exavior Rease (Andrei), Bri Silasavage (Ensemble), Dylan Stevens (Fedotik), Matthew Tindall (Rode), Jack Williamson (Solyony), Isabella Yackanicz (Masha).

**Purchase
Tickets**



WCU Symphony Orchestra Presents Irving H. Cohen Memorial Concert

*(Story courtesy of WCU
Communication & Marketing)*

The West Chester University Symphony Orchestra, one of the esteemed ensembles at WCU's Wells School of Music, presented the Annual Irving H. Cohen Memorial & Concerto Winners' Concert on Sunday, February 18 in the Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall.

Under the direction of Paul Bryan, the concert honors the impact of Irving H. Cohen, WCU Professor of Music from 1969 until his death in 1989. A memorial fund in Cohen's name benefits current West Chester music students through scholarships and other means of support.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The Society of WCU Establishes Two New Awards

*(Story courtesy of WCU Communications &
Marketing)*

The Society of West Chester University has established two new awards that are now presented annually at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Brunch each January: the Larry Dowdy Community Service Award and the Student Service Leadership Award. The Society, which organizes and



hosts the brunch, is an organization of University faculty, staff, and administrators who embrace the spirit of Frederick Douglass' commitment to social consciousness and inclusiveness.

In recognition of his extensive service to the University, Lawrence A. Dowdy '73 (who was out of town and unable to attend the brunch) was named the inaugural recipient of the Larry Dowdy Community Service Award.

Dowdy completed his undergraduate degree at what was then at West Chester State College in 1973, becoming a residence hall director and assistant director of the Act 101 Program following his graduation.

In 1976 he began working for Cheyney University, serving in several roles that included dean of men, dean for student services, and Affirmative Action officer. He completed his master's degree in counselor education during this time.

Dowdy returned to his alma mater in 1983 as the Affirmative Action officer, later becoming special assistant to the president, the executive assistant to the president, and government relations officer. He was named executive deputy to the president and governmental relations officer in 1999, the position he held until his retirement in 2014. Dowdy was lauded for mentoring both students and staff members. He was chair of the Campus Climate Intervention Team, the Board of Governors Scholarship Committee, and the Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration Committee.

Dowdy has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Humanitarian Award, the Mary Baltimore Award from the Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education, the President's Award for Philanthropy, and the WCU Presidential Medallion for Service. The Dowdy Multicultural Center is named in his honor.

The first annual Society Student Service Leadership Award was presented to Empower Communities Around You (ECAY). ECAY is a multicultural community service organization whose mission is to uplift, impact, and empower those within our community through meaningful service opportunities in the tri-state area, special programs, and collaborative events on campus. They pride themselves on being able to create a safe space for students to give them a voice and allow them to create a great college experience for themselves.

The Society annually raises money for scholarship funds in an effort to increase the economic options available to the student body. It seeks, by the example of Douglass, to promote an intellectual standard that is not only grounded in excellence, but also profoundly rooted in the public mission of higher education. Current academic year officers are Andria Young, president; Stephanie Reid, vice president; Tiffany Jones, treasurer; and Ronda Taylor, secretary.

Women's & Gender Studies Hosts New Lecture Series

(Story courtesy of WCU Communications & Marketing)

The West Chester University Women's and Gender Studies Department, in a new initiative called the Women's and Gender Studies Collection, invites renowned feminist scholar-activists Sara Ahmed and Loretta Ross to present their views on gender and equality. Events are FREE and open to the public.



Ahmed discussed “Travelling with Feminist Killjoys” in a virtual conversation on February 28 in Sykes Student Union Ballroom, and Ross's live talk titled “Reproductive Justice Now” will be presented on **Monday, March 25**, at 5 p.m. in Philips Autograph Library, 700 South High Street. To register for the March event, click the button below.

The new Women’s and Gender Studies Collective initiative focuses on providing free, accurate, and trustworthy materials on race, gender, and sexuality via an online, open educational resource collection.

Lisa Huebner, WCU professor of women’s and gender studies and director of this initiative, says, “I am truly honored to host these events with internationally renowned feminist scholar-activists for our campus and surrounding communities. Sara Ahmed and Loretta Ross are trailblazers in feminist and human rights work in ways that truly account for all oppressed people and help so many of us. That we bring them as part of the Women’s and Gender Studies Collection is a dream come true for me, and for so many of us.”

Both speaking events are sponsored by WCU's Department of Women’s and Gender Studies, the Center for Women & Gender Equity, and the Women's and Gender Studies Collection.

[Register Here](#)

SCHOLARSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Wellness Promotion Peer Educators Win Third Place in DEA Red Ribbon Week Campus PSA Video Contest

As part of the Drug Enforcement Administration’s Red Ribbon Week campaign, DEA and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration cosponsor a Campus Video PSA Contest for colleges and universities to promote the importance of preventing alcohol and other drug misuse among college students.

After drug traffickers murdered DEA Special Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena in 1985, Red Ribbon Week became an annual event highlighting the importance of preventing drug misuse in our nation’s schools and communities. Each year from October 23–31, people across the United States show their commitment to a healthy, drug-free lifestyle by wearing or displaying a Red Ribbon.

This year at the NASPA Strategies Conference in San Francisco, CA, the Peer Educators of The Office of Wellness Promotion at West Chester University brought home third place in this PSA video contest. Our students chose to highlight a synthesis of drug and alcohol effects, as well as drug-free hobbies, and earn a 3rd place plaque and \$1,000 to support campus drug misuse prevention efforts. The video highlighted current students and their choice to be kind to their mind engaging in healthier alternatives to drug and alcohol use. Congratulations to the Peer Education Team!



[Watch You Tube](#)

RESOURCE CORNER

LOOKING TO
**RESERVE A
LARGE SPACE
IN SYKES**
FOR 2024-2025?

Advance Registration Process For Sykes Student Union Now Available

After a successful inaugural year, Sykes Student Union is pleased to begin the 2024-

2025 Advance Reservation process. Please review some of the FAQs in the link below and note the tentative timeline.

Advance Reservation is the process that Sykes Union and Student Activities implemented in 2022 to assist student organizations and university departments with reserving space within Sykes Student Union for future events.

[Learn More About Advance
Registration](#)

[Click Here to Submit an Advance Reservation
Request](#)



How to Submit Your Event to Online Campus Calendar

The WCU Calendar is populated by events submitted in **25Live**, WCU's room reservation and calendaring program. Faculty/Staff may submit events to the calendar by selecting "WCU Featured Events Calendar" in the "Resources" section of the 25Live Event Form.

[WCU Event
Calendar](#)

[How to submit your event to WCU
Calendar](#)

**Professional Headshots Available
via Iris Photo Booth at Twardowski**



Career Development Center

Students, Faculty, and Staff now have access to the Iris Booth, a free professional photo booth located in the Career Development Center (Lawrence 225).

Students, Faculty, and Staff can stop by anytime Monday through Friday between 8:30am and 4pm to get a photo

taken, no appointment needed.

Communication Sciences & Disorders
1923-2023
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY
Celebrating 100 Years

Accepting Appointments

West Chester University Speech and Hearing Clinic

FREE hearing evaluations available

Schedule your appointment now by contacting
Jacqueline Johnson at 610-436-3402 or email
jjohnson@wcupa.edu

Click to
Schedule



RECAP Conference

Adapting to Today, Preparing for Tomorrow: Transformative Trends in Higher Ed Technology and Pedagogy

We invite you to be a part of this dynamic conference by submitting your proposal and joining us on **Thursday, May 16, 2024**.

Together, let's explore, innovate, and elevate higher education to new heights

Presentation Proposals Now Being Accepted
Deadline for submissions is Monday, February 12, 2024



WWW.WCUPA.EDU/RECAP

[Click to Submit Proposal](#)

FAST Schedule & Offerings



Check out what IS&T has on tap for the semester! The Faculty and Staff Training (FAST) unit supports WCU faculty and staff in becoming proficient in various applications, in addition to providing best practices in trending platforms (e.g., OneDrive, D2L,

RamCloud). Courses are designed to accommodate all levels of learning and allow users to build on acquired skills. Click below for the full schedule or take **self-paced options**.

[Click for Schedule](#)

ODLI On Air Podcast

ODLI on Air is a podcast on digital learning & innovation at WCU that expands teaching and learning perspectives by connecting theory and practice through conversations with expert WCU faculty. Check out episodes on a variety

of topics including sustainable study abroad, using H5P interactions, inclusive learning, and e-portfolios.



[Listen to ODLI On Air](#)



Want to learn more about Navigate?

Visit our **webpage**. You'll find an overview, information about **Progress Reports**, and our **training site**.

[Navigate Homepage](#)

You can also check out the **FAST training site** and search "navigate" to find all of the Navigate-specific offerings. Here's a **quick guide** to the offerings.

FREE LinkedIn Learning Content Available to WCU Faculty, Staff and Students

LinkedIn Learning with Lynda.com content is an industry leader in online training, with a digital library of over 180,000 videos, covering a wide range of technical, business, software, and creative topics. West Chester University faculty, staff and currently enrolled students have unlimited access.

[Access LinkedIn Learning](#)



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