



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. 6

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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.

*Our next issue comes out on **April 27**. Should you wish to submit a story for the April issue, please click the button below. Submissions must be received by **Friday, April 21**.*

[Submit Story Here](#)

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Dear colleagues,

This month we celebrate women's history. Therefore, this issue of *The Provost's Post* features stories from across the university of how women have shaped and been shaped by West Chester University. Pictured above are just a few of the many women who have had a significant impact on this institution.

One of these women is Dr. Laurie Bernotsky who, as many of you know, has been asked to help support Pennsylvania West University (Penn West) in its transition from three universities to one as part of the PASSHE merger, first as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer to now interim president. She will serve as interim president until a new president is hired. Until then, I will do my best to fill her shoes as interim EVP and Provost.

The Division of Academic Affairs has been busy this month. We launched a new 3/2 dual degree program in Quantum Sciences and Engineering in collaboration with the University of Delaware, the first of its kind in the nation. In recognition of women's history month, the Center for Women and Gender Equity hosted its annual Gender Justice Conference and WCU's Communications Sciences & Disorders Department celebrated its 100th anniversary on the occasion, appropriately, of World Voice Day. We are pleased to shine a spotlight on Associate Professor Liu Ciu's research on "Closing the Gender Gap in Computer Sciences." Dr. Ciu's work is one of the projects recognized in this year's Spotlight on Faculty Research, which will highlight faculty research that aims to close equity gaps that exist in student success and retention, part of our Moon Shot for Equity initiative.

Of course, an issue devoted to women's history would not be complete without mentioning WCU's Department of Women's and Gender Studies. The first women's studies course was proposed in 1971 at what was then West Chester State College. The course, which attracted nearly 100 students, was interdisciplinary in nature, with lecturers from history, philosophy,

sociology, English, psychology, and art history. Despite the interest, the course was not without controversy as the lectures and assigned readings challenged preconceived views about women's roles. For more information about the history of women's studies at West Chester University, I encourage you to read the article, "**From Margin to Center: The Development of a Women's Studies Program**" by Anne Dzamba, Madelyn Gutwirth, Lynette McGrath and Stacey Schlau, some of the pioneers of the women's studies program.

Last, but not least, I want to remind everyone that the deadline to submit proposals for the **Provost's Enrollment Planning Investment (PEPI)** grants is April 3, 2023. Proposals should be electronically submitted to the Office of the Provost via email to **Provost@wcupa.edu**. Please direct any questions to Cheryl Neale-McFall at **cneale-mcfall@wcupa.edu**.

Sincerely,

Jeff Osgood

BEING STUDENT READY

SSET: Student Success and Engagement Team

Relaunching Spring 2023

- > Monitors Navigate cases to foster student engagement with support services.
- > SSET intervention is designed to ensure more Navigate case outcomes involve connecting students with the support they need.

Scan above or click below for more info
WCU SSET

The graphic includes two photographs: one showing two people looking at a laptop, and another showing a student talking to a staff member at a desk.

Student Success & Engagement Team

As we move into the second half of the spring semester, we want to remind you of the work of the **Student Success & Engagement Team (SSET)**, and how you can connect students with this support team.

SSET is charged with supporting cases concerning student academic well-being, academic engagement, and supporting student belonging. Their work stems from cases, alerts, and data from **Navigate**. Both **CARE** and SSET will work collaboratively to support students. The CARE Team continues to receive cases via the **online form** and respond to acute needs. The SSET team

receives cases via Navigate and provides longer-term care and support to students. Both teams work together to understand the holistic student experience and offer support accordingly.

The SSET team, comprised of faculty & staff, monitors Navigate cases to foster student engagement with support services. SSET intervention is designed to ensure more Navigate case outcomes involve connecting students with the support they need. Additionally, **if you are seeing multiple supports needed for a student or want to refer a student directly to SSET you can do so via Navigate. Here is a quick guide on how to refer students to SSET.**

SSET team members may reach out to faculty and advisors to seek updates on student engagement and for assistance connecting with students. These outreaches are intended to help us support students throughout the semester.

Please bookmark the site below and refer to it for updates on the team's work.

**More Info on SSET
Webpage**

STUDENT SUCCESS

WCU Celebrates World Voice Day and Centennial Anniversary of Communications Sciences and Disorders

On Tuesday, March 21, West Chester University recognized National World Voice Day on the 100th anniversary of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.



The event brought voice disorder scholars, speech-language pathologists as well as speech-language students and alumni together to engage in compelling discussions on a wide range of trending and relevant topics, including the results of the first study conducted on mindfulness and people with voice disorders.

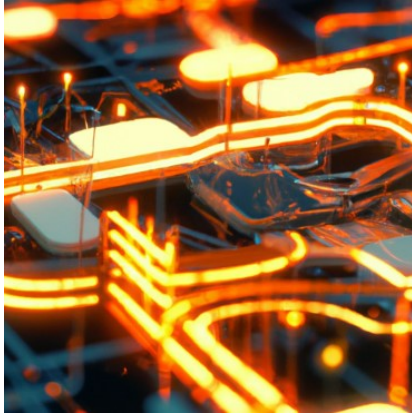
“World Voice Day is a celebration of all things voice,” says Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders Liz Grillo. “In the field of communication sciences and disorders, it is a celebration of how we, as speech-language pathologists, help people with voice problems, disorders and differences.”

In addition to presentations, Professor Grillo engaged with several current graduate students, as well as alumni, who assisted on two National Institutes of Health grants dedicated to saving teachers’ voices. Professor Grillo’s ground-breaking grant work helped support her invention of **VoiceEvalU8**, the only comprehensive voice-evaluation smartphone application tool in the U.S. dedicated to helping to reduce debilitating voice disorders. The tool is the first to record acoustic, perceptual and aerodynamic voice data across multiple days in the morning before talking all day and in the evening after talking all day.

One of the key components of the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department is its renowned Speech and Hearing Clinic. Founded in 1923, the Clinic was one of the first in the U.S. Today, it offers free, full diagnostic evaluations for children and adults suspected of having speech, language or hearing disorders. Treatment is offered in both individual and group settings and bilingual Spanish-English evaluations and treatment are available.

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders’ Centennial Celebration will continue throughout 2023 with numerous events, including an upcoming Centennial Banquet featuring Speech and Hearing Clinic Tours, faculty and student presentations at the Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association Conference, and much more.

[Learn
More](#)



WCU and UD Launch Nation's First Quantum Science and Engineering 3/2 Dual Degree Program

This is a new program in which West Chester University and the University of Delaware have teamed up to offer the country's first and only 3-2 dual degree program in quantum science and engineering. After completing just three years at WCU and an additional two years at the University of Delaware, students will earn a bachelor's degree in Physics from West Chester University and a master's degree in Quantum Science and Engineering from the University of Delaware.

Quantum Science and Engineering (QSE) focuses on understanding and exploiting the unusual behavior of particles and excitations governed by the laws of quantum mechanics. This improved control over the quantum world has already found its way into a tremendous number of applications spanning a broad range of fields. For example, quantum communication uses the phenomenon of entanglement to securely transmit data over large distances. Quantum computers can perform calculations that would take current classical computers decades or even hundreds of years, which will in turn have implications for medicine, finance, and defense. Quantum materials applications include using 2D semiconductors for more efficient solar cells and quantum dots that can potentially be harnessed to drive ultralow power consumption devices. Quantum magnetic field sensors will enable improved functional brain imaging. The vast potential of QSE will require a workforce with interdisciplinary training in quantum mechanics, materials science, electrical engineering, and computer science.

With applications we have yet to even imagine on the horizon, Fortune Business Insights projects the QSE market to grow from \$486 million in 2021 to \$3.2 billion in 2028, an average annual growth rate of about 31%. We are excited to provide WCU Physics majors with this unique opportunity to become part of the truly revolutionary field of Quantum Science and Engineering.

[Learn
More](#)

ACCESS

Center for Women and Gender Equity

Since 1974, the **Center for Women and Gender Equity** has been serving as advocates for gender equity issues in collaboration with the campus community. The Center for Women & Gender Equity is supported by a staff of paid undergraduate Peer Educators, one Graduate

Assistant and the following full time team members: Lindsey Mosvick, Interim Director; Barb DiEdwardo, administrative staff; and Tess Benser, Assistant Director (until 4/7/23).

The Center for Women and Gender Equity actively promotes and advocates for a campus community that values the safety, equality, and intellectual advancement of women and other historically marginalized groups.



Their mission is accomplished by:

- Facilitating co-curricular initiatives that address a wide range of issues that affect the success and well-being of women.
- Offering opportunities to examine the ways in which gender-based oppression intersects with other forms of systemic oppression.
- Coordinating campus wide violence prevention initiatives designed to engage all members of the University community.
- Engaging allies through programming focused on exploring concepts of masculinities.
- Building partners-in-movement through programming that supports and engages with other historically marginalized groups.
- Providing referrals and support to campus and community partners on issues that disproportionately impact women.
- Advocating for systemic changes that support women and other historically marginalized groups.

The Center looks forward to our 50th anniversary next year and welcomes opportunities to collaborate on programs and initiatives. Follow our social media, especially Instagram, to learn more about our plans for April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Lindsey Mosvick at lmosvick@wcupa.edu.

**More About the
Center**



WCU's Promise Program Supports Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

The WCU Promise Program is a campus support program currently serving 43 unaccompanied homeless and foster youth. That number fluctuates year-to-year between 40-60 students. It's

premise is based on the notion that a lack of basic needs and supports should not prevent students from succeeding.

Since 2014, WCU has been providing services to students on campus who are determined housing insecure. The University expanded services to foster youth and formalized its efforts into a campus support program known as the Promise Program thanks to organizer Tori Nuccio. The Promise Program provides support services including monthly programming that provides mentorship and opportunities to engage with peers, faculty and guest speakers. Priority access to housing, tutoring, jobs on-campus, and other support services are also provided. WCU also operates a **Resource Pantry** for WCU students in need, in both the West Chester and Philadelphia campuses, which provides fresh food from the University's South Campus and Tanglewood Gardens, as well as a room for toiletries and school supplies. There is a welcoming intake space for students, and even an area where donated desktop computers can be provided. The Resource Pantry resides within the **Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact (CCESI)**, and is supported by the Office of Financial Aid, Office of Student Affairs, and very generous donors through the WCU Foundation.

Starting in 2021-22, foster youth from Philadelphia may be considered for the **Immensitas Scholarship** from the Brook J. Lenfest Foundation which offers up to five eligible students a full scholarship to WCU once federal and state gift aid have been exhausted. The Immensitas Scholars program is offered to up to 100 Philadelphia students annually. Approximately, 250 Philadelphia youth annually age of foster care beginning at the age of 18. It is estimated that only 3% of those who enroll in college will graduate, mainly for financial reasons. The purpose of this scholarship is to eliminate that barrier to success. Four universities were funded: West Chester University, Penn State, Pennsylvania College of Technology and Harcum College.

For more information about the Promise Program and the Immensitas Scholarship, contact Ian Davis at idavis@wcupa.edu or click button below.

**WCU's Promise
Program**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



WCU Hosts Nobel Peace Forum with Members of Norwegian Nobel Committee

On March 24, West Chester University was proud to host members of the **Norwegian Nobel Committee**, which selects the annual Nobel Peace Prize laureate. The panelists shared conversations about issues related to global peace and conflict, fraternity, civil conversation in the face of conflict, and behind-the-scenes stories of how the Peace Prize laureates are selected.

Joining us were Asle Toje, deputy leader of the Norwegian Nobel Committee; Jørgen Frydnes, the youngest member ever to be appointed to the Norwegian Nobel Committee and a prior deputy leader; and Henrik Syse, a former

member and deputy leader of the Norwegian Nobel Committee who is now a research professor at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), a professor at Oslo New University College, and currently a visiting professor at West Chester University.

The forum, sponsored by the Office of the Provost and **WCU Honors College**, wrapped up on Saturday with a workshop for students who submitted proposals that reflected the theme of the three 2022 Nobel Peace Prize winners Ales Bialiatski (Belarus), Memorial (Russia), and Center for Civil Liberties (Ukraine). For more information about last year's Nobel Prize winners, see link below.

WCU students worked with members of the Nobel committee on four topics:

- Building Community Among Campus Clubs and Organizations
- Building Community Based on the WCU Legacy and History on Human Rights
- Building Community and Respectful Dialogue between “Town and Gown” – Students and Residents
- Combatting Sexual Violence and Harassment and Fostering Better Relations between Genders

Since World War II, the Nobel Peace Prize, known as the most prestigious award in the world, has principally been awarded to honor efforts in four main areas: arms control and disarmament, peace negotiation, democracy and human rights, and work aimed at creating a better organized and more peaceful world. In the 21st century, the Nobel Committee has embraced efforts to limit the harm done by man-made climate change and threats to the environment as relevant to the Peace Prize. Thanks to connections made through WCU’s Honors College, WCU has the distinction of being the only school in the world to submit a nomination for Nobel Peace Prize laureate to the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

2022 Nobel Peace Prize

DIVERSITY

WCU Hosts Third Annual Gender Justice Conference

The Center for Women & Gender Equity, in collaboration with a multitude of campus partners, held a successful Third Annual Gender Justice Conference on Wednesday, March 29th.



Over 100 attendees engaged in two keynotes and seven educational sessions throughout the day both in person and virtually. The lunchtime keynote by Dr. Lexx Brown-James, led a critical conversation on the role of pleasure and bodily autonomy and how we as humans can embrace it. Dr. Lexx offered practical, insightful knowledge for parents and caregivers and helped center consent. The evening Zoom keynote address featured author Sara Nović, who offered an impactful, insightful, and intersectional session about disability justice. In addition to centering the ways justice cannot exist without justice for disabled people, Sara wrote about their process of writing and imagining True Biz, answered the questions the Center’s month long book club members posed about the

characters, plot, and structure of the novel, and offered some incredible writing advice to audience members: Go write the weird book.

There is no way the conference could have been such a success without the leadership of Tess Benser, the conference's organizer, the Conference Committee, the peer educator staff of the Center and all of the event's sponsors. The Center extends gratitude to the Center for Trans & Queer Advocacy, the Counseling Center, Dowdy Multicultural Center, English Department, Graduate Social Work, LGBTQIA+ University Caucus, Languages and Cultures-ASL/Deaf Studies, Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, Office of Wellness Promotion, Peace and Conflict Studies, Political Science Department, Psychology Department, Public Health, Undergraduate Social Work, Student Government Association, Women's & Gender Studies Department for their generous financial support of this conference. The Center looks forward to carrying the tradition forward next year: save the date for Wednesday, April 4, 2024.

SCHOLARSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Closing the Gender Gap in Computer Science

Over the past decade, gender diversity has become a prominent issue in the United States. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that in the academic years of 2016, 2017, and 2018, women comprised 19.1%, 20.0%, and 20.6% of undergraduate computer majors. However, at West Chester University, the percentages of female students in the Computer Science undergraduate program were 13.33%, 13.05%, 15.35%, 13.99%, 14.87%, and 14.19% from 2016 to 2021, indicating a need for improvement in recruiting and retaining female students. The scarcity of role models is identified as a primary barrier to women pursuing computer science. To address this issue and promote women in computer science, we facilitate female students' attendance at conferences such as the **Grace Hopper Celebration (GHC)** and CodeFire.

GHC is a series of conferences featuring technical and career sessions designed to highlight women's research and career interests in computer science. Our students have had excellent experiences at the GHC, receiving interview and internship opportunities, listening to the up-to-date research talks, and connecting with peer female students in the field. CodeFire is a three-day event hosted by **Girls Who Code**, which is a nonprofit working to close the gender gap in tech. It provides immersive tech experience for coding and opportunities to nurture participants' passions while learning computer science skills. Our female students have actively shared their experiences and knowledge learned with other students in the **Women in Computer Science Club** and local high schools to encourage more women to pursue computer science.

FEATURED FACULTY

WCU's Dirhan Receives Outstanding Dietetic Educator Awards

Dr. Dara Dirhan, Associate Professor of Nutrition and Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) was recognized by both the Nutrition and Dietetic Educators and Preceptors (NDEP) and the Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (PAND) as "Outstanding Dietetic Educator."

Dr. Dirhan earned her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Management from Drexel University where she studied changes in dietary habits and behaviors of college students. Aside from teaching in higher education, she has professional experience in the corporate wellness sector, providing nutrition counseling and health education to corporate clients. Dr. Dirhan's research experience centers on best practices in teaching and learning pedagogy, including game-based learning, and studying student outcomes among undergraduate nutrition students. Her current research agenda is focused on studying mindfulness in undergraduate nutrition students, intuitive eating, presence among educators, and advocating for the inclusion of nutrition as a general education course requirement in the undergraduate curriculum.

NDEP consists of over 1,350 educator and preceptor members with a decision making body composed of 13 elected members and four appointed members known as the NDEP Council. The Pennsylvania Academy, an affiliate of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (PAND) is the advocate of the dietetics profession serving the public through the promotion of optimal nutrition, health, and well-being and represents nearly 2,700 members throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



RESOURCE CORNER

Call for Proposals: Provost's Enrollment Planning Investment Grants

West Chester University has been fortunate to experience an extended period of enrollment growth, which has contributed to our success. However, we have begun to transition into a new era of enrollment management where growth will be more difficult, and retention will require additional attention and investment. Given all of this, we are pleased to announce the creation of the **Provost's Enrollment Planning Investment Grants (PEPI)**. These grants are meant to fund proposals from teams of faculty and/or staff that seek to address our enrollment challenges and opportunities. We welcome proposals from entire departments, interest groups, collective bargaining units, shared governance leadership teams, and others. We view these grants as not only an investment in our students' success, but an investment in our faculty and staff.

Proposals should include a brief abstract (less than one-page), a narrative not to exceed five

pages, and a budget detailing any faculty and/or staff compensation and any operating needs. We are looking for proposals that will focus their initial work during summer of 2023 and seek to complete the work no later than the end of the spring 2024 semester. The goal is to implement the interventions no later than the 2024-25 academic year. **Proposals should be electronically submitted to the Office of the Provost by April 3rd, 2023** via e-mail to Provost@wcupa.edu. Award notifications will be distributed by April 28th, 2023. Questions can be directed to Cheryl Neale-McFall, interim Associate Provost for Research and Creative Activity at CNeale-McFall@wcupa.edu.

[More information](#)

Call for Manuscripts: JARIHE 2023

The Journal of Access, Retention, and Inclusion in Higher Education supports research in the areas of developmental education, access, retention, inclusion, and student success in higher education. Contributors provide scholarly research, practical insight, and accounts of best practices to support students from traditionally underrepresented, first generation, and other marginalized communities. Readership includes faculty, program managers, legislators and college/university senior leadership. Submissions will be accepted through April 1, 2023, and can be accepted at jarihe@wcupa.edu. Please direct any questions to John B. Craig, Ed.D., Editor, at jcraig@wcupa.edu.

[For more information](#)

WCU IRB Q&A Zoom Sessions

The WCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) will host IRB Q&A Zoom sessions for the campus community. Please find linked below the spring 2023 Q&A Zoom sessions dates, times, and zoom links. All may attend any of the scheduled sessions.

[More Information](#)



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](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Wednesday, April 12 from 4 - 5:30pm (via Zoom):** Navigating Academic Freedom, Free Speech and Social Justice! The event will feature a presentation by Dr. Rachelle Brunn-Bevel, followed by a conversation facilitated by WCU's Professor Orkideh Mohajeri. Click [here](#) to register.
- **Thursday, April 27 at 3:30 - 5pm (Zoom):** Designing for Equity: Using UDL to Create an Equitable & Inclusive Classroom. Are you new to UDL? Do you want to make your courses more inclusive in one of the three UDL areas? Join us for this flexible workshop. To register, click [here](#).
- **Wednesday, April 19, 3:30 - 6pm (Philips Conference Room 004):** The Annual CELT Spring Workshop. The theme for the workshop is "Student retention through inclusive teaching." Register [here](#).
- **Friday, May 19, 2023, 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM (In person)** Applying the QM Rubric (APPQMR) Training - This one day workshop is a great option for faculty wishing to renew CAPC Distance Education Training Credential. Participants must attend the whole day. To register, complete the [APPQMR interest form](#).

West Chester University

700 South High Street
West Chester, PA 19383
610-436-1000

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