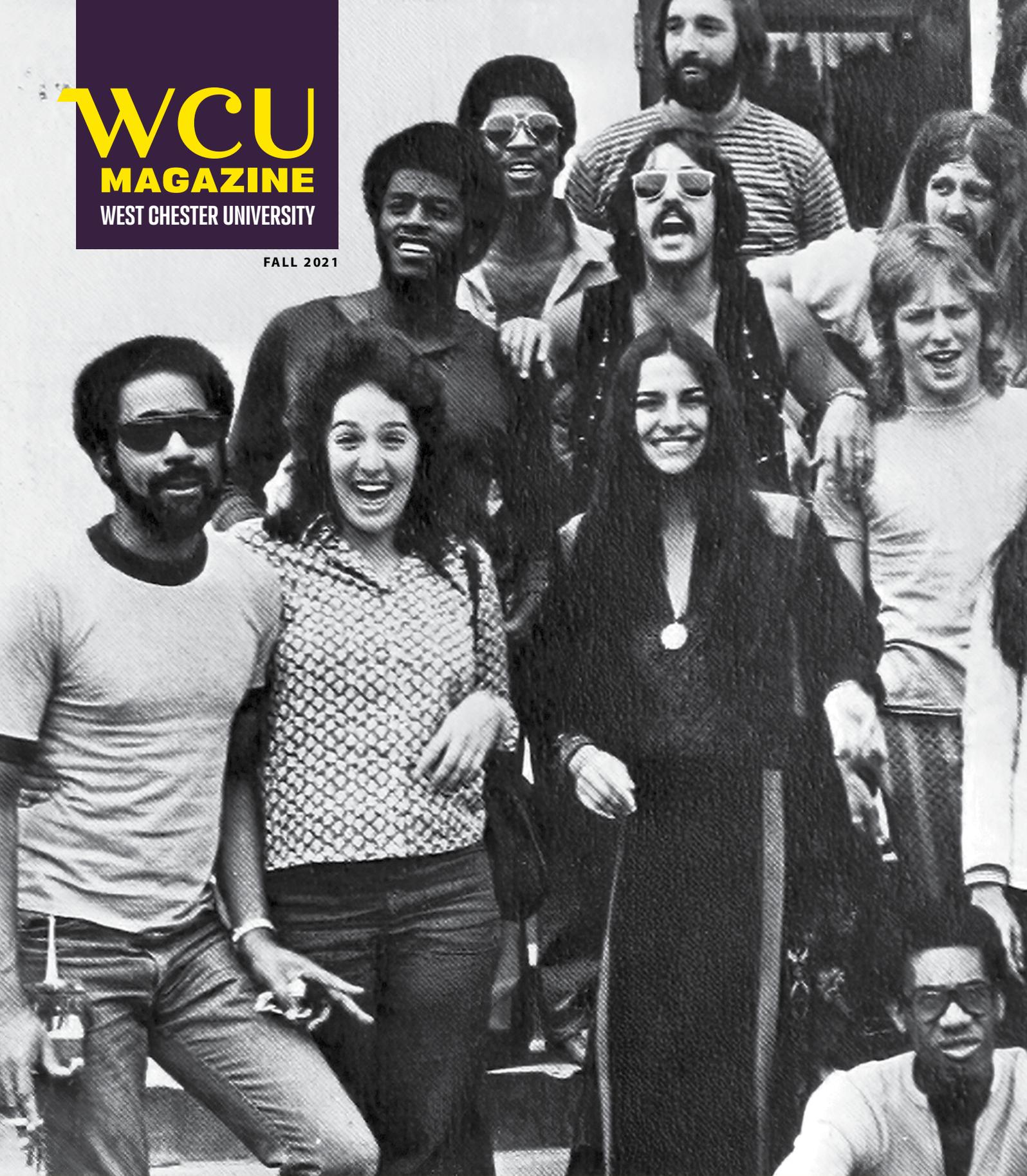


# WCU MAGAZINE

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

FALL 2021



**The Human Story:  
The History and Future of the  
College of Arts & Humanities**

PAGE 7

**Erase Equity Gaps**  
PAGE 22

**Sesquicentennial Kickoff**  
PAGE 24

## A Place to Be

by Cassidy Graham

Serpentine stone on the Old Library  
Trees whistling as the yellow turned leaves rustle  
on the restless Quad  
Students throwing Frisbee, while others eat sushi  
in a circle on the emerald grass

### A place to become who I want to be

The girl who sat next to me in Lawrence,  
asking my freshman self if I was okay  
My roommates who have turned me into Jess  
from "New Girl"

### A place to discover my passions

The professor who asked me sophomore year  
if I had ever thought of grad school  
Attending Jan Beatty's poetry reading  
One poet and the realization of  
who I can become as a writer

### A place to belong

My first sweatshirt bought at Sykes, gold and purple  
a symbol of my acceptance  
Just a step outside of my apartment  
to hear the low hum of the band practicing  
for this Saturday's game

### A place called home

Main Hall, a revolving door for English majors  
and writers alike  
Banana Day in April, a tradition since '96  
An alliance of people brought together by one place

### A place called West Chester



## LARGEST CAMPAIGN IN UNIVERSITY'S HISTORY ANNOUNCED

Coinciding with the University's 150th anniversary celebrations on September 17, President Christopher Fiorentino announced a \$65 million comprehensive campaign, 150Forward: The Campaign for West Chester University, the largest campaign in the University's history.

More than \$43 million has been raised in support of the three campaign priorities: Investing in our students. Creating opportunity. Leading with technology. Working alongside President Fiorentino and our Foundation to make this campaign a reality are campaign co-chairs Eric K. Bossard '85, Marc Duey, and Jacquelyne North '81.

West Chester University has never had greater momentum than today. Capitalizing on our rich history, healthy enrollments, and new national initiatives, we are ready to fulfill our mission of student success for the next 150 years.

The announcement also showcased students' creativity with a video featuring music arranged by Spencer Camacho '20 and a poem by Cassidy Graham, a class of 2023 English writing major who's minoring in creative writing, which appears here.

Visit the campaign website to explore the campaign priorities: [www.wcufoundation.org/150forward/](http://www.wcufoundation.org/150forward/).

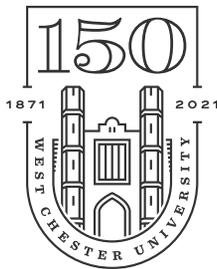
## ON THE COVER

07

**The Human Story:  
The History and  
Future of the  
College Of Arts &  
Humanities**



Cover Photo: Found in a 1972-73 yearbook, this photo is from a WCU production of *Superstar*.



150<sup>th</sup> logo designed by David P. Jones,  
associate professor of art

Visit WCU's anniversary website  
[wcupa.edu/wcu150](http://wcupa.edu/wcu150) for frequently updated  
historic features and photos, videos,  
and news on upcoming celebrations.

Share your memories using  
#WCU150 on social media.

Visit the campus store website  
for 150th anniversary merchandise!  
[wucampusstore.com/merch/webstore/150th](http://wucampusstore.com/merch/webstore/150th).

## FEATURE

17

**The Future Begins  
With You**

\$65 million comprehensive  
campaign launched.

## PROFILES

21

**Donor:  
The Brady Family**

Communications scholarship fulfills  
father's wishes.

28

**Alumni:  
Deirdre McEvoy Bigley '86**

Top marketer values English lit lessons  
mastered at WCU.

## DEPARTMENTS

04 President's Letter

06 University News

16 Faculty Profile

27 Chapter News

29 Class Notes

34 Homecoming Joy

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Save-the-date  
Sesquicentennial  
Campus Showcase

**April 23, 2022**

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



I cannot remember a fall season that has been heralded with such celebration—and with good reason. Our campus has come back to life as students, faculty, and staff return to in-person learning and life-changing experiences. This true homecoming has never meant more as we celebrate our 150th anniversary as an institution that commits to student success in intentional ways that, in turn, help make a difference in so many lives. Teach one. Touch thousands. That is what we have done and what we will continue to do for the next generation of Golden Rams.

We have “found our element” and this is indeed our golden moment. Know that WCU’s enrollment continues to be impressive as the institution remains the destination of choice for more than

17,000 students and numerous prospective students are applying with hopes of being selected during this time of high-volume recruitment.

West Chester University remains a game changer in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and beyond. In a *Philadelphia Inquirer* article written by Sue Snyder, it was stated that “West Chester, at 150 years old, has emerged as the state system’s best...And it’s arguably the most successful.” That is a fact. The affordable, high-quality education provided by WCU is second to none and our reputation precedes us for nurturing students who use critical thinking, analytical skills, and compassion as their resolve to change the world.

As this University makes it a practice to cultivate students who are equipped to view the various sides of an issue and recommend solutions, it is fitting that the first issue of *West Chester University Magazine* for the 2021-2022 year features the College of Arts and Humanities. Rightly called a “regional innovator” by Dean Jen Bacon, the College of Arts and Humanities is one of the University’s many academic powerhouses where students’ thirst for knowledge is quenched in rigorous and impactful ways that inspire the human story.

During this season of thanks and giving, I can think of nothing better than being uplifted by our Golden Rams. Happy holidays to all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris M. Fiorentino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher M. Fiorentino  
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Through the generosity of Agnes and Roger Ware, Jr. '82 (pictured), the northwest corner of Rosedale Avenue and South High Street has been redefined as a welcoming southern entrance to the campus and the Quad. The focal point of the new Roger and Agnes Ware Plaza is a wide stairway/stadium-style seating area and a fountain that draw pedestrians away from the busy intersection. Programmable water jets, lit at night, invite relaxation and play as well as contemplation. This project, dedicated on September 25 by President Christopher Fiorentino and members of the Ware family, incorporates strategies of sustainability in storm water use with onsite management, energy efficient lighting, and the addition of trees and grass areas. It's a destination now, not a crossroads.

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# EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY

## WCU EARNS SECOND HIGHER EDUCATION EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY (HEED) AWARD

**W**est Chester was selected for the second consecutive year to receive the 2021 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education.

WCU earned this honor for the first time in 2020, along with 89 other recipients. This year, 101 colleges and universities across the U.S. and Canada were selected.

**Diversity is broadly defined and this award recognizes how the University goes the extra mile.**

The HEED award measures an institution's level of achievement and intensity of commitment in regard to broadening diversity and inclusion on campus through initiatives, programs, and outreach; student recruitment, retention, and completion; and hiring practices for faculty and staff. The University was selected for its demonstrated resolve and innovative initiatives, including:

- **The Ram Shop**, the country's first on-campus convenience store that provides workplace training for autistic students to develop their social and professional skills.

- A new chapter of **Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha)**, an honor society for first-generation college students, established at WCU during the 2020-2021 academic year. Of nearly 170 eligible WCU students, 56 were inducted for this inaugural cohort.
- **WCU Resource Pantry**, which supports student success by minimizing food and basic need insecurity and preparing students for life after graduation.

"The HEED Award demonstrates engagement in an array of best practices, in addition to innovation and a collective commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion," said WCU Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Tracey Ray Robinson. "We are so proud to receive this national recognition for the second time. Diversity is broadly defined and this award recognizes how the University goes the extra mile."

West Chester University and the other award recipients are featured in the November 2021 issue of *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine. [WCU](#)

## Top Rankings

### WCU Achieves Multiple Top Rankings on U.S. News Best Colleges Lists

West Chester retains its high positions on the 2022 *U.S. News* college rankings lists, coming in for the second consecutive year at both **#10 in Top Public Schools Regional Universities North** and **#50 Regional Universities North**. The latter list includes both public and private institutions.

For the first time, West Chester is included among the **Most Innovative Schools Regional Universities North at #20**.

WCU also advanced on these lists (the 2021 rankings are in parentheses):

**Best Value Schools Regional Universities North #40** (50) — one of only two public institutions in the top 40.

**Best Colleges for Veterans Regional Universities North — #15** (23).

**Top Performing Universities in Social Mobility — #122** (136).

West Chester is also listed at **#24 in Best Undergraduate Teaching Regional Universities North** and at **#251 for Best Undergraduate Nursing**, a new category this year.

*The 2022 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings assess 1,466 U.S. bachelor's degree-granting institutions on 17 measures of academic quality.*

# #15

## BEST COLLEGES FOR VETERANS



## #10 Top Public Schools

# #50

## Best Regional Universities North

(both public and private)



# HISTORY AND HERITAGE

150 YEARS

THE HUMAN STORY: THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF THE  
COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES



Mr. Starkey teaches a Latin class circa 1880 in an original West Chester Normal School classroom in Old Main. >



## IS PURSUING A LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE STILL WORTHWHILE?

Based on the growing success of the College of Arts and Humanities (CAH), the answer is a resounding “Yes.”

“Regardless of your profession, if you can ask good questions; read deeply in order to understand complicated information and communicate it articulately; really understand where someone is coming from; and not engage in just black-and-white thinking, that’s the juice,” said Jen Bacon, an English professor and former English Department chair who has been CAH’s dean since 2017.

In the wake of the 2008 recession, the number of liberal arts majors declined, both nationwide and at WCU. However, in the past four years alone, the College’s undergraduate enrollment has increased more than 15%, to more than 1,500 majors.

CAH was primarily carved out of the former College of Arts and Sciences. It comprises two art departments — Art + Design and Theatre and Dance — and six humanities departments: Communication and Media; English; History; Languages and Cultures; Philosophy; and Women’s and Gender Studies. The college now offers 22 undergraduate degree programs, 12 graduate degree programs, and 38 undergraduate minors — many of which focus on interdisciplinary approaches to social justice.

“We pride ourselves on being a regional innovator in education that cultivates interdisciplinary collaboration, artistic and cultural programming, and inclusive and engaged citizenship,” said Bacon.

Professor J. Kanan Sawyer takes full advantage of the technology in today’s classrooms for her communication and media courses. >



## AMONG THE HIGHLIGHTS:

- The English Department, with more than 70 professors, adjunct professors, and instructors, is the largest of any department in the entire PASSHE system, and faculty from this one department engage in interdisciplinary programs across campus.

- The American Sign Language minor is now the fastest growing language study.

- Embracing technology and the digital world — including communication, social media, gaming, and web content — the college's fastest growing major is media and culture, which, after just two years, already has 358 majors.

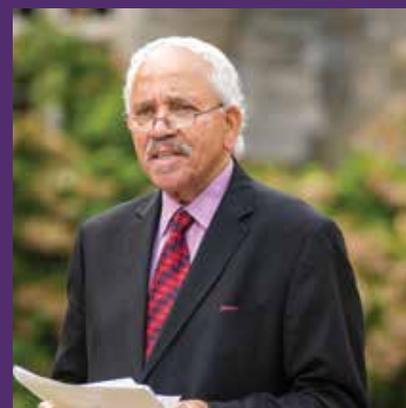
- “I overhear theatre and arts students discussing minoring in computer science and learning how to code,” said Bacon. “Our students want to make themselves as marketable and adaptive as possible in a world where they know technology is going to be part of every job, no matter which discipline they pursue.”

## PROFESSOR EMERITUS TROTMAN AND FREDERICK DOUGLASS INEXTRICABLY INTERTWINED

Professor Emeritus C. James Trotman, who taught English at WCU for 32 years (1979-2011), focused on Frederick Douglass, the distinguished statesman and abolitionist who had been enslaved and who gave his last public lecture on the campus of WCU on February 1, 1895.

The *Frederick Douglass: A Biography* author founded the University's Frederick Douglass Institute and the Douglass Collaborative, which exists at the 13 other state system universities. He was also instrumental in having the Douglass statue created and installed on campus and in the listing of FDI as a national historical landmark designation.

“Whether they were majoring in English, the sciences, or social studies, my students enjoyed reading him, identified with him, and found his causes to be stimulating,” said Trotman, who, in 2019, delivered the inaugural Dr. Clifford E. DeBaptiste Frederick Douglass Lecture. “As a former slave, a Black man, an abolitionist, an orator, and author, he is a transformative figure with whom people can find connectedness, regardless of their backgrounds.”



Foreign language students  
in the late 1970s.

## DIGITAL INNOVATION IN THE LIBERAL ARTS

**M**arrying the digital age with the liberal arts is at the core of two innovative digital history classes co-taught by History Professors Charles Hardy III and Janneken Smucker since 2014 and the resulting student-created media projects:

**Goin' North: Stories from the First Great Migration to Philadelphia** ([goinnorth.org](http://goinnorth.org)), which focuses on the influx of African Americans from the South beginning in 1916. Students utilized early 1980s cassette audio recordings of interviews that Hardy and others conducted with the migrants for WHY? public radio; and Philadelphia Immigration ([phillyimmigration.nuncenter.net](http://phillyimmigration.nuncenter.net)), which compares and contrasts the stories of European immigrants who settled in the early 1900s with those who emigrated from China, the Soviet Union, Iraq, West Africa, and Latin America 100 years later.

For **Goin' North**, which won the 2016 Roy Rosenzweig Prize for Innovation in Digital History from the American Historical Association, undergraduate and graduate students created a digital archive of more than 600 objects; edited the transcripts of the digitized interviews while curating the audio with images, links, and GPS

coordinates; wrote brief biographies of individual interviewees; and created digital stories, interactive maps, and walking tours.

For the latter project, students did the same *and* conducted interviews themselves.

"We wanted to empower students to be creative and open up the parameters of what a history assignment looks like," said Smucker.

Added Hardy, "Because of all the time they spend with the life story of a single person who they otherwise wouldn't interact with, students build empathy with someone different from themselves and say, 'My God, this is an amazing person.'"

That describes Alabama native Charles Vance, a 15-year-old who journeyed for six long, hard years before reuniting with his father in Philadelphia in 1923. Ben Spohn M'16, now the oral history program manager at the Hagley Museum in Wilmington, DE, focused on the story of Vance, who became a construction and steel mill worker.

"I caught the bug," said Spohn. "Vance had a tremendous life, but if Charlie hadn't spoken with him, nothing of his story would remain. I came to view oral history as something absolutely necessary to do."



1950s Chess Match. >



^ Theatre and Dance students in the Broadway Cares: Equity Fights AIDS fundraiser.

## DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

**D**iversity and social justice issues, such as structural inequality, have long been a major focus of the English, history, language, and philosophy faculties. They helped implement the original diversity requirement for the University’s general education program nearly 20 years ago. In order to graduate students who are committed to creating a just and equitable society, the College now offers 56 of the 93 courses that meet the University’s diverse communities requirement.

Other examples include the Holocaust & Genocide Studies programs, which the late History Professor Irene Shur pioneered four decades ago, and women’s studies, whose first course was offered in 1970.

Stacey Schlau, professor emerita of Languages and Cultures, led what was then the women’s studies program from 1985 to 2001. After the introductory course became the first to fulfill the interdisciplinary requirement in 1986, she saw the program and its minor grow, eventually gaining a major and a second minor. This led to it becoming an academic department, all the while retaining its activist component. Its



The DNA Discussion Project.

students and faculty, for instance, played a leading role in developing a sexual harassment policy focused on advocacy.

The DNA Discussion Project, which Anita Foeman, professor of communication and media, launched in 2006, also heightens students’ diversity, equity, and inclusion awareness. Since then, more than 3,000 participants — mostly students and faculty members but also the general public — have completed a pre-test survey about their perceived ethnicities; taken an Ancestry.com DNA test; and then discussed their results with other participants.

While the tests often confirm what participants have thought about their backgrounds, many are surprised. “Italian”

descendants may discover that, genetically, they are also part Middle Eastern; African Americans may make the sobering discovery that one of their female ancestors probably was raped by her white slaveholder.

“Many people often identify as one race or ethnicity, but after they get their results, they realize that they share a lot of genetic ancestry with other people that they didn’t expect,” said Bessie Lawton, the professor of communication and media who teamed up with Foeman on the project in 2011.

Added Foeman: “My favorite comment people make is, ‘Oh my goodness, if I didn’t know this about myself, what don’t I know about other people?’ So, they look at others less judgmentally.”

## VIBRANT, RELEVANT CULTURE

*Carnival of Ruin.*



CAH encompasses creative disciplines that tell the human story and influence culture. One such thought-provoking gem is *Carnival of Ruin*, both an exhibit and a theatrical, musical dance performance. It was created by three Theatre & Dance Department faculty members to encourage citizens to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Presented both virtually and live at East Goshen Township Park in May, the performance featured eight student and alumni dancers dressed in costumes made from plastic bags, soda cans, hula hoops, bottle caps, and repurposed clothing. The set was a tent crafted from thousands of plastic bags.

The University's John H. Baker Gallery and the Chester County Art Association also exhibited the stunning sets, props, and costumes. Constance Case, associate professor of theatre created the costumes; Gretchen Studlien-Webb and maria urrutia, associate professors of dance, choreographed the performance. *[Ed. note: Professor urrutia prefers lower case spelling of her name.]*

"This faculty/student collaboration highlighted the devastating impact of plastics on the globe with an 'Aha!' moment," said urrutia. "From a distance, the costumes and set pieces seem so beautiful. But when people got closer, they realized that the costumes and the tent were made of thousands of crocheted-together plastic bags, which will take hundreds or thousands of years to decompose."

The college's cornucopia of other artistic and cultural programming includes art exhibits, artists in residence, and the Poetry Center's WCU Poetry Conference, which, since 1995, has annually drawn a who's who of American poets as presenters. The Center's new director, English Professor Cherise Pollard, has also instituted a new Poetry & Pedagogy Conference that offers teachers tools for teaching poetry in K-12 classrooms and beyond.

Meanwhile, to improve their peers' environment, students in Assistant Professor Scotty Reifsnnyder's art design for social good class have created murals in the WCU Resource Pantry, which helps students with financial needs, and in the Ram Shop, the Dub-C Autism Program's convenience store that provides students on the autism spectrum with job and social skills.

Classic art, art history, drawing, and painting classes are now joined by courses in digital media, digital object design for 3D printing, visual branding, and design for the social good. >





↑ Outside class “rooms” now and then.  
Top: RUCCAS Pop up Class.

## RAISING A RUCCAS

The newest example of CAH’s social justice-focused interdisciplinary education is the Urban Community Change (RUX) major, part of the University’s Rustin Urban Community Change Axis (RUCCAS), a hub that provides resources for Philadelphia-area urban changemakers.

The RUX major, launched this fall, builds upon CAH’s highly successful, 10-year-old Youth Empowerment & Urban Studies (YES) interdisciplinary minor. Both emphasize in-the-field experiences. Said program director Hannah Ashley, “Nothing is more important now than envisioning what the world tells you is impossible — reordering our economy to save the climate, true racial justice and healing — and making those changes happen with others. And that is actually a learnable knowledge base, from how people built movements throughout history, to how to collaboratively partner, to how to sustain the self as a change-maker.”

The major attracts both traditional and returning students who want to turn their experience into a degree and enhance their theoretical knowledge; first generation and students of color enroll in both YES and RUX in high numbers. One is Brandon Holiday, 28, holder of an associate’s degree and head program orchestrator for OnesUp. Like any number of Philadelphia organizations that partner with RUCCAS, the North Philadelphia grassroots nonprofit works on the ground with urban communities, in this case specifically to improve the wellbeing and futures of 16- to 24-year-olds.

When Ashley described the RUX major to Holiday, he said, “That would be amazing for our program participants, and also for me.”

“Urban community change is no small task,” Holiday reported just weeks into the fall semester. “But my classes are already shaping how I look at my work with youth and how I choose to engage with the community.

“It’s been a big eye-opener.” [WCU](#)

Next issue’s 150th anniversary history feature will focus on the College of Business and Public Management.

ALUMNI THEATRE GROUP ENDOWS SCHOLARSHIP

# FOR MINORITY THEATRE STUDENTS

A group of theatre arts alumni have launched an endowment to fund the Theatre Alumni Diversity Scholarship for Emerging BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) Artists, including LatinX and Asian students. Their goal: to bridge the gap between opportunity and talented minority theatre makers.

“I was born and raised in Puerto Rico,” said Ed Porrata ’97, a fashion stylist lead for QVC fashion and jewelry shows and one of the scholarship organizers. “When I was at West Chester, I always felt that there were not many other people I could relate to in our theatre program from minority groups, such as the Latino or African American communities.”

Discussions he had beginning the summer of 2020 with other theatre alumni, including Leonard Kelly ’85, associate professor of theatre at WCU, led to the creation of the scholarship. After having raised more than \$25,000, the theatre alumni are continuing to fundraise, with plans to officially begin disbursing two scholarships per year in 2024. The scholarships will range between \$500 and \$1,000.

The other original alumni organizers include: Andrew Lowy ’09, director of North American ticketing for the Broadway production of “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child;” Jay Sefton, ’96, a licensed mental health counselor; Micah Hauptman ’97, an actor; Andrea Grinwis ’98, WCU’s associate registrar for student success; and Kristin Aldridge ’95, vice president

**“This is a really strong step to creating greater opportunities for deserving students.”**

of digital sales performance at the Disney ABC Television Group. The group recently welcomed three new members: Mandie Curtis Banks ’97, Amy Smith Powers ’96, and Brian McGowan ’97.

“I’m very proud of everybody who has participated and responded to the need for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in our department and University,” said Kelly, who teaches acting, voice, and dialect performance. “This is a really strong step to creating greater opportunities for deserving students. We hope it sets an example for other departments as well.” WCU

Theatre alumni (L-R) Kristin Aldridge, Leonard Kelly, Andrea Grinwis, Mandie Curtis Banks, Ed Porrata, and Amy Smith Powers.





## Frederick Douglass' Descendant Zooms in for American INSIGHT Free Speech Film Award Program

Kenneth Morris, the great-great-great grandson of 19th-century orator, statesman, abolitionist, and former slave Frederick Douglass, was a virtual guest speaker at the institution where Douglass gave his final public speech: West Chester University.

Also the great-great grandson of leading 19th-century educator Booker T. Washington, Morris was part of the American INSIGHT 2021 Free Speech Film Award ceremony on October 9. He discussed his famous ancestor and human rights as part of a panel that also included actor and activist Paul Oakley Stovall, currently playing George Washington in the national tour of *Hamilton*, also via Zoom, and Anita Foeman, WCU professor of communication and media, who researches genetic ancestry and the narratives and perspectives that define people. Moderator Karen Curry is an American INSIGHT board member and former NBC and CNN bureau chief.

With his mother, Nettie Washington Douglass, Morris is cofounder of the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, an organization that promotes human rights, racial equity, and social justice. Stovall is working on a song cycle about Frederick Douglass' experiences in Ireland and has collaborated with the Irish Institute for Music and Song.

Several WCU students read quotes from Frederick Douglass: Camryn Smith, women's and gender studies major and a College of Arts and Humanities ambassador; Mahmou Turay, sports medicine major in the WCU Honors College; and Craig Johnson, psychology major in the WCU Honors College.

Following the discussion, American INSIGHT screened the Free Speech Film Festival winner, *Footsteps in the Wind*, a seven-minute animated film set to Sting's song "Inshallah." A narrative journey about refugees as told through the eyes of children who never give up on their dreams, it was produced by filmmaker Maya Sanbar as a gift to the U.N. Refugee Agency. Sanbar's prerecorded comments on free speech and human rights were shown.

Nadine Bean (bottom center) with the EPIC team (clockwise from lower left): Cheryl Neale-McFall, Wendy Myers, Julie Tennille, Fatima Bakayoko, and Sarah Fisher.



## NEARLY \$2 MILLION GRANT BRINGS INTEGRATED CARE TO ADDITIONAL HIGH-NEED POPULATIONS

This summer, the University's Education and Programming for Integrated Care (EPIC) team, led by Julie Tennille in the MSW Program, learned that the competing continuation grant they applied for in January of 2021 was successful. They received an additional \$1.9 million grant to continue for four years (2021-2025) work begun in 2017. The team's new grant expands Professor Emerita Nadine Bean's 2017 four-year \$1.6 million HRSA grant and supplemental \$300,000 two-year grant (fall 2018-spring 2020) which trained 116 students from MSW and Counselor Education.

With the new grant, the EPIC team has included WCU's Psy.D. students in delivering behavioral health services to children, adolescents, and transitional-age youth in southeastern PA, NJ, and Wilmington, DE. Tennille took over the reins upon Bean's retirement in summer of 2020 to complete the original grant. The other EPIC team members are Cheryl Neale-McFall, co-principal investigator and project evaluator (PE); Wendy Myers, LSW, program coordinator; Sarah Fisher, M.Ed., research assistant; and Fatima Bakayoko, MSW candidate '22, graduate assistant.

Health outcomes are far better, Tennille notes, when services are delivered by interprofessional teams that include social work, school counseling, psychology, and other primary and behavioral health discipline professionals who are savvy to the value of integrated care and capable of "warm handoffs" to one another.

"EPIC really helped me see both how essential integrated care is and how our current systems still have trouble making space for it," noted MSW graduate, Chris Tyler. "Training with the EPIC program gave me a predisposition in practice to ask, 'How else can we provide wraparound care for this

client? What might that look like?' Until we are thinking of it on a daily basis as an important part of treatment, it is not likely to happen. And when we do start thinking of it, asking for and looking for ways to make it happen, we become agents of change."

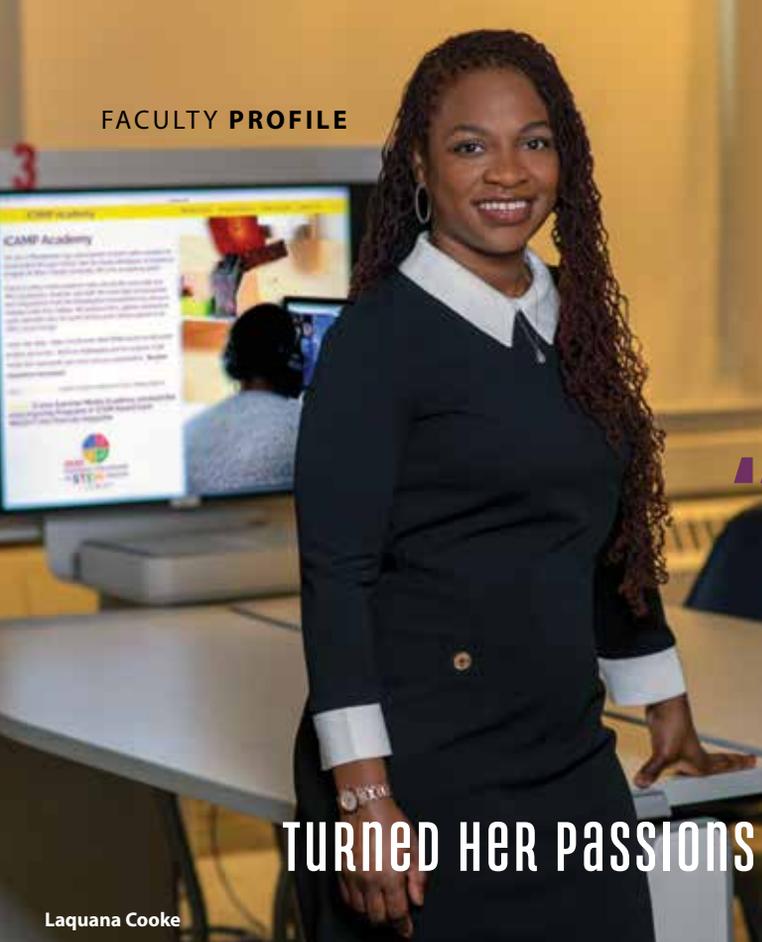
Like their predecessors, new EPIC students are in their final practicum/training year in settings serving youth. Each receives a stipend — \$10,000 each for MSW and M.Ed. students and \$25,000 each for Psy.D. students — when they commit to post-graduate employment serving medically underserved children, take a special elective course, and attend four two-hour training events. Tennille hosted the virtual fall 2021 integrated care symposium, focused on integrated care for trans and gender-diverse adolescents, in October.

Graduates of the program keep the EPIC team apprised of their career progress.

Anamika Anand M'18, M.Ed. in school counseling, appreciated learning "the importance of integrated health care with vulnerable populations. The grant opportunity has been integral in my current role as an elementary school counselor in a high-needs school district."

"As a Latina social worker, the EPIC program provided me with the extra skill set and knowledge to help my community in an interdisciplinary setting," said Yareli Lara MSW '20. "This program has truly shaped me to be the social worker I am today."

MSW graduate Veronica Gillen '21 said the program gave her an advantage in her job search. "My experience with the EPIC program and particularly the emphasis on integrated care practices and interprofessional collaborations gave me the confidence during my interview process to speak into the importance of this type of healthcare. ... I landed a position with a company that I am truly excited about!" **wcu**



Laquana Cooke

# “VIDEO GAMER” LAQUANA COOKE TURNED HER PASSIONS INTO A NOVEL ACADEMIC CAREER

Laquana Cooke, associate professor of digital rhetoric in the English Department, got her first Nintendo video game console when she was 8 years old.

“I’ve always been a gamer,” said the Newark, NJ, native. “But besides watching TV shows and film and playing video games, I’ve always been intrigued about what goes on behind the scenes to make them.”

That’s why today she creates socially responsible video games and teaches students how to design and develop them; and, since 2017, has directed the University’s iCamp Summer Media Academy. Each summer, Philadelphia public high school students come to campus, where they spend a week with WCU faculty and undergraduate student mentors to develop digital production skills. The program won a 2020 Inspiring Programs in STEM Award from *Insight into Diversity Magazine*.

Cooke earned dual B.S. and B.A. degrees in professional and technical communication and in theater arts, television, and media arts from the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Rutgers University (respectively) in 2005. Then, after working as a research and production assistant for *Cyberchase*, a children’s TV show for the New York City PBS affiliate, she earned her M.A. in media, culture, and communication from New York University in 2010.

Her decision to propose what was then a novel doctoral thesis at Rensselaer Polytechnic University, where she earned her Ph.D. in 2016, paved her career route. “It proved to be a new path, a new future for me in video game research and scholarship,” said Cooke, who was granted tenure this year.

For the free iCamp, which is financially supported by the WCU College of Arts and Humanities and local banks including Uninvest Financial, Mid Penn Bank, and DNB First through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, there are no prerequisites. “Most come in not knowing much about video games or video, audio, or website production, which are the four media tracks,” Cooke said. “Yet, late at night, you find them in the student lounge working on their projects together.

“You can’t teach that commitment and ownership, you can only try to foster it. At week’s end, when I see students

proudly presenting their projects to their families, friends, and instructors, you can’t manufacture that empowerment.

“It’s what keeps me going.”

Her efforts to solidify a pathway for more Philadelphia students to enroll at WCU include her development of a sustainable dual enrollment program for 35 students from the W. B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences.

“When I talk to high school kids, I tell my story of growing up in Newark often disenfranchised, under-valued, and underfinanced,” she said. “But I celebrate and value that part of me. The beauty that comes through that is that people like myself can counter common negative perceptions and give back to our communities to keep them thriving.” **WCU**

**“People like me can counter common negative perceptions and give back to our communities to keep them thriving.”**

# MOMENTUM IS BUILDING AND THE FUTURE BEGINS WITH YOU



*“ I can think of nothing more worthy of our time, energy, and resources than building on the successes that have brought our school — and our students — to the stature we have achieved today. ”*

**Dr. Chris Fiorentino**  
President, West Chester University



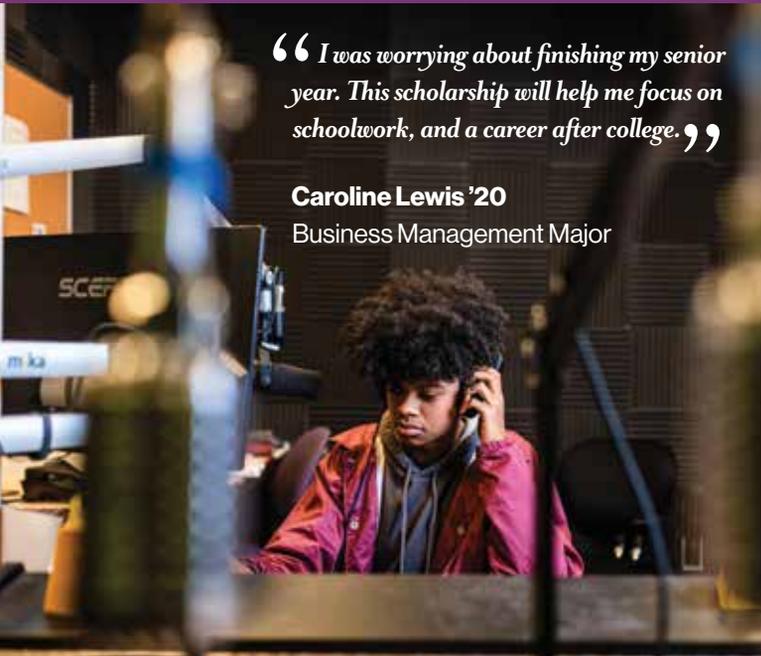
As West Chester University celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are forging ahead with a \$65 million comprehensive campaign. Built on three critical priorities, this campaign will preserve and accelerate WCU's momentum. We will invest in promising students to drive lasting excellence, lead state public universities with technology, and create greater opportunity for every student who calls West Chester University home.



West Chester University offers countless pathways to success for passionate students. With your support, WCU can enhance its efforts to ensure student success — all while elevating the profile of our facilities, faculty, and campus.

*“I was worrying about finishing my senior year. This scholarship will help me focus on schoolwork, and a career after college.”*

**Caroline Lewis '20**  
Business Management Major



# INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS

*to inspire lasting, attainable excellence*

## **Broadening access through scholarships and bringing in the nation's brightest**

Need-based scholarships remove financial barriers and close gaps defined by inability to pay and personal hardship for promising students. Merit-based scholarships are an investment in the future, helping West Chester University to attract top-performing students and create a path to success for underserved, academically talented individuals.



# LEADING WITH TECHNOLOGY

*to connect students & advance research*

## **A leap forward for the health sciences and advancing the way we share knowledge**

With great strides in classroom connectivity, research support, and new, future-focused facilities, our students are better poised to enter the workforce better equipped to lead their communities. And, state-of-the-art learning spaces will arm every graduate with a lasting competitive advantage.

“Access to new technologies, including high-fidelity mannequins, healthcare informatics, and digital recording platforms will ensure students in health science disciplines are prepared to meet the needs of 21st century front line workers.”

**Scott Heinerichs, Ed.D., ATC**  
Dean, College of Health Sciences

# CREATING OPPORTUNITY

*to realize the potential of every student*

## **Propelling tomorrow's leaders and building up students' well-being**

Investing in students' academic, civic, and professional success makes WCU a more inclusive launch pad for lifelong achievement. Co-curricular programs prepare WCU students for life beyond the classroom, while initiatives that foster and support students build sustainable skills that make a life-long impact.



“Understanding that learning happens both inside and outside the classroom, and that [co-curricular] learning completes the educational mission of our institution, we are committed to preparing our students to learn, lead, and serve.”

**Zebulun R. Davenport, Ed.D.**  
Vice President for Student Affairs

# NOW IS THE TIME TO PUSH WCU FORWARD



## Campaign Leadership

**Jacquelyne North '81**  
Legal Chief of Staff & Head of Legal  
Strategic Projects (Ret.), GlaxoSmithKline

**Eric K. Bossard '85**  
President, Commonwealth Insurance Advantage

**Christopher Fiorentino, Ph.D.**  
President, West Chester University

**Christopher Mominey**  
CEO, West Chester University Foundation

**Marc Duey**  
Managing Partner, Duce Management  
Founder & Former CEO, ProMetrics, Inc.



West Chester University has been a beacon of excellence and accessibility for nearly 150 years. Yet in one-and-a-half centuries, our institution has never seen the momentum we are seeing today. WCU is propelling students from throughout our region – and across the nation – into an exciting, empowered future. We will equip every WCU student with the tools and support they need to reach their full potential.

➤ Visit [www.wcufoundation.org/150forward](http://www.wcufoundation.org/150forward) for your opportunity to make an impact.

**MAKE THIS CAMPAIGN – AND THIS VISION – A REALITY.**

# CHILDREN HONOR FATHER WITH \$5,000 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 10 DESERVING STUDENTS

**A**fter serving two years in the U.S. Army, Joe Brady took advantage of his Veterans Affairs benefits to attend 12 years of night school at what was then La Salle College in order to earn an undergraduate degree — all while working full-time as an insurance claims adjuster and raising his young family.

Last fall, three years after his death, his two children— including his daughter, a WCU employee — used some of his legacy to establish the Brady Family Communication Scholarship in his honor. The result: last semester, 10 WCU students each received critically needed \$5,000 scholarships during the pandemic.

“My father was never the best student in high school and did not have a high college GPA,” said his daughter, who wishes to remain anonymous. “Still, that degree enabled him to have a 40-year professional career and, at the age of 60, to start a very successful company with a partner.

“He was so proud of me going to college and having a genuine college experience, which he never got to have,” she added. “That’s why it was his dream to have every willing student attend a traditional university at the lowest cost possible, leading to great-paying jobs.”

**“...it was his dream to have every willing student attend a traditional university at the lowest cost possible...”**

The Brady family earmarked the scholarships for students who took a public speaking course and are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or People of Color), LGBTQIA+, or a veteran.

“I come from a very low-income family, and this scholarship changed everything for me in the best possible way,” said senior business management major Matthew Ronca, a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. “I was able to buy online textbook access and pay off my phone bill, some student loans and medical bills when I went to the ER with Covid-19 last year.”

The first-generation college student from Chester Springs, PA, is minoring in human resources, finance, and business analytics. Following graduation, he said, “I want to become a financial advisor or work in human resource management to help people, particularly the marginalized, to save for retirement or make sure they are treated equally by their employer.”

Another first-generation college student, Mitzi Colin Lopez, graduated *summa cum laude* this summer with a B.A. in political science and minors in Spanish and computer science. Ultimately, the Coatesville resident hopes to earn a law degree and become an immigration attorney. “As a DACA

recipient, I was not eligible for any student loans or financial aid,” said Lopez, who worked one or two jobs throughout college. “The scholarship really reduced the financial burden on my family and me.”

In a thank-you letter to the donors, she wrote, “I hope one day that I will also be able to help struggling students reach their goals in higher education by assisting them in the same way you have helped me.”

“The students’ letters brought my brother and me extreme joy,” said Brady’s daughter. “My father would have been thrilled.” **WCU**



Matthew Ronca

Mitzi Colin Lopez

On September 15 at Penn Wood High School in Lansdowne, West Chester University & Delaware County Community College announced that they have joined the Moon Shot for Equity, a national student-success initiative led by Washington, D.C.-based education firm EAB. The two schools will work together and with EAB to help more students of color and those from other historically underserved populations in the Southeastern Pennsylvania region graduate from college. (L to R): Harry J. Costigan, chief of staff and vice president for strategic planning, Delaware County Community College; Tom Sugar, vice president of partnerships, EAB; Eric J. Becoats, superintendent of William Penn School District; Nylla Miller, a Penn Wood High School junior who is also taking classes at Delaware County Community College; L. Joy Gates Black, president of Delaware County Community College; Tanya I. Garcia, acting deputy secretary and commissioner for postsecondary and higher education; Christopher M. Fiorentino, president of West Chester University; and Jeffery L. Osgood, WCU deputy provost and vice president for academic operations.



# ERASE EQUITY GAPS

## WCU & DELAWARE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE JOIN NATIONAL “MOON SHOT FOR EQUITY” PARTNERSHIP TO ERASE EQUITY GAPS IN COLLEGE COMPLETION

West Chester University and Delaware County Community College have joined the “Moon Shot for Equity,” a national student-success initiative led by Washington, D.C.-based education firm EAB. As the inaugural members of the project’s Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Collaborative, the two schools will work together with EAB to help more students of color, and those from other historically underserved populations in the Southeastern Pennsylvania region, graduate from college.

Through this innovative partnership, each school has committed to implementing more than a dozen research-based best practices proven to remove systemic barriers to student success. These commitments range from updating academic policies to working together to establish common academic pathways and providing equity-mindedness training to university and college leaders. EAB will provide research, technology, and advisory services to the schools.

EAB launched the Moon Shot for Equity in October 2020 in cooperation with an inaugural consortium of colleges and universities in Southeastern Wisconsin. A third region has also been established in the Greater Cincinnati area.

Data show that barely half of all Black and Latinx students who enter college earn their undergraduate degree within six years, compared with nearly 70 percent of White students. The statistics are similarly poor

**“It is up to us to work together to develop ways to eliminate one of the greatest barriers of our times — systemic equity gaps.”**

for first-generation students and those from families with lower incomes — regardless of race.

“The collaboration between West Chester University, Delaware County Community College, and EAB is the type of innovative

partnership that can help change the entire trajectory of so many students’ lives,” says Tanya I. Garcia, the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Acting Deputy Secretary and Commissioner for Postsecondary and higher education. “We applaud these schools for doing the hard work that will benefit our learners and ultimately, our entire region.”

WCU and DCCC have a long history of working together to increase educational opportunities for area students. Last year, the two joined forces to strengthen a dual admission agreement that now enables qualified, enrolled DCCC students to earn an associate degree and then transfer seamlessly to WCU in a parallel major with opportunities not typical of such agreements. Qualified DCCC students now transfer to WCU with guaranteed housing, a renewable scholarship, and success coaching. The announcement came at a time when students had increased need amidst an unyielding worldwide pandemic.

“As an institution that takes great pride in activating its access mission every day,” says WCU President Christopher M. Fiorentino. “West Chester University is deeply committed to this critical project that will ultimately

help all of us make securing higher education possible for more students of color and students who have significant financial need. It is up to us to work together to develop ways to eliminate one of the greatest barriers of our times — systemic equity gaps.” **WCU**

# Ring in Tradition:

## ANNUAL HOLIDAY PROGRAM CELEBRATES ITS 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday, December 11, the University's students, parents, alumni, donors, and the local community will gather together – as they have for 100 years – to usher in the holidays with beautiful and melodic music from the many choirs and ensembles of WCU's Wells School of Music.

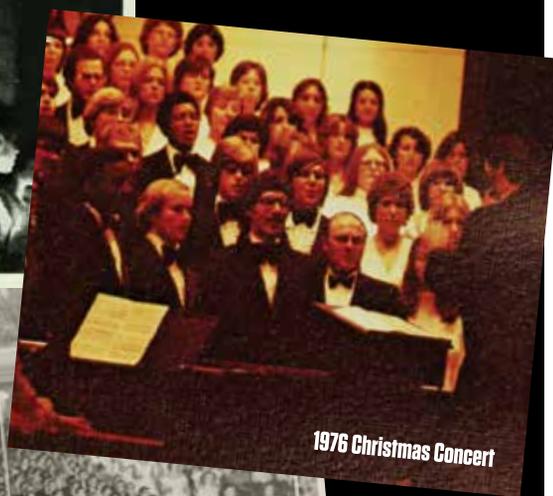
What began on December 18, 1921, as the "Christmas Carol Service" is now known as the annual Holiday Program. The newly appointed head of the music department for the West Chester State Normal School established the program of choral and sacred music, initially performed by the senior girls' and junior girls' glee clubs. Wearing white gowns, they processed down the aisle of the Old Main chapel and, later, the Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall, where the concert is now held annually.

The concert morphed through the years to include more secular music and to feature more of the Wells School of Music's ensembles and choirs, including the WCU Symphony Orchestra and the Criterions Jazz Ensemble.

An event highlight is a rendition of "O Holy Night" sung by the winner of the vocal honors competition. Originally awarded to the best female soloist, the honor now spotlights a vocalist of any gender.

To honor the momentous occasion, this year's program also includes a commissioned work by San Francisco composer David Conte of a festival setting of "Gloria" for choir, brass, and organ.

**Tickets are on sale to the public for \$12 at [www.wcupatix.com](http://www.wcupatix.com).**



### DECEMBER

**10, 11, and 12**

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS benefit

**10**

WCU Planetarium:

So, You Want to Buy a Star... | 7 p.m.



**12**

Wind Ensemble Concert | 3 p.m.

### JANUARY

**19**

Faculty Recital: Stephen Ng, tenor

### FEBRUARY

**7**

Faculty Recital: Kimberly Reighley, flute | 8 p.m.



**25**

WCU Planetarium:

Men are from Mars | 7 p.m.

**27**

Faculty Recital: Dali Quartet | 7 p.m.

**28**

Faculty Recital: Henry Grabb, oboe and Jonathan Fowler, bassoon | 8 p.m.

**28 – March 3**

Art + Design John H. Baker

Visiting Artists: The Clay Siblings Project

## WCU EVENTS

### MARCH

3 – 6

William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

4

WCU Live! Johnny Peers & the Muttville Comix | 7 p.m.

7

Faculty Recital: Ovidiu Marinescu, cello | 8 p.m.

12

WCU Live! *Artrageous* | 4 p.m.



19

President's Speaker Series: Christopher Jackson | 8 p.m.

27

Wind Ensemble Concert | 3 p.m.

23 – 26

32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Jazz Festival

25

WCU Planetarium: *Dethroning the Earth* | 7 p.m.

### APRIL

8 & 9

WCU Opera Theatre: *Die Fledermaus* | 7:30 p.m.

21 – 24

Theatre & Dance Presents *Into the Woods*

25

Faculty Recital: Jonathan Ragonese, saxophone, and Peter Paulsen, double bass | 8 p.m.

20 – May 16

BFA Senior Show '22

### MAY

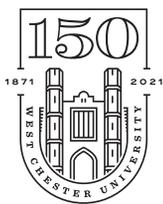
5

WCU Symphony Orchestra Concert  
on the Quad  
5:30 p.m.

6

Criteria Jazz Ensemble | 7:30 p.m.

For information and a full schedule  
of public events, visit: [www.wcupa.edu/arts](http://www.wcupa.edu/arts)



## It's WCU's *Sesquicentennial!*

President Christopher Fiorentino officially launched the University's 150th anniversary on Friday, September 17. Rammy, the Marching Band, cheerleaders, and the WCU Dance Team stirred up Golden Rams spirit and President Fiorentino received a special Senate Resolution and a House Citation from elected officials as well as a Citation from West Chester Mayor Jordan Norley.

The grand opening of the Anthropology Museum's interactive 150th anniversary exhibit in FHG library included an invitation for guests to add mementoes to the time capsule. Nashville soul singer-songwriter and WCU alumnus Devon Gilfillian '13, who gave a free concert that evening in Asplundh Concert Hall, added his Grammy-nominated album *Black Hole Rainbow*.

And in Philadelphia, the iconic crown lights on top of the PECO building scrolled a special message that weekend: West Chester University Celebrates 150 Years of Student Success!





Rev. Dr. Wayne E. Croft, Sr., pastor of St. Paul's Baptist Church in West Chester, delivered the 2021 Dr. Clifford E. DeBaptiste Frederick Douglass Lecture on October 7 at the Frederick Douglass statue on the Quad side of Philips Memorial Building. He spoke about Douglass' years as a preacher and "prophet of hope." Croft is a prolific writer and scholar and the Jeremiah A. Wright, Sr., Associate Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics in African American Studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. These lectures are made possible through the generous gift of Dr. Clifford E. DeBaptiste, the first African-American mayor of West Chester Borough and a champion of education. This year's lecture is part of the 150th Anniversary Diversity Speaker Series.



### Be Part of the 150 Internships Challenge

In this sesquicentennial year, West Chester University is helping more students prepare for their futures by identifying an additional 150 internships beyond the many that already provide our students with hands-on pre-career opportunities.

Join WCU's 150 Internships Challenge by referring an internship opportunity offered by your employer.

Students who complete internships are more likely to be interviewed for full-time jobs, more likely to make a higher starting salary, in a better position to evaluate their career choices, and even given the advantage of building a strong professional network before they leave WCU.

This initiative is coordinated through the University's Twardowski Career Development Center in partnership with the Office of Alumni Relations, the WCU Foundation, the Office of Parent and Family Relations, and University Affairs.

The 150 Internship Challenge began October 11 and runs through March 7, 2022. Questions? Email [recruit@wcupa.edu](mailto:recruit@wcupa.edu).

## WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY ENERGIZES ITS BRAND... AND IT'S GOLDEN! 🏆

As the University celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is more important than ever to share our relevance and the ways that student success is nurtured across campus. Working with the Philadelphia-based advertising agency of 160/90 and our University Communications and Marketing team, WCU has energized its brand in a way that prompts us to stand out and articulate what we are all about. Know that our purple and gold continues to dominate, Rammy still reigns, and our logo remains intact. It is our spirit that has been ignited. West Chester University's refreshed brand helps us underscore our story, show the depths of our passion, and communicate about ourselves to the world. You will see our "Find Your Element" rebrand on billboards, in print, through digital mobile fencing, streaming on Spotify, airing on Comcast, and appearing on other out-of-home channels. It is our hope that the University's refreshed brand resonates with each of you and that the next generation of Golden Rams will find their element with us on this very campus. **Our time has come.**



Josh McNew

then started thinking about the meaning of my life and realized what I always knew: I should pursue my love of Spanish and teaching,” he said.

After moving to Pennsylvania with his wife, Sara, the chief scientific officer for a medical devices and pharmaceutical engineering firm, and their two children, he became a WCU graduate assistant last year. He has collaborated with Daniela Johannes, associate professor of languages, to develop curriculum and teaching methods for implementing an elementary school Latinx social justice and literature project. It engages children in intergenerational conversations about migration, homeland, family, and identity.

He has also helped organize the University’s annual Latina/x/o Communities Conference; voluntarily worked with faculty from different departments who are trying to launch social justice initiatives at WCU; and is the graduate assistant for the Latin American and Latinx Studies Program.

“Before my experiences here, I understood the importance of implementing social justice and equity in the classroom,” he said. “But I really didn’t understand how to promote it and incorporate marginalized cultures in a way that everyone feels their voice is being heard and is valid.”

McNew expects to earn his master’s degree next spring and his state teaching certificate the following winter. His goal: to teach Spanish, most likely in a high school. “I want to serve a purpose,” he said. “I am interested in bringing people from different backgrounds together to celebrate both their differences and the fact that, at the end of the day, we’re all human.” **WCU**

## DEEP DOWN INSIDE, JOSH MCNEW ALWAYS KNEW HE WANTED TO TEACH SPANISH

Not surprisingly, for someone who is pursuing an M.A. in Spanish language and culture, Josh McNew has long been passionate about Spanish.

While growing up in a St. Louis suburb, he used his older sister’s 9<sup>th</sup>-grade Spanish books to teach himself the language; sold candy bars to fund a 10-day high school trip to Spain; and then, while a business administration major at the University of Missouri-Columbia, spent a winter semester studying Spanish and business at the Universidad de Alicante in Spain.

Although he minored in Spanish, as the first person in his family to attend college he concedes that “I didn’t go with my gut and didn’t think of it as a potential career option.” Instead, following graduation, he said, “I tried to incorporate Spanish into my work, but in small doses.”

So, as a bilingual licensed personal banker in Chicago and Berwyn, IL, with Fifth Third Bank, McNew recruited Hispanic employees for the bank’s H.E.R.O. Hispanic Resource Group and taught English as a second language for Catholic Charities.

A series of promotions pulled him away from this diverse environment, and then his father’s sudden death, at the age of 63, “really rocked” him. “I started to question what my father’s life did and didn’t mean, and



## ALL PRESIDENTS’ GALA

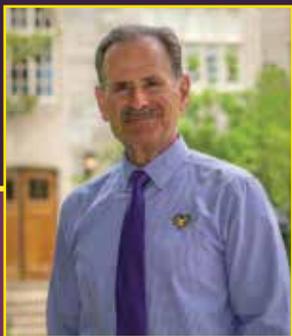
39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP  
COMMUNITY GALA

LONGWOOD GARDENS  
APRIL 2, 2022

[www.wcufoundation.org/gala](http://www.wcufoundation.org/gala)

*Momentum is building  
and the future begins with you.*



## A MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

**O**n behalf of the Board of Directors of your Alumni Association, I wish each of you and your families a happy and safe holiday season.

I don't need to remind you of all of the things we can be thankful for during these tumultuous times. Students have once again returned to walk our campus and enjoy all that it and the borough have to offer. It's wonderful to see our campus again populated with Golden Rams! As you reflect on your years at the University, be thankful for your experiences that helped shape the person you are today, and contemplate what you may be able to do to assist a current student through your involvement. You also should consider registering on our new Perks Connect website ([wcuaa.perksconnection.com](http://wcuaa.perksconnection.com)) to take advantage of all of the benefits afforded to alumni.

By now many of you have participated in Homecoming, have contributed to our 150 Forward Campaign, toured the Sesquicentennial exhibit in Francis Harvey Green Library, and walked through the new SECC building, the largest on campus. Please note that the Alumni Association funded the Sesquicentennial Exhibit, as well as the Learning Stairs in the SECC Building.

The fall semester is coming to an end and I am looking forward to an exciting 2022. Leading your Alumni Association's Board of Directors is a privilege. They are a group of dedicated members who continue to work to lead our Association so that it is well positioned to offer engaging opportunities and benefits to our more than 117,000 alumni — both today and in the future.

Finally, remember that Golden Rams step up, show up, and stay up until the work gets done. That's why we say Rams Up!

Bill Scottoline '74  
President, WCU Alumni Association

## CHAPTER NEWS

We have kicked off our celebration for West Chester University's 150th anniversary and are excited about the rest of the academic year ahead. We continue to look forward to engaging with our alumni all over the globe in new ways to commemorate this tremendous milestone of our institution. As ambassadors of our great alma mater, the WCU Alumni Association alumni chapters work hard to connect with our alumni through social events, professional networking, service initiatives, and fundraising. We hope you join them this year as we celebrate our Sesquicentennial Anniversary. Below is a list of the alumni chapters available. For more information about each chapter and how you can get involved, visit our website [www.wcu alumni.org/chapters](http://www.wcu alumni.org/chapters).

**Abbé Society**

**Alumni Dance Chapter**

**Baltimore Metro Alumni Chapter**

**Bands Alumni Chapter**

**Black Alumni Chapter**

**Chester County Chapter**

**Communication Alumni Network**

**Criminal Justice Alumni**

**Delaware County Chapter**

**Friars Society**

**GOLD X Alumni Chapter**

**Graduate Student Alumni Chapter**

**Honors College Alumni Chapter**

**International Military Alumni Chapter (IMAC)**

**Law Alumni Chapter**

**Lehigh Valley Alumni Chapter**

**LGBTQA Alumni**

**MBA Alumni**

**New York Alumni**

**Omega Delta**

**Political & Government Affairs Chapter**

**Public Health Alumni Chapter**

**Public Policy & Administration Alumni Chapter**

**Washington, D.C., Chapter**

**WCUR Alumni Chapter**

**Women's Lacrosse Alumni Chapter**

**York County Chapter**

**Zeta Psi Alumni Chapter**



Deirdre McEvoy Bigley

## TOP MARKETER FOR BOTH IBM AND BLOOMBERG

**D**uring her sophomore year, the late English professor David McKenty pulled Deirdre McEvoy Bigley '86 aside to suggest she major in English literature rather than business or social work, her initial choices. "I think you're good at this and have a command of it." She had no idea that following his advice would lead to her working directly with Michael Bloomberg as the chief marketing officer for Bloomberg LP, the country's leading provider of financial news and information.

"I loved working for him," said Bigley, who, during nearly 12 years at Bloomberg, designed and launched the company's first global marketing department and expanded the marketing department from 20 to nearly 250 employees, with a presence in nearly 50 countries. "He was tough, yet incredibly fair. He challenged me and made me better.

# ENGLISH LIT GRADUATE DEIRDRE MCEVOY BIGLEY

"I am forever grateful to him for believing in me and allowing me to do what I thought marketing should be at Bloomberg, without a ton of interference," added Bigley who, earlier this year, resigned to provide her expertise as a board director to four international corporations.

Throughout her more than three-decade business career, her English degree has served Bigley well. "Dissecting characters and talking about how an author writes, you experience language," she said. "It basically teaches you how to communicate verbally or in writing, and I think that ability, more than anything else, has helped me in my career."

After graduation, she worked at several entry-level jobs at public relations/advertising firms before, in 1994, becoming a global account manager for Ogilvy Worldwide, the legendary firm that essentially invented modern advertising. Prior to joining Bloomberg, she spent 13 years as a vice president with IBM, where she was variously responsible for marketing communications, then worldwide TV, print and interactive advertising; and then

launched the tech firm's first official brand program across 50 countries.

This year has been one of great change for Bigley. She and her husband Joe, who have two children in their 20s, just moved from Montclair, NJ, where Bigley was raised, to what was their summer home in Wells, ME — where Bigley spent her childhood summers at her grandparents' home.

She also left Bloomberg so she could double the number of corporate boards she sits on from two to four: Shutterstock, the supplier of stock photographs and footage; Wix, an Israeli-

based web developer; Sportradar, a Swiss-based international provider of sports data to the gambling industry; and Taboola, an online advertising firm.

Bigley, who has mentored many other business women, was simply following her own feminist workplace advice: take charge of your own career.

"I loved Bloomberg, but it was time to move

on," she said. "I love the thought that, at 57, I'm starting a whole new career, working for myself as a professional board member. And I'm not done." **wcu**

**Dissecting characters and talking about how an author writes, you experience language. It basically teaches you how to communicate verbally or in writing, and I think that ability, more than anything else, has helped me in my career.**



Dowling '56



Boulden '84



Carlson '85



Myers '91



Ewing '99



Meade '02



Swift '05



Thoms M'06



Basti '19

## 1950s

**Iris Gray Dowling '56, M'66** celebrated the 2021 release of her sixth picture book and 17<sup>th</sup> book, *Open Your Eyes (Discover the Cecropia Moth)*. This book is designed specifically for elementary age children to enjoy and learn the scientific facts about moths and butterflies, especially those who live in the eastern United States, particularly in Pennsylvania.

**Francis A. (Frank) Romano, Jr., professor emeritus '59** recently celebrated his 60th anniversary with the College of New Jersey. During his years at WCU, he was a member of the golf team under Coach Earl (Muddy) Waters and Coach Edwin Cottrell and was captain his senior year. He credits his interest in pursuing a career in higher education to Michael Bannon, Edwin Cottrell, Richard Strayer, and many other WCU professors.

## 1960s

**E. Ted Gladue M'62** is the author of a forthcoming novel, *The Making of a Global Professor: Against All Odds*, by Commonwealth Books. He also wrote *American Foreign Policy: Fighting Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Terrorism*, which was published in 2014.

**Joanne (Clarke) Guzzi '68** helped develop a program called Understanding Our Differences that has been adopted by more than 200 schools across the country. It helps children understand what it is like to have a disability. After an eye-opening educators' trip to South Africa, she developed the Open Books ~ Open Minds Literary Project. She raised more than \$280,000 and provided more than 37,000 books — curated to be appropriate for South African children — to nine schools, 273 teachers, and 10,800+ students. She also developed teacher-training workshops that have been accredited by the South African Council for Educators. This year, Bayer Pharmaceuticals funded a grant to make her ultimate goal a reality by continuing to implement the project locally within South Africa.

## 1970s

**Tom Faustman '70** released his most recent book, *Dylan's Court*.

**Kim Holsten '70** this year had her book, *Scarlett Johansson: The Films and Life* (McFarland & Co.) published.

**Lawrence Hoffman '71** is a private practice attorney focusing on municipal law and criminal defense.

**Patricia Horton '78** had her three college seniors all graduate on the same day, in three different states. The family recently added a third grandchild, with another one on the way. Patricia enjoys her job and is thankful for the education she received at West Chester.

## 1980s

**Rich Weiss '82** retired from the School District of Philadelphia after 32 years, with the last 18 at Central High School, where he coached varsity baseball and JV girls basketball. He will stay active as a PIAA sports official in football, baseball, and basketball.

**Thomas Boulden '84** has been named to the 2021 Super Lawyers list. An attorney with Timoney Knox in Fort Washington, PA, Boulden has been named to the list as a top-rated real estate and trust litigation attorney every year since 2014.

**Christine Carlson '85**, vice president of executive communications with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Fox & Roach, Realtors, was awarded a Top Women in Communications award from *PR Daily*. The award celebrates influential women who are making a significant impact in their jobs and careers, advancing the profession while accelerating growth for their organizations. Carlson was recognized in the "Bridge Builder" category and joins an elite list of women advancing the communications industry, inspiring their peers, and mentoring future generations of communications leaders.

**Mark Austerberry '86** was awarded the Cristol Award by the Philadelphia County Medical Society for furthering and enhancing the educational and charitable goals, purposes, and functions of organized medicine. He is the first non-physician to win the coveted award.

**Joanna Beske '87** recently completed her doctorate in ministry, focusing on global leadership and orality at Alliance Theological Seminary. In addition to training African churches to serve in cross-cultural work around the world, she is the pastor of Deerfield United Methodist Church in South Jersey.

**Bill Binkley '87** is entering his 35th year in education. Binkley, who serves as the orchestra director at the Exton and Glen Acres elementary schools, has worked in the West Chester Area School District across five decades.

**Gregory P. LaMonaca, Esq. '88** was named as a best lawyer for family law in the 2021 *Delaware County Daily Times*; top lawyer for divorce & family law in the 2021 *Main Line Today* and super lawyer for family law in Thomson Reuters 2021 *Super Lawyer Magazine*. He is the author of *The Brutally Honest Life Management Journal*, *The Pennsylvania Divorce, Custody & Financial Survival Guide*, and *The Brutally Honest Guide to Sur-thriving Generation Now*. He is currently working on his fourth book.

## 1990s

**Jeff Sutton '90** will retire after 29 years of teaching in the Hatboro-Horsham School District as a health and physical education teacher. During his tenure, he coached the middle school football team and worked with more than 700 students a year at Simmons Elementary School. In 2015, he was inducted into the Hatboro-Horsham Wall of Fame as part of the 1982 undefeated (11-0) football team during his senior year. He has three children: oldest son Matt, who just graduated from Temple University; his daughter Alli, a senior at Point Park University; and a younger son Asher, a sophomore at Penn Tech Engineering College.

**Pam Myers '91**, office administrator and paralegal at the Law Offices of Daniel J. Siegel and Integrated Technology Services in Havertown, PA, and her colleague Dan Siegel, recently released their new book, *The Ultimate Guide to Adobe Acrobat DC* (Second Edition), published by the American Bar Association. The book provides step-by-step instructions for both PC and Mac users on how businesses and law firms can use and get the most out of Adobe Acrobat.

**Todd Richman '92** recently joined Morgan Stanley Private Wealth Management in New York City as managing director and financial advisor.

**Lara (Shaffer) Dushkewich '93** was honored as a recipient of the Pennsylvania Governor's Victim Service Pathfinder Community Service Award for her work with the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County (DVCCC). She was recognized for her leadership of their

Adopt a Family Program. For more than seven years, she has recruited 200+ families and businesses to support hundreds of survivors who are financially overburdened and give them a brighter holiday season as they free themselves from the cycle of violence. An active member of DVCCC's board of directors, she also visits with her therapy dog Freddie to bring joy to survivors and the DVCCC staff.

**Jason Love '96** had his first book, *Slices of Americana: A Road Trip Through American Baseball History*, published by Sunbury Press in June 2021.

**Jim Ewing '99**, managing director and partner of Clarity Point Financial Partners, a Hightower Company in Marlton, NJ, has been named chair of its planned giving committee.

## 2000s

**Joe Meade '02** was appointed to the newly created position of vice president of community relations & government affairs for Comcast Spectator (Flyers) and the Wells Fargo Center in February 2021. He was also inducted as the first African American athlete in the La Salle College High School Hall of Athletics in 2021. He was also recognized as a Leader by the *Philadelphia Tribune* Most Influential African Americans.

**Lisa Reichley '02**, middle school science teacher at Quakertown Christian School, released her second book, *The Fascinating Space Book for Kids: 500 Far-Out Facts* in August. Her first book, *Our Solar System*, was published in October 2020. Both books are published

by Rockridge Press in association with Callisto Media; both are written for children ages 8-12 who are interested in space.

**Jonathan Long '03** an attorney with the Buckley Brion McGuire & Morris LLP law firm in West Chester who focuses on civil and criminal litigation, was named one of best lawyers in Chester County by the *Daily Local News*.

**Kristen S. Swift '05** has been named a partner of the Weber Gallagher law firm in New Castle, DE. She provides insurance coverage opinions and appellate assistance, and litigates in all Delaware courts in myriad areas of the law, including employment, civil rights, insurance, subrogation, contract disputes, construction, general liability, malpractice, and bankruptcy.

**Jennifer Thoms M'06** graduated with highest honors from Nova Southeastern University with a doctorate in speech-language pathology in May 2020. In 2017, while completing her doctorate degree, she was inducted into the honor society of Phi Kappa Phi for academic excellence. She has been working as a school-based speech-language pathologist for 20 years, provides speech/language therapy in early intervention, and has her own private practice, Seen and Heard Speech Therapy LLC, based in Galloway Township, NJ.

**Mike Arena '07** was appointed as corps director for the Crossmen Drum & Bugle Corps in San Antonio, TX.

**Jessica Conrad '08** received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award to Austria. While there, she will lecture and research at the University of Graz as part of her project "Perspectives of American

Protest Literature and Culture from Abroad." The project traces connections between historical examples of early American literary activism to current cultural expressions of protest, particularly in social justice and climate activism.

## 2010s

**Ikedi Onyemaobim '11** was selected by the National Black Lawyers to be included in this year's Top 40 Under 40 in the state of California.

DLL HR business partner **Mary Healy '11**, and Philips Medical Capital financial specialist **Mike Richards '13**, have been named to this year's edition of the *MonitorDaily* NextGen Leaders List. This recognition is given to 40 rising leaders in the equipment finance industry.

**Brian Zepka '13** recently sold the publication and film rights to his debut young adult novel, *The Temperature of Me and You*, to Disney, which will publish the book in January 2022. The story mixes teen romance with a sci-fi adventure.

**David L. Worst '14**, a health and physical education teacher at Rose Hill Elementary School, was named a Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools' 2021 Outstanding Elementary Teacher.

**Kayla Krasley '14**, recently completed her master's degree in education at WCU. She is currently the choral director at Glen Acres Elementary School in West Chester, PA, teaches K-5 general music, and directs the school's vocal ensembles.

## ALUMNI

**Gail LeChien '15** became a Registered Corporate Coach through the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches in June 2020. She also completed an accelerated MBA program with a concentration in leadership through Excelsior College in June 2021.

**Liana R. Carvalho Pruna '15** graduated in May from Villanova Law School with her J.D. degree. She is excited to begin her career practicing cyber security and data privacy law at Mullen Coughlin LLC in Devon, PA.

**Tanner Barretta '19** was promoted to senior accountant at Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A., in Wilmington, DE.

**Mike A. Basti '19** has been promoted to senior staff accountant with Brown Schultz Sheridan & Fritz in Camp Hill, PA. He has two years of public accounting experience and specializes in providing tax services.

## 2020s

**Andrew Treon '20** has been promoted to staff II accountant at Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A., in Wilmington, DE.

**Tammy A. Bagby M'21** has been appointed the athletic director of Cheyney University, where she formerly coached the women's basketball team.

## In Memoriam

1949 Jane Edwards Graff  
1951 Lou Jean (Boush) Seifarth  
1953 Shirley (Swartzlander) Guernaccini  
1954 Robert Zellner  
1956 J. Fred Christman  
1959 Francis "Fran" Zaloski  
1960 Harold Friesleben  
1961 Richard Costello  
1963 Ruth O'Connell  
1969 George Lesh  
1972 Courtney B. Springmeyer  
1975 Deborah Szumachowski Baechtler  
1977 Tina Stiely Detweiler  
1979 Michael Alexander Maslowski  
1979 Charles Sheaffer

## Engagements

1. **Rebecca Bannan '16** to **Benjamin Eppley '16**
2. **Francesca Caravano '06** to **Kevin Weick '06**
3. **Frank Ganther '13** to **Ashley D'Andrea**
4. **Lauren McDade '17** to **Evan Marabella '17**
5. **Shea Miles '18** to **Steven Massaro '17**

## Marriages

6. **Ashley Sapen '18** to **Bradley Foltz '18** on August 7, 2021.
7. **Bradley Strathmeyer '16** to **Casey Salvesen '17** in October 2019.
8. **Sean Milligan '20** to **Julie Stoltzfus '20** in December 2020.

### PHOTO SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Photos should be no less than 300 DPI and in JPG format.

If you are scanning a printed photo, please set the scanning resolution to at least 300 dpi.

Digital camera and/or cell phone shots should be taken on the highest resolution setting available.

Photos should be emailed as an attachment, not pasted into the email or document.

*We reserve the right to not publish a photo of low quality, and not all photos can be published.*

Please send your photos as email attachments to the attention of the WCU Alumni Relations Office at [alumni@wcupa.edu](mailto:alumni@wcupa.edu).

**SUBMIT** your class notes to the Office of Alumni Relations to [alumni@wcupa.edu](mailto:alumni@wcupa.edu).

### DEATH NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Contact the Alumni Relations Office with a copy of the decedent's obituary from a newspaper or the internet, or a copy of a letter or email from a family member of the deceased. Please note: Death notifications will not be accepted via telephone.



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610-436-2813

## Future Alumni

**9. Christina (Durbin) Davis '12** and **William Davis '13** welcomed Kent Joseph Davis in July 2021.

**10. Todd Ciccarone, Sr. '98** welcomed his grandson, Leo, son of Todd Ciccarone, Jr. & fiancée Lilia Walker on November 24, 2020.

**11. Christian Passarelli '08** and Johanna Passarelli welcomed Remy Joseph Passarelli.

**12. Ryan Fickinger '14** and **Rebecca (Williams) Fickinger '15** welcomed Presley Fickinger in April 2020.

**13. Bradley Strathmeyer '16** and **Casey (Salvesen) Strathmeyer '17** welcomed Lenny Strathmeyer in April 2021.

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### SAVE THE DATE! *Alumni Weekend*

April 22 – 24, 2022

Join us for WCU's 150th anniversary showcase! As an alumnus, you represent a piece of WCU history that will be recognized during this momentous milestone. Come share your memories with family and friends.

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**HOMECOMING**  
**2021**





## 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Keepsake Box

Join the celebration and continue the legacy of supporting student success with your purchase of our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Keepsake Box! Each contains a collection of items unavailable anywhere else. *Only 150 boxes will be sold.* All purchased boxes will be mailed directly to you.

### INCLUDED IN EACH BOX:

- 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Challenge Coin
- 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lapel Pin
- Purple Ceramic Campfire Mug
- Softbound journal book
- Stickers, magnets, pens and more!

**VISIT [WCUALUMNI.ORG/150BOX](http://WCUALUMNI.ORG/150BOX) TO PURCHASE YOURS TODAY!**



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## RESERVE YOUR FREE T-SHIRT!!!

In collaboration with West Chester University's 150th Sesquicentennial Celebration, the WCU Alumni Association is excited to share our love of WCU with you. Free t-shirts will be available for the first 1,000 requests.

Visit [wcu alumni.org/sendusnews](http://wcu alumni.org/sendusnews) to request your free WCU Sesquicentennial Celebration t-shirt today! T-shirts will be shipped directly to you at no cost.

### RAMS UP!