

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



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This academic year was the inaugural year of a new division at West Chester University. University Advancement & External Affairs (UAEA) was formed in July 2022, led by vice president Dr. Zebulun Davenport. The division comprises three departments: The Office of External Relations, The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact, and the Twardowski Career Development Center. The vice president for UAEA also serves as the university liaison to the West Chester University Foundation and the Office of Alumni Engagement.





As the vice president of a newly created division, I am extremely pleased with the accomplishments that have occurred over the last academic year. From creating a divisional mission, strategic priorities, and providing direction for a new team, we were able to accomplish many of the goals that were outlined for the 2022-2023 academic year. Entering a year not fully staffed was a major challenge; however, the staff in this division pressed forward and served our students in major ways. In addition to results achieved by members of this division, in my role as the liaison to the West Chester University Foundation and the Office of Alumni Engagement, I am pleased to say because of the hard work and commitment of the staff in the Foundation and Alumni Relations, not only were the annual goals met, but they were exceeded on several fronts. This report will highlight many of the achievements of the Division of University Advancement and External Affairs.

Sincerely,

Zebulun Davenport, Ed.D.

Divisional Mission and Strategic Priorities:

In July 2022, the UAEA leadership team created the division's mission and strategic priorities. The departments worked together using the newly formed statements to help focus our work. Using these statements as a guide, UAEA continues to serve students but also serves as a connection point and resource to external community partners.

MISSION:

University Advancement and External Affairs optimizes student success and community impact by cultivating partnerships, stewarding relationships, and creating robust engagement and experiential learning opportunities that prepare students to succeed throughout college and beyond.

Strategic Priorities:

- 1. Enhance** community relationships and streamline connecting points for entities interested in establishing university partnerships.
- 2. Promote** and provide equitable access for all students to participate in experiential learning opportunities (e.g., high-impact practices such as service learning and internships) to prepare them personally and professionally to contribute to the common good.
- 3. Engage** in advocacy and steward meaningful relationships with public officials, employers, and community partners to support the success of WCU students and the University toward fulfilling its public mission.
- 4. Increase** funding opportunities by expanding alumni engagement, annual/planned giving, and philanthropy by connecting donor intent to institutional priorities.

Organizational Chart

The image on page 11 is the organizational chart with the division members committed to UAEA's growth and development as a new division. UAEA also serves as the primary liaison to The WCU Foundation.

Departmental Achievements & University Collaborations

This section will begin with the achievements of UAEEA's departments, which are: The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact; The Office of External Relations and The Center for Community Solutions; The Twardowski Career Development Center; and featured accomplishments from our partners in The West Chester University Foundation and The Office of Alumni Engagement. Lastly, this section will highlight UAEEA's university collaborations. You will see from work done during 2022-2023 that we are positioned to continue a successful path forward, and we are committed to our work as partners with external and internal constituents at West Chester University.

The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact

The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact (CCESI) promotes community-based learning experiences that address issues of public concern by building mutually beneficial partnerships and empowering students to be active citizens in their local, national, and global communities.

Due to employee turnover, the CCESI experienced a year of transition. Focusing on core programs and services, the office had a successful year. This was mainly due to the staff, including newly hired assistant director Katie Clay, the office assistant Alondra Martinez, and faculty associate Elizabeth Munz. Below are key highlights from 2022-23.

The Benefits Hub

In September 2022, CCESI launched the Benefits Hub, staffed by a full-time graduate assistant. The Benefits Hub supports students by connecting them to government benefits and community resources to reduce basic need insecurity and maximize success. Students can visit The Benefits Hub to receive WIC, SNAP, PA Department of Human Services, FAFSA, LIHEAP, and Philadelphia Campus assistance. In the first month, the Benefits Hub screened 25 students and referred over 19 students to the Coalition Against Hunger of Philadelphia regarding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The Benefits Hub also collaborates with the Philadelphia Campus to create a consolidated experience when applying for benefits.

The Resource Pantry

The WCU Resource Pantry supports student success by minimizing food and basic needs insecurities. Over the years, the Resource Pantry has become a CCESI cornerstone service, offering food, personal care items, and school supplies to students in need. In 2022-23 the WCU Resource Pantry saw significant growth in student utilization and the expansion of services, with a 67% increase in food items and a nearly 4x increase in personal care items distributed. This year, the Pantry served more than 3,000 students, an increase of 55% over last year.

At the start of the year, the CCESI staff members began advising faculty, graduate students, and success coordinators to create a Philadelphia Campus Resource Pantry to serve Philadelphia campus students and main campus students who reside in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Pantry opened its doors during the Fall of 2022 and is stocked through partnerships with Sharing Excess and Philabundance. The Resource Pantry is proud to serve as a resource for other college campuses looking to add a similar service to their campus. Through a strong partnership with the Chester County Food Bank, the WCU Resource Pantry procured two glass-door refrigerators, one glass-door freezer, and two microwaves. The use of glass-front doors helps with food management and reduces waste.

The food pantry also facilitated the campus Swipe Out Hunger initiative. Students with excess dining hall meal swipes from the fall semester donated unused meal swipes to students in need. The CCESI distributed over 300 meal swipes in the spring semester through this program.



GRANT FUNDED AWARDS:

CCESI was awarded a \$54,399 grant from the PA Department of Education as a recipient of the PA Hunger Free Campus Initiative in recognition of its innovative work addressing student hunger and basic need insecurity. West Chester University is part of this grant's first-ever cohort of recipients, thanks to the hard work of CCESI staff and partners. This funding will allow for infrastructure improvements at the Philadelphia Resource Pantry, personnel, and programmatic support in programs such as the Benefits Hub and Swipe Out Hunger; support for produce production at the campus gardens, and the expansion of peer-to-peer education programs.

The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact looks forward to starting 2023-2024 with a full staff to engage with students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders on new and continuing programs.

Community Engagement

Students at WCU can serve the community while earning academic credit. The Pathway Certificate for Community Engagement (CE) is a 12-credit certification designed to develop civic engagement and a commitment to the public good. The CE Pathway Certification is part of a nationwide movement to foster participatory democracy at universities. All CE courses engage students in hands-on community engagement projects designed to meet public needs and are connected to curricular goals.

Six new Community Engagement Pathway Certificate courses were submitted through the university curriculum committee, nearly doubling the seven current offerings and bringing the total options for students to 13 classes.

The Center for Civic Engagement's community partner directory generated 54 student requests for volunteer opportunities with community organizations engaged in various work ranging from senior support services to ecological conservation. January and February were particularly heavy activity months, with 30 of these requests.

New Team Members

By the end of Spring 2023, the CCESI team filled all their position openings. We are proud to welcome the following to the center and UAEA.



Dr. Rita Patel Eng joined the department in February of 2023 as the director for the CCESI. Rita graduated from West Chester University of Pennsylvania (WCU) with a doctoral degree in Policy, Planning, and Administration in Higher Education in 2022. She also holds a Certificate in Higher Education and Student Affairs

Policy (HEPSA) from WCU. She received her MS in Technological Systems Management and BS in Biology and Secondary Science Teaching Certification at Stony Brook University in New York. Rita joined WCU in 2016 and has served in various student support roles on campus, working with undergraduate and graduate student populations, faculty and staff, and campus partners to coordinate student success initiatives. She has been involved in K-16 education for over 30 years. She is passionate about working with students to help them find success and realize their potential to create change! She is committed to these goals and has lent her professional and personal talents as a community volunteer.



Dr. Ann Mitchell joined the CCESI in June 2023 as the associate director. Ann is a triple alum from West Chester University and recently graduated with a doctoral degree in Policy, Planning, and Administration in Higher Education in May 2023, a Master's in Higher Education Policy and Student

Affairs in May 2017, and a BS in Education. Ann came to the CCESI team from Delaware County Community College. Before, she worked in New Student Programs at WCU. She returns to campus, bringing her excellence and passion for working with students.



Katie Clay joined the CCESI in August of 2022 as the assistant director. After receiving her MS in Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs from West Chester University, Katie spent two years as a graduate assistant in the CCESI. She coordinated community partnerships and community-based

student leadership programs with the Ram Corps program in this role. Katie was also a core part of Resource Pantry operations and customer service experiences, helping to support the day-to-day Pantry needs and events through her work with the Campus Garden, the Chester County Food Bank, and the West Chester Food Cupboard.

The Office of External Relations and the Center for Community Solutions

The Office of External Relations cultivates and sustains relationships with local, state, and federal elected officials, their offices, and government entities and serves as a leading liaison within the community. The Office serves as a point of contact for internal and external constituents navigating and leveraging University resources and services, informing advocacy, and identifying opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

The Center for Community Solutions (CCS) addresses community needs by matching students with project-based community needs. Students apply their knowledge and skills to the learning experience to complete the project at no cost to the community partner.

The Office of External Relations completed a successful year of collaboration with government officials and community partners. Below are some of the key highlights of this area.

New Government Relations Strategic Plan

Under the direction of the vice president for University Advancement and External Affairs, the executive director of External Relations, and the associate vice president for Communication, Operations, and Strategy developed a three-year Government Relations Strategic Plan. The goals of the strategic plan were to create a comprehensive approach to engage with elected officials, advance PASSHE's legislative agenda and secure resources to further the WCU's mission of developing graduates to succeed personally and professionally.

A component of the strategic plan aligned with the PASSHE Advocacy Campaign was the creation and presentation of The Higher Education Legislative Series: WCU Powering Productivity in Pennsylvania. The series focused on the six high-growth sectors in southeastern PA: education, social services, engineering, computer science, business, and nursing. The presentations, which included the president, vice president for University Advancement and External Affairs, deans, department chairs, employers and WCU students, outlined opportunities and challenges in the respective fields and addressed opportunities for legislators and the university to work together to secure funding for these sectors. The series reached 44 members of the southeast Pennsylvania General Assembly. In addition, six one-page briefs on each of the high-demand sectors highlighting WCU's impact on each sector were distributed to the House and Senate leadership in the final weeks of the state's budget negotiations.

Another component of the plan was to develop a comprehensive policy and process around engaging with public officials, elected and appointed, and their offices. The purpose of the policy was to better coordinate engagement efforts and ensure that the appropriate leaders are aware of such engagement. The policy stipulates that all university employees, internal organizations, and external organizations who wish to engage with public officials on WCU's campus must get approval before engaging directly with a public official and/or associated office staff. In addition, employees must notify the Office of External Relations if contacted by a public official or their staff. A group of key stakeholders made up of senior faculty and staff members experienced with engaging with public officials were involved in the development of the policy statement and both the approval and notification forms.



Community Partnerships

On behalf of the University, the executive director for the Office of External Relations led the coordination of the WCU Diversity Walk Dedication in partnership with the WCU Foundation. WCU paid tribute to the community work and teachings of former State Senator Andrew E. Dinniman by dedicating a popular pathway leading to the entrance of the SECC.

Funded by the Dinniman Together Endowment: Diversity, Inclusion & Equity, the first annual Community Gathering and dedication brought together WCU faculty, staff, and community leaders to create opportunities for thoughtful, genuine, and courageous discussion of race and gender, and difference through new approaches within the region's varied communities.

The CCS Project Highlights and Impact

The CCS partnered with eleven community organizations to develop and enhance existing educational and professional skills for WCU students. Below are three examples of the projects completed by WCU students.

- **West Chester Green Team (WCGT):** a Computer and Earth Sciences major, Emily Miller, created a cohesive branding campaign across the WCGT digital media platforms related to sustainability.
- **Borough of West Chester:** Korryn Wingertsahn, a Media and Cultures Major, created a cohesive communication strategy to provide current information to the West Chester community. Korryn redesigned the borough's website and social media accounts, emphasizing the importance of accurate and accessible information.
- **West Chester Film Festival:** The film festival aspires to educate the public on the artistry of filmmaking through the presentation of global independent short films and interactive workshops. Olivia Carzo, an English and Journalism major, successfully assisted with the execution of the Film Festival's administrative duties, including marketing, sponsor outreach, fundraising, and film selection.

The CCS also partnered with other organizations on similar community-engaged projects with West Chester University students:

- Chester County Economic Development Council
- Chester County Food Bank
- Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness
- ESORM Africa
- Lundale Farm
- Restart Your Life/RENREW Your Mind
- Uncommon Individual Foundation
- US Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan



LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS:

Chester County residents and WCU students were welcomed to the second annual county-wide job fair. The successful collaboration between TCDC, External Relations, and the County of Chester hosted 96 employers and grew in number of job seekers by 72% (125 in 2022 to 215 in 2023).

Twardowski Career Development Center

The Twardowski Career Development Center (TCDC) bridges students and alumni to the professional world, introducing them to who they can become. The TCDC facilitates connections between students, alumni, and employers through virtual and on-campus recruiting and networking events and offers career education and career counseling.

Employer Engagement and Events

This academic year, the Twardowski Career Development Center (TCDC) engaged 474 unique employers in on-campus recruiting and networking activities, including career fairs, industry meetups, information tables, and the campus interviewing program. This represents an all-time high and a 46% increase in the number of employers engaged in the last six years.

In addition to employers engaged in recruiting and networking events, the TCDC engaged 159 unique employers across two Employer Town Halls. These virtual events give employers a preview of the upcoming recruiting season and information on hiring trends.

The TCDC leveraged several on and off-campus partnerships to connect students and employers. In partnership with the Office of External Relations, the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce, and the West Chester Business Improvement District, the TCDC piloted a Part-Time Job Fair in downtown West Chester, attracting just over 50 businesses and 158 students.

Lastly, the TCDC partnered with several academic and non-academic departments, including Accounting, Economics, Nursing, Computer Science, Communications, Marketing, Nutrition, the Dub-C Autism Program (D-CAP), and the Center for Civic Engagement and Social Impact to host several industry and sensory-friendly meetups, as well as career fairs.

Career Education In and Out of the Classroom

Over the course of two years, the TCDC presentation requests increased both in and out of the classroom. Classroom presentations increased by 7% this year. One hundred and four requests this year beat the 2021-22 record high of 97 requests, represented by the purple bar graph. The TCDC also engaged a record number of students outside the classroom, primarily through student clubs and organizations. In two years, student-requested presentations jumped from 65 to 73 (a 12% increase), represented by the yellow bar graph in Figure 1.

The Twardowski Career Development Center engaged 5,570 students through classroom presentations, a 35% increase in the students engaged compared to the previous high in the academic year 2021-2022, as represented in purple. This was achieved through career assignment partnerships with faculty in several departments.

The TCDC also delivered career education on a broad range of topics to 1,753 students through 73 club and organization presentations, a 75% increase in students engaged (compared to 1,001 in 2021-2022), represented on the yellow bar in Figure 2.

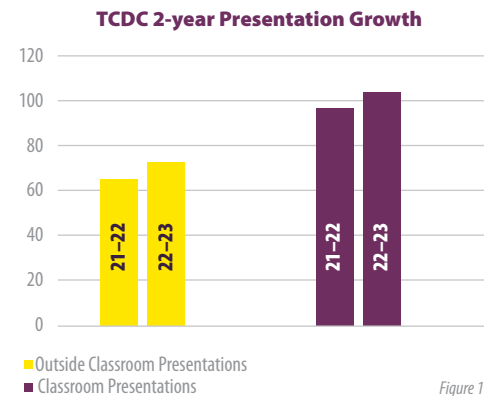


Figure 1

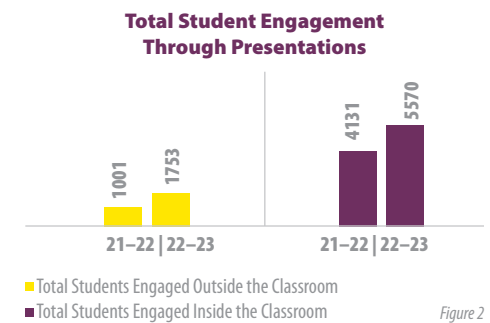


Figure 2

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS

In partnership with the WCU Foundation, the Twardowski Career Development Center raised \$52,285 for the Fund for Unpaid Internships through the generosity of 31 donors. The fund seeks to remove financial barriers for those participating in unpaid internships, and funds will be distributed in the summer and fall of 2023.

WCU Foundation and Alumni Engagement Highlights

The **WCU Foundation** has exceeded their annual goal for FY23, raising \$10,710,887. Despite the challenging economic market, they also achieved a record-breaking number for total cash and gift-in-kind of \$8,232,905 which is 149% of the cash goal!

The **150Forward Campaign** raised \$57,134,382 toward a \$65M goal (87.9%) as of May 31, 2023.

This year, the university received the **largest athletic endowment gift for Volleyball** of \$400,000.

WCU Day of Giving raised \$174,655 from 805 donors, a 197% increase over last year.

Athletic Friends & Families raised \$76,028 from 813 donors, which was an increase of 12.8% from last year.

The **40th Annual Presidential Scholarship Community Gala** hosted over 250 guests at Longwood Gardens. Since its inception, the Gala has raised more than \$2.6 million dollars for WCU students through a renewable, four year Presidential Scholarship. This year's event raised more than \$120,000 for the Presidential Scholarship funded entirely by private donations.

Alumni Relations completed a new strategic plan with six strategic priorities:

- Organizational Excellence
- Campus Collaboration
- Data Analytics
- Purposeful Engagement
- Strategic Communications
- Student and Young Alumni Cultivation

\$10,710,887

RAISED BY WCU FOUNDATION
IN FY 2023

\$57,134,382

RAISED THROUGH
150FORWARD CAMPAIGN

197%

INCREASE IN
WCU DAY OF GIVING

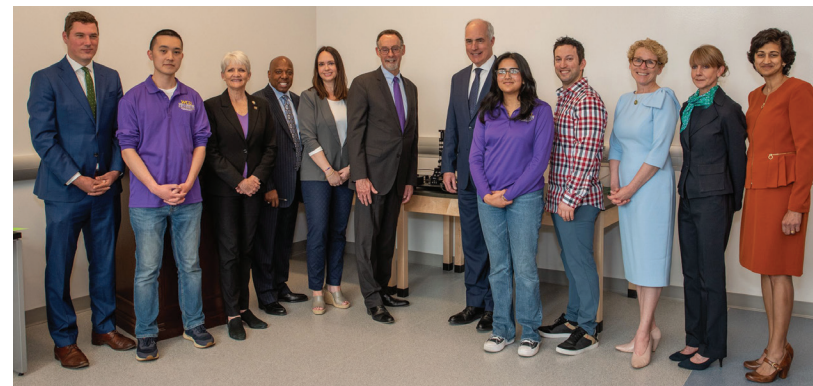
\$120,000

RAISED FOR
PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP

first-gen students, hosted community events, started weekly communications, and celebrated first-gen graduates through special pins and photo opportunities. As best practice for university-wide initiatives, this committee is led by a tri-chair structure. The director for operations, Dr. Diane D'Arcangelo, serves as a Tri-Chair, in collaboration with Amanda Thomas from the Division of Student Affairs, and Dr. Evelyn Anderson from the Philadelphia Campus.

"I Want to STEM!"

The Office of External Relations is proud to have partnered with the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the College of Science and Mathematics Center for STEM Inclusion, and the offices of Senator Casey and Congresswoman Houlahan to secure an award of \$716,000 for its "WCU Moonshot: I Want to STEM!" project.



The "I Want to STEM!" project objectives are to expand K-12 STEM engagement for low-income and minority students in grades 3-12 and to improve college STEM retention by increasing financial assistance and building a sense of community for participating WCU students. This project has the potential to serve as a model for addressing the achievement gap, help meet STEM employment needs, and alleviate the cost of attendance for low-income and minority students pursuing STEM degrees.

University Collaborations

Members of the UAEA team collaborated with other staff and faculty members of the university throughout 2022-23. The second part of this section features these collaborations.

The Experiential Learning Website

University Advancement & External Affairs, in collaboration with the Division of Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs, has created a new website to streamline Experiential Learning (ExL) opportunities at WCU. The website is a centralized information point for ExL for university and community partners. The ExL website assists students, faculty, staff, and external partners with their unique needs. The new website addresses the division's strategic priorities and one of the recommendations from The Carnegie Community Engagement Reclassification.

West Chester's First

The West Chester's First Committee serves a community of approximately 5,500 first-gen students. This year, the committee maintained the University's status as a First Forward Institution, obtained a \$15,000 grant from the Justamere Foundation, improved the process for identifying

UAEA Staffing Update

Upon creating University Advancement & External Affairs, the vice president immediately had two leadership positions to fill for the division. Dr. D’Arcangelo and Dr. Patel-Eng transitioned into their roles from other areas of the university. The division also filled four other key positions during 2022-2023.

Department/Area	Vacant Position	Staff Member
Vice President’s Office	Executive Associate/ Director of Operations	Dr. Diane D’Arcangelo
Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact	Director	Dr. Rita Patel Eng
Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact	Associate Director	Dr. Ann Mitchell
Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact	Assistant Director	Katie Clay
Twardowski Career Development Center	Assistant Director	Yessica Gutierrez
Twardowski Career Development Center	*Office Assistant	Keara Hennessey

**The Administrative Support position became vacant again in April 2023.*

Awards and Recognitions

Individual Spotlight

The Fall 2022 Ram Report recognized **Dr. Rita Patel Eng** (then Student Success Coordinator, University College) as a Woman of Color Who Empower Others at the university.

The Advocacy Committee of the Chester County Food Bank selected **Dr. Julie Dietrich**, executive director for External Relations, as a Board Member.

Kate Clay, the assistant director for the CCESI, was approved to serve as a member of the CCFB Advocacy Committee.

Yessica Gutierrez, assistant director for the TCDC, was awarded the Women of Color Empowering Others award in Spring 2023.

University Spotlight



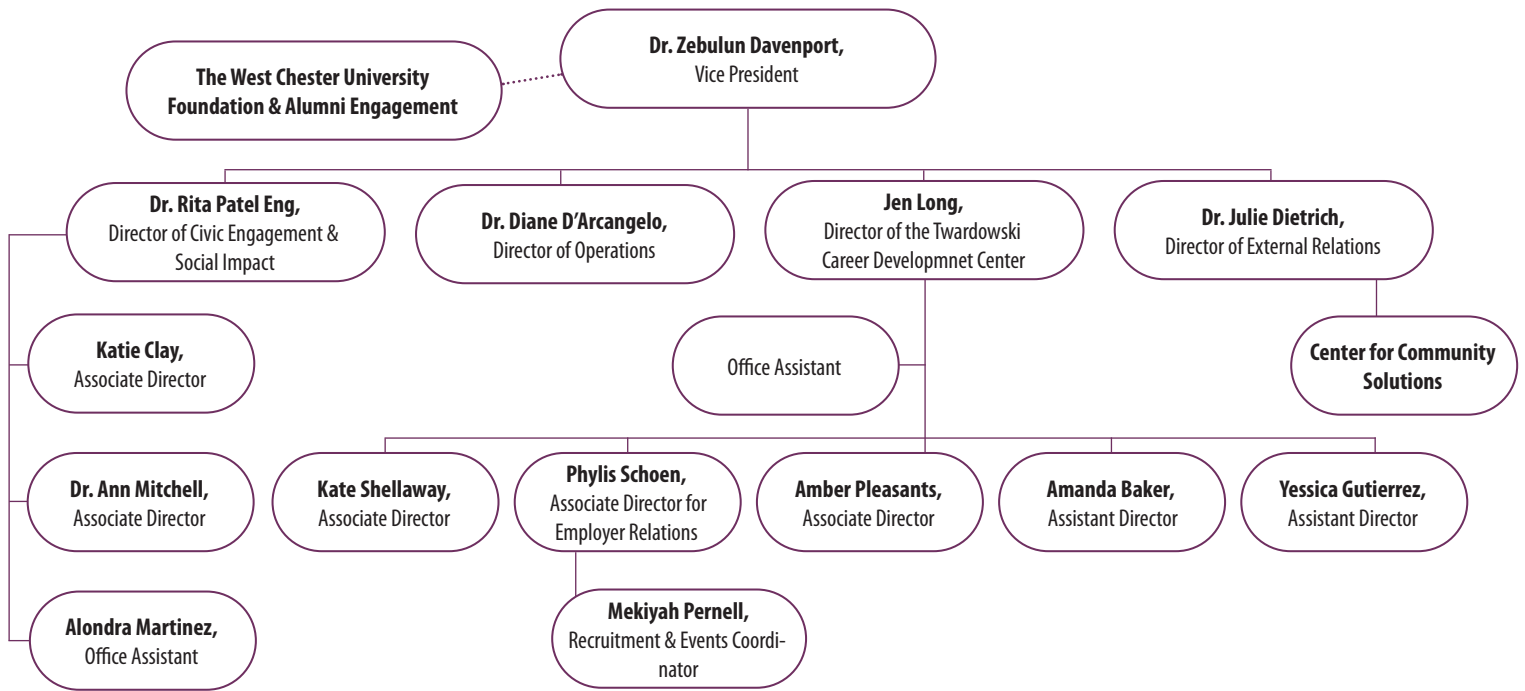
Civic 50 Award

For the second consecutive year, the Philadelphia Foundation recognized West Chester University as a Civic 50 Greater Philadelphia honoree for being one of the 50 most civic-minded organizations in the region for 2023.

The award was achieved through WCU’s commitment to community engagement measured by an investment of resources, integration across business functions, institutionalization through policies and systems, and impact measurement. As an honoree, WCU continues to leverage time, talent, and resources to respond to community needs.

PA Hunger-Free Campus

The PA Department of Education encourages institutions of higher education that are taking steps to address student hunger to apply for the PA Hunger-Free Campus designation. In the spring of 2023, West Chester University earned this designation. As a PA Hunger-Free Campus, WCU is committed to supporting the health and well-being of students and is part of a collective effort to raise awareness and assistance for food insecurity.





WCU
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**UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT &
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Filano Hall – 1st Floor
628 S. High St.
West Chester, PA 19383
610-436-3303