



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

**Issue No. 13**

**January 2024**

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

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

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

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

**Submit Provost's Post Stories  
Here**

## **Table of Contents**

- **Provost's Message**
- **Student Success**
  - WCU Receives PA Hunger Free Campus Grant
  - New SRIS Online Platform Introduced
- **Access**
  - Work Study Positions Still Available
- **Community Engagement**
  - WCU Incomparable Marching Band Debuts in 135th Rose Parade
- **Diversity & Inclusion**
  - WCU Celebrates 30th Anniversary of MLK Brunch
  - WCU Pilots Program to Foster Constructive Dialogue on Campus
- **Scholarship & Professional Development**
  - WCU Welcomes New CSM Dean
  - Condliffe Honored with Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award
  - Three CHS Faculty Honored at December Commencement
- **Resource Corner**
  - How To Post An Event On WCU Calendar

- Professional Headshots Available via Iris Photo Booth at Twardowski Career Development Center
- WCU Speech & Hearing Clinic Accepting Appointments
- Call for Proposals: RECAP Conference
- FAST Schedule & Offerings
- WCU's Bike Lending Library is Here!
- Navigate Training Sessions
- LinkedIn Learning



Dear colleagues,

I hope this message finds you rested and refreshed after a well-deserved break. For those of you who taught classes, advised students, or worked on other WCU projects over the break, I want to thank you for your amazing service to our students and hope that you too got a respite. As we embark on a new semester and a new year, I want to extend a warm welcome back to every one of you. I am pleased to celebrate the beginning of another academic term, filled with opportunities for growth, collaboration, and success.

The start of a new semester is always an exciting time, marked by the promise of fresh perspectives, new challenges, and the anticipation of achievements to come. This semester will be our last under the leadership of President Chris Fiorentino, and we are excited to celebrate his many achievements with a series of events designed to highlight his legacy.

As we gather once again to engage in the pursuit of knowledge, let us reflect on the accomplishments of the past and look forward to the possibilities that lie ahead. West Chester University is not just a place of education; it is a community that thrives on the collective passion and dedication of its faculty and staff. This issue of the Provost's Post celebrates several of our faculty members who were recognized this year for their achievements and contributions to our mission. We are also excited to welcome a new dean of the College of the Sciences and Mathematics.

Further, in keeping with our commitment to foster constructive dialogue on campus, I am pleased to share that we are partnering with a non-profit, nonpartisan organization this semester

to roll out an online resource for our community of educators and students that provides a shared language and practical set of skills to build inclusive cultures and engage constructively across differences.

I encourage each of you to embrace this new beginning with enthusiasm and an open mind. Let us approach our work with a spirit of collaboration and collegiality, recognizing that our collective efforts contribute to the success of our students and the overall growth of our institution.

Throughout the semester, we will face challenges and celebrate victories together. I am confident that, with your expertise, commitment, and the sense of community that defines West Chester University, we will overcome any obstacles and achieve new heights.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for a successful and fulfilling semester. May it be a time of inspiration, discovery, and meaningful connections. Thank you for your dedication to the university and for being an integral part of the West Chester community.

Best regards,

*Jeff Osgood*

## STUDENT SUCCESS

### WCU Receives PA Hunger Free Campus Grant

*(Story courtesy of WCU Communications & Marketing)*

The Governor's Office and the Pennsylvania Department of Education have announced that West Chester University has been selected to receive state grant funding in the amount of \$60,000 from the 2023-2024 PA Hunger-Free Campus grant, as part of the Governor's PA Hunger-Free Campus program. Now in its second year, the grant is designed to combat student hunger at universities, colleges, and private licensed schools throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Once again, West Chester University is one of 30 institutions of higher education and private licensed schools in Pennsylvania selected to receive the much-needed funding. As a member of the PA Hunger-Free Campus grant's first cohort of awardees in January of 2023, the University was awarded \$54,399. Director of the Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact Rita Patel Eng submitted the application for this year's grant on behalf of the Center, which houses the West Chester University Resource Pantry.



"We are deeply grateful to Governor Shapiro and the Pennsylvania Department of Education for providing the necessary funding to help West Chester University reach out to an increasing number of students, so they are not in the position of choosing between buying a textbook, a meal or even basic essentials if they do not have the means to do so," said West Chester University President Chris Fiorentino. "West Chester University is committed to the success of all of its students at all phases of their educational journeys. We are proud that so many of our students are crossing the finish line to graduate because many are willing to provide the resources needed to fuel their success."

Since its inception in 2016, the West Chester University Resource Pantry has been

actively supporting student success by minimizing food and basic need insecurity while preparing students for life after graduation. The Pantry, which is open to all undergraduate and graduate students registered at the University regardless of need level, provides fresh food from the University's South Campus and Tanglewood Gardens. The Pantry also features a room designated to providing toiletries and school supplies, a welcoming intake space for students, and even an area where students can enroll in government benefits called the Benefits Hub. The Resource Pantry is supported by the Office of Financial Aid, the University's civically-engaged WCU student organizations, as well as very generous donors through the WCU Foundation.

Funds from the generous 2023-2024 grant will be used by the Center to expand the Resource Pantry's capacity to serve West Chester University students experiencing food insecurity, especially those who are at the highest risk, through additional programs and infrastructure, on the University's main campus as well as at the Philadelphia location. In keeping with this comprehensive plan, the Center will expand pantry services available for students on its West Chester campus through online ordering; increase options for students to access food during evening and weekend hours through online order pickup via locker access; increase access to healthy and allergy-friendly food; support the expansion of the Resource Pantry at the Philadelphia location; build upon resources to support students in applying for benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and increase students' access to off-campus resources.

"This fall 2023, the WCU Resource Pantry served the highest number of students it has ever served since the pantry started in 2016. The need is unprecedented as we operate on the generosity of donors from our community of faculty, staff, students, alumni, countless community partners, and grants like the PA Hunger-Free Campus Grant," says Patel-Eng."

[\*\*Learn more about the WCU Resource Pantry\*\*](#)

## **WCU Introduces "Blue" Online Student Evaluation Platform**

Spring 2024 will be the first semester that students will complete Student Rating of Instructor Surveys (SRIS) ratings of instruction online using an online platform called "Blue." In Fall 2023, Institutional Research ran the Blue pilot, with the participation of faculty who were not in the evaluation process, to ensure that the system and workflow were working appropriately and to determine whether online SRIS would yield a viable response rate. With the success of that pilot, we are confident that we are ready for the launch this semester. All student rating of faculty surveys—SRIS, DE SRIS, STSAF (for student teaching sections), and NCQ (for nursing clinical sections)—will be administered through Blue.

None of the student evaluation instruments have changed. The selection of an instrument is governed by the faculty collective bargaining agreement, and there have been no new instruments approved according to the process laid out in the CBA. Only the delivery method has changed, and approval for this change came in 2022 from APSCUF's Department Representatives Council, in accordance with the WCU APSCUF Chapter bylaws.

Departments will continue to “order” SRIS from Institutional Research following the same process in SharePoint that was used for the paper SRIS. When the SRIS administration opens for students, faculty will be notified via email. Faculty will be able to track response rates in D2L and through a dashboard in Blue, and they will be able to encourage their students to complete the SRIS. In addition, students will get reminders to fill out SRIS via D2L. These methods were proven effective in getting the needed response rates in the Fall 2023 pilot. After grades are in, faculty will be able to return to the Blue dashboard to retrieve their SRIS results reports. The reports, downloadable as PDFs, have been designed to look as close to identical to the reports from the paper SRIS as possible. Just as with the paper SRIS, open-ended question results will be available through the dashboard, and only accessible to the faculty member.

Additional information about the online SRIS, including FAQs for faculty and students and other resources for faculty, can be found here: <https://www.wcupa.edu/sris>.

Getting to this point is a significant accomplishment that will reduce faculty workload involved in SRIS administration and benefit the environment through the reduction of the use of paper. We would like to thank the faculty and staff who put in countless hours selecting a vendor for online delivery of SRIS and designing and running the Fall 2023 pilot. In particular, for managing the vendor selection and pilot, we thank Lisa Yannick, Senior Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, and IR team members—Nilima Inamdar, Sandi Unger, Andee Samartino, and Christy Quinlan. We also thank the members of the APSCUF committee who worked on the vendor selection and pilot: Maxine Gesualdi, Matthew Kruger-Ross, and Laura Pyott, as well as Andy Famiglietti, who worked on the vendor selection.

## ACCESS

### Work Study Positions Still Available

The WCU Financial Aid office still has federal work study funds available for students to earn this spring term. Federal work study jobs can be created to support various areas of campus including research, program promotion, social media management, and student engagement work.



The purpose of the Federal Work Study (FWS) Student Employment Program at West Chester University is to stimulate and promote the part-time employment of students who are enrolled as degree-seeking undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who are in need of earnings from employment to pursue their course of study AND to encourage students receiving Federal student assistance to participate in community service activities that will benefit the Nation and engender in the students a sense of social responsibility and commitment to the community.

**For more  
information**

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## WCU Incomparable Marching Band Debuts in 135th Rose Parade

*(Story courtesy of WCU Communication & Marketing)*

On Monday, January 1, 2024, West Chester University's very own RamBand made history by becoming

the first marching band within PASSHE to participate in the iconic 135<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade® presented by Honda.

The band and its 300+ members also made history by becoming the first band in the history of the Rose Parade to use more than 20,000 live flowers as part of their performance. They did it all while bringing a little of "Philly" and Chester County with them in the form of ROLLING paneled floats that depicted the Love Statue, Independence Hall, and the Liberty Bell. They also displayed a 30-FLAG MURAL with iconic images of the Philadelphia region including the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, the Love Statue, the Rocky Statue, Valley Forge Park, the Longwood Garden fountains, Brandywine Battlefield, Lenape Nation, and, of course, West Chester University.

It's all about the music. The band played the "Theme for Rocky," "Philadelphia Freedom," and the "Liberty Bell March." Once again, our RamBand made us proud and proved to the world that they are truly INCOMPARABLE.

[Watch 6ABC Action News Coverage](#)

# DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

## WCU Celebrates 30th Anniversary of MLK Brunch

*(Story courtesy of WCU Communications & Marketing)*

The multi-day commemoration highlighted the 30th anniversary for the University's Martin Luther King, Jr., Brunch, which has been expanded over the years beyond the actual brunch celebration to include other events, service projects, and special guests. The brunch is organized and hosted by the Society of WCU, formerly WCU's Frederick Douglass Society.

This year, Ndaba Mandela, author of *Going to the Mountain: Life Lessons from My Grandfather, Nelson Mandela*, presented a free virtual keynote



address on January 26.

Ndaba carries on his grandfather's humanitarian mission as co-founder and chairman of the Mandela Institute for Humanity, where he lifts up the next generation of African leaders and fights for the end of HIV/AIDS. He was named one of the "28 Men of Change" by BET (Black Entertainment Television) and is featured in their International Emmy-nominated 2023 documentary series *The Mandela Project*, which centers on Nelson Mandela's legacy.

The brunch program celebrated Dr. King's civil rights work and promotion of nonviolent struggle for racial justice. WCU alumni who exemplify Dr. King's legacy were recognized at the brunch with the annual Drum Major for Justice Awards.

Other awards presented during the brunch included the **Civility Award** and, new this year, a community service award named for former Executive Deputy to the President Lawrence A. Dowdy '79 and the Society's **Student Service Leadership Award**. This year's packed program also included a history of the event presented by Valerie Dudley, one of the past presidents of WCU's Frederick Douglass Society and now director of Multicultural Education & Training at Temple University.

Andria Young, interim executive associate in the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs and president of the Society, remarked on the anniversary of the brunch, saying, "As I reflect on Dr. King's legacy, though there have been some changes, ... there is so much that still needs to be done. It is my sincere hope as the community engages in the various events of the week, that they will do so genuinely mindful of Rev. Dr. King's commitment to mercy, justice, and peace; that something said or done will communicate the importance of his legacy; and that it will motivate a move from complacency to consistent and directed activism "until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream."\*

Service has been part of the University's commemoration of Dr. King's legacy from the beginning. This year, two community service projects brought the campus community together to spruce up Bayard Rustin Park (corner of Rosedale Avenue and South Walnut Street), named for the civil rights activist and West Chester native, and to inspect and clean toys from the St. Agnes Day Room. In addition, there was a student panel entitled "Through Our Eyes."

**The Society of WCU** is an organization of University faculty, staff, and administrators who embrace the spirit of Frederick Douglass' commitment to social consciousness and inclusiveness. Their programs aim to stimulate other groups on campus to enrich our multicultural climate. The MLK Brunch is one way the Society raises money for scholarship funds.

## WCU Pilots Program to Foster Constructive Dialogue on Campus

WCU is partnering with a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that provides customizable online educational resources and training modules aimed at fostering constructive dialogue on college campuses. The program, which is psychology and evidence-based, is a product of the **Constructive Dialogue Institute** (CDI). CDI has developed research-based educational tools, resources, and frameworks to equip schools, universities, and workplaces with a shared language and practical set of skills to build inclusive cultures and engage constructively across differences.



To learn more about these resources, contact Helen Hammerschmidt at [hhammerschmidt@wcupa.edu](mailto:hhammerschmidt@wcupa.edu) or faculty ombudsperson Joan Woolfrey at [jwoolfrey@wcupa.edu](mailto:jwoolfrey@wcupa.edu).

Learn more about the Constructive Dialogue  
Institute

## SCHOLARSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### WCU Welcomes New Dean of the Colleges of the Sciences and Mathematics

We are pleased to announce the successful completion of our search for the next Dean of the College of the Sciences and Mathematics.

Dr. Jessica OShaughnessy (pronounced “O-Shocknessy”) will be joining us on February 1<sup>st</sup> from Stockton University, where she currently serves as Associate Provost. She has served in a variety of leadership roles over her career, including Chair of Mathematical Sciences and Assistant Dean at Shenandoah University. She currently serves as the chair of the Mathematical Association of America Committee on Assessment. Her current portfolio at Stockton includes the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Office of Global Engagement, the Office of Assessment, and the Office of Community Engagement and Service Learning. She also serves on the institution’s negotiating team with the faculty union.



Dr. O'Shaughnessy received her PhD in Mathematics and her M.Sc. in Communication Systems Theory from the National University of Ireland, Galway, and her B.A. in Mathematics from St. Mary's College in Maryland.

We would like to thank the members of the committee who played an instrumental role in our search process: Tabetha Adkins and Jen Bacon (search chairs), Mahrukh Azam, Howell Bosbyshell, Rich Burns, Jennifer Chandler, Tara Easterling, Zhongping Huang, Cliff Johnston, Allison Kolpas, Jessica McMahan, Karen Mitchell, Chris Stangl, Matt Watie, Heather Wholey, and Julie Wiest.

### Condliffe Honored with Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award

At West Chester University's winter commencement in December, Simon



Condliffe, professor of economics and finance, was awarded the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award for demonstrated excellence in teaching students.

Condliffe's teaching interests are microeconomics, managerial economics for MBA students, business statistics, research methods, and the economics of

health care. He has received awards at the University for excellence in advising and has been recognized by WCU's Honors College as an outstanding faculty member.



His research interests include health care economics, microeconomics, regional economics and the economics of gambling. He has published papers in the American Economic Review, the Municipal Finance Journal, and in the Journal of Regulatory Economics on the topics of health economics, economic development, and environmental economics, respectively. Additionally, he has published in The Review of Regional Studies, Applied Economics Letters, and the UNLV Gaming Research and Review Journal.

Condliffe earned his doctoral and master of science degrees from the University of Delaware and his undergraduate degree from the University of Humberside, England.

Since 1961, the Lindback Foundation has made grants in support of the **Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award** to colleges and universities primarily in the Greater Delaware Valley area.

## Three CHS Faculty Honored at December Commencement

During December's commencement ceremonies, three faculty from West Chester University's College of Health Sciences (CHS) were recognized for their excellence in the classroom and beyond. All three honorees teach both undergraduate and graduate courses.

The **E. Riley Holman Memorial Faculty Award** was presented to Chiwoneso Tinago, associate professor of public health sciences. The award recognizes her demonstration of innovative teaching techniques that foster student creativity.

In addition to teaching public health and gerontology courses, Tinago conducts community-based health promotion and education programs and participatory research focused on improving maternal and child health outcomes in this country as well as southeast Africa. In 2018, she was awarded a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Round 20 Grand Challenge Explorations Grant in the amount of \$100,000 to support this work in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Tinago is also internship coordinator and faculty internship advisor for the public health program and chair of the CHS Global Health Research Team and the Global Initiatives Committee.

The **Campus Diversity Award** was jointly presented to Zeinab Baba, assistant professor of public health sciences, and Kimberly Johnson, associate professor of nutrition. The

award recognizes outstanding contributions to the spirit of diversity on campus.

Baba and Johnson developed and are co-facilitators of the CHS Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Learning Community (DIFLC), where CHS faculty participate in discussions, case studies, and readings and hear from invited speakers to support cultural competence in the development of inclusive learning environments. Launched for the fall 2020 semester, the work was supported by a WCU Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion grant. One outcome was creation of a collective document on strategies for inclusive practices. For the academic year 2023-2024, the program has been opened to all faculty and is being co-sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Center and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Baba is the assessment coordinator for the MPH program. She has extensive experience managing and analyzing various healthcare datasets for pediatric and adult populations. Her quantitative and qualitative research focuses on prevention, health disparities, mental health, and perceptions of health, and particularly on the intersection of public health with other closely related fields including social work, migration, cultural anthropology, and others.

Johnson directs the Sustainable Food Systems Management concentration of the nutrition program. Her research includes social theory of food and nutrition, sustainable food systems, social determinants of health, food security, and public engagement in science and policy of food, health, and citizenship. Her work has been funded by an Allen Foundation grant.





## RESOURCE CORNER



### How to Submit Your Event to Online Campus Calendar

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

[WCU Event Calendar](#)

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



### Professional Headshots Available via Iris Photo Booth at Twardowski Career Development Center

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

Students, Faculty, and Staff can stop by anytime Monday through Friday between 8:30am

and 4pm to get a photo taken, no appointment needed.



# Accepting Appointments

**West Chester University  
Speech and Hearing Clinic**

**FREE** hearing evaluations available

Schedule your appointment now by contacting  
Jacqueline Johnson at 610-436-3402 or email  
[jjohnson@wcupa.edu](mailto:jjohnson@wcupa.edu)

Click to  
Schedule



## RECAP Conference

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

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

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

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



[WWW.WCUPA.EDU/RECAP](http://WWW.WCUPA.EDU/RECAP)

[Click to Submit Proposal](#)

## FAST Schedule & Offerings



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

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

[Click for Schedule](#)

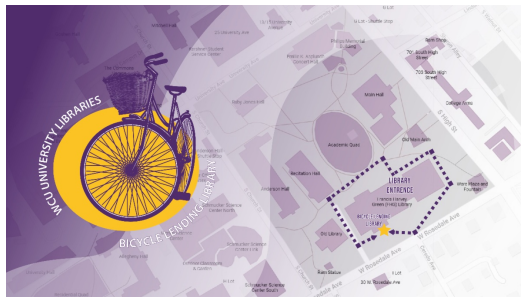
## ODLI On Air Podcast

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

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



[Listen to ODLI On Air](#)



## WCU's Bike Lending Library

Can't find a parking space? Need to get to class faster? With the opening of the Bicycle Lending Library (BLL), you're in luck!

The BLL offers 28 Trek bicycles available in sizes XXS-XL. WCU students and employees can borrow a bicycle for two-week increments or full semesters. Riders should submit an **online request** for a bicycle and wait to be contacted by the library staff. From here, the lending process will begin. After scheduling a pick-up time, riders will present their WCU ID and receive their bicycle, as well as a helmet and a combination lock.

[More Info on BLL](#)



## Want to learn more about Navigate?

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

[Navigate Homepage](#)

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

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

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

[Access LinkedIn Learning](#)



### West Chester University

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

[Email Us](#)



Share This Email



Share This Email



West Chester University | 700 S. High Street, West Chester, PA 19383

[Unsubscribe hammerschmidt@wcupa.edu](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by provostspost@wcupa.edu powered by



Try email marketing for free today!