

WP

Cutting-Edge Research Lab Prepares Students for Careers in Booming Cybersecurity Field



Spring 2022

William Paterson University

The Magazine of William Paterson University

WP Inside

Bringing Adult Learners Across the Finish Line

The University is meeting the needs of adult learners with an innovative new bachelor's degree program—the first of its kind in New Jersey and one of a few in the nation—and a new Center for Degree Completion and Adult Learning



Johanna Prado, director, Center for Degree Completion and Adult Learning; Amanda Vasquez, director, WP Online Student Success Services; Kara Rabbitt, associate provost, academic initiatives; and Djanna Hill, professor and chair, community and social justice studies, collaborate on plans for adult learners

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Editor
WP, The Magazine of
William Paterson University
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Joe Di Giacomo '73 Gives Back by "Paying It Back" with a Bequest in His Will

"I decided it would be meaningful to name a scholarship in memory of my parents because neither went to college. I look upon gifts to WP as paying back the institution for my years of study; it is as rewarding for me as it is for the student recipient. The goal of my bequest is to provide education opportunities for future students with financial need. My small gift might be what allows them to attend college."

—Joe Di Giacomo '73

A 41-year loyal donor, WP volunteer, and "Beaconite," Joe Di Giacomo has supported the Joseph and Carmel Di Giacomo Scholarship since 2000. Now, his will includes a bequest that provides support for future students, with a preference to first-generation students. We are grateful to Joe and all of our Hobart Society planned giving members for their gifts that impact the next generation of William Paterson University students.

Visit us online at wpunj.giftplans.org for information about gifting opportunities that may be best for you and your family. Please contact **Judy Linder**, senior director of development and planned giving, at **973.720.2309** or at linderj@wpunj.edu for a complimentary guide, *Plan Your Bequests to Meet Your Family and Charitable Objectives*.



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Office of Marketing and Public Relations

William Paterson University

300 Pompton Road, Wayne, NJ 07470-2103

973.720.2971 | wpmag@wpunj.edu

SEND CHANGES OF ADDRESS TO:

Office of Alumni Relations, William Paterson University

The Allan and Michele Gorab Alumni House

42 Harmon Place, North Haledon, NJ 07508

973.720.2175

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Message from the President

Dear Friends,

Speechmakers usually prefer that audiences focus their attention on the stage and not their screens. When I delivered my State of the University address at the start of the academic year, however, I asked everyone with me in the Shea Center and watching on Zoom to take out their phones. I asked them to participate in a real-time poll of their preferences among a series of potential new approaches to the University's branding and identity.

WP is fortunate to have many strong elements that contribute to its distinctive identity—from the University seal and its “Commitment to Excellence” motto to our black and orange colors to the Will. Power. tagline.

As well as these assets continue to serve us, today's increasingly competitive higher education marketplace demands an even stronger brand and identity that speak directly to what WP has to offer. With this in mind, I asked everyone to consider two models: what I called WP-Specific, which focuses on what programs we deliver, and WP(You), which focuses on how we deliver them. Then, I asked them to indicate their preference based on both the models' appeal to students as a place to get an education and to faculty and staff as a place to work. The roughly 300 votes cast showed a strong preference for the “How” model. Subsequent surveys of the Student Government Association, Faculty Senate, University Council, and other groups reinforced our community's preference for it.

After further consideration, we formally adopted this approach and have spent the spring semester working through the specifics of what it will look like in practice. We've done a lot of great work that will serve us well in building out a comprehensive system of student support that I call a “Cocoon of Care,” including Will. Power. 101, our successful first-year experience program. More professional advisors, fully online graduate and undergraduate programs, a case management approach to student success, pass/no credit options, 7- and 15-week semesters, career communities, and meta majors are all possible components of this new model.

The work of shaping our vision is being conducted by the Branding and Identity Working Group, which has been getting the campus community's input on how our new approach will represent and advance our work in the areas of academics, affordability, and student support.

At the end of all this work, we will have a new branding and identity model that will speak more powerfully to the distinctive William Paterson experience and a well-organized suite of comprehensive student success resources to back it all up. I look forward to sharing the results with the entire WP community in fall 2022.

Richard J. Helldobler, PhD
President

WP Selected by AASCU for New Initiative Focused on Student Success for Underrepresented and Low-Income Students

The University is one of 15 colleges and universities around the country, and the only institution in New Jersey, selected to participate in the newly launched American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Transformation Accelerator Cohort (TAC). The program, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is designed to help institutions eliminate race, ethnicity, and income as predictors of student success.

“As a university that is committed to eliminating achievement gaps by rethinking systems that create barriers for underrepresented student populations, William Paterson is honored to be a part of the first AASCU Transformation Accelerator cohort,” says President Richard J. Helldobler. “WP has made great strides on this front, but more needs to be done here and nationally. I am confident that, together with the support of AASCU and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and with a shared commitment to success, this cohort of institutions will make great strides in serving our own Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and low-income students, as well as

sharing our successes for the benefit of these populations throughout American higher education.”

Among the participants, representing rural, urban, and suburban areas across the country, are seven Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), including William Paterson University; three historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and predominately Black institutions (PBIs); and three Asian American and Native American Pacific-Islander serving Institutions (AANAPISIs). The selected institutions serve 120,525 students, with an average Pell Grant eligibility of 48 percent.

The two-year, team-based learning initiative is designed to accelerate institutional transformation by providing customized support for making data-informed decisions grounded in students’ realities. William Paterson has assembled a team of campus leaders who will learn best practices to close equity gaps and achieve student success goals for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and low-income students. Presidential engagement in the model ensures sustainable transformation.

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF STATEWIDE HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF NEW JERSEY NAMED COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER, AWARDED HONORARY DOCTORATE



Carlos Medina, president and CEO of the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey and president of Robinson Aerial, will give the keynote address at the University’s 2022 undergraduate Commencement ceremony on May 18. He will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

A separate ceremony will be held for master’s and doctoral degree candidates on May 19 in the Sports and Recreation Center on campus. A total of more than 2,300 bachelor’s, master’s, and

doctoral degrees are expected to be awarded.

Medina became president and CEO of the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey in 2019, having served as its chairman since 2012 and as a member since 2005. The organization represents 119,000 Hispanic-owned businesses in New Jersey that contribute more than \$20 billion annually to the state’s economy. With the Chamber’s founding, Medina in 2019 co-founded and became chairman of the Hispanic Chamber Fund, a loan program that helps Hispanic Chamber member business owners and entrepreneurs across the U.S gain access to capital to help them build, grow, and expand.

Dedicated to raising awareness for and promoting diversity in entrepreneurship, he serves as executive producer and host for *Que Pasa NJ* on PBS; the show features in-depth discussions with Hispanics from business, culture, politics, nonprofits, and academia, as well as non-Hispanic influencers and allies. He is a regular contributor on Univision New York and often discusses important issues with New Jersey and New York media outlets.

Medina is the president of Robinson Aerial, Inc., a firm specializing in mapping and engineering with a long and rich history in New Jersey. As president and majority owner of the company since 2009, he has led an expansion into services such as construction management and GIS mapping, among others.

A graduate of Rutgers University-Newark, Medina earned a law degree from Rutgers Law School. He is a member of the board of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey and the advisory board of the New Jersey Salvation Army; a trustee of the Hudson County Economic Development Authority; and a member of Governor Murphy’s ReStart the Economy Task Force. He has served as a board member of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, where he was chairman of the Real Estate Subcommittee for several years.

Nancy Norris-Bauer, director of professional development and school/community partnerships; Amy Ginsberg, dean, College of Education; Cicely Warren, assistant superintendent, Paterson Public Schools; and Betsy Golden, professor-in-residence, Paterson Public Schools

2ND ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S DIVERSITY LECTURE FEATURES EXPERT ON LATINO STUDENT SUCCESS

Deborah A. Santiago, an authority on efforts to accelerate Latino student success in higher education, discussed how serving students—



Deborah A. Santiago

especially Latino students—requires intentionality, when she presented the second Annual President's Diversity Lecture on March 31.

The co-founder and chief executive officer of the national organization Excelencia in Education, Santiago provided her perspective and experiences with institutions committed to building communities where students thrive, sharing strategies that build on students' strengths and opportunities guided by evidence-based practices and leadership commitment.

"William Paterson is a proudly diverse and dynamic University, and our status as a designated Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) is very much at the heart of that," says President Richard J. Helldobler. "Deborah Santiago's expertise speaks directly to one of our top priorities, which is to truly embrace our HSI status to fully serve and support all our Latinx students so they thrive here and go on to succeed in their chosen careers."

Santiago created Excelencia in Education in 2004 to accelerate Latino student success in higher education. For more than 20 years, she has led research and policy efforts from local to national and federal levels to improve educational opportunities and success for all students. Her work focuses on federal and state policies, financial aid, HSIs, and effective institutional practices for student success.



College of Education and Paterson Public School District Win National Award for Successful Partnership

The longstanding relationship between WP's College of Education and the nearby Paterson Public School District has been recognized with a 2022 Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement Award, bestowed by the National Association of Professional Development Schools.

The College of Education's Professional Development School (PDS) network of 64 schools in 23 districts includes 14 schools in Paterson, a district with which the University has partnered for more than two decades. Through the network, a WP professor-in-residence is on site at a school at least one full day each week, working alongside its teachers, administrators, and staff toward the attainment of annual goals set by school principals to meet specific, critical needs.

Membership in the network, coordinated by Nancy Norris-Bauer, director of professional development and school/community partnerships at WP, affords teachers access to a wide array of professional development workshops and conferences at and through the University.

"The Professional Development Schools Network is a crown jewel in our College of Education, prized through

the region as a model of best practices in university, P-12, and community partnerships," says Amy Ginsberg, dean of the College of Education.

The University's PDS connection to the Paterson Public School district, she notes, stands out because Paterson is the third largest school district in New Jersey with an enrollment of more than 24,000 students. Moreover, it is among the most diverse districts in the state; 95 percent of students come from minority backgrounds, and combined, they speak more than 40 languages. Its schools subsequently have "complex needs," Ginsberg says, "and our PDS network has been eager to help."

"Over the course of this partnership, countless administrators, teachers, and students have benefitted from differentiated support, collaborative professional learning communities, innovation, and opportunities to extend their learning beyond the schoolhouse doors," adds Cicely C. Warren, assistant superintendent for school administration for the Paterson Public Schools.

"This award is a testament to the many teachers, faculty, staff and administrators in Paterson and at William Paterson who have shared a commitment to student success over many years," says Norris-Bauer.

RESEARCH BY SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR FINDS WORKING FROM HOME OFTEN CREATES MORE PERSONAL CONFLICT FOR WOMEN VS. MEN



New research led by sociology professor Deniz Yucel paints a picture of working from home that isn't as rosy as popular belief often conveys.

Despite its advantages—such as not having to commute and all-day access to one's home kitchen—her study, published in the journal *Community, Work, and Family*, discovered that working from home can increase, rather than decrease, feelings that work demands and family demands conflict with one another.

Her research, conducted with professor Heejung Chung of the University of Kent in the United Kingdom, found this to be especially true for women, who often perform more housework and childcare when working from home versus working outside the home. When those women are mothers of children under the age of six, feelings of work-to-family conflict are that much stronger. When taking workers' gender role attitudes into account, women with egalitarian gender role attitudes report more work-to-family conflict when working from home than do women with traditional gender role attitudes.

On the contrary, working from home was found to reduce work-to-family conflict for men. The study suggests that this could be due to men traditionally sharing less of the housework and family-related activities or due to the differences in their work-family ideals compared to women.

"There is a lot of overlap between work and family because of the 24/7 economy we're in," says Yucel, who has dedicated the past four years of her research to topics centered on understanding work-family interface. "Although most families are less traditional than before, we are still finding overall gender differences in how work and family are related; the workload issues are still traditional."

Overall, the study shows, men report more work-to-family conflict—such as an argument with a colleague affecting their mood with family. Meanwhile, women report more family-to-work conflict—such as when they have to leave work early to take a sick child to the doctor.

"The role the individual perceives they are mainly responsible for—either breadwinning or caregiving—shapes how they perceive and respond to family demands conflicting with work demands or work demands conflicting with family demands," the study says.

"Therefore, if family already creates conflict in work for women, working from home—in the same space as the family—can have a negative effect on their wellbeing," Yucel adds.

She points out that working from home is not, in and of itself, an indicator for an employee's feelings of work-to-family or family-to-work conflict, though. How much power employees have in controlling the activities of their workday, how much they control their schedule, and the overall workplace culture surrounding issues of family are also important.

Yucel and Chung coincidentally undertook their study right before the COVID-19 pandemic, which thrust scores of workers internationally into having to work from home.

"Although working from home is a timely topic in most workplaces right now, having to work from home for a set amount of time per week is not always positive," Yucel stresses. "The important thing in terms of employee wellbeing is that arrangements are flexible. Maybe one employee prefers 30 hours in the office and only 10 at home. There are lots of policy implications here for employers and stakeholders."

Drawing on her cumulative research experience in work-family issues, Yucel adds, "The happier you are at work, the happier you are in life—salary and personal finances notwithstanding."

RADIO AND TV STATIONS WIN SIX FIRST-PLACE INTERCOLLEGIATE BROADCASTING SYSTEM AWARDS



Hosts of Brave New Radio's morning show, "Morning Commute." From left: Justis Gregg, Suzette Ramirez, and Vont Leak

William Paterson's radio and television stations, WP88.7 FM Brave New Radio and WPTV-6, continue to demonstrate their excellence, winning a combined six first-place awards from the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System (IBS).

Brave New Radio, which received nine award nominations, won four awards: Best Sports Director: Steven Mulder; Best Program Director: Vont Leak; Best Morning Show: Vont Leak, Justis Gregg, and Suzette Ramirez; and Best Campus News Coverage: Marissa Banks, Isabel Birritteri, and Johan Yamoza.

"I never expected to win an award for two passion projects, but being acknowledged for our hard work truly makes it all the more worth doing," says Vont

Leak, student program director for Brave New Radio. Leak won Best Program Director for his day-to-day contributions to the radio station as well as rebranding the station as Jersey's Home for Alt Hip Hop last summer. His morning show, Morning Commute, was also named Best Morning Show.

WPTV Television, with seven nominations, won two awards: Best Comedy Program and Best Social Media Director (TV): Marissa Banks.

"I'm so proud of all of our award winners and nominees this year," says Samory Rose, student president for WPTV. "After a year of creating content on Zoom, our club members proved themselves up for the challenge and we made it happen."



Jenna Daily and Alicia Mitchell

AGREEMENT WITH NY GIANTS PROVIDES COVETED INTERNSHIPS FOR ATHLETIC TRAINING STUDENTS

For the past 23 years, William Paterson has sent two standout students to work alongside the New York Giants’ certified and licensed athletic trainers as part of a written affiliation agreement between the University’s athletic training education program and the Giants’ storied NFL franchise.

Jenna Daily ’22 and Alicia Mitchell ’22 were the most recent beneficiaries of that relationship, as both were selected to represent William Paterson at the MetLife Sports Complex in East Rutherford, New Jersey for portions of the Giants’ 2021-22 training camp, preseason, and regular NFL season as interns with the team’s athletic training staff.

As part of the internship, both Daily and Mitchell utilized skills they acquired throughout their coursework and gained practical experience in helping the Giants’ athletic trainers prevent, diagnose, treat, and rehabilitate acute and chronic injuries.

“They never hesitated to let me jump in and work with the athletes,” says Daily, who worked with the Giants during minicamp and through the regular season. “It was amazing to work with players and athletic trainers of that caliber in such a positive and respectful setting. It really runs like a well-oiled machine and I got to witness it firsthand.”

For Mitchell, who interned for the Giants during summer workouts and the preseason, assisting their athletic trainers with cutting-edge equipment such as the high-powered laser therapy machine and being given the freedom to create her own rehab exercises were among the highlights of her time with the team.

“They really let me do a lot. From assisting with the ultrasound machine, taping and helping relax the players’ muscles with the massage gun, and bringing them through all of the different modalities—it really checked all of the boxes,” says Mitchell. “It’s also just cool to see and experience the everyday feel of an NFL team’s sports medical team.”

All of the WP interns’ activities were closely supervised by the Giants’ athletic training staff. “It’s very rewarding in terms of job placement, providing such a diversity of experiences to our students in a more fast-paced and high-stakes environment,” says Jaclyn Morrissette, assistant professor and director of the athletic training and sports medicine programs at WP. “Students learn athletic trainers’ role as part of an entire sports medicine team, and get experience with different resources that are available to athletes at the professional level.”

KINESIOLOGY PROFESSOR TO BE INDUCTED INTO NATIONAL ATHLETIC TRAINERS’ ASSOCIATION HALL OF FAME

Robb Rehberg, professor of kinesiology, will be inducted this June into the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) Hall of Fame—the highest honor in the athletic training profession—for his influence on and advancement of the profession within New Jersey.

“I am beyond humbled to join a distinguished group of professionals whom I have admired throughout my career. To be recognized by the profession I love so much is truly an honor of a lifetime,” he says.

Rehberg, who teaches courses in athletic training and sports medicine at WP, is a medical consultant and coordinator of the ATC (Athletic Training Certified) Spotter program for the National Football League.

In February, he worked his third Super Bowl.

He is also a subject matter expert for emergency care for the National Safety Council; president/CEO of Sport Safety International, which provides education and resources on head injury prevention and treatment; and co-founder of The Rehberg Konin Group, a consulting firm specializing in health care, sports, and academics.

“I’ve worked in nearly every job setting possible for an athletic trainer, and each experience has been rewarding and made me a better educator, as my ability to bring those experiences into the classroom helps better prepare students for their careers as health care providers,” Rehberg says. “My work with the NFL to advance player health and safety has been an especially great teaching tool because that work is both unprecedented and truly cutting edge. I’m proud to be a part of it and excited to expose our students to it.”

Robb Rehberg’s post above the football field, equipped with monitors and replay technology



CHAMBER CHOIR PERFORMS DURING CONCERT TOUR IN ITALY

The William Paterson Chamber Choir, the University's elite vocal ensemble, headed to Italy during spring break for a performance and cultural tour that took them to Umbria, Naples, Spoleto, and Rome.

The 31-member group, which included students and alumni, presented five concerts during the nine-day tour. Among the performances were participation in Masses at the Basilica di San Francesco d'Assisi in Assisi and at the Basilica di San Camillo de Lellis, the parish for the U.S. Embassy in Rome, as well as concerts in Capri with the Sorrento Chorale at the Cattedrale di Sorrento, and at the Pantheon in Rome.

"This was an amazing opportunity for our students to sing cathedral music in the places where the music was conceived," says Lauren Fowler-Calisto, associate professor of music and director of choral activities at William Paterson, who led the tour along with Christopher Herbert, assistant professor of music and coordinator of vocal studies. "There was a rigorous audition process for us to be accepted to sing in these incredible spaces, so this is a real achievement for our students."

Students auditioned for the choir a year ago and dedicated themselves to singing an ambitious program of a *cappella* music in Latin, German, and English from a range of time periods. In addition to performing pieces in Latin that are part of the Mass liturgy, they performed sacred classics such as the Johann Sebastian Bach motet, "Jesu, meine Freude," sung in German. They also performed a number of Americana works such as "The Way You Look Tonight," written by Jerome Kern and popularized by Frank Sinatra,

and the American folk tune, "Shenandoah."

Seven of the choir members—Emily McQuaid alto; Jamie Engels '17, Christopher Leiva, and Jake Newton, tenor; and Alejandro De Los Santos, Salvatore Montero, and Dominick Wood, bass—also served as assistant/student conductors.

Other members of the choir are Kirsten Butler, Elora Chapple, Viviana Kaszubski, Rebecca Levin '18, Jessica Momanyi, Brenna Moran, and Allysa Totten, soprano; Khyriyyah Abdul-Haqq, Taylor Andresen, Africa Gray '20, Scarlette Horvath, Bridget Maresca, Emily Martinez, Nicole Parente, Isabelle Thomas, and Lindsey Wormald '18, alto; Luis Costanza, Ethan Kimball, and Matthew Rodriguez, tenor; and Owen Gavigan, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jones, Austin Sidito, and Caleb Vazquez, bass. Phillip Swan, co-director of choral studies at Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Wisconsin, joined the tour as guest conductor.

In addition to performing in concert, the students also had the opportunity to visit a range of Italian cultural sites, including Mt. Vesuvius, Pompeii, the Coliseum, the Vatican Museums, and the Sistine Chapel, among others.



Photo, Top left: Andrew Jones, Luis Costanza, Jake Newton; Top right: front row (l. to r.): Bridget Maresca, Khyriyyah Abdul-Haqq, Emily McQuaid, Scarlette Horvath; middle row (l. to r.): Nicole Parente, Emily Martinez; back row (l. to r.): Isabelle Thomas, Taylor Andresen; Bottom left: Salvatore Montero, Jake Newton, Austin Sidito, Alejandro De Los Santos, Owen Gavigan, Luis Costanza, Christopher Herbert, Caleb Vazquez, Dominick Wood, Andrew Jones, Thomas Jefferson; Bottom right: Christopher Herbert, Lauren Fowler-Calisto, Marianne Giannott

Alumna Who Overcame Traumatic Brain Injury as a Student Returns to “Give Back” to Campus Community

The moment that Kimberly Pena '21 was offered the chance to return to William Paterson through AmeriCorps to assist the Office of Campus Activities, Service, and Leadership (CASL) as a full-time employee, she knew it was the perfect opportunity to give back to the institution that supported her through one of the most difficult times of her life.

During her senior year at WP, Pena was diagnosed with a rare cerebrospinal fluid leak (CSF) after falling ill her first night patrolling the residence hall where she was stationed as a resident assistant. Spontaneous CSF leaks typically only occur in five out of 100,000 people each year, mostly affecting those in their 30s and 40s.

Shortly after being brought to Robert Wood Johnson Hospital where she received her diagnosis, what was supposed to be one surgery to treat her condition quickly turned into five.

“It was like a *Grey’s Anatomy* season. They did procedures that they said they had never done before,” says Pena, who serves in her current role at WP until August 2022. “I’m thankful for the support that I was given by my family and medical team.”

After the successful round of surgeries in early to mid-September 2020, Pena was transferred to Hackensack Meridian Health where she had to undergo speech therapy to regain her ability to talk and re-learn how to walk.

By January 2021 she was back attending classes and was able to graduate in August 2021, just a few short months after her initial expected graduation date, with a bachelor’s degree in sport management.

“Kimberly embodies Will. Power. through her resilience and ability to persevere through life’s

day-to-day challenges, approaching every day as an opportunity to care, serve, and lead with heart,” says Maribel Rodriguez, former associate director of CASL and mentor to Pena. “She proactively strives to achieve her goals and inspires her peers and William Paterson students to live their dreams. She is Will. Power.”

The day after receiving her degree, Pena was offered a one-year position to serve as the 2021-22 WP AmeriCorps Changebuilder coordinator with CASL.

“It was the perfect way to apply the things I learned during my time at WP while remaining in such a supportive environment,” says Pena, adding that William Paterson has had a profound impact on her both academically and culturally.

Pena was initially filled with uncertainty after completing her recovery, unsure of her post-graduate future and feeling a bit stigmatized after experiencing such a rare and incapacitating injury, as well as an arduous recovery process.

“A part of me was worried about how much I had to prove myself after everything that happened because of the repertoire I had already built, and another part of me felt like I should not be limiting myself or doubting all the potential I hold,” says Pena. “Being offered this position made me feel like something was still seen in me and helped me apply all that I had worked on, not only as an undergraduate student, but also as someone who is still recovering from such a rare case.”

In her role as Changebuilder coordinator, Pena oversees the operations for the WP Pioneer Pantry, creates civic engagement events and

presentations for the campus community, and actively recruits students to participate in the WP Changebuilder Project, a program that



Kimberly Pena '21

encourages students to engage with social issues that help create and promote solutions via service opportunities, educational workshops, and experiential learning.

“Programming these events has taught me to allow students to bring ideas to the table, give insight based on their questions and guide them to their goal. Being able to work with student leaders allows me to pass down all the knowledge that was given to me when I was an undergraduate student,” says Pena.

It is the sum of these experiences that she credits as aiding her professional development and preparing her for life after her AmeriCorps term ends.

“The faculty and staff at WP have helped me grow as a person and notice features in myself that I don’t know if I would have realized on my own,” says Pena. “They have been there to see me grow from a first-generation college student who lived with self-doubt while trying to navigate a ship I have never been on, to being a college graduate who has defied all the odds presented and now understands the greatness I can achieve.”



DONOR BEQUEST SUPPORTS TRIBAL ART COLLECTION

A bequest from the late Joan Tobias, a private art collector, will provide an endowment to support the tribal art collection she and her late husband Gordon donated to the University in 1998.

The Joan and Gordon Tobias Collection of African and Oceanic Art includes more than 500 objects amassed by the Tobiases over a 35-year period for their aesthetic and ethnographic value. Research and documentation of the art and artifacts has resulted in exhibits of selections from both the African and Oceanic collections. The African art consists of bodily adornment objects, ritual use objects, and functional objects, and represents more than 20 different ethnic groups in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Oceanic art consists of objects such as canoe splashboards, navigational charts, and spirit figures and idols, among others.

Tobias, who was born in Scotland, became interested in African art in the 1960s; she and her husband traveled to Africa a dozen times between 1971 and

2001. During a conversation with former University Galleries director Kristen Evangelista in 2017, she reflected on her collection. "I collected for personal interest and edification," she said. "I never dreamed it would be of any interest."

"Reliquary Garden Figure," Kota People, Gabon

POP STAR BRITNEY SPEARS INSPIRES NEW COURSE, #FREEBRITNEY, THAT SPOTLIGHTS DISABILITY RIGHTS

William Paterson students are studying how grassroots activism, social media, and the press have brought disability rights to the forefront of the nation's understanding of basic human rights in a new course focused on the recent conservatorship case of pop star Britney Spears.

The online course, titled #FreeBritney, uses Britney Spears' public battle to dissolve her father's conservatorship as a case study to explore disability rights. It provides an in-depth look at the subject of guardianship/conservatorship through the lens of what has been a prominent legal case extensively covered by the media and impacted by information and advocacy shared through social media.

"I'm really excited about this class," says Pamela Brillante, professor and director of the University's disability studies program. "Guardianship/conservatorship is a disability rights issue. It's all about who has autonomy and who gets to make their own decisions, because as adults, we're allowed to make poor decisions."

Brillante spent a week discussing the #FreeBritney movement last year in the University's introductory disability studies course, "Rethinking (dis)Ability," which gave her the idea to develop the new elective course.

"The topic spurred wonderful discussions with students," says Brillante. "We talked about situations where conservatorship is appropriate, where there could be ethical issues and abuse, and why young children have guardians automatically." Brillante shared her own story of being a legal guardian to a father who had dementia.

This semester, students are getting into deeper discussions and research as they compare high-profile cases like that of child star Amanda Bynes' medical conservatorship, singer Ke\$ha's legal issues, Kanye West's public struggles, and the intersectionality of disability and gender.

Co-taught by Brillante and Paula Danziger, professor of professional counseling, the course also examines how the #FreeBritney movement is instigating changes in disability rights laws, especially in California.

Among their assignments, students are asked to use social media to promote



A crowd of Britney Spears supporters holds up signs for the media, including a cardboard Britney, in front of the Lincoln Memorial during summer 2021.

awareness of what they are learning in class. Some students have started sharing information on the "Spread the Word" global events website, an international campaign to spread the word about inclusive practices, and pledging to be more inclusive themselves. Students are also sharing details about the University's disability studies program overall to create more awareness about this relatively new concentration in higher education, says Brillante.

Students hope their social media posts enact positive change, and say they would be thrilled if Spears herself took notice.

William Paterson's bachelor's degree in disability studies—the first in New Jersey and one of the first few in the country—is designed to meet the growing demand across all industries for professionals who understand the needs of those with disabilities. The program proactively explores the nature and meaning of disability as a social construct instead of a medical deficit, and examines laws, policies, culture, and history as a way to destigmatize disease, illness, and impairment across all areas of society.

RICHARD GERAFFO JR. '85, WITHUM ADVISORY FIRM, AND PROFESSOR EMERITA JEAN LEVITAN HONORED AT ANNUAL LEGACY AWARD GALA

Richard "Rich" Geraffo Jr. '85, vice president, Amazon, AWS North America; Withum, a nationally recognized CPA and advisory firm; and Jean L. Levitan, PhD, professor *emerita* of public health, were honored at the William Paterson University Foundation's 31st Annual Legacy Award Gala on April 27. The gala is the Foundation's largest event to raise funds to support the University's mission of promoting student success and academic excellence through student scholarships.

"It was wonderful to celebrate this year's honorees, who embody the true William Paterson spirit of excellence and service," says President Richard J. Helldobler. "Their participation in this event, along with the support of so many from across the University community, directly benefits our students, enabling and empowering them to earn their degrees and do great things."



Richard "Rich" Geraffo Jr.

Geraffo, honored as Distinguished Alumnus, leads the North Americas Sales team for Amazon Web Services, charged with helping companies that range from fast-growing startups to large enterprises. An accomplished business leader with technology experience in enterprise and software sales, he has led large-scale and highly complex sales organizations and is a recognized expert in cloud technology, market opportunities, and customer care strategies. Geraffo, who earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from William Paterson, credits the University with opening

many doors for him, preparing him to enter the business world and create and grow his three-decade technology career.

Withum, honored as Distinguished Organization, is headquartered in Princeton with additional offices in major cities and financial centers around the world. The advisory and accounting firm is committed to helping clients be more profitable, efficient, and productive in today's complex, fast-paced business environment. Withum supports William Paterson efforts to offer educational opportunities for all students in its very diverse community and strategically support first-generation students and underrepresented individuals in various fields of study. The company funds scholarships for accounting students and participates in professional networking activities for students through the University's Career Development Center.



Jean Levitan

Levitan, who received the Faculty/Staff Service Award, joined WP in 1978 and spent 41 years on campus, witnessing her department's evolution to the current Department of Public Health. She served as department chair from 1985 to 1991; was an active, affiliated faculty member of the Women's and Gender Studies Program; helped develop courses to address racism and sexism; was a long-term instructor of First-Year Seminar, now known as Will. Power. 101, and served as an academic advisor. Named professor *emerita* upon her retirement in 2019, Levitan made a significant donation to the University's Pioneer Food Pantry and continues to be concerned with food

insecurity among students.

JAZZ ENTHUSIAST'S BEQUEST PROVIDES ONGOING SUPPORT FOR WP'S JAZZ STUDIES PROGRAM

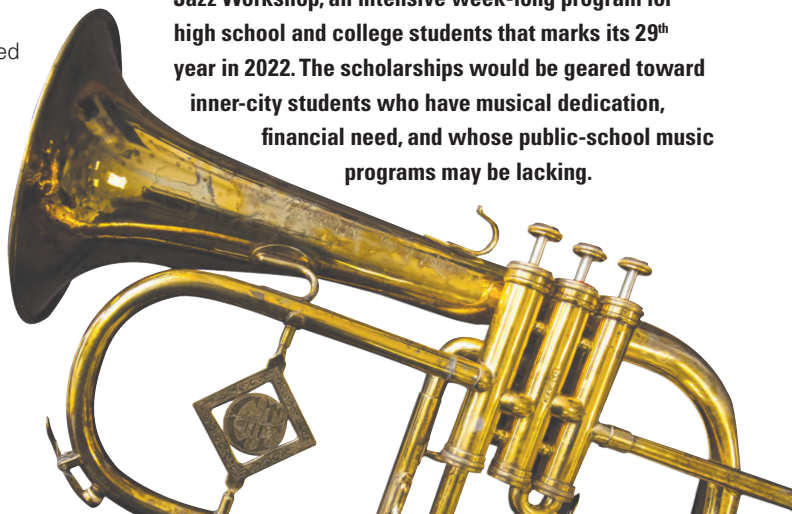
A \$428,000 gift from the estate of Woody Shapiro, who with his late wife, Carole, was a regular attendee of the University's long-running Jazz Room series, will be used to create several endowed funds in support of William Paterson's Jazz Studies Program.

"All of us are honored and thrilled to receive this very significant bequest gift from the Woody Shapiro estate," says David Demsey, professor of music, coordinator of the Jazz Studies Program, and curator of the University's Living Jazz Archives. "Endowments created from this bequest will provide a huge boost to the Jazz Room Series and to the Living Jazz Archives and will provide scholarships to our Summer Jazz Workshop and more, all in perpetuity."

A portion of the funds will be designated to create an annual Woody Shapiro Jazz Room Series Endowed Concert, providing the opportunity to bring a high-level jazz artist to the Jazz Room each year in Shapiro's honor.

Another portion of the gift will establish the Woody Shapiro Living Jazz Archives Endowed Fund to provide ongoing financial support and resources for the University's collection of priceless materials that document the legacy of some of jazz's greatest legends, including Clark Terry, Thad Jones, Michael Brecker, Art Farmer, James Williams, and Mulgrew Miller. In addition to funds for the continuing maintenance of the collection, the donation will allow the Living Jazz Archives to purchase additional items, such as the historic Selmer Bach Stradivarius K-Modified trumpet played by Clark Terry during his years with the Duke Ellington Orchestra and on NBC's *Tonight Show*.

In addition, the University will establish the Woody Shapiro Endowed Summer Jazz Scholarship to be awarded to students who attend the annual Summer Jazz Workshop, an intensive week-long program for high school and college students that marks its 29th year in 2022. The scholarships would be geared toward inner-city students who have musical dedication, financial need, and whose public-school music programs may be lacking.



Students Collect Donations for People of Ukraine

Through an effort led by WP junior Domenick Ciminiello and the Exercise Science Club, with support from the Office of Campus Activities, Service, and Leadership, members of the campus community collected donations for Ukrainian citizens and first responders.

Organizers accepted three forms of donations: physical donations collected at a drop box located in the Student Center, Amazon Wishlist purchases, and monetary donations to Razom's Humanitarian Aid Shipment that allowed the collected materials to be sent overseas.

Ciminiello personally collected the drop box donations and delivered them to Ukrainian Orthodox Holy Ascension Church in Clifton, where church members then sent both the drop box and Amazon donations through Razom's Humanitarian Aid Shipment.

Ciminiello was born in Ukraine and adopted by an American family when he was 17 months old. "I feel lucky that we're here in the U.S., but I felt there wasn't much that I could do to help. After attending an event with other Ukrainians on Capitol Hill, and talking about what we could do, someone mentioned they were collecting medical supplies for humanitarian aid," says Ciminiello.

At the same time that Ciminiello was setting up the drop box, Asmaa Embaby '24 and the Exercise Science Club, of which she is public relations officer, were coincidentally planning a donation project of their own, specifically to aid first responders in Ukraine.

"After seeing the devastating news there, I felt a sudden need to do something. As an EMT myself, I know the struggles that first responders in Ukraine are going through and wanted to extend my help—even from more than 9,000 kilometers away," says Embaby.

The Office of Campus Activities, Service and Leadership connected Embaby and the club with Ciminiello so that they could join forces in their altruistic work.



Domenick Ciminiello and Asmaa Embaby

COMMUNICATION PROFESSOR ORGANIZES INTERNATIONAL SHOW OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN UKRAINE

Thanks to the efforts of communication professor Rob Quicke, people across Ukraine heard college radio station-broadcasted messages of support from students around the world during the early days of the war.

Quicke is co-founder of College Radio Day, an annual celebration of college radio that has grown internationally since it launched out of WP's Brave New Radio in 2010. Approximately 600 stations from more than 30 countries took part in 2021.

Tapping that network, Quicke asked college radio stations to send him recorded messages of support for students in Ukraine. In less than 24 hours, more than 50 stations from around the world responded, including Brave New Radio—"an incredible show of solidarity," Quicke says. "It was truly an international coalition of love and support."

Quicke compiled their submissions, which hailed from such places as Spain, Italy, Canada, Sweden, Greece and Slovakia, and sent them to StudRadio at the National University of Ostroh Academy in western Ukraine.

Students there weren't able to access their studios, but with Quicke's help, they used cellphones—some in bomb shelters—to produce a broadcast piece that they aired and then shared with other college stations in Ukraine. The piece aired across the war-stricken country.

"In this difficult time, we really need to know that we are not alone and we have support. We hope that your words will calm people's hearts," StudRadio wrote in an email to Quicke. A station representative explained that their university was hosting classes online, and that professors and administrators were keeping in touch with students through the tumult. "The only thing left for us is to remain calm... Thank you on behalf of all Ukrainian students."

Sending a sort of virtual hug in response, a group of William Paterson students gathered with Quicke for a photo; StudRadio posted the photo to its Instagram account and publicly thanked WP.

"I am very moved by the bravery of the students in Ukraine to keep going and to make the effort to send a message to the world in such difficult circumstances," Quicke says. He underscores the importance of college radio for providing "an authentic narrative that connects students with one another and with the community."



Professor Rob Quicke (fifth from left) and WP students gather for a photo message sent to a college radio station in Ukraine



Ana Cristina Siqueira

Business Professor Receives National Award for Excellence in Social Entrepreneurship, Practice, and Service

Ana Cristina Siqueira, associate professor of management and director of the University’s recently launched Center for Socially Responsible Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Cotsakos College of Business, has been selected for the highly competitive Award for Excellence in Social Entrepreneurship, Practice, and Service from the U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

The award recognizes individuals who have founded a social impact organization or initiative in order to make a positive contribution to the world, with a demonstrated commitment to social entrepreneurship education.

“Other institutions often have centers for entrepreneurship and innovation, but we are bringing this differentiation with social responsibility, and to receive an award that comes from a group that is focused on that—it’s a great honor,” Siqueira says. “This is a wonderful type of recognition to receive right at the start-up phase

of our Center, because it highlights the importance of our mission to help individuals launch and develop organizations committed to environmental sustainability and social inclusion.”

The Center, launched last fall, aims to empower current students, alumni, and members of the general public from diverse backgrounds and industries to create new business ideas and develop socially responsible innovations for their new or existing organizations. It also produces research in entrepreneurship and innovation focusing on organizations that align economic, social, and environmental goals.

Siqueira, who was named a 2021 Influencer in Social Equality and Equity by *ROI-NJ*, is a specialist in strategic management, entrepreneurship, international business, and management of technology and innovation. Her research has been published in the *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, and *Journal of Business Venturing*, among others. She is co-founder of *reframery.org*, an online platform that empowers diverse individuals in various countries to develop socially and environmentally responsible organizations.

In Memoriam

THE UNIVERSITY MOURNS THE PASSING OF THREE MEMBERS OF THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY:



Sally Nixon Hand, professor *emerita* of English, died December 16, 2021. Hand, who joined the faculty in 1964, coordinated the Writing Center and was a pioneer in using the computer for teaching writing to remedial students, as well as exploring themes of racial and social justice in writing. She was an early proponent of Writing Across the

Curriculum, a program designed to forward and foster the idea of writing-as-learning in every discipline, and was project director for a federal grant that promoted the concept to teachers in New Jersey K-12 schools and community colleges. Hand published articles on literature and writing, and conducted research on Dr. Samuel Johnson’s affiliation with women intellectuals of the late 18th century. A *Phi Beta Kappa* graduate of the University of Georgia with bachelor’s degrees in French and English, she earned a master’s degree in English and Latin from the University of Florida and a doctorate in English literature from New York University.



Christine A. Kelly, retired professor of political science, died on December 21, 2021. She was 60. A graduate of Douglass College, Rutgers University with a bachelor’s degree in political science and women’s studies, she earned a doctorate from Rutgers in political theory, focusing on American politics and women in politics. During her time at Rutgers,

Kelly played a prominent role as a student activist, seeking to organize student activists across the country; her papers regarding those efforts are held in the Rutgers University archives. Prior to joining the political science faculty at William Paterson in 1999, she taught at the University of Northern Colorado and Mount Holyoke College. During her tenure at William Paterson, she was instrumental in promoting civic engagement. She was the inaugural

director of the American Democracy Project on campus, a national project of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities that seeks to raise the civic and political participation levels of young people at public colleges and universities. She co-taught, with Wartyna Davis, current dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, the pilot course, Civic Engagement: Theory and Practice, that spurred the development of other courses focused on service learning and led to the University’s pioneering requirement that undergraduate students take a course in civic engagement. The author of *Tangled Up in Red, White and Blue* (2001), she published numerous essays, book chapters, and conference papers and presentations on social movements, social policy, and youth politics, and regularly provided political commentary and election analysis. Kelly was a long-standing member of the American Political Science Association, for which she chaired or co-chaired prominent committees for nearly three decades.



William Woodworth, retired professor of music, died on February 16, 2022. He was 88. A U.S. Army veteran, he was stationed at U.S. Army Headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany. Upon his return, he began his teaching career as a middle and high school band director. Woodworth joined the music faculty at William Paterson in 1966, where

he served as band director and taught low brass (trombone and euphonium), music appreciation, and conducting. He also served as the supervisor of student teachers and the head of recruitment for the Department of Music. Woodworth retired in 1998 after 32 years on campus. A graduate of Eastern Michigan University, he earned a master’s degree in music from the University of Kentucky and a doctorate in music from the University of Michigan. His family has established the William Woodworth Music Scholarship in his name; those who wish to contribute can contact Maureen O’Connor, director of development, at ocnorm24@wpunj.edu or 973.720.3990.

ASSESSING LANGUAGE BARRIERS AND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE IN HISPANIC COMMUNITIES

Before nursing major Emily Baldarrago '22 began planning her research thesis for the nursing honors track, she had identified language barriers as an issue that affected millions of people across the U.S.

Baldarrago chose to focus on the importance of bilingualism in healthcare, specifically on Hispanic communities, and how bilingual healthcare workers have positively impacted their experiences in comparison to patients that have had monolingual healthcare providers.

"Language barriers have been a real problem in the United States and have affected millions of people," says Baldarrago, who is minoring in Spanish. "Through my research, I have noticed that Hispanic communities are those that need the most support in having healthcare workers that are bilingual in both English and Spanish to help facilitate their treatment plan in the hospital or other health facilities."

Baldarrago credits Joset Brown, assistant professor of nursing, and Megan Maguire '90, a nurse practitioner who serves as a mentor to nursing students through the Career Development Center, with helping her accomplish her goals as an undergraduate student.

"Both have inspired me immensely to do my best in school and have motivated me to become the best nurse I know I can be," says Baldarrago, who also serves as the president of Order of Omega, part of the Greek Honor Society.



STUDYING MICROPLASTICS AND WATER QUALITY IN THE PASSAIC RIVER



While deciding on an area of research for his senior practicum course, environmental sustainability major Michael Whipp '22 felt the growing cause of concern about microplastics in our nation's water supply warranted further study.

Whipp and his research partner, fellow environmental sustainability major Elizabeth Kehrley '22, who both share

a common interest in hydrology and wetland ecosystems, examined whether the Passaic River contains harmful microplastics, possibly contaminating other northern New Jersey waterways.

"Microplastics can end up in our waterways via sewage, surface runoff, storm drain overflow, or illegal dumping," Whipp explains.

The study focused on five locations along the Passaic River, which they inspected by conducting a visual evaluation with a high-gradient habitat assessment form, and then collecting

physical samples with a manta trawl net that were later studied in the University's lab.

After processing and analyzing the water samples, Whipp and Kehrley discovered that contaminants and microplastics are indeed present within the entire Passaic River system and follow an increasing gradient from the headwaters in rural Morris County to the mouth of the river in Newark Bay, with increased residential and commercial land use among its trajectory.

"I feel blessed to have had the guidance and support of all the professors within my department. I have gotten so much motivation from my teachers. Really great relationships were fostered here in the classroom that I will carry with me into my life in science," says Whipp. "Professor Nicole Davi has had a major impact on so much of my experience. She has been there every step of the way, always there for advice or questions, even when they weren't related to classwork."

"This project allowed us to use tools that we will be using once we get into the workplace and enabled us to network and work with various groups of people. All of the skills we acquired are something that most people in the field have to learn when they start working, but because of this project we are prepared," says Kehrley.

STORIES ABOUT RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION



USING AGELENIDAE SPIDERS AS A MODEL ORGANISM TO CREATE A SPECIES DISTRIBUTION MODEL

A species distribution model (SDM) is a popular tool in ecology that generates a map showing the likelihood of a species inhabiting specific areas that are used to inform such things as expected migration patterns due to climate change and determining likely phylogenetic trees.

After conferring with Joseph Spagna, professor of biology, Nikki Gaffney '22 chose to create such a model for North American Agelenidae spiders for her honors research project.

Gaffney, a biology major with a concentration in animal physiology and behavior and minors in both art studio and ethics, is analyzing migration patterns of Agelenidae spiders across North America based on 20 environmental factors that she carefully selected to determine which factors are most influential in where they prefer to live.

Under the guidance of Professor Spagna, Gaffney is using species distribution software Maxent to study these patterns and formulate her own SDM as a digital map that could help contribute to land conservation and plotting discussions.

"Studying Maxent provides a good introduction into the field of ecology and prepares me for ecological study in graduate school," says Gaffney. "WP has also given me a wide breadth of experience—especially in leadership—that will make me valuable everywhere."



CONSUMER AND EMPLOYEE IMPACT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As digital marketing student Megan Kwiecien '22 learned about the global impact of socially responsible business during her courses in the Cotsakos College of Business, she wanted to further explore the direct impact corporate social responsibility (CSR) had on both consumers and employees.

Through her honors research project, Kwiecien is seeking to pin down these external and internal effects. She predicts that due to the rise in consumer pressure on companies to conduct more responsible business practices, such as reducing their carbon footprint and taking a stance on social justice issues, that organizations with a greater focus on CSR will see more sales and happier employees with increased retention rates.

According to Kwiecien, this data is important because it affects not only the companies and their future, but the future of the world.

"Continuing to research on topics surrounding CSR gives companies the resources to rethink their company values to meet their consumers' evolving beliefs," says Kwiecien. "By doing so, corporations can positively impact their surroundings and

provide another way to connect with customers and employees. The current pandemic and rise in social discourse in the past few years has also increased the demand for this sort of research."

Kwiecien credits Janice Lai '07, marketing director at Behaviorally, as a valuable resource and mentor during her senior year at WP. Lai, assigned to Kwiecien by the Pesce Family Mentoring Institute, has provided meaningful insight and career advice in a multitude of ways.

"Her efforts have been great and she is genuinely interested in helping me succeed. In addition to reviewing my resume and cover letters, she has sent my resume to her connections at multiple companies. She is always available to answer any question I have. I highly recommend the Pesce Family Mentoring Institute to all business students at WP," says Kwiecien.



Baseball Alumnus Mike Guadango '11 Hits It Out of the Park as a Performance Trainer

While Mike Guadango '11 was breaking records and earning awards on the William Paterson baseball diamond, he was already planting the seeds of what would become a thriving business.

A part-time physical performance trainer while wearing the orange and black, Guadango built his resume, connections, and knowledge base after graduation,

eventually opening his own facility called Freak Strength. At his Oakland, New Jersey location, Guadango and his team of coaches work with all



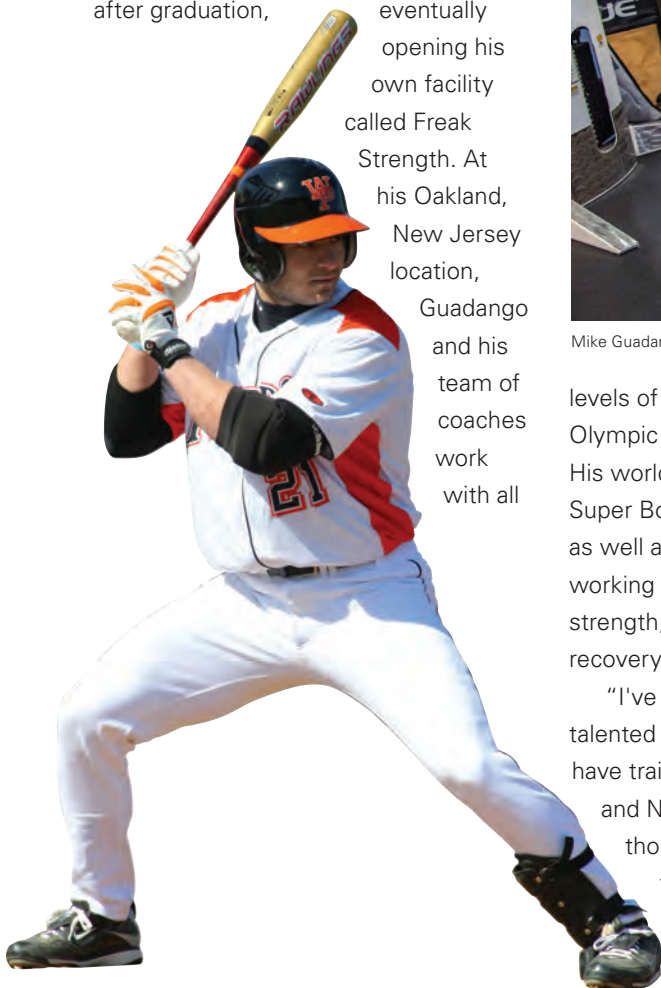
Mike Guadango works with Super Bowl Champion Devin McCourty in his Oakland, New Jersey facility.

levels of athletes, from professionals to Olympic gold medalists to teenagers. His worldwide clientele includes NBA, Super Bowl, and NCAA champions, as well as collegiate all-Americans, working to improve their speed, power, strength, endurance, flexibility/mobility, recovery, and general health.

"I've worked with some really talented athletes," says Guadango. "I have trained multiple potential NFL and NBA Hall of Famers, and even though I really enjoy working with those guys and helping them attain sport mastery, my

favorite group to coach are the young athletes. Getting kids while they're young, awkward, and insecure, and helping them navigate through it, is an amazing experience. I really love being able to have a positive impact on their lives."

Guadango can relate to his trainees' desire to find an extra "edge" as an athlete. A four-year Pioneer (2007-10), his hard work paid off with a pair of all-America awards and four First-Team All-New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) certificates. He finished his career as WP's hits (257), doubles (54), and






at-bats (622) leader while rating second in RBI (177), third in runs (167), fourth in home runs (26), and fifth in batting average (.413), which made him a shoo-in for WP's Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame 2021 induction class.

Pairing that athletic excellence with an exercise science degree, Guadango credits his time at William Paterson for preparing him to excel professionally.

"My time here was valuable because it allowed me to hone in on my ability to grow and push myself, both with baseball as well as academics," Guadango says. "My academic advisors, Dr. Michael Figueroa and the late Dr. Jim Manning, recognized my abilities and encouraged me to pursue them by allowing me to go to the University of Pittsburgh for my internship. This is something that wasn't typical at the time. But they understood what I wanted to do and how it would benefit me in the long run. That internship changed my life and I wouldn't be where I am today without it and without their understanding."

When asked what advice he would give to current Pioneers, Guadango simply says, "Whatever you do, do it well." It's a mindset that has allowed him to already become a leader in the physical performance industry. 



HEAD SOCCER AND MEN'S GOLF COACH BRIAN WOODS RETIRES

Following 30 seasons leading the William Paterson men's soccer program, head coach Brian Woods retired January 1, 2022.


The 2008 New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Men's Soccer Coach of the Year, Woods also served as head coach of the men's golf program (2010-21), and founded the women's soccer program as a club sport in 1993 before guiding it through its first three varsity seasons (1994-96). He started the 2021 season as one of the top 35 winningest active Division III men's soccer coaches, and finished his career with a 246-249-57 record.



Brian Woods

Woods led the Pioneers to the second round of the 2010 NCAA Men's Soccer Tournament, the 2008 ECAC Metro Tournament championship, and an ECAC Metro Tournament runner-up finish in 2013. In all, WP competed in 10 NJAC tournaments and nine ECAC tournaments under his watch. Under Woods' tutelage, one Pioneer was named an all-American, 19 were all-region selections, and 63 were members of the All-NJAC Team.

While he coached the men's team, Woods also simultaneously coached the fledgling women's soccer program, compiling a 36-17-2 record from 1994-96 before his brother, Keith, took over the reins in 1997. For his efforts, Woods was named the 1995 NJAC Coach of the Year, and during those three seasons he mentored the 1996 NJAC Rookie of the Year, one all-region honoree, and 11 all-conference picks.

After a lengthy period of not sponsoring the sport, WP re-started its men's golf program with a club team that Woods coached during the spring of 2010. He ended up leading the Pioneers to an impressive 27-7-1 dual-match mark in 11 seasons of NCAA competition. 

CODED IN CAREER READINESS

*New Cybersecurity Research
Lab Leads to New Curriculum
Focused on Industry Needs*

BY MARIA KARIDIS DANIELS

On the fifth floor of Science Hall East, students are working together on computers, trying to hack into a smartphone. On the wall across from them, a large, flat-screen monitor displays a map with real-time data on global cybersecurity attacks.

Once they've gained access to data on the smartphone, they'll move onto another assignment: They'll use instruments that capture all WiFi traffic in the area in an attempt to see, in real time, the websites that classmates are surfing on their devices—passwords they enter, online forms they fill out, Google searches they perform and all.

"We call it 'ethical hacking,'" explains WP computer science professor Kiho Lim, who runs the cybersecurity research lab on campus. The lab, which opened in the fall of 2019, started in a first-floor space of Science Hall East and then expanded to an additional, fifth-floor space—complete with networking devices, high-performance graphic processing units (GPUs), and computers for machine learning-related projects. "I show students simple ways to hack users, without the users ever knowing, in order to show the importance of cybersecurity: the importance of defending against malicious activity."

Among the new courses in cybersecurity now offered in the computer science department, Penetration Testing and Ethical Hacking

made its WP debut this past fall. Of 27 students in the course, eleven took an exam to gain Ethical Hacker Pro Certification through TestOut Corporation, which provides professional credentialing and online training courseware in the IT industry. Many companies prefer cybersecurity job candidates who, on top of their degree, also have special certifications to validate knowledge of best practices. Earning some entry-level certifications before they even graduate will undoubtedly make WP students stand out to employers, he adds.

Venkat Sharma, dean of the University's College of Science and Health, is working alongside faculty to both develop and expand the cybersecurity curriculum. They are also looking at revamping existing courses in computer information technology



Dean Venkat Sharma

as part of the process. Input from College of Science and Health Dean's Advancement Advisory Council member Thomas McGuire '03, who runs a cybersecurity firm in Washington D.C., has been very valuable in this process, the dean adds.

Sharma says he is committed to making sure the cybersecurity program remains in a "market-driven state of constant evolution, with students learning from industry-leading experts and practices." As part of his vision—wherein the University produces graduates who are cybersecurity "innovators"—the computer science department would meet all the requirements that could earn it National Security Agency (NSA) accreditation, the most prestigious accreditation in the field.

"Cybersecurity is a very trendy topic; there are so many job openings in this field of computer science right now," Lim adds.

Organizations in both the private and public sector are hiring candidates with cybersecurity credentials at high rates with high salaries. Hospitals, banks, and retail outlets, for example, need information security analysts to guard against customer data breaches. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 33 percent increase in information security analyst jobs between the years 2020 and 2030. The average growth rate for all occupations is 8 percent.

Moreover, information security analyst jobs in the U.S. came with a median annual income of \$103,590 in 2020, compared to \$41,950 for all occupations, the Bureau reports.

To ensure our graduates get to capitalize on the current environment, cybersecurity courses at WP are designed with the earning of professional certifications in mind and a core of experiential elements based on industry demand.

“Our courses are not theoretical. We create courses that are going to lead students to a career in cybersecurity,” explains computer science professor Weihua “Daisy” Liu, who recently conducted research on the use of machine learning to detect cyberattacks. Hands-on learning, using the lab to facilitate students’ work, she says, is key.

Hands-on activities in the lab extend beyond required coursework, with several computer science students having served as research assistants there. Students have undertaken faculty-guided research projects on topics such as vulnerability testing of contactless mobile payments and common security issues in websites, and have presented their research and findings at campus events and beyond.

Igor Lyebyedyev ’23 was the lead author on a peer-reviewed conference publication based on the research he performed alongside Lim in the area of vehicular network security. Titled “Analysis of Bio-signal based Biometrics Application Technique

Trends for Smart Connected Cars,” the paper appeared in the 2020 International Conference on Smart Media and Applications.

“I can definitely say that, personally, it was very exciting to work with cutting edge technology,” Lyebyedyev says of his experience in the cybersecurity research lab. “For our research, we got to explore the work others have done in the cybersecurity field, and it was inspiring to see them push tech to its absolute limits to achieve something that hasn’t been done before.”

the computer science department’s newfound potential to create graduates who will shape the regional cybersecurity workforce.

“Additionally, William Paterson now has the potential to attract computer science students who would otherwise consider attending Tier 1 research institutions, and adult learners who are already working in the industry, but need cybersecurity coursework to advance their careers,” the dean says.

To advance the cybersecurity research lab’s capabilities and impact,



Professor Kiho Lim (left) with students Elaine Morillo '23 and Justin Bundschuh '22 in the cybersecurity research lab. The monitor displays the Live Cyber Threat Map, which shows the number of daily cyberattacks in real time

Recognizing the value in such high-level undergraduate research experiences, WP alumna Gay Lynn Jackson '68 and her husband Mel made a significant donation to the College of Science and Health toward the purchase of hardware for the cybersecurity lab.

Jackson, who studied speech pathology at WP, says she was inspired to support the lab after reading a book about the likelihood of a major cyberattack on America’s power grid and just how devastating such an attack would be.

She sees her gift to WP as a contribution to the cybersecurity industry at large.

Sharma points to strategic funding from the University and support from alumni as great testaments to

Lim is continuing his work to secure grant funding. A recent grant, from South Korea’s Institute of Information and Communications Technology Planning and Evaluation, awarded Lim \$80,000 plus another \$60,000 in stipends for three visiting research scholars from Chosun University.

Lyebyedyev says what he’s learned through the cybersecurity lab and curriculum has already reaped benefits, as it allowed him to land an internship in web development. The research process also helped him discover many of his personal strengths and weaknesses, which is invaluable—both professionally and personally. Though he is still deciding on a specific career path, Lyebyedyev adds, “I definitely benefited from my experience at the lab—enormously.” WP



Johanna Prado, director, Center for Degree Completion and Adult Learning; Amanda Vasquez, director, WP Online Student Success Services; Djanna Hill, professor and chair, community and social justice studies; and Kara Rabbitt, associate provost, academic initiatives

For many years, Kachana Wilder's associate's degree from Passaic County Community College served her workplace needs as a payroll professional for a large New Jersey organization. Married, a mother of three, and a grandmother, she often considered returning to school for her bachelor's degree. "But I ran into a brick wall in trying to schedule my classes," she says. "They just didn't fit with working fulltime and my other family responsibilities."

But she continued to think about it, especially when other employees at her company regularly came to seek her advice regarding workplace issues. "I realized I must have some leadership skills that were driving people to come to me, and I wanted to make sure I had an academic foundation that aligned with the advice I was giving."

Then Wilder saw a flier for William Paterson's innovative new bachelor's degree in leadership and professional studies (LPS)—the only one in New Jersey and one of the few such programs in the country. The program, which launched in fall 2021, provides adult learners with a highly flexible structure designed to help them return for a degree and build on professional knowledge and previously earned credits. "It literally checked off all the boxes for me," she says.

Offered through the University's fully online degree platform, WP Online, as well as in an on-campus model, the LPS degree program is built around a required core of three successive courses focused on leadership; students must also demonstrate knowledge and application of communication skills, professional analysis, quantitative skills, organizational

understanding, ethics, and cultural competency through the completion of courses or through credit for prior learning options.

The interdisciplinary curriculum is drawn from academic departments across the campus—an acknowledgement that many adult learners bring transfer credits from a major that no longer fits their career or interests. That strategy, combined with the opportunity to earn credit for prior learning, means students can create a very individualized degree targeted to their own career paths.

"We are giving an academic name to the skills and competencies employers are looking for and providing support for these learners to be successful," says Djanna Hill, professor and chair of the Department of Community and Social Justice Studies and program director of the LPS degree program.

Wilder enrolled in the LPS program last fall and is set to graduate in 2023 with her bachelor's degree, and plans to subsequently pursue a master's degree. Five current LPS majors are already scheduled to graduate this August.

With more than one million adult learners in the New York metropolitan area who have some college credits and no degree, or just an associate's degree, the need is substantial for this important population, says Joshua Powers, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

"Helping adult learners earn a bachelor's degree can have a huge economic impact on their lives," he says. "They have extensive life and professional experience but may lack the credentials to seek a promotion, land a job, or to forge a

BRINGING ADULT LEARNERS ACROSS THE FINISH LINE—

New flexible bachelor's program at WP is first of its kind in N.J. and one of few in the nation

BY MARY BETH ZEMAN

new career path. They also may need specialized support services and resources as they choose to pursue a college degree. We are excited about building a reputation for excellence in what we offer this population.”

To that end, the University recently expanded its fully online offerings in support of adult learners. The new bachelor's degree in leadership and professional studies is one of eight just-launched online degree programs—the others are communication studies, criminology, health studies, liberal studies, marketing, management, and psychology—targeted to adult learners, defined as those who have been out of high school for at least two years and are returning to college or enrolling for the first time. In addition, WP Online offers an online RN to bachelor of science in nursing degree for nurses seeking to advance their careers. And the on-campus version of the LPS program gives students access to a wide array of course options.

“We want William Paterson to become known as a place where adult learners are valued, supported,

and have multiple options for pursuing a degree,” says Kara Rabbitt, associate provost for academic initiatives, who is spearheading the University's expansion in programs for adult learners.

Hill says it has been incredibly gratifying to work with the adult students in the new major, which currently total 29. “There is something about adult learners—they have an intrinsic motivation to do well,” she explains.

“They want to be here and are invested in being students,” adds Amanda Vasquez, who as director of student success services for WP Online provides one-on-one academic advising

to WP's online adult learners. With nearly two decades of experience in previous roles as director of scholarship programs, director of transfer programs, and director of new student programs, Vasquez brings an arsenal of skills to WP Online.

“Our goal is to meet them where they are,” she continues. “They may need assistance with technology, or advice on how to approach faculty, and we are here to help them.”

To provide specialized support and resources, the University has launched a new Center for Degree Completion and Adult Learning (DCAL). Located in the University's building at 1800 Valley Road, the Center works one-on-one with adult learners to facilitate the process of applying college credits toward their degrees, such as credit by examination, course challenge exams, credit from professional training programs, and portfolio assessment of prior, non-college learning that can include work experience and more that might equate to college credit.

“Students bring in a wealth of knowledge from their careers—they've

earned those credits,” says Johanna Prado, director of degree completion and adult learning. Receiving credit for prior learning can assist students in advancing their degrees and has been proven to double the likelihood of degree completion, according to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).

Prado, who is certified by CAEL, assists students with the many options of earning credit for prior learning, including the process of a portfolio assessment to receive credit for a specific course. “It's very intensive,” she says, explaining that required elements in a portfolio assessment include the student's educational goals, an autobiography, a resume, a narrative about the learning objectives for the specific course for which the student wishes to obtain credit, and supporting documentation. Portfolios are reviewed by appropriate faculty experts, who determine whether credit can be awarded.

DCAL also works to build community for the University's more than 200 current online undergraduate adult learners. Offerings include virtual orientations for new students, “meet the faculty” sessions by major, group check-ins with academic advisors, Career Development programs and workshops, peer mentoring sessions, and Facebook, LinkedIn, and GroupMe groups for each major. The office has plans underway to start a campus chapter of the National Honor Society for Adult Students, Alpha Sigma Lambda. All events are in the evenings and on weekends to accommodate the needs of working adults.

“Online adult learners want the same experiences that a traditional, on-campus student wants: they want to meet their professors and fellow students,” says Hill, who is available for informal meetings and holds open virtual office hours for her students.

Ultimately, Hill, whose mother was an adult learner, says she believes in teaching with an ethic of care. “These are the aunts and uncles and parents of our traditional-aged students on campus,” she says. “In working with these adult learners, we are making the structure fit the student versus the student fit the structure, and in doing so, we learn to be more effective for all of our students.”

Pioneers Going Strong in Their Golden Years

BY MARIA KARIDIS DANIELS AND THERESA E. ROSS '80

ALUMNA CELEBRATES 103RD BIRTHDAY, SHARES COLLEGE MEMORIES—81 YEARS AFTER GRADUATION

Ruth (Kaufman) Davis '40, of Bergenfield, New Jersey, turned 103 years old on January 29, 2022. She is believed to be the oldest living graduate of William Paterson University.

Her freshman year, 1936-37, marked the first year that what was once known as the Paterson City Normal School, founded in 1855 to professionally train teachers working in the City of Paterson, transitioned to a four-year, degree-granting institution known as New Jersey State Teachers College at Paterson. That institution eventually became the University we know today.

"It was hardly a college campus," Davis says, explaining that Paterson State operated out of the basement and two upper floors of Paterson School No. 24.

"There was a little park right across the narrow road from the building, and that was our campus."

Today's WP campus, which left the City of Paterson for the Township of Wayne in 1951, spans 407 acres.

Davis's graduating class consisted of 42 students. The University's Class of 2021, by means of comparison, had nearly 2,400 students.

About 25 classmates shared Davis's major of teacher education; the others were among the first to pursue the institution's brand-new general college curriculum. They were subsequently referred to as "The Experimentals," she says.

"We were a very close-knit group," Davis continues, of her fellow education majors. "We traveled, the way you do in grammar school, together: We went from one class to another as a group."

"Of course, everybody is gone now," she adds, of her beloved classmates. The alumna treasures her Class of 1940 yearbook, which she still peruses, 81 years later, even though she is largely blind. "I really can't see the photos, but I can glimpse and I have an idea of who it is," she explains.

Beyond "friendships that lasted many years," WP also left Davis with two lifelong



Paterson School No. 24

loves: the love of teaching and the love of the music of Gilbert and Sullivan, the latter thanks to the operettas Paterson State students staged annually; Davis performed in all four during her college career. She sings the songs she learned then to this day.

After graduating, Davis worked professionally as a teacher for 10 years, in fourth- through sixth-grade classrooms, and only gave up the profession because, as was common in the 1950s, her husband wanted her to stay home.

"My first teaching job was in Bergenfield, and there was a strip of paper pasted onto my contract—that was the addendum—that said if you married within the year, you would not be rehired," Davis says. She did marry, and she did lose that job.

Three years into her new teaching position in neighboring Dumont, Davis received a call from the principal of Haworth's grammar school. His last name was Kaufman—the same as her maiden name, though there was no relation. When she was still a student at Paterson State, college staff had accidentally mailed one of her report cards to him.

Ruth Davis '40 on her birthday, and in the 1940 Paterson State Teachers College yearbook



"I was a very good student, and he remembered what good grades I had on that report card," Davis says. "When he heard I was teaching in Dumont, he contacted me and said, 'Whatever you're getting, I'll give you more if you come to Haworth.'"

Davis, who grew up in Haworth and attended that very grammar school, was "thrilled" and took him up on the offer. "I loved teaching. I just loved it. It was fun every time I went to class," she says.

Her college-fueled love of singing helped make it so. "We'd save a few minutes at the end of each day to sing, so the kids would leave singing," Davis recalls. "I'd say, 'OK, what do you want to sing today?' and they'd invariably say, 'Home on the Range' because they knew I didn't like that song. It was great fun."

Today, Davis enjoys cueing up and singing along to the songs of her youth, including those of her favorite Guy Lombardo, on her beloved Amazon Alexa devices. As she can no longer see well enough to read, she uses the technology to listen to audio books, too.

Davis also spends time writing what she refers to as verse. "I don't dignify it by giving it the title of poetry," she jokes. She has a box full of her writing and seamlessly weaves her verses into conversation:

*I love telling people
I'm way past 99
They're astounded
that I'm still living
My secret is a daily
glass of wine
And lots of laughing,
loving, and giving.*

Giving, she says, "of yourself as well as financially" is very important to her. Davis is a member of the University's Heritage Society, a distinction given to those who have donated funds for 20 years. Additionally, though she left the teaching workforce, she funneled her love of the craft into several volunteer positions working with young children. Her favorite was the time she spent caring for babies in the nursery of a childcare center, in her 70s, in Boca Raton, Florida—where she and her late husband used to spend their winters.

"Her love of teaching never diminished. It is still so palpable today," adds son Sam Davis. His mother leads ongoing English classes for her two foreign-born in-home aides, and doesn't hesitate to correct family members' grammar. "She credits William Paterson University with fostering her

enduring love for this calling. It is a key secret of her longevity and *joie de vivre*. Thank you, William Paterson University."

Due to the pandemic, Davis celebrated birthday No. 103 just as she celebrated No. 102: with a Zoom party attended by family and friends. Davis has two living sons; a third, her oldest, passed away in his 80s. Davis also has six grandchildren (ages 26 to 45) and one great-grandchild.

Pandemic or not, grandchildren are always welcome, and hers visited in person for her birthday, Davis says. She talks with her grandchildren regularly, and is very proud of their strong relationship.

Of her friends, Davis says she is "very blessed with many." She has a best friend aged 95 and "then they go down into the 80s. I don't have many contemporaries left, but I don't think about that. I think about the people I have left," she says. "Life's good. It's not exciting for me these days, but it's good."

In discussing a favorite outfit—an orange sweater with a black beaded necklace very befitting of her *alma mater*—she adds of WP, "It did so much for me. It all comes back so vividly and so delightfully. It wasn't college the way you know it now, but I just enjoyed it so much." WP

RETIRED BIOLOGY PROFESSOR EMERITUS ROBERT BENNO RETURNS TO INDULGE HIS LOVE FOR JAZZ

When retired biology professor *emeritus* Robert Benno joined William Paterson in 1982 to teach courses in neuroscience and anatomy and physiology, WP's jazz program also caught his attention. Benno decided that someday, maybe after he retired, he might get involved with the jazz program and sharpen his musical skills.

"That was 40-some years ago and it was always in the back of my mind," says Benno. Now retired since 2017, he has been returning to the WP campus to sit in on classes for music writing, arranging, and jazz piano without grades or credit.

David Demsey, coordinator of jazz studies, has known Benno for years. "Bob has the musical and piano background to be able to audit these classes and understand

the musical subjects at hand at the highest level," he says. "It's a beautiful turn of events that he has decided in his retirement to be a jazz pianist! We are happy to have him in our jazz community and it's a joy to see him in Shea Center as much as I do."

"I always dabbled in music," says Benno. "I started playing classical piano when I was six years old and played trumpet in middle school. I played piano and guitar in a rock band here and there, but it was never going to be my career."

Over the years, Benno has taken

courses in jazz history, ear training, and jazz improvisation. He currently enjoys sitting in on a Jazz Arranging 2 class taught by William Paterson jazz professor



Robert Benno

Peter McGuinness, director of arranging.

“Pete has really been my mentor along the way,” says Benno. “He’s an amazing teacher who puts his heart and soul into everything. And having taught for 35 years, I am always fascinated by watching others teach, especially music, and seeing how they go about engaging their students.” Benno recently composed a piece for jazz octet that some of the students played. He is also working on a big band arrangement for the class.

“Having such a highly respected former professor in this class is a real treat,” says McGuinness. “Bob has great enthusiasm for the subject and is not afraid to ask seemingly basic but often important questions in class. The attitude he exudes acts as a role model for the much younger students.”

Benno has also audited classes in Functional Jazz Piano with James Weidman, a former adjunct professor at WP who is now at the University of Georgia, and looks forward to taking lessons with WP professor Carl P. Bolleia.

“I’m trying to up my game,” says Benno, who has found that piano is a good foundation for all musical endeavors.

When Benno’s not taking music classes or enjoying his love of travel, he plays piano with the Jazz House Kids adult big band in Montclair or occasionally performs at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Montclair and a senior center. He also remains involved with science and is working on a data mining project for the National Institutes of Health. He is using data from the 10-year longitudinal Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) study to examine whether music education can help children improve their reading, language scores, and brain development.

A neurobehavioral geneticist, Benno earned his PhD in anatomy and neuroscience from the University of Iowa and his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in chemistry from Tulane University. Originally from Texas, he came to WP after four years as a postdoctoral fellow and instructor in the Laboratory of

Neurobiology at Cornell University Medical College in New York City, where he was studying the brain using computerized image analysis.

At William Paterson, Benno researched the role of genes and environment on brain development and neurological diseases like autism spectrum disorder and authored numerous papers in his field. For more than 20 years, he served as director of the Honors Biopsychology Track and worked with professor *emeritus* Martin Hahn in overseeing the behavior genetics laboratory, also known as the mouse lab.

“I have no idea where any of this is going,” adds Benno. “Maybe my strength is in my writing or arranging. I’ll never be the player that these young students are, but without the music I’d be a little untethered in my retirement.”

Benno vows to keep challenging himself and learning jazz really keeps your mind sharp, he says. “Retirement is a strange thing, so if I don’t know what else to do, I sit down at the piano.” **WP**

INSPIRATIONAL PROFESSOR *EMERITUS* GABE VITALONE CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

“Hardly a day goes by without a call from a student,” says Gabe Vitalone, William Paterson professor *emeritus* of education.

A beloved teacher, mentor, and friend to many in the William Paterson community, Vitalone will celebrate his 100th birthday on May 31, 2022. A loyal group of his students, former colleagues, and friends, known as “Gabe’s guys,” still gathers together to meet him at the local Wayne Hills diner.

“I celebrate each day,” he says. “I’ve been lucky with my physical health.”

And it’s a gratifying life, he reflects, filled with so many people including Evelyn, his wife of 67 years, three children, two grandchildren, and numerous friends.

Vitalone spent 34 years teaching and coaching at William Paterson, starting in 1957 as a professor of health and physical education. He was coach for the baseball, basketball, and later on, cross country teams. In 1962, after completing

his doctorate, he went on to teach developmental psychology on campus.

Throughout his life, he never slowed down. At 95 he starred in the YouTube video, “Keep Moving: It’s Never Too Late,” featuring him running and doing his morning exercise routine. And in 2015, he self-published a collection of poems he had written over the years. It includes one of his earliest poems to his wife, Evelyn, written in 1952.

At 98, he enjoyed the thrill of singing “The Star-Spangled Banner” at Yankee Stadium. Vitalone, a lifelong Yankees fan and World War II veteran, had long dreamed of singing the song to honor his boyhood pal, Joe Romano, who was killed during the war. The performance was postponed from April 2020 to September 2020 due to COVID-19, when the Yankees arranged a

video rendition for the players and coaches in attendance. At-home viewers saw the broadcast before the team’s afternoon game against the Baltimore Orioles.


What sage advice does this remarkable centenarian offer? “I’ve come to the conclusion that everyone we meet becomes a part of our life. Even in the small, transient encounters...every person affects us in some way.”

As a teacher, what you say in front of the classroom isn’t the only thing that matters, he adds. “Cherish the brief, treasured talks before and after class, or in chance meetings with students on campus. That is what they remember.” **WP**



Partnership Between University's Russ Berrie Institute and Alumni-Led Company Reaps Returns for All

BY MARY BETH ZEMAN



From left, Professor Bahar Ashnai, Patrick Kimler '21, Marlon Borges '21, Guy Baroan '93, and Dimitri Miaoulis in the Russ Berrie Institute Professional Sales Lab

Digital transformation—using digital technology to change the way a business operates—is critical today for many companies, a fact brought home during the COVID-19 pandemic as businesses needed to shift their employees and processes online or use social media for marketing.

Yet small and medium-sized businesses who could benefit from digital transformation may not know what that means, or how it could help them. That's the challenge faced by Guy Baroan '93, president of Baroan Technologies, an Elmwood Park-based digital transformation company, and his partner, Dimitri Miaoulis.

"To many companies, digital transformation is a buzzword they don't understand," says Miaoulis. "We have a great digital technology platform that can really help our prospective clients, and we wanted to sharpen our sales message."

In spring 2021, they decided they needed additional sales support in order to expand their business. Baroan, who has a degree in marketing from William Paterson, knew about the University's Russ Berrie Institute for Professional Sales, and thought his company could benefit, both by hiring young professionals with an academic background in sales and collaborating with the University's academic program.

"We wanted to bring in new employees who would carve a new path," says Baroan, "and we thought that working with William Paterson would be a great way to make that happen."

Not only did Baroan hire two new University graduates as salespeople, the company and RBI have also forged a

partnership that is providing significant hands-on learning for current University students studying professional sales, while giving Baroan the opportunity to refine its sales practices.

"We are very excited about this partnership with Baroan Technologies, which will help us provide our students with the experiential learning opportunities they need to stand out in the job market," says Anthony Bowrin, dean of the Cotsakos College of Business. "We are grateful to Guy Baroan and his company for its financial and developmental support, which will have a tremendous impact on our students and students from across the county who participate in our sales programs."

Through the partnership, which began last fall and runs through June 2023, Baroan's leadership team has committed to working closely with RBI on a wide range of activities that help students develop hands-on sales skills, including the RBI Sales Triathlon, a competition for the University's professional sales students, and two events that draw sales students from across the United States and abroad: the National Sales Boot Camp, a five-week virtual program focused on sales and interview skills, and the annual National Sales Challenge, a premier collegiate sales competition held at WP each November that is judged by corporate executives who often recruit—and hire—the student competitors.

In addition to these experiential learning events, Baroan has opened up its business to academic scrutiny as the subject of the spring 2022 Practicum in Professional Sales course, in which students are developing a professional sales plan focused on the company's sales pitch.

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“Digital transformation is a very relevant topic for our students,” says Bahar Ashnai, associate professor of professional sales, who is co-teaching the course with alumnus Ian Michaelchuck '07, '13, MBA '17, national accounts manager for MSC Industrial Supply Co. and an adjunct professor of professional sales. “The students in this course have an amazing opportunity to apply fundamental sales models to a real-world business case in this field.”

During the course, the students are taking a deep dive into understanding Baroan’s business and providing recommendations for how the company might improve its sales pitch. In addition to having access to a wealth of documents about how Baroan approaches prospective clients, identifies their needs, and sells its services, the students have been able to meet with Baroan’s leadership team.

“Having access to senior business leaders, to have someone’s time, is extremely valuable for students,” says Michaelchuck. “They are able to pick their brains and ask questions about how they provide value to their customers.”

As part of the plan, the students are developing and distributing an online survey to prospective Baroan clients and practicing sales call techniques in collaboration with Patrick Kimler '21 and Marlon Borges '21, the two recent WP grads hired by Baroan as business development representatives.

Both Kimler and Borges are excited about their continuing involvement with WP through the partnership. “I’m sharing with the students what it’s like to actually call clients, how to get in the door and set up appointments,” says Kimler, who majored in marketing and professional sales. “I get to pass along some knowledge to them.”

Borges, a marketing major, was attracted to Baroan because of the opportunity to do business-to-business sales at a tech company and stay involved with his alma mater. “I’m able to provide insight into how a business runs and the importance of sales to this company,” he adds.



From left, Guy Baroan and Dimitri Miaoulis of Baroan Technologies meet with Professor Mike Chao, academic director of the Russ Berrie Institute, about the partnership

Robyn Snyder '23, a digital marketing major taking the course, says she has been able to learn a “new industry language like digital transformation,” and put her skills to the test. “I’ve had the opportunity to interact with Baroan’s potential clients and customers,” she says. “It’s great practice and they are here to guide us.”

Her classmate Allysia Edwards '23, a political science major, concurs. “The practicum is my first sales course, but it is taught in a way that allows students from various backgrounds to grow,” she says. “It gives me a chance to learn sales concepts hand on and I hope to feel more confident when doing sales pitches or cold calls.”

For Guy Baroan, the experience has already yielded results. “Explaining our business to the students and the faculty has helped us sharpen our message,” he says.

“They really value our academic perspective, and have established themselves as playing a role in the learning environment,” says Ashnai. “We are excited to see this collaboration continue to unfold.” 

Professor Bahar Ashnai meets with alumni and Baroan employees Marlon Borges '21 (left) and Patrick Kimler '21 (center) and two students in the practicum course, Robin Snyder '23 and Jennifer Gianetti '23



FROM WP TO CEO

ON A MISSION TO TRANSFORM
HEALTHCARE,

MICHAEL DANDORPH '90

"FLIPS THE TRIANGLE OF LEADERSHIP"

BY MARIA KARIDIS DANIELS



He wasn't playing for them, but when WP coaches spoke, Michael Dandorph '90 listened.

"How do coaches really make teams? How do they get them to excel? How do they motivate and get the best out of people overall?" the athletic training student wondered.

A big sports fan who had an interest in healthcare from a young age, Dandorph appreciated the athletic training program at William Paterson. He loved how much teamwork and friendship he found there, the personal connections he forged with athletes he treated, his mentor—WP's late longtime head athletic trainer Toby Barboza—for pushing students toward excellence, and the opportunity to learn both directly and indirectly from Pioneers coaches.

"I believe leaders are coaches," Dandorph explains from his office in Boston, about 30 years removed from those days on the sidelines.

If that's the case, call him Coach Dandorph.

As president and CEO of Tufts Medicine—comprised of an academic medical center, four community hospitals, a network of 2,500 physicians, and a home healthcare company covering the Boston metro area—Dandorph currently leads a team of more than 15,000 employees.

"My role as CEO is to set direction of the organization and ensure our talented staff are working together to benefit the individuals and diverse communities we serve," the Weehawken, New Jersey native says. "I'm also a big believer in servant leadership: I work for the people who report to me; they don't work for me. My job is to help them be successful, and if they do the same thing for the people that report to them, we begin to flip the triangle of leadership. I'm not at the top of that triangle; I'm at the bottom of the triangle supporting others. As leaders, if we help others be successful, then the organization will successfully meet its goals."

What exactly Dandorph's goals were when he first graduated from WP, he wasn't quite sure. He left campus thinking he wanted to be a professional athletic trainer, with plans to pursue a master's in athletic training at the University of Virginia, just like his mentor Barboza had done.

Finances necessitated a change of plans, though, so Dandorph deferred going to Virginia and started working as a sports therapist for The Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, New Jersey. As

he took on more responsibility at the hospital's Sport Institute, he got to meet several administrators and the hospital CEO. After a series of informational interviews, Dandorph grew interested in the business side of healthcare and went on to earn a master's degree in health administration from Cornell University.

His professional highlights include 17 years with the University of Pennsylvania Health System in Philadelphia, where Dandorph climbed the

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ranks from director to vice president to the health system's senior vice president for strategy and business development for his last 10 years. He was then recruited to be executive vice president of clinical affairs at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, later becoming president of the three-hospital system there.

As a healthcare leader, Dandorph has always aimed to promote the human side of medicine, staying close to the lessons he learned at WP.

The University, he explains, made him truly understand and value the strength of personal connections in clinical care, which he learned both through his experience caring for WP athletes and through the way the WP community cared for him.

Shortly after winter break his freshman year, Dandorph was in a car crash that left him with life-threatening injuries, including a broken spine. He spent six weeks in the hospital and returned to campus later in the spring wearing what he describes as a "clamshell apparatus" that his roommate helped him out of every night, so he could get into bed, and back into every day, so he could get out. He took two classes the next semester, and then as many as 21 credits for some semesters in order to catch up and graduate in four years.

"There was a community around me that supported me—my friends in the dorms, my friends in the athletic training program, the faculty. Those interpersonal relationships are what got me through," Dandorph says. His freshman year roommate was his roommate throughout his four years at WP and remains his best friend to this day.

"My experiences led me to appreciate how important personal connections between caregivers, patients, and their families are," he continues. "It's important to stay grounded and do our best to ensure as many personal and compassionate connections as possible. It's an essential part of the healing process."

Dandorph brought that philosophy to his current role as president and CEO of Tufts Medicine in late January of 2020, merely weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic hit U.S. shores—"or right before all hell broke loose," as he puts it.

Dandorph was now living in a new city as head of the largest team he'd ever had—a team he'd barely met—and was tasked with leading the charge to simultaneously keep that team safe and save as many people's lives as possible during an unprecedented global health emergency.

"William Paterson has positioned me to think differently about how we can solve some of these larger problems and not settle for the status quo."

—Michael Dandorph

"In some ways, COVID brought us together quicker," Dandorph says, citing how leaders across the Tufts Medicine team had to join forces in new ways to make company-wide decisions about the temporary closing of elective services, how to secure enough ventilators for seriously ill COVID patients, and how to ensure equitable access to protective equipment and COVID testing for frontline workers.

"I really learned a lot about our amazing people during my first few months—those who were natural leaders, those who were resolved to work through uncertainties, and the thousands of heroic physicians, nurses and staff who pulled together to do everything possible to save lives and keep people safe," Dandorph says.

That experience reached beyond the interpersonal relationships at Tufts Medicine and brought Dandorph closer to embracing his own professional purpose and the mark he wants to leave both at Tufts and on the industry at large.

The COVID-19 pandemic, he says, "really put a punctuation mark on the question of, 'How do we transform healthcare?'"

The enormity of that health crisis, he explains, uncovered "systemic challenges" in the industry, such as scarce mental health and personal well-being resources, and helped leaders better identify the issues that lead to health disparities for more vulnerable populations. "These are complex healthcare and societal problems that we, as leaders, have an obligation to address."

His team's vision is now focused on creating a more "equitable and frictionless" healthcare experience—"one that more seamlessly coordinates patient care across all medical settings," he continues. Overall, they are trying to find ways to make healthcare more personalized and affordable while keeping the quality of care high.

"These are problems that the country has been grappling with for years and I think it's about time we tackle these things once and for all," Dandorph says. "William Paterson has positioned me to think differently about how we can solve some of these larger problems and not settle for the status quo."

Dandorph hopes the next generation of WP graduates continues to embody Pioneers' longstanding characteristic Will.Power., grit, and eye for civic engagement and community betterment.

His advice for today's students: "Keep your mind open to ways you can make an impact on the lives of others, be that one person or a community or a nation. We all have talents and options in terms of what we can do. The key is to find something you are passionate about, to find a place where you feel like you can really make a difference." WP

Kansas Siblings Make Their Mark Out East After Graduating from William Paterson's Jazz Program

By Zach Hertz '21, MA '23

Growing up in the rural town of Newton, Kansas, a quiet city located 25 miles north of Wichita, Nathan '10, Jacob '11, and April Webb '15 each had an affinity for music since they were young children.

The trio of jazz musicians, siblings, and William Paterson University graduates, began picking up different instruments as early as the age of eight, eventually forming a band out of their local church and performing gospel music at various community events, local festivals, and summer camps as the “Webb 3.”

Although they still perform live shows and record in the studio together on various projects, the Webbs have gone on to forge their own paths as successful jazz musicians.

Nathan, the eldest, currently teaches music at Belleville Middle School, in Belleville, New Jersey, and is enrolled in WP's doctor of education in leadership program. Younger brother Jacob makes up one half of chart-topping jazz group The JT Project with fellow WP graduate Todd Schefflin '10 and is the owner of his own jazz record label, Next Paradigm Records. The youngest, April, makes up the award-winning jazz duo Sounds of A&R with her husband Randall Haywood, and recently placed second in the prestigious Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition.

“To have three of these remarkably talented siblings here has been truly a gift for all of us and for the jazz program. Nathan is such a force on the drums and an equally impactful teacher, Jacob has gone

on to accomplish truly great things, and April has shown the world what we already knew about her musicianship,” says David Demsey, coordinator of WP's Jazz Studies Program.

The church was the foundation of their musical journey, says Nathan. “Newton was good for that,” he adds. “We had a wonderful path of paying our dues and learning the craft, and we were able to play in all sorts of situations with huge, diverse crowds.”

After attending Wichita State University for three years after high school, Nathan was yearning to explore jazz programs beyond Kansas that were near bustling jazz communities. Jacob, due to graduate high school in 2007, began researching jazz programs in Texas and along the East Coast — William Paterson University was on his shortlist.

“William Paterson's name was floating around in Kansas; jazz musicians knew about the school, everyone just said it was a great school,” says Jacob, who also recalls Rufus Reed, an acclaimed jazz bass player and the University's former director of jazz studies, suggesting William Paterson to him on multiple occasions.

The two brothers flew out to New Jersey and visited WP, quickly becoming impressed with the energy and level of talent permeating throughout the University's jazz program. Jacob was offered a full scholarship to attend WP as a freshman, while Nathan transferred through the National Student Exchange Program, beating out 13 other drummers to chair the big band on campus in his senior year at WP.

It wasn't long before Jacob was calling his baby sister April to convince her to join her brothers. It was a simple pitch: “He just told me, ‘You need to come here,’” says April.

April studied vocals under WP jazz professor Nancy Marano, whom she credits with helping her fit into the different stylistic approaches to jazz and working with her on her musicality. She also participated in jam sessions with fellow students at local hangouts such as Moore's Lounge, a popular jazz venue still run by notable drummer Winard Harper.

“I got a lot of experience going to the different sessions around WP; it really allowed me to dive into music and work with professionals,” says April.

Now April uses the skills she learned at WP as a professional jazz musician, performing at venues around the country, and teaching jazz workshops at colleges and universities. In 2021, Sounds of A&R released *Questions Left Unanswered*, their third studio album, which rose to number 12 on the national *JazzWeek* charts. The duo was joined on all 14 tracks by Nathan and Jacob.

For Nathan, studying at William Paterson opened up the door for international gigs with legendary trumpeter Kenny Garrett while he was still a student.

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Jacob Webb '11, April Webb '15, and Nathan Webb '10 perform on campus in Shea Recital Hall



In 2021, the Webb siblings were inducted into the Newton High School Hall of Fame in their hometown of Newton, Kansas

After being placed in one of WP’s small jazz ensembles taught by Mulgrew Miller, the late legendary jazz pianist and director of jazz studies, Nathan was introduced to Garrett and eventually offered a seat as his primary drummer after guesting for a few gigs.

“It was an experience that I am so forever grateful for. I did all of his gigs in 2010—Europe, China, Canada, Mexico,” says Nathan.

It was on one of these trips, in Copenhagen, that Nathan realized his desire was to teach.

Nathan credits William Paterson with shaping the educator that he is today.

“WP’s education department has an excellent teaching style. It was really a wonderful experience and the placements were phenomenal,” he says. “They equipped me with what I needed to have a diverse experience teaching in both Wayne and Paterson, which was really good for me.” He quickly landed a full-time position at the New Roberto Clemente School in Paterson teaching middle school music, a position he held for eight years.

According to Nathan, his playing experience, compounded with his formal education, provides a unique perspective on teaching.

“Especially in the inner city, I was able to bring a perspective that was much different than was previously there, and that’s what I feel I contribute to middle school education within communities of color—I’m able to offer a truly unique and genuine experience coming from a musician that performed on the road,” says Nathan.

Jacob, who says he was initially intimidated by the competitive nature of WP’s high-level jazz program, quickly leaned into it. He built a long-lasting playing relationship with fellow JT Project member Schefflin after hearing him play saxophone his first day at Shea.

The JT Project has reached number one on the Billboard Smooth Jazz Airplay chart for their songs “Overdrive” and “Backyard Brew,” and received critical acclaim for their contemporary jazz albums *Moments of Change* and *Another Chance*. The duo is signed to Next Paradigm Records, the record label Jacob created to better serve artists after experiencing the often-one-sided deals musicians agree to in order to get signed.

“We are so proud of all of the Webbs and they will always be part of our jazz community here at William Paterson,” says Demsey. WP

Alumni Join Foundation Board

Two WP alumni—Brian Wood ’87 and Michele Garcia ’15—have joined the board of the William Paterson University Foundation.



Wood is the founder of MARS Coaching, a corporate leadership and development company, based in Phoenix, Arizona. A specialist in transition coaching for current and former athletes, he provides executive coaching and training in leadership, communication, and culture and serves as a motivational speaker. Prior to founding his company in 2016, Wood held a variety of management positions in the corporate world, including with American

Airlines. He serves as an executive coach with Arizona State University’s Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation, and is a certified professional coach (leadership, success, and transition) through the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching. In addition to the Foundation Board, Wood is a member of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Advisory Council. A 1987 graduate of WP with a bachelor’s degree in communication, Wood was a captain on the men’s basketball team. He holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix.

Garcia, who was elected president of the WP Alumni Association in October 2021, is a realtor with eXp Realty in Montclair. A 2015 graduate of William Paterson with a bachelor’s degree in marketing and professional sales, Garcia was a leader on campus as a student and has remained actively involved as an alumna since graduating. A member of the Alumni Executive Council since 2015, she has served as president of the Young Alumni Council and product chair for the Foundation’s Golf and Tennis Outing and annual Legacy Award Gala. Garcia is a mentor for the University’s Pesce Family Mentoring Institute and has served as a panelist and speaker at various events for students including the Cotsakos College of Business COIN program and the Women’s History Month Women’s Empowerment Social Hour. She has shared her real estate expertise with the alumni community through virtual webinars.



Create a Legacy with a Commemorative Brick!

Leave your mark on campus by securing a brick at your alma mater. Each brick is etched with your personal message. Your generous contribution will help us inspire, educate, and empower WP students.

Order today at wpunj.edu/legacy-brick.

Alumni Across the Country Celebrate Pioneer Pride

WP alumni around the country gathered at recent virtual and in-person events, where they had the chance to hear the latest University news and updates from President Richard J. Helldobler and connect with fellow Pioneers living in the area.

In February, Florida alumni and friends gathered virtually, connecting with friends and classmates who also reside in Florida, permanently or seasonally. Attendees tested their WP knowledge with a fun game of trivia, and those who won received WP swag. They also raised more than \$1,700 in support of the Florida Alumni Scholarship, awarded annually to a William Paterson University student who has resided in Florida.

Nearly 30 West Coast alumni, ranging from the class of 1958 to 2009, and friends came together in March for the Southern California Alumni and Friends Reception. Dan Cimmino '94 and Sally (Stroff) Cimmino '96, who serve as the Southern California Alumni Network leadership volunteers, helped to organize the event as a way "to celebrate the incredible diversity of William Paterson alumni located here on the West Coast while also celebrating the great State of New Jersey," they said. More than 750 WP alumni and friends live in Southern California.

In addition, the Cimminos announced the establishment of the Southern California Annual Scholarship, making the first gift and spurring several others to generously support the scholarship that evening. "William Paterson has been the catalyst for the incredible opportunities we have experienced in our lives," the Cimminos note. "We decided to spearhead a scholarship in order to provide a small token of our appreciation for everything



the University provided to us personally and professionally." The first Southern California Annual Scholarship will be awarded to a deserving student for the 2022-23 academic year.


Jean DiCarlo-Wagner '78 and her husband, Chris D. Wagner '78, were among the California reception attendees. "I remain connected to WP because my life was changed by my degree as the first in my family to graduate from a four-year college," she says, noting her 28-year career as an educator. DiCarlo-Wagner met her husband at WP; he was on a G.I. bill and she received many scholarships and loans, including work-study. "We both feel fortunate that our educations allowed us to live a purposeful life and we believe in extending a hand to others in the future generations," she said.

Similarly, Michele Stanton '69 says she remains connected "due to the tremendous value the school played in my career and life. What I enjoyed most about the recent alumni event was the triggering of warm memories of wonderful times and friends."

Graduates from Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia, and even North Carolina attended the WP in DC Alumni and Friends Reception in April. Led by alumni volunteers Tom Fitzgerald '89, Norman Greene '98, and Gena Zak '97, the event—the first in-person gathering for the group in more than two years—brought together many long-standing attendees, as well as several first-time attendees, including a member of the Class of 2021. With nearly 1,500 alumni and friends living in Washington, DC region, the group remains active and vibrant.

"Pioneer pride knows no boundaries," says Mark Kozaki '79, MA '80, who joined the gathering. "WP in DC is a manifestation of the WP alumni spirit that travels with us wherever we reside."

Continuing a tradition of supporting current WP students, area alumni raised more than \$2,000 for the WP in DC Annual Scholarship, which was established in 2018. Norman Greene '98 generously kicked off the fundraising effort and inspired others to give.

"It's important to me to be able to give back with my time and via scholarship donations to the University that gave me so much support and opportunity during my undergraduate years," says Zak. 



Photos: Top left: President Richard Helldobler (far left) with alumni and friends in California; Top right: Sally (Stroff) Cimmino '96, President Helldobler, and Dan Cimmino '94; Bottom left: Norman Greene '98, Gena Zak '97, President Helldobler, and Tom Fitzgerald '89; Bottom right: Eddie Rosado '86 and Christian Reyes '20

VISUAL ARTIST JONTE DREW '18, MFA '21, GARNERS ATTENTION WITH RECENT EXHIBITIONS

After being awarded the inaugural 2021 MFA graduate residency from Art Fair 14C, a program designed to expand opportunities for underrepresented artists, Jonte Drew '18, MFA '21, was provided with a 400-square-foot art studio and \$1,000 to purchase supplies, allowing him to focus on his creative process and produce visual art in the comfort of his own space.

Drew, who graduated from WP's master of fine arts program in 2021, uses humor to explore the African American experience, mental health, and urban culture as a commodity in the artwork he created during the residency, drawing inspiration from events that unfolded during the pandemic.



"My experience with Art Fair 14C was life changing. Through the open studio tours and their annual art fair, I connected with a lot of artists, curators, and art lovers, and gained a few collectors," says Drew. "All of these interactions and experiences helped me gain more confidence in myself as a visual artist and I realized how important it is for artists to exhibit our work and network."

After the conclusion of his residency, Drew showcased his artwork during *Take a Breath*, his own exhibition that represented the culmination of his six-month experience with Art Fair 14C, presenting imagery with themes that included self-care, spirituality, color therapy, and nature. He also had the opportunity to showcase his work during the ArtCrawl Harlem's exhibition *Fire & Soul 2022: We're Still Harlem* at Heath Gallery in New York City, which garnered media coverage by New York stations CBS-TV and WPIX-TV.

Drew has since returned to campus as gallery coordinator at WP, his "second home," where he designs materials that promote the gallery's exhibitions and related programs, creates social media content, manages the gallery's website, hosts tours, and helps install and de-install exhibitions.

Wanting to build on the experience he acquired after working in the gallery as an undergraduate, Drew says that "working as the gallery coordinator felt like the right decision," and "being in the gallery allows me to be surrounded by beautiful art that inspires me to create each day."

In May, Drew will have his work on display at the Akwaaba Gallery in Newark during an exhibit featuring diverse contemporary works of art in various mediums.

ALUMNI JOIN NATIONAL GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORTS DAY CELEBRATION

William Paterson University celebrated the 35th Annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day and the 50th anniversary of Title IX during a virtual event on February 18. The annual gathering provides an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments of female athletes, recognize the influence of sports participation for women and girls, and honor the progress and continuing struggle for equality for women in sports.



Five WP alumnae athletes spoke to current WP female athletes about their experiences, their insights as former female college athletes, and how being an athlete has helped them be successful in their lives post-graduation. The panel, moderated by Kristen Foley, director of intercollegiate athletics and recreation, included:

Bridget Brennan Jones '98, basketball, a member of the Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame who scored more than 1,100 points and collected more than 700 rebounds during her four-year career;

Courtney Chelf '16, field hockey, who earned honorable-mention all-NJAC laurels as a senior, and was a three-time selection to both the NFHCA National Academic Squad and the Academic All-NJAC Team;

Dana Feltz Schwartz '00, soccer, softball, and basketball, the only-three sport inductee into the Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame;

Julie Haledjian Buccino '10, women's basketball, whose 412 assists currently rank fourth on the WP career list; and

Lauren Shears Agnew '06, volleyball, WP's all-time volleyball leader who established a school record with 1,557 digs.

The panel is available for on-demand viewing through the WPUNJ Alumni YouTube channel.

SAVE THE DATES

Homecoming and Family Day – Saturday, October 29, 2022

Join us on Saturday, October 29, for a fun-filled day with festivities for the whole family. Cheer on the Pioneers as William Paterson University takes on The College of New Jersey. Come home to WP to gather with friends for a pre-game tailgate, enjoy food and games at the carnival, and support Pioneer Athletics!

Fall 2022 Football Home Games

Saturday, September 3 vs. Western Connecticut State University

Saturday, September 17 vs. Keystone College

Saturday, October 8 vs. Salisbury University

Saturday, October 15 vs. Rowan University

Saturday, October 29 vs. The College of New Jersey – Homecoming and Family Day



Go Virtual

Your Virtual Connections

The Office of Alumni Relations is committed to keeping all Pioneers connected to WP, no matter where they are located. Providing virtual connections has allowed alumni to come together and stay engaged throughout the year. Graduates have access to a variety of virtual programs and activities, such as the Virtual Book Club, social events, lifelong learning opportunities, career development programs, reunions, affinity gatherings, regional activities, and more. Subscribe to WP's Alumni YouTube channel @wpunj_alumni to view past virtual sessions available on demand. Here are just a few:

ANTARCTICA MATTERS!

Ellen C. Frye, professor of languages and cultures, discusses why Antarctica matters, covering topics such as climate change, global warming, glacier calving, and iceberg melting.

IS A CAREER IN REAL ESTATE RIGHT FOR YOU?

Learn about the tools needed to successfully break into the real estate industry. Hear from Carmen J. Dorns, New Jersey licensed real estate broker and instructor, and learn more about the University's New Jersey Real Estate Salesperson Certification course.

LIVING JAZZ ARCHIVES

William Paterson's Living Jazz Archives is a vital connection between the history of jazz and the students who perform and study it. David Demsey, professor of music, coordinator of the Jazz Studies Program, and curator of the Living Jazz Archives, discusses the wealth of materials held in the archive.

CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET TRENDS: BUYER AND SELLER EDITION

Is one of your goals this year homeownership? Or are you ready to move on and sell your current place? Learn about what's happening in the current real estate market from real estate professionals Michele Garcia '15, eXp Realty, and Kathi Verbeek, Keller Williams Realty.

LINKEDIN 101 – CREATING YOUR BRAND

In this webinar, Alex Corsillo, MA '18, and Alma Diaz '11, both assistant directors in the University's Career Development Center, discuss how to utilize LinkedIn in order to build your network and your brand.

CAREER WEBINAR: ACE YOUR NEXT INTERVIEW!

Jenny Nesenjuk, assistant director of the Career Development Center, discusses in-person and virtual interviewing, including how to create an "elevator pitch" to introduce yourself, how to answer and ask questions, professional behavior, and more.

HANDSHAKE

All alumni may use Handshake, an online portal, to view job postings, access and attend career and networking events, and more. Alumni have access to the full resources of the Career Development Center for up to one year after graduation. Resources include career coaching, resume review, mock interview, job search support, and more. Visit wpunj.edu/career-center to learn more.

HIRE A PIONEER

Is your company looking to hire? Recruit a fellow Pioneer! Our campus recruiting program is designed to help you make connections with our qualified and diverse students and alumni. Employer engagement opportunities include career and internship fairs, networking events, and access to Handshake to post jobs and internships. Contact CareerDevelopment@wpunj.edu to learn more.

LINKEDIN

Don't forget to join the official William Paterson University Alumni LinkedIn Group to connect with fellow Pioneers, build professional connections, and stay informed on career and professional resources and events.

Stay Connected

For information about events, reunions, and activities, to update your contact information, or to share your news and accomplishments, visit wpunj.edu/alumni.

Follow us on social media to keep up with current events announcements, activities, alumni spotlights, and more!



AlumniWPUNJ | @wpunj_alumni

Class Notes

1972 KAREN (WOLFSTIRN) SMITH, MED '00 received the Father John McElroy Award from Friends of Catholic Education, Inc. The award is given to individuals whose actions or achievements have furthered Catholic education in Frederick County, Maryland.

1974 JOSEPH "JOEY" TRAVOLTA and his production company, Inclusion Films, debuted *Lost Luggage*, a one-hour picture filmed at McNair High School in Jersey City. The film was created with the help of Lodi Unified students. Inclusion Films was created by Travolta in 2007 and teaches filmmaking to individuals with developmental disabilities in six production studios throughout California.

1975 HOWARD MICHAELS was featured in *Senior Living* for his portraits of rock icons like Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and Jim Morrison. Michaels is a retired teacher and dedicates most of his spare time to being a pop artist.

1976 KEVIN CARR created the Outreach Fundamental Basketball program run by First Baptist Church of Newton. The program was created to keep children active by teaching them basketball and is offered at no charge. Carr retired from teaching in 2015 but still works part-time as a substitute teacher and coaches boys' basketball at Northwest Christian School.

1982 LAURA ANN MCCLUSKEY was featured in *Marquis' Who's Who* for her 32-year career in science education. She retired from teaching in 2019... **GERARD NUOVO** has been named senior vice president of business development for Calyxt, Inc. He will be responsible for business development functions, including potential partnerships, deal structures, valuation models, and subsequent transaction execution and alliance management.

1983 DONALD GENERALS, MA '88, was awarded the 2021 Standout College President/Chancellor Award by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, a national initiative that empowers colleges and universities to achieve excellence in nonpartisan student democratic engagement. Generals was also ranked 87 in the 2021 Philly Power 100.

1985 VINCENT VICARI was the 2021 recipient of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association's Executive of the Year Award. Vicari currently serves as regional director of the New Jersey Small Business Development Center in Bergen County.

1987 STACIE CORCORAN was a featured speaker at the New York Society for Ethical Culture Speaking of Science series. She presented on the exploration and understanding of the concept of cancer survivorship... **DONALD LUPO** has been named executive director of ThinkLA, a trade association serving the Los Angeles advertising, marketing, and media industry. A former copy editor at *The Beacon*, Lupo has been with the association for the past five years after 25 years working in the advertising industry.

1988 KENNETH BERK was named head coach of Felician University's new women's swimming and diving program that begins in the 2022-23 season... **GARY STAGER** published *Twenty Things to Do with a Computer—Forward 50: Future Visions of Education Inspired by Seymour Papert and Cynthia Solomon's Seminal Work*. The book assembles essays by more than four dozen experts from across the globe to reflect upon the past 50 years of education practice and celebrates visions for the next half century. The critically acclaimed book he co-authored, *Invent to Learn: Making, Tinkering, and Engineering in the Classroom*, has recently been translated into Kyrgyz, Italian, and Chinese, making "the bible of the maker movement in schools" available in nine languages.

1989 MARK SEMERARO was named partner at DeCotiis, FitzPatrick, Cole & Giblin, LLP.

1991 ROBERT RUOCCO, chief information officer at Highmark Western and Northeastern New York, was selected as an honoree of this year's C-Level Executives Awards by Buffalo Business First.

1992 ANTHONY DESENZO was named first senior vice president at First Bank. His focus will be growing the bank's presence in the northern New Jersey market... **GWENDOLYN POUGH** was voted president-elect of the Rhetoric Society of America at Syracuse University. She will serve a six-year term beginning in July 2022, and is currently a dean's professor of the humanities and a professor of women's and gender studies at the university.

1993 TARA BERNIE returned as emcee for Morristown Onstage, a fundraiser organized by the Morris Educational Foundation at the Mayo Performing Arts Center. She previously won an

Emmy Award for her work at Daily Mail TV... **TOMOKO (OHNO) FARNHAM** performed at the New Jersey Jazz Society's 26th Jazz Social celebrating the work of Claudio Roditi... **SHAKIRA WILLIAMS-LINZEY** has joined March of Dimes as the director of maternal and infant health for the greater New York/New Jersey market. The non-profit advocates for the health of mothers and babies with research and education programs across the US.

1995 PAUL SEMENDINGER released a new book, *The Least Among Them*, featuring stories about 29 lesser-known New York Yankees players and the team's history.

1996 MARQUETTA SCOTT was named director of diversity and inclusion at Clara Maass Medical Center. In this position, Alexander will ensure the hospital incorporates culturally competent care to its diverse patients.

1997 JOSEPH "JOEY" BONELLI joined Cedreo, a 3D architecture software company, as vice president of marketing... **CRYSTAL COOPER** was appointed as principal at Starling Elementary School in Grayson, GA... **JENNIFER ROSE** was recognized as one of the Parsippany Good Scout Award honorees. She is currently the manager of patient access at Morristown Medical Center and a life member, past chief, and past president of the Parsippany Volunteer First Aid Squad.

1998 ALEXIS COLE released her new album, *Sky Blossom*. The record revisits Cole's past days in the U.S. Army... **NICOLE (GRAVES) WATSON** founded and was named president of a new NAACP branch in Hillside. She has a long history of civil rights advocacy and has worked in the fields of journalism, social work, counseling, and community relations... **MATTHEW WHELAN** was appointed the ninth president of Caldwell University. He was previously vice president for university enrollment strategy and relationship development at Stony Brook University.

1999 FREDERICK HENDRIX performed with his quartet during the South Orange Performing Arts Center Jazz Series... **TIESHA (CASSELL) MURRAY** has been named associate director of Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) at Georgia State University. Her department assists the IACUC with ensuring all animal research conducted at the university is done so in accordance with regulatory requirements from state and federal agencies... **AUGUSTO "GUS" PENARANDA, MA '16**, was named executive director of the New Jersey LGBT Chamber of Commerce, a newly

formed position. He is the former public information officer for the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs in the Office of the New Jersey Attorney General.

2000 JASON SCHNEIDER had his artwork on display at the Beese Gallery at Bay College in Escanaba, Michigan. Schneider is a studio furniture maker who uses traditional woodworking processes with non-traditional materials to create unique 3D objects.

2001 ALLEN "SAM" SADIGURSKY released a new album, *Soloman Diaries*, in January 2022. Sadigursky is an award-winning composer and clarinetist who has performed with the Philip Glass Ensemble and toured internationally. His album is inspired by New York's Borscht Belt region.

2002 PAIGE DWORAK is part of a \$6.2 million ownership group that has agreed to acquire East Orange Hospital. Dworak was appointed CEO of the hospital in 2017.

2003 TYESHIA (HENDERSON) REELS became the first African American superintendent of the Prospect Park school district... **ARMANDO TRIANA** was named senior vice president at Coyne PR in Parsippany.

2004 IAN JACOBSEN was promoted to lieutenant by the Montville Township Police Department... **TYSHAWN SOREY**, composer and instrumentalist, was signed to a publishing agreement with Edition Peters. He was also selected as one of nine composers whose works have been co-commissioned by orchestras and other musical organizations across the country through New Music USA's Amplifying Voices Program, which is designed to foster collaboration toward racial and gender equality in new orchestral music.

2005 CATHERINE PURVINES was promoted to partnership director for Pearson Online Learning Services.

2006 MICHAEL DELUCCIA was named Educator and Arts Specialist of the Year by Passaic Valley Regional High School. He has worked at Passaic Valley for more than 16 years and teaches concert band, concert band honors, rock of ages, and music exploration.

2007 JONATHAN ADAMS was named first dean of students at Saxe Middle School in New Canaan, CT... **MICHAEL BLIZZARD** wrote a play entitled *God's Armor*, which was presented live via Zoom in April 2022... **SCOTT CUMBERBATCH** will have two compositions, "Praise Ye the Lord" and "My Jesus, I Love Thee," included in the 2022 African American Church Music Series catalog, published by GIA Publications.

2008 JENNIFER MAURY HARRIS was sworn in as a Hackensack Board of Education trustee... **DANIEL O'BRIEN** was appointed to the Supreme Court of New Jersey's Committee on Continuing Legal Education by Chief Justice Stuart Rabner.

2009 OLALADE "LOLA" (AKINRONBI) EKWERE joined Innerspace Counseling as a mental health nurse practitioner... **THADDEUS EXPOSÉ** performed a Mardi Gras jazz concert at the Morris Museum. He is a professional jazz bassist, composer, and recording artist... **JUAN GIRALDO** was awarded a residency with the Tusen Takk Foundation. Residencies at Tusen Takk are typically solo residencies that provide mid-career or

Future Pioneer!

The Pioneer community welcomes Luca X. Aboisleiman! Luca is part of a proud William Paterson tradition—his grandmother is Dr. Marilyn Torley '87, and his great grandmother is Marilyn's mother, Helen Wienke Mault '59, MA '61, who served as a member of the Alumni Executive Council, as president of the Alumni Association from 1976 to 1980 and 1982 to 1984, and who continues to loyally support her *alma mater* through the annual Gerald X. Mault and Wienke-Mault Scholarships and a Charitable Gift Annuity. We look forward to someday welcoming Luca to campus!



established artists with a time to develop current work or explore new ideas.

2010 NICOLE HERLINSKY was promoted to manager at Levine, Jacobs & Company, LLC... **OYLUM SEKER** was named senior vice president, regional manager for Provident Bank's north central region in New Jersey.

2011 DANIELLE LIAUTAUD-WATKINS, MED, was named special assistant to the president at Community College of Philadelphia... **ROBERT MCGRADY** was recently hired to serve as a financial aid officer at Princeton University. This is his third year working in higher education financial aid... **JEFFREY PIERRE** launched an e-course through his student-athlete education program, Clarity Sports Group, that teaches younger athletes about financial literacy... **ARTHUR VINT** opened a jazz club, The Century Room, at Hotel Congress in Tucson, AZ. The club will host weekly jazz performances and serve local mezcals, beers, and wines.

2012 KEVIN LYNCH served as musical director and original music composer for an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* that was performed at the Centenary Stage Company at Centenary University... **RYAN STAIGER** was hired as head coach of the girls basketball team at St. Joseph Academy in Hammonton.

2013 VU-AN FOSTER was invited by New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy to be a special guest at the 2023 fiscal year budget address. Foster is the founder of Life After 2 Losses, where she uses all forms of social media to document her journey as a mom after the loss of two pregnancies.

2014 ALONZO BROWN-SLATER co-starred in the Lifetime film, *Welcome to the Christmas Family Reunion*... **DAVE JOISIL** was inducted into the West Orange Athletic Hall of Fame. He won the titles of county and district champion in wrestling before graduating in 2007.

2015 DASEUL KIM, MM '18, performed in the REACH Winter Lanterns PLUS Korea event, part of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Korean Cultural Center's annual Lunar New Year Celebration... **LEWIS RITTER** published his first novel, *Turbulence: Dispatches from the Student Protest Movement, Rutgers 1970*, about social and political movements during the '70s such as gay liberation, feminism, and the work of Abbie Hoffman... **ANGELICA SANCHEZ, MM '17,** was appointed to New Music USA's Board of Trustees... **VUYOLWETHU "VUYO" SOTASHE** performed with the Harlem 100 at the Grunin Center in Toms River.

2018 SAMI KLOBUCISTA has been named academic technical support specialist for the Martin J. Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University... **SALLY MACALUSO** started an educational blog, *Tenderhearted Teacher*, that provides age-appropriate strategies to encourage overall development in children. Macaluso is a special education preschool teacher and mother. Her blog focuses on topics such as academics, play,

social-emotional learning, behavior, and wellness... **WYATT MAYES** joined CBS News as a social media producer for *Face of the Nation*, a program that offers insights and analysis on the top issues of the day.

2019 KERRYANN COLLINS was chosen to create content to accompany the vocals for Latin star Becky G's Bella Ciao remix, which is featured in the soundtrack for the season finale of the series *Money Heist* on Netflix... **ADRIAN RODRIGUEZ** received his Certified Financial Professional certificate and currently works as a financial advisor at Access Wealth, a wealth management firm in East Hanover.

2020 ROBERT MEICHSNER has been sworn in as a police officer for the Wayne Police Department... **BRANDON RUNK** qualified for the Professional Bowlers Association Tour PBA Players Championship East Region Finals and finished third.

2021 LARYSSA DURSCHLAG was hired as a freelance teleprompter operator at Fox News.

Mourning the loss of . . .

'51 **JEAN BARKLEY ALNOR**
Somerset, NJ
December 23, 2021

'53 **AUDREY BETTS***
Nutley, NJ
February 24, 2022

'55 **VIRGINIA BAIRD***
Oradell, NJ
December 11, 2021

'56 **JANET EAGLER***
Bedford, PA
October 6, 2021

'59 **PATRICIA MALONE***
October 3, 2021
Brick, NJ

'62 **LOUIS CARCICH**
January 28, 2022
Somerset, NJ

'66 **JOSEPH DZIEZAWIEC***
October 9, 2021
Paterson, NJ

CHRISTINE GREINER-BOZART
Weiser, ID
February 10, 2022

'67 **EDNA LEWITZ, MA '71***
Mahwah, NJ
January 16, 2022

'68 **EDYTHE GREENBERG WEINERMAN, MA '72**
Fair Lawn, NJ
January 15, 2022

'73 **IRENE GINGRAS***
October 1, 2021
Wayne, NJ

'74 **KATHLEEN LOHREY**
Pompton Plains, NJ
November 19, 2021

ROBERT TAYLOR
Middletown, NJ
January 10, 2022

'75 **MAUREEN HOPKINS BUCKMILLER**
Verona, NJ
October 30, 2021

MARVA "WENDY" CUMBERBATCH-HINDS
December 30, 2021
Paterson, NJ

ANGELA ESPOSITO
Hamburg, NJ
February 25, 2022

PHYLLIS SCHMIDT
Stillwater, NJ
November 18, 2021

'76 **SHEILA THREATT CASTELLUCCI**
Jackson, NJ
October 15, 2021

'78 **VINCENT FITZGERALD, MA '84***
Glen Rock, NJ
October 21, 2021

BETSY GLANTZ, MA
Pompton Plains, NJ
October 26, 2021

'79 **PAUL OLSON**
Leonia, NJ
January 24, 2022

ROBERT POIANI
Cocoa Beach, FL
December 21, 2021

EDWARD SPITALETTA
Hackensack, NJ
January 21, 2022

'80 **MARIE ELENA ATTANASIO DEVANEY**
Lodi, NJ
October 31, 2021

'83 **GERARD TOLVE**
Nutley, NJ
February 3, 2022

'85 **SHERIDAN JOHN "OGGIE" OGDEN**
Hackensack, NJ
November 4, 2021

PETER PALLATRONI*
Sparta, NJ
January 6, 2022

'87 **PATRICK KELLY**
Andover, NJ
January 4, 2022

'89 **JOSEPH URSO, MBA**
Westfield, NJ
October 7, 2021

'91 **KAREN JUNG**
Medford, NJ
October 15, 2021

'00 **BETH PLANER**
East Rutherford, NJ
November 16, 2021

'04 **LAURA HOLLENY CZAIKOWSKI**
Egg Harbor Township, NJ
December 19, 2021

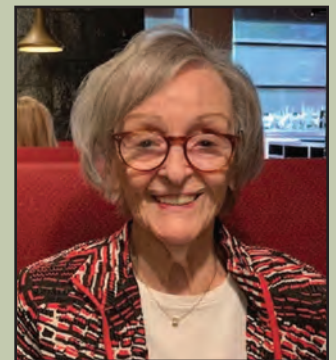
'05 **TILGHMAN WAESCHE, MAT**
Pinehurst, NC
January 13, 2022

'07 **PATRICIA DUDEK KELLY**
McMinnville, OR
February 26, 2022

'12 **LAUREN LIPOMA, MED**
West Caldwell, NJ
December 19, 2021

'18 **JASMIN WEL**
Paterson, NJ
December 2, 2021

**Heritage Society Member: loyal donor who has given to the University for 20 or more years, no matter the giving level*



The University mourns the loss of **Ruth Frances Narotsky Macy '50** on March 8, 2022. She was 93.

She earned a bachelor of arts degree in education and went on to teach typing and stenography in the Nutley school system before marrying Morris Macy in 1951 and leaving to start a family.

Ruth was a supportive partner as Morris cofounded the accounting firm Sax, Macy, Fromm and Company (now Sax LLP). She was known far and wide for her baking, as well as her sumptuous Thanksgiving dinners, Passover seders, and other family gatherings. No one ever left her table hungry.

Ruth was an enthusiastic volunteer and passionate philanthropist. In recognition of her 20 years of giving to her *alma mater*, she was inducted into the University's distinguished Heritage Society. In 2021, the dean of the College of Education recognized Ruth for her generosity and dedication to the University as one of its most loyal donors with more than 40 years of giving. In her final days, she established the Ruth Narotsky Macy Endowed Scholarship to support aspiring teacher candidates. This coming fall, her daughter Sue Macy and son Buddy Macy will have the honor of meeting the first scholarship recipient of their mother's endowed education scholarship. Ruth's legacy at William Paterson will continue to make a difference in perpetuity.

ALUMNI STAY INVOLVED BY PARTICIPATING IN CAMPUS EVENTS

Alumni participated in two of the University's recent themed celebrations. They had the opportunity to share their professional experiences and insights as well as stories of where their WP journey has led them.

Black History Month

In the month of February, as part of the University's Black History Month celebration, the University community was invited to participate in the Black Alumni Network Career Panel: Black in the Workplace. This panel discussion featured alumni who shared their professional experiences and tips and advice on how they overcome challenges and influence change in their careers. The panel was moderated by two current students, Marques Adams, a senior communications major and music and entertainment industries minor, and Rosheeka Williams, a junior business finance major.

Featured alumni panelists:

- Michael Blizzard '07, Oncology Research Administrator, New Jersey Urology
- Nicole Graves-Watson '98, Community Relations Specialist, Essex County Prosecutor's Office and Founder and President of the Hillside branch of the NAACP
- Aleaka Ince '12, Recruitment Program Manager at TED Conferences
- Naima Ricks '11, Director of Programs, SEEDS – Access Changes Everything
- Stephen Tolud '13, Technical Production Manager, MSNBC/ NBC Universal



Women's Empowerment Panelists Nicole Trella '97, Irene Bondar, MBA '97, Lesley Weiner '82, Lauren Shears Agnew '06, and Blair Wilson '95

Women's History Month

As part of the University's Women's History Month celebration in March, the campus community participated in the Women's Empowerment Social Hour. Several alumnae joined in a panel discussion, Women Impacting Communities Across New Jersey, and spoke about their experiences as community leaders and how they give back in settings where they work, live, and volunteer.

Featured alumnae panelists were:

- Lauren Shears Agnew '06, Public Information Officer, County of Essex
- Irene Bondar '97, Global Chief Technology Officer, Neo Media World
- Nicole Trella '97, Director of Medical Operations, Novartis
- Lesley Weiner '82, Financial Advisor, Mid-Atlantic Resource Group
- Blair Wilson '95, CEO, Morris Habitat for Humanity

Asian Heritage Celebration

During the month of March, an Asian Cultural Celebration Month Panel took place and the University community was invited to participate. The panel discussion featured alumni who shared their expertise and insight on their professional careers and how they overcame adversity.

Featured alumni panelist:

- Janice Lai '07
- Kyle Nicole Deveza '16, MA '20

MORE THAN \$2,000 RAISED AT MANHATTAN BAGEL SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER



William Paterson staff and alumni at the Manhattan Bagel fundraiser

WP alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends demonstrated an outpouring of support for the 3rd Annual Manhattan Bagel Scholarship Event on April 7. The Manhattan Bagel in Wayne, located across from the University on Hamburg Turnpike, generously donated 50 percent of the proceeds from the day to support WP students through the Manhattan Bagel Scholarship. The community stopped by throughout the day, purchasing bagels, sandwiches, and treats, and raising more than \$2,000 for deserving University students.

"It was so wonderful to see the WP and Wayne communities come together to support this scholarship event," says Jenna Villani, executive director of alumni relations. "We are so appreciative of the generosity and support that Manhattan Bagel in Wayne has provided to William Paterson. We look forward to continued collaborations and are grateful to have a wonderful partner in the local community."

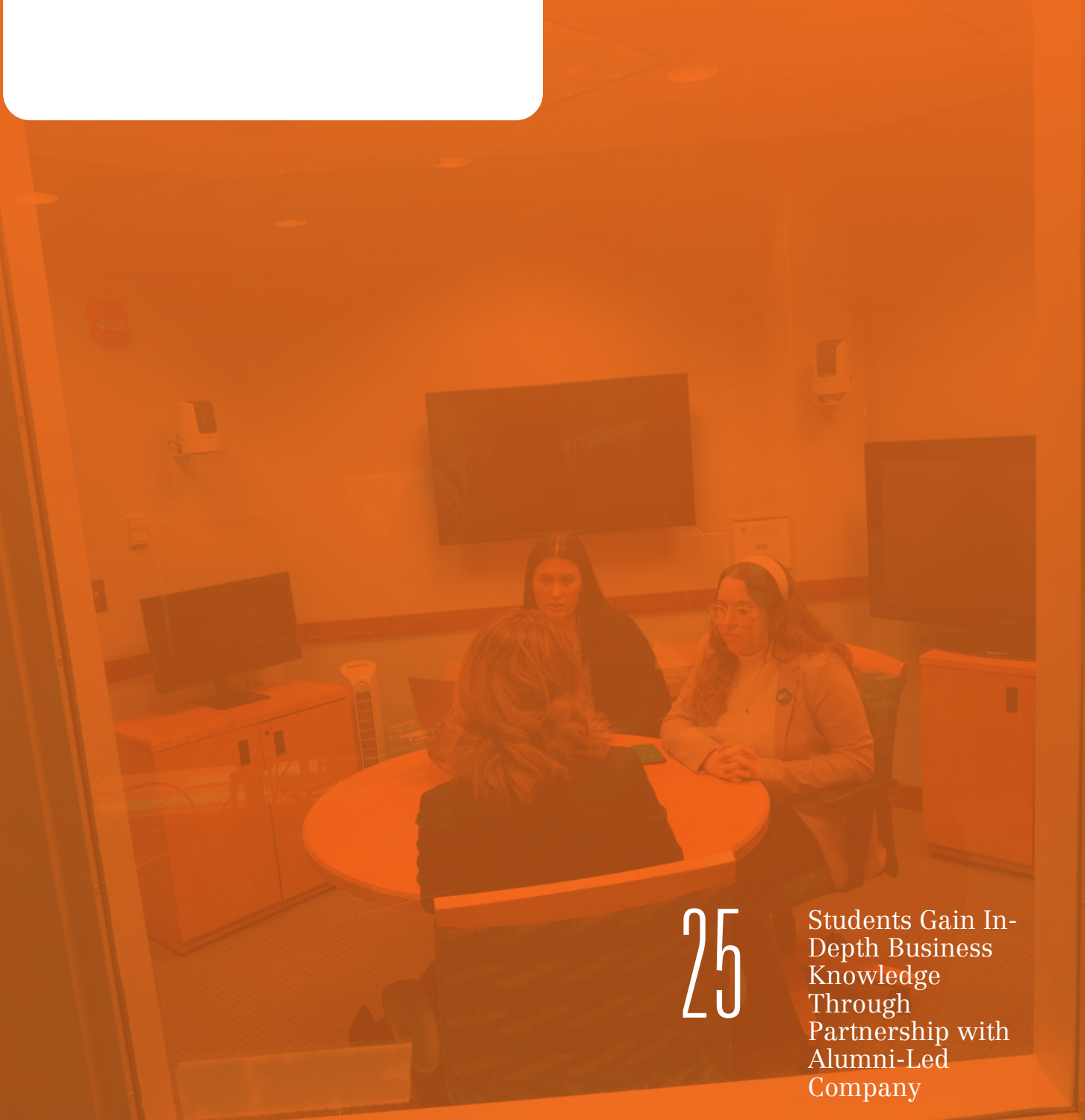


Celebrating 25 Years as a University

On June 27, 1997, William Paterson College became William Paterson University, as the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education granted the institution university status based on the its breadth of graduate programs and a rigorous review of programs, faculty, and facilities. “We are now positioned to pursue our destiny as a dynamic center of educational excellence,” said then-President Arnold Speert.

To mark the occasion, several campus events were held, including University Day on September 2, 1997. Among the highlights was the cutting of a “birthday cake” in the form of Hobart Manor, which brought together alumni who represented the many stages of the University’s evolution. Joining President Arnold Speert (far right) were (left to right) Ed Marsh, a 1997 graduate of William Paterson College; Anna Daube Freund, professor *emerita* of communication and a 1963 graduate of Paterson State College, Guy Dittamo, a 1947 graduate of Paterson State Teachers College, and Helen Demarest, a 1927 graduate of Paterson Normal School.

To view a slide show documenting the University’s growth and development in the past 25 years, visit wpunj.edu/25years.



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Students Gain In-Depth Business Knowledge Through Partnership with Alumni-Led Company