



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

Issue No. 2

October 28, 2022

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

*Should you wish to submit a story for the November issue, please click the button below. Submissions must be received by **November 21, 2022**.*

[Submit Story Here](#)

From the Desk of Dr. Laurie Bernotsky . . .

Dear Colleagues,

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. It is with that in mind that this issue of *The Provosts' Post* focuses on campus events and programs that reflect the work that is being done at WCU on behalf of women. Multiple factors contribute to a woman's overall health and wellbeing. According to the **2022 Blueprint Report: Lighting a Path**, a needs assessment of women and girls in Chester County published by the Fund for Women and Girls, there are a number of pressing issues that affect women. The report, which was compiled by WCU's Dr. Michelle Wade, highlights opportunities for improvement in the areas of employment and earnings; work and family; educational disparities; poverty and opportunity; reproductive rights; health and well-being; violence and safety; and political participation.

At West Chester University, we strive to address these barriers every day—in the classroom, on the athletic fields, in meetings, and through community events and programs that educate and inform both internal and external audiences, a few of which are highlighted in this issue.

As part of Breast Cancer Awareness month, West Chester University's Dance Department hosted the first-ever "Dance for HER" fundraiser supporting Unite for HER, a West Chester-based non-profit led by WCU alum Sue Weldon. Unite for HER provides integrative therapies and services for patients with breast cancer. The dance concert featured WCU student dancers, along with more than 200 youth dancers from 13 local dance studios.

The Women's Leadership Forum kicked off with the largest cohort ever of faculty, staff, and managers who identify as women at WCU. The Forum was designed to expand upon the professional development skills offered through the **HERS Women in Leadership Conference** to a broader group of women leaders at WCU through a series of three workshops held throughout the year.

The Women's Entrepreneur Conference, a partnership between the Cottrell Entrepreneurship Center and SCORE Of Chester County, provided an opportunity for more than 170 women leaders to make new connections and explore the endless possibilities that come with being an entrepreneur. This year's theme was "Driving Success and Being Your Best."

Campus-wide, there were conversations around reproductive health through the series "Reproductive Justice, Rights and Liberties: Conversations Post-Roe v. Wade," hosted by the Center for Women and Gender Equity and the Women's and Gender Studies Department with participation from all six colleges and the School of Music. The series included a discussion with State Representatives Jennifer O'Mara and Dianne Herrin, and State Senator Carolyn Comitta.

Lastly, I wanted to recognize the many women who have contributed to the standards of excellence that we have come to associate with West Chester University. It was my privilege to be recognized as

one of the **150 Most Influential Women of WCU** during last year's sesquicentennial celebration. The photo above was taken at the recognition ceremony last spring. The women named, some who sadly are no longer with us, are part of the fiber of this institution. Collectively, they helped build West Chester from a normal school to a state college to the university it is today. There are countless more who did not make the list but who made valuable contributions. We honor their memory and thank them for the impact they made on this university.

Sincerely,

Laurie

BECOMING STUDENT READY



Moon Shot Week Launched

WCU hosted Moon Shot Week October 10-14. Our Moon Shot for Equity mission is to erase institutional equity gaps in student success through various evidence-based practices. The Moon Shot team hosted a series of events building and supporting equity-minded practitioners at WCU. Equity-mindedness involves calling attention to inequities in student outcomes and taking personal and institutional responsibility

for the success of our students by critically reassessing our own practices. To this end, Moon Shot week events focused on establishing a common understanding of equity-mindedness, shifting our mindsets and language away from student deficits to institutional transformation, and understanding common institutional barriers to systemic change. Staff and faculty engaged in sessions discussing ways individual members of our campus community can apply an equity-minded lens to their work—whether in financial services, our classrooms, advising, or other student and faculty support work. This mission will engage the entire WCU community to achieve our goal of erasing institutional equity gaps in student success. Our work is complex and long-term, so look for additional opportunities in the coming months to learn more about how the Moon Shot for Equity team at WCU can support you in furthering the development of your equity-mindedness.



STUDENT SUCCESS

Mary Kline Day

October 11 was "Mary Kline Day" in the Department of Nursing. The day-long program, featuring speakers, alumni and corporate engagement for our students, was named after Mary Kline, a beloved faculty member, who retired in 1983. "Mary Kline Day" offers students the opportunity to meet with alumni and discuss professional issues related to the profession of nursing that may be beyond traditional bedside care. It is a day dedicated to the profession of



nursing. Nearly 200 undergraduate nursing students attended, networked with alumni and faculty and 20 employers where they explored nursing residencies, internships, or jobs. This year's keynote speaker, Kelly Liddell, MSN, RN, SANE-P, FN-CSp, spoke about Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) and her experiences working with pediatric victims.



"Byte Me" Team Wins First Place in Regional Competition

The Competitive Programming Club sent three teams to attend the programming contest hosted at the **16th Annual Regional Conference for the Consortium for Computing Sciences in Colleges, Mid-West Region**. The teams were Byte Me (Mary Bauman, Kevin Codd, and Nolan

Prochnau), Hacker-Rams (Samuel Auman, Adam Hansen, and James May), and Golden Rams 2 (Christopher Calixto). All teams successfully developed correct solutions to the programming questions, with **Byte Me achieving first place standing** after the four-hour competition ended. The Competitive Programming Club is coached and advised by Dr. Linh Ngo.

ACCESS



Center for STEM Inclusion Issues Its First Annual Report

Last year, the College of the Sciences and Mathematics launched the Center for STEM Inclusion (CSI). Programming began with a conference in April 2021 titled "Opening Doors to the STEM Workplace: More Seats at a Longer Table," which addressed the challenges women and underrepresented minorities face in the workplace. The Center for STEM Inclusion develops outreach events and mentoring programs aimed at career development.

CSI's first cohort of nine students, supported by a \$1M NSF S-STEM grant, joined WCU in Fall 2021. This program combines four-year scholarships with intensive interpersonal support and peer engagement. All nine students returned this fall, and a new nine-student cohort, selected from a competitive field, joined us in August 2022.

The mission of the Center for STEM Inclusion is to actively promote diversity and equity initiatives in the College of the Sciences and Mathematics that will increase access to STEM careers for a diverse body of students. As the demographics of the Commonwealth evolve, the Center for STEM Inclusion will empower change in the College by ensuring that aspiring STEM students from a diverse range of backgrounds can persist in their majors and gain access to the STEM workforce. Therefore, our goals are to strengthen the STEM pipeline at West Chester University by removing barriers caused by social injustices and socioeconomic status and promoting structures that increase inclusivity and equity. This work consists of four pillars to support that mission: Outreach, Access, Persistence, and Career Readiness.

Click the button below to read the Center for STEM Inclusion's 2022 Annual Report.

[2022 Annual Report](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WCU Dance Department Partners with Unite for HER to Support Patients with Breast Cancer

Kicking off Breast Cancer Awareness Month, WCU's Dance Department, under the direction of Dr. Gretchen Studlien-Webb, hosted the first-ever **Dance for HER** fundraiser supporting Unite for HER, a West Chester-based non-profit providing integrative therapies and services for patients with breast cancer.



A dance concert featuring West Chester University student dancers, along with more than 200 youth dancers from 13 local dance studios, raised more than \$20,000 for breast cancer support services.

Professor of Dance at WCU Gretchen Studlien-Webb said, "West Chester University Dance was thrilled to host this large group of enthusiastic and talented dancers in support of a terrific organization and cause. It's staggering to realize that 1 in 8 women will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of her lifetime and that it is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among American women." Sue Weldon, Founder and CEO of Unite for HER said, "We are so appreciative of this outpouring of support from West Chester University Dance. As a graduate of West Chester University and a former member of the Dance Department, this was a full-circle moment for me. I couldn't be more grateful."

For more information on Unite for HER click the button below.



Unite for
HER

Women's Entrepreneurship Conference

Each year, West Chester University is proud to celebrate women entrepreneurship. The Cottrell Entrepreneur Center hosts various activities and workshops to support entrepreneurs, including the annual **WCU Women's Entrepreneurship Conference**. This signature event provides an opportunity for nearly 200 women to make new connections and explore the endless possibilities that come with being an entrepreneur. The theme of this year's conference held on October 21 was "Driving Success and Being Your Best" and focused on how to face challenges, seize opportunities, find support and grow a business. Speakers included Yasmine Mustafa, CEO of ROAR, Inc., and U.S. Congresswoman Chrissy Houlihan.

A huge thank you to Citadel (Presenting Sponsor) and QVC (Gold Sponsor) for their support! In addition, we thank Chester County Women's Business Connection; i2n, an initiative of The Chester County Economic Development Center and The Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce for their partnership.



[Learn More](#)

WCU Hosts Series of Conversations Post-Roe v. Wade

WCU is a community of educators developing graduates to succeed personally and professionally and contribute to the common good. As part of that mission, we seek to produce graduates who can communicate effectively and participate in civic discourse and engage inclusively in a diverse society. To that end, all six colleges and the School of Music joined the Center for Women & Gender Equity and the Women and Gender Studies Department to host a series of conversations about the impact of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. State Representatives Jennifer O'Mara and Diane Herrin and State Senator Comitta joined the conversation on October 12. The series continues throughout the year. For a list of upcoming events, click the button on the left.



[More Information](#)

DIVERSITY



Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy Celebrates Queer Pride Day

The Center celebrated the 5th Annual Queer Pride Day on October 3 with free swag and photos with identity flags featured on the CTQA Instagram page. The day ended with snacks and Queer Trivia in Sykes.

The **Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy's** mission is to create an environment where the intersectional experiences of trans and queer people are supported, celebrated, validated and affirmed. It offers trainings for faculty and staff on terminology, WCU policies, and qualities of an advocate as it relates to the transgender and non-binary communities and experiences.

Education and Training

For more information about trainings, check out: wcupa.edu/CTQA or contact transandqueer@wcupa.edu or 610-436-3147.

To request training for your class, group, or organization, fill out the training request form by clicking the button below.

[Training Request Form](#)

Latino/a Communities Conference

With intergenerational relations as its theme, the 2022 Latinx Communities Conference drew students and others to Sykes Student Union on September 29. The 14th Annual Conference was the first held in person since 2019. It is part of the University's recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated nationwide from September 15 to October 15 each year.



Experts from New Mexico Highlands University, UT Dallas, Marquette University as well as representatives of community organizations joined WCU presenters. WCU's Latin Jazz Ensemble, directed by Marc Jacoby, associate professor of music and jazz studies coordinator, set the tone, playing a variety of numbers that had some participants dancing.

Keynote speaker Kat Lazo of Mitú Latino Media Company is pictured (above center) with conference organizers Emily Aguiló-Pérez (above left), Assistant Professor of English, and Daniela Johannes (above right), Associate Professor Languages and Cultures and co-chair of both the WCU Multicultural Faculty Commission and the Greater Philadelphia Latin American Studies Consortium. Lazo, a Colombian-Peruvian New Yorker, has made a name for herself as the "Internet's no-nonsense Latina who tells it like it is." Her digital content production work has been featured in *The Daily News*, *Huffpost*, *Latina Magazine* and *Buzzfeed*. Sponsors of her appearance were Latin American and Latinx Studies; Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI); College of Arts and Humanities; College of Sciences and Mathematics; Dowdy Multicultural Center; and WCU Poetry Center.

[Learn More](#)

Former Senator Andy Dinniman Delivers Frederick Douglass Lecture

Andy Dinniman, WCU professor emeritus, retired Pennsylvania senator, and a leader for communities, families, and taxpayers throughout more than 45 years of public service in the Commonwealth, delivered the 2022 Dr. Clifford E. DeBaptiste Frederick Douglass Lecture on Thursday, October 13, in Philips Autograph Library. Dinniman's topic was "The Life and Legacy of Frederick Douglass in the America of 2022." During the lecture, Senator Dinniman announced the creation of the "Dinniman Together Fund", an endowed fund to support diversity, equity and inclusion in STEM education.



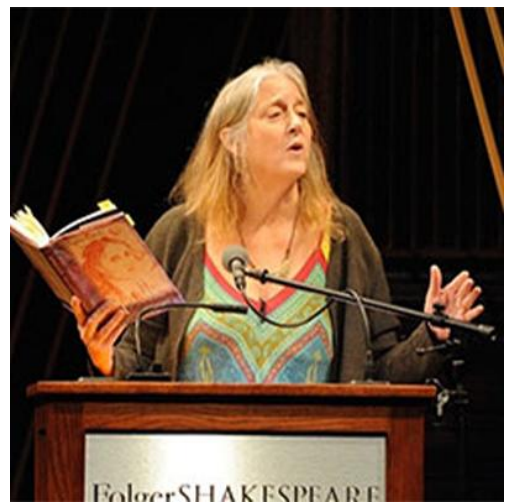
The DeBaptiste Frederick Douglass Lecture is an educational and cultural resource for advancing multicultural studies across the community and for deepening the intellectual heritage of Frederick Douglass. It is hosted annually by the Frederick Douglass Institute and is made possible through the generous gift of Dr. Clifford DeBaptiste, the first African-American mayor of West Chester Borough and a recognized champion of education.

[Learn More](#)

SCHOLARSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Poet-in-Residence Annie Finch

West Chester University's **Poetry Center** will host several public events this fall for poets, and lovers and teachers of poetry. On October 3 at 7:30 p.m., award-winning poet and writer Annie Finch began her WCU Poet-in-Residence tenure with a free public reading. She will end her residency with another free public reading on Wednesday, November 2 at 4:30 p.m. with both taking place in the Philips Autograph Library, Philips Memorial Building.



Finch is the author of seven books of poetry including *Eve*, *Calendars*, *Among the Goddesses*, and *Spells: New and Selected Poems* (Wesleyan University Press.) Finch's poetry has appeared in *Poetry*, *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times*, and *The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century American Poetry*. Her books about poetry include *The Body of Poetry* and *A Poet's Craft: A Comprehensive Guide to Making and Sharing Your Poetry*. Finch holds a Ph.D. from Stanford University and teaches online classes on poetry at www.anniefinch.com and in Poetry Witch Community. She is passionate about helping bring the pleasure and power of rhythm and meter back into poetry.

Women's Leadership Forum Kicks Off with Largest Cohort Ever

The Women's Leadership Forum, a collaboration of the Provost's Office and the President's Commission on the Status of Women, held its kick-off event on October 21. For the past 38 years, **HERS** (Higher Education Resource Services) has provided professional development opportunities to more than 4,000 women in higher education administration to develop leadership and management skills. Every year, West Chester University sponsors a woman from our campus to attend this event. As a supplement to this opportunity, every other year, faculty, staff and managers who identify as women are invited to participate in a WCU Women's Leadership Forum. This forum includes a series of workshops designed to help faculty and staff take their leadership to the next level. This year we are hosting 83 participants for the 2022-2023 cohort of the WCU Women's Leadership Forum with a series of three sessions addressing: Mental Health, Burnout and Self-care; Anti-Racist Leadership; and Exploring Next Steps: Goal setting, Negotiating and Networking. The forum is led by Dr. Cheryl Neale McFall and a leadership team made up of faculty members, many of whom have attended the HERS Conference.



PASSHE Faculty Professional Development Council Request For Proposals due January 24

The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) Faculty Professional Development Council (FPDC) invites you to apply for the 2022-23 Annual Grant Program (funding will begin in June 2023). This program is intended to provide professional growth opportunities for individual faculty, with a focus on projects that encourage student success. This year, the maximum number of proposals has increased to twenty-one (21) from each of the 10 universities. Below, you will find the categories for funding and the attached application has detailed instructions regarding eligibility and criteria.

If you have any questions about the application and review process, or if you would like support or advice regarding the construction of your proposal, please contact your assigned Grants Development Specialist, Andrea Morris (AMorris@wcupa.edu) or Catherine Spaur (CSpaur@wcupa.edu).

Applications will be accepted for the following categories:

Category 1-A: Joint Faculty-Student Basic or Applied Research

Category 1-B: Scholarly Research: Basic or Applied

Category 2: Joint Faculty-Student Public Service

Category 3: Creative and Performing Arts

Category 4: Innovation in Teaching and Improvement in Student Learning Outcomes

Category 5: Individual Career Enhancement in Off-Site Settings

To review the call for proposals and to apply, please go to the **WCU PASSHE FPDC application form** by clicking on the link below. Because this is a limited submission opportunity, your application will be reviewed at WCU before it is submitted to the FPDC. Applications are due for initial, internal review by **January 24, 2023**.

FEATURED FACULTY

Dr. Sharon DeJoy Receives State Funding for COVID Vaccine Outreach to Midwives

The Pennsylvania Development of Community and Economic Development (DCED) is funding the work of Dr. Sharon DeJoy, a faculty member in the College of Health Sciences' Department of Health, aimed at increasing the rate of vaccine uptake among women seeking perinatal care from midwives offering out-of-hospital birth services.

The social marketing campaign was co-developed by a class of senior public health students and a public health intern under the direction of Dr. DeJoy. The project is using social media and client handout materials to increase COVID vaccination rates among vaccine-hesitant families.

After completing her doctorate in Public Health from the University of South Florida, Dr. DeJoy joined the faculty as Assistant Professor in 2012. Prior to accepting her current position, she was an Assistant Professor of Community Health at the State University of New York at Potsdam. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate public health courses and directs the BS in Public Health program. Dr. DeJoy has conducted community-based research and consultation in maternal child health for underserved populations. She has authored and co-authored various peer-reviewed articles and presented at international conferences. Dr. DeJoy was formerly a Licensed Midwife in Florida.



RESOURCE CORNER

IRB Q&A Zoom Sessions

For faculty conducting research involving human subjects, the WCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) will host IRB Q&A Zoom sessions for the campus community. Please find below the fall 2022 Zoom sessions dates, times, and zoom links. All may attend any of the scheduled sessions.

Also, in addition to the dates listed, the IRB Co-Chairs hold weekly open office hours. Please feel free to join those at any point with questions as well.

[List of IRB Sessions](#)

FAST Trainings



The Faculty and Staff Training (FAST) unit supports WCU faculty and staff in becoming proficient in various applications, in addition to providing best practices in trending platforms (i.e. Office365, OneDrive, D2L, RamCloud). Courses are designed to accommodate all levels of learning and allow users to build on acquired skills.

[Click to Register](#)

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

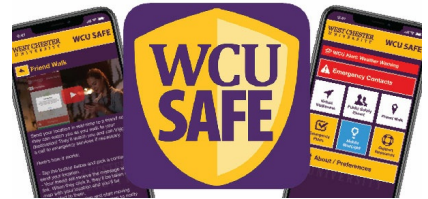
LinkedIn Learning with Lynda.com content is an industry leader in online training, with a digital library of over 180,000 videos, covering a wide range of technical, business, software, and creative topics. West Chester University faculty, staff and currently enrolled students have unlimited access.

[Access LinkedIn Learning](#)



Public Safety - WCU Safe App

WCU Safe is the official safety app of West Chester University. It is the only app that integrates with WCU's safety and security systems. The Department of Public Safety has worked to develop a unique app that provides students, faculty and staff with added safety on the WCU campus. The app will send you important safety alerts and provide instant access to campus safety resources.



[Learn More](#)

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