



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. 1

September 29, 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.

To submit a story for the October issue, please email provostspost@wcupa.edu by October 21, 2022.



From the desk of Laurie Bernotsky . . .

We're back! It is my great pleasure to welcome members of West Chester University's esteemed community of educators back to campus. For those of you who are new to WCU, we look forward to

working together toward our shared mission of developing students to succeed personally and professionally to contribute to the common good. ALL of you, faculty and staff alike, play a critical role in the future developments of your departments, student success, and the University as a whole.

It is with this in mind that Dr. Jeff Osgood and I wanted to create *The Provosts' Post*, to share some of the exciting things happening in the Division of Academic Affairs with the campus community.

The 2022-2023 academic year is off to a great start. Between the student orientations over the summer to Move-In Day to the amazing Golden Welcome on the Quad for our largest first-year class EVER, the start of a new year is always exciting. It is especially so this year. After two years of uncertainty and Zoom fatigue, we look forward to a return to normalcy, but we recognize that "normal" is not the same as it was in 2019. Times have changed, and so must we.

I am excited to announce we are investing in new tools and trainings to connect our access mission with our passion and commitment to student success. Look for more information about these exciting new opportunities in the issues to come. In *The Provosts' Post*, we will post updates on our progress toward becoming more "student-ready" and share stories that reflect the five strategic priorities that guide our division starting with, of course, student success:

- **STUDENT SUCCESS:** Developing and sustaining an accessible academic environment and support services that ensure student learning, integrity, and success.
- **DIVERSITY:** Recruiting, enrolling, and retaining a diverse undergraduate and graduate population from the Commonwealth, as well as regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- **ACCESS:** Providing increased access to resources, technology, and facilities in support of teaching and learning excellence.
- **SCHOLARSHIP:** Recruiting and retaining a diverse community of educators comprised of faculty teacher-scholars and academic staff, as well as fostering their professional development and success.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Facilitating the generation of knowledge by embedding and enhancing research, creative activity, and civic engagement in the teaching and learning process.

This newsletter will also include a **Resource Corner**, connecting all of you with resources that are available to you as valued members of the WCU community and featuring faculty, staff and students who exemplify WCU's values and academic excellence.

September is **Mental Health Awareness** and **Suicide Prevention Month**. It is also **Campus Safety Awareness Month**. Therefore, many of our stories are focused on health, safety and wellness programs and relevant resources available to the campus community.

Finally, I wanted to share that I was recently asked to assist PennWest University in its transition from three institutions to one. During the early stages of this appointment, I will spend considerable time at PennWest, while maintaining a visible presence at West Chester University and continuing to provide strategic leadership for the University. During this limited-time assignment, I will remain our executive vice president and Dr. Osgood will serve as the interim provost and senior vice president, assuming most of my executive vice president responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Laurie Bernotsky, D. Phil
Executive Vice President

BECOMING STUDENT-READY



[Welcome Back Address Video](#)

Training being developed for new faculty to be "student-ready"

In the Welcome Back address this month, Dr. Bernotsky announced that, starting next year **all** new faculty will have a course release during their first year at WCU. With that release time, faculty members will engage in extensive training on innovative pedagogy and inclusive excellence—with the goal of learning how to be exceptional teachers for ALL our students. Bernotsky noted that, "We have an amazing faculty who are doing amazing things, but we believe they could do even more amazing things if we invested more in their teaching up front." To develop the training, we will rely upon members of our own faculty. We will identify excellent and experienced teachers to help less experienced teachers succeed in the classroom. Similar training will also be offered for staff--training that emphasizes how they can best play their part in our "community of educators."

STUDENT SUCCESS

Introducing... Navigate for Student Success

Navigate is a student success and engagement platform playing a crucial role in helping us achieve the Moon Shot for Equity mission to erase all student success equity gaps in the next 10 years. The platform is utilized to celebrate student progress, connect students with support resources, streamline advising, and monitor student engagement through various forms of communication.



[Learn More](#)



SECC Ribbon-Cutting Ceremonies

On Thursday, September 15, amid lots of purple & gold fanfare, the ribbon was officially cut to WCU's 175,000-square-foot Sciences & Engineering Center and The Commons (SECC), the largest project and most complex building in our history. Among those performing the official ribbon-cutting honors outside of the SECC's main lobby doors were West Chester University President Chris Fiorentino; Executive Vice President & Provost Laurie Bernotsky; Managing Partner of Duce Management and Former Founder, President, and CEO of ProMetrics Marc Duey; and WCU Alumni Association President Matthew Holliday '09.

Dr. Bernotsky emphasized the SECC is intentionally designed for "engaging students actively in all aspects of learning." The progressive design also encourages students to use the SECC as a location to meet, get a meal between classes, and engage in other non-academic activities.

This building would not be possible without WCU's faculty and staff who have guided our students every step of the way in this effort—you teach, you mentor, you inspire. Many of you contributed to the \$1.28 million that was raised to name spaces in the building. Your gifts made the construction of the building possible, but they also provide a daily reminder to students: "We do believe in you, and we know you will succeed."

[Learn More](#)

ACCESS

Welcome New Golden Rams!

WCU was proud to welcome the largest first-year class in its 151-year history. More than 3,000 students now call themselves Golden Rams. Check out the video of our Class of 2026 Golden Welcome.





Ram Initiative welcomes new students!

A college experience should be available to all 18-24-year-olds. The RAM Initiative provides this opportunity to young adults with intellectual disabilities. This two-year inclusive program enriches the young adulthood time by having the students enroll in college courses while paired with a peer mentor. This fall, the Real Achievement Matters (RAM) Initiative welcomes two new students to WCU! As the students'

complete courses and internships toward their certificate of completion, they gain the skills necessary to pursue their career aspirations. The students learn how to be part of their communities by interacting and learning with fellow students, faculty, staff, and administrators across campus—they are integrated into the WCU community, rather than in the historical segregated model. The critical contributions of the Peer Mentor volunteers, who accompany and coach the students in the RAM Initiative through their classes and activities around campus, keeps this program moving forward. As one RAM Initiative student states, "People don't think I'm stupid anymore." For more information, please visit our website.

[Visit our Website](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



HEALED

CHS Partners with American Cancer Society and Pat Croce on Health & Wellness Webinar Series

Jeanie Subach, associate professor of nutrition, is one of four faculty members in WCU's College of Health Sciences who developed these **programs specifically designed for the American Cancer Society (ACS) HEALED Community**. Subach has been a regular monthly guest on these online programs, which were launched in May 2021 and are hosted by WCU alumnus Pat Croce. A cancer survivor, Croce hosts these weekly gatherings to discuss physical, mental, and spiritual health with expert guests and cancer survivors.

An acronym for Health and Energy through Active Living Every Day, **HEALED is an ACS community movement** to educate and encourage people to live healthier lives in the present moment. The HEALED Community Movement's goals are to reduce suffering and death due to cancer and to create a supportive community for cancer survivors, caregivers, and loved ones.

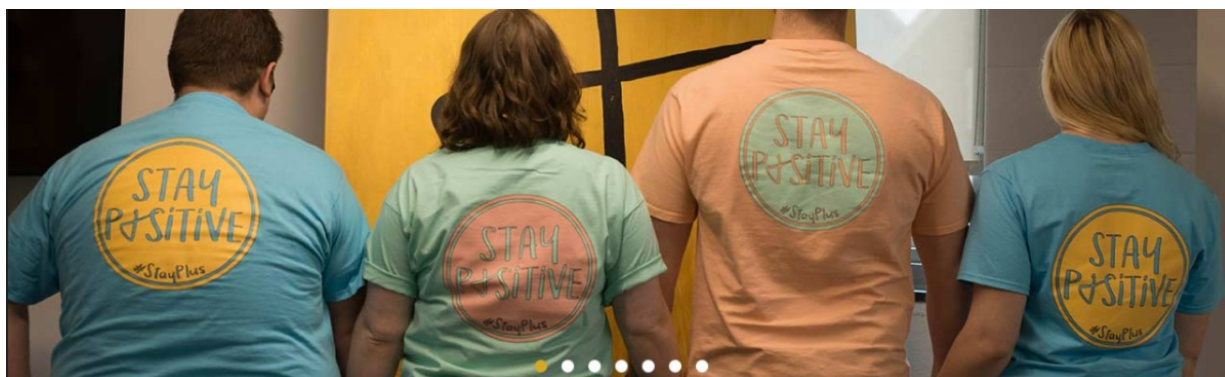
On September 14, Subach opened the series by discussing the "Application of Culinary

Medicine for Cancer Prevention and Treatment.” A Registered Dietitian and Board-Certified Sports Specialist Dietitian, Subach is also the advisor to the Student Dietetic Association and program director for the Ram Chefs, a culinary program for young adults with developmental disabilities. To register for future webinars in the series click below.

[Register](#)

Community Mental Health Services

The WCU Community Mental Health Clinic, located on the 8th floor of Wayne Hall, is affiliated with WCU's Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) Program. The clinic serves as a training center for graduate students in the Psy.D. Program and as a clinical research site for faculty in the Psychology Department. As a non-profit training and research facility, the Community Mental Health Clinic is able to provide low-cost, cutting-edge psychotherapy and testing for up to 100 families in the community.



[Learn More](#)

DIVERSITY

Moonshot for Equity

We are making progress in WCU's Moon Shot for Equity work to close institutional equity gaps in student success. Over the summer, our five goal teams have completed the initial phases of the work: (1) learning about equity-minded practices, and (2) reviewing disaggregated data to identify institutional racial and income equity gaps in student success. Goal teams will now initiate the next phase: through inquiry, teams will engage our campus community to understand each goal area from the perspective of our students, staff, and faculty. We will launch these efforts with Moon Shot Week, October 10-14.

[Learn
More](#)



[Learn
More](#)

Innovation and Diversity & Inclusion Grants

The Innovation in Diversity & Inclusion Grants Council (IDIGC) will begin accepting proposal applications from campus community members for programs during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semesters. Funding will be focused on programs that support WCU Strategic Plan goals, capacity-building goals, and/or ODEI strategic initiative goals as described within the RFP Guidelines.

SCHOLARSHIP

Provost Research Grant

In recognition of the importance of faculty-directed research and creative activities, Dr. Bernotsky has committed funds to support the **Provost Research Grant (PRG)**. In keeping with the University's mission to develop graduates who will "succeed personally and professionally and contribute to the common good," the PRG encourages faculty applicants to include a model for student/faculty collaboration and impact in their proposals. Faculty who can draw connections to making our campus student-ready, accessible, and affordable are strongly encouraged to apply. Proposals are due November 28, 2022. As a reminder, Grant Specialists, Andrea Morris and Catherine Spaur, are available to help you craft your proposal.

[Learn
More](#)

2022 Blueprint Report: Lighting a Path

West Chester University is proud to partner with the Fund for Women and Girls on the fourth edition of the *Blueprint Report*, the first and only comprehensive needs assessment of women and girls in Chester County. Published every five years, the Blueprint Report highlights pressing issues facing women and girls at the local, state, and national levels, with a deep dive on conditions in Chester County. The Fund's *2022 Blueprint Report: Lighting a Path* provides critical data to identify areas of progress for women and girls and indicates where additional improvements are still needed. It presents data points across eight key areas: Employment and Earnings; Work and Family; Educational Disparities; Poverty and Opportunity; Reproductive Rights; Health and Well-Being; Violence and Safety; and Political Participation. Kudos to Dr. Michelle Wade, PhD, MPA, who provided the leadership for this research study. To read the full report, click the button below.

[2022 Blueprint Report](#)

FEATURED STUDENT



WCU student's mural on display in West Chester borough

Noah Burns, a sophomore Art + Design student, is painting a mural on the side of the Friends Association building at 113 Chestnut Street in West Chester Borough. His design was chosen to help commemorate the 200th anniversary of the organization, a nonprofit providing services for Chester County individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Overwhelmingly, the West Chester Public Arts Commission (WC PAC) and Friends staff chose Burns's design concept from among dozens of applicants. After several rounds of edits, the final concept was presented to the WC PAC and the Historical & Architectural Review Board (HARB) for approval.

[Learn More](#)

FEATURED FACULTY

WCU's Lindsey Keenan Tackles Student Athlete Mental Health

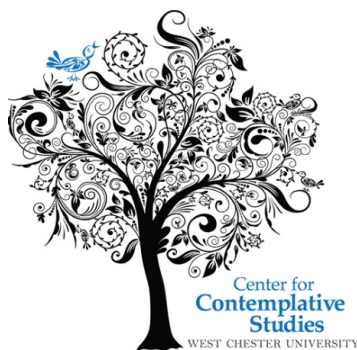
Dr. Lindsey Keenan's work regarding mental health in athletes started with her personal experiences as a collegiate student-athlete. She found herself experiencing mental health distress, including depression and suicidal thoughts, but was scared to speak up about it—and no one ever asked her about her mental health. As Dr. Keenan's career in athletic training continued, she was determined to change how the athletics and sports medicine fields talk about and address mental health in athletes.



This experience led to Dr. Keenan's PhD in Sport and Exercise Psychology and her dissertation examining temporal changes in depression symptoms in athletes at Temple University. She found that athletes benefitted from frequent mental health screens, but, nonetheless, compared to their non-athlete peers they were still more likely to under-report their symptoms and less likely to seek help.

Today, Dr. Keenan works in the Department of Sports Medicine, teaching courses in the athletic training graduate and sports medicine undergraduate programs. All the Sports Medicine faculty at WCU also work clinically as athletic trainers with the WCU NCAA varsity student-athletes, preventing and treating injuries and illness. Dr. Keenan works with the women's rugby team and has seen the benefits of changing the environment and stigma around mental health for athletes. Her research has focused on the epidemiology of athlete mental health, mental health screening, and access to mental health resources in sport. Dr. Keenan helped launch the **RAMs Let's Talk** mental health support group for student-athletes and the **RAMs Let's Walk for Mental Health 5K**. Most recently, along with two colleagues, she developed a mental health screening app and platform, **PROmotion Health**, to facilitate mental health screening in sports and schools. PROmotion is now being used by over 7,000 student-athletes and nearly 100 athletic trainers across the country.

RESOURCE CORNER



Mindfulness

Founded in 2011, the Center for Contemplative Studies has as its mission to create a culture for students, faculty, and the community to understand, apply and create a contemplative approach to life and learning. The vision is to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing within the West Chester University community. The Center for Contemplative Studies offers live, online, and recorded resources to help you find calm in the present moment, to see the moment more clearly, and—most importantly—to stay connected with others. Below is the link to CCS's weekly schedule.

[CCS
Calendar](#)



Suicide Prevention Training

Campus Connect is a 90-minute training for faculty/staff on suicide prevention and how to recognize distress in students. Participants will learn signs of distress, how to talk about suicide with students, and how to respond and provide appropriate referrals. Click below to register for the 10/12 or 11/7 session.

[Click to Register](#)



FREE Speech and Hearing Evaluations and Therapy Services

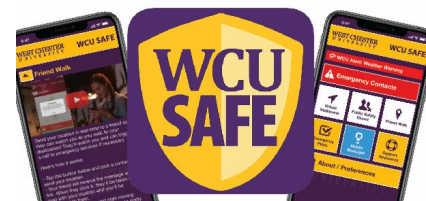
September is also Deaf Awareness Month and the WCU Speech and Hearing Clinic is currently accepting appointments for the 2022 Fall Semester. The Clinic is offering speech and hearing evaluation and therapy services **free** of charge for children and adults. Individuals need not be part of the WCU community. This opportunity is available to anyone interested. In-person speech and hearing evaluations and therapy will be scheduled September 6, 2022 through November 22, 2022.

[Learn More](#)

Appointments may be made by contacting the Clinic Administrative Assistant, Jacqueline Johnson, at 610-436-3402 or jjohnson@wcupa.edu. You may also contact the Clinic Director, Dr. Jennifer Means, at (610-436-3447) or jmeans@wcupa.edu for additional information.

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](#)

State Employee Assistant Program (SEAP)

Whether you want to talk about an issue, seek counseling, find legal resources, or get advice about a financial concern, SEAP is a free confidential program to all State System employees;

this includes everyone who lives in your house, as well as your parents, adult children, and siblings—regardless of where they live.

Services are available 24/7 by calling 1-800-692-7459. The services provided by SEAP are strictly confidential; your employer will not be notified unless you give written consent. Click below for additional information about what's included in your SEAP benefit.

[Visit the Website](#)

Need a New Headshot?

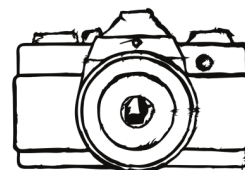
Registration is now open for studio headshot sessions for faculty and staff on October 24-25 in Sykes 210. Click on the link below to schedule your session.

[Register Today!](#)

STUDIO HEADSHOT SESSION

DO YOU NEED A HEADSHOT?

October 24 and 25



For Faculty and Staff
Sykes 210

[Register Online Today!](#)

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