
FEDERAL AFFAIRS

Director of Federal Affairs Departs for American Cancer Institute

James Williams Jr., longtime Federal Affairs Director for Wayne State University, recently accepted a position as Director of Federal Relations for all cancer screening and early detection issues at American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. James served the university well for 11 years and has left the university in great position to build upon the relationships he established and the successes he achieved. We are in the process of posting the opportunity to fill this position.

Federal Student Loan Debt Relief

On August 24, 2022, President Biden and Vice President Harris and the U.S. Department of Education have announced a three-part plan to help working and middle-class federal student loan borrowers transition back to regular payment as pandemic-related support expires. This plan includes loan forgiveness of up to \$20,000. Many borrowers and families may be asking themselves “what do I have to do to claim this relief?” There will be more details announced in the coming weeks as the Department of Education promulgates the regulations. To be notified when the process has officially opened, students should sign up at the [Department of Education subscription page](#). They will have until DECEMBER 31, 2023 to apply.

Part 1. Final extension of the student loan repayment pause

Due to the economic challenges created by the pandemic, the Biden-Harris Administration has extended the student loan repayment pause a number of times. Because of this, no one with a federally held loan has had to pay a single dollar in loan payments since President Biden took office. To ensure a smooth transition to repayment and prevent unnecessary defaults, the Biden-Harris Administration will extend the pause a final time through December 31, 2022, with payments resuming in January 2023. The extended pause will occur automatically.

Part 2. Providing targeted debt relief to low- and middle-income families

To smooth the transition back to repayment and help borrowers at highest risk of delinquencies or default once payments resume, the U.S. Department of Education will provide up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation to Pell Grant recipients with loans held by the Department of Education and up to \$10,000 in debt cancellation to non-Pell Grant recipients. Borrowers are eligible for this relief if their individual income is less than \$125,000 or \$250,000 for households.

In addition, borrowers who are employed by non-profits, the military, or federal, state, Tribal, or local government **may be eligible to have ALL of their student loans forgiven through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.** This is because of time-limited changes that waive certain eligibility criteria in the PSLF program. These temporary changes expire on October 31, 2022. For more information on eligibility and requirements, go to [PSLF.gov](https://pslf.gov).

Frequently Asked Questions:

How do I know if I am eligible for debt cancellation?

- To be eligible, your annual income must have fallen below \$125,000 (for individuals) or \$250,000 (for married couples or heads of households)
- If you received a Pell Grant in college and meet the income threshold, you will be eligible for up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation.
- If you did not receive a Pell Grant in college and meet the income threshold, you will be eligible for up to \$10,000 in debt cancellation.

What does the “up to” in “up to \$20,000” or “up to \$10,000” mean?

- Your relief is capped at the amount of your outstanding debt.
- For example: If you are eligible for \$20,000 in debt relief, but have a balance of \$15,000 remaining, you will only receive \$15,000 in relief.

What do I need to do in order to receive loan forgiveness?

- Nearly 8 million borrowers may be eligible to receive relief automatically because relevant income data is already available to the U.S. Department of Education.
- If the U.S. Department of Education doesn't have your income data, the Administration will launch a simple application which will be available by early October.
- If students would like to be notified when the application is open, please sign up at the [Department of Education subscription page](#).
- Once a borrower completes the application, he/she can expect relief within 4-6 weeks.
- The Department of Education is encouraging everyone who is eligible to file the application, but there are 8 million people for whom the Department has data and who will get the relief automatically.
- Borrowers are advised to apply before November 15, 2022 in order to receive relief before the payment pause expires on December 31, 2022.

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- The Department of Education will continue to process applications as they are received, even after the pause expires on December 31, 2022.

What is the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program?

- The Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program forgives the remaining balance on your federal student loans after 120 payments working full-time for federal, state, Tribal, or local government; military; or a qualifying non-profit.
- Temporary changes, ending on Oct. 31, 2022, provide flexibility that makes it easier than ever to receive forgiveness by allowing borrowers to receive credit for past periods of repayment that would otherwise not qualify for PSLF.
- Enrollments on or after Nov. 1, 2022 **will not be eligible** for this treatment. The Department urges borrowers to sign up today. [Visit PSLF.gov to learn more and apply](https://pslf.gov).

Part 3. Make the student loan system more manageable for current and future borrowers

Income-based repayment plans have long existed within the U.S. Department of Education. However, the Biden-Harris Administration is proposing a rule to create a new income-driven repayment plan that will substantially reduce future monthly payments for lower- and middle-income borrowers.

The rule would:

- Require borrowers to pay no more than 5% of their discretionary income monthly on undergraduate loans. This is down from the 10% available under the most recent income-driven repayment plan.
- Raise the amount of income that is considered non-discretionary income and therefore is protected from repayment, guaranteeing that no borrower earning under 225% of the federal poverty level—about the annual equivalent of a \$15 minimum wage for a single borrower—will have to make a monthly payment.
- Forgive loan balances after 10 years of payments, instead of 20 years, for borrowers with loan balances of \$12,000 or less.
- Cover the borrower's unpaid monthly interest, so that unlike other existing income-driven repayment plans, no borrower's loan balance will grow as long as they make their monthly payments—even when that monthly payment is \$0 because their income is low.

The Biden-Harris Administration is working to quickly implement improvements to student loans. Again, the Department urges borrowers to sign up for email updates from the U.S. Department of Education.

House Republicans Propose Student Loan Plan.

House Education and Labor Committee Ranking Member Virginia Foxx (R-NC-05), Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY-21), and Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN-03) introduced the *Responsible Education Assistance through Loan (REAL) Reforms Act*, which seeks to scale down student loan forgiveness programs. While the [legislation](#) is not expected to progress in the current Congress, it indicates a potential Republican approach to student loans if they regain power in Congress next year. In response, House Education and Labor Committee Chair Bobby Scott (D-VA-03) stated the proposal “misses the mark and would leave students and families worse off.”

The bill would eliminate public service loan forgiveness, the federal program that provides debt relief to public servants who make 10 years of payments on their loans. Income-driven repayment options would also be replaced with a program that pegs monthly payments to 15 percent of a borrowers’ discretionary income. Borrowers would make payments until they pay off their principal balance, plus 10 years’ worth of interest. Loan forgiveness after 20-25 years of payment would be eliminated, and a mandatory minimum payment of \$25 would be instituted. Interest capitalization on federal student loans would also be eliminated, and Pell grants would be expanded to short-term programs, including those that are online or run by proprietary institutions. Lastly, the legislation would limit federal lending for graduate programs, eliminating the Grad PLUS loan program for new borrowers and instituting a \$25,000 annual cap on direct graduate loans with a \$100,000 lifetime limit.

House Democrats File Amicus Brief in Affirmative Action Case.

On Monday, House Education and Labor Committee Chair Bobby Scott (D-VA-03) and 64 Democrats filed an amicus brief in the case of *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard College*. House Democrats urged the Supreme Court to uphold race-conscious admissions policies and described the need for such policies due to a “significant underrepresentation of African Americans, Hispanics, and many Asian Americans in colleges and universities across the country.” The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments on October 31.

Senate Confirms Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

The Senate on Thursday confirmed Nasser Paydar to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education. Dr. Paydar was formerly the chancellor of Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis and executive vice president of Indiana University. He was a faculty member at Indiana University for more than 36 years, and previously chaired the Department of Mechanical Engineering, among other leadership positions. President Joe Biden nominated Dr. Paydar for the Department’s most senior position overseeing higher education on March 18.

Federal Judge Grants Preliminary Approval to Borrower Defense Settlement.

A federal judge ruled that the class-action settlement that would automatically cancel more than \$6 billion for more than 200,000 student loan borrowers with pending borrower defense claims was “fair, reasonable, and adequate to the members of the class.” The deal is a “grand slam home run” for borrowers, the judge said during the hearing, but indicated outstanding legal issues remain on whether the Education Department has the power to forgive the debt. Although colleges made their arguments at the hearing, the federal judge was skeptical to their viewpoints, saying, “I don’t see much harm to you.” However, the judge noted the reputational harm to schools named in the lawsuit was a “possible legitimate concern.” On Tuesday, the administration wrote in a related filing that “settlement relief does not constitute an approved or successful borrower defense claim,” adding that the settlement does not have any bearing on whether the Department will or will not punish colleges in the future. Additional time will be allowed to file motions to intervene until August 25. A hearing on the final approval is set for November 3.

Meanwhile the Career Education Colleges and Universities (CECU) requested records from the Education Department, White House, and Justice Department related to proposed changes to the regulations surrounding the borrower defense to repayment program and the pending settlement in *Sweet v. Cardona*.

Congress

The House is in recess until September 14, 2022. WSU is met with the staff of Sen. Debbie Stabenow Friday, September 2, 2022 regarding the status of various community development projects, and the week after with the staff of Sen. Gary Peters.

WSU had a meeting with Dr. Allen of the Department of Chemistry to update the department on the status of the REUSE community development project and with Dr. Carole Miller regarding the water improvement community development project. All of the projects submitted last fiscal year that will get funding will be released when Congress returns. It is expected Congress will have to pass a continuing resolution that will last beyond the election cycle as there is simply no way Congress will finish the plethora of funding bills before the end of the fiscal year. In all reality, Congress will likely NOT finish any funding bill until the end of January 2023.

STATE AFFAIRS

Budget Updates

Since the budget's signing in on July 20, 2022, the Office of Government and Community Affairs has been working with various Departments to ensure that Wayne State applies for and receives various funding opportunities from the budget. More specifically, the office is working on each of the following:

MiDOCS: The budget included \$6.4 million GF/GP resulting in a \$24.2 million gross level of support for MiDOCS. This investment proposal reflects current year funding. Wayne State is on the MiDOCS Board is currently working with the board to draft, approve, and execute a new contract for the upcoming fiscal year.

Poison Center Funding: The budget included \$1,121,400 in funding for the Poison Center. This funding, and its associated federal match money, directly supports the statewide activities of the Poison Center at WSU. WSU's Government and Community Affairs is having conversations for the upcoming fiscal year to see increased, cost-of-living adjustments for the program to better position the program moving forward.

Center for Behavioral Health & Justice: The budget includes \$1,650,000 for a 4-year pilot certification program to train social workers to manage crisis stabilization to increase the number is social workers managing crisis stabilization. The Office of Government and Community Affairs is working with the School of Social Work to submit its RFP to secure the funding for the 4-year pilot program.

Wayne State University x Karmanos Cancer Institute: The budget included \$100 million for Wayne State to partner with the Karmanos Cancer Institute to design and build a facility dedicated to medical education, cancer research, and community health in Detroit. Wayne State's Government and Community Affairs team is working with Office of Finance and Business Operations, Office of Facilities Planning and Management, and the Office of General Counsel to finalize the grant agreement with the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

Update on the Legislature

The Legislature is only scheduled for a handful of days between now and the election in November. The current speculation is that the Governor's Office and Senate are working on an economic development supplemental that would provide additional funding into the newly created SOAR fund. This fund is used to fund large economic

development projects that need more assistance than the MEDC can traditionally offer through its existing programs. Based on conversations with Legislative leaders and staff, the House has not expressed the same desire or interest to move forward with an economic development supplemental. In fact, House Appropriations Chairman Thomas Albert released a statement on September 1 saying the House is opposed to additional spending when there is so much uncertainty in the economy.

Legislation Update

WSU DGCA continues to monitor state legislation and regulations that could impact our students, our faculty, our community, and our ability to carry out our mission. When formulating a university position, we work with internal subject matter experts to both craft the best position and to provide feedback to legislators. Further, we work collaboratively with both our URC partners and all 15 public universities to leverage our collective positions and create favorable outcomes as often as possible. We are currently monitoring, and actively engaging, on several pieces of legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- House Bill 4512 (Hornberger) clarifying the removal procedures for university board members. WSU is monitoring this legislation.
- House Bill 4615 (Marino) requiring candidates for university boards to file a financial disclosure. WSU is monitoring this legislation.
- Senate Joint Resolution F (McBroom) requiring university board meetings to be open to the public. This is a constitutional amendment proposal requiring a heightened 2/3 vote of both chambers before being put onto the ballot during the next general election for approval by the people. WSU is monitoring this initiative.
- House Joint Resolution K (Hornberger) requiring university board meetings to be open to the public. This is a constitutional amendment proposal requiring a heightened 2/3 vote of both chambers before being put onto the ballot during the next general election for approval by the people. WSU is monitoring this initiative.
- Senate Bills 637 (Chang) and 638 (Outman) create important opportunities for co-response models and community crisis responses teams to actively engage in the criminal legal process, potentially diverting individuals who would be better served through behavioral health interventions from the traditional criminal justice system. This legislation was actively informed by WSU team members and the WSU Center for Behavioral Health and Justice. WSU is supportive of these bills. These bills were signed by the Governor.
- Senate Bill 582 (Wojno) would prohibit a public body, including a university, from carrying out research involving canines. Legislation that aims to restrict, or arbitrarily eliminate the ability to conduct potentially life-saving research, is not something WSU supports.

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- House Bill 4881 (Hertel) would prohibit a public body, including a university, from carrying out research involving canines. Legislation that aims to restrict, or arbitrarily eliminate the ability to conduct potentially life-saving research, is not something WSU supports.
 - House Bill 5183 (Tate) which moves up the effective date of legislation signed last term allowing student athletes to be compensated for their name, image, or likeness. WSU is monitoring this legislation.
 - House Bills 5556 (Roth) and 5557 (Damoose) allowing community colleges to offer a four-year bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) degree program. This legislation is a reintroduction and has been consistently reintroduced each legislative session for nearly 18 years. WSU opposes this legislation but is actively working with the bill sponsors to convene a stakeholder workgroup to discuss the issue, non-legislative solutions, and ways the legislature could leverage existing infrastructure to support rural healthcare needs.
 - House Bills 5361 (VanSingel) and 5362 (Steckloff) would prohibit a community college from collecting local taxes if they began offering a new 4 year degree program. This legislation is in response to HBs 5556-5557, and strategically creates opportunity to further the discussion around the roles of public post-secondary institutions in the state as well as their funding streams. WSU is supportive of this legislation.
 - Senate Bill 1098 (Bayer) would provide student loan repayment for teachers.

Recently passed and enacted Legislation that the Office of Government and Community Affairs was monitoring includes:

- Senate Bill 1012 (VanderWall) creates a new program to aimed to increase behavioral health professionals in the State. The legislation creates the student mental health apprenticeship retention and training internship program. Please note: the final passed budget includes \$100 million in funding for all forms of mental and behavioral health funding, of which, this program is eligible.
- Senate Bill 576 (Zorn) and 577 (Wojno) amend the Michigan Penal Code and Age of Majority Act, respectively, to change ages related to the sale, purchase, possession, and use of tobacco products from 18 to 21, and to make other related changes. The age increase would match the age threshold in current federal law.

Appointments

The Division of Government and Community Affairs monitors and engages in the Gubernatorial Appointment process to ensure that Warrior voices are at the tables where decisions are being made. Recent successes and efforts include:

Michigan Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee: Safwan Badr, M.D., of West Bloomfield, is the chair of internal medicine for Wayne State University School of Medicine. He holds a Doctor of Medicine from Damascus University School of Medicine and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Tennessee. Dr. Badr is appointed to represent physicians for a term commencing August 25, 2022, and expiring October 1, 2023. He succeeds Anthony Ognjan whose term expired October 1, 2021.

Juvenile Justice Committee: WSU DGCA has worked with the School of Social Work to help promote the appointment of Terri Gilbert to the Juvenile Justice Committee. For background, Terri was a former administrator of JJ and Child Welfare programs at MDHHS and since then has been working at UM and WSU Center for Behavioral Health and Justice (CBHJ) on issues related to diversion and deflection of youth from detention. She is incredibly knowledgeable about the system – strengths and weaknesses – and has been a tireless advocate for system change. In her current role at WSU CBHJ she is working closely with Wayne County Circuit Court Chief Judge Tim Kenny on creating better screening, stronger legal representation from earlier points in time’ and instituting continuous quality improvement efforts.

Legislators and Other Elected Officials on Campus

The Division is always looking for opportunities to bring legislators to our campus. This summer, we were able to host several elected officials on campus for various events, such as the I-94 Bridge Announcement and FY22 Budget signing, among others.

- Governor Gretchen Whitmer
- Lieutenant governor Garlin Gilchrist
- Attorney General Dana Nessel
- Congresswomen Brenda Lawrence
- State Senator Adam Hollier
- State Senator Stephanie Chang
- State Representative Abraham Aiyash
- State Representative Felicia Brabec

Student Legislative Engagement

The Division of Government and Community Affairs partners with students, faculty and staff who have an interest in participating in the legislative process. Members of Science Policy Network-Detroit, a student group at WSU that aims to break down barriers

between policy makers and researchers, has continued to work with our office to increase efforts in Lansing and Washington, D.C. The WSU DGCA team will also participate in an upcoming course to discuss how scientists can engage the public, including elected officials, on important research that impacts the state and public at large.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

DGCA continues its work of supporting the various colleges and divisions at the university as well as engaging external community partners. Stacie Clayton, Community Affairs Director, continues to provide internal support and guidance to the university's various colleges, schools and divisions on special events, programs, and other matters as needed.

Partnership with North American International Auto Show

The Detroit North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) also returned as an in-person event in September. In an effort coordinated by DGCA, students from the School of Social Work conducted a demographic survey of the auto show attendees, compiled the data and prepared a report as part of their Fall semester studies. The SOSW's Dr. David Merolla led this unique and exciting opportunity for our students.

Sponsorships

African World Festival

Wayne State University maintained its annual sponsorship of the 39th Annual African World Festival. This year the festival returned to Hart Plaza and WSU had a constant presence for all three days, July 15-17. Over 75 additional WSU students, faculty and administrators volunteered under our five tents, in addition to the doctors at the Mobile Health Unit. These outstanding volunteers offered festival attendees a variety of information and swag related to college admissions, financial aid, academic programming and the university's involvement in the Detroit metro area.

WSU once again provided its signature Health Is Wealth Pavilion, which included medical services such as COVID-19 vaccinations, blood work screening, blood pressure screening and testing, HIV testing, patient education, and referrals to primary care doctors and specialists. Units represented included the College of Nursing, Wayne Health, the Black Medical Association, Pediatrics, the Michigan Poison Control Center and various student medical groups.

Provost Mark Kornbluh, Vice President Patrick Lindsey and School of Medicine's Dr. Richard Baker represented WSU during the festival's opening ceremonies. Below are photos:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govcomaffairs/sets/72177720300686946/>

Occupy the Corner

In June, WSU alumnus and Detroit City Council President Mary Sheffield held her Occupy the Corner event. This family event featured bike-giveaways and entertainment. Stacie Clayton and Admission's Nick Doyle joined numerous community representatives and provided enrollment and Heart of Detroit information.

2022 MANA de Metro Detroit Brindis Luncheon

In July, WSU sponsored and the DGCA coordinated attendees from CLAAS and the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies for the 2022 MANA de Metro Detroit Brindis Luncheon where several Latinas received scholarships to attend WSU. Since 1976, MANA de Metro has awarded over \$144,000 in scholarships.

Detroit Branch NAACP's (B.R.I.D.G.E.S.) Program

Also in July, DGCA facilitated a virtual learning experience for the Detroit Branch NAACP's Building Resources In Detroit, Giving Expanded Services (B.R.I.D.G.E.S.) program for 15 young people ages 14-22. The virtual discussion provided information about WSU and programs for college prep, the benefits of attending Wayne State University and the support it offers students. A few of the young adults currently attend Wayne State. The program administrator, Jermain Peguese, is a recent WSU graduate and currently sits on the Wayne State Adult Learners Council and is a Warrior Way Back Ambassador.

2022 Detroit Jazz Festival

For the first time since 2019, the Detroit Jazz Festival (DJF) returned to an in-person event and took place over Labor Day Weekend. Wayne State University's Department of Music was represented from the very first note until the end of the festival with performances by faculty and students. WSU Professor Chris Collins serves as the Artistic Director of the DJF and is also president of the Detroit Jazz Festival Foundation.

WSU was the Presenting Sponsor of the DJF Information & Accessibility Booth. This booth was in a prime location with WSU signage and included Maps, Wheel Chairs, Hearing Enhancement Devices, and calls for Golf Cart Shuttles for attendees. The President's Office, The College of Fine, Performing and Communications Arts, and The Division of Government and Community Affairs collaborated to support this event.

Amigos de SER Luncheon

Also in September, WSU was a sponsor for the 50th Amigos de SER Business Luncheon. This annual event is one of Detroit's largest civic events that supports workforce development programs, financial literacy, and educational opportunities for Detroit youth.