

Submitted By: Laurie M. Lauzon Clabo, PhD  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT

### **HIGHLIGHTS FROM SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

#### **Academic Student Affairs and Global Engagement**

Office of International Programs

OIP is preparing for its fourth year of hosting 25 of Africa's emerging public management leaders for a six-week Leadership Institute sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. The Mandela Washington Fellowship provides academic coursework, mentoring, networking, professional opportunities and local community engagement. Wayne State's Fellows are from 19 nations across the continent.

OIP's Office of Fellowships has enjoyed an unprecedented year of success with student fellowships. Among the awards:

- Adaure Iwuh, a fourth-year public health student, is one of only 60 students from around the nation selected as a 2024 Harry S. Truman Scholar. She is the first Wayne State student to win a Truman Scholarship and this year's only recipient from a Michigan college or university. The Truman Scholarship is one of the highly competitive, national student awards and provides financial support for graduate study and leadership training. Iwuh wants to help shape U.S. public health policies by improving preterm birth and maternal mortality rates.
- WSU has two Goldwater Scholar awardees for 2024: Siblings Elyas Khan and Zakaria Khan (who also received a Fulbright Research Award to Malaysia). The Goldwater provides scholarships to sophomores and juniors who intend to pursue research careers in the natural sciences, math and engineering, with the goal of ensuring the U.S. is producing the number of highly qualified professionals needed in critical fields.
- Two students received awards from the U.S. Department of State's Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, which enables students of limited financial means to study or intern abroad. Awardee Alex Ashaya is studying abroad through WSU's Junior Year in Munich program, and Fahmida Khanom is participating in a faculty-led program for Central Europe Business.

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- Seven students received \$1,500 Douglass-O'Connell Scholars Grants, which can be used toward more than 20 Summer Global Internship programs offered by nonprofit study abroad and intercultural exchange organization CIEE. Awardees include Seynabou Coly, Waziye Mulibwa, Joleigh Jackson, Ciera Higgins, Caria Taylor, Cierra Henry and Chayse Covington.

## Transfer Student Success Center

Wayne State and Macomb Community College have created a new guaranteed-transfer admission partnership that expands access to college degrees, meaningful careers and economic prosperity. The new Transfer Pathways Agreement, which includes 20 academic programs at Wayne State, helps students maximize credits earned toward a Macomb associate degree when transferring to WSU to complete a bachelor's. The program also supports the state's 'Sixty by 30' goal to increase the number of residents with a college degree or professional credential to 60% by the year 2030.

## Student Success

Students using supplemental instruction increased 43% from winter 2023 to winter 2024, and students completing tutoring appointments increased 60% during that same time.

## Warrior 360

Warrior 360 will welcome 150 new students in the upcoming academic year. 127 are first-generation students/Heart of Detroit Pledge recipients, and 125 identify as Black/African American.

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W360 will host Summer of Success workshops designed to support incoming FTIAC students. Workshops are intended to directly improve a student's ability to navigate campus, identify gaps in preparation and activate correlating campus resources, and begin building a community with other first-year students, staff and faculty. Workshops include Math Mindset and Mastering Math, College Writing and Research, Making the Grade and Getting Engaged, and Becoming a Campus Expert.

## Student Financial Aid

OSFA will begin Know B4 U Go sessions in June to assist students in determining their potential balance at WSU and how much aid they are receiving so they understand their financial status before the start of the fall term.

Virtual and in-person FAFSA completion events are scheduled through July. 40 events have been offered and 24 additional are scheduled, with more on tap if needed.

## Undergraduate Admissions

By the end of May, WSU has received more than 19,000 applications, a record number and an increase of 11% over the same time last year. A record number of students also have been admitted (13,000+), an increase of 9%.

Detroit recruitment events for admitted students to assist them with their next steps for enrollment have been held for Central High School, Renaissance, Crocket Midtown Academy, Communication and Media Arts High School, Western International High School, University Prep, Cass Tech, Frontier International Academy, Cesar Chavez, Hamtramck High School and Detroit Cristo Rey.

## **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

[Wayne State Anthropology's Malcolm X House Project was honored with the Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation](#). Since 2021, in collaboration with local nonprofit [Project We Hope Dream & Believe](#), WSU's Department of Anthropology has been working to restore the once-home of social revolutionary and civil rights leader, Malcolm X. The highest honor for preservation projects, the Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation

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recognizes standout projects across both peninsulas, exemplifying the collaboration and deep impact preservation can have in Michigan communities. Recipients are meticulously selected by Michigan's State Historic Preservation Office and the State Historic Preservation Review Board.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences hosted the 11th annual [Lipids@Wayne conference on May 1](#). Lipids@Wayne is a Midwest forum for the exchange of ideas and knowledge in the field of lipid research. Annual research symposia and bi-weekly seminars are collaborative platforms for researchers in various disciplines. The 2024 Lipids@Wayne symposium focused on the diverse roles of lipid-mediated signaling and organelle contact site trafficking, along with the mechanistic regulation of these important pathways.

The [WSU Economics Club partnered with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago for an insightful tour of economic development in Detroit](#) this May. Students had the unique opportunity to see the city through the eyes of a Senior Business Economist from the Federal Reserve, gaining valuable insights into Detroit's overall economic progress. This experience provided students with a deeper understanding of the real economic dynamics shaping Detroit.

Wayne State's resident Peregrine Falcons, Herman and Lillie, welcomed a new chick this season. The proud parents will care for their chick until it fledges in June. Viewers from around the world can watch the (often dramatic) nesting season unfold via [WSU's Falcon Cam](#) and the [@WSUFalcons Instagram](#).

In April, four CLAS faculty members were honored with [BOG Faculty Recognition Awards](#), celebrating their outstanding achievements over the past academic year. This long-standing tradition highlights the remarkable contributions and accomplishments of our faculty, showcasing their dedication to excellence.

The WSU neuroscience program [dedicated Brain Day/Mental Health Awareness Month to conducting educational demonstrations for Troy Public Schools](#), fostering awareness and understanding of neuroscience and mental health among students.

At just 18, Cassidy Conley, a dedicated political science and law student at Wayne State, is already making an impact as an intern for Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan. [Featured on the City of Detroit's Instagram account, Cassidy showcased her passion for the city by highlighting and visiting several often-overlooked neighborhoods](#), challenging negative stereotypes and promoting a positive image of Detroit. Her initiative embodies the spirit of Detroit, inspiring others to "Be Like Cassidy and Rewrite The Hype."

From the tranquil forests of northern Michigan to the state's expansive waterways, WSU faculty and students are pioneering solutions to today's most pressing environmental

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challenges. [Here's how CLAS researchers](#) are using hands-on learning in sustainability and environmental sciences.

The [CLAS Alumni and Philanthropy team, along with the University's Division of Development and Alumni Affairs, has partnered to support Cass Community Social Services](#), a Detroit-based agency dedicated to providing food, housing, health services, mental health support and job programs in areas of concentrated poverty.

Environmental sciences students and faculty represented Wayne State University at the [International Association for Great Lakes Research's \(IAGLR\) 67th annual conference](#) this month. Environmental Sciences Program Director Donna Kashian and a team of students will present several talks at the prestigious conference. WSU is one of 23 conference sponsors.

The [International Association for Great Lakes Research named Donna Kashian, Ph.D., professor of biological sciences and director of environmental science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, as president](#). Kashian previously served as vice president of the board.

The Grosscup Museum of Anthropology, Detroit's only anthropology museum, opened its latest exhibit. [The Art of the Drink: From Metro Detroit to KwaZulu-Natal](#) explores material culture emerging from the production and imbibing of grain-based alcoholic beverages. Featured artifacts related to drinking are from Asia, Africa, and South America as well as North America and Europe and include Zulu beer pots, Peruvian chicha vessels, Swedish beer mugs, as well as items from Prohibition-era Detroit. The exhibit will be on display through Fall 2024.

### **Irvin D. Reid Honors College**

Honors hosted an informational session on April 3 designed by Honors alumnus Dr. Cedric Mutebi ('18) on study abroad experiences for students of color. It included a panel of Honors students who have traveled across the globe who shared their experiences and offered their advice on traveling and resources to attending students.

The Honors College Research Fair was held on April 9 in the Community Room of the UGL and featured poster presentations from 15 Honors students highlighting their undergraduate research projects. The event was well attended by students, staff and faculty and gave participating students the opportunity to talk about their research experience and how the knowledge from the project is being applied. Represented research projects included those from the natural and social sciences.

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The Irvin D. Reid Honors College Graduation Ceremony was held on May 1 in the Hilberry Gateway complex to celebrate our students graduating with university and departmental Honors. The event was attended by more than 90 graduates and more than 200 guests, and included three Honors senior speakers (Nia Jones, Max O'Rourke, Zori Martinez), greetings from Acting Dean Elena Past and Dean John Covino, and joined by deans from CLAS, CFPCA, Engineering, Social Work, MISB and Nursing. The ceremony was followed by a reception in the lobby.

### **Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences**

The university's new **3T PRISMA MRI** was placed inside the Applebaum Building after five months of preparatory construction. The 17,000-pound MRI is the second of its kind in the nation and the first of its kind to receive FDA approval.

The **Pharmacy Practice** department continues to be productive in research and service, with recent accomplishments including: Dr. Amber Lanae Martirisov received the Excellence in Innovation Award from the Michigan Pharmacists Association. Preceptor and alumna Susan Findley was awarded the Preceptor of the Year Award from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Dr. Christine Rabinak received a most-cited paper award for her publication, "A common genetic variant in fatty acid amide hydrolase is linked to alterations in fear extinction in a racially diverse, nonclinical sample of adults." Dr. Susan Davis and Dr. Michael Veve received a top poster award at the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases. Dr. Paul Kilgore has been appointed chair of the Research Committee for the Consortium of Universities for Global Health. Third-year student Shannon Habba, who spearheaded the well-publicized project #ATimeToTalk: A Strategy to Destigmatize Depression in a Community Pharmacy Setting, has received the National American Pharmacist Association Student Leadership Award, guided by project mentors Dr. Brittany Stewart and Dr. Kyle Burghardt. Dr. Joseph Fava was honored by WSU with the Community Engagement Award for his ongoing immunization training and outreach efforts.

In **Pharmaceutical Sciences**, Dr. Zhengping Yi was honored by WSU with an Outstanding Graduate Director Service Award.

The **Physical Therapy** program hosted its annual PT Research Symposium in the Applebaum Building on April 22, featuring renowned guest speaker Dr. Bhupinder Singh, who presented "Leveraging Your PT Education." Students resented their final research platform projects to an audience that included special guest President Espy. Also in Physical Therapy, both Dr. Nora Fritz and Dr. Marie Eve Pepin were awarded 2024 Health Care Sciences Teaching Awards, nominated by students. Dr. Moh Malek was awarded the Charles H. Gershenson Distinguished Faculty Fellowship by WSU.

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Dr. Georgia Young from the **Nurse Anesthesia** program and students Nicole Langley and Katelynn Barszczowski traveled to Honduras to provide surgical care to the community.

Assistant Clinical Professor of **Medical Laboratory Science** MaryAnne Stewart was inducted into Wayne State's Academy of Teachers. Also in MLS, Program Director Karen Apolloni earned the Applied Health Sciences Teaching Award.

In the **Pathologists' Assistant** program, Nichole Bradford won the Applied Health Sciences Part-Time Teaching Award.

**Physician Assistant Studies** students and faculty advocated for the advancement of their profession with legislators in Lansing. Assistant Professor Sara Lolar served as a co-facilitator for a PA faculty skills symposium for educators from across the nation.

The **Occupational Therapy** new doctoral program was approved at the April 26 BOG meeting that took place in the Applebaum Building. Dr. Preethy Samuel was awarded the 2024 Barbara W. LeRoy Research Initiative Award.

## **College of Nursing**

The college's Master of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs are once again ranked among the best in the country and second highest in Michigan. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the Wayne State MSN at No. 38 and DNP at No. 49 in their annual list of the nation's best graduate nursing schools.

The College of Nursing hosted its annual Urban Health Research Conference on Wednesday, April 17, in the Student Center Building. More than 300 students, faculty, clinicians and scholars from various disciplines attended the conference, which focused on Building Trust in Health Care Among Diverse Populations. Keynote speakers S. Raquel Ramos, PhD, MBA, MSN, FNP, FNYAM, FAHA, from the Yale University School of Nursing and Schenita Davis Randolph, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, from the Duke University School of Nursing highlighted the conference, delivering presentations on using technology as a tool to facilitate trust, access, and reach of behavioral interventions in historically marginalized populations; and partnering with communities to improve trust in the research process. The conference also featured more than 20 poster presentations from students and scholars at Wayne State and other institutions across the country, along with panel discussions and breakout sessions led by College of Nursing and School of Medicine faculty members.

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We are celebrating the recent accomplishments of several College of Nursing faculty members, including new grants, professional appointments and awards. These achievements reinforce our faculty's standing as experts in their fields and nationally recognized leaders who empower health for our city, region and state. Assistant Professor Seung Hee Choi, PhD, RN, is the recipient of the Spring 2024 Office of Health Research Harriet H. Werley Faculty Research Award. The \$5,000 award will support Dr. Choi's study, "Impact of Frequency of Distributing Gift Cards on Engagement of a Web-App for Smoking Cessation," which compares engagements with a web app (WeQuit) between two groups of 10 smoking couples, using a two-arm Quasi experimental design.

Assistant Professor (Clinical) Angela Bowman, DNP, ANP-BC, has been elected president of the Detroit Chapter of the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners. Dr. Bowman joins Drs. Nancy George and Mary Anne McCoy as the third MICNP from the Wayne State College of Nursing faculty.

Associate Professor (Clinical) Nancy George, PhD, FNP-BC, FAANP, has been elected as the Membership Committee chair for the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners Executive Board.

Assistant Professors (Clinical) Cynthera McNeill, DNP, AGPCNP, FAANP, and Tara Walker, DNP, AGACNP, were among a select group to receive a 2024 Nightingale Award for Nursing Excellence from the Oakland University School of Nursing. Dr. McNeill received the Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing Research, and Dr. Walker received the Award for Excellence in Community Nursing. They are the first Wayne State University College of Nursing faculty members to receive Nightingale Awards.

Associate Professor (Clinical) Leanne Nantais-Smith, PhD, NNP-C, FAANP, has been elected to serve as chair of the National Association of Neonatal Nurses-Advanced Practice Council, beginning September 2024. Dr. Nantais-Smith was also appointed as a liaison to the NANN-AP Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education Network.

Assistant Professor (Clinical) Umeika Stephens, DNP, PMHNP-BC, FNP-BC, has been appointed to the American Nurses Association's Michigan Foundation Board of Directors.

Clinical Instructor Nicole Wheeler, DNP, CNM, FACNM, has been named a Fellow of the American College of Nurse Midwives.



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PhD student Krista Wonderly, BSN, RN, CCRN, received a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation Student Award to support her dissertation project, "Understanding Anticipatory Grief to Support Mental Health and Decision Making in Black Family Members of ICU Patients," chaired by Dr. Rick Zimmerman.

## School of Social Work

Accelerate Mobility for Our Students:

- The WSU School of Social Work has been named among the top 50 social work graduate programs in the country by U.S. News & World Report. The school's Master of Social Work Program (MSW) ranking [moved up in the ranks to the top 11 percent of ranked schools nationwide](#) due to innovative changes including the addition of specialized focal areas that allow students to customize their learning experience to gain additional skills that allow them to meet the needs of the diverse clients and communities and a fully-online asynchronous program.
- MSW graduates Alondra Barajas and Jesus Cruz-Navarro [founded Unidad de Guerrero/a\(s\)](#), a Latino/a-focused and led social work student organization. The first of its kind in the School, Unidad de Guerrero/a(s) provides a safe space for Latina/o/x social work students to discuss issues and challenges that they face and to find ways to empower their community through practice.
- Wayne State University School of Social Work Associate Professor (Clinical) and the Education Technology Coordinator Fay Keys and Assistant Professor (Teaching) and Bachelor of Social Work Program Director Norma Love-Schropshire were [selected to serve as fellows for the university's recently announced Online Course Quality Fellows Program](#). This collaborative initiative underscores the School's dedication to elevating student success through excellence in course design and instruction.
- The School of Social Work [announced its 2024 Teaching and Service Award recipients](#). Teaching Award recipients include Associate Professor J. Lloyd Allen; Acting Associate Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs, and Professor Suzanne Brown; and Part-time Faculty Anthony King. Service Award recipients include Administrative Assistant II Juanitta Hill; Academic Services Office II Andre Iadipaolo; and Assistant Professor Kess Ballentine.

Empower Health for Our Urban Neighborhoods:

- Associate Professor J. Lloyd Allen is pioneering research on the mental health challenges encountered by Black male students, such as stigma and limited access to services, [with the use of hip-hop as a therapeutic tool](#) enabling students to express themselves and connect with their experiences.
- Postdoctoral Fellow Bakari Wallace is [examining how societal attitudes impact the role of Black fathers in their children's academic lives](#). Wallace noted that many of his study subjects felt unwelcomed in schools, others overlooked or dismissed. At

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the other end of the spectrum, Wallace discovered, some fathers felt as though they were being unduly praised just for showing natural concern for their children's education.

- The [naloxone vending machine program](#) and the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice (School of Social Work) delivered several new vending machines across the state during the last quarter. To date, the program has placed 55 vending machines in 35 counties across the state, which have dispensed over 20,000 naloxone kits (or 40,000 doses of naloxone).

Fuel Innovation for Our Competitiveness:

- Professor and Associate Dean for Research Richard Smith is at the [forefront of innovative research tackling climate-induced challenges](#) through the use of Accessible Real-time AI-based Flood Tracking (A-RAFT). His recent participation in the 2023 pitch competition at the National Science Foundation Convergence Research (CORE) Institute Bootcamp led to selection for the NSF CORE Institute Incubator Program at the University of California, San Diego.
- In partnership with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), WSU Social Work is [developing a training and credentialing program to support Michigan's crisis services workforce](#). The first offering will be a 40-hour CE training to prepare bachelor's level social workers and counselors for crisis work slated to launch in August 2024. The training will also be offered as a for-credit course starting in 2025, allowing degree seeking students to earn the credential.
- In partnership with the Undergraduate Library, the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice (School of Social Work) [hosted](#) "With Love, From Inside," an original play crafted by the Dropped Keys Theatre Company, featuring University of Michigan undergraduate theater students alongside currently and formerly incarcerated writers and performers.
- The SSW Center for Behavioral Health and Justice operates 26 projects across six different initiatives with community partners in 43 counties across Michigan and a total operating budget of \$2.8 million. With new partnerships brought in during the last quarter, the CBHJ is working with over half of Michigan's counties.
- In the News: The School of Social Work: [Second Wave Michigan](#), [WDET](#), [Associate Press](#), [Bridge Michigan](#), and [Crain's](#) and the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice: [The Oakland Press](#), [WEMU 89.1](#), and [ABC57](#)

## **Ilitch School of Business**

### **School**

The first annual all-board meeting and summer social was held Tuesday, May 21, 2024. The Ilitch School's ten volunteer board members were invited to share their work and

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hear from Dean Kleist. The overarching goal of this event is strengthening awareness and collaboration across the school over the next academic year. The boards in attendance included all six academic department advisory boards, two special-interest/program advisory boards (Student-Managed Investment Fund and Belinsky Entrepreneurship Learning Laboratory), the Alumni Council and the Board of Visitors. Approximately 170 volunteers were extended an invitation and 50 attended.

Each board presented its purpose, structure, key events/priorities, goals for 2024-25 and areas of collaboration the members are interested in exploring. Dean Kleist also gave a State of the School address and opened the floor to questions. Feedback was resoundingly positive.

Additional Ilitch School news:

- [Ilitch School Among best part-time M.B.A. programs in U.S.](#)
- [Michigan universities change up MBA programs to meet demands--with Dean Virginia Kleist](#)
- [Board of Governors approves new Ilitch School joint M.B.A.-M.S. in Accounting, and M.S. in Organizational Leadership](#)

## **Students – College to Careers**

- [Ilitch School student Nina Goodwin presents research at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research](#)
- [Ilitch School team wins first place in case competition at healthcare supply chain conference](#)
- [Ilitch School marketing senior Jenna Lutfi tours LinkedIn, Tik Tok, Weiden + Kenney with American Advertising Federation's 2024 Most Promising Multicultural Students class](#)
- [Ilitch School student Fahmida Khanom receives \\$3500 scholarship through the U.S. Department of State](#)
- [Detroit police officers learn valuable leadership skills in the Ilitch School's Detroit Police Department Leadership Academy](#)

## **Faculty**

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[Faculty-led study abroad trips](#) provide insightful experiences, instrumental to helping our students grow into insightful, global business leaders. Current/recent trips include:

- Trip to NYC led by [Basma Bekdache](#), Assistant Professor of Teaching in Finance, May 18 - May 25, 2024:
  - 8-day program to New York City. First-hand fundamental knowledge of the day-to-day interactions between finance professionals (i.e., investment bankers, traders, portfolio managers, private equity fund managers etc.) and global financial markets by visiting various Finance organizations in New York city, the second largest financial hub in the world.
  - Visits to the NYSE floor exchange, the Federal Reserve of New York, the Museum of American Finance, and international banking firms are some of the potential excursions of this program while being immersed in the world of finance by embarking on a walking tour of Wall Street.
- Trip to Central Europe led by [Kevin Ketels](#), Associate Professor of Teaching in Global Supply Chain Management, May 20, 2024 - June 4, 2024:
  - 15-day program to Poland, Germany, Czech Republic and the Netherlands. The students travel through Central Europe to learn about a variety of European companies and corporations that have left a mark on the international business community.
  - Earn 3 credit hours
  - Meetings with domestic and international companies, tours of corporate manufacturing and distribution facilities, interaction with business, government and academic professionals and tours of cultural and historic sites.
  - Deep dive into economic, political and social issues that impact international and local businesses in this region of the world. Students will visit Fontys University of Applied Sciences in Venlo, one of Wayne State Universities foreign exchange partners; and the International University of Logistics and Transport in Wrocław, Poland.

Faculty continue to publish papers in top-tier journals, including:

- [Anand Jha accepted for publication in the Journal of Financial Stability](#)
- [Prabhjot Mukandwal's research has been accepted in Journal of Supply Chain Management](#)
- [Santanu Mitra accepted for publication in the International Journal of Auditing](#)
- [Toyin Clotthey's research has been accepted in IISE Transactions](#)

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- [Francesca Toscano and Sungjounng Kwon accepted for publication in the Journal of Banking and Finance](#)

## **College of Engineering**

The Great Lakes Water Authority, which provides water to more than 40% of the population of the state of Michigan, has partnered with Wayne State University to develop a workforce and pipeline management program (PMP) to help recruit, teach and graduate the pipeline managers of the future. GLWA has hired Professor Chris Eamon to be the inaugural director of the PMP, which was initiated by John Norton, director of research and transformation for GLWA. The PMP will have four primary directives: water industry workforce development; implementation of applied research focused on pipe failures and renewal of legacy pipe; establishment of a large diameter pipe boneyard facility for education, training, and research purposes; and program growth and advancement.

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The Great Lakes Protection Fund announced an investment of more than \$1.1 million in a project led by Wayne State University that will launch and accelerate novel solutions to enhance the health of the Great Lakes and its ecosystems. The team, which also includes partners in the Huron River Watershed Council, Cleveland Water Alliance, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and Resource Recycling Systems, will create a microplastic action network that will use proven reduction strategies and new analytic tools, including a new open-source analytic engine, or "Library," for identifying environmental microplastics. The Library will empower communities with the ability to identify local pollution sources for the first time, offering new opportunities for microplastic pollution mitigation at a local level. Leading this effort for Wayne State is Yongli Wager, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering.

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A select group of Wayne State University construction management students recently embarked on an international collaboration in Roatan, Honduras. As part of the 2024 Student Passport Initiative, these students designed and installed 36 solar panels at a community center and elementary school in Flowers Bay, Roatan. This opportunity,

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made possible by Electri International which funded and coordinated the project, aimed to reduce dependency on non-renewable energy sources, thereby contributing to environmental conservation and long-term energy security for the region. Participation in the Student Passport Initiative provided these students with invaluable hands-on experience in renewable energy systems design, project management, and cross-cultural collaboration.

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Ebissa Kedir, a post-doctoral researcher working with Professor Carol Miller in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, was granted two awards by the American Society of Civil Engineers. Kedir received the Visiting International Fellowship and the ASCE StAR Fund Award, both of which are for the 2024 World Environmental and Water Resources Congress which was held last week in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Kedir was the only young professional selected for both categories of the award, which in addition to the prestige fully funded his travel, lodging, registration and expenses. He presented a paper at the event and was honored at a special awards ceremony. Kedir came to Wayne State after completing his Ph.D. in civil engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology in Roorkee, India earlier this year. His research is mainly in the fields of hydraulic modeling, water resources planning and management, groundwater engineering and sustainable management, and wastewater treatment.

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The College of Engineering will welcome more than 500 elementary, middle and high school students to campus for a variety of summer camps. The 2024 Summer Academy, offered beginning in July to rising first through 12th graders, aims to inspire the next generation of innovators by introducing age-appropriate STEM resources geared toward students' varied interests and strengths. Wayne State's Aviation Career Education Academy gives high school students first level exposure to the aviation industry, including aviation history and theory of flight. The College of Engineering is also offering a Summer High School Research Program, an opportunity for rising ninth through 12 graders the opportunity to work on emerging energy technologies, CAD/3D modeling and semiconductor engineering for six weeks. Registration is ongoing for all of these summer programs, which are made possible with the support of several

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partners including MEDC, Apple, Ford Motor Company, Continental Automotive, and the Selfridge Air National Guard.

### **College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts**

On April 26, the Art@Wayne Open House celebrated the end of the semester projects from the James Pearson Duffy Department of Art, Art History, and Design. Individual course projects were on display from Ceramics, Metalsmithing, Printmaking, Sculpture, Industrial Design, Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Digital Art, Core Studio, and Photography. The Art@Wayne Open House also celebrated the Undergraduate and Graduating Seniors Exhibition. All events took place in the Art Building and Old Main. We are hopeful that this will become an annual event.

On Friday, April 29, the Journalism Institute for Media Diversity held the 2024 Spirit of Diversity Awards Reception. This year's Spirit of Diversity Award recipient is Kat Stafford, Global Race and Justice Editor for Reuters. Receiving the Working in the Spirit of Diversity Award is Sarah Alvarez, Founder and Editor of Outlier Media. Student Achievement Awards were also presented.

Wayne State University's Department of Communication and Detroit PBS hosted the annual Collaborative Journalism Summit, organized by Montclair State University's Center for Cooperative Media. The event was held May 9-10 on Wayne State's campus and attracted journalists from across the country. The Collaborative Journalism Summit featured two days of lightning talks, workshops, and participatory discussions about a wide array of #collaborativej topics and projects.

We're incredibly proud of our Department of Communication student journalists Ronnie Martin II and Victor Jackson who covered NCAA's top NFL prospects with NBCU Academy.

Ronnie, who graduated in May, and Victor interviewed athletes and attendees, captured behind the scenes content, created stories, and watched history unfold at #NFLDraft2024.

The NBCU Academy x NFL Draft Experienceship provides students access and opportunity to build their professional skills, get real-world experience, meet industry insiders, and gain a deeper understanding of league operations. Students serve as NBCU Academy Multimedia Journalists on the ground, capturing content in videos, photos, and quotes that can be used in any recap assignments.

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The Annual Department of Communication Speech and Debate turned 90 this year! We wish all of the students and faculty involved a congratulations on an amazing season and history-making year. Featuring guest speaker, Jay Johnson, the 90th Annual Forensics and Debate Alumni Banquet held on Saturday, May 4, was well-attended by alumni, faculty and friends to celebrate a successful season of WSU Forensics and Debate. A portion of the proceeds were donated to the George Ziegelmuller Forensics Endowment Fund.

For Department of Communication students, serving their Detroit neighbors and transitioning from college to career goes hand in hand.

Most recently, Warriors in the department's capstone course for communication studies majors worked with local groups throughout the winter 2024 semester to promote anti-bullying in schools and colleges, develop campaigns against drunk driving, and foster awareness of environmental pollutants in the surrounding communities. The three projects were Love Laces, the Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities, and WSU's Center for Leadership in Environmental Awareness and Research (CLEAR).

The Maggie Allesee Department of Theatre and Dance held the 95th Annual Spring Dance Concert: Echoes of the Future. Prior to the performance on April 20, Jerwaun "Renegade" Suddun and Michigan Krump Movement dancers treated all in attendance to a presentation in the Hilberry Gateway lobby. It was an evening to remember as dance alumni and faculty, past and present, gathered for the first time in many years.

The Department of Music took center stage last month at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for an unforgettable "Salute to Detroit" concert. On full display were the University Wind Symphony, Orchestra, Jazz Band, Concert Chorale, Choral Union, and many soloists. The concert featured students from various ensembles at Wayne State University.

Bravo to Department of Music's Jonathan Lasch, assistant professor of voice, who was recently invited to perform with The Philadelphia Orchestra. The Orchestra's tour of Canada and Ann Arbor came to a conclusion on April 20 at the University of Michigan. Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nezet-Seguin led baritone Jonathan Lasch, soprano Ying Fang, the UMS Choral Union, and over 200 musicians on the Hill Auditorium stage in an impassioned performance of Brahms's A German Requiem.

## **Law School**



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Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

### ***Law School Sets Another Record in National Rankings***

*U.S. News & World Report's* 2025 Best Law School rankings ranked Wayne Law No. 55 this year, another record-high for the school. This is the seventh consecutive year of rankings increases for Wayne Law, which has risen 45 spots since 2017 despite repeated changes in the ranking methodology—a clear indication of the fundamental strength of the law school's programs. Wayne Law also ranked No. 20 in part-time law programs—the best in the state—as well as No. 46 in clinical training.

### ***Graduates' Employment Rate and Starting Salaries Reach Historic Highs***

The law school's recent innovations in career success and job placement for its J.D. graduates continue to pay off, with the class of 2023 achieving a "gold standard" employment rate of 93% within 10 months of graduation—capping a steady increase over the last seven years from a rate of 73% for the class of 2017. Average starting salaries were \$108,371, an increase of \$26,980 in the last two years. Behind that success is a revamped on-campus interview program that has increased both the number of participating employers and student engagement in the process, with clear and measurable impact: in 2021-22, employers conducted 352 interviews on campus; in 2023-24, they conducted 595. As outreach and placement have increased, so too has the footprint and reputation of the law school and university, with graduates now interviewing with a diverse range of employers in metropolitan Detroit and nationwide.

### ***Wayne Law and American Bar Foundation Host National Access to Justice Conference***

To critically examine how empirical research might provide answers to the access to civil justice crisis, the American Bar Foundation (ABF) Access to Justice Research Initiative and Wayne Law co-hosted a conference on campus in May titled, "Emerging Insights from Access to Justice Research: Translating Ideas into Action." The ABF is the world's leading research institute for the empirical and interdisciplinary study of law; its research initiative serves as a hub bridging access to civil justice scholarship and practice in the U.S. and around the world. The conference featured presentations from 14 past and current ABF/JPB Foundation Access to Justice Scholars, including Wayne Law Professor **Kirsten Matoy Carlson**, who was instrumental in bringing the event to WSU. Topics included the intersection of civil and criminal law, the role of data in justice outcomes, and the relationship of housing and environmental justice to access to justice issues. Over 100 participants from around the country attended in person and another 130 attended virtually via livestream.

### ***B.A. in Law Thrives During its First Year***

The law school's and CLAS' collaborative undergraduate B.A. in Law degree, which launched in Fall 2023, is thriving in its first year. Over 215 WSU undergraduate students

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have declared the major to date. Of those, 163 students are brand new students to WSU, illustrating the new degree's drawing power, its ability to differentiate the university from its state and regional competitors, and the potential that inheres in innovative, interdisciplinary programming that transcends traditional academic boundaries within the university.