

Points of Pride

March 2024



STRONG SPRING ENROLLMENT

IUP achieved a 6.5 percent **overall increase in enrollment** in spring 2024 compared to the spring 2023 semester, and a 90.1 percent retention rate of new, first-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students for the spring 2024 semester, the highest fall-to-spring retention rate for a cohort since 2010. This cohort also had **strong academic success** in their first semester: more than 13 percent of this group earned a perfect 4.0 grade-point average, joining 19.4 percent of undergraduates who achieved a 4.0 GPA during the fall semester.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP REAFFIRMED

The Pennsylvania Senate has confirmed the **reappointment of three members of IUP's Council of Trustees** to new terms: Laurie Kuzneski, David Osikowicz, and Nathan Spade.

CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO RURAL HEALTH



During a public reception welcoming Miko Rose, the founding dean of IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine, Senator Joe Pittman announced that as part of the 2023-24 state budget, **\$2 million was set aside for the project.** These new dollars are an investment beyond what IUP receives in the budget, Pittman said. This funding will be used largely to support the operations at the start of the medical school.

IUP's Alumni Association Board of Directors has authorized a donation of **\$500,000 to IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine.**

IUP will receive \$500,000 as part of the 2023–24 State System of Higher Education capital allocations budget for a **facilities feasibility study** for academic facilities for IUP's health sciences cluster and proposed college of osteopathic medicine. The updated long-range plan recommendation designates Johnson Hall, Uhler Hall, and Stright Hall for the health sciences cluster, with a renovated and expanded Johnson Hall as the primary location for the proposed college of osteopathic medicine.

IUP and Indiana Regional Medical Center have finalized an **affiliation agreement** that provides IUP students with the opportunity to complete their clinical experience at IRMC for the **IUP Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Technology.** The program is part of IUP's Department of Nursing and Allied Health Professions. Students who complete the program and their clinical training at IRMC could receive loan forgiveness if offered a position and agree to sign a three-year contract to work at IRMC as medical laboratory scientists.



IUP and IRMC's podcast, **Rural Health Pulse**, continues in February with an episode discussing how social determinants of health and other barriers such as food insecurity, transportation, and insurance coverage significantly impact access to quality healthcare in a rural setting. The podcasts include professionals from IRMC and IUP and are recorded by students in the IUP Department of Communications Media under the direction of communications faculty member Mark Piwinsky and produced by IUP Director of Strategic Partnerships Christina Koren. Jim Kinneer, IRMC's Chief Human Resources Officer, serves as the host.

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ACADEMY OF CULINARY ARTS PROJECT MOVING FORWARD

IUP will receive \$17.1 million in funding for the Academy of Culinary Arts long-range facilities plan as part of the 2023–24 State System of Higher Education capital allocations budget. Specifically, this funding will be used for the construction of the 45,000-square-foot educational and multipurpose commercial facility in downtown Punxsutawney adjacent to the Academy's Fairman Centre. Design is underway for this Department of General Services project, which includes the demolition of properties gifted to IUP that are adjacent to the Fairman Centre. Demolition of those vacant buildings is projected to begin in the fall.



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP and RECOGNITION

Waleed Farag (Mathematical and Computer Sciences, IUP Institute for Cyber Security) was an invited participant for a roundtable discussion with Jake Braun, acting principal deputy national cyber director from the **White House Office of the National Cyber Director**.

Three graduate programs have been selected by *U.S. News & World Report* for its **2024 Best Online Programs ranking**: online master's in criminal justice program, online master's in education, and online master's in nursing program. A total of 1,752 programs were considered for the ranking.

Rick Adkins (Mathematical and Computer Sciences) has a leadership role in a **U.S. National Science Foundation Campus Cyberinfrastructure program** grant. The project, based at the Penn State Institute for Computational and Data Sciences, has been awarded approximately \$1.1 million in funding from the National Science Foundation to develop a commonwealth-wide secure network and related cyberinfrastructure to interconnect Pennsylvania colleges and universities.

IUP, the only university in Pennsylvania recognized by the Federal Aviation Administration as an FAA Collegiate Training Institution, used funding from the federal Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant to purchase a **WingtraOne Gen II hybrid drone for IUP's Geospatial Intelligence and Unmanned Aircraft Systems Certificate Programs**. The WingtraOne is classified as a hybrid drone because it has both the ability to take off and land vertically in compact areas and to fly at altitude using fixed wings.

For the third consecutive year, IUP is one of only two universities in the United States chosen to host students participating in the **Secretariat of Research, Innovation, and Higher Education State of Yucatan scholarship**, a short-term, intensive English language and American culture program. IUP will host 80 students (two cohorts) during the spring semester for the three-week program.