

# Points of Pride

March 2025



## PROPOSED COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE MOVING FORWARD



IUP has signed 11 clinical training affiliation agreements between its proposed college of osteopathic medicine and regional medical centers and health agencies across western Pennsylvania: Armstrong County Medical Center, Broad Top Area Medical Center, Clarion Psychiatric Center, Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, Conemaugh Nason Medical Center, Hyndman Area Health Centers, Indiana Regional Medical Center, Nulton Diagnostics and Treatment Center, Penn Highlands Healthcare DuBois, The Primary Health Network, and Punxsutawney Area Hospital, with additional agreements in the pipeline. Clinical training agreements are a key step in securing accreditation from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation.



Since the beginning of the new year, two gifts totaling \$500,000 have been made for IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine: one from an anonymous donor, the other from the Fairman Family Foundation of DuBois. More than \$31 million has been allocated through state or federal funding or private giving for the project.

## CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO RURAL HEALTH EDUCATION

IUP and IRMC's joint podcast, Rural Health Pulse, continued its third season with episodes featuring Byron Stauffer, executive director of the Indiana County Center for Economic Operations; Tammy Calderone, administrator for the Armstrong-Indiana Behavioral and Developmental Health Program; and Theresa Gropelli, chair of IUP's Department of Nursing and Allied Health.



Theodore Lazzaro, owner and founder of Aestique Plastic Surgery of Greensburg, Shadyside, and Wexford, has gifted \$50,000 to IUP to establish a scholarship for students pursuing a degree in a healthcare field.

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania is funding a state-wide research study, developed by Miko Rose, founding dean of IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine and Paul Hawkins, from IUP's Applied Research Lab, to determine commonalities of physicians who commit to and stay in rural health care practice.



## STUDENT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

IUP's PsyD (doctoral psychology program) Graduate Student Organization (PGSO) is using a Pennsylvania Department of Education MASLOW grant of \$1,000 to support student mental health with a student relaxation room.

IUP received \$40,000 through Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro's It's On Us PA initiative to continue the university's work to combat campus sexual assault. Programming funded by the grant will focus on first-year students.

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## FACULTY, STAFF, and STUDENT STARS



Jackson White, a political science and economics honors double major in the Cook Honors College, was approved as a student trustee on the IUP Council of Trustees. He will begin his role after the May graduation of Trustee Shaguftha Haque.



Dr. John Wesley Lowery (Student Affairs, Student Success, and Disability Access) received the Raymond H. Goldstone Legacy of Excellence Award from the Association for Student Conduct Administration.



Dr. Edel Reilly, former interim dean of the IUP College of Education and Human Services, has been selected to serve as dean of the College of Education and Human Services.

Dr. Kelly Heider, former acting assistant vice provost for University Libraries, has accepted the position of associate vice provost for libraries and research support services.

Two IUP students will participate in the annual Research at the Capitol event: Parker Bradley, presenting "Adsorption of Ruthenium-based Photoactive Complexes on Clay and Zeolites;" his faculty mentor is Avijita Jain (Madia Department of Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Physics) and Symia Taimuty-Loomis, presenting "A Comparison of Psilocybin and Ketamine User Reports for the Treatment of Anxiety, Depression, and PTSD;" her faculty mentor is William Meil (psychology). Both students participated in IUP's 2024 Undergraduate Summer Opportunities for Applying Research (U-SOAR) Program.

## ALUMNI, FACULTY, AND STAFF GIVE BACK

IUP Food and Nutrition Professor Emerita Rita Johnson has established a scholarship for students studying food and nutrition.



Thomas Baker, '05 Cook Honors College and Madia Department of Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Physics, and his wife have committed \$100,000 to establish a scholarship to support students in chemistry or biochemistry research programs.



Michele Norwood '92, a retired administrator and founding director of IUP's University College, has gifted \$30,000 for IUP's ongoing student success initiative.



IUP graduates Primo '62 and P. Suzanne Kurtz Toccafondi '63 and Rolando Toccafondi '65, and his wife, Barbara Micks Toccafondi, have established a scholarship for students pursuing an education degree or teaching certificate.



Col. Stephen Abel, '73, a 2018 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, is continuing a 29-year tradition of giving to IUP. To date, he has provided more than \$200,000 to IUP, focusing on student support.

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## RANKINGS AND ACCOLADES

In recognition of IUP's ongoing research commitment and doctoral student success, IUP has earned an R2 Doctoral University--High Spending and Doctorate Production classification from the American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in its 2025 Research Activity designations. IUP first received the R2 ranking in 2022. It remains one of only two public universities in Pennsylvania and one of only 97 public universities nationwide with this classification.

The Pennsylvania Drone Association selected IUP for its 2024 Ellie Education Award, recognizing IUP as "an educational institution that has helped to elevate the drone industry in our commonwealth in a meaningful and significant way."

IUP's Department of Safety Sciences and Environmental Engineering is ranked No. 1 in the state and second in the nation by Universities.com.

U.S. News & World Report selected IUP's criminal justice program for its Best Online Programs recognition.



## TALONS UP

IUP's men's and women's swimming and diving teams were selected for the Scholar All-American Award by the College Swimming and Diving Coaches Association. This recognition honors programs that achieve the highest standards in the classroom while representing their institution in the pool.

Frank Cignetti Jr., '88, who has 34 years of coaching experience – 23 in college (including at IUP from 1990 to 1998) and 11 in the NFL, returned to IUP as the football team's offensive coordinator.