

WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

HONORS COLLEGE NEWS

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New to Honors

This fall, Honors welcomed 104 new first year students, 3 new transfer students, and about 40 new sophomore students.

Throughout the first seven weeks of the semester, the students took part in “New to Honors” meetings focused on community-building and academic

success. Activities included “Honors Speed Friending” and conversations about study skills, time management, and strategies for thriving in the Honors College.

Honors tracks: finding the perfect fit



On September 30, students gathered in the Multipurpose Room for an Honors Track Information Session, where they had the chance to explore the different track options.

During the event, students heard directly from other students conducting research or creative work in each of the Honors Tracks

and spoke with the faculty members who lead the tracks. Events like this help students explore which track best aligns with their academic and professional goals.



Students plan next steps

On October 6, the Honors College and Honors Club sponsored an event, “Envisioning Your Honors Experience.”

During this event, several junior and senior track students spoke about their current research topics and their plans following graduation. Afterwards, the group took time to unwind and create vision boards while they thought about their own future paths in Honors.

A Message from Dean Andrew



Dr. Barbara Andrew

The Fall semester is off to a great start! In this issue of our newsletter, you can see all the vibrant activities happening in our college.

We welcomed our new first and second-year students.

We met with students about our research and creative performance tracks, which they begin at the end of their second year or the beginning of their third year. We encouraged students to plan for their futures and embrace leadership roles.

Please look inside the newsletter to see some of the inspiring leadership positions students have earned and all the wonderful community engagement activities they have already participated in this semester.

Additionally, we celebrate some of the many faculty accomplishments, whose dedication continues to enrich our academic community.

Save the Date!

Honors Research Day 2025

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS
in Honors 1000 Seminars
present their research
from 5:00—6:00 p.m.
— UC Ballrooms —

SENIOR HONORS STUDENTS
in the Biology, Humanities, Music,
and Clinical Psych. & Neuropsychology
Tracks will present their research during
the afternoon and evening.
— Library Auditorium —
(Times to be announced)

Noteworthy



Dr. Lisa Foley

Welcome to Honors!

Dr. Lisa Merkle Foley, Assistant Professor of Nursing, has been named Honors Nursing Track Director. She succeeds Dr. Jill Nocella, who recently stepped down to assume her new role as Chairperson of the Nursing Department.



Dr. David Gilley

Dr. David Gilley, Professor of Biology, has been appointed as Interim Biology Track Director for the 2025–2026 academic year. Dr. Gilley will serve in this role while current Biology Track Director, Dr. Emily Monroe Waldburger, is on sabbatical.



Students take part in university leadership

Congratulations to Honors student, Rachel Hayek, (center) on her recent appointment as a non-voting member of the University Board of Trustees for the 2025-2026 academic year. Rachel is pictured with (from left) Vice President for Student Development, Dr. Miki Cammarata; University President, Dr. Richard Helldobler; BOT Student Representative and Honors student, Xavier Clavijo; Board of Trustees Chair, Mr. Michael Seeve; and General Counsel to the Board of Trustees, Ms. Melissa Reardon Henry.



'Slices of Service' helps individuals in need

The Honors College recently hosted the first *Slices of Service* event of the semester, partnering with the Paterson Cares organization to prepare, package, and distribute peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for unhoused individuals in the community. In addition to assembling the sandwiches, students wrote thoughtful notes of encouragement to include in each package.

By participating in experiences like this, students have the opportunity to think about and discuss issues that affect individuals and families in our local communities, exchange ideas, and participate in hands on activities that make a real difference in people's lives.



Students learn about study abroad and other opportunities

Honors Dean Dr. Barbara Andrew led a Study Abroad information session on October 2, highlighting the upcoming Spring 2026 trip to Italy with Dr. Elizabeth Harkins and Dr. Wendy Wright.

During the meeting, Associate Provost Jonathan Lincoln also shared information about study abroad opportunities and the National Student Exchange program. In addition, Honors students, Jaelyne Francisco and Xavier Clavijo, spoke enthusiastically about their own Honors study abroad experiences.

Honors Student Spotlight

Honors student elected to regional council position for 2025-2026

Congratulations to junior Honors student, Rory Stansfield, elected as a Student Representative for the Northeast Regional Honors Council (NRHC). In this role, Stansfield serves as a member of the NRHC Executive Board and is heavily involved in planning the annual conference, which will be held in New Haven, Connecticut next March. Stansfield, the first student ever from William Paterson University to be elected to this position, is active in the WP Honors College as a Peer Leader and Office Assistant.

"I was interested in the position because of the positive experience I've had during my time in the Honors College here at William Paterson," said Stansfield, who has found her involvement in WP Honors to be so fulfilling that when the election for the position was announced earlier this year, she knew right away that she wanted to put her name in the hat. "I took the initiative to run for the election because I love being able to interact with, help, and advocate for my fellow Honors students here at WP, and I wanted to be able to serve in a similar role for Honors students across the Northeast region," said Stansfield.

A Speech Language Pathology major, Stansfield is enrolled in the Cognitive Science Honors Track and is working toward presenting

her own research prior to her graduation in May 2027. Learning more about the 2026 NRHC Conference and playing such an active role in planning the student events for the entire weekend has made her even more passionate about serving on the council and participating in the annual conference. She is already planning to present her research at the 2027 conference and urges her peers to take advantage of these types of opportunities.



Rory Stansfield

"Presenting your research or creative work at the NRHC Conference or any professional conference serves as a wonderful opportunity to grow as an individual, network with students and professionals from around the region and beyond, and to show off all of the hard work that you have put into your Honors thesis," noted Stansfield.

The NRHC is an organization of about 200 colleges and universities in the northeast region that encourage and support students, faculty, and administrators dedicated to undergraduate honors learning. The University Honors College at William Paterson has been involved in the organization for over 20 years.

Honors students taking the lead

Honors hosts annual Civic Engagement Fair and Coat Drive Kick-Off

On September 29, over 60 students participated in the annual Honors Civic Engagement Fair & Coat Drive Kick-Off in the ballrooms. Together, we created winter care packages of gloves and hats for preschool children in need, explored upcoming civic engagement opportunities, had a discussion on "leading with purpose," and connected with student leaders from various clubs and organizations across campus.



This event was co-sponsored by the Honors College and Honors Club. Special thanks goes to the Student Government Association for providing funding for food and supplies.

On Tuesday, October 7, Honors delivered 120 packages of children's hats and gloves that were assembled at the Civic Engagement Fair to the Children's Day Preschool (CDP) in Passaic. Pictured (from left) include: CDP Executive Director, Susan M. Dannemiller; CDP Family Services Worker, Patricia Torres; Honors Club Advisor, Jan Pinkston; and Honors Club President, Angela Marcucilli.



Around Campus

Faculty members recognized



Dr. Neil Grimes, Curriculum Materials Librarian and Honors 1000 faculty member, was recognized by the State of New Jersey for his work with the "Real Men Read" program. This library-led initiative was launched in March 2020 by Grimes to benefit schools and students that are a part of the Professional Development Schools Network in northern New Jersey.



Dr. Krista Molly O'Donnell, Professor of History and Director of the Honors Humanities Track, received the 2025 Faculty as Mentor Pioneer Award in September. This award recognizes WP faculty and staff for their exemplary contributions, leadership, and dedication to the William Paterson University community.

Honors Club News



Honors Club Saturday Service continues during the fall semester

Saturday Service at the Father English Food Pantry got off to a great start this fall! Even Provost Josh Powers, joined in to help with this weekly initiative sponsored by the Honors Club.

This activity takes place on most Saturdays during the fall and spring semester. Volunteers package bags of food, stock shelves, help unload donations, and do other tasks that help the food pantry operations run smoothly.

Honors students participate in Pioneer Service Ventures



On 9/6, over 70 Honors students turned out for the Pioneer Service Ventures event that was sponsored by Campus Activities, Service and Leadership. Honors alum, Xiana Gutierrez, '16, gave the keynote address and shared her personal story about how her experiences with civic engagement as an undergraduate helped shaped her life today. The participants then split up into smaller groups to participate in various service activities on and off campus.

Honors Advisory Council

Honors Advisory Council gathers on campus

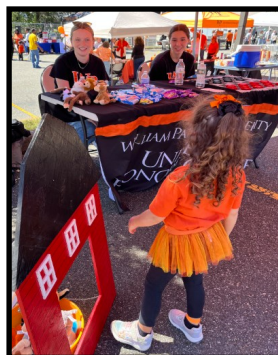
Several members of the Honors College Advisory Council visited campus in September to reconnect and share ideas.

The council brings together WP Honors alumni and friends of the program who are passionate about supporting our students and the College's mission. Members contribute by advising the dean, supporting curriculum development, and serving as ambassadors for the Honors College within the broader community.

Pictured are (from left) Ashley Pettet, '10, Jan Pinkston, Barbara Andrew, Kleo Philli, '05, and John DeLuca, '79. Advisory Council members not present for the photo include: Sandra DeYoung and James Van Wyck, '06.



Communiversy Day and Homecoming & Family Day



Honors Peer Leaders Angie Marcucilli (left) and Sarah Weissberg chat with a future Honors Pioneer at Communiversy Day on September 20th.



Pio and their handler, Honors student Carissa Ostolaza, played a game of checkers with a few of the Honors Peer Leaders during Homecoming and Family Day on Saturday, October 4th. Honors Peers pictured are (from left) Sarah Weissberg, Owen Walter, and Angie Marcucilli.