

# Points of Pride

December 2025



## Making an Impact



As of September 30, Impact 150, IUP's comprehensive campaign launched in August to celebrate IUP's sesquicentennial, has raised \$97,842,766, or 65 percent of its \$150 million goal. The campaign's themes are healthy students, a healthy university, and healthy communities.

Part of the Impact 150 campaign, IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine and its commitment to addressing the rural health crisis have resulted in funding from individual donors, foundations, agencies, and legislators totaling more than \$48 million.



### Impact 150: IUP Criminology Graduate to Gift More Than \$3 Million to Support Education, Criminology Seniors at IUP

Arlene Eva Langley-Mendenhall, '78 criminology and sociology, will gift more than \$3 million to establish the Arlene Eva Langley Memorial Scholarship at IUP. The scholarship will support tuition, fees, and books for two full-time seniors annually: one student majoring in education and one student majoring in criminology.



### IUP Alumni Deb and Tim Cejka Honored With 2025 Keepers of the Flame Award

Alumni Tim and Deb Cejka '73, were honored by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education with the 2025 Keepers of the Flame Award for their sustained leadership, vision, and generosity. The Keepers of the Flame Award recognizes an individual from each of the 14 State System university campuses for their contributions to creating and promoting diverse and inclusive environments that cultivate a sense of belonging.



### IUP Scholar in Residence, Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient, Wins International R&D Award for Breakthrough in Mass Spectrometry; Proof of Technology Demonstrated at IUP

Howard M. "Skip" Kingston, '73, M'75, scholar in residence at IUP's Media Department of Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Physics, IUP, and the IUP Research Institute, won a 2025 R&D 100 Award for "Thor's Hammer," a breakthrough that has the potential to advance precision medicine and rural healthcare. Kingston has gifted state-of-the-art equipment valued at more than \$1.8 million to IUP, including the university's first inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometer (ICP-MS), which allows isotope analyses. This equipment is part of the Kingston Laboratory in IUP's John J. and Char Kopchick Hall, which is used by faculty and by students for a variety of courses and research projects.

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## [IUP Selects Five Alumni for Young Alumni Achievement Award; Past Achievement Award Winners Return as Part of Sesquicentennial Celebration](#)

Five IUP graduates were selected for the 2025 IUP Young Alumni Achievement Award: Ray Edwards, '11, Eberly College of Business, director of retail media data engineering at The Home Depot; Byron McClure, D'16, College of Education and Human Services, entrepreneur, speaker, writer, and CEO and founder of School Psych AI and The Black School Psychologists Network; Luke Piper '13, John J. and Char Kopchick College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, staff psychiatrist with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center-Central PA Hospitals; Angelica Terepka, M'13, D'16, College of Health Sciences, director of psychology at Elmhurst Hospital; Cykhira Walton '15, College of Arts, Humanities, Media, and Public Affairs, senior policy advisor to Councilmember Anthony Phillips.

## [IUP Receives \\$1.3 Million for Crimson Hawk Bridge Program to Serve Students With Intellectual Disabilities](#)

IUP has received \$1.34 million from the U.S. Department of Education to develop the Crimson Hawks Bridge, a multi-year program to help individuals with intellectual disabilities gain skills, experience, and credentials to live independently and successfully transition to the workforce.

## Healthy Students



A total of 429 students will be receiving degrees at the associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels at IUP's commencement ceremonies on December 13. Of the 289 bachelor's degree recipients, 149 qualified for honors (3.25 or above cumulative grade point average).

## [IUP Receives \\$2 Million from National Science Foundation to Support Students Earning Data Science Degrees](#)

IUP received \$2 million from the National Science Foundation to help academically talented and financially challenged students earn data science degrees. Spanning six years and starting in spring 2026, the project, Experiential Pathways and Networks for Data Science (EXPANDS) Opportunities Scholarship program, will support 36 scholars, with particular focus on transfer students from regional and partner community colleges, to transition to IUP to complete bachelor's and graduate degrees in data sciences.

## [IUP Student Wins Pennsylvania Historical Association Prize](#)

Applied Archaeology graduate student Emma Lashley won the 2025 Pennsylvania Historical Association (PHA) Magruder-Newman Prize for Best Student Paper Presentation for her paper "The Wanton Women of Western Pennsylvania: Identifying Individuals of the Sex Work Industry in Early 20th Century Rural Pennsylvania."



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## [Voice Students Win Big at National Association of Teachers of Singing Competition](#)

IUP voice students of Joseph Baunoch, Erin Koolman, and Oliver Lo (Music, Theatre, and Dance) won 12 awards during the Tri-State National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Audition.

## [IUP Students Publish Coauthored Research Paper With IUP Economics Faculty Jim Jozefowicz](#)

A research paper coauthored by two IUP students with IUP economics faculty member James Jozefowicz (finance and economics) has been selected for publication in an international economics journal. Micaela Jebitsch, Emily Schumacher, and Jozefowicz's coauthored work, "NHL Attendance Differences Across the Border: United States Versus Canada," was published on November 10 in International Advances in Economic Research.



## [Four Students Selected for IUP Fourth Annual Justice Research Fellowship Program](#)

Four IUP students in the Cook Honors College from the Department of School Psychology, Special Education, and Sociology and the Department of Finance and Economics were selected for the fourth cohort of the IUP Justice Research Fellows at the Administration and Leadership Studies Research and Training Center: Lauren Connor, a sociology and Spanish dual major from Johnstown; Reia Sanchez, who is completing a dual baccalaureate, one in sociology with a psychology minor and a second degree in Spanish, from Northampton; Kelly Szolek, an economics major from Youngstown, Ohio; and Jackson White, a political science major with economics honors concentration from Uniontown.

## [Lin Xu Shares Summer Cancer Research Experience at MD Anderson Cancer Center](#)

The Media Department of Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Physics hosted a research seminar featuring Belinda Lin Xu, who presented her summer research experience at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She spent 10 weeks in Houston, Texas, as part of the Partnership for Careers in Cancer Science and Medicine and the John J. Kopchick Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship. This highly competitive program provides undergraduates with the opportunity to conduct hands-on biomedical research alongside world-class scientists.



## [IUP Ambassadors Student Alumni Association Continues Support for IUP Food Pantry and Help Center for Third Year](#)

For the third consecutive year, the IUP Ambassadors, IUP's student alumni association, donated \$800 from its Homecoming parade first-place float prize to the IUP Food Pantry and Help Center. The group also donated \$916 from its 2025 Philanthropy Cup winnings to the Food Pantry and Help Center.

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## IUP Organ Studio Director, Students Participate in Manhattan Pipe Organ Study Crawl

Indiana University of Pennsylvania Assistant Professor of Organ and Keyboard and Director of IUP's Organ Studio Christine Clewell and six IUP Organ Studio students were invited performers at First Presbyterian Church in Stamford, Connecticut, on October 20, followed by a Manhattan Pipe Organ Study and Crawl on October 21 and 22 during the university's fall pause.

## Campus-Wide Food Drive

More than 1,555 items and \$3,430 were donated to the IUP Food Pantry and Help Center during the fall university-wide drive sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs, Office of Student Inclusion, Housing, Crimson Scholars Circle, Promising Scholars Program, Susan Graham and the Counseling Center, Student Government Association, the Cook Honors College, and Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

## IUP Student Organizations Raise Funds, Awareness During Inaugural IUP Philanthropy Cup; Two Alumni Donate \$10,000

Six student organizations participated in the first IUP Philanthropy Cup event, raising funds to support the Student Assistance Fund and creating initiatives to inspire students to "give back" and engage in creative fundraising. As part of the initiative, Col. Stephen Abel '72 and Dr. Thomas A. Baker '05 each donated \$5,000, which included prize money for the winning groups and a \$5,000 donation to the Student Assistance Fund.

## Braun named Tri-State PGA Golf Executive of the Year

Dan Braun, coach of IUP men's golf and president of the Tri-State PGA, was named 2025 PGA Tri-State Section Golf Executive of the Year. The award recognizes a PGA professional in good standing for at least 10 years who has served in an executive management role for a minimum of three years. Braun is in his seventh season leading IUP men's golf and serves as the athletic department's first academic coordinator. He previously became IUP's inaugural academic coordinator before adding coaching duties. He also directs academic support for multiple varsity teams.

## Smith named Player of the Year, Hays and Lattea named CCA All-Region

Three IUP women's soccer players earned all-region honors from the Division II Conference Commissioners Association. Elle Smith was named the Atlantic Region Player of the Year after leading Division II in goals. PSAC West Defensive Player of the Year Emma Hays joined Smith on the first team. Emily Lattea was selected to the second team after finishing among the nation's top 10 in goals scored.

## Rueve named Harlon Hill Award Nominee

IUP graduate student quarterback Matthew Rueve was named a nominee for the 2025 Harlon Hill Award, given annually to the nation's top Division II football player. Rueve is one of 36 nominees, including eight from Super Region I.

## IUP Volleyball Advances to Second Regional Final in Three Seasons

IUP women's volleyball made a fourth consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance in 2025, advancing to the NCAA DII Atlantic Region championship match (NCAA Sweet 16) on December 6 in Erie. The Crimson Hawks won 23 matches under the direction of first-year head coach Avery Moore. Three student-athletes earned all-region honors by the American Volleyball Coaches Association.

## IUP Women's Basketball Ranked No. 13 in WBCA Poll

IUP women's basketball is off to an impressive 6-0 start this season, rising to 13th in the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) Division II Coaches Poll, released December 2. The Crimson Hawks have defeated two top-20 teams this season, with both wins coming at the KCAC.

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## Healthy University

### [IUP Sees Highest Retention on Record of New, First-Time, Bachelor's Degree Seeking Students, Increase in Undergraduate Enrollment and New Students, Increase in Persistence Rate](#)

For fall 2025, IUP achieved record-breaking retention rates for new, first-time, bachelor's degree-seeking students, as well as increases in both the number of undergraduate degree-seeking students and new, first-time, bachelor's degree-seeking students. Additionally, there was a five percentage point increase in continuing student persistence (students continuing for a third year of study). The retention rate of new, first-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in fall 2024 and returning for fall 2025 is at 78.2 percent, an increase of nearly three percentage points from fall 2023 to fall 2024 retention rate of students in this category.

### [IUP Computer Science Program Ranked Seventh in Nation by Cybersecurity Guide](#)

IUP's computer science program has been ranked seventh in the nation by Cybersecurity Guide in its 2026 Cybersecurity Guide. IUP's program is the only program at a Pennsylvania college or university selected for the ranking of "best computer science with cybersecurity emphasis" program.

### [IUP Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program Graduates Have 100% Pass Rate on Psychology Licensing Exam](#)

IUP Clinical Psychology Doctor of Psychology program graduates who took the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology from January 2020 through December 2024—required for licensure and certification in the United States—achieved a 100 percent passing rate. IUP's program has the only 100 percent passing rate of programs at public universities in Pennsylvania for this time period; only five Pennsylvania colleges and universities achieved a 100 percent passing rate.

### [IUP Selected for Princeton Review's 2026 Best Colleges: Region by Region Best Mid-Atlantic Listing](#)

IUP continues to be recognized by The Princeton Review, this time, in its 2026 "Best Colleges: Region by Region" listing. IUP is one of fewer than 100 colleges and universities chosen for the Best Mid-Atlantic ranking, which considers colleges in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Princeton Review editors selected schools considered to be "academically outstanding."



### [IUP Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Honored by Educational Policy Leadership Center](#)

The Educational Policy Leadership Center has recognized Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Lara Luetkehans as a recipient of the 2025 Educational Policy Leadership Program Alumni Award.



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## [IUP Computer Sciences/Languages and Systems Bachelor's Degree Program Earns Full Reaccreditation by National Organization](#)

IUP's bachelor's degree program in Computer Sciences/Languages and Systems has earned full reaccreditation from ABET, the world's leading accreditation body for programs in applied and natural science, engineering, and engineering technology.

## [IUP Selected for U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Colleges Rankings](#)

IUP has been selected for U.S. News & World Report's "2026 Best Colleges" national universities ranking, and the undergraduate business, computer science, psychology, and nursing programs were selected for listing of "Top Public Schools." IUP was also recognized in the "Top Performers on Social Mobility" listing.

## [IUP Nursing Program Recognized as Top in Pennsylvania](#)

IUP's online nursing program has been ranked fifth in Pennsylvania by EduMed. This year's ranking focused on value, recognizing institutions that blend affordability and academic quality with the flexibility and student support services necessary to foster success both during school and after graduation.

## [IUP Homecoming Celebrating IUP Sesquicentennial: Special Fifth Quarter Concert With the Clarks, Chris Higbee](#)

IUP's annual Homecoming celebration on October 4 drew thousands to Indiana, including for a special event in celebration of IUP's sesquicentennial. On October 4, IUP's Homecoming celebration featured a special "Fifth Quarter" concert, featuring Pittsburgh rock favorites—and IUP alumni—the Clarks and special guest Chris Higbee.

## Healthy Communities/IUP Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine



## [Second Annual Impact Awards, First Mentoring in Medicine Award, Presented at IUP-IRMC Pennsylvania Mountains Rural Health Conference](#)

More than 420 people attended the IUP-Indiana Regional Medical Center's Fourth Annual Pennsylvania Mountains Rural Health Conference, "Healthcare Innovation," held November 20 at IUP's Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex. The conference, held in conjunction with National Rural Health Day, featured 34 presenters, including members of Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro's cabinet, Pennsylvania senators and representatives, as well as key healthcare and industry leaders.

## [Indiana Native, IUP Alumna, Joins IUP Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine Team as Executive in Residence](#)

Lisa Estrada, a nationally recognized healthcare executive, risk and compliance leader, attorney, and strategic advisor, has joined IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine team as an executive in residence. A 1988 IUP journalism and political science graduate, she has more than 25 years of experience guiding hospitals, health care providers, and nonprofit organizations through complex regulatory and operational challenges. Estrada was general counsel and compliance officer for some of the largest hospital and healthcare networks in the country, including LifePoint Health and ScionHealth.

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## [\\$1.9 Million for IUP Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine in FY26 Federal](#)

In November, \$1.9 million in community project funding for IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine was announced as part of the FY26 federal budget. Congressman Guy Reschenthaler is the sponsor of this community project funding.



## [IUP Alumni Donate \\$500,000 to Support IUP Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine](#)

David '71 and Becky '70 Walzak's appreciation of IUP "as the place it all started" has led them to a gift that will make an impact for the future of IUP and for rural Pennsylvania. After retiring from distinguished careers, including work with rjbWalzak Consulting, owned by Becky Walzak, they have made a \$500,000 donation to IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine.



## [IUP, Warren State Hospital Sign Clinical Training Affiliation Agreement for Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine Future Students](#)

On Oct. 9, IUP and Warren State Hospital formalized a clinical training affiliation agreement for future students at IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine.

## [IUP, Clarks Summit State Hospital Announce Clinical Training Affiliation Agreement for IUP Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine Future Students](#)

IUP and Clarks Summit State Hospital have announced a clinical training affiliation agreement for future students at IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine. Securing clinical training sites for students is a crucial part of the successful accreditation process; IUP has secured more than 230 percent of the required clinical training spots, surpassing the 120 percent minimum required for accreditation. Clarks Summit State Hospital, in Lackawanna County, is one of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services' six state hospitals that provide inpatient services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.

## [IUP, IRMC Launch Season Four of "Rural Health Pulse" Podcast With Episode on IRMC Stroke Center](#)

IUP and Indiana Regional Medical Center's joint podcast, Rural Health Pulse, launched season four in conjunction with National Rural Health Day and IUP-IRMC's annual Pennsylvania Mountains Rural Health Conference on November 20. Episode one of the fourth season is titled "Seconds Matter: IRMC Advancing Stroke Care in Rural Communities."



## [Members of the IUP Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine Team Are Invited to Present at State System of Higher Education Summit](#)

Members of IUP's proposed college of osteopathic medicine leadership team were invited presenters for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's 2025 Summit, "Together We Thrive, Building Inclusive Excellence Across the State System," held virtually and at PennWest Clarion on October 29 and 30. Founding Dean Miko Rose, Founding Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs and Graduate Medical Education Ryan Smith, and Founding Associate Dean of Preclinical Affairs Luke H. Mortensen presented "Let's Build a Med School" at the Summit.

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## Happy Holidays!



### IUP Tree Featured in It's a Wonderful Life Festival

A 40-foot blue spruce from outside IUP's Waller Hall is at the center of this year's holiday festivities in downtown Indiana's IRMC Park. The tree, which had outgrown the space, was provided by IUP and the IUP Arboretum as part of IUP's sesquicentennial celebration and recognition of the importance of Indiana as IUP's home community. In recognition of IUP's anniversary, IUP President Michael Driscoll was invited to serve as the It's a Wonderful Life parade co-grand marshal.

### **IUP Greek Organizations Raise Funds for Community**

Members of IUP's fraternities and sororities continued a decade-long tradition, raising funds for the Indiana County Salvation Army. This year, the students collected \$6,897; this brings the total raised over the years to \$68,000.