

Millersville University

# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Nov.  
2024

Dear Campus Community,

The changing colors of trees and shrubs around campus in response to the falling temperatures and decreased daylight make the second half of the fall semester a time of joy. Coupled with crisp mornings and warm afternoons, the 'Ville comes to life with bright and resplendent hues of yellow, orange and red vegetation. That is one of the highlights of the year for our campus, especially when prospective students are touring our campus.

Over the past month, I had the opportunity to represent Millersville University at several convenings focused on global education and partnerships. At the recent American Association of State Colleges and Universities meeting, where I continue to serve on the Board of Directors, I chaired my final meeting of the Committee on International Programs. AASCU is a leading force in promoting partnerships that prepare campus leaders, faculty, and students for global interconnectedness.

In October, I traveled to Beijing for a triennial meeting of the International Association of University Presidents and continued to the Philippines to meet with leaders from the Philippines Department of Education and Thames International University. We had a meaningful discussion with Philippine Education Secretary Sonny Angara and Thames International President Joel Santos toward establishing a strategic partnership to advance education and public management in the island nation. Among the key topics we discussed were strategies for Disaster Risk Reduction Management System, building capacities of guidance counselors, as well as nursing and teacher upskilling programs.

My Listening Tour with the purpose of seeking and collecting ideas, data and information in preparation for our next strategic planning is well underway and will continue throughout the semester. All campus voices are welcome and encouraged. I hope to see you at one of the upcoming Listening Tour events and invite your input through our online portal. More information can be found on our [Strategic Plan 2025-30 website](#).

In this month's edition, we tell the story of the generous gift from Jason '98 and Therese '01 Wicht to upgrade the equipment in the TV Studio, and we recognize our generous donors of 'Ville Visionaries and the Golden Swans. We share details on our new micro-credentials efforts and discover more about extremely rare photographs from the archives of the McNairy Library. Finally, we recognize the outstanding achievements of cross-country runner Morgan Janiuk and look back at the recent PA State System Summit on Inclusive Education held on Millersville's campus.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our community. Have a wonderful and relaxing Thanksgiving break with family and friends.

## ALUMS KICKSTART OVERHAUL OF STUDIO 1

Jason '98 and Therese '01 Wicht's journey together began at MUTV – Millersville University's award-winning student-run television station. Both are graduates of the University's Communication and Theatre Department and have continued to stay connected to the program that brought them together. The Wichts were on hand during the 2024 Homecoming festivities to be recognized for their significant support to upgrade the equipment in TV Studio 1. To acknowledge the transformative impact of their donation, the broadcasting instruction lab has been renamed "Wicht Studio."

"The Department of Communication and Theatre is blessed with a wonderful group of alumni," says Dr. Ileva Zake, Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. "After joining the College advisory board, Jason visited me, and we discussed the program's most pressing needs. I told him the truth is we need to make very big and expensive upgrades to the cameras and other equipment in the TV studio."

Jason Wicht recalled how their meeting led to the donation. "Given our history, our family had a shared desire to support the current and next generation of students benefiting, as we did, from the experiences with the studio and the broadcasting department overall at Millersville," says Wicht. "When we were presented with the opportunity to help, it was an easy decision, and we look forward to seeing the evolution of the studio and engagement from the students."



Jason Wicht is Executive Vice President of Growth Strategy and Operations for Comcast, leading customer growth and marketing/sales strategy for the company. He has been with Comcast for over 27 years, beginning his career there as an intern from Millersville and moving on to lead sales and marketing teams at multiple levels within the organization before accepting his current role in 2023. He also serves as Board Chairman for the Cable and Telecommunication Association for Marketing and is a long-time supporter of the Millersville Communication and Theatre Department as well as an active mentor within the telecommunications and technology fields.

Therese Wicht graduated with a focus on Public Relations and a minor in marketing and was an active member of the National Broadcasting Society during her time at Millersville. Following graduation, she worked for the PA Association of School Business Officials.

"Jason and Therese are truly an inspiration for us," says Zake. "And we are deeply grateful to them for entrusting us with their hard-earned funds."

## Golden Swan and 'Ville Visionaries Societies Continue to Spread Generosity

Each year, Millersville University receives gifts from generous donors. Those donations contribute to making education for Millersville students affordable and accessible. To show gratitude towards donors committed to Millersville's EPPIIC values, the University recognizes the individuals, awarding them the title of either 'Ville Visionaries or Golden Swans.



### ['VILLE VISIONARY SOCIETY](#)

Ville Visionaries are donors, individuals or couples, who have made a gift of \$1,000 or more to Millersville University during the fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).

### [GOLDEN SWAN SOCIETY](#)

A donor who has made gifts for over five consecutive years becomes a member and is considered a Cygnet member of the Golden Swan Society at the five-year mark. Those who have made gifts for 20 consecutive years or more are Gilded Feather members of the Golden Swan Society. Heather Morris, Millersville's Interim Director of Philanthropic Giving, comments on the devotion of Millersville's continuous donors, "Our Golden Swan Society recognizes loyalty. We have more than 660 members of the Golden Swan Society and we are excited to see at the close of the 2024 fiscal year that we have 32 individuals who have made consecutive gifts to Millersville for 38 years or more."

Here are the 32 members of the Gilded Feather status who have donated to Millersville for 38+ years:

- Mr. Bernard P. Citerone, CPA '73
- Mrs. Pauletta H. Copenheaver '65
- Dr. Ralph E. Daywalt '60
- Mr. Steven A. DiGuseppe '82
- Mr. Gerald C. Eckert
- Mrs. Lynn H. Fackler '77
- Dr. Richard L. Frerichs '64
- Ms. Catherine C. Glass '53
- Mrs. Jolinda A. Grace '69
- Mr. Ronald M. Hallman '64
- Ms. Nancy K. Hanna '68
- Dr. Carol A. Heintzelman
- Ms. Suzanne C. Hulsizer '63
- Mr. Stephen Kepchar Jr '70
- Mr. Geoffrey Kurtz '85
- Dr. Susan P. Luek
- Ms. Martha P. MacAdam '83
- Mr. Patrick B. McDonie '83
- Mr. Michael A. McDowell

- Ms. Sherri L. Miller '83
- Mrs. Dorothy M. Nye '51
- Renee G. O'Leary PhD '50
- Mrs. Cynthia H. Regel '84
- Mr. Robert R. Shock '68
- Mrs. Sheryl J. Smith '66
- Mr. James A. Stoneback '75
- Mrs. Cynthia L. Trago '70
- Mrs. Agnes K. Vaughn '63
- Mr. Craig C. Wagaman '74
- Mr. Michael G. Warfel '84
- Mrs. Beverly L. Wisniewski '76
- Mrs. Cheryl J. Youtz '69

Here are the members who have recently joined the Gilded Feathers; these individuals have donated to Millersville for 20 consecutive years:

- Mrs. Linda L. Burke '69
- Dr. Dennis Denenberg
- Dr. Victor S. DeSantis
- Mr. Scott T. Francis '73
- Mr. Joseph W. Garner '90
- Mrs. Susan F. Glass '84
- Mr. Penn B. Glazier
- Mr. Lamar A. Jackson '97
- Ms. Janet E. Kacskos
- Mr. Glenn N. Stitzel '68
- Mr. Robert N. Swift '66

More information can be found here - [Be Recognized | Millersville University](#)

## EXTREMELY RARE PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION AT MILLERSVILLE

You'd never guess that deep in the archives of the McNairy Library on Millersville University's campus there are one-of-a-kind photos of key figures from the Harlem Renaissance. They include original portraits of Ella Fitzgerald, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gloria Vanderbilt, the now-late James Earl Jones and more. The collection from Carl Van Vechten is massive, and much of it is still being processed due to its size. It also includes Van Vechten's personal writings and correspondence.



The photos were taken by famed photographer Van Vechten and presently, one of the photographs is on loan to the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C. It's a stunning and rare portrait of Nora Holt, a much-lauded musician of the Harlem Renaissance era. The photo is part of a traveling exhibit called "[Brilliant Exiles: American Women in Paris, 1900 – 1939](#)," and the image of Holt will be on loan until December 2025. The exhibition showcases female African American artists who traveled to Paris seeking more rights and artistic freedoms than they had in the United States at that time.

While other collections of Van Vechten's work exist at the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library and Yale University, this particular image of Holt could only be found in Millersville's collection. The collection at Millersville is also assumed to be one of the largest and spans decades with items from 1932 to 1964.

How did the collection land at Millersville University? [Late professor emeritus of English, Dr. Bruce Kellner](#), who passed away in 2019, was a longtime friend and mentee of Van Vechten. He was also Van Vechten's biographer and the executor of the famous photographer's physical estate. Kellner himself was photographed by Van Vechten numerous times. Millersville University [offers an art course](#), History & Aesthetics of Photography, that makes use of the incredible collection.

"Our collection may be unique because Kellner was the executor of his will. What we have in our archives may be from the artists' personal collection," says Frank Vitale, Assistant Professor, and University Archivist and Special Collections Librarian. "It's a legacy of [Kellner's] dedication to the institution and his belief in using these materials that we have such a fantastic collection here for our students."

### WHAT WAS THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE?

Van Vechten was renowned for his documentation of key figures in Harlem during that pivotal time. This renaissance was a flourishing of Black art and culture in Harlem in New York City during the late

1900s and early 20th century due to the diaspora of African Americans leaving the South post-Civil War. As Vitale describes, saying, "It was a seedbed of African American creativity."

More key figures from this time that Van Vechten photographed include the artist Langston Hughes, who was widely regarded as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance, the jazz singer Ethel Waters and more.

To see more of the collection in person, please contact the Special Collections team located in the McNairy Library, a part of [University College](#), with advanced notice by emailing [Special.Collections@millersville.edu](mailto:Special.Collections@millersville.edu) or calling 717-871-7134. To make a gift to Archives and Special Collections, visit [millersville.edu/give2mu](http://millersville.edu/give2mu) and select Archives and Special Collections Discretionary Fund from the dropdown menu.

## MILLERSVILLE'S JANIUK CAPS CAREER AT NCAA DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIP

Millersville University's [Morgan Janiuk](#) capped her outstanding collegiate career Saturday with a 140th-place finish at the NCAA Division II Championship run at Arcade Creek Cross Country Course. Janiuk was only the 10th Marauder since 1988 to compete as an individual at the NCAA Championship, and she was the first Marauder qualifier since 2010. She posted a time of 22:32.6. Grand Valley State's Lauren Kiley, the individual champ, ran a 20:28.5, followed by Kendal Kramer of Alaska Fairbanks in 20:30.7.

With heavy rains in California most of the week, the course was water-logged, and with the women's race following the men's, the turf had already been chewed up. Normally, the flat course played to Janiuk's strengths as a runner, but the conditions forced Janiuk to abandon her race plan.

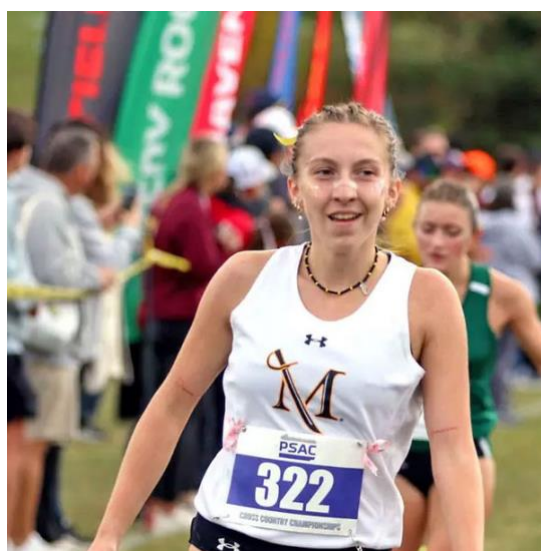
"The conditions weren't ideal," said Janiuk. "It was about going out and racing, throwing away any plan I had. It didn't go exactly the way I thought. It wasn't a foot race. With better conditions, it would have been more similar to Lock Haven. I might have let a little anxiety in, but I think I did a good job shaking it off and resetting."

The race started with 261 runners, and Janiuk ran the first 1,000 meters in 3:29.7, putting her 124th, in a pack of nearly 30 runners within two seconds of each other. As the groupings thinned, Janiuk was unable to chase down the lead group. She did move up nine places over the final 1,200 meters.

"She got where she wanted to be placement-wise but got stuck," said [Millersville head coach Andy Young](#). "She had some nerves. I don't think she expected to make it this far, but she ran a solid race. It was her first time at nationals, so I just hoped she could stay calm and run her race plan. She did that. It's in the middle of the race when you realize that everyone here is really fast."

Janiuk's career included two All-PSAC East First Team honors, an NCAA Atlantic Regional runner-up finish, and on the track, she was All-PSAC in the outdoor 1,500-meter run and a seven-time point scorer at PSAC Championship meets. Finishing her career at the finish line of the NCAA Championship in California is a memory she won't soon forget.

"It's the coolest thing I've ever done," said Janiuk. "I'm a little bummed because of the race, but I'm trying to think about the overall experience being great. I feel very lucky that I had friends and family fly out to see me race. I had the opportunity to do some sightseeing and meet new people."





## Micro-Credentials Aplenty

Studies have found that organizational leaders value micro-credentials, and students say they are more likely to enroll in programs that offer them. Millersville University is now offering a host of [micro-credentials](#) to help students and the public build their workforce skills and expand their resumes.

“Micro-credentials can be a flexible and expedient way for an individual to fill skill gaps in their experience, stay relevant as industry trends create a demand for new skills, and remain competitive in the job market,” says Hope Schmids, director of the [Workforce Development Program at Millersville](#). “Because these credentials are often affordable and readily available, individuals can explore a new skill before committing to a degree program or career change.”

“While industry micro-credentials do not replace the value of degree programs, they can complement more traditional higher-education offerings,” says Schmids. “From the higher-ed point of view, using micro-credentials can create ‘stackable’ credentials, which provide a record of competencies a student acquires within a degree program. This is especially valuable to adult learners seeking advancement within their industry. They can meet employers’ needs in quickly upskilling or reskilling employees affordably.”



Six of the new micro-credentials are offered through Focus EduSolutions.

### Focus EduSolutions

Of the wide variety of micro-credentials MU offers, the [Focus EduSolutions program](#) has the most. From interpersonal skills to supply-chain management, there is a little something for everyone to benefit from. Each credential is 100% online and self-paced, so there is no worrying about implementing a fixed schedule in your daily life. The micro-credentials offered include; Food truck entrepreneurship, Insurance sales accelerator, Retail Management, Soft skills, and Supply-chain Management.

Additional certificates offered by Millersville include Grow with Google, ed2go and MindEdge.

### Grow with Google

Last year, [MU partnered with Google](#) to bring the [Grow with Google](#) program to the institution. This program includes nine different micro-credentials to build skills in IT, job mapping, data and business intelligence and more. Each micro-credential is available to “give you an edge as a tech-savvy consumer with insider knowledge and training from the professionals at Google.”

## ed2go

Thanks to an agreement with ed2go, MU now offers [Online Career Training Programs](#) for its faculty, staff and students, leading to industry-recognized certifications. They offer various courses ranging from art and design to business and writing. There is a long list of opportunities to help people prepare for future careers or advance in their current occupations. To view a list of all the courses and apply, visit the [Online Professional Development and Career Training](#) page.

## MindEdge

Those who struggle with a busy schedule can check out the [MindEdge catalog](#). This program at MU allows people to expand their skill sets, earn professional credits or learn something new from the comfort of their homes. Some of the programs include building skills in project management, human resources, banking and business. Each course is self-paced and mobile, so it can be done anywhere at any time.

## Pennsylvania Certified Public Manager Program

The [Pennsylvania Certified Public Manager Program](#) is an eight-course program dedicated to helping managers build their leadership skills in the workplace. It is a rigorous 308 total contact hours designed to develop the individual's core leadership skills. Program content addresses key management and leadership development within the context of the unique structure of the Pennsylvania government. The program includes developing and completing a Capstone Project, where you will apply the skills you have developed to an issue within your department or agency.

## School Safety Preparedness Certificate

Millersville University is excited to announce a unique partnership with the [Pennsylvania School Safety Institute](#) to develop and deliver an innovative School Safety Preparedness Certificate. This collaboration aims to enhance the ability of educational professionals to respond effectively to natural and man-made disasters, including active shooter scenarios.

The pilot group is full, but those interested may join a wait list for the next cohort. For more information, [click here](#).

## OSHA Training

Another micro-credential program is a partnership with [the Mid-Atlantic OSHA Training Institute Education Center](#). Safety classes for OSHA trainers and other safety and risk management professionals are offered at Millersville's Ware Center in downtown Lancaster.

For a complete list of all of the micro-credentials, visit the [Workforce-Aligned Credentials](#) page on the MU website.

## MU Hosted State System Summit on Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is a hot topic in the world of academia and one that touches all aspects of the student experience. On October 28 and 29, Millersville hosted [PASSHE's Annual Summit](#), bringing together faculty members, staff and students from across the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to focus on students' success in all its forms.

This year's theme, *Uniting for Inclusive Student Success*, served as a guiding framework for the event. The Summit was in a hybrid format and free for all students, faculty and staff of the 10 State System institutions.

This year's keynote speakers were Dr. Tia Brown McNair and Ben Cannon. Brown McNair is a partner at Sova Solutions which helps organizations in higher education and workforce development solve problems by building coalitions, planning strategically, and managing change. She is also a Senior Consultant at the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Cannon is the Executive Director of the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission and has been since 2013. In this role, he oversees state funding allocations, policy-setting, and coordination for Oregon's higher education system, including community colleges and public universities.

"We' were proud to host this year's Summit and highlight the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in the higher education space," says Carlos Wiley, Chief Diversity Officer at Millersville University. "We all want to see our students succeed, and it's important to examine the many factors that contribute to their success – and the things that can hold them back."

