connections

fall 2013

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

TOP OF THE CLASS
WILDCATS WIN ACCOLADES FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE WHITE HOUSE

ALSO INSIDE
PROJECT RUNWAY: RAY CONNER’S HIGH-FLYING CAREER
THE SCIENCE OF ROLLER DERBY
GROOVIN’ WITH CENTRAL’S JAZZ LEGACY
Cover: President Barack Obama presents the 2013 National Teacher of the Year award to CWU alumnus Jeff Charbonneau, Zillah High School science teacher, during a Rose Garden event at the White House, April 23, 2013.
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The latest edition of CWU CONNECTIONS is now online at [www.cwu.edu/public-affairs/gallery](http://www.cwu.edu/public-affairs/gallery)
Presidents have the privilege of attending exciting and moving university events. So often they remind me of the remarkable impact a CWU education has on all of us.

Students dazzle with innovation at CWU’s annual research conference, the Symposium On Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression. Varsity and club athletes demonstrate their determination and skill with regional and national trophies. Alumni share their experience and expertise with each other and with students and faculty. Wildcat artists put their creativity on display on stage and at museums and galleries.

When I see our Wildcats in action I know CWU is uniquely positioned to lead our region and our country in preparing the thoughtful leaders that the world needs.

At this time in our university’s history, we must stand together, united by a bold conviction and shared belief that what CWU stands for must be both protected and nurtured for even greater growth, greater influence, and greater relevance. We must turn our belief in Central into three simple actions.

**UPDATE.** Tell us where you are and what you’re doing. Tell us the best way to keep you up-to-date on the Wildcat activities you most care about: your department, your team, your club. Your ideas, your feedback, and your partnership will help lead Central forward. It’s easy to do by visiting [www.cwu.edu/update](http://www.cwu.edu/update).

**GIVE.** Give to create opportunity. Give to ignite innovation. Give to protect your investment. Your gift, no matter how big or small, will literally change the trajectory of students’ lives and equip them with a Central education. And it will lift up students by enabling them to live a life of great purpose, intention, and influence regardless of the field or profession they’ve chosen. You can give to Central by visiting [www.cwu.edu/give](http://www.cwu.edu/give).

**SHARE.** The time for CWU being the “best-kept” secret is officially over. Word-of-mouth is still among the most powerful communication tools we have. Tell your friends and family about the amazing difference a CWU education makes. Invite them to an alumni event, a concert, a game, or a campus tour. Do it on Facebook, over coffee, or in the grocery store. But don’t hide your Wildcat pride!

Together we can do anything. Together, Central’s future is limitless. Together we can make the greatest impact on the hearts and minds of the students . . .”

Sincerely,

James L. Gaudino
President, Central Washington University
First Person:
Sheila Jones

Walking into Academic Advising in the summer of 2009, I had no idea that it would be the beginning of my incredible four-year journey. The advisor asked me about my background, my interests, my family, and what plans I had for the future.

I’m very guarded when it comes to planning for the future. Life’s had a funny way of rearranging it for me. Born to a British father and a Ghanaian mother, I grew up in the United Kingdom and Ghana, West Africa. Traveling between the two countries had its perks, but it also caused a great deal of instability.

I changed schools often, lost friends, made new ones, and had to adapt to different cultures. I earned my diploma from a Catholic boarding school and then completed a two-year secretarial course. This led to a career in the secretarial field that spanned 30 years and three continents.

Two years before coming to CWU, I had lost my job of 12 years and defaulted on my home mortgage. I was trying to pick up the pieces from where life had dropped me. So, I had no plans for the future.

“I think each child is entitled to a good education and that’s why I went into the educational field.”

But I knew in my heart that I could make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged children and teens. Working both in the United States, especially in lower-income areas, and disadvantaged countries, I found that the educational systems either lacked good teachers or resources. I think each child is entitled to a good education and that’s why I went into the educational field.

As I look back, I realize how significant it was for me to lose the things I lost. They were simply things. Instead, I discovered what is most important: being true to myself, doing what I am passionate about, and holding close to me those people who matter most. That’s what has brought me to this point in my life along with that lucky day in 2009 and a chance meeting with a CWU academic advisor.

I have developed lifelong friendships with CWU faculty, staff, and students, without whom my journey would have been incomplete. This is a dream come true for me.

It is now my turn to shape my life for the future. But shaping just my own life will never be enough; I’m determined to shape the lives of others for the better. This is what CWU has taught me: “Learn. Do. Live.” I want to make the world a much better place with what I now know.

I’ve learned. I’ve done. Now I plan to live!

Jones, a 2013 President’s Scholar for the College of the Sciences and Dean’s Scholar for the College of Educational Studies, earned bachelor’s degrees in both early childhood development and sociology. She wants to work in early childhood development in the United States or abroad.
CELEBRATE THE LEGACY AND SPIRIT OF OUR ALUMNI FAMILY

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2013

OCTOBER 11-12

Come Home to CWU

Help us make Alumni Weekend 2013 the most successful yet! If 2013 marks your 10th, 20th, 30th, or 40th reunion, we invite you to join our Reunion Committee. Reconnect and reminisce, make new connections, share accomplishments, and celebrate achievements at Reunion 2013. Activities will honor alumni from the classes of 1973 through 2003.

If you’d like to reach out to fellow classmates, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 509-963-2752 or alumni@cwu.edu.

www.cwu.edu/alumni

AA/EO/Title IX Institution. For accommodation: CDS@cwu.edu
"Thanks for helping our kids hope deeply, and realize a br

DID YOU KNOW?
In the last 10 years, five state Teacher of the Year awards went to CWU alumni.

2013 Jeff Charonneau, Zillah School District
2009 Susan Johnson, Cle Elum-Roslyn School District
2008 Laura Jones, Pasco School District
2005 Tamara Steen, Grandview School District
2003 Veronique Paquette, Eastmont School District
Jeff Charbonneau: National Teacher of the Year

When Jeff Charbonneau graduated from CWU with a science teaching degree, he returned to his hometown high school in Zillah. It lacked an engineering curriculum and the computers and science curriculum were out of date. Students actually had to leave campus for technology classes.

“But Jeff was determined to turn that around,” said President Barack Obama, in a Rose Garden ceremony honoring Charbonneau as the nation’s top teacher. “He wanted to convince kids that something like quantum mechanics wasn’t something to run away from, but something to dive into. He said, ’It’s my job to convince them they are smart enough that they can do anything.’”

Charbonneau’s trip to the White House came at the end of an exhilarating year in which he won both local and state teacher-of-the-year awards. In typically humble fashion, Charbonneau said being named National Teacher of the Year was about “showing my students what they can do and, hopefully, give them the same passion for their profession, whatever it happens to be.”

“Look at my fellow teachers of the year, and I ask you to see what I see,” he asked the Rose Garden audience. “See the sparkle of pride in their eyes, pride that comes not from winning awards but pride in knowing they represent more than 3.2 million hard-working and dedicated teachers—pride in knowing that we are a very small sample of the greatness of education in the United States of America.”
The local, state, and national awards recognized Charbonneau for creating programs that allow high school students to earn college credits and revitalizing the high school’s yearbook and drama programs. He also started a robotics curriculum that provides students the ability and equipment to design and build a competition robot. In his “spare” time, he launched an outdoors club that led student exploration as far away as Montana.

Charbonneau’s road to the White House began at Central, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in 2000 and a master’s degree in 2005. From 2005 - 2011, while teaching at Zillah High School (ZHS), Charbonneau was an instructor at CWU, leading online professional certification courses for teachers. He’s still part of CWU’s Cornerstone Program, which certified him to teach college-level physics in high school so his students could earn college credit. Always eager to learn something new, last June Charbonneau completed certification in Career and Technical Education.

“One of the biggest things I got from being at CWU was well-rounded and very diverse training,” said Charbonneau, a Douglas Honors College student. “While I’m definitely a science teacher, the Douglas Honors College gave me a really strong humanities background and it allowed me to think about education more holistically.”

For the past 12 years, Charbonneau, 35, has taught both chemistry and physics at ZHS, where he earned a diploma in 1996.

“I would love teaching no matter where I was,” he said. “But there’s something extra special about doing it in your hometown. I want to show students that it doesn’t matter where you come from—you can do amazing things if you put your mind and heart into it.”

Zillah superintendent, Kevin McKay, said Charbonneau’s enthusiasm and leadership reach beyond the walls of ZHS and have made the entire district and community a better place—especially for students.

“Jeff’s commitment to all students, public education, and the teaching profession is contagious,” said McKay. “He makes all of us want to do a better job of educating our students.”

That job hinges on understanding students’ backgrounds, according to Charbonneau. “The more you can understand where someone’s coming from, the better you’re going to be able to relate subject matter to them.”

His approach worked with ZHS student Maddie Burge, who said Charbonneau changed her mind about science.

“Science wasn’t my favorite subject, but I loved learning it with him,” she added. “He helped me so much that I knew I could get through physics. He taught in a way I could relate to and that anyone would understand.”

Maddie is the daughter of 1989 CWU alumnus, Doug Burge, the principal of Hilton Elementary School in Zillah. Charbonneau’s impact on the district was evident to Burge from an administrator’s district-wide perspective, but also from the point of view of a parent.

“He’s a leader among staff and this even crosses buildings in our district,” explained Burge. “His peers respect and look up to him and value him as a fellow instructional leader. Most of all, Jeff has the students’ best interests at heart.”

KCTS-9 recognized Charbonneau’s innovative teaching with a Golden Apple Award for Project CROAK! The program taught ZHS students about math, chemistry, biology, and technology by engaging them in field research. Students studied the ecological role of amphibians in agricultural lands, and used tagging and global positioning technology to track frogs. Students evaluated soil and water samples for chemical composition. He presented and won top honors for Project CROAK! at the CWU research conference, the Symposium On University Research and Creative Expression (SOURCE).

Charbonneau’s influence and enthusiasm—along with a lot of hard work—is paying huge dividends. Science enrollment is up and ZHS now needs more science teachers—including one to replace Charbonneau temporarily. As the National Teacher of the Year, he’s spending the 2013-14 academic year visiting schools and talking with educators across the country and around the world to help develop guidelines for best practices in education. Charbonneau says his 150 speaking engagements worldwide include two weeks in China.

“When I start out the school day, I say a very simple phrase that I think fits pretty perfectly with today, ‘Welcome back to another day in paradise.’”

Jeff Charbonneau
I’ll start off in Beijing and then head out into the countryside. I’ll see lots of different types of schools and lots of different training they do,” he said. “I’ll actually be allowed to teach a couple of chemistry courses while I’m there. I’ll be learning a lot.”

He acknowledged that stepping away from the classroom for a year is going to be difficult. But said returning with more knowledge to share in the classroom will make his year as National Teacher of the Year worthwhile.

Scan the QR code to the right to see the OSPI video, “Jeff in the Classroom.”

Trevor Greene: CWU Alumnus is Nation’s Top Principal at “Top-Hi”

Toppenish High School (THS) was a vastly different place just a few short years ago, before Trevor Greene arrived and put it on the national map. For his extraordinary efforts, Greene was named the 2013 National High School Principal of the Year.

“I felt a slight sense of disbelief and amazement at first,” Greene acknowledged. “It’s not something that one aspires to intentionally—I was honored.”

He is the first principal in the Pacific Northwest to earn the award in the 20 years since it was established. In addition, Greene, a member of the Muscogee-Creek Nation of Oklahoma, became the first Native American recipient of the award. Greene was eligible for the national award, sponsored by MetLife and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP), after being named the Washington State High School Principal of the Year. Overall, there are more than 20,000 public high school principals across the United States.

Greene was quick to share the credit.

“The success that we’ve had is not solely because of me,” said Greene, who came to THS in 2008. “It’s also because of the hard work of the staff and how we’ve implemented and built upon our collaborative vision to benefit our students.”

At a surprise awards ceremony, Gary Kipp, the executive director of the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP), talked about what sets Greene apart.

“First and foremost you have to know your community to be an effective principal, not just the school but you have to know your community—and Trevor does,” Kipp said. “You also have to have a vision of where you want your school to go and you have to model for students and staff the risk-taking and creativity to get to that vision—and he’s done that too.”

School improvement and student learning have been hallmarks of Greene’s tenure. At Toppenish he’s been particularly focused on integrating engineering and biomedical science classes into the curriculum, while igniting student interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) classes.

“We started with one class, offering five sections of the class,” he says. “We now offer more STEM classes than any other school in the state.”

Even the Spanish department began offering STEM curriculum with a bilingual course in medical terminology. In January 2012, a number of Toppenish engineering and biomedical students presented their projects at a STEM showcase event. Combined with small class sizes of approximately 23 students, overall student STEM interest is at an all-time high at the school. This year, 11 classes are being offered, with more than 27 sections.

Because of those strides, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) recognized “Top-Hi” as a 2012 state “STEM Lighthouse School,” one of three high schools in the state that best model the three best practices related to STEM education: 1) Small, highly personalized learning communities; 2) An interdisciplinary curriculum with a strong STEM focus, delivered through a project-based instructional approach; and 3) Active partnerships with businesses and the local community to connect learning...
beyond the classroom. The program provides grants to high-performing STEM middle schools and high schools each year. The Lighthouse schools use the funds to help other schools create STEM programs.

Much of Top-Hi’s STEM curriculum comes from the non-profit Project Lead The Way (PLTW). Top-Hi is among 4,200 schools nationwide using PLTW materials. Greene and his staff want to offer even more subjects, such as technical writing for English.

In recent years, student math and science scores have increased by 67 percent. Enrollment also has increased dramatically, with students choosing to take math and science as electives.

“We are seeing kids that are meeting the challenge of high-rigor courses,” Greene said. “That didn’t exist previously.”

Greene has overcome significant obstacles in order to help students attain higher goals.

The school, within the boundaries of the Yakama Indian Reservation, has a 95-percent minority student body, primarily Hispanic and Native American. More than 30 percent of school students come from single-parent households. Nearly all qualify for free or reduced-price meals, a testament to the area’s high poverty rate.

“We choose not to use that as an excuse,” Greene said, “but to recognize what we are, to build upon that, and seize it as an opportunity.”

To help beyond the classroom, he also developed an advisory program a couple of years ago that “gives us an opportunity to connect with students on a personal level and address the needs that they have academically, socially, and emotionally.” It involves outreach to middle-school students matriculating into high school.

“We’ve seen a decrease in the dropout rate,” Greene said, “so we think it’s paying great dividends.”

Kipp added, to make the kind of strides that have been made at Top-Hi, “You have to treat all students as if they were your own kids, and Trevor is known for doing that.”

Greene knew about the obstacles he would face in Toppenish, because he grew up on the reservation, in the White Swan area.

“The last thing I ever thought I would do was return to work on the reservation,” Greene admitted. “As a kid—no matter where you are—you want to get out because of the perspective that any place is better.”

Greene earned his Master of Arts in Education from CWU in 1998. He credits Central for preparing him to become an administrator who has been able to make “significant, positive change.”

“What I value from my time as a student was the people I was surrounded by and the respect and collegial nature of the professors—it was a great ‘learning-together’ environment,” Greene recalled. “The intellectual conversations also helped in the development of my own vision of what I wanted to see happen when the time came for me to direct a school.”

Greene said the late professor Alberta Thyfault was the professor from whom he learned the most because she always answered his questions with one of her own.

“She was one of my all-time favorite teachers K-20 and, yes, I do keep a list,” he said, with a laugh. “She would force you to come up with your own hypothesis and have the class then dialogue around that issue. She was very skilled in that approach. I admired how she taught and managed a class from day one.”

This year, Greene is only working in Toppenish two days a month. He’s been appointed to a one-year fellowship that partners him with principals throughout eastern Washington.

“I’m offering professional development around the common core [curriculum] implementation, the new principal evaluation component, and other projects the Association of Washington School Principals deems important,” Greene explained.

While he does allow himself some free time to ride his motorcycle and for some physical activity—including learning yoga with his wife, Melanie—even his off-duty time is generally spent on schools and school improvement.

“The books and magazines that I read are around education—I need to find more balance and that’s something I’ve struggled with,” he added.

Greene also has four children, who are enrolled in elementary, middle, and high school within the Toppenish School District. “That’s kind of interesting at this time in my life. I get to see the whole gamut, both as a high school principal and also as a parent of children in all levels of the system.”

Trevor Greene, in his own words at www.schooltube.com/video/c7356ebbb3a04ad99c97/
In May, the College of Education celebrated the strongest state review in a decade, including special recognition for achievement in assessment, remarkable growth in the school administration program, and research in the school psychology program. The five-year approval by the Professional Educator Standards Board also awarded CWU accolades for unique collaboration across colleges, according to Connie Lambert, the dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies.

“CWU has the only education program in the state in which colleges share hiring decisions for faculty who teach courses required for teacher education,” said Lambert. “That ensures that faculty who teach teacher-preparation content areas have three to five years of K-12 teaching experience and students receive top-notch education in the sciences, math, and other content. They learn it from faculty who’ve actually taught in K-12 classrooms.”

Lambert said the college also shined in the accountability category, which requires schools to show that they’ve established a performance-based preparation program. CWU was among the first colleges nationally to pilot the Teacher Performance Assessment, which requires students to demonstrate content knowledge and teaching skills in a portfolio. The portfolio includes written and video samples of the student’s work, as well as that of the high school students he or she has been teaching. Students also have to demonstrate how they collect and use feedback from their own pupils to inform planning, assessment, and changes in curriculum.

CWU ranked 12th nationally for the number of teachers produced each year, about 425. About 90 percent of CWU graduates pass the Washington Educator Skills Tests Endorsements the first time they take it.

CWU awarded seven Educational Specialist (EdS) degrees during the 2013 commencement, the first time that the university has conferred a degree higher than a master’s. The EdS replaced the Master of Education (MEd) in School Psychology, which already required 100 credits, far more than the 45 typically required for a master’s degree.

The state legislature authorized the new degree last spring. While the EdS is the entry-level degree in school psychology, Gene Johnson, director of the School Psychology Program, said many school districts consider it the highest degree in the field. The EdS broadens and deepens educators’ knowledge and skills by concentrating study in a specialized area, for example, special education or educational administration.

“The Educational Specialist degree results in a great depth of expertise in one academic area,” Johnson said, adding that all seven EdS graduates had jobs upon graduation.
Michael Jackson:
Lighting Up Excitement for the Sciences

The average number of physics degrees produced at an institution per year? Five. The number CWU produced this year? Twenty.

There’s a reason for this productivity. It’s Mike Jackson, winner of the national American Association of Physics Teachers Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Physics Teaching. The award recognizes extraordinary accomplishments in communicating the excitement of physics to students through undergraduate research, community outreach, and innovative teaching.

“When I was informed of the award, I nearly fell out of my chair,” said Jackson, chair of the Physics Department. “While I greatly appreciate the recognition that comes with this award, it also reflects the quality of our physics department. Everyone here—faculty, staff, and students—plays a critical role in its success.”

Stuart Boersma:
Igniting Math Passion Around the World

Math is exciting and fun, especially if you’re a student of math professor Stuart Boersma.

His innovative approach to math teaching earned recognition from the Mathematical Association of America last spring. Boersma received the award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics from the group’s Pacific Northwest region.

The chair of the CWU Department of Mathematics, Tim Englund, said Boersma goes above and beyond what’s expected of math faculty to make mathematics appealing to students everywhere. The criteria for the award required that the candidate be widely recognized as extraordinarily successful in their teaching, have documented teaching effectiveness, have influenced others through their teaching outside their institution, and fostered curiosity and generated excitement about mathematics in their students.

Boersma is igniting math passion around the world through “κρυπτοσ,” or Kryptos. It’s an online cryptography “tournament” that presents a puzzle to college students around the globe. When the puzzle launches, teams try to crack the code. Participants come from all sorts of higher education institutions, from military academies, and local colleges. The competition leverages the fame—and infamy—of popular culture phenomena like the TV show “NUMB3RS” and high-tech security organizations like the National Security Administration and Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

Boersma is also one of the creative forces behind “Quantway,” a program that promotes quantitative literacy among those who have had bad experiences with mathematics in high school and college. Quantway, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, focuses students on understanding and applying math concepts rather than memorizing seemingly disconnected processes and procedures. This innovative approach encourages students to use numerical reasoning for decision-making, argumentation, and “sense-making” about real-world questions in personal, social, and global contexts.

In addition to the PNW-MAA teaching award, Boersma received the 2006 MAA Trevor Evans Award for “A Mathematician’s Look at Foucault’s Pendulum.” The Trevor Evans Award goes to exceptional articles that are accessible to undergraduates and published in Math Horizons.

Try your hand at a Kryptos puzzle www.cwu.edu/~boersmas/kryptos/pastchallenges.html
Jackson, or “The Laser Show Guy” as he is affectionately known in central Washington, is a physics evangelist. If you were not a physics major in college, you will wish you were after you meet Jackson or attend one of his “Nature of Night” community seminars. Jackson’s energy lights up more than 800 elementary and middle school students and their teachers annually through “Science is Central,” a week-long science celebration that includes hands-on demonstrations in everything from rocketry to astronomy.

Jackson’s enthusiasm has driven a quadrupling of enrollment in the department over the last six years. He was instrumental in shifting the department’s teaching approach to inquiry-based learning, which integrates lab and lecture. The approach also helped accommodate the dramatic increase in enrollment by making more efficient use of faculty time and other resources. Jackson also was key in developing a dual Physics-Engineering degree: physics from CWU and engineering from Washington State University or the University of Washington.

“Mike’s enthusiasm for physics is contagious,” said CWU President James L. Gaudino, adding that Jackson’s students are doing research typically reserved for graduate students at other universities. “Mike’s standards for physics teaching include high energy, personal attention, and hands-on experience. It’s why Central is the best place in Washington to earn a bachelor’s degree in physics.”

Hear Professor Jackson talk about physics teaching at CWU at www.cwu.edu/cwu-professor-recognized-nationally-physics-teaching-0
How the executive vice president, president, and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes put his CWU education to work changing aerospace.
Ray Conner faced one of the biggest crises of his career last winter—the potential for catastrophic inflight fires aboard Boeing 787 Dreamliners. The CWU alumnus had shepherded the revolutionary design and production of the innovative aircraft from inception to debut.

But he had a big problem, and he needed to solve it fast. “Nothing is more important than getting the airplanes back in the air safely for our customers,” he said in an interview in the June issue of Boeing Frontiers. Conner gathered a team of experts to assess the problem and find solutions—and they did. The solution? “Three years of work in three months to fix the problem of overheating batteries on the 787.”

Conner’s deft managerial skills provided the necessary support that allowed the team to accomplish their goal. “I learned it’s important to be involved at the right level with each of them [members of the team],” Conner said. “Let the experts do their job and be there to help with any roadblocks they face along the way.”

Making the Most of Opportunities

“The reality of Boeing is that it is like a city within a city,” he explained. “At a place like Boeing, you can create a career, you have far more opportunities. I got to figure out what I wanted to do.”

Conner recalls reading the Boeing employees’ newsletter and getting inspired to take advantage of some of those opportunities. “[The newsletter] always had a lot of good stuff in it, always a lot of articles about sales,” he said. “Then I saw a photo of a group of guys handing over the keys to an airplane, and I said to myself, ‘I think I could sell airplanes.’”

Conner assessed his situation and decided he needed a master’s degree. With assistance from Boeing, and after going to school at night “for quite a few years,” he earned an MBA from the University of Puget Sound in 1984.

The effort paid off. Before long, Conner became one of those guys handing over the keys to new airplanes as sales director for Thailand.

“My first big sale was to Thai Airways,” remembered Conner. “Eighteen airplanes—some 737s and some 777s. It was big money and gave me the opportunity to really go forward. For many years [sales] was all I focused on. There were a few years when I was on a plane 200 days of the year.”

“All that operational background, running crews—it all helped,” he said. “It helped that I was a front line supervisor, that I worked with customers, that I worked with systems—and knew the people who were associated in the various departments. It allowed me to develop a foundation within the company.”

Conner built on that foundation to improve his understanding of all aspects of Boeing operations. His hard work and ambition propelled him into management, where he gained business acumen and began to develop his leadership style. During this time he also was networking and developing relationships within the company that would help him for years to come.
As he moved up in the organization, Conner said he tried to become more broadly aware of every aspect of company operation, seizing on opportunities to develop his understanding of product and practices. His determination paid off when he was charged to lead first the Propulsion Systems Division, then the 747 program, and then the 777 program. He led sales initiatives in China, Japan, Korea, the Americas, and eventually world-wide. From there his versatility and experience took him to the post of vice president and general manager of Supply Chain Management and Operations for Boeing Commercial Airplanes and then to the leadership of Sales, Marketing and Commercial Aviation Services for Boeing Commercial Airplanes.

In June 2012, he was promoted to executive vice president of The Boeing Company, and president and chief executive officer of Boeing Commercial Airplanes, where he is responsible for all of the company’s Commercial Airplanes programs and services, is a member of the Boeing Executive Council, and serves as Boeing’s senior executive in the Pacific Northwest.

“It means I spend a lot more time in planes,” he said with a laugh. “I spend a lot of time between our headquarters in Chicago and Seattle.”

Conner rests uneasily on his laurels, if at all. He is constantly evaluating what needs to be done to move his company forward and looking for paths to greater success.

“We have big challenges today,” he said. “We need to execute product rate increases. We’re working on the next version of the 787 [Dreamliner]. We need to develop a new wide-body strategy. Most important, we need to get the next generation ready to go.”

Conner said that for a company like Boeing to continue, it needs to groom successors to leadership throughout the organization. He said grade point average isn’t the first thing he looks for in the next generation of Boeing leaders.

“I first look for someone who has had to overcome something. I’m not that focused on the GPA as much as character,” he related. “Kids that have had to work and go to school, or raise a family, who’ve done more than just academics—something that has taught them how to work with people.

“At the end of the day, it’s how you work with people,” he said. “I encourage kids to get experience functioning within a group of people. It’s not all about you—it’s about we’ not ‘me’—that will make the difference.”

In October 2012, Conner wrote a message in Boeing Frontiers. In it, he reminded the people he leads that they are the most important ingredients to the company’s success. He wrote, “Just as we evolve the way we design and build airplanes, we have to continue to evolve ourselves.” If Conner has his way, a Boeing mechanic or designer or office assistant will read those words and start thinking about someday handing over the keys to an airplane.

Last season, Conner returned to Ellensburg for a Wildcat football game.

“I was so impressed with what’s happened [on campus]. I really love it here,” he enthused, adding that President Gaudino is “a really dynamic leader.”

The one thing he felt hadn’t changed was the quality of education.

“I got a well-rounded education,” he said. “The staff and teachers were excellent, and there was a great environment built around the school. This is a neat institution for a young person to complete their education and develop their foundation for the future.”
WILDCAT JAZZ FEEDS SUCCESS

GROOVE FOR THOUGHT
The pure sound of the human voice too often is lost in the bits and bytes of 21st-century music technology. But the jazz vocal group Groove for Thought just might change all that.
Here’s how the Seattle Times reviewed a Groove for Thought (GFT) concert at Benaroya Hall in 2011. “In the sparkling, lush, harmonically and rhythmically sophisticated arrangements of group member Kelly Kunz, the seven singers merge into one powerhouse unit—whether they’re backed up by excellent keyboard player Nick Moore, or performing sans instruments.”

The seven mostly CWU alumni musicians who form GFT have worked together for more than 10 years, developing magical harmonies that transform classic tunes into jazz masterpieces. Although members vary in age and interests, they share a love for singing—especially singing together. That bond comes from a powerful Wildcat music tradition.

Central has long been a nurturing environment for jazz educators and performers alike, and we wouldn’t be the musicians we are without our CWU experiences.”

Jeff Horenstein

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GFT started out in 2000 as a group of friends jamming together in their homes to create vocal music that went far beyond what they could produce in college choirs. As they coalesced more into a formal group, they began performing locally, then regionally, until they made their first national appearance before an audience of thousands at the American Choral Directors Association Conference.

Their music earned rave reviews and awards almost from the beginning. They won the 2005 National Harmony Sweepstakes Competition and, since 2006, three Contemporary A Cappella Recording Awards.

In 2010, GFT was one of 10 vocal groups from around the United States selected to appear on the second season of NBC’s vocal competition show, The Sing-Off. In addition to appearing on four of the show’s five episodes, Groove was featured on The Sing-Off: Harmonies For The Holidays and The Sing-Off: The Best of Season 2.

Many GFT members are music educators as well as performers. For them, music education is a way to inspire and empower young people in a unique and important way. Music education is central to GFT’s existence. They present workshops, clinics, and master classes at conferences and symposia around the world. GFT members also teach at high schools, colleges, universities, and conservatories throughout the United States. Although some are separated in age by three decades, the differences all but disappear when they get together.

“We all learn a great deal from each other, regardless of our varied ages. We don’t really think much about it,” continues Horenstein. “We all just try to bring our own musical experiences to the table and work together to create something unique.”

Two of the GFT members have a little more than musical ability in common. Kelly Kunz, who sings baritone and tenor, is the father of Amanda, the lead soprano. A lifelong...
musician, Kelly’s performance career began when he was 3 years old, singing as his musician father accompanied him on the piano. And just as he had a significant connection to his father through music, through GFT, Kelly has a similar connection with his daughter.

“It’s truly amazing when you and your child share a love for music and can work together creating and performing,” says Kunz. “At home she’s my daughter, but when we’re in the group, she becomes a colleague and fellow singer. Her maturity as a performer, musician, and songwriter continues to delight and amaze me.”

Amanda has been singing and playing music most of her young life. She joined GFT in 2009, when she was 16, after many years of performing in award-winning groups, such as the Seattle Youth Symphony and Seattle Girls’ Choir. While a high school freshman, she took college-level music courses and sang in Pierce College’s award-winning vocal jazz group, Farwest Jazz.

As a junior, she was one of a handful of students in the nation accepted into the Grammy Jazz Choir. The Grammy Foundation flew her to Los Angeles to rehearse with the select group, which then performed for Grammy-nominated and winning artists at the Blue Note Records party and the Grammy Celebration After Party.

A songwriter since she was very young, Amanda earned her bachelor’s degree in music composition last spring, and plans to pursue a master’s degree in film scoring at the University of Southern California. She completed her debut solo album, *Pieces of my Heart*, a collection of original songs, in 2011.

Earlier this year, she bested composers throughout the Northwest and Alaska to win the Student Choral Composition Award, sponsored by the Seattle-based Opus 7 Choral Ensemble. Last spring Opus 7 performed her winning piece, “A Single Rose,” scored for women’s choir, at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Seattle.

“Working with my dad in a setting like this seems completely natural. He’s always been involved in my musical development, obviously from a parental standpoint, but also as my director in multiple groups,” notes Amanda. “When I graduated from those groups, it was such an exciting idea to be able to sing with one of the best musicians I know of, and one of my favorite people.

“People ask sometimes what it feels like to be the youngest member of the group . . . honestly, that’s not something I ever really have to think about. We get together once a week, we work to make good music, and we have a blast on stage. They’re my peers and my friends, and that’s about all there is to it.”

*Amanda Kunz is congratulated by Gary Weidenaar, director of choral studies, during CWU’s 2013 Commencement.*
This year, when the house lights dim and the downbeat falls, the CWU symphony will be performing before the largest audience ever: 250,000 public television viewers from Wenatchee to Prosser.

**CWU Goes “On Stage” with KCTS-9/KYVE-47**

*CWU On Stage* is a one-hour classical-music performance made possible through a partnership between KCTS 9 / KYVE 47 and Central. The program airs the first Monday of each month, allowing classical music fans to savor CWU’s award-winning music without leaving their armchairs.

Nikolas Caoile, CWU’s director of orchestras, hosts the program and conducts many of the performances. He said the 70-piece symphony rehearsed four and a half hours each week. Sections rehearse another two. Performance majors have one-hour lessons. And everyone has frequent contact with a practice room. The result of the toil? A national reputation for mature and sophisticated execution even of the most difficult repertoire.

“This is like a championship team; they love what they do and have a tremendous work ethic,” said Caoile, adding that, until now, there hasn’t been a good way to give audiences a chance to see their performances. “We want people to know that remarkable music performance and music education is as close as the back yard.”

Caoile said the appeal of a wider audience includes the opportunity to inspire students to take up an instrument.

“Music is an educational power bar, packing history, math, team building, language, and more into one delicious bite,” laughed Caoile, who also is the music director of the Wenatchee Valley Symphony Orchestra and principal conductor of the Salem Chamber Orchestra.

The public-television partnership isn’t a new idea for CWU. Since 2005, CWU and KYVE 47 have joined forces to produce *Apple Bowl*, KYVE 47’s *Jeopardy*-style high school quiz competition.

“One of the roles of public media is to give a voice to the community,” said John Booth, deputy director of content at KCTS 9. “This new program features wonderful musical performances created by the community—in this case CWU—and made available to a larger audience through KYVE 47. It’s a natural fit.”

*Sample CWU ensembles* [cwu.edu/music/symphony-orchestra-recordings](http://cwu.edu/music/symphony-orchestra-recordings)
Born November 17, 1912 in Rockford, Illinois, Herbert A. Bird began taking violin lessons when he was seven years old. He earned his bachelor’s degree in music at the Oberlin (Ohio) Conservatory of Music and a master’s degree in music education at Teacher College at Columbia University in New York, where some of his classmates were from Washington State. They told him about a position at Central Washington College of Education and he applied. CWCE President Robert McConnell sent word about the promising applicant to Wayne Hertz, music department chair, who just happened to be at New York University at the time. They got together and Bird agreed to take a position at Central in 1947.

He received his Doctorate of Musical Arts from Boston University in 1957 and returned to Central where he taught strings and music theory, conducted the orchestra, and offered individual music lessons for 31 years until his retirement in 1978. He was also active as a solo performer, with chamber groups, and orchestras.

After his retirement he moved to an assisted living facility where he regularly treated his fellow residents to impromptu concerts on the grand piano in the lounge. Bird died at the age of 100 on October 9, 2012, at Kittitas Valley Community Hospital.

On November 17, the Kairos Quartet performed one of his favorite pieces, the Schubert Quintet in C major, at a celebration of his extraordinary life. Kairos violinist Carrie Rehkopf played Bird’s own violin, a 1747 Carlo Testore instrument Bird loaned to the music department.

Remember Dr. Bird with a memorial gift to the Herbert A. Bird Scholarship at [www.mycentral.cwu.edu/SupportHerbertBird](http://www.mycentral.cwu.edu/SupportHerbertBird).

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**CWU In Memoriam**

We’ve lost many friends and family over the past year. Visit [cwu.edu/alumni/imemoriam](http://cwu.edu/alumni/imemoriam) to learn more.

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This photograph was taken in 1947 just as Bird started teaching at Central Washington College of Education. Photo courtesy Ellensburg Daily Record

Bird played the piano at Hearthstone Cottage in Ellensburg in April 2011. As a lifelong musician and retired CWU music professor, Bird credited his love and involvement with music for keeping his mind sharp over the years. Photo: Brian Myrick/Daily Record
The Torch is Passed:
CWU Welcomes New Athletic Leadership

Dennis Francois looks like an athlete, a wrestler. He’s intense and deliberate and sure of himself. You can tell he’s thought about what he says.

First of all, he says, he is thrilled and honored to have been chosen to lead CWU Athletics. He wants to make a difference in the department and the university.

“My goal is to take Wildcat Pride to the next level,” he says. “I want to develop a program that everyone is proud of—faculty, alumni, students, the community, and, of course, athletes and fans.”

The new athletic director says it starts with the little things, like racking dumbbells in the weight room with the CWU Wildcat facing up.

“Pretty soon our upper classmen are telling the freshmen and recruits, ‘This is how we rack!’” laughs Francois. But building a culture of pride is no joke to him.

Francois comes to CWU from Drake University, where he was associate athletic director for external affairs. Prior to that he was director of athletics at Southern Oregon University. Under his leadership institutional scholarship support increased by 80 percent and department revenue increased 20-fold due to the development and facilitation of an extensive corporate sponsorship and marketing plan. He also developed comprehensive academic support services that increased retention and produced a six-year graduation rate among student-athletes that exceeded the rate of the general student body by up to 20 percent.
“My goal is to take Wildcat Pride to the next level. I want to develop a program that everyone is proud of—faculty, alumni, students, the community, and, of course, athletes and fans.”

Coming from Drake University (NCAA Div. I) with an enrollment of just 3,500, Francois wasn’t sure how connected the CWU campus community would be with athletics. He didn’t know if CWU would be too big to care.

“Everyone I’ve met has a love and passion for this university and wants the best for its future,” Francois grins. “People support and understand the value of athletics. They know it’s an integral part of who we are.”

Francois hasn’t let moss grow under his feet. He’s been on the road all summer meeting with friends and fans, athletes and alumni. He’s got the lay of the land and he and his staff are already developing a mission- and value-driven strategic plan.

“Alumni and fans are hungry for more contact and communication. We need to give them a reason to engage with our university,” says Francois. “A cornerstone of our new mission has to be personal contact with Wildcat Nation.”

Francois says winning is an important element of enhancing pride in the program—but he emphasizes it will not come at the expense of classroom success. Francois, himself a former student-athlete and university professor, says he’ll make the student experience his top priority. He rarely says “athlete” without attaching it to the word “student.”

“We want them to feel great about being a Wildcat student-athlete—not just the member of a specific sport team, but a member of the student-athlete family and the athletic department as a whole,” he says, adding that a positive experience includes equity in things such as travel accommodations, meal per diems, training and competition facilities, coaching, and, of course, earning a meaningful degree. “We have to ensure a base level of support for every sport program and provide the resources they need to be successful in competition, the classroom, and life. Of course, we are going to make greater investments in particular programs—but not at the expense of others.”

His interviewers call him an engaging and “authentic” man.

“He’s one of these guys that’s heart-forward. He cares. He’s incredibly competent,” says search committee chair Gail Farmer, adding that Francois exudes confidence. “You can tell he’s been around the block several times. You can’t study that; you have to live it.”
One of the nation’s top 30 volleyball coaches is at CWU. The American Volleyball Coaches Association named Chloe Solum, assistant volleyball coach, a “Thirty Under 30 Award” winner for 2013. The prestigious national award was created in 2009 to honor 30 up-and-coming volleyball coaches younger than 30, at all levels of volleyball, including high school, club, and college.

Solum, 28, has been part of the Wildcat coaching staff for the past five seasons. She’s helping build a program that is gaining a reputation as a fierce competitor after another appearance in the West Region playoffs last season. Even so, she prefers to stay out of the limelight and focus, instead, on the team’s successes.

“I’m excited that our program is getting some recognition for all the hard work the coaching staff and the players have put in,” said Solum, adding that the team spends hours in the weight room, at practice, watching film, and preparing for games. She shared credit for the honor with head volleyball coach Mario Andaya and some of her own high school and collegiate coaches, who also earned the national recognition.

Solum was a collegiate volleyball standout at North Dakota State University, where she was an outside hitter between 2003 and 2006. She came to Ellensburg to be closer to her family, including her dad Wayne Quirk, at the time the dean of Graduate Studies and Research. When she applied for the assistant volleyball coaching vacancy, Andaya recognized a golden opportunity and hired her.

“Chloe works tirelessly to meet the needs of players and the program,” said Andaya. “Chloe’s sense of humor, competitiveness, and overall perspective on life makes me enjoy being around her as a friend and a coach.”

Athletic success runs in her family. Her brother, Tony Quirk, was an all American offensive tackle for the CWU football team four years ago. And her sister, Kaitlin, is now one of the Wildcats Solum coaches.

“Chloe knows exactly what to say to me when I’m having a rough practice or game,” said Kaitlin, adding that her sister demands a lot. “It pushes me harder at practice and weights because I know she expects a lot out of me.”

This season, Solum will also get a new opportunity to coach against her other sister, Carly, who will be playing at Northwest Nazarene University.

As for her future plays, Solum says she wants to continue coaching, while helping to create the next generation of coaches for the sport.
Wakeboard Club Nabs National Crown

Pro-style massive Hoochi Glides, Scarecrows, and Tootsie Rolls carried the Wakeboard team to a national championship last May. Think extreme freestyle skiing or skateboarding—but on the water, on a tow rope, at 24 miles per hour.

“It was definitely the coolest experience of my college career,” said Eddie Roberts, club president and recent graduate. “The win was a huge relief, because a lot of work went into it.”

Each team brings seven competitors: four men, two women, and a wakeskater. Each competes in his or her individual category and earns points that add to a final team score.

The Wildcat men swept first place in all four individual categories, with honors going to freshman Kyler Green and seniors Thomas Olson, Eddie Roberts, and Sean Harris. Two CWU women competed in Shreveport, Louisiana: Chelsea Worland and Amanda Parker, who earned second place. Pat Mahoney rode wakeskate for the Wildcats and placed third in the final round. Freshman Kolby Blew rode well enough to win third place against the top individual riders.

Roberts, a 29-year-old Redmond native, got a lesson in leadership, planning the trip for 12 to Shreveport. Roberts said the club saved $2,000 using a “Planes, Trains & Automobiles” approach: a flight to Dallas followed by train and then bus to Shreveport.

“It was a challenge to keep everyone excited and motivated after a long trip,” said Roberts, adding that a friend of his dad and a Shreveport local, David Stamps, helped by bringing a pop-up shade tent, water, Gatorade, and sandwiches.

Roberts said that, in addition to exciting memories, wakeboarding has given him a network of lifelong friends.

“All my best friends are in wakeboard club. It’s cool that we’re a community inside and out of the club,” he said. “We help each other and care about each other. I’ve gotten jobs for several club members and I know we’ll be networking for the rest of our lives.”
Professor Pain
and the Science of Roller Derby

By day, she’s the mild-mannered professor of Apparel, Textiles and Merchandising, Andrea Eklund. By night, she’s Professor Pain, a fierce competitor on the Ellensburg roller derby league, Rodeo City Rollergirls.

The internationally recognized apparel-design professor caught her passion for roller derby in 2007 when she showed up at a Seattle roller derby boot camp with the pink and white skates she’d kept since sixth grade. She recalled, “I instantly got ‘the derbs’ and I’ve been with the league ever since.”

Eklund said derby changed her life, but it’s also added a dimension to her academic focus. She has partnered with Barbara Masberg, a CWU recreation and tourism, to research how women’s involvement in roller derby affects their body image.

They surveyed roller derby teams online in March 2012, asking women to describe themselves, their participation in roller derby, and how that participation has changed the way each woman views her body. Eklund and Masberg received more than 2,400 survey responses—and “97 percent indicated roller derby had a positive effect on their body image,” said Eklund.
Eklund explained three main themes emerged from her research. Women said derby made them view their bodies as instruments to be tuned for the best possible derby performance. One respondent said, “I now see my body as a tool for the sport rather than an object for display. I just think about how I can make my body stronger to become a better athlete.”

Women also said derby made them more accepting of their own bodies. Body acceptance was typified by “acceptance of my body—(and) not afraid to show it.” Seeing other women of various sizes and shapes involved in the sport was cited in improving acceptance of their own bodies. Instead of worrying about dress size, respondents said they focused on a healthful and active life and a desire to be fit.

Participation in roller derby also affected respondents’ clothing choices, which reflected more form-fitting apparel during derby practice and bouts and in their daily lives. Dress used during bouts, “derbying up,” can include such items as tights and mini-skirts, to basketball shorts and fishnet stockings. Women said that wearing revealing clothing during practice and bouts increased their confidence.

Eklund will use the roller derby research in her class on socio-cultural aspects of apparel, where students examine how and why people adorn their bodies. Her findings will be a focal point in a segment of the course discussing body image, the cultural ideal, and what motivates decisions to conform to that ideal, to niche markets, and to personas. Her research was featured in the summer 2013 issue of fiveonfive, a magazine for women’s flat-track roller-derby. It will also be published in Clothing and Textile Research Journal.

Eklund’s next derby project? Install a regulation-size track on her property next spring so she and her friends can skate anytime. Then it’s on to the Women’s Flat Track Derby Association National Tournament and the 2014 Roller Derby World Cup.

Roller Derby 101

Roller derby matches two teams of five skating counterclockwise around a flat track. Each team designates a scoring player, the jammer, and four blockers. After the initial pass through the pack, each time the jammer laps an opposing player her team scores a point. Those on the other team try to ensure that doesn’t happen using hip checks, shoulder checks, and other techniques. Contact with the hands, elbows, head and feet are prohibited, as is contact below mid-thigh or above the shoulders.

It’s physically demanding and somewhat dangerous, as Eklund, a.k.a. Professor Pain, can attest. She suffered serious pain when she broke her fibula, dislocated a foot, and tore ankle ligaments during practice. “A pack of 10 players fell on me,” she recalls, “and my rear wheels went back and touched my calf.”

Putting the ankle back together required a plate, screws, and pins. Her first question to the doctor was, “When can I get back on skates?” After seven months of physical therapy, she was back on the track.

It’s a far cry from her day job teaching students to recognize fashion-industry trends, analyze market and consumer behavior, and design apparel marketable in the diverse, fast-paced, and ever-changing fashion industry. Eklund teaches 12 classes a year, supervises up to 20 interns, advises 70 students, and mentors the Student Fashion Association, and directs the annual fashion show, which involves more than 100 students. Since Eklund took over the program, it has grown more than 165 percent. In 2012, Eklund won an award for sustainable design from the International Textile and Apparel Association.
Dear Friends,

On May 1, I celebrated my first anniversary in our community. My heartfelt thanks goes out to the entire Central Washington University family for the warm and gracious welcome I received as I connected with alumni and friends across the state. Virtually from the moment I became CWU’s alumni officer, our Alumni Association’s immediate past president and staunchest supporter, Todd Mason, challenged me to reach out to alumni and to conceive and execute big and bold ideas about the future of our alumni community.

If you have contacted the alumni office and/or participated in one of the many programs and events we launched this year, my guess is that you have already experienced some of the big ideas we have begun to implement just for you. The upcoming pages will feature a glimpse of some of the programs we offered you this year. However, if you have not availed yourself of the plethora of opportunities to engage, I hope you will take this opportunity to find your place in the CWU community.

As you peruse the pages, you will also notice engagement comes in many shapes and forms. We are working diligently to develop meaningful ways for you to be at home at CWU. Whether you decide to become a mentor, regional ambassador, alumni association board member, and/or attend an event, we welcome and value your involvement!

We’re embracing all alumni and urging you to take your place in the Wildcat Nation. Reconnect with alumni in your field of business. Share your expertise with students. Help plan a reunion or a program that’s important to you.

The fall has always been my favorite season as it signals new beginnings and change. A new academic year brings new students, new classes, and a fresh slate of plans for the year ahead. I invite you to join us in shaping the entertainment, educational, and career activities for the upcoming year. Stay tuned as we roll out an exciting lineup of events that will extend across the country.

Homecoming is always one of the marquee celebrations for alumni and the greater CWU community. Mark your calendars to be back on campus when the Alumni Association will also honor our Distinguished Alumni. Visit our alumni webpage (www.cwu.edu/alumni) and join us on the social media scene.

Thanks for all of your contributions. I look forward to connecting with you at one of our events this year.

With warmest regards,

Grace A. Greenwich
Executive Officer of Alumni Relations
Want to Hear More About Alumni Activities?

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We want to hear from you! Let us know what’s happening in your career and your life. Send news of your promotion, birth of a child, or the memoriam of a loved one to:

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Stay in Touch!
Be sure to stay up to date on alumni news, events, and information by liking us on Facebook, following us on Twitter, and joining our LinkedIn® group.

Dennis Haldane (’77)
is a member of the CWU Legacy Society through a bequest to honor music professors Robert M. Panerio Sr. and John Moawad.

Create a Legacy of Giving

A bequest gift allows the donors to make a difference beyond the spans of their own lifetime and create a lasting legacy.

Contact the CWU Foundation today to learn more about establishing a bequest through a will or trust to benefit CWU’s students and programs.

Contact Catherine Scarlett at 509-963-3083, scarletc@cwu.edu or www.cwugift.org.
Life-Changing: Alumna Provides Profound Leadership Experience in Nation’s Capitol

Carol Smoots gives CWU students the leadership experience of a lifetime. Each spring the energy-law attorney hosts students in her Washington, DC, home for 10 intense days of learning the DC ropes.

There’s a tour of the city and “the Hill.” Students network with alumni, and Smoots uses her capital connections to introduce policymakers to students—who have impressed the DC crowd.

“The students just bowled them over; they are so polite, interesting, and interested,” smiled Smoots, a former chair of the CWU Foundation. “I really enjoy them. Their energy amazes me. It’s exciting to see the future and have it be so bright.”

Smoots welcomes students from a variety of personal and academic backgrounds. She loves “that real mix of every major, from art to accounting to business to education.” According to Smoots, “Some are well traveled and some have never been in an airplane before. Some are obvious leaders and some are quiet—and then we watch them blossom!”

Smoots’s enthusiasm is infectious and has drawn several other DC Wildcats into her internship project. Artist Jenny Walton (’01) takes the students on tours of the “undiscovered” DC art scene. Even students who aren’t art aficionados find this a fascinating, intimate look at artists and their work, and appreciate the chance to view a part of the nation’s capital that’s off the beaten path for most tourists.

Smoots, a 1975 summa cum laude political science grad, also arranges more structured meetings with alumni who are business and government leaders. Rich Vogler (’97) is a program analyst at the US Small Business Administration; Sherry Gustafson (’97) is the director of finance and administration at the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. She also has arranged meetings with leaders in NASA and the Department of Energy.

Smoots’s goal? Open students’ minds to possibilities and opportunities.
“Last year, two of our interns woke up early to be on the steps of the Supreme Court when the landmark healthcare decision was handed down,” related Smoots. “They were right there when history was being made. That kind of experience stays with you for life!”

Smoots is careful to balance interns’ work and play. Students take in baseball games, concerts, and other events with the Smoots family. Two excursions that have proved popular in the last few years are a trip to see Monticello, Thomas Jefferson’s estate, and a longer sojourn to Mount Vernon, George Washington’s home.

“The time we spend together is special for them and special for us,” explained Smoots. “We want them to have a good time and have fun.”

She gives special credit to her husband, attorney Jay Hines, and daughter, Lizzie. Smoots says they provide “amazing support—cooking, driving, planning excursions. I could not host these students without them.”

Smoots and the interns stay in touch long after the internship is over. Students often go to her for career advice. “I’m sort of a Central mom to them,” she said, adding that students become close to her whole family, especially her college-age daughter, who often relays messages to Smoots about what’s going on in their lives.

The CWU Department of University Advancement offers as many as four students a full scholarship for the leadership experience internship. This program, funded solely through alumni donations, includes airfare, lodging, and a small stipend.

Students describe the adventure as “life changing” and say it gives them a broad new understanding of what is possible for their lives and careers.

Allyson Mundy, who participated in the Leadership Experience in 2012, describes her experience as “fabulous.”

“Everyday was jam-packed full of learning and new adventures,” she exclaimed.

Mundy, the 2012-13 vice president of the Associated Students of CWU, says she’ll never forget the tour of DC landmarks.

“On the 4th of July, a fellow classmate and I experienced Independence Day downtown at the Washington Monument—something I will never forget,” said Mundy, who graduated last June, earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a specialization in management and organization.

Intern Averyl Shindruk said the 10-day trip “really opened my eyes to how much more the world has to offer beyond my original perception of post-CWU life.” She was fascinated to discover the connections among business, government, and healthcare. The highlight of her trip? Standing on the steps of the US Supreme Court when justices handed down a landmark decision on the Affordable Care Act.

“We were standing right in the middle of the gigantic crowd of protestors for and against the plan,” said Shindruk, a pre-med student with a dual degree in biology and Spanish. “The energy was incredible, and it was both chilling and exciting to see our democracy at work!”

For Shindruk, one of the best parts of the internship was simply spending time with the other interns and with the Smoots family, whom she calls “inspiring people.”

“They made us feel like we were their kids,” she laughed. “I loved being around them. Carol does a wonderful job of connecting with students of any background and giving them an experience that they will carry with them for a lifetime. I know I can go to Carol for anything, whether it’s networking, academic advice, or just life encouragement in general.”

“I feel so enriched,” said Smoots about her interns. “I hope CWU considers expanding the program. I’d love to see more students get this experience.”

Carol Smoots is a national leader in the development of renewable energy projects and an active participant in the development of state renewable portfolio standard programs. She serves as former chair of the American Bar Association Renewable Energy Committee and is a frequent speaker on renewable energy issues. A partner in the Pierce Atwood Energy Practice Group, Smoots represents energy companies in proceedings before federal and state regulatory bodies as well as in domestic and international energy transactions. She is on the LexisNexis Inaugural List of Top Woman Lawyers in the Northeast. Smoots earned her law degree from Willamette University College of Law in 1978.
Wildcat Nation Roared in 2012-13, with more than 80 events throughout the state. At focus groups, socials, networking receptions, and guest speaker presentations, more than 1,200 alumni and 500 students shared their vision for engagement with CWU.

The CWU Performing Arts and Speaker Series, normally available only on the Ellensburg campus, came to the REI headquarters in Seattle and more than 250 alumni held their breath as acclaimed author Jon Kedrowski recounted mountaineering adventures. Alumni gathered at the Rainier Club in Seattle to hear about “Life on the Hill” from MSNBC Correspondent Angela Rye. Alumni and students took over Safeco Field and Tacoma Wildcats socialized at the Pacific Grill. The Alumni Office brought together recent graduates to get job-search tips from Susan Long-Walsh, senior recruiter for the Gates Foundation, and presenters Tom Washington and Terry Pile.

The year culminated in May when more than 350 alumni joined students and faculty at a glittering celebration of research and scholarship at the Experience Music Project (EMP) in Seattle. The air crackled with excitement as winners of the CWU Symposium on University Research and Creative Expression (SOURCE) explained their discoveries to alumni.

Mechanical engineering graduate Andrea Battles designed and manufactured the drive train of a remote-controlled car for her senior project. Her challenge? Design a system that was efficient as well as “manufacturable.” The design placed second out of 25 in a Northwest collegiate competition and won top honors at SOURCE.
“Being able to present at the EMP was a great experience. I spent my entire senior year working on this project and it was so amazing to be able to show all my hard work to the alumni,” said Battles. “All of the alumni were very interested in what each student was presenting, which made all the hard work worthwhile. Also, having the awards ceremony at the EMP made it possible for family and friends to attend and see my research.”

The crowd sipped wine and nibbled on sumptuous hors d’oeuvre in EMP’s Sky Church. Alumni and students watched CWU come to life on a brilliant, two-story video screen and listened to President Jim Gaudino challenge alumni to impact the life of the university through a 30-day campaign in June. The Impact Challenge sought to reach 300 alumni in 30 days: to get them to update their profile on the alumni website, to give to CWU, and to share both activities on Facebook.

In the end, more than twice that number actually participated. About 750 alumni responded to the challenge and donated nearly $400,000.

“Our alumni are wonderful partners in the life of the university,” said Scott Wade, executive director of University Advancement. “They provide professional expertise and mentorship to our students while giving to scholarships and other areas of program support. We’re proud of our alumni and want to engage them in the work of advancing CWU in the months and years ahead.”

SOURCE recognition celebration at EMP: (l. to r.) Sean Quinn, Andrea Battles, Jacob Dahlgren, Seth Litsheim, and CWU President James L. Gaudino

You Don’t Wanna Miss a Thing!

A CWU alumni event is coming soon to a community near you. Engage. Connect. Impact the life of CWU. Visit us at cwu.edu/alumni

REGIONAL ALUMNI GROUPS

Our regional programs have become one of our most popular alumni programs, as we engage alumni in meaningful ways and in locations where alumni work and live. We are eager to expand our reach. If you would like to become a regional alumni representative, please contact the alumni office at alumni@cwu.edu.
“Welcome to the society of educated men and women!” declared CWU President James L. Gaudino, and with that, the class of 2013 threw their caps into the air, hugged each other, and cheered along with family and friends.

More than 3,700 people earned degrees during the 2012-2013 school year. The oldest graduate was 76, the youngest was 20, and the average age was 27.

Keynote speakers were alumni Mary Alice Heuschel, chief of staff to Washington Governor Jay Inslee, and Ron Dotzauer, one of the nation’s top political strategists and founder of the public affairs firm Strategies 360.

Visit cwu.edu/commencement to see video, pictures, speeches and much more from CWU graduations past and present!
Invest in students’ lives by supporting one of CWU’s two annual fund priorities this year, the Pillars Fund and the Students First Fund.

Your gift to the CWU Foundation, no matter how large or small, literally changes the trajectory of a student’s life and equips them with a Central education that allows them to live lives of great purpose, intention, and influence.

Thank you for your continued partnership with us and your investment in our student’s lives.
VISIT CWU'S NEW SEATTLE OFFICE ON BEAUTIFUL LAKE UNION!

Located at:
1505 Westlake Ave. N, Suite 1010

CWU is now 90 minutes closer to Puget Sound-area alumni, students, and partners. CWU's presence in western Washington has been growing for more than 30 years. Now we're excited to add this beautiful Lake Union office to Wildcat paw prints in Edmonds, Everett, Des Moines, Kent, and Steilacoom. We hope you'll visit us soon and discover how CWU is reaching out to alumni, students, businesses, and policymakers in this convenient new location.