

maroon gold
m&g
Winter 2024



LETTER

from the President



I hope this message finds you and your families well.

During the summer of 2023 we opened the new UC Downtown Innovation Hub. Located at the corners of Capitol and Lee Streets, the Hub provides workshops, training, advising, coaching, and networking for small businesses to help them scale up and grow. This extension of the Wehrle Innovation Center on the Charleston campus also provides students with opportunities to work with small businesses and learn first-hand about the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship.

We also finished a complete redesign and renovation of our football locker room at UC Stadium. And it seemed to have helped the coaches and the team - ending the season as MEC Champions, making it to the second round of the NCAA Super Region One playoffs, and a 9-2 record.

Our recent graduates also did well this summer. For examples, every student in both our Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Master of Physician Assistant programs who graduated this Spring passed their licensure exams. Yes, that's a 100% pass rate for both programs! Students seeking licensure in other healthcare programs also earned very high pass rates. These results are testament to the exceptional commitment of our faculty and staff to student success.

As you will read in this edition of *Maroon and Gold*, each day we live our mission to educate each and every student for a life of productive work, enlightened living, and community involvement. We also practice our core values of student focus, quality, and integrity as we navigate the challenging higher education landscape. Despite the head winds we face, UC continues to be a vibrant, innovative, and growing university, meeting today's students' needs in Charleston, Beckley, and online.

Our success is due in large part to the generosity of alumni and friends who believe in the power of a UC education. Whether you help support student scholarships, athletics or other student activities, new academic programs, faculty development, or campus projects, your contributions have a profound impact on the students we have the privilege to serve.

***Your gifts really make a difference in the lives of others.
How fitting as we usher in a great new year!***

Best regards,

Marty
Martin S. Roth, Ph.D.
President

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University of Charleston

Winter 2024

THE MISSION OF UC
is to educate each student
for a life of productive work,
enlightened living and
community involvement.

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UC OPENS *Downtown* Innovation Hub

The University of Charleston is proud to introduce its latest endeavor, the Downtown Innovation Hub (DIH), a cornerstone for business growth and the first business accelerator of its kind in Charleston. This revolutionary program is designed to propel West Virginia enterprises forward.

Located at the strategic crossroads of Capitol and Lee Streets, the DIH serves as a multifaceted facility offering coworking spaces, an accelerator program, and a suite of services such as coaching, advising, employee training, and venues for community events. These resources foster economic development, job creation, and retention and stimulate private-sector investment within the Kanawha Valley.

In July 2023, the DIH celebrated its inauguration with a festive ribbon-cutting event attended by distinguished guests including WV Senator Shelley Moore Capito, a delegate for Senator Joe Manchin, and Charleston Mayor Amy Goodwin, along with prominent local and state economic figures.

The event also welcomed the first businesses participating in the accelerator program. The inaugural cohort, comprising businesses aged three to a century, embarked on their initial training workshop, signaling the start of their growth journey.

The Downtown Innovation Hub's establishment was made possible through a notable U.S. Economic Development Administration grant of \$1,590,123, augmented by significant contributions from the City of Charleston and the Benedum Foundation, which provided \$247,531 and \$150,000, respectively. These funds are a testament to our collective commitment to nurturing entrepreneurial spirit and innovation in the Charleston area.

The site of the DIH holds sentimental value as the former location of the Chesapeake Bagel restaurant, a fond memory for many, including WV Senator Capito, who reminisced about her mornings there. She highlighted the DIH's role as a catalyst for business growth. She anticipated its positive impact on the local economy and as a model for the rest of West Virginia.

The DIH's team includes Executive Director of Innovation David Ransburg, Program Director Dr. Russell LaAsmar, and Program Manager Allyssa Cover, who are dedicated to guiding businesses toward success.



Pictured, left to right: Michael Graney, Patrick Graney, Brian Aluise (representing Senator Joe Manchin), Senator Shelley Moore Capito, Marty Roth, Mayor Amy Goodwin, Fonda Elliot, John Elliot, David Ramsburg.

The inaugural cohort featured a diverse array of businesses from various sectors, each poised to redefine their industries with the support of the Downtown Innovation Hub:

- Atlas Prediction Control, Chemical Industry Consultant, Charleston
- Donut Connection, Food Services, Charleston
- Easter Group, LLC, Electrical Contractor, Mount Nebo
- Gresham Plumbing, Plumbing Wholesaler, Charleston
- Pipestem Spa and Chalets, Niche Hospitality, Pipestem
- Rocco's Italian Specialty Foods, Inc., Frozen Food Facility, Huntington
- Saraceno and Associates, Inc., Insurance Agency, Charleston
- Vandalia Digital, Digital Marketing Agency, Hurricane

The University of Charleston is excited to foster a collaborative environment where businesses can thrive, contributing to a vibrant future for Charleston and beyond.



Amy Goodwin



Shelley Moore Capito



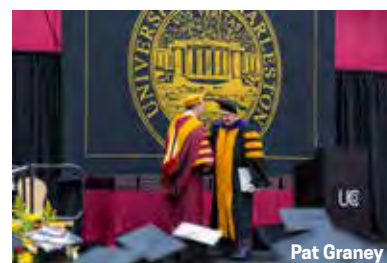
Marty Roth

SPRING 2023 COMMENCEMENT

Over 300 new Golden Eagle alumni were celebrated during our spring commencements held at the end of April. There were two ceremonies, the first for undergraduates and the second for graduate students.

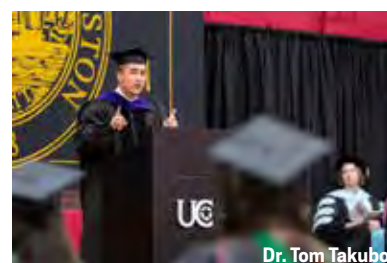


Pat Graney, former UC Board of Trustees Chairman and recent recipient of the YMCA's "Spirit of the Valley" Award, was the commencement speaker for the undergraduate ceremony. Dr. Tom Takubo, partner at Pulmonary Associates of Charleston, current Senate Majority Leader in the WV Legislature, and vice president of provider relations for WVU Health System, addressed the graduate ceremony. Both received honorary degrees.



Pat Graney

Undergraduate Senior of the Year was Sidra Tahir from Annapolis, Maryland, who graduated Magna Cum Laude with a degree in biology with a biomedical sciences concentration and a minor in psychology. Graduate Student of the Year was Darius Berry of Cumberland, Maryland, who received his PharmD. Berry was also awarded the U.S. Public Health Service Excellence in Public Health Pharmacy Award.



Dr. Tom Takubo

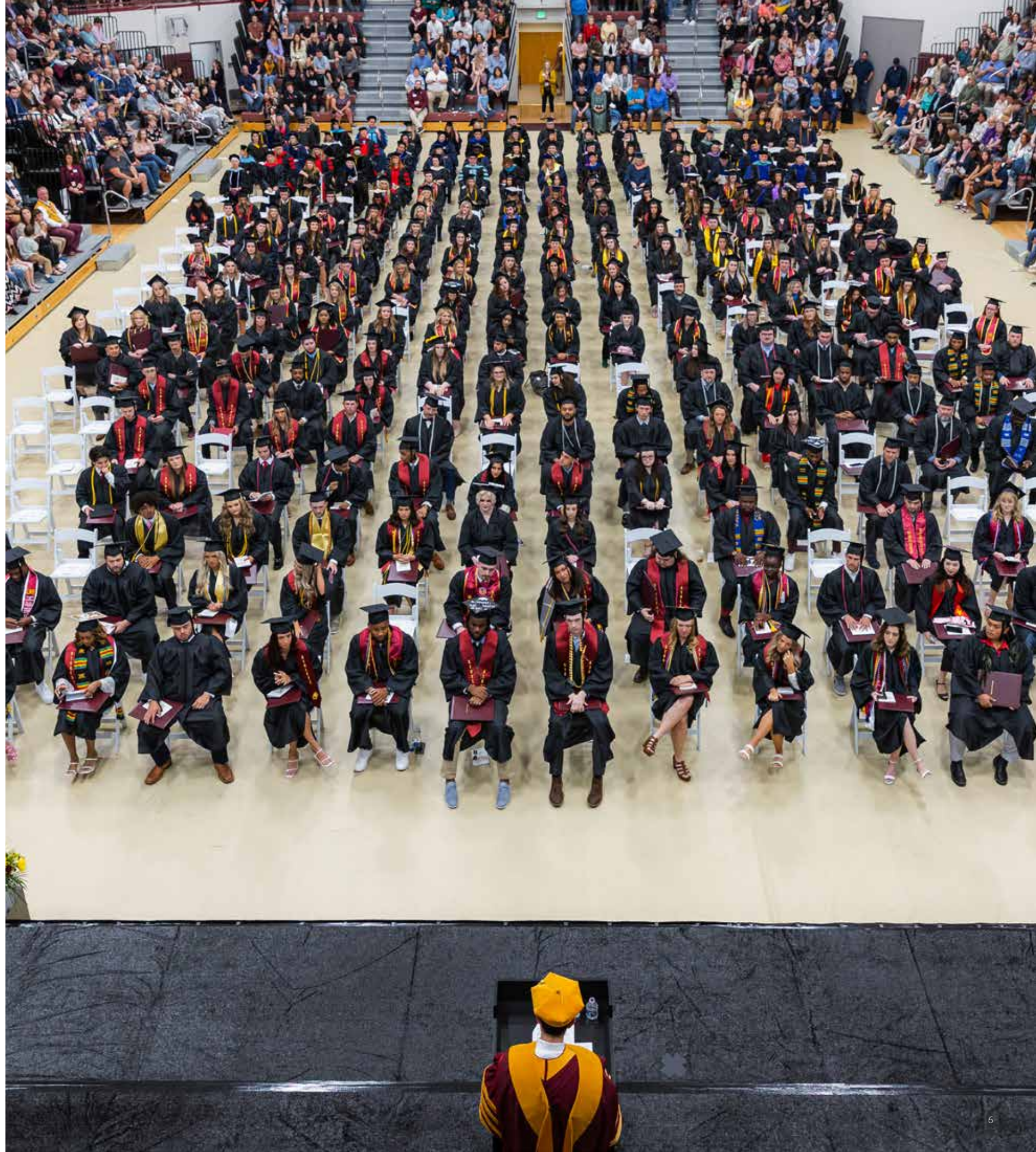
The evening before the main ceremonies, there were several program-specific events: the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Radiologic Science programs held pinning ceremonies, and the UC Graduate School of Business & Leadership, the School of Pharmacy, and the UC Physician Assistant Program held hooding ceremonies.



Sidra Tahir



Darius Berry





Health Sciences & Pharmacy Camps Highlight Career Options

High school juniors and seniors in Kanawha and surrounding counties interested in a health profession career were invited to attend one of two health sciences camps.

On the Charleston campus, an overnight camp gave students a glimpse at career options as well as a view of college living.

Campers learned about various health science professions, including exercise science, radiology, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and pharmacy. They participated in hands-on activities led by UC faculty, including visiting simulation labs and an interactive anatomy and physiology experience featuring 3-D technology. Campers also received one-on-one advice on applying for college.

In addition, the School of Pharmacy offered its annual ExRx Day, where undergraduate students explored the world of pharmacy through the school's mock pharmacy, IV, compounding, and simulation labs. Led by SOP faculty, the day-long camp provided a fun way for students to learn more about pharmacy and potential related careers.

HIPE

Healthcare Interprofessional Education

WEEK

September 5 - 7

UC Health Sciences Students Get HIPE-d

Interprofessional Education (IPE) is vital to our health sciences students to enable them to solve issues within the boundaries of ethics and values, communication, and roles and responsibilities while supporting the team's collective efforts.

The UC IPE team - composed of health science deans, program directors, faculty, and staff - created a Healthcare Interprofessional Education (HIPE) week, which took place in early September. Bringing together UC students in our nursing, radiology, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and physician assistant programs, HIPE Week included activities such as general health screenings, first aid education, Narcan training, immunization administration, Active Shooter simulation, roles and responsibilities debriefing, a mental health wellness session, and simulation demonstrations. Students gained experience working together in teams from different disciplines, as they will do when they move into their careers.



NEW FACES, *New Roles*

Vice President of Communications and Marketing

Following a national search, Ella Curry was named Vice President of Communications and Marketing in December 2022. She comes to UC from Marshall University, where, for the past decade, she held roles of increasing responsibility in admissions and recruitment. She was Assistant Director from 2009-18, Associate Director from 2019-21, and most recently served as Director. She led all outreach and engagement activities with prospective students and families, including marketing, social media, and website content and distribution.

Her experience also includes leading and contributing to successful data management and technology-driven strategies, event hosting, and staff productivity and retention.

Prior to her work in higher education, she held information and press roles in state government. Ella earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism and is active in various professional organizations.



Beth Pauley Named Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Dr. Beth Pauley, who has been serving as Assistant Provost, has become Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. She will continue to support the University's accreditation and related processes while offering guidance to programs with specialized accreditation. She will also oversee assessment procedures and coordinate the preparation of curricular proposals. Working with the Provost, she will also serve as a liaison to senior leadership, curriculum subcommittee review, approval, and implementation process and facilitate faculty professional teaching and learning development programs.



New Board Members Elected

The University of Charleston Board of Trustees has elected five new members and named a new Chairman of the Board.

Greg Burton, retired Executive Chairman of Encova Mutual Insurance Group, is the new Chairman. He follows Pat Graney, who had served as Board Chair since June of 2018, completed his term.

Two new members, Fonda Elliot and Nettie Horne, return to the Board after completing earlier terms in 2022. They will be joined by Dickie Jamieson, Paul Smith, and Louis Weisberg.

"The University of Charleston has long benefitted from its exceptional Board of Trustees. They are deeply committed to the University's success. Their advisory, network, and philanthropic support help us achieve our mission to educate every student for a life of productive work, enlightened living, and community involvement. Our newest members will add even more expertise and diversity to our outstanding Board."

- UC President Marty Roth

School of Business, School of Leadership

With the restructuring of our School of Business & Leadership into two distinct schools, we hired a new Dean and changed the roles of two UC leaders:

Dr. John Barnette is now the Assistant Vice President for Strategic Initiatives. In this role, he will leverage his institutional knowledge and extensive professional network to help UC deliver innovative career-relevant programs attractive to students and employers. He will report to the President and the Executive Vice Presidents and be a member of the University Leadership Team along with the University's Vice Presidents and School Deans.

Dr. Kristen Dugan transitioned into the Dean of the School of Leadership. She continues as Program Director of the University's DEL (Doctor of Executive Leadership) program and has extensive experience serving in other program director roles and on various committees at UC, as well as industry experience.

Dr. Cedric Stone, selected through a national search, is the new Dean of the School of Business. His extensive corporate and small business backgrounds, combined with business school faculty and leadership roles, will be ideal to drive innovation and growth for our business programs.



UC Welcomes New Executive VP, Provost, and Dean of Faculty

Following a national search, Dr. Dan Silber became UC's next Executive Vice President, Provost, and Dean of Faculty. Dr. Silber comes to UC having served over the past 15 years as the Senior Vice President and Provost at Piedmont University in Georgia, Vice President and Dean of the College at Culver-Stockton College in Missouri, and Associate Provost at Florida Southern College. Prior to his administrative positions, he served in faculty positions at Kent State University and Florida Southern College.

Dr. Silber earned his Ph.D. and MA degrees in philosophy from Vanderbilt University and a BA in philosophy and history from George Washington University. He is also a graduate of the Institute for Management and Leadership at Harvard's Graduate School of Education.

Dr. Silber brings to UC extensive experience managing and leading initiatives to serve students of all ages and backgrounds via in-seat and online modalities, liberal arts and professional programs, and bachelor and graduate degree education.

Dr. Silber began his appointment with UC on July 3, 2023, following the retirement of Executive Vice President and Provost Dr. Kim Spiezio.

“I am very excited to be joining the University of Charleston and look forward to getting to know new colleagues, students, and the whole community. UC was an institution I’d heard many positive things about over the years because of its high-quality academic program, focus on professional education, and uncompromising dedication to student success. It is truly an honor to now have the opportunity to serve UC and to work with faculty and staff to help our students achieve their dreams.”

-Dan Silber



Education Professor Named as One of “40 under 40”

Sarah Gallagher, Assistant Professor in our Education Department, was named a “Generation Next – 40 Under 40” member by the *WV State Journal*.

Gallagher teaches various education courses, a geography course, and a West Virginia and Appalachian Region course. Before her role at UC, she worked at St. Albans High School for three years and Ripley High School for six.

The *State Journal* recognizes and honors young professionals throughout West Virginia with its annual Generation Next 40 Under 40 issue. Those named are honored for their contributions to making their communities and West Virginia a better place to live, raise families, and do business.

According to the *State Journal*, “These are 40 of the best and brightest individuals under the age of 40 in our state. Each of the winners is a standout in their field of endeavor.”

In addition to Sarah, this list of impressive leaders includes three UC alumni, Bradley Harris, Chelsea Kinzinger, MBA, and Mason Olszewski, MBA - way to represent Golden Eagles!



WVSOM, University of Charleston partnership will allow students to earn dual D.O./MBA degree

“Today’s medical students want the flexibility to seek out additional education that will help them build successful practices. The University of Charleston is an outstanding institution, and we’re happy to work with their administration to offer this option to our hard-working future physicians.”

***–James W. Nemitz, Ph.D.,
President, WVSOM***

Students at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (WVSOM) now have the option of learning to manage a business while learning to manage the health of their future patients.

This past spring, WVSOM and UC entered into a partnership that allows the medical school’s students to supplement their Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. The program began in July and is available to any second-year WVSOM student in good academic standing.

James W. Nemitz, Ph.D., WVSOM’s president, said the agreement will allow the school to better serve students who are motivated to learn about the business side of health care.

Marty Roth, Ph.D., MBA, president of the University of Charleston, detailed some of the ways the partnership will help physicians take roles as leaders.

“We are always looking for innovative ways to help students achieve their personal goals and professional success,” Roth said. “This partnership is a unique and exciting opportunity for students to position themselves for roles that require a combination of patient care, management skills, and leadership expertise. Our MBA program offers students exceptional applied learning opportunities for advancing their business proficiency and organizational capabilities. We are proud to work with WVSOM to help the next generation of physicians face the changing field of health care, offer exemplary care to their communities, and grow as professionals and individuals.”

The partnership establishes a path for interested students to attend osteopathic medical school for two years of preclinical education before beginning a 10-month online program at the University of Charleston, leading to the awarding of an MBA degree. After completing the MBA program, students will return to WVSOM to complete third- and fourth-year studies at rotation sites in the school’s Statewide Campus, where learning occurs in clinical settings such as physician offices, medical centers, and hospitals.

NEW INITIATIVES AND ACCOLADES

Nursing Programs Lauded

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) reaffirmed our nursing programs’ excellence, granting continuing accreditation to our Associate and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees through Spring 2029 and bestowing initial accreditation to our Master of Science in Nursing.

UniCare Boosts PA Program and HIPE Week

Through a Community Investment Grant, UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia will help house Physician Assistant students doing rural rotations and provide professional development opportunities for health sciences students.

The grant, created to reduce barriers to education and promote health equity in West Virginia’s rural communities, provides \$60,000 to two important UC programs. The most significant portion of the grant – \$50,000 – will help UC Physician Assistant Program students cover the cost of their housing during clinical rotations in rural areas, enabling these students to bring much-needed healthcare to remote areas of the state.

“At UniCare, we are dedicated to empowering the next generation of leaders in their journey to transform the healthcare landscape, ensuring the well-being of all communities across West Virginia, regardless of their location,” said Tadd Haynes, President, UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia. “Through housing support, we remove a substantial barrier that often limits students from exploring opportunities outside urban centers. We envision a future where these students emerge as the cornerstone of local healthcare, creating a lasting impact within their communities and significantly contributing to areas in need.”

Michelle Riffe, UC Director of Clinical Education, explained further, saying, “Our program emphasizes service to the underserved populations in rural areas of WV. Each student is required to complete at least two clinical rotations in a rural setting in WV. To access these sites, students require housing facilities in the local community, and this donation will help them be able to serve those communities without incurring housing costs.”

The \$10,000 remainder of the funding was used for Healthcare Interprofessional Education (HIPE) Week programming. HIPE Week brought together students from our nursing, PA, pharmacy, and other health sciences programs to give them experience working in teams from different disciplines, as they would in a professional setting. This gives them important “real world” experience. This year’s HIPE event took place in September.

UniCare is based in Charleston and offers a variety of plans to help people create benefit solutions to meet their needs. In West Virginia, it serves Mountain Health Trust, West Virginia Health Bridge Medicaid, and WV CHIP members.

UC Hailed as Best Regional School

The University of Charleston has been named one of the Best Regional Schools by the Princeton Review in its 2024 “Best Colleges: Region by Region” rankings, recently released.

The publication lists schools in seven zones – Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Northeast, South, Southwest, West, and International. A total of 630 schools were recognized this year.

UC is one of 97 schools listed in the Mid-Atlantic Region that the publication considers “academically outstanding and well worth consideration.” (Schools are not ranked but listed alphabetically.) UC was one of five West Virginia schools to make the list.

The Mid-Atlantic Region includes schools in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

PA and BSN Programs Celebrate Perfect Pass Rates

The University of Charleston Physician Assistant Program Class of 2023 has achieved a pass rate of 100% for first-time test-takers on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). The program graduated 29 students in April.

This year’s national average for first-attempt pass rate is 93%. For the past four cohorts, the UC PA program has graduated students with first-time test-taker pass rates above the national average.

The UC Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduating class of 2023 achieved a 100% passage rate on the National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX-RN) exam. Those who pass the exam can then become Registered Professional Nurses.

Sun Safety Initiative

Partnering with WV Health Right and IMPACT Melanoma, we’re promoting sun safety on campus with free sunscreen dispensers, ensuring our students enjoy our beautiful riverbank lawn while staying protected.

New Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling

UC has received a second grant that will help fully fund the startup costs for a Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling degree, scheduled to start in Fall 2024. The Benedum Foundation is making a single \$80,000 award in 2023. The Bernard McDonough Foundation has made an \$80,000 two-year grant.

ATHLETICS

HIGHLIGHTS



CROSS-COUNTRY TRIUMPHS

The UC cross-country teams once again dominated the MEC Championship, with the men's team clinching their sixth consecutive title and the women's team securing their third. Coach Nick Bias demonstrated his exemplary leadership, earning the distinction of Coach of the Year for both the men's and women's teams.

Standout athletes Julie LaFare and George Couttie were honored as Athletes of the Year, with Couttie also nabbing Freshman of the Year. The Golden Eagles showed their depth with five men's team members selected for the MEC Men's First Team and another for the Second Team. The women's team also shone brightly, with four making the First Team and two on the Second Team.

Both teams also took home NCAA Atlantic Region DII titles, with nine Golden Eagles receiving first-team all-region honors. This is the fifth straight regional championship for the men, and the second straight for the women.

The US Track & Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association (Atlantic Region) named Coach Bias Coach of the Year for both men's and women's cross country teams and named Golden Eagle George Couttie DII Atlantic Region Men's Athlete of the Year. Couttie also earned the individual title at the Atlantic Regional Championships.

FOOTBALL'S STELLAR SEASON

For the first time in UC history, Golden Eagle Football are Mountain East Conference champions. The team charged through the season, going undefeated at home and toppling five-time reigning MEC champions Notre Dame College. The team defeated cross-town rival WV State 52-20 in the final game of the season to clinch the championship. The Golden Eagles saw their historic season come to an end in the second round of the NCAA Super Region One playoffs against the Golden Bears of Kutztown University. The team made it a fight until the end, losing the contest 32 - 31. They ended the season with an impressive 10-2 record, with four team members being named to the 2023 All-Super Region One Team.

SOCCER'S NATIONAL RECOGNITION

A historic achievement for UC as both men's and women's soccer teams were ranked in the United Soccer Coaches poll—making UC the sole NCAA D2 institution to hold this distinction. The women's team stood strong at #9, while the men's ranked #3, both securing the Mountain East Conference South Division Season Champions title.

The women's team became Mountain East Conference champions for the first time in program history under new coach Gary Ogilvie, defeating Frostburg State University 2-1 at the Welch Athletic Conference to earn the title. Three UC players were named to the All-Tournament Team. In addition to winning the championship, the team boasted an incredible undefeated streak (13-0-3).

For the sixth consecutive year and tenth time overall, Coach Smee's men's team claimed the Mountain East Conference Championship. The team soundly defeated Davis & Elkins 6-1 to claim their title, and finished the season with 18 wins and only one loss.

The season, unfortunately, ended at the Sweet Sixteen of the DII NCAA Tournament against Gannon University but the team posted a season record of 19-2. Six team members were named to DII Conference Commissioners Association (CCA) Atlantic Region teams, and the coaching staff was named NCAA DII Atlantic Region Staff of the Year.

VOLLEYBALL'S ASCENDING PATH

Our women's volleyball team had a season to remember, with an incredible 24-8 record (11-4 in MEC play), positioning them at #9 nationwide and ranked second in the MEC South Division. Under the guidance of Coach Tyler Kanelos, now in his third year, the team continues building on last year's success—a 33-5 record and the program's highest winning percentage. Last season's achievements included winning the MEC South Division and breaking into the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2007.



SOFTBALL

For the first time, the Golden Eagles softball team is the Mountain East Conference Tournament Champions! The team won five elimination bracket games in a row to earn the title while also capturing the MEC South Division Championship for the first time since 2016.

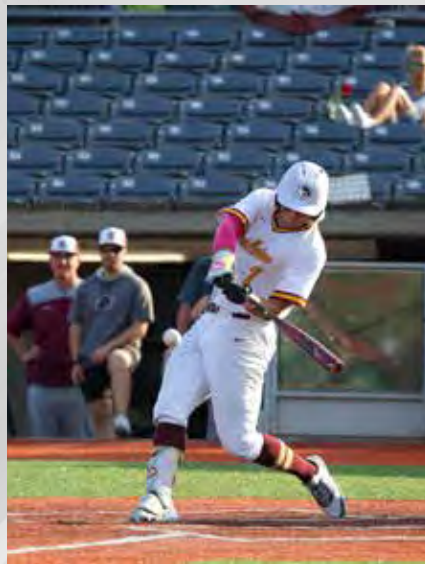
Junior Hannah Rose was named MEC Player of the Year for the second year in a row and named Female Athlete of the Year by the MEC for 2022-2023.

Bella Andujar became the new single-season home run leader, hitting her 17th home run during the championship.

BASEBALL

The Golden Eagles baseball team was named Mountain East Champions for the fourth time in five years. Three players earned 2023 National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA) All-American honorable mentions: Tyler Dellerman, Kyle West, and Cole Peschl. The three, plus Giano Zuccaro, were named All-Atlantic Region First Team by the NCBWA. The team ended the season with a loss to Millersville in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Tournament. They still finished with a 43-12 record, including a program and conference record for wins.

Dean Peterson was named the new head coach for the team.



LACROSSE

While the team lost a heartbreaker to Notre Dame in its last game, women's lacrosse ended the regular season with an 8-9 record (7-3 in the Mountain East Conference) that included wins over Alderson Broaddus, Davis & Elkins, WV Wesleyan, and Frostburg State.

Two Golden Eagles – Madison Sobolewski and Gianni Blundell – were named to the All-MEC First Team. Destiny Jackson, Tess Yuhas, and Kaiya Roberson were named to the All-MEC Second Team, and Madison Partridge (who was also named to the Freshman Team) and Ally Wilson were named Honorable Mention, and Antonia Martinez was named to the Freshman Team.

Ryland Luciano was named the head coach of the team.

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

After a fantastic season, men's volleyball coach Luke Reynolds was named 2023 EIVA Eastern Intercollegiate Volleyball Association (EIVA) Coach of the Year. The team ended the regular season with a 22-6 record, 5-5 in the conference. In his second year at UC, Reynolds is the first EIVA Coach of the Year and the first EIVA individual award winner for the Golden Eagles.

Diego Villafane became the first UC American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) National Player



of the Week in program history. To put it in perspective, Diego beat out men's volleyball players from USC, Ohio State, Penn State, Pepperdine, etc. According to the AVCA, Villafane "helped Charleston improve to 13-0 with two wins over Harvard. The setter led the 15th-ranked Golden Eagles to a .408 hitting percentage, averaging 9.5 assists per set in the sweeps."

The team had its best start in program history, won its first 14 matches in a row, had its first season with a winning record, first win against a ranked opponent, first appearances in national rankings, first AVCA National Player of the Week, and their highest finish in EIVA regular-season standings. They entered the EIVA conference tournament as the No. 3 seed, and while the team lost a hard-fought battle against NJIT, bringing this incredible season to an end, it was a great one.

TRACK AND FIELD

Outdoor Track and Field: Coach Nick Bias and both men's and women's outdoor track and field teams won the Mountain East Conference Championship – the men for their seventh consecutive MEC Championship, and the women earned their fourth consecutive title. Coach Bias was named both men's and women's coach of the year. Several players were recognized as well:

Most Valuable Performer & Freshman of the Year: Mathias Mees



Field Athlete of the Year: Kellen Tropeck (senior Kellen Tropeck was also indoor track and field Athlete of the Year)

Freshman of the Year: Julie LaFare

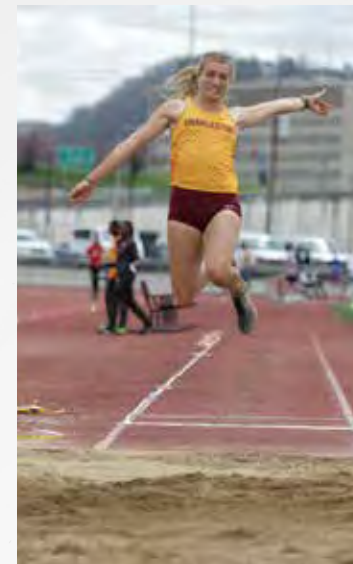
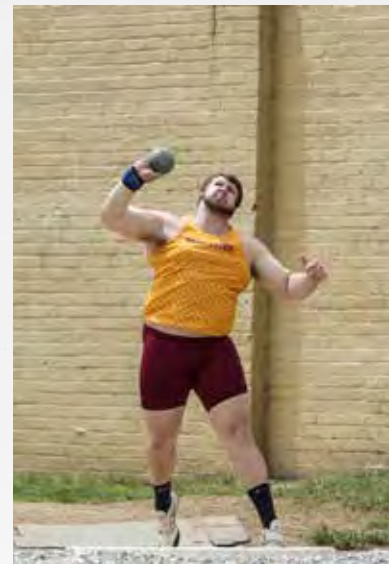
Track Athlete of the Year: Louanne Pouzancré

INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD

The women's track and field team repeated and was once again named the Mountain East Conference Indoor Track Champion. Our men's track program finished second place at the MEC Indoor Championships right behind West Liberty, losing only 12 points.

The track & field team had 12 members – a program high – named to the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) All-Academic List. The team finished the year with the men earning a collective 3.31 GPA and the women earning a 3.48 GPA. To qualify for the All-Academic List, a student-athlete must hold at least a 3.25 GPA through the end of the semester.

Coach Nick Bias stated, "I'm so proud of my student-athletes for achieving all academic selections in track and field, as it takes a special individual with self-discipline and hard work to achieve such a prestigious honor. This is the most student-athletes we've ever had to achieve Academic All-American status in track & field, so this is just another nod to our program, coaches, and athletes for outstanding work."



GOLF

The women's golf team placed second in the Mountain East Conference Spring Women's Championships, and Iciar Canalejo was named both MEC Player of the Year, Freshman of the Year, and named to the All-MEC First Team. This marks just the third time in MEC history and the first time in UC golf history that Player and Freshman of the Year honors have gone to the same athlete.

Beatrice Dietz also earned First Team honors, and Lauren Besford and Victoria Witouski were named MEC Honorable Mention.

TENNIS

The men's tennis team clinched the regular season conference championship with wins over Frostburg State and West Liberty University. Women's tennis swept Frostburg State to clinch the women's conference championship. Prinkle Singh was named the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's Atlantic Region Senior Women's Tennis Player of the Year. Coach Alec Foote was named the Atlantic Region Women's Coach of the Year.

UC WINS COMMISSIONER'S CUP

For the 6th consecutive year, the Golden Eagles have won the Mountain East Conference (MEC) Commissioner's Cup! The award recognizes overall athletic excellence among its members. Our teams won 11 regular season titles throughout the 2022-2023 season to bring home this impressive award and keep an equally impressive streak alive. This is the eighth time UC has won the Cup since the league began in 2013-2014.

LEARFIELD CUP RANKING #14

UC came in at #14 overall in the Learfield Director's Cup standings for the 2022-2023 season. The National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) gives the Cup annually. Points for the Cup are based on the order of finish in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sponsored championships. UC is the only Mountain East Conference school to place in the top 20.

RECORD ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

UC student-athletes achieved record academic excellence for spring 2023. The department GPA was an impressive 3.38, a new UC record. Nearly 400 student-athletes brought in a GPA of over 3.0, and 136 had a 4.0!

HERE'S THE BREAKDOWN:

136 HAD A GPA OF 4.0

60 REACHED 3.75+

79 HIT 3.50 +

116 ACHIEVED 3.00+

GIVE FOR GOLD DAY

2023

After 20 years of a successful program, the Golden Eagle football team now has an updated locker room to call home. This year's Give for Gold Day set as its goal to update the aging facilities at the University of Charleston Stadium to make it as great as the Wehrle Innovation Center and Welch Athletic Complex.

Funds raised by UC alumni, faculty, staff, and students enabled the project to move forward. Work was completed over the summer, and the 120 student-athletes and ten coaches who use the UC Football Locker Room now have a state-of-the-art facility for practice, game days, and recruiting.

A dedication ceremony was held at the locker room on September 21.



HOMECOMING '23

A TIMELESS TRADITION, REIMAGINED



This year's Homecoming was a vibrant tapestry of new memories woven with the threads of our rich heritage. The University of Charleston opened its arms wide, welcoming back its cherished alumni and their families into a campus buzzing with change and tradition.

As leaves turned golden, so did the spirits of our Golden Eagles, who, alongside old friends and fellow alumni, cheered our football team to a glorious victory. It wasn't just about reliving the past but witnessing the transformation that has swept across the halls and fields of our beloved campus.



Celebrating Milestones with Pride and Reflection

The heart of our Homecoming celebration beat strongest when classes marking their 40th, 45th, and 50th+ reunions gathered. The air was alight with laughter and reminiscent tales during a luncheon where President Roth, evoked our shared legacy and looked ahead to our promising future. The UC Singers lent their voices in a performance that was as much a celebration of the present as an echo of the past.

Campus tours unveiled our progress, with the newly upgraded football locker rooms serving as a testament to our commitment to excellence. As dusk settled, the riverbank lawn came alive with the spirit of Homecoming at the pep rally, a prelude to a tailgate where camaraderie was the guest of honor and our Golden Eagles' soaring win over WV Wesleyan the crowning jubilee.

The Sam Femia Broadcasting Booth: Honoring a Legacy

In a particularly poignant moment, we dedicated the Sam Femia Broadcasting Booth in Wehrle Arena. Sam Femia, a 1981 graduate of Morris Harvey College and a passionate Golden Eagle fan, sadly lost his battle with cancer last year. To honor the legacy of their fraternity brother, Sam's Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter raised funds to build a broadcasting booth where Femia spent so much time cheering on his beloved Golden Eagles. Many of his fraternity brothers and family members attended the ceremony, remembering a man who touched many others. The booth will enable UC to livestream games in the arena.



Each year, we recognize two outstanding members of our alumni community in recognition of their living our mission. The awards are open to alumni of Morris Harvy and UC. This year, we are proud to recognize Steve Kawash and Mark Broyles, who were honored at halftime of our homecoming game.

2023 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR - Steve Kawash, Morris Harvey class of '78

During his time at Morris Harvey College/University of Charleston, Steve was active in student government and many business and social clubs. He graduated summa cum laude in 1978 with a bachelor of science degree in business administration. He later obtained a master's in business administration from the West Virginia College of Graduate Studies. "In addition to getting a great education, joining the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity had a great impact on my life. It allowed me to meet fellow students from around the country, and I made lifelong friends with whom I still maintain a close relationship. I have the good fortune of living in Charleston and getting to see all the improvements that have been made on campus over the years. If you have not visited the school in a while, I would encourage you to come to Charleston and see all the great things happening at our Alma Mater."

2023 RISING ALUMNUS Mark Broyles, UC Class of '06

Mark graduated from the University of Charleston in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. During his time at UC, Mark was a member of the 2004 WVIAC Conference Tournament Championship Team and 2nd Team All-Conference.

"I feel very fortunate that I was able to work so closely with the top-quality business professors at UC. The classes were challenging, but I always felt comfortable knowing that their door was open to seek guidance. The personal relationships and general accessibility students have at UC is something I don't think you can find in many other places. I still have all my notes from Alcazar & McMillen's classes!"

Dr. Beth Pauley

Four Generations

make a

STRONG BOND

Dr. Beth Pauley, a dedicated member of the UC community since 2006, has contributed significantly to the university in various capacities. Her connection to UC, however, extends far beyond her professional contributions, tracing through four generations.

Ray Musser, Morris Harvey College Class of '49, and George Pauley, MHC Class of '51, both had children who also went to Morris Harvey College. Ray Musser's daughter, Gloria, and George Pauley's son, Thomas, married before they graduated in the 1960s.

Tom shared, "My Dad went to MHC, and even though I visited other schools, I just didn't like what I saw. I am convinced that if I had gone to any other school, I would not be where I am now. I give Morris Harvey all the credit. After teaching at other colleges and universities for 47 years, I look back, and I can recognize what a wonderful experience it was."

Gloria shared, "I was planning on going to Marshall, but the dorms were full, and back then, if you couldn't get into the dorms, then you couldn't go to school. So, I thought I would go to Morris Harvey for one year. When I got there, I really liked it and decided to stay. It all turned out okay. I got a degree and a husband while I was there."

Their union brought forth Dr. Beth Pauley, representing the third generation linked to the University of Charleston. Dr. Pauley, now the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, and her husband, Dr. Mark Watson, Chair of the Natural Sciences and Math Departments, are integral parts of the UC family. Mark joined the faculty in 2004, followed by Beth in 2006.

Beth shared "Mark started teaching at UC in 2004, and I started in 2006, both in the UC biology department. We both love the department and the students. We feel this is one of the places where you can really make a difference in a student's life. Some of our very first students are now physicians and pharmacists, and it's amazing to see. Once I started working here, I went back to Marshall and earned my doctorate in curriculum and instruction. I moved into an administration role in 2018, but I am still teaching in the first year program, and this year I am teaching a biology class, so that's fun."

Representing the fourth generation of Golden Eagles in the family, Mark and Beth's youngest son, Eli Watson, is a member of the UC class of 2022. Eli graduated with his political science degree in May 2022. Then, in August 2022, he made a last-minute decision to teach and spent time teaching at Sissonville High School. In August of 2023, he joined the UC Admissions team as the International Enrollment Coordinator.

When Eli graduated, Tom and Gloria gifted him Tom's father's Morris Harvey class ring. Eli reflected, "I had a little more of the 'carrying the torch' feeling once I graduated. When you are a student, you are just in survival mode. Once I left, I was proud to carry on the tradition."

Please see this and other stories about our graduates on our Alumni web page.



Synita Gates, '13



As a UC student, Synita competed on the cross country and track teams for all four years, served as a Resident Assistant for three years, and helped with events in the athletic department. She graduated magna cum laude in December 2013 with a degree in sports administration. She was also named Sports Administration Senior of the Year.

“During the 2013 spring semester, I really started thinking about grad school. By this time, I had already been exposed to D3 and D2 college athletic events a good bit and knew that was the path I wanted to take. I had experienced competing as a college athlete, assisted (UC VP and Director of Athletics) Dr. Bren Stevens with volleyball tournaments, helped create the UC5K half marathon, traveled to the Super Bowl and YUM Center in Louisville, and more. Now, I just had to figure out where I would apply for grad school.”

While Synita didn’t get into Ohio University as she hoped, she left an impression on an individual who recommended her for a graduate assistant position at Toledo University. There, she spent two years working on her master’s degree in recreation and leisure studies and learning a lot about the administrative side of college athletics.

In September 2016, she became the Events Coordinator at the University of California, Merced, an NAIA school. “At that time, UC Merced Athletics was only five or six years old, and I was their third events coordinator,” Synita explained. “Other than keeping stats, my team of about fifty students and I managed all aspects

of the games for men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s basketball, cross country, and men’s and women’s volleyball. That experience taught me how important it is to build relationships across campus and with our campus partners.”

She moved on to the University of Akron as the Manager of Athletic Operations and Events. In July 2021, she beat out over 100 applicants to become the Assistant Director of Game/Event Management at Louisiana State University, where she was the game manager for volleyball, gymnastics, tennis, and softball.

Currently, Synita is the Program Director of Operations, Facilities, and Event Management at Notre Dame University. She handles facilities and event management aspects, including overseeing guest services.

“It’s been a pretty fun ride, and I attribute a lot of my success to my time at UC, (UC Professors Michelle Wells and Annie Valeant) brought me out of my shyness. Public speaking is my weakness, but having to do it at such a young age, especially in the sports law class with Dr. Bren Stevens, had a huge impact on me,” Synita says.

“That family bond and continued support of my professors has been so special, and if I had gone to a big school, I would not have been able to form those bonds. I always said I never wanted to go to a big school, which is funny now that I work at one.”

“In the future, I want to be a senior administrator. I want to impact college athletics. It is important that I continue to be an influence as an African-American woman in this industry. It has meant so much to have young Black females hired as interns come up to me and say, ‘I don’t get to see someone who looks like me in this industry very often, and I’m glad you are here.’

“THAT FAMILY BOND AND CONTINUED SUPPORT OF MY PROFESSORS HAS BEEN SO SPECIAL, AND IF I HAD GONE TO A BIG SCHOOL, I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FORM THOSE BONDS. I ALWAYS SAID I NEVER WANTED TO GO TO A BIG SCHOOL, WHICH IS FUNNY NOW THAT I WORK AT ONE.”

SPEAKERS ON-CAMPUS

Conor Knighton

New York Times best-selling author, “CBS Sunday Morning” national correspondent, and Charleston native Conor Knighton visited campus in late October in an event sponsored by AARP West Virginia, WOWK, and the West Virginia Humanities Council. A book signing after the event was hosted by Taylor Books.

Knighton is the author of *Leave Only Footprints: My Acadia-to-Zion Journey Through Every National Park*, a behind-the-scenes account of the year Knighton spent wandering through America’s “best idea,” exploring the threads that tie our national parks together and that tie us to nature.

Knighton’s reports for “CBS Sunday Morning” have covered everything from the Scandinavian obsession with salty licorice to what it’s like to wake up on Wake Island, one of America’s most remote military bases. He’s the creator and producer of the show’s “On the Trail” and “Island Hopping” series and has hosted and produced shows for AMC, Biography, EW Scripps, and Current TV.

Knighton has won four Daytime Emmys as part of the Sunday Morning team and a Los Angeles Area Emmy for his work on KCET’s SoCal Connected. He’s been nominated for two additional Los Angeles Emmys, and his feature reporting has earned a National Headliner Award and an LA Press Club Award.

A graduate of Yale University, Knighton grew up in Charleston and attended Chamberlain Elementary, John Adams Junior High, and George Washington High School.



Author Cory Doctorow

The WV Humanities McCreight Lecture brought author and tech humanist Cory Doctorow to campus. He held an informal session with students and UC faculty and staff, discussing ethics in technology. He presented a lecture to the public as well, offering his thoughts on empowering our communities to determine their digital futures. Doctorow is the author of non-fiction works, including *The Internet Con: How to Seize the Means of Computation* and, with Rebecca Giblin, *Chokepoint Capitalism: How Big Tech and Big Content Captured Creative Labor Markets and How We’ll Win Them Back*. His latest fiction novels are two cybersecurity financial thrillers, *Red Team Blues* and *The Bezzle*.



Author Alica Fruhwaldova-Belanova

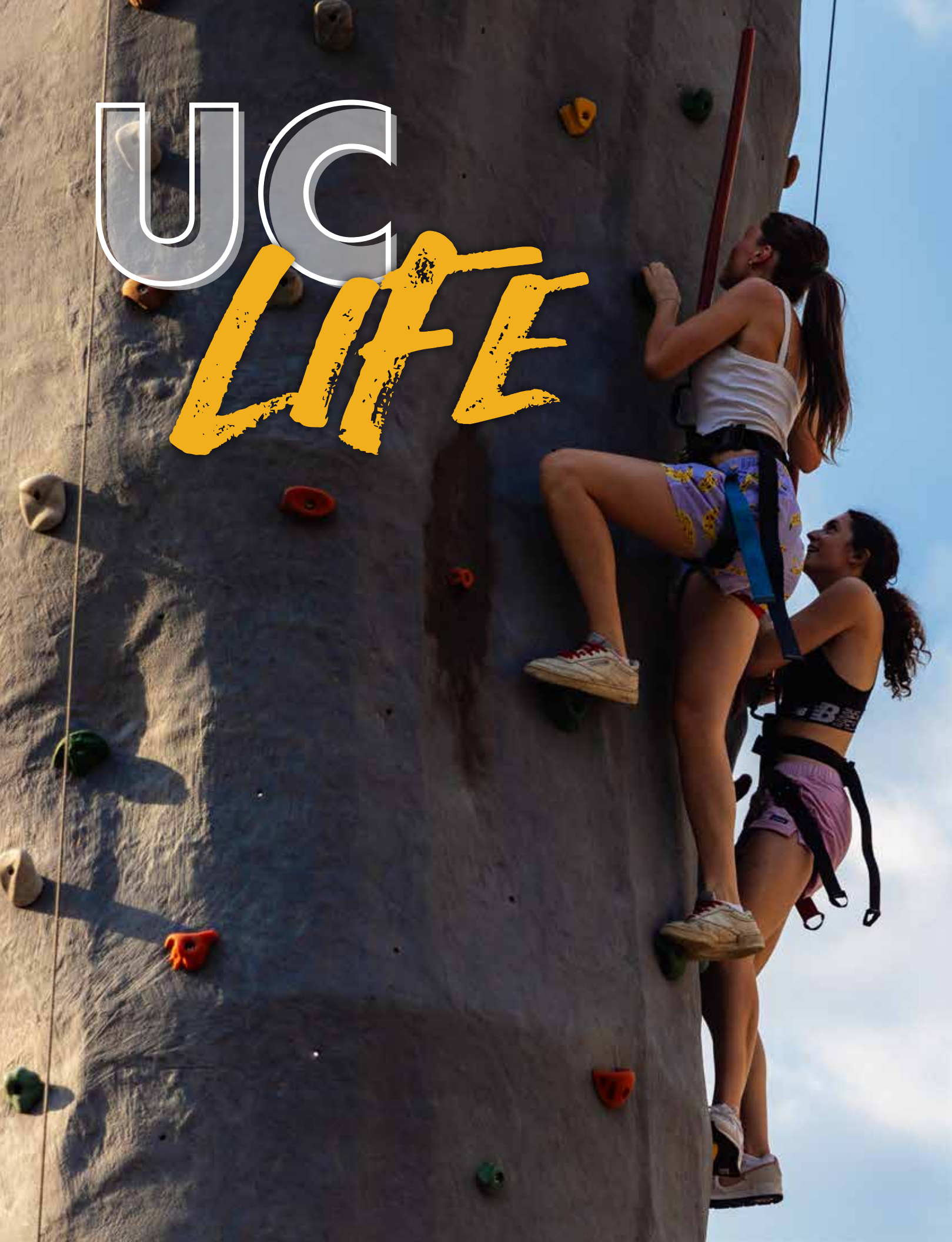
Alica Fruhwaldova-Belanova discussed her book *The Loves I Have Lost* during the October Builders Luncheon. The book describes how her parents survived the Holocaust by living in a cave in the mountains outside of Banská Bystrica in Slovakia during the WWII years. Born immediately after the war, Alica shares her story of growing up in her homeland without ever knowing any of her extended family, all of whom had been murdered by the Nazis in the years before her birth.

She and her daughters were visiting West Virginia for the WV Book Festival and also met with the UC Honors College students to discuss her book and life experience.



MBA SPEAKER SERIES

The MBA Speaker Series continued to offer thought-provoking speakers this fall, including Ashley Wright from Dem 2 Brothers, Jamie Spears, President of Astorg Auto of Charleston, and Mike Graney, Executive Director of the Department of Economic Development.



Week of Welcome & EagleFest

The annual Week of Welcome started off with a bang at EagleFest. Amidst the exhilaration of starting a new academic year, students enjoyed a Student Organization Fair to discover campus engagement opportunities alongside various activities—from Axe-Throwing to a Rock Wall and Euro-Bungee. Free t-shirts, inflatables, and a Riverbank dinner added to the spirited ambiance. The Boathouse offered bikes, paddleboards, and games, making it a lively evening despite the summer heat.

The week's events continued with the beloved BINGO night, an outing to GoMart Park for a Dirty Birds game, and a Food Truck Friday filled with live music and giveaways. Addressing vital campus health and wellness topics, we hosted educational sessions with Hypnotist Keith Kakrut and Briana Hansen's "Sex Rules" seminar on healthy relationships and assault awareness.

Culminating the week, UC Night at Live on the Levee drew a vibrant crowd of students, alumni, and faculty, celebrating with live music in Haddad Riverfront Park—another testament to UC's commitment to enlivening the Charleston community.

For spirit wear enthusiasts, the Athletics Garage Sale was a treasure trove of UC gear, and the week rounded off with community service during Labor of Love and relaxation at Lounging on the Lawn.





UNIVERSITY OF CHARLESTON

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The University of Charleston does not discriminate on the basis of sex and anyone with questions regarding Title IX may contact the University's Title IX coordinator or the Office of Civil Rights.

ALUMNI DISCOUNT FOR UC GRADUATE PROGRAMS

For alumni considering a graduate degree, UC can help make the decision easier with our tuition discount for select graduate degrees. The discount is 20% off the published tuition for the selected degree program. It cannot be combined with any other tuition discounts (e.g., military/law enforcement discount, etc.) with the exception of athletic scholarships.

The following UC graduate degrees are eligible for the discount:

- **Master of Business Administration (MBA)**
- **Master of Science in Business and Data Analytics**
- **Master of Science in Strategic Leadership**
- **Master of Science in Cybersecurity**
- **Master of Science in Nursing - Family Nurse Practitioner**
- **Master of Science in Occupational Therapy**
- **Doctor of Executive Leadership (DEL)**

Students must have earned a degree from the University of Charleston and be admitted to one of the approved graduate degrees to be eligible for the discount.

