

maroon gold
m&g
Summer 2025

MORRISON REHABILITATION SCIENCE
AND
ATHLETIC CENTER



UC
UNIVERSITY OF
CHARLESTON

LETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends of the University of Charleston,

It is a great time to be part of our story!

Everywhere you look, there is something new, exciting, and inspiring happening at UC. From the grand opening of our state-of-the-art Morrison Center to the success of our nationally ranked athletic teams, to the growing impact of our Downtown Innovation Hub—you can feel the momentum building.

This is not an accident. We are growing by design. We are laser-focused on preparing students not just for today's world, but for tomorrow's challenges and opportunities. Innovation is not just a buzzword here—it is embedded in how we teach, how we lead, and how we serve our community.

In this edition of Maroon and Gold, you will see exactly what innovation at UC looks like.

We are proud to introduce two new graduate programs in occupational and physical therapy, created to meet critical workforce needs across our region. You will also read about the largest graduating class in our history and UC bringing a full marathon back to our city—led by our students and guided by our commitment to being Charleston's University™.

We also recently earned a 10-year reaccreditation from the Higher Learning Commission, a strong endorsement of our academic excellence and student success.

Of course, none of this happens by chance. It takes vision, hard work, and a deep belief in what is possible. It takes people like you—alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends—who continue to fuel our progress with your support, effort, and encouragement.

We are proud of where we are—but even more excited about where we are going.

With gratitude,

Marty Roth
President, University of Charleston

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SUMMER 2025

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

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On the Cover:

Morrison Rehabilitation Science and
Athletic Center Ribbon Cutting.

Pictured Left to Right –

*Ryan Taylor, President Pickering &
Associates; Greg Burton, UC BOT*

Chair; Larry and Lisa Pack; Marty Roth;

Antoinette Morrison; Senator Shelley

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A NEW ERA OF EXCELLENCE

How the newly opened Morrison Center is transforming healthcare education at UC



With the cutting of a ribbon, many cheers, and support from our UC community, the Morrison Rehabilitation Science and Athletic Center officially opened. The Morrison Center, a \$10 million initiative, will serve as the home for

new graduate programs in occupational therapy and physical therapy, both designed to meet growing workforce demands across the region and nation in critical areas of healthcare.



Bright, modern hallways connect classrooms, labs, and study spaces.

"This is a great day for the University of Charleston," UC President Marty Roth said. "This new facility will prepare our students to become skilled, compassionate professionals and help address healthcare challenges in our communities. It also reflects our continued growth as a university and our commitment to preparing students for successful careers in high-demand fields. We are incredibly grateful to everyone—faculty, staff, donors, and partners—who helped make this vision a reality."

The Morrison Center features advanced labs specifically designed for occupational and physical therapy instruction, providing hands-on learning opportunities in a real-world setting. The facility also includes collaborative learning spaces, private study rooms, new classrooms, and faculty offices.



The lobby features a donor wall honoring those who made the Morrison Center possible.



Shared Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy lab spaces are designed for hands-on, real-world learning.



With a full range of adaptive tools and simulated living spaces, this dedicated Occupational Therapy lab helps students build practical skills they'll use in the field.



Guests toured the Morrison Center during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



Donors joined a special celebration following the grand opening.



A dedicated PT space blends rehab, strength work, and functional movement training.



The Morrison Center's expanded weight room offers top-tier training space for UC's student-athletes.



Dr. Steven Lesh will lead the development of UC's Physical Therapy program.

In addition to its academic features, the Morrison Center includes significant upgrades to UC's athletic facilities. Renovated visitor locker rooms, modernized weight training areas, and new laundry facilities will enhance the overall student-athlete experience.

The project was made possible through support from generous donors, regional foundations, and a federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant secured through the Congressionally Directed Spending process.

"The Morrison Rehabilitation Science and Athletic Center is a remarkable example of what can be accomplished when federal support, private philanthropy, and strong institutional leadership come together around a shared goal: to invest in the future of our students and the health and wellness of our communities," Senator Shelley Moore Capito, who participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony, said. "This newly renovated facility will play a vital role in preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals and student athletes. I'm grateful to President Roth, the Board, and all the generous donors who helped bring this vision to life."

Generous support for the project came from several contributors, including Lisa and Larry Pack, the Maier Foundation, Encova Foundation, the Martha Gaines and Russell Wehrle Memorial Foundation, HB Wehrle Foundation, the John L. Dickinson Family, and many individual donors, including all members of UC's Board of Trustees.

Pickering Associates and Pray Construction led the project's completion.

"The support we've received for this project just shows the belief so many people have in UC's mission and future," Gail Carter, UC's vice president of development, said. "Every dollar invested in the Morrison Center helps us build a pipeline of healthcare providers, leaders, and innovators who will make a real difference in the lives of others. We're grateful to our donors and partners for being part of this transformative project."

The center is named in honor of the late J. Holmes Morrison - the longest-serving chair of UC's Board of Trustees, a respected banker, and a prominent community leader. In conjunction with the project, the University is also launching the J. Holmes Morrison Endowed Scholarship to support aspiring healthcare professionals, providing financial assistance to undergraduate students pursuing careers in rehabilitation sciences.

"Holmes Morrison played an important role in shaping the trajectory of the University of Charleston," Greg Burton, current chair of UC's Board of Trustees, said. "His leadership, guidance, and commitment to our mission helped lay the foundation for the institution we are today. Naming this center in his honor serves as a lasting tribute to a man whose impact will continue to be felt for generations."



Students dive into the swimming pool that once lived inside Gorman Hall. Photo courtesy of the Morris Harvey Archives at the Schoenbaum Library

The Evolution of Gorman Hall

Gorman Hall is the oldest building on campus and has grown alongside the University of Charleston.

For many years, it was home to the Eddie King Gym — a small, non-air-conditioned facility where the Golden Eagles won numerous championships. Generations of Charlestonians also remember Gorman Hall as the place where they learned to swim.

To better serve a growing student body and provide top-tier athletic and academic spaces, Gorman Hall has been transformed twice in recent years into a state-of-the-art education facility.

In 2016, part of the building was converted into the Russell and Martha Wehrle Innovation Center and the H. Bernard Wehrle Sr. Athletic Facility. Today, another section houses advanced classrooms and labs for our Master of Occupational Therapy and Doctor of Physical Therapy students - spaces designed to help their knowledge and skills thrive. A new weight room and visitors' locker room also support our student-athletes, athletic trainers, and coaches.

The memories of the old gym and pool will always be part of UC history, but as the University has evolved and grown, we are proud that Gorman Hall has done the same.

Two Programs to Fill a Vital Need

Our two new graduate degree programs in occupational and physical therapy will help meet the increasing demands for rehabilitation services in the city, state, and region. The two new programs will be part of UC's School of Health Sciences.

Forecasted jobs in occupational and physical therapy far exceed the number of students graduating from existing state programs. Adding these two healthcare programs to our existing healthcare degree portfolio is consistent with our strategy to design and deliver new programs that lead to high-paying jobs in in-demand fields.

The Master of Occupational Therapy is enrolling students for its next cohort, and the Doctor of Physical Therapy program is expected to begin enrolling students in 2026.



SPRING '25 GRADUATION

CELEBRATES LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS

The newest UC graduates were honored during our Spring Commencement ceremonies on Saturday, April 26, 2025. There were two separate ceremonies, an undergraduate and a graduate celebration.

Two inspiring keynote speakers shared their perspectives on life after graduation with our graduates: Chef Paul Smith, West Virginia's first James Beard Award winner, who spoke to the undergraduates, and Brigadier General (Ret.) Michaelle Munger-Dulong, the first female general officer in the history of the West Virginia Army National Guard, who spoke to the graduate students.

A particularly heartfelt moment during the undergraduate ceremony saw Glenn Kirk fulfill a lifelong promise. Glenn and his late wife, Joyce, attended Morris Harvey College (now UC) in the 1960s but left before graduating due to financial pressures after starting a family. Although Glenn later earned degrees elsewhere, he vowed to graduate from UC one day. On April 26, that promise was realized with his family cheering him on.

Several faculty members were honored as emeritus faculty during the ceremonies: Dr. Michael Bayly, retiring from UC after 34 years; Dr. Rebecca Linger, Ms. Barbara Doak, Dr. Gannett Monk, and Dr. Aladin Siddig, all from the School of Pharmacy.

The celebration marks a significant milestone for 382 graduates – 260 undergraduates and 122 graduate students – one of the largest graduating classes in UC history.



Leadership Certificate Ceremonies Recognize First Responders

Degree-seeking students weren't the only ones celebrating academic achievements this year. Two special ceremonies also honored the hard work and dedication of first responders who completed one of UC's Leadership Certificate programs.

In March, nearly 300 law enforcement professionals from across West Virginia were recognized during the Senior Law Enforcement Leadership Certificate ceremony.

In July, 165 EMS professionals were honored for completing the EMS Leadership Certificate program. Governor Patrick Morrisey also joined to offer congratulations to these exceptional public servants.

UC launched the EMS Leadership Certificate in 2022 and expanded its offerings in 2024 with the Senior Law Enforcement Leadership Certificate. Each program provides participants with 15 college credits, which can be applied toward a UC leadership degree.

Funding for these programs was made possible by the Governor's Office, the West Virginia Legislature, and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC).

UC Secures 10-Year Reaccreditation by Higher Learning Commission

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) continued UC's accreditation, with reaffirmation through the 2034-2035 academic year.

The accreditation followed a rigorous evaluation, including a comprehensive document submission and a February 2025 site visit by HLC reviewers. It reflects our dedication to academic excellence, integrity, and continuous improvement.

During the process, we successfully demonstrated how our mission drives decision-making, upholds ethical practices, and ensures the quality of education for our students, from learning outcomes to timely graduation and career readiness. We also showed that we have robust planning and resources to support our long-term goals.

This achievement reflects the success of the entire UC community in fulfilling our mission, vision, values, and goals.

University Senior Earns Prestigious Fellowship

Continuing a tradition of excellence in academics and community service, University of Charleston senior Kelton Boblits was named a 2025 Judith A. Herndon Fellowship recipient.

Boblits graduated with honors from UC in April 2025, earning a B.A. in Political Science (Public Policy Concentration) and a B.S. in Business Management (Entrepreneurship Concentration). He was selected as the Outstanding Undergraduate Student and was a member of the UC Honors College. He was a Promise Scholar, an Innovation Scholar, and a Presidential Scholar. He also served as student body president and student representative on the UC Board of Trustees, as well as vice president of UC's Lions Club chapter. He will continue his graduate studies at UC.

The Herndon Fellowship is a highly competitive program that selects 10 undergraduate students across colleges in West Virginia each year to participate in the 60-day legislative session. Students are assigned to assist a legislator from the West Virginia Senate or House of Delegates.

Over the past decade, the University of Charleston has had nine students selected for the coveted Fellowship, including Emily Rector (2015), Luke Yingling (2017), Kelli Chattin (2017), Isaiah Smith (2018), Paige Carpenter (2020), Ryan McFarland (2022), Justin Webster (2024), Tim Wise (2024), and Kelton Boblits (2025).



UC to Host Marathon in 2026

For the first time in nearly three decades, Charleston is set to host a full marathon, inviting distance runners from across the region to the Capital City.

The University of Charleston Marathon is scheduled for April 2026, serving as a signature event for both the institution and the Charleston community, with support from the City of Charleston and the Charleston Convention & Visitors Bureau. The marathon will feature a fast and flat 26.2-mile course, guiding runners through some of the city's most iconic locations, including downtown Charleston, the historic Elk City district, Kanawha City, and UC's scenic riverfront campus.

"We believe in creating opportunities and experiences that extend well beyond traditional classroom education," UC President Marty Roth said. "We are deeply committed to being Charleston's University". The UC Marathon reflects our mission to educate our students for a life of productive work, enlightened living, and community involvement. The UC Marathon brings that mission to life by uniting students and the Charleston community in a shared pursuit of connection and wellness."

The announcement was made on campus, at this year's finish line of the UC Half Marathon and 5K, where President Roth and Charleston Mayor Amy Shuler Goodwin unveiled the new event.

"I am thrilled to join the University of Charleston and the Charleston CVB for today's announcement of the inaugural UC Marathon, especially as it coincides with the energy and spirit of today's half-marathon, 5k, and our vibrant local running community," Mayor Goodwin said. "Taking this energy to the next level – the 2026 UC Marathon will further reinforce our position as a premier sports tourism destination while also creating a significant positive impact on local businesses."

This exciting new race will bring a high-quality marathon experience to Charleston, attracting runners from across the region and beyond. The marathon is also expected to boost tourism, support local businesses, and create new economic opportunities for the Charleston community.

University of Charleston Honors College students will help bring the UC Marathon to life by planning, promoting, and executing the event. Proceeds will directly support the Honors College to help fund opportunities for future scholars and leaders.



PA Class of 2025 Achieves 100% First Time Pass Rate on National Certifying Exam



When Enoch Koo set out to find the right Physician Assistant Program, he looked at options across the country.

From his home in Southern California, Koo recognized that the University of Charleston program, with its strong academic reputation and supportive community, would offer him a place where he could not just survive the intensity of PA school but truly excel.

That instinct proved right.

Koo and his UC Physician Assistant Program Class of 2025 achieved a remarkable feat: a 100% first-time pass rate on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).

“One of our professors said that PA school is like trying to drink from a fire hose—there’s just so much information coming at you,” Koo said, who also served as the class vice president. “But the support system we had really helped us trust the process and build strong relationships with our classmates and faculty.”

That support was woven into every aspect of UC’s program. Early on, students learn to practice with mock patients, facing tough scenarios that test their skills.

“Initially, we were all nervous about applying what we learned in the classroom to real practice. Sometimes, the ‘patients’ can be challenging. However, by the time we reached our rotations and clinicals, we were well-prepared and confident in working with a diverse range of patients in different settings. The preceptors were impressed by how ready we were to take on our roles.”

Now a certified Physician Assistant, Koo is headed to Houston to begin his career, joining a network of UC PA graduates making an impact nationwide.

The PANCE is a standardized exam administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants to assess the clinical knowledge, clinical reasoning, and other medical skills and professional behaviors that have been deemed important for entry-level practice as a PA. It is a crucial step for PA graduates to gain certification and practice as a physician assistant.

“This milestone is a direct reflection of our program’s collective, collaborative dedication to its PA students,” stated Lesley Adkins, UC PA assistant professor/principal faculty. “From admissions to the classroom to the clinical setting, and all the logistics that go into the behind-the-scenes details, UC’s PA Program offers a robust education that makes for an exceptional student experience. We are so proud of the Class of 2025 and honored to now call them our colleagues.”

The University of Charleston Physician Assistant Program was established in 2013 with the goal of educating compassionate, skilled caregivers who were ready to practice in a variety of settings. The program is both rigorous and challenging, serving as preparation for students to competently provide medical care in the primary care setting.

Health Sciences Students Continue to Soar

In addition to the exceptional pass rate for our Physician Assistant Program, the Radiologic Technology and Radiologic Science programs also achieved 100% pass rates on their licensure exams this year. The Occupational Therapy Assistant program achieved a very close 91% pass rate. Our students, faculty, and staff in the health sciences have worked exceptionally hard to achieve these outstanding results, and we congratulate them all on their success.



INSPIRING INNOVATION

DOWNTOWN INNOVATION HUB UPDATES

New Executive Director of Innovation Announced

Jim Linsenmeyer joined UC as the executive director of innovation. He will oversee all innovation initiatives, programs, and operations at the Charleston campus and the UC Downtown Innovation Hub (DIH), where he will lead the development and delivery of programs and design workshops for small and medium-sized businesses and UC students. Additionally, he will manage innovation-related grants and donor activities.

Linsenmeyer comes to UC from the West Virginia Department of Economic Development, where he served as region manager in the Eastern Panhandle. In this role, he led efforts to attract new businesses and support existing ones, helping secure major projects such as the \$640 million CMC steel mill factory, the \$60 million Treplar food packaging plant, and the \$59 million HandCraft Services commercial laundry facility.

Before his work in economic development, Linsenmeyer spent 40 years owning and operating beer and wine wholesale businesses in West Virginia. He has been involved in multiple startups, mergers, and small business acquisitions.

Inspiring Innovation Continues – and Evolves

The DIH continued its “Inspiring Innovation” series and, like all innovations, evolved to enhance its programming. This year, the series transitioned from breakfast events to “Thinking Outside the Lunchbox,” fostering lunchtime conversations. The “Two Views” series continued to present differing viewpoints on contemporary issues, with topics this year including the impact of AI on business, HR hot buttons, innovation insights, and perspectives on TikTok.

DIH Wins International Innovation Award

The Downtown Innovation Hub tied for third place as a Best Startup Ecosystem Support Organization in the Global Innovation Management Institute’s (GIMI) 2024 Innovation Awards. This category is designed to “recognize top incubators, accelerators, or hubs that support and foster innovation within the entrepreneurship ecosystem.”

Dr. Hitendra Patel, CEO of GIMI, presented the award to DIH staff. He also spent a day at the DIH, working with our Business Accelerator Cohort and offering our first “Thinking Outside the Lunchbox” event.

To qualify for the GIMI award, organizations had to showcase their uniqueness and creativity, be practical and viable, and have the potential for scalability. They also had to demonstrate measurable changes, with clear evidence of the innovation or framework being adopted successfully, and the organization had to demonstrate measurable outcomes, including financial and non-financial benefits.

The Global Innovation Management Institute provides world-class training and certification programs, working with organizations to implement best practices in innovation management. GIMI works with the UC Downtown Innovation Hub as a resource for staff, students, and small businesses participating in the Business Accelerator Program.

ATHLETICS

HIGHLIGHTS

BASEBALL

After falling to Fairmont State, Coach Peterson's baseball squad ended its season at the MEC Tournament. The team finished with a 26-25 record (20-10 in MEC).

A brand-new batting cage was constructed, and the ribbon cutting was held in early April. Our facilities already lead the way in the Mountain East Conference, and this is another feather in our (baseball) cap.

UC GOLF

The Men's Golf team won the MEC Spring Classic title, and Coach Will Johnson was named MEC Men's Coach of the Year.

William Carestam was named Player of the Year after a playoff round against fellow UC golfer Carlos "Charlie" Mortera. Both players were named to the MEC First Team, along with teammate Erik Ulväng.

Three UC Men's Golf team members were named to the DII PING All-Atlantic Region Team: William Carestam, Carlos Mortera, and Erik Ulväng.

Women's Golf came in second at the MEC Spring Classic, and Will Johnson was named MEC Women's Coach of the Year. UC had three players – Lucia Martin, Mari Filippa Larsen, and Gabrielle Harrison – making the MEC First Team. Alice Anderson made the Second Team.

LACROSSE

With a 21-9 victory over Malone University on March 12, junior Madison Partridge became UC's all-time leading scorer, scoring six goals in the game and tallying 137 career goals. The team ended the season with a phenomenal 12-6 record (6-2 in MEC play) for the most successful campaign in program history. The team will look to improve on a season that ended in the conference semifinals.

SOFTBALL

The Golden Eagles claimed the Mountain East Conference Tournament title and advanced to the NCAA Atlantic Regionals. Addison Mass was named the MEC Pitcher of the Year, and three Golden Eagles made honors – Lindsey Phares and Addison Mass both made All-MEC First Team, and Hannah Meyer made Second Team.

TENNIS

Both teams earned MEC Championship titles after an awe-inspiring season. The Men's team went into NCAA play with a 20-3 overall record. The men defeated Davis & Elkins 4-0 to win the NCAA Atlantic Regionals and earn a trip to Orlando for nationals. The Women's team earned a 20-4 record going into the NCAA Atlantic Regionals. The women defeated Fairmont State to earn the NCAA Atlantic Regional title.

TRACK & FIELD

Golden Eagles track & field brought home both the Men's and Women's 2025 MEC Championships. This is the second consecutive year that UC has swept the men's and women's championships. The Golden Eagles also earned 30 All-MEC awards.

UC women finished first in team points for the fourth consecutive year and captured three honors: Laura Delgado de Torres took home the MEC Female Athlete of the Year and the meet's Most Valuable Performer award. Beth Sykes repeated as the Female Indoor Track Athlete of the Year.

On the men's side, the team won for the fourth time in five years. Sam Idiens was named Track Athlete of the Year, and Coach Nick Bias was named Men's Coach of the Year.

The US Track & Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) named UC athletes Frankie Winter, Iggy Chalker, Hugo Hewitt, Jules Geffroy-Remot, Timber Huysmans, Roberto Agrizzi, Tim Gutzeit, Zach Parsons, Beth Sykes, Madison Woolwine, Maya Clark, Colette Patti, Brooke Burns, and Stefani Vasileva to its All-Region teams. Two Golden Eagles qualified for the NCAA DII Men's and Women's Outdoor Track and Field Championships, held in Pueblo, Colorado: Iggy Chalker placed 15th in the 10,000m, while Brooke Burns finished 17th in the Hammer Throw.

VOLLEYBALL

Adam Hamad was announced as our new Women's Volleyball head coach. Coach Hamad returns to UC (he was assistant to the men's volleyball program from Fall 2020 to Spring 2022) from Arcadia University, where he has served as the head men's volleyball coach for three seasons.

Four Men's Volleyball players were named to All-EIVA teams: Paul Stommel and Kai Cousins made the First Team, Max Nissen made the Second Team, and C.J. Raines received Honorable Mention. Cousins was also named EIVA Freshman of the Year. The team defeated Penn State for the first time in program history.

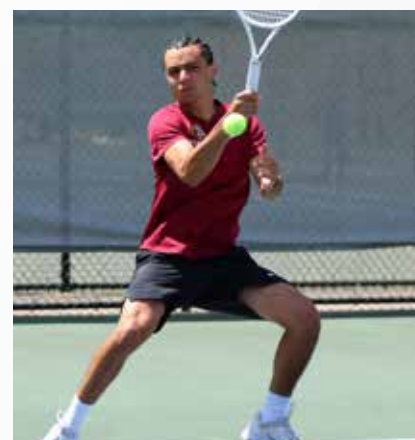
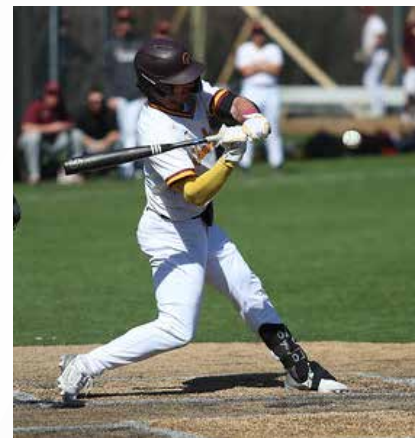
WE ALSO CONGRATULATE THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAMS for reaching the quarterfinals of the MEC Tournament this year. Bright futures ahead for both squads!

UC CLAIMS COMMISSIONER'S CUP

The Golden Eagles once again earn the Mountain East Conference Commissioner's Cup! Since the MEC was founded 12 years ago, the University of Charleston has claimed the Commissioners Cup 10 times—an extraordinary accomplishment that reflects the unwavering commitment, hard work, and passion of our entire athletics team. The Commissioner's Cup is the league's annual award recognizing overall athletic excellence among its members.

Spring 2025:

Over 400 student-athletes earned a 3.0 or higher grade point average during the spring semester, with 112 achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA. The average for the athletic department was 3.38. This strongly reflects the support our student-athletes receive from their coaches, faculty, and staff, preparing these young men and women for even greater success after graduation.





2024 HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

Our donors, alumni and friends make up the strong foundation of support that has enabled UC to create opportunities for our students for over 135 years. We appreciate such wonderful support of the University and our mission to educate each student for a life of productive work, enlightened living, and community involvement. The support from alumni, friends, foundations and corporations ensures our long-term stability.

The following reflects gifts received between January 1 and December 31, 2024. This list highlights donors who contributed \$1,000 or more during that time. For a full list of all our generous supporters, please visit ucwv.edu/giving.

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